

Hospitality for Bicyclists

Hotels, motels and guest houses can benefit from bicyclists, their families, friends, and others sympathetic with them. This describes who they are, how groups can be identified, and what you can do to attract them.

Who they are

Recreational bicyclists are:

- 60% male
- Independent-minded
- Financially established
- Often seeking bargains
- Under 45 years old

How they bicycle

Recreational bicyclists may be bicycling in many ways:

- **Touring cyclists.** Singly or in small groups. One-night stays are typical.
- **Touring groups.** Commercial operations offering arranged tours will reserve blocks of rooms for one or several nights.
- **Bike club tours.** Clubs may arrange package tours or weekend bike rides for members and friends.
- **Charity rides.** One-day and multi-day event managers work with local hotels, caterers, and entertainers to craft a complete ride package.

What they look for in accommodation

Because they are not local residents, they will seek information on the Internet, perhaps searching “bicycle” in conjunction with “hotel” in a given area. Mentioning bicycling on your site will enhance your opportunities to sell rooms. Bicyclists will look for:

- **Secure bike parking.** Bike racks that are placed in prominent, well lit locations, visible by people inside and outside the building, will tell them that you value their vehicles.
- **Permission to keep bikes in rooms.** Good bikes cost \$3000 and up, so owners will not be comfortable

leaving them outside.

- **Set up, maintenance space.** A small lighted outside area can serve those assembling or maintaining bikes.
- **Bike box storage.** For those arriving by plane or train with their bikes packed in boxes, they may need a place to store the boxes while on multi-day tours.
- **Good food.** Bicycling burns calories and hungry bicyclists spend more on food than others. Bicyclists are aware of the benefits of healthy fare, and will patronize your restaurant rather than venture elsewhere if you offer a healthy menu.
- **Loaner or rental bikes.** Some places offer bikes and helmets for free to patrons. Bike rentals are available at several places in Santa Barbara.

What they look for in our area

Although you cannot change things outside your establishment, you can provide information about attractions that will bring bicyclists to our area:

- **Santa Barbara County Bike Map.** Produced by Traffic Solutions, this free map is online and printed.
- **Bike routes.** The South Coast has installed several hundred bike route signs that bicyclists can follow by themselves or can use in conjunction with the *County Bike Map*.
- **Bike rides.** We offer several online rides that bicyclists can print out and take any time. They range from easy 5-mile rides to 50-mile challenges.
- **Bike shops.** There are 12 bike shops in the South Coast area. You should know those near you. Some will receive shipped bikes, assemble them for the bicyclists, store the boxes, repack them later, then ship them home.
- **Outdoor restaurants.** Bicyclists prefer outdoor dining where they can watch their bikes and the sidewalk scene. A nearby bike rack tells them



Fess Parker's DoubleTree Resort has a Wheel Fun rental center with bicycles.

that they are welcome, and one parked bike will attract others.

- **Ice cream.** When you burn calories, a sweet reward won't hurt at all.

What can make our area more bike-friendly

You can make a difference by telling local government that you want better bicyclist facilities. Bicycles take up a tenth the roadway or parking space of a car, they don't pollute, and they're quiet. If a community has bike lanes on streets, separate bike paths, and quiet scenic roads, bicyclists will return and bring their bike friends.

Finally, don't overlook secure bike parking for your employees who may depend on bicycling for all their transportation.

Resources

Here are some sites that offer help for hotel owners and bicyclists:

- Bike rides
www.sbbike.org/region/rides/rides.html
- Bike rack suggestions
www.sbbike.org/docs/Seattle-guide.pdf
- Bike shops, clubs, commercial tours, bike rentals
www.sbbike.org/region/region.html
- Online bike map
<http://trafficsolutions.info/bikemap.htm>



Serving Santa Barbara County. We're a countywide advocacy and resource organization that promotes bicycling for safe transportation and recreation.

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