



Cycle Touring Gear List



To give you an idea of what gear to take we've listed the gear that my wife and I have taken on previous cycle tours.

The Bikes

The bikes we use are 2 Koga Worldtraveller-S 14-speed Rohloff touring bikes, which we have found to be excellent. Our first bikes were Claud Butler 'Odyssey' 18 gear hybrid bikes. They did us well for a couple of tours, although their specifications weren't quite up to long tours as we had to replace various parts, like the back axles and bottom brackets!! We bought 2 Giant Expedition touring bikes in 2000 and they did us well until we sold them in 2019 and bought the Kogas.

Each of our 2 Koga Worldtraveller-S 14 speed Rohloff touring bikes is kitted out with these extras for touring:

- 2 Ortlieb Bike Packer Plus panniers on the rear, with extra pockets.
- 2 Ortlieb Sports Packer Plus front panniers on the front.
- 1 Ortlieb Ultimate 5 Plus bar bag.
- 1 Ortlieb Backpack (small size).
- 1 Brooks 'Champion Flyer' saddle.
- 1 'Bike Buddy' bottle cage

Personal Kit

- 2 prs cycling shorts
- 2 cycling tops
- 1 short sleeve T-shirt.
- 2 prs cycling socks.
- 1 pr cycling shoes.
- 1 cycle helmet.
- 1 Gore-Tex helmet cover.
- 1 pr Ron Hill Tracksters.
- 1 Gore-Tex Paclite waterproof top
- 1 pr Gore-Tex Paclite waterproof over trousers.
- 1pr Waterproof cycling overshoes.
- 1pr Gore-Tex socks (great for keeping the feet dry).
- 1 Pertex top (Callange).
- 1 pr cycling gloves,
- 1 pr Cycling sun glasses (Rudy Project - Wizaard)
- 1 T shirt (to sleep in).
- 3 Handkerchiefs



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Personal kit (cont.)

- Underwear
- Swimming costume
- Wash kit (toothpaste, toothbrush, shampoo, deodorant, razor, soap etc.)
- 1 medium sized light weight travel towel (we have tried several types but found the Lifeventure Trek Towels to be the best). • 1 Fleece.
- 1 lightweight insulated jacket - useful for cold evenings and doubles up as an extra pillow at night.
- Watch.

Most of our Cycle Touring takes place in the summer months, for colder climates or for touring at other times of the year you might wish to include warmer gear. We sometimes include a pair of thermal tops and long Johns, useful for cold nights.

Bike Repair & Maintenance Kit

The amount of repair kit that you take is dependent on your expertise at bike repair and to which countries you visit. For Holland, Germany, Denmark and Sweden although we had some mechanical problems we didn't seem to be too far away from a bike shop. Most of the repair shops realised we were touring and repaired our bikes while we waited or within a few hours and the prices were quite reasonable.

Basic repair kit

- Spare inner tube.
- Puncture repair kit with 8 patches and new glue + some 'leeches'.
- Homemade Multi tool kit (includes - spoke wrench, tire levers, screw driver, 2-3-4-5-6mm Allen wrenches, Koga Torx multitool, 8-9-10mm spanners and a small Gerber Clutch Multi-tool which includes a small pair of pliers.
- Lezyne Micro Floor Drive HVG Mini Floor Hand Pump with gauge
- Small plastic bottle of general lube.
- Selection of cable ties - useful for repairs.
- A 3m length of thin strong cord. (very useful for lashing broken racks back together!)

For more out of the way places we take:

- 1 spare folding tyre.
- 2 spare shifter cables.
- 1 spoke repair kit and 2 spare spokes.
- A small selection of nuts and bolts.



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Other gear carried

- 3 x 1 litre Stainless Steel drinks bottles.
- 1 Stainless Steel 0.5 litre vacuum flask (keeps drinks hot or cold and useful for carrying milk for brews).
- Maps & Ortlieb waterproof map case.
- Compact Digital Camera, memory cards and battery charger.
- Small pair of Binoculars.
- Small "hotel" type sewing kit.
- Notepad and pen.
- Passport, travel insurance documents, E111, ATM and credit cards.
- Waterproof stuff sacks or plastic bags for gear inside panniers. (We use some waterproof rucksack liners as we found that plastic bags tend to easily rip and tear with continuous stuffing).
- Earplugs (for sleeping at night on noisy campsites).
- 2 bike cables and locks.
- 2 Brooks saddle covers.
- 1 First aid kit (plasters, paracetamol, etc.).
- Sunbloc (Piz Buin Sport - we have found this to be the best as it's non greasy and survives a lot of sweating).
- Insect repellent.
- Some washing powder for laundry and twisted elastic drying line.
- 1 Large lightweight nylon bike cover. (This has been a boon as it keeps the bikes dry overnight, no soggy seats and handlebars in the morning, it's also good for security as it keeps prying eyes off so that they are not noticed so much).
- Vertix Velo intercom system attached to our helmets.
- Smartphone, earphones & charger - We use it to make notes for this site and to write a diary of each tour, it also has our music collection on it, which is great.
- Amazon Kindle - Frank now carries one. It means that she has loads of books to read and the battery easily lasts a month as long as the Wi-Fi is turned off.

Camping Equipment

- 1 Nordisk Oppland 3 SI , plus groundsheet protector footprint.
- 2 Mountain Equipment 'lightline' sleeping bags. (See our summer alternative below)
- 2 sleepmats - We prefer the Exped down mats.
- 2 Exped seat kits (invaluable addition after a long day, saves a lot of back ache).
- 2 Blow-up pillows (Sea to Summit).
- 1 Optimus Polaris multifuel stove.
- 1 Optimus Camping cook set - includes 2 billies and a frying pan.



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Camping Equipment (cont.)

- 1 Folding spatula (MSR).1 folding spatular (MSR).
- 2 Plastic plates (Sea to Summit).
- 2 Plastic mugs.
- 2 Titanium Sporks.
- 1 Small sharp knife.
- Washing up liquid and sponge.
- 5 litre folding water carrier (MSR)
- 2 Black Diamond ion headlamps.
- Swiss Army Knife.
- Matches and gas lighter.
- Toilet Roll

Summer alternative

In summer my wife and I prefer to take a duvet instead of 2 sleeping bags. We take a goose down king size duvet bought from John Lewis complete with light weight pertex duvet cover (which we made ourselves) and a single fitted sheet which fits nicely over our 2 sleeping mats when they are coupled together. This may seem a bit 'wossy' for camping but it has a lot of advantages over 'maggot' bags. Firstly it is a lot more cozy!, secondly it's a lot more comfortable, you don't wake up in the middle of the night trussed up like chicken unable to move like you do with a sheet liner in a sleeping bag!, thirdly it's a lot easier to regulate your temperature than in a sleeping bag. We pack the duvet in a waterproof Ortlieb dry bag and we reckon it takes up the same amount of room as 2 sleeping bags as well as being about the same weight. We also take 2 lightweight cotton pillowcases, which we fill with the insulated jackets, and the 2 Sea to Summit pillows, which make for a really good pillow, an essential for a good nights kip. As we tend to be away for up to 5 weeks at a time the duvet cover, pillowcases and sheet can be easily washed and tumbled at the campsite on a rest day.

Food

We normally buy all our food on route, however we do carry our own supply of tea bags, a couple of dehydrated emergency meals and some milk powder just in case. We have been caught out by shops not being open due to National Holidays and Religious Festivals, so look it up in the guidebooks and plan accordingly. Try and keep space available in your panniers for the food that you buy at the shops, we have one racpac which is normally empty when we set off ready to put food in when we go shopping just before finding the campsite.



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Tips & hints on Gear

These tips & hints might seem obvious but if you are new to cycle touring or camping they might be useful:

- If you are new to cycle touring, go for what the navy call a 'shake down' trip before you embark on a long tour. Try a short trip with an overnight camp close to home, it will help sort out any gear problems or needs. If we buy some new gear we always go on a weekend shakedown tour prior to our main tour just to test it out. You don't want to be saddled with (pardon the pun) a bit of gear on a 4 week tour that that doesn't do what you had hoped it would do.
- When packing gear consider the packing of each pannier with equal weights of gear to increase stability. We are greatly in favour of using both front & rear panniers, try to distribute the weight 50/50 or 40/60. If you load everything on just a rear rack the stability and steering is compromised, an over loaded rear rack can cause you to pull 'wheelies'. This over loading can be dangerous on sharp inclines and can cause a 'wallowing' effect on taking sharp corners at speed (very unnerving believe me!!).
- Don't consider riding with a rucksack on your back, it is after a while profoundly uncomfortable and can hinder your stability. If you find yourself needing to carry a rucksack then you are carrying too much gear, review what you need to take.
- Although weight isn't as critical as in back packing an overladen bike is hard work up hills consider what you take, look for light weight kit and consider things to have a dual role e.g. Ron Hill tracksters could be used over our shorts if it is too cold and can act as pyjama bottoms on cold nights.
- Pack gear with thought as to what needs to be easily accessible on route i.e. waterproofs near the top or in a pannier pocket and consider what might be needed first when arriving at the campsite i.e. Tent near the top.
- Pack everything in waterproof bags as most panniers are not at all waterproof (unless you can afford the superb Ortlieb panniers). All our gear is packed in either Ortlieb dry bags or in waterproof pack liners.
- Carry plenty of drink (particularly when it is hot) in some countries there can be a distance between shops, we have 2 bottle carriers plus our combination hot & cold flasks giving us a total of 2.75 litres each.
- If you carry things that use batteries - lights, radios etc. try and take ones that all use AA batteries, as they are the ones that are the easiest to get hold of in most countries.



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For your own notes and additions