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SOUTH AFRICA NAMIBIA ANGOLA ZAMBIA MALAWI TANZANIA ZANZIBAR UGANDA KENYA ETHIOPIA SUDAN EGYPT EUROPE

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Harry and Linda  
2010/11

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# ROUTE MAP

## AFRICA



# ROUTE MAP

## EUROPE

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## Numbers

- 03/12/2010 depart South Africa, Port Elizabeth
- 15/05/2011 leave Egypt, Alexandria
- 06/06/2011 arrive France, Calais
- 25 000 kilometers
- 60 kilograms of luggage (30 kg each)
- 17 countries (11 African, 6 European)
- 6 months
- 13 falls
- 9 Linda (3 sand, 4 Marsabit, 1 culvert, 1 wind)
- 4 Harry (1 muddy ridge, 1 track, 1 garage, 1 beer)
- 8 tyres (2 sets each)
- 3 tyre punctures
- 2 replacement back shocks
- 1 replacement water pump gear
- 1 seized ignition lock
- 0 accidents
- !! countless!! unforgettable faces and places

# 1. SOUTH AFRICA

(3 to 5 December 2010)

## 1.1. Introducing Isadora Duncan (Linda; SA; November 2010)

I'd like to start off by introducing 'Isadora Duncan' ...

I'm one of those people that names things, especially things with wheels. And, if I hadn't sold one to get the other, in the garage of my life you would find Hermie, Benjamin Franklin, Racheltjie de Beer, Duno, the Butterworth Bullet, Shrek and, most gratefully, 'Isadora Duncan'. Oh my, never before have I christened so perfectly. 'Isadora Duncan'. The perfect persona for my first big motorbike, a BMW Funduro 650. There before me the steely frame of daring, of adventure, of the less conventional, of the sensual.



*Isadora Duncan American dancer in the early 1900s that flouted tradition and convention, without apology, and inspired modern dance. She tossed aside traditional ballet steps and pursued natural movement, emotion and human form. She was popular only in New York and then only in later life. She was adored throughout Europe.*

But, with the mandatory naming of my second bike, a BMW Dakar 650, I simply can't move on from 'Isadora Duncan'. And, I realise the name has almost nothing to do with the bike, and almost everything to do with me. I'm transformed! I'll soar like an 'Isadora Duncan' on every, and any, old bike (well almost). On my feet, I'm loose-limbed, poor-postured and a

little jittery. But on a bike, I manage to tip-toe across a wide flat plain towards a mountain halo with the fullest spectrum of grey, grey-blue, grey-green, grey-purple. I prepare for the rise with thoughts and movements razor sharp, all the while maintaining a beautiful fluid tempo. I cheer on my whirls and my twirls through the strong arms of the mountain pass. And then I simply pop over the top and sink into the sights on the other side. And, god help me, often I have seen Julie Andrews singing 'the hills are alive' on a round fat little hill in a single lazy sunbeam. And sometimes I'm lured far away in the distance by a little rural settlement that slowly reveals its fields of little RDP houses and little white HIV / AIDS crosses ... and I cringe, clutch the handlebars and rock, forwards and backwards. But it doesn't matter because I just keep going forever. And it's effortless, until I stop. Exhausted.

Thank you, 'Isadora Duncan'.

In his poem 'Isadora Duncan', Carl Sandburg, writes:

*"The wind? I am the wind. The sea and the moon? I am the sea and the moon. Tears, pain, love, bird-flights? I am all of them. I dance what I am. Sin, prayer, flight, the light that never was on land or sea? I dance what I am."*

Incidentally, Harry's bike is 'Josephine Baker'. I'm sure he'll tell you there is nothing better than riding in the bosom of her sultry voice.



## 1.2. Friends, Family And Farewells



*Ladies, stare down that continent!*



*Some of the Bike Gear folk*

### 1.3. Josephine on the Road Again (Harry, SA; December, 2010)

**I am probably best characterised as the day dreamer, always at the back of the pack. The banner on our website adds credence to this.**

My postings will most probably be a collection of daydreams, often disjointed and in the main totally irrelevant.

If you have the perchance for navel gazing and have excess time on your hands then welcome to my ramblings.

Josephine Baker is my steed. A reliable one named after a 1920's Negro singer who found fame and "fortune" outside of her home country. Often temptious and never predictable I feel she embodies the spirit of this trip, and my bike.

Josephine to-date has mainly been a reliable companion taking me to places that one can only dream of. She does however have a temptious streak and has the capacity to morph into a Jezebel, at a whim.

This has happened in the past and we have to endure a trip of this nature together. The obvious elements of this relationship have already been taken care of- copious attention to her mechanics, oil changes, bearing replacements etc, etc.

The more enduring ones, as with any relationship, will unfold as we proceed.

We have more than 25 000km to cover on the African continent alone.

Part of our ritual will have to include a fair dose of mollycoddling, not only for her well being but for our collective sanities.

Tar roads are the start. I unashamedly have no problem with them. They allow my thoughts to wander and for Josephine to soak up the surroundings, purring merrily along even though the average air temperature ranges from +35C to 50C.

There is another school of thought regarding tar roads however. For some they are the antithesis of what riding a bike of this nature is about. For such the challenge lies in pushing the limits not only of the machine but also their own boundaries. For others perhaps their machines are merely an extension of elevated testosterone levels.

There is space and place for all of these permutations.

It is not for me to pass judgment on any of them.

What I do know at this point is that if a tar road suits our collective sentiments at that specific point then so be it. Ditto for off road riding.

*It is not a race but a journey of experience.*

Hopefully I will be able to ramble on about some road experiences in the next posting but for now Josephine is becoming impatient at rest. I need to reciprocate to keep the peace.....

### 1.4. I'm a Party on Two Wheels (Linda, SA; December 2010)

Harry & I leave Port Elizabeth to take the quickest route to Ruacana, the northern edge of Namibia, to join Elsebie and Michnus. I've been looking forward to this ruler straight, immaculately tarred stretch of 2000 kilometers. I see it as a purging, a deep cleanse, a detox! A stripping of clutter, the whittling away of layers, an erasing of the preceding months filled with anxiety. Work, home, the trip. I need space!

And it doesn't disappoint! After 4 days, and in Windhoek, I'm an empty page! The dry wind, across the Karoo and then the Namibian plains, delivers a constant buffering that shakes every cell. It's peppered with violent gusts and crosswinds. The gusts are thankfully announced by Harry's little compensating swerves ahead of me. The crosswinds have me leaning forcefully into them with a windward cheek plastered against molars and a leeward cheek quivering and bulging outward. The oncoming truck, and its impact on that crosswind, has me theorizing for ages. I now ignore the cold air rushing up my back in the early mornings and the unbearably itching of my dry nose, imprisoned in a helmet, from midday onwards and, yes, even that little piece of skin between my glove and jacket sleeve that is exposed and is being burnt into a fizzle frazzle.

*I have Harry ahead of me, who I'm as comfortable with as my own heartbeat, and his red taillight is the reassuring beep-beep on my radar.*

Eventually, thankfully, I'm left with a bag of bones! And my skeleton is ready to hang things on, to receive everything that is on offer. It all feels so damn right and I grab the handlebars. And there, from that moment on, I become aware of two whole handfuls of people wriggling about inside me! Someone has occupied the little pinkie on the right and rushes along my arm, down my side and all along my leg to the little right toe. Then it's the ring finger, the middle finger, the pointing finger, the thumb all scrambling down to their counterparts in my foot. The left side goes wild and a Mexican wave begins. They have come for the ride! They are my make-up! My 'defining' friendships - some family, some friends, some dead and some alive, - that have shown me to see really see, to listen, to feel, to care, to question, to laugh, to tease. I squeeze and welcome on board each digit individually. Oh, it's 'so cool' to have them to draw on each in there own remarkable way. My fingers and toes are wriggling wildly in my tight gloves and my roomy boots. It's ticklish. My helmet is bursting with a grin.

There's not a lonely bone in my body. I'm a party on two wheels.