

Mattis Lühmann

2500 miles  
60 days  
7 countries  
Travel diary

By bike through  
Corona-Europe

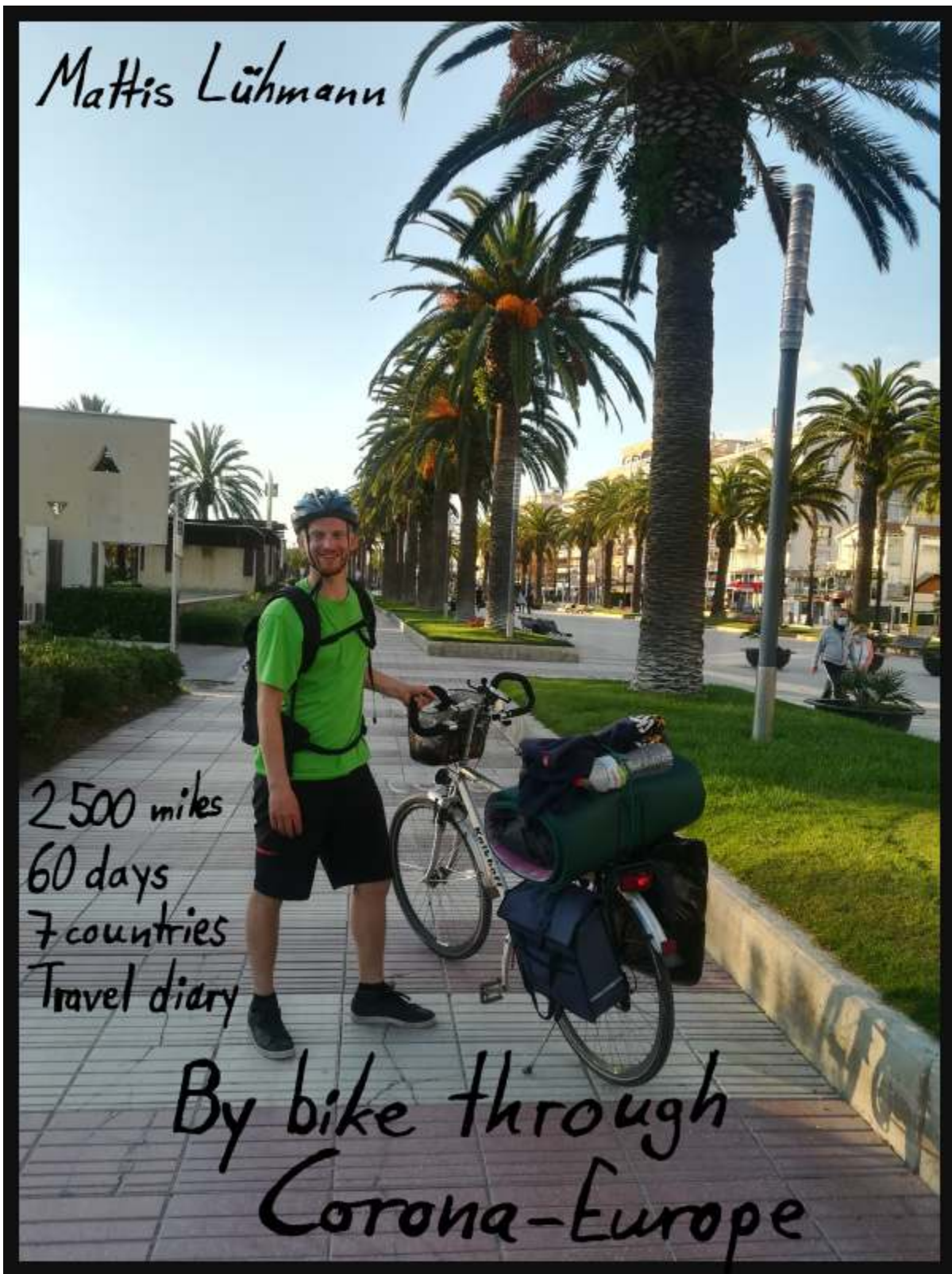




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# **By bike through Corona- Europe**

**2500 miles - 60 days - 7 countries - Travel diary**

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# **Imprint**

## **By bike through Corona-Europe**

**2500 miles - 60 days - 7 countries - Travel diary**

**Mattis Lühmann**

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# Introduction

On September 30th 2020, the author Mattis Lühmann started his 60-day bicycle journey from Bremen in northern Germany to the Cabo da Roca in Portugal. On his way he rode through Germany, Switzerland, a part of Italy, along the Mediterranean coast to Monaco, through the south of France, Spain and then to the Cabo da Roca in Portugal, which is the westernmost point of the mainland of Europe.

In total, he covered about 2500 miles. Read about his positive experiences, such as nice encounters, beautiful views and happy coincidences, but also about the difficulties caused by government actions or bad weather. Furthermore, you'll see many pictures of the journey.

# 09/30/2020



About 11:45 am: Me just before the start





05:43 pm: My first real break

**05:44 pm**

Hello, my name is Mattis Lühmann and I started my bike tour from Bremen to Cabo da Roca in Portugal today, on Wednesday, September 30th 2020. At about ten to twelve, after saying goodbye to my girlfriend, I set off from my home in the center of Bremen. I have already covered about

52 miles, and I am taking my first break in a wooden cottage. I rode through Bassum and through the district of Diepholz, mostly on bike paths along roads, but also nice and quieter paths through fields, pumpkin fields and past a small pumpkin farm. The weather is perfect so far, between 59 and 69 degrees Fahrenheit I guess and the sun is shining. I want to go to Cabo da Roca because it is the westernmost point of the mainland of Europe. Of course, I have intermediate destinations, such as Monaco, friends in southern France and el Punto de Tarifa in Spain, which is the southernmost point of the mainland of Europe. I have already made such a bike tour three years ago, to North Cape in Norway, but now I want to go south. My navigation system app Komoot tells me that it is 2647 miles to go. But it'll probably more if I get lost.

I quit my job as a food delivery driver after I managed to save up some money for this tour, about 1500 euros. Fortunately, I could sell one of my paintings (I'm an artist) for 800 euros the day before yesterday, which happened just at the right time.

I have planned that I will be on the road for about two months. Unfortunately, however, I'll have to interrupt the tour for a few days at the end of October because then the funeral of my grandpa will take place. He died last Saturday.

Windmills: 3  
Dead animals on the road: 7

**07:40 pm**

Now I am lying in my small tent for one person in a small forest next to a road. I've done 59 miles today. That's not bad for the first day, since I didn't leave that early. My goal is to make at least 62 miles every day, except today. I bought my bike in July or August for 70 euros on eBay



Classifieds, oiled it and put a new handlebar on it. It rides well, but the rear tube must be changed soon because it was totally flat. So, I had to pump it up at a gas station. I just talked to my girlfriend on the phone, and now I'm going to read something.

# 10/01/2020



07:21 am: My first sleeping place

**09:28 am**

I'm sitting at a gas station right now, there's a power outlet and an internet connection here, even though people look at me funnily when I sit around. I have a solar cell thing on my backpack to charge my phone, but somehow that does not work, so now I'm charging my phone and my powerbank here. My rear tire was completely flat this morning. Yesterday I rode past a vending machine for bicycle tubes, but at this

moment I thought that the tire wasn't doing that bad. Well, next time I'll buy one. I'll have to pump it up anyway. I've already done a few miles and had breakfast on the way. An apple and a pear, fresh from the tree, respectively from the ground. I have also seen the first small mountains already. Finally, no more flatland. The night in the tent was not so pleasant. Maybe it is a bit too small after all. And it was also damp, because of the morning dew. Maybe I'll sleep better when my rhythm has adjusted. At ten to eight I left today. I only spent money on the road for food, bike spares and the trip to my grandpa's funeral. The most expensive thing is renting my apartment in Bremen.

**01:09 pm**

I'm taking a break on a bench somewhere in Herford next to a river in the park. I have ridden over the first small mountains and have to pump up my tire for the third time. Just now, two cyclists at the traffic light asked me if I was on a big tour and where I was going. I said, "To Portugal." And they said, "Holy shit, do you want to get there this year?"





01:49 pm: Break at the river





01:50 pm: The river I was in and the path I had ahead



04:30 pm: Hose change

### **05:15 pm**

Short progress report: earlier when I left Herford, I drove along the river the whole time. It was really nice there, I was also down to cool off a bit in the river. At first, I couldn't get out because the bank was so high, but then I pulled myself up on the grass. Now I have nettle stings on my stomach, chest and face, it itches.

Afterwards, I bought another new bicycle tube at a shop and just now I pulled it up. Went easier than I thought, only that I have black hands now.

Just now I drove past a Dr. Oetker factory, it smelled like



cookies. I also got through Oerlinghausen, which is on a mountain. A charming spot. A place of artists.

**06:47 pm**

Okay, today I only made 44 miles, but I have a new tube now. It has just rained a little. I'll sleep on a soccer field today in a little house on the side, so it doesn't matter if it rains. I just have to wait until it gets dark.

Dead animals on the road: 2

# 10/02/2020



08:58 am: Break under the roof at the soccer field in Espeln

**09:06 am**

Soccer fields are really convenient. It was a bit cold at night and foggy this morning, but it worked. Yesterday I had to wait for the soccer players to leave.

Now I am at another soccer field in Espeln. There is electricity here, an internet connection and running water. As long as my phone was charging I just tried to straighten my

tire because since the new tube is on it, it wobbles all the time.

**10:59am**

I am writing while driving. When charging my phone, a man suddenly came around the corner. He asked if I was taking a break, but when he saw that I had used the faucet. Because the sink was wet, he gave me a nasty look. I quickly packed up, said goodbye and left.

The great thing about such a trip are all the impressions and brief moments. You see so much that you can hardly finish a thought. Strangers greet you, who you have never seen before and who you'll never see again, a dog lying in the middle of the road, beautiful little villages with beautiful little churches, special gardens, small stores, alpacas, lamas and so on.

For me, as a North German, it is still hard not to greet with "Moin".





11:23 am: On the way



12:29 pm: Organic eggs today



01:39 pm: Going downhill





03:43 pm: Break and cook

**04:09 pm**

I'm sitting on a bench and looking over the hilly landscape. The way's going up and down and along many rivers. I did not know that Germany is so mountainous. Just now I used my gas stove for the first time and cooked two free-range eggs, which I bought at a stand on the way, with Korean noodles and sauce.

**09:04 pm**

I am now in Winterberg, a ski resort. I have done 59 miles so far. My tent is opposite the station in bushes behind a house.

A dog barked at me. I hope it's gone now. Just now I was eating pizza and did some shopping. Tomorrow I will continue writing, my battery is almost empty. Oh yes, Brilon is a beautiful place.

# 10/03/2020

**08:59 am**

I'm still in Winterberg, charging my phone. I have also had breakfast here. Winterberg is not a ski resort, but a resort with many bike paths, bars and so on. I forgot to write that I got my tire fixed yesterday, it's not wobbling now. Yet, I think 62 miles a day is too much for me, especially when it's so hilly. I had to push my bike at least five times yesterday. My navigation system says there are 2483 miles left, that means I have to ride 50 times 50 miles. But I'll still ride a bit further to find a place to sleep. So, 50 miles is now my daily minimum.

The night here was not particularly restful, but I could sleep a little. Now my legs and ass are slowly starting to hurt. A handicapped guy just came by here and told me how bad everything is with Corona and that people throw their trash everywhere.