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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Extraordinary 1500-mile Alpine Trekking Adventure Proves to be Much More Than Cheese and Gnomes**

Explorer/über-adventurers Brandon Wilson and his wife Cheryl have recently completed a momentous trek of discovery. In June, they set off on the recently formed Via Alpina for a nearly 1500-mile (2500-kilometer) trek the length of the Alps.

Their route took them across eight countries, as they left Trieste, Italy to trek across Slovenia, Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, France and Monaco—eventually arriving at the long-awaited Mediterranean Sea on September 18th.

This Via Alpina route consisted of more than 100 stages and lots of "ups and downs," climbing 3,000 feet up and down a mountain every day. So the Wilsons traveled light, carrying just 15-17 pounds (7-8 kilos). The latest ultra-light gear provided by GoLite and Gossamer Gear saw them through the famous unpredictability of the Alps; snow-bound passes, 40+ days of rain, and high altitude winds. Climbing the Alps from hut-to-hut for twenty miles a day provided a supreme physical challenge for these trekkers, but what a unique (and ecological) way to experience Alpine culture—one-step-at-a-time. It was total immersion into local life, customs, history, and cuisine.

Brandon and Cheryl followed this unique trail for 3 1/2 months as they pressed on to reach the Mediterranean Sea before the Alpine snows hit. At least, unlike their historic 1,000-kilometer trek across Tibet, they didn't have to dodge Chinese bullets—but they sure missed Sadhu, their equine Sherpa.

As usual, Brandon chronicled this latest odyssey through daily journal entries and photographs. Those notes and photos will provide grist for his new adventure

book scheduled for publication from Pilgrim's Tales publishing in late 2010. His chronicle will allow readers to vicariously share the daily challenges and victories of their latest exploit. After reading it, readers may be ready for an adventure of their own.

Brandon Wilson is an award-winning author of three other true travel adventures set in such rugged locales as the Tibetan Himalayas and wilds of Africa. His most recent book, **Along the Templar Trail**, a 2008 *ForeWord* Magazine Book of the Year Award finalist (Adventure/Recreation), chronicles his recent 2600-mile trek for peace along what was once the route of the First Crusades from France to Jerusalem.

Like his other adventure books, this one is bound to provide an intimate look at "deliberate travel". As he puts it, "The Alps are much more than gnomes and cheese. Plus, for folks seeking a little peace and simplicity in these difficult times, I can think of no better solution than to simplify, slow life down, disconnect from the distractions of the outside world and head off the beaten track. In fact, I foresee this new trail developing into Europe's equivalent of our Appalachian Trail."

The couple, among the first to complete the route, carried over thirty topographic maps supplied by Omni Resources. To better physically prepare for this extreme daily challenge, they followed a regime of aerobic and strength training at Upcountry Fitness on Maui.

This is Brandon's tenth long-distance peace trek. He has also walked Spain's Camino de Santiago and Via de la Plata, St. Olav's Way across Norway, the Via Francigena from Canterbury to Rome, the Buddhist pilgrim's path from Lhasa, Tibet to Katmandu (as related in his book **Yak Butter Blues**), and the Templar Trail from France to Jerusalem. He is a member of the prestigious Explorers Club.

The couple is an official partner of the Via Alpina. For details about the routes, huts, activities, forums, and culture, visit [www.via-alpina.org](http://www.via-alpina.org). For more information about the intrepid explorers, visit [www.pilgrimstales.com](http://www.pilgrimstales.com).

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