

Ride 2 - Potato Country Tour

Distance: 50 miles

Terrain: Rolling

The wide open spaces and rolling countryside of northern Maine is among the richest, most productive agricultural land in the state. In Maine, they just call this “The County” and here the potato is not just about making French fries, it’s a staple of the region’s economy. This exhilarating 50-mile ride takes cyclists through the heart of this beautiful and rural landscape with stops along the way to learn about “The County’s” history at the Aroostook Agricultural Museum and other historic sites along the route.

No shorter loops are designated because there are only a few places to cross the Aroostook River. A shorter loop could be devised using the end of the tour and Rt. 167 between Fort Fairfield and Presque Isle.

Special features: Maine’s “Big Sky Country”; historic Washburn; Aroostook Agriculture Museum; Maine State Science Museum in Presque Isle.

Road conditions: Poor to fair; broken pavement along ME 205.

Services: Bike shop on route (Aroostook Bike & Sport, Presque Isle, 207-764-0206); lodging and basic services available. For accommodation information contact, Caribou Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 357, 111 High Street, Caribou, Maine 04736, 207-498-6156; or Presque Isle Area Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 672, Three Houlton Road, Presque Isle, Maine 04796, 207-764-6561.

Cautions: Heavy traffic in Presque Isle and in Caribou; also, the route in Caribou may be confusing due to traffic routing, please follow instructions carefully.

Starting point: The ride originates from the parking lot off Riverside Drive near the Court House in Presque Isle. To get there, *from the south*, follow Main Street (US1) to the traffic light at intersection with State Street (ME 227). Turn left on State Street and turn immediately onto Riverside Street just before crossing the river.

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).

!	0.0	Turn right onto Riverside Street. At stop sign, turn left on State Street and cross bridge.
!	0.1	Bear right at traffic light on ME 163/227 and go 0.9 mile on Parsons Street.
!	1.0	Bear right on Parsons Road and go 9.7 miles to Washburn. (The names change between ‘street’ and ‘road’ at this point.) At stop sign, continue straight across Connector Road staying on Parsons Road. <i>The Aroostook River is on your right.</i>
!, P	10.7	Turn right on Castle Hill Road and go 0.3 mile to ME 164. Cross bridge over the Aroostook River. There is a town operated picnic area here.
!	11.0	Turn left at stop sign on ME 164 (Washburn Road) and go 10 miles to Caribou.
CS,R HX OPTION	11.3	Enter Washburn. All services are available in Washburn except bicycle repair. <i>While in Washburn, visit the Salmon Brook Historical Society's Benjamin C. Wilder Farmstead and Aroostook Agricultural Museum, located at 17 Main Street next to Story Park. The museum has a collection of old farm implements, pottery, culinary items, and old shop tools.</i> <i>Another interesting place to visit is the Knott-II-Brag-Farm in Wade. Turn left on Church Road and then right on New Dunn Town Road. Visitors can tour the working farm and see butter made, soap cooked, and many other old-time skills demonstrated. An herb and farm tour is offered as well.</i>
P	12.0	Mill Pond Recreation Park. Picnic tables.

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.

!	14.4	Bear left at sharp corner staying on ME 164. Caribou Lake Road forks to the right.
!	21.7	Bear right on Hatch Drive and go 0.2 mile to Main Street. Caribou has all services available except bicycle repair. <i>While in Caribou visit the Nylander Museum on Main Street.</i>
!	21.9	Turn left on Main Street and immediately turn right on High Street and go 0.3 mile to Pleasant Street. The Caribou Municipal Office and Caribou Public Library are at the corner.
	22.0	Caribou Chamber of Commerce on the right.
A	22.1	Old Iron House Inn is on the right.
!	22.2	Turn right on Pleasant Street and then bear left on Elm Street, and go straight to stop sign and US 1. Cross US 1 and go to Broadway. Caution: Dangerous intersection.
!, I	22.4	Turn left at stop sign on Broadway and go 0.4 mile to Railroad Street. <i>Notice the old potato houses lining the rail yard.</i>
	22.8	Continue straight on Railroad Street 1.1 miles to ME 89.
!	23.9	Turn right at flashing red light on ME 89 East and go 0.7- mile to the Grimes Road.
!,S	24.6	Turn right on Grimes Road, go 10.4 miles to US 1A, following signs to Fort Fairfield. The Grimes Road hugs the Aroostook River. <i>Outstanding views of the river.</i>
!	35.0	Turn right at stop sign on US 1A South, cross bridge, and go 0.2 mile to ME 167.
!, ATM, R, P, A, CS, H	35.2	Continue straight at traffic light on ME 167 and go 0.4 mile to the Currier Road. All services are available in Fort Fairfield except bicycle repair. <i>Visit the replica of the Fort Fairfield Blockhouse, built in 1839 during the bloodless Aroostook War.</i>
!	35.6	Bear right on Currier Road and go 3.3 miles to Marshall Road.
S	37.9	<i>Outstanding views from the top of the hill.</i>
!	38.9	At stop sign merge right with the Marshall Road and go 2.6 miles to ME 205.
!	41.5	Turn left at stop sign on ME 205 South and go 4.2 miles to ME 163/167.
C	44.7	<i>Arndt's Aroostook River Campground with tent sites, pool and laundry.</i>
!	45.7	Turn right at stop sign on ME 167/163 and go 2.2 miles to Fort Street.
!	47.9	Turn left on ME 167 and go 0.4- mile to the bicycle path or 0.8- mile to Fort Street.

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OPTION !	48.3	Optional Return: Bear left on bike path. Follow the path to the end at parking lot on Riverside Street. <i>Use the Presque Isle Bicycle path to avoid traffic on Main Street. The path terminates at the parking lot off Riverside Street. The path uses a combination of back streets, trails and abandoned railways to connect with the Riverside Street parking lot. The University of Maine at Presque Isle and the Maine Science Museum are accessed from the path. This is the preferred return route to the parking area.</i>
!	48.7	Bear left on Fort St. at curve in road (Rt 167 continues to the right on North St.) and go 0.4 mile to intersection with Blake Street. Fort Street ends at this point.
!	49.1	Turn right on Blake Street and go 0.3 miles to Main Street.
!	49.4	At Main Street, go straight across onto Riverside Drive for 0.5 miles.
!	49.9	Turn in to the parking lot where you began the ride. This is the end of ride.

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