



anyone for several miles. On this particular day we found ourselves among some timber trucks and water management officers, who were tending to the lochs and the water courses feeding them.

Forestry operation folk weren't our only companions. A herd of wild mountain goats shared the hillside with us, while buzzards soared overhead. Sightings of golden eagles are relatively common within Galloway Forest Park, and although we didn't have the pleasure of spotting one, you may be more fortunate.

Over the rolling hills and home

The gravel miles galloped by as we ticked off yet more lochs, imposing dam walls and towering forests. We passed foreboding, derelict industrial structures, their history and heritage evident from arches protruding monstrously from the valley floor. As we rode south, the landscape changed. Rugged ruins and rocky outcrops were left behind; ahead lay rolling terrain as far as the eye could see.

Emerging from a forest, we knew there was a hamlet up ahead. We crossed our fingers that the promised café would be open and have enough cake to go around. Our hopes were answered and we sat outside,

“Every turn and summit provided an ‘oh, wow!’ moment”

Clockwise from left: It's not all valleys and mountain vistas; stunning coastline also features. The sense of wilderness is a highlight of Gallovidian Gravel. Taking a break in one of the many cafés en route and checking our progress against the downloaded GPX file



conscious that the bulk of the route was now behind us. We reflected on the adventure so far, on how it will fit into our series, and we imagined the tales that will be told by future riders. Then we hoovered up the last crumbs of cake and carried on.

The frequency of villages and communities increased, as did our cake-fuelled cadence. We made good progress on this, our final leg. The bridges we'd crossed days earlier came back into sight and, rather than troubled water, Robert Burns welcomed us back into Dumfries. Smiles were etched deeply across all our dirty faces, with the memories of an unforgettable trip through some of Scotland's finest scenery still fresh in our minds.

Gallovidian Gravel isn't just another bikepacking route; it's a journey through history, culture, coastline and remote mountain passes. But journeys like this



The Adventure Series

Cycling UK's Adventure Series is a collection of long-distance bikepacking routes. They embody the spirit of exploration, nature, community, health and wellbeing, personal challenge and adventure.

Each route must meet certain criteria to qualify as part of the series, as we want them to appeal to a wide range of cyclists. The routes are broken down into suggested itineraries to support your planning. Each has a GPX file for navigation and a must-have guidebook (with a discount for Cycling UK members) to provide fascinating details about the sights, sounds and smells you'll experience on your journey.

Great views, incredible riding, delectable dining and memories to last a lifetime are on the menu for each route. However, they also have their own unique flavour that sets them apart from each other, ranging from the momentous mountains of Traws Eryri and the coastal coves of West Kernow Way to the heritage and history of Marcher Castles and King Alfred's Way. Around every corner and over every rise, there's something new to discover. Whether you've ridden one or more, why not plan your next adventure and complete the series?

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are only possible because of the people behind them. The support of our members and donors allows us to discover these remarkable places and share them with others to be ridden, respected and enjoyed by all. See you out on the trail! 🍷

The official guidebook – available from 25 June – will provide a suggested itinerary for the route, as well as shorter options for those challenged by time or fitness. Members get a discount on this and other guidebooks. shop.cyclinguk.org