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# «Tom»

# Thomas Harbeke

**Life is too short not to enjoy it.**

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Bike enthusiast, Swiss, wine lover, world traveler, snowboarder, advertiser, brand strategist, craft beer brewer, diver, husband, father of two kids, copywriter, windsurfer, cook, manager, photographer, tour guide, tour planner, and certified Swiss Cycling MTB Guide.



People call me Tom, although my name is actually Thomas. But ever since I read "Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn" in my early days it has been only Tom. I was probably fascinated by the adventurous spirit and the anti establishment attitude of this book, for these things are a kind of thread through my life.

I stopped my studies of mechanical engineering at an early stage to build surfboards instead and try them out in the winds and waves of Tarifa in Spain. Later on during my studies of journalism and German literature, it soon seemed to me more interesting to travel the countries of Northern Africa and learn all about their culture and food. So I did and that meant the end of all my university education.

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Luckily, I discovered the world of advertising. For in this business, cross-thinkers, nonconformists and idealists are in great demand. And well paid. After seven years, a lot of work and a successful career in the leading advertising agencies in Switzerland, I had had enough of the permanent stress and enough money to travel the world. So I took a container ship to Australia, started windsurfing in big waves and had a good time. That lasted for over a year.



Back in Switzerland, however, I became quite bourgeois: married, two children, Volvo station wagon, house in a suburb of Zurich and five weeks of holidays every year. But with such a wonderful woman by my side and such great children, the bourgeois life is good. In addition, I was quite busy building up a creative advertising agency, where I could implement enough unconventional ideas.

During this time I discovered mountain biking. And when finally the fully and disc brakes were invented, there was no holding back for me and my friends. Almost every weekend we were in the mountains and the holidays of course became mountain biking holidays.

I started to organize one week bike trips for a group of friends and their partners. We always went to different places, always with beautiful mountains and always at the sea, so for the fellow travellers without a bike it was always a nice holiday too.

2015 I handed over my advertising agency to younger employees and reduced my workload as a brand strategist and a copywriter, so that I could get out of the office again.

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At the Swiss Cycling Association I have been trained and licensed as official MTB Guide.

The tour operator Island hopping gave me the chance to turn my tour guiding hobby into a profession. Now I am guiding tours in Croatia, Denmark, Bhutan, Balearic Islands, Tuscany and South Africa and Switzerland. My signature move is a wine tasting with the best local wines. People just love it!

It fulfills me with great satisfaction and joy that I can help to make these journeys a wonderful and unforgettable adventure for all the guests. They are always super happy - what more could you ask for?

