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From London to Lhasa



Eager adventurers Krista Bernard, from the Byron Shire, and her partner, Daniel Coward, will leave the UK on May 10 for an awe-inspiring journey by bicycle from London to Lhasa.

Their project, RideHimalaya, will be raising money for Mullumbimby-based Rainforest Rescue, an organisation dedicated to protecting the world's rainforests. Rainforest Rescue is committed to a number of projects aimed at protection and restoration, including buyup projects to prevent development and deforestation, in aid of the fight against climate change.

Their expedition will take them on a route through Europe via Belgium, Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria. From there, the couple will rest in Turkey for the winter before cycling on to Georgia and Azerbaijan in spring 2009. After crossing the Caspian Sea into Central Asia, they will cycle through the deserts of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, where they are expecting scorching summer temperatures of 50°C.

Conversely, the 5000 metre passes in neighbouring Tajikistan will see the cycling duo dealing with altitude and sub-zero temperatures.

No doubt there will be celebrations by the time the couple reach China. From

there, they will pedal across the vast Tibetan Plateau, known by locals as the roof of the world, to reach Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, before snowfall closes the high altitude passes.

The journey is inspired by Krista's epic 15,000 kilometre solo bike ride from Indonesia to Egypt between 1996 and 2000. During this time, she decided to forsake air travel to make her journey as sustainable as possible. In the same way, the couple hope to make the entirety of their journey without flying, while raising money for a vital environmental cause.

According to Krista: 'The journey is a chance for us to live simply, sustainably and create peaceful connections with the people we meet.'

Daniel adds: 'It will be a great learning opportunity and chance to expand our cultural appreciation of the world. Many daunting challenges lie in store, but ultimately our feeling is that of excitement.'

Krista and Dan would like to thank the Australian Geographic Society, ecological-hosting.com, Hilleberg the Tentmaker, Nelles-Verlag and Reise Know-How for their support.

If you would like to follow their expedition visit www.ridehimalaya.com. To donate to Rainforest Rescue's projects, visit www.rainforestrescue.org.au.