



Danielle Amerongen

## **Palm Springs Hub and Spoke 2025**

**Interstate 10 and highway 111 lead to Southern California’s nine-city resort oasis which consists of a unique blend of “escape, adventure, and relaxation. Surrounded by three mountain ranges: the San Jacinto, the Santa Rosa, to the south, and the Little San Bernardino to the north, all ranges cushion the valley in a sun drenched, arid warmth, and is an amazing location to plan a cycling vacation.**

## **RIDE ONE! Let’s Get Started!**

Monday, March 17, 2025: Day One Indio Hub and Spoke

Cyclists from Alberta, BC, Ontario in addition to one couple from Washington started their first day with an amazing breakfast buffet. This was followed by a meeting outlining some of the special cycling tips as not many Canadians know the plants here have goat thorns that puncture bike tires, and tiny thistles that will trick cyclists with a flat tire in the morning.

We cycled past the historic La Quinta Resort that opened in 1926. From there we travelled the well paved bike paths out of Indio to enjoy the beautiful desert landscape. Cyclists quickly dusted off the winter cobwebs on a 4% hill climb before descending into the La Quinta.



There we lounged under the sidewalk café umbrellas sipping Café Lattes and Iced Teas until the ride leaders convinced us that we still had to ride home. And, thank you Canadian Ambassadors Craig Brown, and Paul Conquest for joining us and providing vital information on the area for our enjoyment.





What a beautiful day on a bike!!!! What a day at the pool!



**RIDE TWO! Checking out Lake Cuihilla! (Mucho Construction Fences) – Will be very nice...**

Tuesday, March 18, 2025: Day Two Hub and Spoke



Well, the 4 Amigos who did the 85 km with 216 m of vertical were the first to set off, and it didn't take long before we were off route...the first turn! LOL Paul set the pace and the rest of us just hung on. We were soon out of the city and riding on country roads. We rolled past the polo grounds where they host several music festivals including the Coachella . Next was a quick stop at the PGA west, but..., unfortunately, there were no T times available!

As if the pace wasn't quick enough (LOL), we decided to start a paceline...and, of course, when Lara got to the front the pace really picked up. Not too long and we were at Lake Cahuilla. A beautiful setting but, sadly, construction obstructed some of our views.

On to a lemon orchard...what a pleasant smell ! We stopped by the Thermal neighborhood where Paul explained the history of the racetrack...and there is a race this weekend!



The wind played havoc with our stamina, and thankfully our stop at the Temalpakh Farmers Market and a refreshing smoothie restored our energy! A short ride from there and we were back home again. The 4 amigos: Paul, Lara, Ed and Keith.



The weather was cool and fresh when the next group set off for a 60 km cycling tour of Indio. Luckily, there were none of the frequent winds which blows in dust from the surrounding desert.

Our Ride with GPS Navigation guided us, and also gave us verbal “tour guide” descriptions of the sites we were viewing.

Our first stops led cyclists through pristine routes surrounding the world renowned PGA West golf courses designed by Jack Nicholas, Greg Norman, and Arnold Palmer, and all were lush and green; a stark contrast to the surrounding desert countryside.

Next, a smooth ride on new pavement over to Lake Cahuilla Veterans Regional Park. The lake is small as far as lakes go, not surprising, as it is a desert here. Even though there is construction going on in the



park, it was still an interesting and impressive view of water availability and conservation.

We then headed to the old downtown Indio to see the extensive murals that add a lot of personality to this historic downtown and are rich in color and detail. Check out those poses!

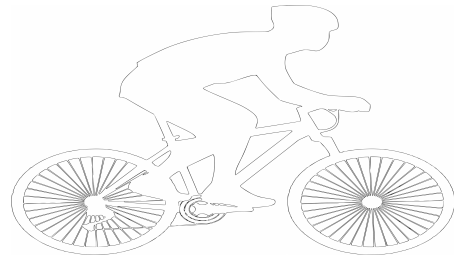


And finally, a short ride down the road, we stopped at “Shield’s Date Farm”, for a delicious ‘date milkshake’, not something we have back home, but very tasty. The date farm and gift shop have a distinctive retro look, like stepping back to the 1950’s. Every kind of date you can imagine is sold in the shop, as well as a huge array of interesting date related products. With our legs fueled by ‘date milkshakes’, we set off for home.



All day, along the route, we catch glimpses of the big brown hills that surround the town, and the three ranges of snow capped mountains on the horizon. It was an entertaining, well-planned route, which we all enjoyed.





### **RIDE 3: Day 3 Country Roads**

Wednesday March 19, 2025: Long and Short Country Roads (Mecca). Most Riders...

The sky dawned blue and the winds were mild as we happily left the busy city streets for some riding on quiet country roads. We enjoyed



Sofa anyone? You guys actually sat on it! Amazing!

vistas of the surrounding mountains, date farms, fragrant artichoke farms, polo grounds, and even a lone road runner to cheer us on. Just before the end of the ride, we turned into the Tack Room Polo Club for an al fresco lunch sponsored by Eurasia Auto thanks to the generosity of Canadian ambassadors, Paul and Margaret Conquest. After gorging on monster gourmet burgers and other southwest fare, accompanied by refreshing

beverages, we pushed our pedals the final few kilometers back to our respective houses and pools.





A very big thank you to Sue Bunton who met us at our host VRB0 to relay some very important facts about water conservation in the Palm Springs area. Another Canadian Ambassador supporting the CCCTS!



#### **RIDE 4: Box Canyon and the Salton Sea!**

March 20, 2025: A ride into the archeological history of the area.

This 73 km gentle 430 m climb through Box Canyon with its two points of access did host at one time a doomsday cult (Krishna Venta in the 50's) It is located in the Mecca Hills, and is part of the metamorphic zone of the San Andreas Fault. Its sides are formed by upturned strata twisted, buckled, and eroded stretching for about eight miles. The original road was washed away by floods, and so the rebuilt pristine tarmack is a joy to ride. (Some took their ride all the way to the highway!).

After climbing, then coasting back, the ride continued to the Salton Sea State Park which boasts a history of the rich who brought their yachts to this area to relax and be seen. Now the sea is receding and all has been abandoned ...





Our Canadian ambassadors Paul and Craig with Ed and Lara, Alan and Lawrence.



The Salton Sea, is now a park and camping ground, yet whispers of its fashionable past and wealthy visitors who lounged on their “boats” and partied till sunrise.



Date Palm Farms surround Palm Springs every time you leave the municipal areas.



After lunch, we all decided to play! Thanks for posing everyone!



Tomorrow is a moving day. Packing up and leaving our VRBO's to move to our Palm Springs Hotel (The Best Western Plus Las Brisas)







Celebrity Turtles! Being seen, being suntanned, being chill.



The Gartleys found Marilyn Monroe! So what's under there Keith!



Riding is joyful...with people we love.

Stopped for coffee at the halfway point; most of us had little motivation to continue. It was hot, it was past 2 pm, and there was a flat (poor Gino), so we rode back to our hotel and checked in.



Some went shopping and some jumped in the pool. What a pool!



Happy Hour was at 5 pm. Danielle gave us a choice of 6 routes to ride tomorrow, so what to choose?

Our hotel is well located...close to many restaurants...so we had lots of choices for dinner. Some very cool trick cars arrived...the noise and the mayhem on the main strip is well worth a visit.



Mary and Dale: Happy Hour for sure! Big ones!!



## **Day 6: The Final Ride**

Saturday March 22, 2025: Zenning It Out and the Foothills

Oh my goodness, where did the time go!

Everyone had choices, and some went on rides, and others had to leave, while others simply stuck close to downtown and did some touristy things.

We met for dinner at Lulu's California Bistro, and celebrated the end of the ride and our time together. New ride, new friends, and best wishes and safe travels for all.

The Zen ride group finished a 51 km ride and visited Sunnylands to view the amazing desert garden and stop for coffee. Beautiful surroundings and lush greenery greeted us, and the information centre and museum provided many details about the history of the area, and the fauna to be found.





● The Zen group. Barb is taking our picture!



The Gartley's riding and discovering cool places on the Foothills Ride.





The End!!

Just in case you need a little extra information about the area

