



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: The Enan's compact footprint made it a good choice for this rocky area in the Swiss mountains. ✚ Martina delights in frosty morning solitude. ✚ The night sky along the border of Switzerland and Austria made the perfect backdrop for this peaceful camp. ✚ Lightweight and easily packable, the Enan was a comfortable shelter for this short hike from Julier Pass to Sertig in Switzerland.

YELLOW LABEL

VOICES FROM FRIENDS: Martina Gees



AN IMMENSE APPRECIATION FOR NATURAL BEAUTY inspires photographer, writer, hiker and adventure cyclist Martina Gees, whose singular mission is to enjoy her time in the outdoors. “For me, it’s not about being fast – I’m quite slow – walking is very slow, so cycling is a bit faster but it’s still slow enough to discover things along the road. I also go on multi-day hiking trips, but for me the bike is exactly the right speed to discover the world. Some

people call it the speed of butterflies. For me it’s a nice way of imagining it,” she says warmly. Many of her recent journeys have been to the mountains in her home country of Switzerland, though Martina is no stranger to long tours in faraway places, either. From 2009 to 2013 and then again from 2014 to 2016, she traversed the length of North, Central and South America, in total traveling to 25 different countries over 60,000 kilometers (37,282 mi).

Despite her impressive track record, Martina’s goal is merely to slow down and be present with her surroundings. “One of my biggest hobbies is taking images of the night sky,” she says. “I think this started a long time ago. I was cycling in the Peruvian Andes, in Bolivia on the salt flats – places that are really dark. I remember back then I would step out, it was freezing cold and of course I was tired. I didn’t have a good camera, but I ended up sometimes staying outside, marveling at the sky.” For Martina, gazing up at the night sky also provided a window to look within. “I think what fascinates me most is that we as humanity always think we’re extremely important, but when I see that night sky and the Milky Way, I know that we’re just like a little piece of dust. This usually puts things into perspective. For me it’s a very right perspective,” she says with an undeniable self-assuredness.

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– Martina Gees

The night sky is only one aspect of her journeys. “It’s also finding a nice place to pitch the tent and then sitting there, having a cup of hot tea or coffee in my hand. Sometimes I just sit there. It’s just being with yourself, your thoughts, and moving in nature. It’s the whole thing as a package,” she says. She cherishes that sense of peace and solitude she is only able to find in nature. “For me going outside camping for a weekend, it’s like having a week of vacation. I just feel recharged after that,” she says. To find such comfort during her journeys, she has used many different Hilleberg models. “I’ve been using Hilleberg tents for a long time,” she says. For her recent warm-weather bike touring adventures, her go-to tent is the Enan. “When I really started going on solo trips then it was clear that I needed something small,” she says.

While it provides excellent airiness at a very light weight, the Enan also meets her other important criteria in a tent – it has both the strength to handle unpredictable conditions and the durability to last for many years. “In the mountains, you never know what’s going to happen. Weather can change quickly. It can be that there is no wind but at night suddenly it almost blows you away,” she says, continuing, “My first night out with the Enan it was exactly one of those nights. I was ‘like oh no!’ But the tent handled it just fine. I’ve had thunderstorms in the Enan, with high winds shaking everything, but it’s fine,” she says. For Martina, having gear for the long-term is a key part of her personal philosophy. “This is the reason why I spend more money for my gear, because I want to make sure it lasts. I want to make sure that it protects me. This is important for me also from a sustainability aspect,” she says. Overall, she believes in having only what she needs, leaving each place she travels to better than she found it, and fully experiencing every moment outside. “I’m just happy with what I do. For me, it’s not about going completely to my limits. It’s just really enjoying what I do,” she says.