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from Brendan Driscoll *Booklist* --  
 "Autonauts of the Cosmoroute: A  
 Timeless Voyage from Paris to  
 Marseilles" a review of [Autonauts of the  
 Cosmoroute: A Timeless Voyage from  
 Paris to Marseilles](#)

*Autonauts of the Cosmoroute: A Timeless Voyage  
 from Paris to Marseille*

2007-12-01

In the late spring of 1982, Argentine writer-activist Cortázar (*Hopscotch*, 1963) and his wife, writer-photographer Dunlop, spent 33 days traveling from Paris to Marseille on the Autoroute du Soleil, a journey that normally takes 8 to 10 hours. Advancing at the rate of 2 to 3 rest stops per day, the authors ate, slept, and wrote in Fafner, a red Volkswagen camper with the personality of a playful dragon. Teasingly invoking the hallmarks of the world's great epics through dramatized interactions with marauding ants, suspicious maintenance workers, and the unforgiving elements, the authors' gently surrealist narrative is punctuated by photographs of the intrepid explorers and diary entries cataloguing their meals. Yet underlying the narrative's delightful sense of whimsy lies a deeply penetrating seriousness about the experience of life and the bittersweet nuance of love. Though one could be excused for taking this selection as commentary on our modern inability to leave the freeway, it is clear that the authors' true cause is to describe a month of timeless happiness—an endeavor made more poignant when one knows that both authors passed away not long after their voyage together.

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