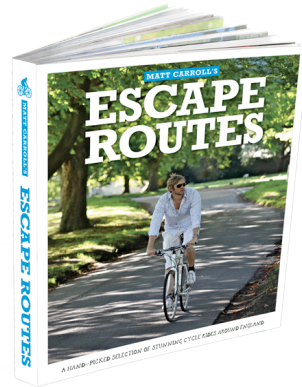


**‘Enjoy the ride’ with stunning new cycle guide,
Matt Carroll’s *Escape Routes* – tempting ‘Brits on Bikes’ this Summer**



- **60 hand-picked scenic rides across England**
- **From a seven-mile pootle to 20-mile day trips**
- **Highlights the best places to see, eat, and stay along the way**

Following the popularity of the best-selling *Cool Camping and Wild Swimming* guides, Punk Publishing is putting the freewheeling delights of cycling in the spotlight with the launch of a new title, Matt Carroll’s ***Escape Routes: A hand-picked selection of stunning cycle rides around England*** – out on 3 May 2011, £16.95.

The popularity of cycling is exploding right now, with millions of people across the UK getting out on their bikes – for work, for fitness but more importantly, for *fun*. Whether you ride the latest road bike with all the trick bits, or a second-hand jalopy with a basket on the front, the great thing about cycling is that *anyone* can experience the freedom of the open road. And it looks like this cycling revival is set to stay – with the success of the ‘Boris Bikes’ in London, new cycle paths opening up all over Britain, and the growing interest in greener getaways at home. Mintel reports that in 2010 alone 3.5 million bikes were sold.

These are all factors suggesting that there’s never been a better time to get on your bike, something that’s confirmed by ***Escape Routes*** author Matt Carroll, as he maps out his personal selection of 60 scenic cycle rides across England.

From a seven-mile pootle to a 20-mile day trip taking in proper country pubs, gorgeous Grade I-listed manor houses, and pottery studios in Cornwall, this is an original guide that includes rides to match all moods and abilities, inspiring Brits to explore England’s hidden treasures at a more sedate pace.

“I believe that the biggest motivation behind the current cycling boom is that riding your bike gives you total freedom. It’s not about how many miles you rack up, or the number of calories you burn; the best thing about cycling is that you can just swing your leg over the saddle and enjoy the ride. And in these times of cutbacks and traffic queues, it’s good to know that there’s a whole country to explore – no parking stresses, no petrol price worries – all you need is some good old-fashioned pedal power,” says Matt Carroll.

Everything you need to put some pleasure in your pedal and explore the English countryside can be found in the pages of **Escape Routes**. Matt has divided the rides up into six tempting categories suitable for all ages and all levels of proficiency, including:

- Jaw-Dropping Views
- Taste Tours
- Best for Pubs
- Magical History Tours
- Down by the River
- Beside the Seaside

Each route has been personally researched by Matt, all of them beginning and ending at a smart B&B or independent hotel. What's more, they include practical information, step-by-step directions suggestions of where to "stop and see" – and ideas on where to eat, drink, and sleep. There's even a cycle hire listing for each route, too, for those who don't have their own bikes.

*"A hymn to slow cycling, a new bible to the backroads, **Escape Routes** justifies a place in every pannier." Robert Penn, author of 'It's all about the bike'*

Here's a taster of some of the great rides:

Around London (Escape Route for stressed Londoners)

Hertfordshire, 15 miles – Aldbury to Frithsden: Two idyllic pubs, rolling parkland, a quiet towpath along the canal, and even a vineyard... This scenic cycle ride has everything you need for a quick-fix escape – and the good news is it's just a stone's throw from London...

East Anglia (A trip back in time)

12 miles – Foulsham to Heydon: Step back in time for the weekend and stay in a gorgeous restored shepherd's hut, before cycling through deserted lanes to Heydon – the 'Village that Time Forgot'. You'll find a quaint pub, an old-fashioned teashop and a cluster of red-brick cottages huddled round the village green. It's as if someone stopped the clock here, sometime in the 1700s...

South West (A cycle round Prince William's old stomping ground)

Gloucestershire, 13 miles – Tetbury to Sherston: Gorgeous pubs, the best lemon drizzle cake on the planet (fact), and one of the biggest tree collections in the world. Best of all, this ride has no hills – despite being in the beautiful Cotswolds. The route takes you to within a mile of Highgrove House – where Prince William grew up, and Charles and Camilla still live. In fact, the lunch stop is at a pub that was Prince Harry's local, not so long ago.

North East (England's most beautiful coast?)

Northumberland, 16 miles – Craster to Alnmouth: Base yourself in a luxury cottage overlooking the sea, just a stroll away from Dunstanburgh Castle. This relaxed ride takes you along some of the most beautiful beaches in England, as you begin in the tiny fishing village of Craster (famous for its kippers and other fresh seafood) and pootle along to Alnmouth. Now comes the hard part – tuck into delicious fish and chips or stretch out on the enormous sandy beach? Or why not both?

For more information and to read extracts and purchase a copy go to:

www.escape-routes.co.uk

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For further media information, publishing details, review copies, interviews, extracts, competition copies as well as high quality images please contact Fiona Reece or Claire Southern at Fiona Reece Public Relations

fiona@fionareece.com / claire@fionareece.com

0117 973 1517 or 07702 684 682

Notes to Editors:

- 2011 marks the fifth birthday of the *Cool Camping* series, with *Cool Camping: England* the first ever to be published.
- **Mintel** reported in 2010 that 12% of adults now cycle regularly with the main motivations being fitness (41%), fun (31%), holiday (27%), environment (22%) and saving money (18%). Additionally, 42% of adults think that “*Cycling is a great activity to do as a family*”.
- **Author Matt Carroll** is an experienced travel writer and broadcaster, specialising in adventure and motoring. Over the last 15 years he’s contributed to a wide range of international newspapers and magazines including *The Independent*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Guardian*, *Men’s Journal (New York)*, *GQ*, *Men’s Health*, and many more. Aside from this, he is an experienced presenter and has appeared on a number of television and radio programmes for Channel 4, BBC Newsnight, BBC Radio 5 Live, and others. He also presents MetroSnow TV, the Daily Mail Ski & Snowboard Magazine’s new online channel.

Book specifications:

- ISBN 978-1-906889-10-4
- Published by Punk Publishing
- Author Matt Carroll
- Size 210mm x 170mm PB, Extent 288pp
- Illustrations Over 200 colour photographs and 60 hand-drawn illustrations
- Price £16.95, Publication 3 May 2011