



Bejarano-Ligato cycling in Laos and with her husband, Richard, in Patagonia

## More Reader Abroad Her Life Cycle

**Name** Amanda Bejarano-Ligato  
**Age** 40

**Where I live** Everywhere

**Why I packed my bags** In 2000, I was living with my husband, Richard, near San Diego and working as a VP in human resources. Our future was predictable, and I said to Richard, who was also in the corporate world: Is this really what we want? He asked what I'd do if money were no object. I wanted to take him through Mexico, where I'm from. We quit our jobs, put everything in storage and bought a 1978 Volkswagen van. After five and a half months in Mexico, we hit Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and Ecuador.

**A real address—for a minute** After three years on the road, we had changed so much that we couldn't return to our old life. Instead, we rented a flat in Durban, South Africa, and wrote a book about our experiences [*Wide-Eyed Wanderers*]. We saw countries

that are incredibly poor. In Africa, women would rifle through the trash cans outside our apartment and reuse things like envelopes and jars. It inspired us to be less wasteful.

**The recycle tour** Last summer we sold everything we had in storage. We wanted to test how little we could live on by cycling through Asia. We started in Bangkok and went into Thailand, through Laos and Vietnam. We cycle anywhere between 40 and 50 miles a day. It's usually 100 degrees outside, so we drink lots of water, which means lots of breaks in the bushes. All our clothes are used, and so are our bikes; I got

mine at the Salvation Army. I carry foldout dish-ware on my handlebars, along with a map, a bell, a compass and our itinerary. Next, we plan to cycle through



Malaysia and Singapore, fly into China, then pedal through Tibet, Nepal and India.

**What Americans take for granted** Time. Too often, we put our hopes and dreams on hold. We think the things we want to do will wait till we retire. —DARA PETTINELLI

**Put down the knife and walk away from the table** Almost three-quarters of cosmetic surgery is done on patients under 50 years old. Seems a funny thing happens after we hit that big birthday: We relax. Surveys consistently show that post 50, we're happier, more confident and more socially involved than younger women.

✕ Sources: The American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery and comprehensive surveys conducted by the TrendSight Group

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF AMANDA BEJARANO-LIGATO