

Heart-to-Heart



Preview of 2024 European Tours for HeartCycle West Coast & Algarve, Portugal April 7-17, 2024

Spring is the perfect time to cycle in southern Portugal while it is green, the wildflowers are blooming and before it gets too warm. Our tour starts south of Lisbon and heads down the western coast through the Natural Park of Arrabida. We will visit small fishing towns and see Roman ruins as we head south to the Natural Park of SW Alentejo and the Vientiane Coast. Finally we visit to the famous Algarve coast and head eastward bound to Tavira one of the oldest towns in the Algarve.

Fantastic accommodations for 10 nights, including all your breakfasts and 9 dinners including Portuguese wines, cheeses and desserts. Use of a Cube road bike is also included in the tour fee. Fully supported tour with vans & guide. Come see this beautiful coastal area with HeartCycle.

For more information contact Judy Siel, judy.siel@gmail.com.



Four more European tours are also scheduled:

Balkan Quartet: Albania, North Macedonia, Kosovo & Montenegro May 17-31, 2024

Bike & Barge Belgium to Netherlands July 20-27, 2024

Tuscany, Italy September 5-18, 2024

Le Monastere, France September 28-October 5, 2024

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Newsletter Editor

Tour Director Musings

Tour ideas and plans are being offered by our members and we are starting to paint a picture for 2024. I am excited by all the great ideas and hoping to have 14-16 tours to offer to our members. We already have five European tours set and hope to get tour descriptions out by late July and open registration for these 5 tours in August. Domestic tours from coast to coast (and with some in the middle) are also lining up on our potential list. It is always exciting being able to work with our volunteer tour leaders and get the wheels turning for taking the scenic routes next year. Domestic tours will be posted in mid-October.

“July is hot afternoons and sultry nights and mornings when it is a joy just to be alive. July is a picnic and a red canoe and a sunburned neck and a softball game and ice tinkling in a tall glass. July is blind date with summer.” Hal Borland, Sundial of the Seasons.

May your summer have joy and fun with friends or family.

Giro di Sardegna (Tour of Sardinia)

By Scot Gould

In 2018, HeartCycle ran what many long-time HC participants considered its greatest tour. The pandemic delayed a repeat until this year. Was it just as good? Absolutely.

Beautiful scenery, traffic-free roads, challenging but doable climbs, incredibly tasty food and wine and highly responsive service. Such phrases describe the Giro di Sardegna. But it had more. Included in the ten days were two “rest days.” One of these days consisted of a day-long boat ride along the island’s eastern coast. The second day consisted of a multi-hour hike over the second-highest dunes in Europe on the island’s western coast. And as part of this tour was an education into the culture, history and botany of the island called Sardegna.

There was a tour run by Alessandro and Enrico, who live in Sardegna. They were exceptional - responsive and accommodating. Each day, the bikes were prepared before the ride, and they were stored at the end of the ride. On the only day we had to be shuttled from one village to another, they arranged for a wine tasting and a lecture on Sardinian culture.



Ready-to-ride bicycles, breath-taking vistas, virtually traffic-free roads and impossible-to-find-in-the-US delicious food and wine, including mirto – the elixir of life.

For the ten-day tour, the daily ride consisted of between 60 to 100 km (40 to 60 miles) and 1000 to 1400 meters of climbing (3300 to 4600 feet). Even with the occasional rain shower, each person had the opportunity to ride as much, or as little, as they desired. Breakfast, lunch, SAG stops and dinner were all provided.



Rolling over a hill to view an even more unexpectedly beautiful scene.



Meeting some of the local



Another delicious and unique meal. Fish, fruits and vegetables were local. We were introduced to a number of exceptionally well-prepared Sardinian dishes.



Ahh, the rest day. Crystal clear water, excellent swimming and getting ready for a meal of seafood pulled from the sea two hours earlier.



The culture, the food, the quiet road, the surf, the sand and the scenery. Every day was a new adventure. Every day ended as “the best day ever.”



Team HeartCycle completes the Giro di Sardegna



Long time HeartCycle member, Mary Stewart passed away unexpectedly the end of January of this year. In addition to doing the HeartCycle tours, she was also a competent mountain biker, golfer, tennis player, theater and arts patron and excellent downhill and cross country skier. If there was something fun and a bit curious, Mary would be the first to participate. A South Dakota native, she came to Denver to get her MBA at the University of Denver and just stayed - for which her MANY friends are very grateful.

Diane Short

Do Drivers Even Know the Laws That Protect Cyclists? Do You?

SEVERAL NEW LAWS HAVE BEEN PASSED RECENTLY TO KEEP CYCLISTS AND OTHER MORE VULNERABLE ROAD USERS SAFE.

BY MICAH LING

Did you know that many drivers think the “Share the Road” signs are aimed at cyclists? Of course the intended purpose is the opposite, to remind drivers to be vigilant and considerate of more vulnerable, slower-moving modes of transportation on the road.

And what about “taking the lane” when a cyclist moves to the middle of the traffic lane because there’s no shoulder or it feels too dangerous to have a car pass? Perfectly legal and the smartest course of action in some situations.

Generally, people riding bikes are treated by the law the same as people driving vehicles —they have similar rights and responsibilities.

But a 20-pound bike is a lot different from a 5,000-pound vehicle, so several laws have been passed recently to keep cyclists and other more vulnerable road users safe.

For instance, most states now adhere to the 3-foot law, which says that the drivers of vehicles must give cyclists 3-feet when passing. And six states require vehicles to completely change lanes when passing a cyclist, if more than one lane is present.

Former World Tour cyclist Phil Gaimon, who spends an exceptional number of hours biking the roads around Los Angeles (a place with a lot of people driving cars), has become an advocate for cyclists and their rights on the road.

He’s created several informative [YouTube](#) videos on the matter, including one from earlier this year, about an encounter he had with a driver in Newport Beach. He worked with Bike Legal to clearly explain how to navigate scary interactions with drivers.

“Most people [driving cars] don’t think cyclists are even allowed on the road,” Gaimon told Bicycling. “They think we’re supposed to be on sidewalks and not in their way.”

Gaimon talks specifically about a new set of laws that went into effect in California this year. The California OmniBike Bill gives people who bike more rights on the road. And Gaimon is hoping other states pass similar laws. But equally as important as passing such bills and laws, is educating the public so that they actually follow the rules. Many times, as Gaimon says in the video, police officers aren’t even aware of the laws.

“I’ve had a dream of starting a GoFundMe to buy a Super Bowl commercial,” Gaimon said. “Everybody chips in and we make a Super Bowl commercial, 30 seconds, just to personify cyclists.” That’s one idea to blast the nation with a message that cyclists are real people who belong on the roads, and that there are laws to protect them.

In addition to regulations about passing cyclists on the road, the new California bill addresses intersection protocol. Now, people on bikes follow the same rules as pedestrians at intersections. When the walk sign goes on to allow pedestrians to cross before vehicles, bikes may also use the 7-second head start to cross the street.

New California laws also allow e-bikes on all roadways and bike paths, but still allow communities to ban them from equestrian and hiking trails. This will allow people to fully adopt e-bikes as a safe way to commute and run errands, which helps reduce car traffic and carbon emissions. But no matter how many new laws are passed, people still react incredibly emotionally out on the roads. People are upset about sitting in traffic (another reason to get out on a bike instead of a car) or are amped up from some other situation. Gaimon goes into all encounters with drivers assuming they’re already “at an eight” on the scale of anger.

Generally, Gaimon says that as a cyclist, it’s best not to engage someone who is angry and behind the wheel of an automobile. Cars can pretty easily become weapons.

His advice, if you’re comfortable having a conversation with someone who likely just threatened your life, do it calmly. “If you have a chance to patiently explain it and not get yourself shot, keep it simple. I try to come at it from a purely vulnerable and scared point of view.” Gaimon suggests saying something like, “Just so you know, that was super scary for me, and here’s what the law says...”

If you need advice on a specific situation, or want to learn more about your rights as a cyclist on the roads, Bike Legal and The Cyclist Lawyer have loads of information to help you stay safe.

Beautiful Berkshires

By Barbara Klein

Day 2 - Albany to Great Barrington

It's easy to fall into the rhythm of a HeartCycle tour – Breakfast, Ride, Snack, Ride, Lunch, Ride, Shower, Drink as in the nightly Happy Hour (don't do this if you are dehydrated), Meeting for the next day's ride, Dinner, Sleep, and REPEAT.

Patty Menz and Rich Crocker, our tour leaders, spent hours and hours planning and preparing for the inaugural Beautiful Berkshires tour. As tour participants, we should have spent hours and hours training, particularly on the hills. Instead, we spent hours and hours studying the weather... Rain? Wind? Yes! However, I jump ahead.

Half-a-mile into the first day's ride, we had a detour which Rich had thoroughly explained the gyrations for at the orientation meeting. Fortunately, executive talent, as in Jim Bethell, guided us through the detour and then suddenly it all made sense. Next up an 8-mile climb with a strong head wind; followed by mist. And we knew we were cycling through the advertised farmlands when we smelled the fragrant manure wafting through the air.



Farm living is the life for me – Llamas!



Mayoma supervises the snacks

Mile 40 was literally a WATER STOP. Ahead there was a 100% chance of rain. Our lovely SAG drivers, Kathleen Schindler and Mayoma Pendergast, were waiting to load our bikes into the van. This is when Diane Bechtold joined the SAG sisterhood helping to bring those of us who melt in the rain to the hotel. This is also where Team EFM (Every F*#@%^ Mile) consisting of Guy Kelley, Greg and Mark Lestikow, and Phil Stoffel drove a spoke in the ground and didn't get "too wet" riding their bikes to the hotel.



Fred loads the bikes at our "WATER STOP"



Kids (Ann, Bill & Gail) are well behaved in the back seat of Diane's SAG

Day 3 - Bish Bash Falls

"Splish Splash I Was Taking a Bath" was the song of the day. Our routine expanded as we biked, ate, and then hiked $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to Bish Bash Falls – a mini-triathlon of sorts.

Tandem Etiquette – If a tandem doesn't pass you on a downhill, they are being kind. If you pass Bill and Gail Buckley's tandem on an uphill and Gail tells you that you are making her look bad, the correct response is "No one on a bike looks bad."



Mary Ann, Diane S and Daytripper Roger Rossi at Bish Bash Falls

Day 4 - Aliens & Angels – Great Barrington to Stockbridge

The sun was shining. The air was cool. Some took cover in the Upper Sheffield Covered Bridge while Graham Hollis tried to summon the aliens. Fortunately, or unfortunately depending on your viewpoint, there were no unexplained incidents unlike September 1, 1969 when an alleged alien abduction took place right where we stood.



Graham summons the aliens with Ralph & Jim



Patty, Ann, Bob, Graham, Mark & The Colonel

Best Potty Stop - In an obvious snafu, we “diehards” were one week early for the season opening of Christ Trinity Church’s Cycling Hospitality Station offering all the amenities – a port-a-potty, drinks, snacks, a pump, and bike tools. What a unique and wonderful service to cyclists in their community! Those that hung around the parking lot long enough were kindly invited to use the indoor plumbing. Admiring their TWO Tiffany windows was an artistic bonanza. One window was of an angel and the way the light was shining it’s just possible that the aliens were trying to abduct it.

Crashing HeartCycle’s Snack Stop – NO! Our SAG team risked their own safety by uninviting a bear to our stop at Umpachene Falls, MA. The bear was smart enough to leave peacefully before the cyclists arrived.

Team DFL (Dead F*#@%^ Last) – The NJ contingent of Ralph Pantuso, Doug Chucka, Mary Ann and Jeff (aka Barn) Brand, and myself made a strong showing but the undisputed Team DFL Captain was Ralph in full touring mode. Chris Berry and Kathleen Markham tried to represent CO but they kept going ahead.



Doug checks the tool kit at the Cycling Hospitality Station



Bill, Gail, Kathleen M, Doug & Ralph tempt the aliens

Day 5 - Rest Day

Does a cyclist ever really rest? Touring ones don't. There was eating, shopping, visits to the Norman Rockwell Museum, and drinking (and rocking) on the porch of the historic Red Lion Inn in Stockbridge, MA. The spot that had the most spinning was the Village Laundry.

“Do unto others as you as you would have them do unto you.” Rockwell’s Golden Rule painting got me thinking about safety. Actually, this is one of the very few paintings that he put words on because he felt it necessary to explain the many diverse people in the composition.



Gail, Chris & Kathleen M



Doug at Norman Rockwell’s Studio with “Do Unto Others...” on the easel



Laura at Alice’s Restaurant made famous by Arlo Guthrie



Dinner at the Red Lion – Ann, Bob, Mark, Fred, Graham, Greg & Phil

Day 6 - Stockbridge up and over Mt Greylock to Williamstown

Signature Climb – Mt Greylock! At an elevation of 3,491 ft, it is the highest mountain in Massachusetts. We approached from the south side. A nine-mile ascent that according to Garmin only had two climbs.

Signature Descent – Mt Greylock! Ten miles downhill, 6 hairpin turns, and no pedaling but lots of braking. The park rangers knew that what goes up, must come down. They used orange spray paint and cones to mark road hazards.

Elevation Profile – They lie. Well, they can be deceptive. The scale of the Mt Greylock trail vs. climb ride showed the trail rides do all the climbing. However, we shared four climbs before the two rides split.



#1 Tour Leader (Patty) at Mt Greylock summit



R & R at the Mt Greylock summit – The Colonel, Mark & Phil



A scenic view with Mayoma, Patty, Rich & Kathleen S



Doug, Barbara, Laura, Bob & Ann

Day 7 The Day Garmin and Rides with GPS go Crazy – Natural Bridge Park

The aliens are with us now or was it Rich who tried to update the GPS route in the morning? Good thing it was the shortest ride of the trip because HeartCycle was in scramble mode with riders going clockwise, counterclockwise, and numerous other variations. Today was soaking in the scenery. The clear and sunny sky allowed us to see the hills we weren't climbing. The beautiful stone dam at our lunch spot with marble boulders strewn here and there. The natural stone bridge is "under construction" with protective tape and fencing.

The evening brought Happy Hour where Patty, Rich, Kathleen S. and Mayoma received well-deserved kudos from our group. This was Patty's first time leading a HeartCycle tour and she did a phenomenal job! Consider that this tour included Jim, Mark, Graham, Laura Davis, former President Fred Yu, former Tour Director Bob Rowe (with Anne Cox) and longtime members Diane Short and Robert Grider (AKA The Colonel). For his part, Rich delivered better weather reports than we had that first day of riding.



Greg & Mark at Natural Bridge Park



Jim presents the awards for Best SAG to Mayoma & Kathleen S



HeartCycle's Beautiful People of the Berkshires

Day 8 - Williamstown to Albany

Last day of riding - 50 miles back to Albany. It's the rhythm of the hills and smelling the blooming lilacs. Then all of sudden the routine starts breaking down. Kathleen and Mayoma urge us to eat more to get rid of the food. We are wondering about our next meals. Hugs back at the hotel to say goodbye to old and new friends. Another great HeartCycle tour for the memory book!



HeartCycle on the road



Albany, New York skyline

Colorado HeartCycle 2023 Tours

Springtime in the Sonoran Desert

Tucson, Arizona

March 4 - 12 Status: Complete
7 days, Intermediate \$1,800.00
Rita Kurelja, ritakurelja@hotmail.com
Janet Slate, jslate@ultrasys.net

Our Nation's Capitol

Washington, DC

April 14 - 22 Status: Cancelled
7 days, Intermediate \$1,900.00
Jim Schroeder, jimmyschweb@gmail.com
Kurt Arehart, klarehart@gmail.com

Springtime in Solvang

Solvang, California

April 22 - 29 Status: Complete
6 days, Int./Adv. \$1,600.00
Mark Lestikow,
mark.lestikow@closetfactory.com
Polly Lestikow

Mallorca

Mallorca, Spain

April 30 - May 12 Status: Complete
12 days, Int./Adv. \$2,600.00
Doug Moll, doug.moll67@gmail.com
Scott MacCormack, samaccormack@gmail.com

The Beautiful Berkshires

Albany, New York

May 19 - 27 Status: Complete
7 days, Intermediate \$1,900.00
Rich Crocker, richcrocker@hotmail.com
Patty Menz, pattymenz1@verizon.net

Traverse Bay

Traverse City, Michigan

May 31 - June 8 Status: Complete
8 days, Int./Adv. \$2,240.00
Jim Schroeder, jimmyschweb@gmail.com
Ron Finch, blouie-rfinch@comcast.net

Sardinia

Sardinia, Italy

June 6 - June 20 Status: Complete
9 days, Advanced \$2,400.00
Clare Bena, cbvamoots@gmail.com

San Juan Mountains

Durango, Colorado

June 24 - 30 Status: Complete
6 days, Int./Adv. \$1,800.00
Janet Slate, jslate@ultrasys.net
Roger Sass, rogersass@hotmail.com

Central Oregon & Crater Lake

Bend, Oregon

July 12 - 19 Status: Closed
6 days, Int./Adv. \$2,200.00
Cindy Alvarez, sindelou@cox.net
Helayn Storch, helaynstorch@hotmail.com

Idaho Panhandle

Spokane, Washington

July 29 - August 5 Status: Waitlist
7 days, Int./Adv. \$2,000.00
Doug Moll, doug.moll67@gmail.com
Ben Pope, ben.pope@comcast.net

Colorado HeartCycle 2023 Tours

History in the Finger Lakes Region

Rochester, New York

August 13 - 19 Status: Cancelled
6 days, Intermediate \$1,800.00
Janet Reilly, kayaks06@verizon.net
Gail Golderman, goldermg@union.edu

New England Seacoast

Portland, Maine

September 10 - 16 Status: Open
6 days, Intermediate \$1,500.00
Kurt Arehart, klarehart@gmail.com
Jim Bethell, bethell.jim@verizon.net

Grand Valley Ramble

Grand Junction, Colorado

Sept. 17 - 22 Status: Open
5 days, Intermediate \$1,200.00
Judy Siel bjsiel@msn.com
Barry Siel, bsiel03@gmail.com

Slovenia, Italy & Croatia

Ljubljana, Solvenia

Sept. 23 - Oct. 2 Status: Open
9 days, Intermediate \$4,400.00
Cindy Dore, cdorecycle@gmail.com