

# The ESSENTIAL TOURING CYCLIST

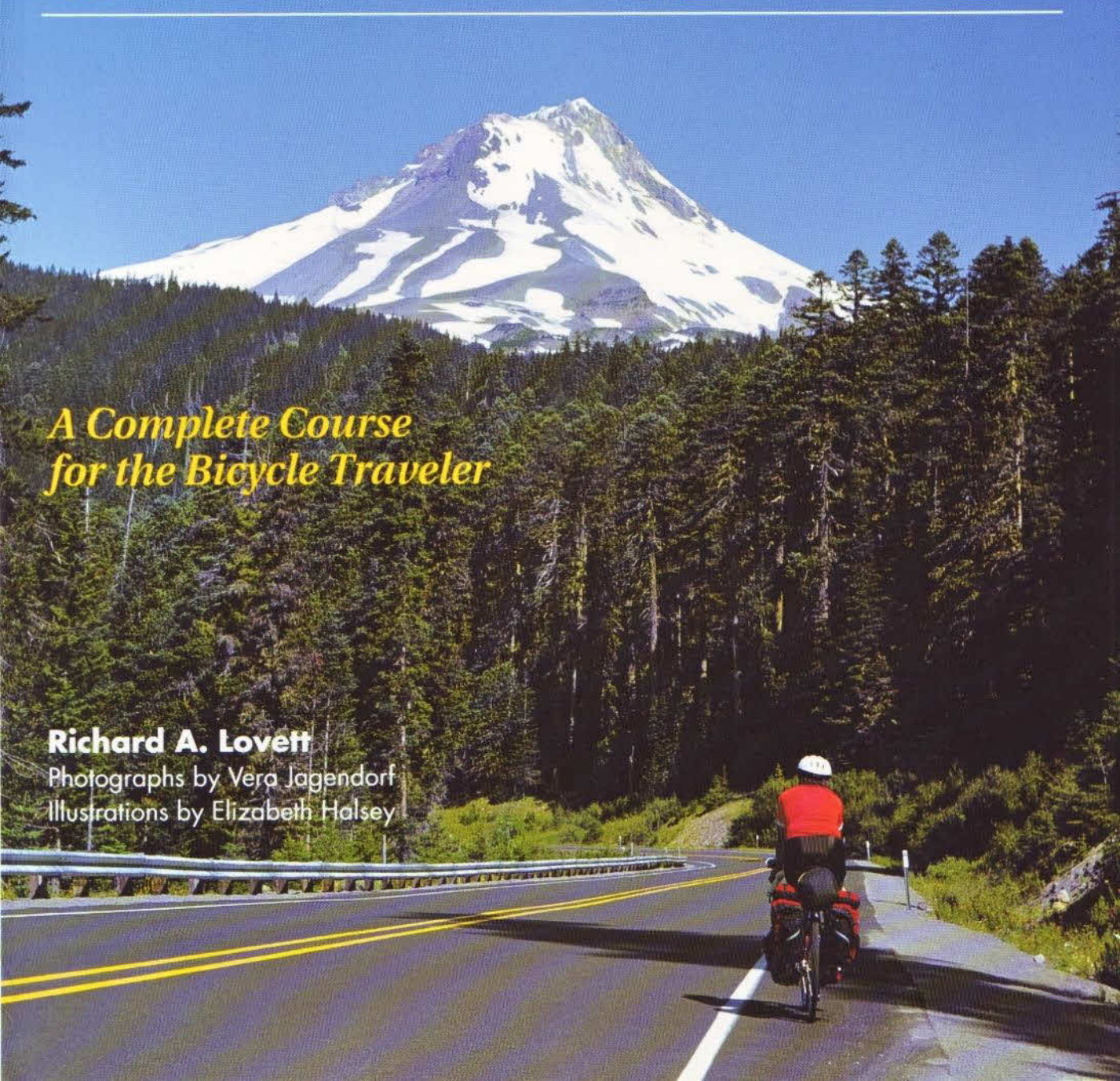
---

*A Complete Course  
for the Bicycle Traveler*

**Richard A. Lovett**

Photographs by Vera Jagendorf

Illustrations by Elizabeth Halsey



Technological advances in bikes and ultralight camping equipment have made bike touring easier and more popular than ever. Thousands of people pedal across the country each year and many thousands more dream of it. Even more choose weekend to week-long tours near home or in exotic locations reached by car or public transportation. Bike touring is a way to really see and experience the countryside, and come home healthier than when you left.

Who better to write the definitive book on bike touring than Richard A. Lovett? Lovett has toured thousands of miles on two wheels. *Freewheelin'*, the lyrical account of his ten-week bicycle trip from California to Maine is "like wind at your back—an easy ride," said *The Denver Post*.

*The Essential Touring Cyclist* demystifies the complexities of cycle touring—topic by topic—in clear, concise segments built around tightly integrated photos and drawings. It guides you through choosing a bike, equipping and customizing it for touring, and maintaining it on the road. It helps you with physical training, and advises you how to deal with aches and pains. It teaches you the art of negotiating crowded highways or pastoral byways with a heavily loaded touring bike, alone or in a group. It shows you how to pack your panniers, make camp, cook dinner, get a good night's sleep, and keep yourself clean and safe. *The Essential Touring Cyclist* is all about traveling on two wheels, and living on the road with style and élan.

Cover Design by Dawn Peterson and Dan Kirchoff

Ragged Mountain Press  
Camden, Maine

The  
**ESSENTIAL  
TOURING  
CYCLIST**



The  
**ESSENTIAL  
TOURING  
CYCLIST**

**Richard A. Lovett**

Photographs by Vera Jagendorf

Illustrations by Elizabeth Halsey



Ragged Mountain Press  
Camden, Maine

*To Pat and Dick Lovett, for nurturing the spirit of  
adventure. And to John and Helen Holland, for the  
encouragement to share it.*

## **International Marine/ Ragged Mountain Press**

A Division of The McGraw-Hill Companies



10 9 8 7 6

Copyright © 1994 Ragged Mountain Press, a division of  
The McGraw-Hill Companies.

All rights reserved. The publisher takes no responsibility  
for the use of any of the materials or methods described  
in this book, nor for the products thereof. The name  
"Ragged Mountain Press" and the Ragged Mountain  
Press logo are trademarks of The McGraw-Hill  
Companies. Printed in the United States of America.

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*  
Lovett, Richard A.

The essential touring cyclist / Richard A. Lovett.

p. cm.

ISBN 0-07-038849-0 (acid-free paper)

1. Bicycle touring. I. Title.

GV1044.L68 1994

796.6'4-dc20

94-5926

CIP

Questions regarding the content of this book should be  
addressed to:

Ragged Mountain Press  
P.O. Box 220  
Camden, ME 04843

Questions regarding the ordering of this book should be  
addressed to:

The McGraw-Hill Companies  
Customer Service Department  
P.O. Box 547  
Blacklick, OH 43004  
Retail customers: 1-800-822-8158  
Bookstores: 1-800-722-4726

 *The Essential Touring Cyclist* is printed on recycled paper  
containing a minimum of 50% total recycled paper with  
10% postconsumer de-inked fiber.

Printed by Fairfield Graphics, Fairfield, PA

Design and Production by Dan Kirchoff

Edited by J.R. Babb, Tom McCarthy, and Dorcas Miller

# CONTENTS



<b>Introduction</b>	<b>8</b>	
<b>Cycle Touring 101: Getting Started</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>Choosing and Equipping a Bicycle</b>	<b>12</b>	
<hr/>		
<i>Types of Bicycles</i>	<i>14</i>	
Racing Bikes • Mountain Bikes • Sport Bikes • Dedicated Touring Bikes • Crossover Bikes		
<i>It's in the Details</i>	<i>17</i>	
Customizing Your Bicycle		
<i>Gearing</i>	<i>19</i>	
Designer Gears • Half-Step Gearing • Elliptical Chainrings		
<i>Wheels, Tires, and Tubes</i>	<i>23</i>	
Quick-Release Hubs		
<i>Saddles</i>	<i>25</i>	
<i>Toe Clips</i>	<i>25</i>	
<i>Other Components</i>	<i>26</i>	
<i>You Don't Have to Get a New Bike</i>	<i>27</i>	
<i>Accessories</i>	<i>28</i>	
Four Essentials		
<i>Useful Additions</i>	<i>30</i>	
<i>How Much Must I Spend?</i>	<i>34</i>	
<b>Equipping Yourself</b>	<b>36</b>	
<hr/>		
<i>Helmets</i>	<i>38</i>	
<i>Gloves</i>	<i>39</i>	
<i>Goggles</i>	<i>39</i>	
<i>Shoes</i>	<i>39</i>	
<i>Cycling Shorts</i>	<i>41</i>	
<i>Shirts and Jerseys</i>	<i>42</i>	
<i>Jackets and Wind Shells</i>	<i>43</i>	
<i>Rain Gear</i>	<i>43</i>	
<i>Cold-Weather Clothing</i>	<i>44</i>	
<b>Making Friends with Your Bike —and staying that way</b>	<b>46</b>	
<hr/>		
<i>Before You Buy</i>	<i>47</i>	
Frame Size		
<i>Stems and Cranks</i>	<i>48</i>	
<i>Adjustments</i>	<i>49</i>	
Toe Clips • Saddle Height • Forward-and-Back Position of the Saddle • Saddle Tilt • Handlebar Height • Handlebar Tilt • Brake Lever Position		
<b>Basic Riding Skills</b>	<b>54</b>	
<hr/>		
<i>Pedaling Cadence</i>	<i>55</i>	
<i>Riding in Traffic</i>	<i>56</i>	
<i>Traffic Laws</i>	<i>61</i>	
<i>Wind</i>	<i>62</i>	
Drafting • Drafting Etiquette		
<i>Dogs</i>	<i>64</i>	
<i>Railroad Tracks, Cattle Guards, and Rumble Strips</i>	<i>65</i>	
<b>Training</b>	<b>68</b>	
<hr/>		
<i>Spring Training</i>	<i>69</i>	
<i>Base Training</i>	<i>70</i>	
<i>Training for a Tour</i>	<i>72</i>	
<i>Training Through the Winter</i>	<i>73</i>	
<i>Keeping the Fun in Training</i>	<i>75</i>	
<i>Stretching and Weight Lifting</i>	<i>76</i>	
<b>Aches and Pains</b>	<b>78</b>	
<hr/>		
<i>Common Injuries</i>	<i>80</i>	
Sore Knee • Pain Behind the Knee • Back Pain • Hand and Arm Problems • Neck Pain • Achilles Tendonitis • Chafing and Saddle Sores • Numbness or Burning in Groin or Legs • Gender-Specific Problems		
<i>Bites and Stings</i>	<i>85</i>	
Ticks • Bees • Dogs • Other Biting Creatures		
<i>Heat Exhaustion and Sunstroke</i>	<i>86</i>	
<i>Overtraining</i>	<i>86</i>	
<i>Surviving a Crash</i>	<i>87</i>	
Road Rash		