

Ride 16 - The Western Foothills Tour

Distance: 28, 46 and 62 mile loops
Terrain: Flat to very hilly

This hilly 62-mile loop requires bicyclists in good physical condition to explore the back roads and byways of Southwest Maine. A marvelous network of country roads are hidden in the foothills of western York and Oxford counties where life seems to have changed little during the last century. This is quintessential New England - old stonewalls and maples line the narrow country roads. Along the way, cyclists encounter river views, mountain scenery and gracious old homes.

Alternate 1 provides a shorter 28-mile loop along the Saco and Ossipee River valleys. It avoids the hilliest sections of this tour.

Alternate 2 provides a 46-mile loop, which includes the covered bridge and also avoids the steepest climbs.

Special features: Pretty villages of Cornish and Maplewood; spectacular mountain and river views; Porter-Parsonsfield Covered Bridge; Willowbrook Country Museum in Newfield; gracious old homes in North Parsonsfield.

Road conditions: Generally good; broken pavement on ME 160 south of the Ossipee River.

Services: No bike shops, so be sure to carry spare parts and tools; other basic services available. For accommodation information, contact Cornish Association of Businesses, P.O. Box 573, Cornish, ME 04020. Telephone (207) 625-7447. They have an excellent guide to the area called *Ahhh! Cornish*. Back Country Excursions in Parsonsfield offers accommodations and guided mountain biking tours; contact them at 207-625-8189.

Cautions: Narrow, winding roads; moderate traffic, no shoulder and blind hills on short section of ME 5 south of Limerick; moderate traffic and no shoulder on ME 113.

Starting point: Ride originates from Cornish Town Office on ME 25 (Maple Street) in Cornish -- the large yellow building next to the True Value Hardware. Park as far from the entrance to the town office as possible.

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 left on Maple Street and go 0.2 mile to Bridge Street.
!	0.2	Turn left on Bridge Street after crossing small bridge and go 0.6 mile to the River Road.
!	0.8	Bear right on the River Road and go 5.7 miles to ME 5/113 and Hiram.
S	4.4	<i>Views of the Saco River on right.</i>
S	4.8	<i>Views of Mt. Cutler on left.</i>
CS		As you enter Hiram village, be sure to stay straight through all intersections. There is a convenience store in the village. Turn right on ME 5/113 to reach the store.
!	6.5	Turn left on ME 5/113 and go 6.5 miles to ME 160. Caution: moderate traffic and no shoulders.
I	6.5-13.0	<i>This area burned in a great forest fire in 1947.</i>
!	13.0	Turn left on south ME 160 (there is a convenience store located at this intersection) and go 21 miles to North Parsonsfield.
	13.6	Enter the village of Brownfield.
!	14.1	Turn sharply left immediately after passing through village, staying on ME 160.
S	15.2	<i>Views of the Burnt Meadow Mountains on left.</i>
S	22.5	<i>Stanley and Trafton Ponds on the left.</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.

!	24.4	Turn right at stop sign on South Hiram Road and follow signs to ME 160. <i>ALTERNATE 1: For a 28-mile loop, turn left on the South Hiram Rd. and follow it for 3.5 miles back to Cornish. Turn left where the South Hiram Rd. ends at Maple St. and the Town Office will be on the left.</i>
OPTION		
!, CS, R	24.5	Enter Kezar Falls village. Kezar Falls has a convenience store and restaurant.
!	25.1	Turn left at stop sign and at the second stop sign turn right on ME 25/160. Go to Porter on ME 25/160. Caution: There is moderate traffic between Kezar Falls and Porter and no paved shoulders although they are scheduled to be built by 2003. <i>ME 25/160 hugs the Ossipee River.</i>
CS	27.7	Porter Country Store.
!	27.8	Turn left on ME 160 South and go to North Parsonsfield. Caution: This section of ME 160 is winding and hilly. There is no paved shoulder.
HX, I, P	28.2	Porter-Parsonsfield Covered Bridge on left.
I	30.0	Academy Hill Farm built in 1804, on left.
I, HX	30.3	Enter North Parsonsfield village. The Parsonsfield Seminary, on the National Register of Historic Places, is on the left. <i>North Parsonsfield has many beautiful old homes in a gorgeous mountain setting.</i>
!	34.0	Turn right on Merrill Hill Road and go 2.1 miles to the Middle Road. Follow signs for Province Lake. <i>ALTERNATE 2: For a 46-mile loop, continue straight on ME 160 and follow the instructions for Alternate 2 below.</i>
OPTION		
	34.4	Start long, steep climb up Merrill Hill.
!	36.1	Turn left on Middle Road just beyond white church and at the bottom of a very steep hill. <i>The dirt road straight ahead leads to Back Country Excursions, a mountain bicycle touring company. Accommodations and a delightful hot tub are available here (contact BCE at 207-625-8189).</i> Go 0.7 to a sharp turn to the right.
OPTION		
!	36.8	Bear right at sharp corner on Moulton Hill Road and go 2.3 miles to a white church and Maplewood Road.
	37.4	Start steep climb up Moulton Hill.
S	38.0	Gorgeous views to the south and west.
!	39.1	Bear right at stop sign on Maplewood Road (there is a white church at this corner) and go 5.4 miles to ME 110.
!	40.2	Bear left staying on paved road.

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I	41.9	In the village of Maplewood stay straight on Maplewood Road. <i>Maplewood is a charming village of wonderful old homes. True to its name, there are maples lining the streets. The cemetery in the village beckons exploration.</i>
S	43.7	Rock Haven Lake is on the left.
CS	44.3	Enter West Newfield village. There is a general store here.
!	44.5	Turn left on east ME 110 at stop sign, and go 0.8 mile to ME 11.
!	45.3	Go straight at stop sign on ME 11 for 3.0 miles to the Back Newfield road.
!, CS	48.3	Turn left on the Back Newfield Road (follow signs for "Willowbrook at Newfield") and go 4.2 miles to ME 11 and Limerick. The Route 11 Trading Post is located here.
I, HX	48.8	Willowbrook Country Museum. <i>This is a fascinating restoration of a 19th Century village featuring 27 buildings, farm implements, and horse drawn vehicles.</i>
!		Stay straight on the Back Road at all intersections.
!	52.5	Go straight at stop sign merging with ME 11 and go 0.4 mile to ME 5 and Limerick village.
CS, A, R	52.6	Enter Limerick village. Limerick has a convenience store and two inns.
!	52.9	Turn left at stop sign on ME 5 and go 8.9 miles to ME 25 and Cornish. Caution: The first 2.5 miles of ME 5 is winding and hilly with moderate traffic. There is no paved shoulder. There is a paved shoulder for the final 6.4 miles to Cornish.
I	55.5	Maple Grove Farm on left
!	61.8	Turn right at stop sign on ME 25 (Maple Street) and go 0.4 mile to the Cornish town office. Enter the Town of Cornish.
!	62.2	The Cornish town office is on the left. This is the end of the ride.
<i>OPTION</i>		<i>ALTERNATE 2</i>
	34.0	<i>Continue straight on ME 160 past Merrill Hill Rd. for 4.8 miles to Spur Rd.</i>
	38.8	<i>Turn left on Spur Rd. and go 1.2 miles to Rt. 5.</i>
	40.0	<i>Turn left on Rt. 5 and go for 5.2 miles to ME 25 (Maple St.). Rt. 5 has paved shoulders through this section.</i>
	45.2	<i>Turn right on Maple St. and go 0.4 miles to the Cornish Town Office</i>
	45.6	<i>Cornish Town Office is on the left. The tour ends here.</i>

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