



# Into Thick Air: Biking to the Bellybutton of Six Continents

*Jim Malusa*

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## **Into Thick Air: Biking to the Bellybutton of Six Continents** Jim Malusa

With plenty of sunscreen and a cold beer swaddled in his sleeping bag, writer and botanist Jim Malusa bicycled alone to the lowest point on each of six continents, a six-year series of “anti-expeditions” to the “anti-summits.” His journeys took him to Lake Eyre in the arid heart of Australia, along Moses’ route to the Dead Sea, and from Moscow to the Caspian Sea. He pedaled across the Andes to Patagonia, around tiny Djibouti in the Horn of Africa, and from Tucson to Death Valley. With a scientist’s eye, he vividly observes local landscapes and creatures. As a lone man, he is overfed by grandmothers, courted by ladies of the night in Volgograd, invited into a mosque by Africa’s most feared tribe, chased by sandstorms and hurricanes — yet Malusa keeps riding. His reward: the deep silence of the world’s great depressions. A large-hearted narrative of what happens when a friendly, perceptive American puts himself at the mercy of strange landscapes and their denizens, *Into Thick Air* presents one of the most talented new voices in contemporary travel writing.

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