

Ride 15 - The Grafton Notch Tour

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| Distance: | 27 and 74 mile loops |
| Terrain: | Mountainous with flat sections along river |

Old Speck Mountain guards the passage through Grafton Notch, one of many hidden scenic treasures in western Maine and a major sight on this challenging 74-mile ride. In fact, the scenery on this ride rivals any you can find in New England. This ride is for the very fit and adventurous bicyclist -- there is no major town along the way, and services are few and dispersed. Alert riders are bound to see moose along the roadside. ME 26, just before Grafton Notch, is one area where moose are plentiful.

Alternate 1 provides a much less-challenging shorter and flatter 27-mile loop along the Androscoggin and Ellis River valleys .

- Special features:** Mountain scenery and abundant wildlife, including moose; Lovejoy Covered Bridge built in 1867; hiking trails.
- Road conditions:** Generally fair; some broken pavement on ME 26 and the South Rumford Road.
- Services:** Bike shop on route (Wallace's Wheels, 485 Prospect Avenue, Rumford, 800-834-7946); basic services and lodging along some of route, but no services from Andover to US 2. For accommodation information, contact River Valley Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Drawer 598, 23 Hartford Street, Rumford, ME 04276, Telephone: (207) 364-3241.
- Cautions:** Beware of logging trucks; there are steep hills on roads with no shoulder; moose that wander onto road; heavy traffic and a steep hill heading out of Rumford. Sections of this ride are remote, so be sure to carry spare parts, water, food and warm clothing.
- Starting point:** Ride originates from parking lot behind Rumford Police station on River Street. From the West: take US 2 to ME 108 following signs to Peru. Cross green bridge and turn left immediately on one-way street (River Street). Follow to end -- police station is on the right. From the east: take US 2 into Rumford to the rotary. Exit the rotary and cross concrete bridge and take immediate right into station parking lot. *Notify the Rumford Police if you leave your car overnight. They will watch it for you.*
- Please note:** The Maine Bicycle Tours are published by the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) as an aid to bicyclists. All routes shown on these tours are on regular state and local roads used by automobiles, trucks, buses and other motorized vehicles. The

MDOT in no way warrants the safety or suitability of the routes indicated on these tours for shared bicycle/motor vehicle use or for use by young and/or inexperienced riders. Bicyclists assume the risk for their own safety at all times when traveling on the indicated routes.

Although the MDOT has made a reasonable effort to ensure that the information contained in this guide is correct as of the date of publication, the actual conditions riders encounter may vary, and the Department in no way warrants its accuracy. MDOT assumes no liability for personal injuries or property damage suffered by bicyclists.

Mileage readings may vary. We recommend you carry a detailed map of the area with you. All roads on this ride can be found in the Maine Atlas and Gazetteer from DeLorme Mapping Co. (www.delorme.com)

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| ! | 0.0 | Turn right as you leave parking lot on River Street and go to "Do not enter" sign. |
| ! | 0.0 | Turn left at "Do Not Enter" sign on Hartford Street, and immediately turn right on Congress Street and go 0.2 mile to a traffic light. |
| ! | 0.2 | Turn right at traffic light on Bridge Street and cross green bridge. Follow signs to US 2. |
| I | 0.4 | The tourist information center is on the left immediately after bridge. Stop here for information about area accommodations and sites of interest. |
| ! | 0.4 | Bear left on US 2 and go 5.6 miles to the East Andover Road and Rumford Center. Caution: There is a steep hill as you leave Rumford and head west on US 2. The traffic through this section is heavy, and there is no shoulder. There is no way to bypass this section. Bicyclists should be extremely cautious here and stay as far to the right as possible. |
| I | 0.6 | Rumford Falls on the left. |
| A, CS, R, BS | 0.9-2.5 | <i>There are numerous convenience stores, hotels, restaurants and a bicycle shop (Wallace's Wheels) located along this section of US 2.</i> |
| S | 2.5-5.6 | <i>Views of the Androscoggin River on the left.</i> |
| HX | 5.7 | <i>Rumford Center Meetinghouse built in 1828 on the right.</i> |
| ! | 6.0 | Turn right on the East Andover Road and go 8.5 miles to the Covered Bridge Road. |
| S | 6.5 | <i>Views of the Ellis River Valley from the East Andover Road.</i> |

LEGEND. !: Important tour directions. CS: Convenience store. I: Information, tour services. A: Accommodations, non-camping. C: Camping location. R: Restaurant. S: Scenery. ATM: Automatic teller machine location. HX: Historic interest site. H: Hiking trailhead/crossing. P: Picnic site. BS: Bicycle Shop. *OPTION*: Optional side trip.

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| ! | 10.6 | Bear right on the East Andover Road following signs directing travelers to East Andover. <i>ALTERNATE 1: For a shorter 27-mile loop, bear left here and in 0.3 mile come to ME 5. Turn left on ME 5 and follow it for 3.0 miles to US 2. Turn left there and rejoin the tour at Mile 60.2</i> |
| ! | 14.5 | At stop sign, turn left at T-intersection on Covered Bridge Road, and go 0.7 mile to ME 5. |
| OPTION A,R,S, HX | 14.5 | <i>Option: For an optional route into Andover, turn right on the East Andover Rd. In East Andover, there is "The Cabin", a hotel offering accommodations and food to bicyclists and hikers. They also offer day bicycling trips and canoeing trips down the Ellis River. This is also an alternative starting point for this tour (call 207-392-1333 for information).</i> <i>In East Andover, there is also the Merrill House, the original settlement with occasional tours.</i> <i>To complete the side trip, turn left from the East Andover Road onto ME 120 and come into Andover. Rejoin the tour route at mile 18.3 and proceed straight up the East B Hill Road.</i> |
| HX | 15.0 | Pass over Lovejoy Covered Bridge, constructed in 1867. |
| ! | 15.2 | Turn right on ME 5 and go 3.1 miles to Newton Street. |
| A, CS, R | 17.6 | Enter the village of Andover. Andover has a restaurant, Bed and Breakfast, and convenience stores. Warning: This is the last convenience store until you reach Hanover, which is 41 miles from here. |
| ! | 18.3 | Turn left on Newton Street (marked) and go 14.3 miles to ME 26 and Upton. |
| H, P | 23.8 | Baldpate hiking trail trailhead on right. There is a picnic table located here. |
| ! | 25.9 | <i>Start of steep, 1-mile climb.</i> |
| I, H | 26.5 | Appalachian Trail crosses the road. |
| ! | 28.9 | <i>Start of steep climb up East B Hill.</i> |
| S | 29.2 | <i>Top of East B Hill. There are spectacular views of Lake Umbagog and the New Hampshire mountains from East B Hill. Start a fast 1.5- mile descent from here.</i> |
| ! | 31.5 | After crossing one-lane bridge over the Swift-Cambridge River start the long, steep, climb to Upton. |
| ! | 32.6 | Turn left on ME 26 and go 20.7 miles to US 2 and Newry. Turn right to go to Umbagog Lake State Park in New Hampshire. |

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| C | | <i>Umbagog Lake State Park Campground is located on NH 26 just across the Maine-New Hampshire border 2.0 miles north of this intersection. This State Park offers camping, lodging, hot showers, canoe rentals, and a store. The campground is located at the bottom of a long (2-mile), steep hill, which makes it easy to get to, but difficult to return from. There is a public telephone located at the Upton town office. Call the campground to make sure they have space available before descending the hill. Better yet, call ahead and make a reservation. The telephone number is (603) 482-3856.</i> |
| S | 34.5 | <i>Views of Old Speck Mountain.</i> |
| I | | <i>Watch for moose along the roadside!</i> |
| I | 39 | Enter Grafton Notch State Park. |
| H | 40.3 | Appalachian Trail crosses ME 26. |
| H | 40.9 | Old Speck Mountain hiking trails trailhead on right. (Pit toilet) |
| I | 41.6 | <i>Moose Caves on the right.</i> |
| I | 42.4 | <i>Mother Walker Falls on the left.</i> |
| S | 42.0-44.0 | <i>Great views of Grafton Notch from here!</i> |
| P | 43.6 | Screw Auger Falls picnic area. (Toilets, water) |
| ! | 53.3 | Turn left on US 2 and go 7.1 miles to Rumford Point and ME 232. |
| C | 54.1 | Stony Brook Recreation Area on left. <i>Camping is available here.</i> |
| CS | 58.6 | Hanover Village Store on left. |
| A, R | 59.1 | Trails End Motel and Restaurant on left. |
| A | 59.7 | Intersection with ME 5. Turn left for Ellis Bed and Breakfast. |
| ! | 60.4 | Turn right on ME 232, cross the green bridge over the Androscoggin River, and go 2.6- miles to the South Rumford Road. Be sure to bear left on ME 232 at Rumford Corner. |
| ! | 63.0 | Turn left on South Rumford Road (marked) and go 9.5 miles. |
| ! | 63.6 | In Abbots Mill, bear left, staying on the South Rumford Road. |
| ! | 71.6 | In South Rumford, bear left, staying on the South Rumford Road. |
| ! | 72.5 | Turn right on US 2 and go 0.6 mile to Bridge Street. |
| ! | 73.1 | Bear right on Bridge Street, cross green bridge, and immediately turn left on River Street which is one-way. Go 0.2 mile to the parking lot behind the police station. |
| ! | 73.5 | Ride ends at parking lot. |

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