

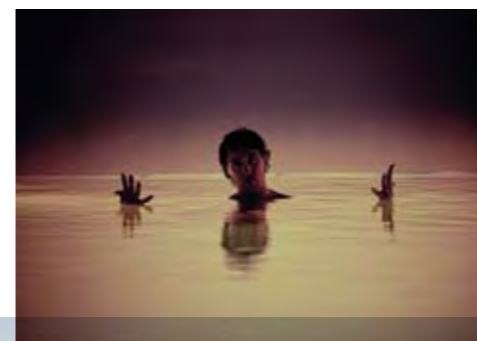


THE ADVENTURES OF SUPER HANS

Faster than a speeding bullet! More powerful than a locomotive! Able to leap tall rocks in a single bound! Look – it's Hans Rey! Join the trials riding superhero on his latest mission to Jordan

Words: mbr/Hans Rey Photos: Dean Gray

“TWO LEGENDARY RIDERS, ONE PHOTOGRAPHER, A CAMERA CREW AND INSTRUCTIONS TO MAKE A TV SHOW”



LEFT: Hanging around in the Dead Sea: no fish, no bacteria; just human croutons

BELOW: Hans, solo: Wadi Rum's rock bridges turn out to be rideable after all



Above: Wadi Dana: 4,000 years of history and a 14km downhill — both proved too much to resist

Left: The carved stone buildings of Petra remain one of Hans' most memorable sites — but the approach from Little Petra wasn't bad either

Two legendary riders, one photographer, a full camera crew and instructions to make a TV show. But no bikes. Life is never easy — just ask Hans Rey. The trials riding world champ was in Jordan at the end of last year with the legendary downhiller Dave Watson and the Ride Guide TV team, but due to a luggage malfunction, Rey's bikes were still at home, Watson was missing a front wheel and photographer 'Blotto' Gray had no pedals.

“It was looking pretty desperate,” says Hans. “Bike stores in Jordan are as rare as surf shops in Nepal. At one point I was actually considering flying to Italy to pick up my bikes, or look over the border in Israel.” In the end, they did neither, and made the most of the wait in Amman, touring markets, eating endless falafels and generally acting like tourists.

“Every cloud has a silver lining,” he says. “We even found a bike store eventually and managed to buy Blotto some pretty funky plastic pedals.”

After a three-day wait, two GT Carbon Force bikes turned up; six inches of travel deemed just enough for the punishing desert trails that awaited. Hans' GT Zaskar Trials bike came along for the ride too; “just in case.”

The full adventure airs on the Extreme Channel this spring, but Blotto's pics provide a pretty tasty appetiser: the rock bridges you see here are in Wadi Rum — which might have been a historical footnote were in not for one TE Lawrence (of Arabia). Deemed unrideable to begin with, Rey somehow managed to find a line. **»**

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From the ruins of Jerash to the rose-red city of Petra, via the Dead Sea and the scrubby desert of the Dana Biosphere Reserve, the terrain was a challenge all the way; so to was the lack of infrastructure for mountain bikes.

But this trip wasn't just about the riding. "I've visited some pretty amazing places in my life, but I have to say that Petra was a highlight," says Rey. "It is right up there as one of the most spectacular sites I have ever seen and it fascinates me with all of its unanswered questions."

There's great riding in this tough landscape, but as Hans points out, it's a scene in its infancy and it's wise to find a tour operator or guide that knows the best trails. In the meantime, look out for this adventure on Ride Guide. [mbr](#)



"PETRA WAS A HIGHLIGHT, ONE OF THE MOST SPECTACULAR SITES I'VE EVER SEEN; IT FASCINATES ME"



TOP: Greenery punctuates the desert as Petra beckons

ABOVE: The versatile chickpea, in its many comestible forms

LEFT: Bridging lone: "At first, one particular rock bridge looked to be unrideable, but on closer inspection I found my line. I just couldn't resist riding it — that was definitely a trials challenge and it got my heart rate pumping!"