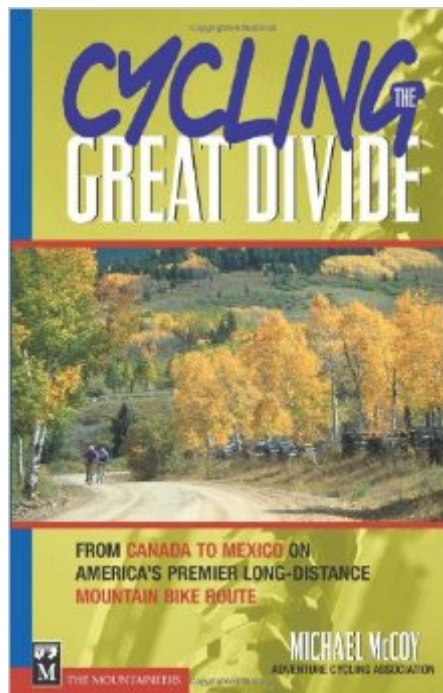


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# Cycling The Great Divide: From Canada To Mexico On America's Premier Long Distance Mountain Bike Route



## Synopsis

Complete information on segments or through-rides in the only guide to America's first long-distance, off-pavement bike

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Whether you're planning on riding the whole thing at once or just just doing a section of it, I'd strongly recommend getting this book. My wife and I rode entire length in the summer of 2000, and we carried this book on the outside of our packs in a plastic bag at all times. We referred to it at least once every day. Like in any guide-book, there are a few confusing spots, but on the whole, the author (one of the original trail planners) has done a great job. He not only keeps you on the right path, he also points out various places you should visit, gives some historic perspective, and more. The book will surely make your experience more enjoyable.

Michael McCoy's *Cycling the Great Divide: From Canada to Mexico on America's Premier Long Distance Mountain Bike Route* is an essential item for those who are planning to bicycle or hike all of the Adventure Cycling route. As McCoy notes in his well-written and informative introduction, this isn't an easy trek. Uneven terrain, adverse weather conditions, and a lack of water and essential services are often the norm. As I found, having the book on hand better enabled me to plan ahead. For instance, my discovering that the climb over Indiana Pass would be long and difficult prompted me to begin my cycling day early, which in retrospect was fortuitous in that had I dilly-dallied, I would have been caught in a late-afternoon snow-storm. One of the book's many strengths is

that it includes a much-needed daily route synopsis. Though I am directionally challenged, I did not miss a single turn, not even in New Mexico, where many of the roads and trail heads are unmarked. Sightseeing, points-of-interest, and photos have been included. I was often glad of this -- as I remarked to some onlookers, if McCoy hadn't pointed these things out to me, my trip would have been more of a slog than it was. For instance, if he hadn't mentioned that the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad passes through southern New Mexico, I would have missed it. The historical information is also a plus in that it will appeal to both tenters and armchair readers. There was many an evening when (because the sun set early) I was glad I had this book on hand. The material in this book also complements the Adventure Cycling maps. In retrospect, my trip was without incident, in part because I had both on hand.

If you are riding the Great Divide Mountain Bike Route, you **MUST** have this book. This is an awesome route - Mike McCoy and the gang did a great job of researching it. One comment on the writing though -- when he uses the word 'steep', he means 'extremely steep', and when he says 'extremely steep', he means 'don't even try to ride your bike up this with a fully loaded bike'. A 'respectable climb' is really a lung-buster. Just expect everything to be a little harder than he makes it sound, and then you won't feel angry because it is not as easy as he makes it out to be. I think he must have either rode it without being fully loaded, or he is a very strong man! Anyhow, if you ride the Great Divide, you will have fun.. I guarantee it.

I rode this trail in the summer of 2006, from Banff to Mexico. I found this book very helpful in planning my daily rides. It briefly described potential camping spots, designated and undesignated, water sources, and trail conditions. To conserve weight while on the trail, I tore out the pages as I completed them. It is definitely well worth the money to buy for planning and for using on the trail. This book does not include any info on the Canada portion. With some help from this book I only needed 40 days to plan everything. Note: This was my first bicycle tour and I did it solo, self supported. Cheers!

I picked up this book, as well as Dividing the Great, because I'm planning to ride the Great Divide route a little later this year. The book does a nice job, breaking down the daily mileage, and locations of camping and scenic stops, based on the maps provided by the Adventure Cycling Association. Together, they'll make for a great resource. The only thing I would suggest be changed, are a little more detailed description of alternate routes, but maybe those are easier to "see" once

out on the trail. Good read. Good information.

This book is certainly full of useful information. I recommend it to anyone thinking about riding the Great Divide. Unfortunately, what's missing in this book are quantitative information about the grade and elevation profile of the route. The author usually describes ascents in terms such as "gnarly" or "eye-opening" or "grueling". Rarely will the reader see a hint about actual elevation gain. Given that GPS data is available for the entire route, it would have been trivial to instead provide information such as "7% average grade for 4 miles". Better yet, provide the elevation profile of each stage in a separate figure. A secondary complaint is that the gray scale maps aren't too useful. Of course, you are expected to buy the ACA maps (which are great). Over all, this is a fine book, but it could be made significantly more useful with a few simple changes.

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