

The world on wheels

Intrepid traveller keeps things simple and sustainable.

CYCLE TREKKING isn't an activity for the faint-hearted but for 36-year-old Krista Bernard it has become second nature. By the age of 23, she'd completed a 6000 km cycle journey around Australia, and knew she'd found her passion.

"By this time I wished to return to the UK, where I was born, so to get there by bike seemed like the only way to go," Krista recalls. In 1996, she began her three-year, 15,000 km solo bike ride from Indonesia to Egypt, sponsored by Australian Geographic (AG 62). "I knew it would be a challenge, but trusted in my dream to cycle across the world as a solo woman," Krista says. Her route took her through more than a dozen countries, including Cambodia, India and Iran, where she spent five days in jail for walking unchaperoned in the street with two male friends. She decided to end her adventure in Egypt after her bike was stolen, although she'd originally planned to ride to England.

"There are so many memories from this trip that sometimes I still get overwhelmed," Krista says. "The freedom of the open road, the hospitality of the people I met along the way, and the inner strength I had to muster from day to day to survive the adverse conditions will stay with me forever." In more recent times Krista has pedalled across

Morocco, in Scotland and through the mountains of Tunisia.

"Throughout my cycle treks I have wanted to travel sustainably, and in a manner that was slow enough for me to be in touch with the land and the people of the countries I was passing through," she says. This environmental awareness continues to inspire Krista's life and work. In April, she left her role as publications editor for Greenpeace to cycle from London to Lhasa with her partner Dan Coward. The pair hopes to make it the whole way without flying; en route they'll raise money for the environmental group Rainforest Rescue.

"The journey is a chance for us to live simply and sustainably, and to create peaceful connections with the people we meet," Krista says. "Many daunting challenges lie in store, but overall we are both very excited."

ERIN ALDERSEA

To follow Krista's London to Lhasa ride visit www.ridehimalaya.com



1996

Freewheeling Krista Bernard on her 15,000 km trip from Indonesia to Egypt.



2008

Krista, 36, prepares to trade London life for the long road to Lhasa, Tibet.

