



16 May 2017

Explore the world on two wheels

See the world on two wheels — biking holidays are as diverse as the bikes you might choose to ride on. Australia's Bike Bag Dude, Kedan Griffin helps cyclists worldwide to make the most out of their adventures. From his home studio in Newcastle, Kedan designs, sews and distributes custom-made bike bags to clients of all abilities.

An avid cyclist, Kedan knows what's required before setting out on a biking holiday. Whether you're a commuter cyclist looking for a gentle tour through the countryside or an adrenalin addict who loves hurtling across off-road trails, preparing for a biking holiday remains largely a matter of stamina and having the right gear.

"There's no easy way to say this, you have to put kilometres in your legs and your bum on the seat for at least a month before you set off," says Kedan, laughing.

Taking a biking holiday, even a gentle one, requires a level of familiarity and comfort in the saddle. If you're not already a cyclist, Kedan suggests borrowing a friend's bike and going for a few rides before you head off on your trip.

"You can't expect to do something you've never done before," he says. "You have to be comfortable when you're cycling, so it's best to see if you like it before you go."

One of the best places to start if you're a beginner or embarking on your first biking holiday, is to go for a ride along the regional rail trails in Australia. With new trails in Queensland and Victoria, these routes are generally flat and well maintained with gradual inclines, and typically, towns to visit along the way.

If you are confident cycling on the road, study your road map carefully to be fully aware of any changes in topography, like steep mountain ranges and narrow roads, or major truck routes that could prove dangerous.

"Rail trails are the perfect biking holidays for beginners," explains Kedan. "They're away from the traffic and often connected by small towns every 20km or so."

He suggests reading up on bike reviews and tuning into cycling forums online to learn from other cyclists who have more experience, as well as stopping by your local bike shops for touring tips, a bike service and a repair kit to take on the road.

"Bike mechanics know bikes better than anyone else and can save you a lot of time and money," says Kedan. "They can help you choose the right bike, for your body and holiday, and make sure it's in great working order with emergency supplies too."

For the more experienced cyclist, Tasmania and Western Australia are the front-runners for favourite biking holidays among cyclists. Tasmania offers scenic, mid-hard range hill cycling

while Western Australia unveiled a new 1000km trail two years ago, with hut accommodation provided along the route.

“Western Australia has become the premier destination in Australia with a new trail that caters to all levels. There’s no technical riding, it’s just riding up and down hills, but you’d need to be a bike rider to start with,” says Kedan.

That said, according to Kedan, it’s New Zealand that is the holy grail of biking holiday destinations. Here cycling is a form of tourism, trails are purpose-built and promoted in books and on websites, with the promise of new tours for two-wheeled travellers.

Biking holidays are viewed as easy if they involve cycling between towns, with accommodation along the way. When you have to carry your own supplies and water, says Kedan, that’s when a biking holiday becomes more of a technical tour.

If you intend to cycle more than 50 kms a day, taking your own bike can become preferable to hiring a new one. At the very least, you can always bring your own seat. These days it’s easy enough to transport your bike – Kedan suggests asking your bike store to show you how to pack the bike so that it meets airline standards.

But there are two remaining factors that can impact the success of any biking holiday. “Go with supportive friends,” says Kedan. “And *a/ways* check the weather.” So what are you waiting for? Get ready for a biking holiday to suit your style.

Ready to go? Get your [insurance](#), [travel money](#) and a [mobile TravelSIM¹](#) right here, now.



Article by

Emily Weekes

Writer

I’m a writer, storyteller, interviewer, mentor and ideas maven. I love riffing with everyday people and teasing out untold stories. A professional chameleon, I’m as comfortable on a construction site as I am interviewing CEOs. Recently I wrote and researched *The Place Economy* – an in-depth collection of interviews, case studies, essays and features, speaking with leaders around the world on how we might build better towns, suburbs and cities in Australia. My words and images have appeared in *The Age*, *Kill Your Darlings*, *Australian Traveller*, *Outback Magazine*, *Big Issue* and other publications.