

Title:

How the re-emergence of the bicycle is changing how we transport ourselves and goods.

Reporter:

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Overview:

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Our roads were paved following the advent of the bicycle but the invention of the motorcar quickly squeezed the bicycle to the curb. Cheap imports means NZ now likes cars more than is good for us which is not great when we go around telling everyone how green we are. Everyone owning a car is simply unsustainable.

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My wife and I sold our car, and went to buy a couple of bikes to see if we could still lead normal lives without a car. We found good commuter bicycles in NZ were all from Europe and prohibitively expensive, so decided to import our own used ones from Japan. The minimum order was 200, so began Mamachari Bicycles Ltd.

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To date we have sold almost 400 very commuter friendly bicycles, each with a basket or carrier. Strategically, we believe women between 25 – 40, our customer base, will have far greater influence in promoting cycling safety and infrastructure.

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In getting people to switch to a bicycle, we will see long term benefits in air quality, a reduction in consumption, an increase in the attractiveness and livability of our cities, lower building costs, and a greater sense of community.

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For the individual, the cost of switching to a low-cost commuter style bicycle is very low, with high savings. Public costs will be high since cities have already been designed for the car. The simple solution is to switch transport spending from roads and highways to support walking, cycling and public transport.

