



Bikepacking 101

WITH GENE VILLENEUVE

7-9 pm. March 9, 2022.

Thank you [OBC](#) for hosting this evening's virtual session!

Thank you
[Ridegravel.ca](#) (Adrian Grant)
[Bikepack Adventures](#) (Chris P)
[Logdriverswaltz.ca](#) (Eric and Jen)

Thank you
Parham Momtahan and David Wright

Discussion Topics

- About Me - Gene Villeneuve
- What is Bikepacking?
- Route Planning
- Bike Choice
- Essential Gear (Hydration, Tools, Safety)
- Gear Selection and Packing
- Physical and Mental Preparation
- Sustaining Your Energy
- Sleeping (Outside or Inside)
- Lessons Learned
- Resources and Websites
- Final Words!
- Extra Information - Gear Budget



Source: Parham Momtahan - showing Eric Betteridge/Jen Adams - Log Driver's Waltz

About Me - Gene Villeneuve

- Lifelong cyclist, over 50
- Born in Ottawa
- Member of multiple clubs - I like friends and the cycling community!
- Lived in Paris, France for nine years
- Married with two daughters

Bikes Build Community!

Connect with me:
genevilleneuve.com



What is Bikepacking?



Bliss on two wheels

*Adventure with any bike over one
night or many nights*

Self discovery

Exploring and touring on two wheels

Making friends

Route Planning

Many local (Ottawa/Gatineau) routes to choose from

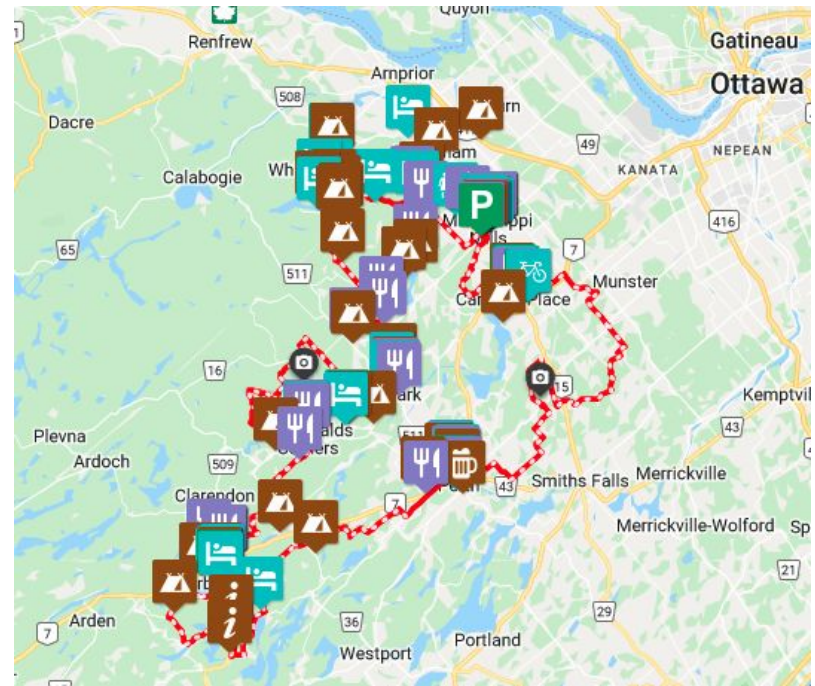
- [Ridegravel.ca](https://ridegravel.ca), [Log Driver's Waltz](#), [Bikepack Adventures](#)
- <https://ridewithgps.com/organizations/7445-log-driver-s-waltz>
 - RidewithGPS - sign up for a free account via this link ^ and download routes for free

Route length - how much time do you have?

- One night, 2-4 days, weeks, or months

Tent, friends, or hotels - Define gear requirements

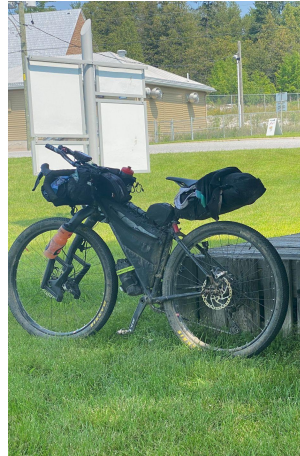
- Hotel/Friends: Less gear, lighter bags
- Camping: More gear, smarter packing
- *In both cases, reservations need to be made or you can do stealth camping, and sometimes trail angels appear to offer you a place to stay*



Bike Choice

The bike you already have!

- 1. Choose a route your bike can do*
- 2. Choose a bike for the route*



Essential Gear and First Aid

Navigation and Communications

- GPS unit, mobile phone, with the route loaded
- Folding paper map in case all your electronics fail
- Extra battery pack and charging cables with plugs for recharging at rest stops
- If you will be out of mobile phone coverage you may want to have an InReach, Spot, or other satellite tracking and communication device



Water Filter and/or Purification Tablets

- Hydration is critical to safety
- Plan ahead with lots of bottles, water filter, and/or purification tablets

First Aid Kit and Emergency Food

- Painkillers, creams, scissors, matches or lighter
- Emergency blanket
- Sunscreen, bug net, repellent
- Energy gels, electrolytes, salt tablets, or other calories



Bicycle Safety

- Front and back lights - make sure you have extra batteries or a dynamo
- Bell, helmet, sunglasses
- Proper bike fit
- Rain gear, wallet, medical information, RoadID

Tool Kit

- Spare tubes, extra sealant, patch kits, allen keys, multi-tool, tire levers, chain tool, spare links, quicklink, oil, tire patch/plug, pump, air cartridges
- Zip ties, spare cleats, spoke tool, emergency spoke
- Learn how to use them before you go



Gear Selection and Packing

Should you use panniers or bikepacking bags?

- Panniers are easier to put on and off, tend to be heavier, and promote taking a lot more gear, can interfere with tight single track trails
- Bikepacking bags are lighter, no rack or very little rack weight, promote lighter packing, more aerodynamic

My bikepacking setup for camping trips (Personal preference)

- **Seat bag (Ortlieb 16L)** - clothing, rain gear, breakfast & dinner food, shoes, compression bags for gear, towel, food bag and string to hang food at night
- **Frame bag (Thief)** - tool kit, first aid kit, water filter, cooking and eating gear (Stove/Fuel, pot, collapsible plate/bowl), first aid kit, tent poles/pegs, headlamp
- **Top tube bags (Topeak/Lezyne)**- wallet, phone, energy gels, spork, lock, foods for the day
- **Front roll (Apidura)** - sleep system (tent, pillows, ground sheet, sleeping bag/pad)
- **Front roll accessory kit bag (Apidura)** - mini backpack, bug repellant, swiss-army knife, battery pack, electronic cables, toiletry kit, wipes, chamois cream



Check out my rig on [bikepacking.com](https://www.bikepacking.com)

Some Gear Photos



Physical and Mental Preparation

Physical Preparation

- Depends on ride length, ambition, current conditioning, and endurance history
- Proper bike fit is paramount
- Do at least two long rides with your bike fully loaded within two weeks of your trip. You'll learn a lot.
- In general, ride 3-4 days a week, as many weeks as you can before your trip. Ensure you have one long ride per week, where the long ride is similar to the long rides planned on the route.
- Upper body and core strength is also important - full body resistance training once per week

Mental Preparation

- You can do more than you think you can do!
- You will suffer... learn how to speak kindly to yourself and how to encourage yourself
- Remember, just have fun!

Cycling is an escape, but within that escape, there is discovery, beauty, and suffering, with incredible rewards and friendships.

Sustaining Your Energy - Hydration, Nutrition, and Pace

Hydration

- 500ml per 1-1.5 hours (drink more on hot days)
- Add electrolytes to prevent cramps
- Coke can be your friend

Nutrition

- Eat real food - fruit, vegetable, carbs, nuts, cheese, meat, sandwiches, salads
- Energy gels - ok for some, but many can't stomach them for long rides

Pace

- Riding in zones 1 and 2 help you burn fat and use less glycogen
- Go long at your all day pace



Sleeping, Campsite, Hotel, or Other

Camping

- Tent, bivy or hammock?
- Hang food at night away from your tent
- Respect private property
- Reserve a campsite in advance
- Research the route for crown lands and public/free campsites
- [Leave no trace](#)

Hotel / Friends

- Make your reservations
- Less gear required
- Most hotels allow you bikes in the rooms



Source: bikepacking.com

Lessons Learned

- Research helps... but enjoy the fun in the adventure and discovery
- Make access to water as easy as possible. When on single track a hose may be easier than bottles unless you are ok to stop.
- Fancy coffee is yummy if you want to carry the extra weight - instant coffee is ok
- Pillows - I now travel with two inflatable pillows
- Bib hygiene and cream
- You are capable of more than you think!
- You will make friends and have adventures
- Expect the unexpected but don't "pack all your fears"



Resources - Websites for Route Planning and Bikepacking

- <https://bikepacking.com/bikepacking-101/>
- <https://www.logdriverswaltz.ca/>
- <https://ridewithgps.com/organizations/7445-log-driver-s-waltz>
- <https://www.bikepackingontario.com/>
- <https://tourdivide.org/>
- <http://www.bt700.ca/>
- <https://www.bikepack.ca/>
- <https://www.adventurecycling.org/>
- <https://www.ridegravel.ca/>
- <http://bikepackadventures.ca/>
- <https://www.bikepackingroots.org/>
- <https://bicycletouringpro.com/>
- <http://www.bikepacking.net>
- <https://www.youtube.com/c/BIKEPACKINGcom>
- <https://bikepackinguk.com/>



Source: Eric Betteridge/Jen Adams - Log Driver's Waltz

Final Words

Ride your bike

Discover backroads and new places

Explore the world on two wheels

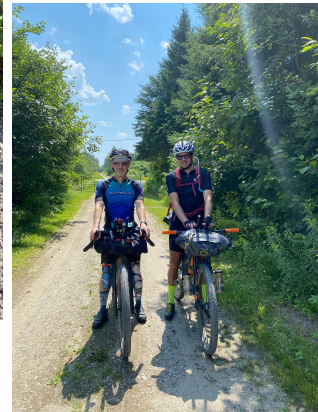
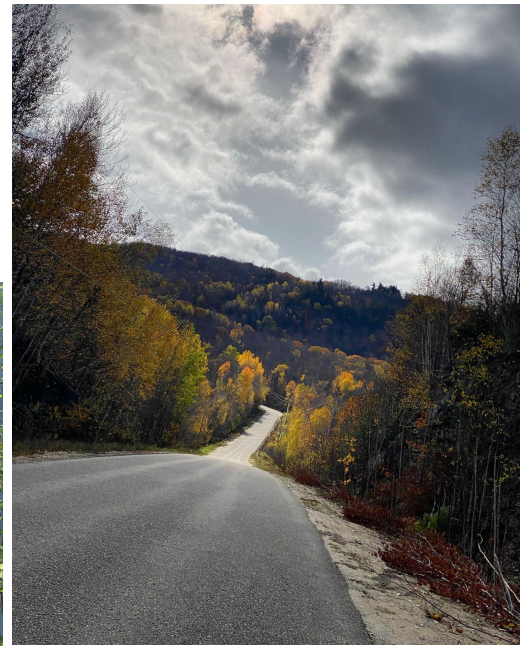
Discover what you are capable of

Push your boundaries

Hone your system

Make friends, build community

Have fun!



Gear Budget (Depends on how much you want to spend)

This is not an exhaustive list but will give you examples of some gear prices. However, you can often reuse a lot of camping gear you already own such as sleeping bags, inflatable mattresses, cooking gear and utensils, or other items.

Gear	Price Range	Example 1	Example 2
Front Roll Bag	\$75 to \$225	Rockbros \$75	Apidura 14L Expedition \$201
Frame Bag	\$100 to over \$300	Custom Thief Frame Bag \$209	Apidura Large Frame Bag \$286
Saddle Bag	\$85 to \$350	Rockbros \$85	Ortlieb 16.5L \$270
Top Tube Bags	\$20 to \$60	Rockbros \$20	Topeak Top Tube Toploader Frame Bag 0.75L \$37
Tent, Bivvy, Hammock	\$250 to \$1000	Near Zero two person ultralight tent - \$239USD	MSR Carbon Reflex 1 \$699 ENO Sub6 Ultralight Hammock \$90
Camping Stove	\$24 to \$200	Near Zero Mini Camping Stove \$24USD	MSR Pocket Rocket 2 \$65
Lightweight Sleeping Bag	\$50 to \$500 or more	ECOOPRO Warm Weather Bag \$50	Thermarest Quilt \$450