

Heart-to-Heart



Note from the President

July 1, 2021

We have now successfully completed two tours this year: Trek to the Tetons and Tour de Sawtooth. I had the privilege of leading the Sawtooth tour and was pleased that all tour participants had received Covid vaccines. That made life easier for everyone and led to a sense of confidence that Covid infection would not be an acute issue while on tour. If our members continue to show the same sensible attitudes toward health and safety while on tour, I am optimistic that HeartCycle will be able to complete the season with tours that will be close to what they used to be.

I often hear from members how much they enjoy the Club's tours. While pedaling about 400 scenic Idaho miles on the Sawtooth tour, I thought about what distinguishes a HeartCycle tour from other bike tours. First and foremost, we are a club. Each of us is a member with a love of cycle touring – exploring the world on two wheels, powered by our minds, hearts, lungs and legs. Club members are not, by and large, casual Sunday pedal pushers. Some of us are fast; some of us used to be faster. Speed aside, we have a serious interest in cycling, even if our individual gifts for the sport vary. I am always impressed at the breadth of cycling experiences of our members – the places around the world they have toured, the cycling challenges and adventures they have encountered, and their drive to keep exploring by bike. Often these experiences lead to a Club member being willing to lead a tour in an area they have ridden to share their excitement and enthusiasm for it. I know that is part of what inspired me to lead two tours in France, and other members to lead tours in locales throughout the United States and the rest of the world. The enthusiasm of the Club emanates from its members and is genuine.

Second, our tour leaders (as well as board members, officers and working members, are all volunteers, not paid staff or contractors (SAGs are paid a daily stipend). Members volunteer out of affection for the Club. As a result, the Club's tour offerings vary from year to year. A tour gets on the Club schedule because someone wants to share his or her keenness for a cycling experience with others of similar interests. We don't have a signature tour that is offered annually, although we may repeat a few tours that prove so popular that not everyone can go on the first iteration and members demand a reprise (e.g., Paso Robles and Mallorca). The tour schedule reflects the changing interests of the Club's members, not the ease of organizing the same tour year after year.

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Tour Director Musings

HeartCycle is planning 5 different European tours for 2022: Jewels of Portugal, Lands End England, Champagne Bike & Barge, Le Monastere and Southern Albania are all on the potential tour list. I am giving you a heads up that your Tour Directors are planning to have early registration for the 4 of the 5 European tours. We are finding that some locations are already being reserved a year in advance. In this newsletter you will find a few glimmers about the upcoming Jewels of Portugal, Bike & Barge in the Champagne region of France, Le Monastere and Lands End to John o'Groats, England.

Get inspired to go overseas for bike tours in 2022.

Judy Siel
 Tour Director

Third, the Club is a nonprofit which exists to further the interests of its members in cycle touring, not to pay annual compensation to its board and officers. We try to manage the Club's operations prudently to achieve a positive, but modest bottom line, maintain its financial health and assure its ability in the future to offer tours that its members want to do. This means that the Club's tours are more economical than most comparable commercial tours, without compromising the overall quality of the tour experience.

Finally, the fact that one must be a Club member to go on a HeartCycle tour means that we are not just clients who pay a fee for a service, but that we are part of a key Club activity. During a tour, we share a sensibility of mutual support for other members on tour and an awareness that we are each a part of the overall experience of other members on that tour. I see and feel the positivity of that experience each year, and especially at the Club's annual meeting as members gather, looking forward to reconnecting with each other.

It is certainly not the only way to do bicycle tours, but I think the Club offers some unique rewards. At least, that's my experience on HeartCycle rides. It has continued to bring me back year after year.

Fred Yu
President



Enjoying the Sawtooth tour

HeartCycle Tour Trek to the Tetons

June 2021

By Laura Davis

Woohoo!!! Tours are back. The Trek to the Tetons came off without a hitch. We had 27 riders, plus our fearless leaders, Jimmy Schroeder and Scott MacCormack and our fabulous SAGs MaryAnn and Rich Loeffler, assisted by their informal but indispensable assistant Dianne Bechtold, who was accompanying her husband on the ride. Highlights included: a cowboy driving cattle by our SAG stop, spectacular dry and warm weather, cool morning climbs through the scenic Snake and Logan River Canyons, a shady paved off-road 4-mile and 2000+ -foot climb up the Old Teton Pass Road leaving Jackson, an off-highway bike path through Grand Teton National Park, and optional visit to the very impressive Wildlife Art Museum in Jackson.





Our route was a figure eight, beginning in Logan, Utah, and riding two days northeast to Alpine, Wyoming, then one day to Jackson, and returning on a more remote alternate route, one day to Alpine and two more days to Logan. We had two days and three nights in Jackson, allowing for both a ride through Teton National Park and a rest day. Alpine, Wyoming is a small town on the enormous Palisade Reservoir, which offers housing options for people who work in the very pricey Jackson. Our comfortable lodging across the street from the Yankee Doodle Cafe felt so familiar on our return.



Leaving Logan, Utah on a Sunday morning we climbed up the scenic Logan River Canyon to Bear Lake. This is one of the largest natural lakes in the western US. The lake water is distinctively turquoise-blue due to limestone suspended in its depths. We enjoyed the popular vista over lunch under our shade canopy at the Bear Lake overlook (good job SAGs!). Before lunch we encountered some challenging traffic, and intermittent shoulder room. Who knew that Mormons didn't all go to church on Sunday? Continuing on to Montpelier, Idaho we enjoyed riding through Garden City, Utah (raspberry capital of the region) and on through land settled by Mormon pioneers on the route of the Oregon Trail. There were numerous historical markers documenting the settlements, with passing reference to the prior Shoshone inhabitants of the beautiful Star Valley. We missed seeing the Oregon Trail historical museum, which was closed for the day. Dinner options were limited in the small towns we stayed in (Subway and BBQ place), and abundant but crowded in Jackson. Day-two included more remote climbs and lovely descents including the final 40+ mile gradual descent into Alpine, Wyoming.



From Alpine to Jackson we rode up another gorgeous river canyon, along the Snake River which feeds the Palisade Reservoir. Entering Jackson along an off-road bike path with views of the Grand Tetons was a highlight of the tour. We encountered some roadwork areas entering both Alpine and Jackson. There were some beautiful descents on new road surfaces, and a few rougher descents as well. Our return route from Alpine through Soda Springs, Idaho, took us through less traveled rolling farm country, growing hay and alfalfa. The main roadside attraction in Soda Springs, is the geyser, which you do have to see to believe! On this most remote day of our tour it was noted that there is a definite correlation between vehicle traffic and bathroom facilities (plenty of both on the Logan River Canyon and Bear Lake route, zero on the return ride to Soda Springs from Alpine).



One of the best features of HeartCycle tours is always the people. The social opportunities were diminished this time by the COVID protocols (no group dinner). But we had time to converse at meals and SAG stops with riders from the usual states (Colorado and Washington) as well as some from New York, Indiana, Kansas and California. We had three riders on this trip using e-assist bikes (Orbea, Trek and Specialized), and all seemed happy with their experience. The COVID protocols for food presented a challenge which our devoted SAGs met with aplomb. We all look forward to those individual packaging restrictions easing up, hopefully soon. All in all a very successful tour given the circumstances we are in. There were a couple of riders who lost a day of riding due to feeling poorly, but their bugs were temporary (food related?) and not shared with the group. Big thanks to our leaders and SAGs for managing our tour so well.



Champagne Bike & Barge June 18-25, 2022

The Champagne tour is a bike and barge touring classic that not only allows guests to explore the world famous city of Paris, but also the Champagne region, famous of course, for producing Champagne wines. From the time the Benedictine monk Dom Pierre Pérignon invented the bubbly drink in 1670 at the Abbey of Hautvillers, the Champagne name has been synonymous worldwide with the very best of sparkling wines.

Every day you will cycle small country roads (including a few un- or semi-paved roads and tracks) that go slightly up and down the beautiful slopes of the wide river valley, through the hills and the Champagne vineyards.

On a daily basis you will have the opportunity to cycle to boutique wineries, sample a variety of champagnes, taste delicious cheeses of the Brie region and generally discover all gems that the Champagne region, UNESCO world heritage, has to offer. But more than just visiting the Champagne region, you will also have the opportunity to explore Paris, one of Europe's most beautiful and beloved cities. Other highlights of the tour include a visit to the city of Meaux, well known for its Brie cheeses and a stopover in Château-Thierry, scene of major battles in World War I. Along the way you will cycle through almost endless vineyards on the rolling banks of the Marne river and visit a local wine farmer. The tour starts in the city of Epernay, the real capital of the Champagne region, where you will have the opportunity to visit one of the town's



The ship – Your sailing hotel

In between cycling excursions, you cruise along with the ship, which travels to a new destination every day. You dine, sleep and eat breakfast on board. You'll receive a packed lunch every day, and you can usually choose between a longer or shorter bike ride. It's also possible to spend a day on board if you like. There are rental bikes on board.

Fully Guided: Accompanied by a competent, professional and multilingual tour leader, you will visit interesting sights and places on the daily cycling tours. During the bike tour, they will explain the local history and culture behind the things you encounter along the way.

For more information contact Laura Davis at: davpete@frii.com

Jewels of Portugal May 7,8-20, 2022

This bicycle tour in central Portugal allows you to discover some “Jewels of Portugal”. Portugal is a small country, but very diverse. You can find evidence of the many peoples that were here in the past and also the influences of the 15th & 16th centuries that showed the world new worlds. Everything is mingled in our culture, our architecture, our landscape, our gastronomy, everything is near.



Jewels of Portugal will have you biking along beautiful and quiet roads, and visiting typical small towns and villages of Portugal. You will admire the vast landscape and ride along our long coast. This tour in Portugal highlights interesting places and roads, avoiding crowds and traffic. It is a 13-day tour that includes 2 non-cycling days when we visit a 14th century monastery and Evora, a World Heritage site. We finish in Cascais, which was a minor fishing village until the Portuguese King made it his Royal Summer Retreat.

Tour includes use of a Cube carbon road bike or Scott Sportster bike. E-Bikes are available for rental. Meals: 12 breakfasts, 10 dinners (including wines, cheeses and dessert), daily snacks and water. Lunches will be at local cafes where you can buy your meal. Activities included: visit to a winery and wine tasting, visit to a cork plant, visit a pottery workshop, visit a marble quarry, tour Roman ruins and a limestone cave. Support with 2 guides, support vehicles, transportation to and from the airport or Lisbon, personal accident and liability insurance and first-aid assistance on location. Total distance 408 miles, average 45 miles/day on 100% asphalt.

For more information contact Janet Slate at: jslate@ultrasys.net



Lands End to John o'Groats, England

May-June, 2022

The LEJOG cycle ride is the grand daddy of all cycling challenges in the UK, starting at Land's End in Cornwall (the extreme southwestward point in mainland Britain) and ending at John o'Groats in northern Scotland - very close to the most northerly point of mainland Britain. You will have rolling hills, stone villages, thatched houses, moors, dales, lochs, mountains, rivers and seas. Like all iconic routes it has boring bits, we plan to take a van around those and spend time on the more scenic parts. Average daily distances are around 65 miles with no day above 4,000 ft of climbing. It's just shy of 1,000 miles with about 50,000 ft of climbing accomplished in 15 days of riding with an additional 2 rest days.

The terrain is not flat, and riders will encounter some challenging grades, although short by Colorado standards. Roads in UK are generally of high standard, but narrow compared to the U.S. UK motorists are typically fast, but patient and courteous toward cyclists.

For more information, contact Graham Hollis at: gramhollis@gmail.com



Le Monastere, France

June 17,18-25, 2022

Le Monastere is a four-star hotel set in a remodeled monastery in Limoux, a small town in the Languedoc region of southern France, north of the Pyrenees and west of the Mediterranean Sea. It is the fixed base from which Chris Georgas, the owner, leads bicycle tours supported by two vans into the surrounding region. The rides are works of art through the varied microclimates of the hilly to mountainous French countryside, on nearly traffic-less roads, chosen day by day to accommodate to the weather and to avoid headwinds. On some days the destination might be a picturesque French town for lunch; other rides might be to the Mediterranean beach or a Tour de France Pyrenees mountain stage climb. Many start or end right out the door of the hotel. There are forests, vineyards, Cathar castles, and gorges. Chris is supported by his wife, Fabienne Montserrat, who cooks fabulous meals, and a small personable staff. Included are full continental breakfasts every morning, dinners (with wine) at Le Monastere or at local restaurants for 6 days of a 7 day visit. Wednesday is their day off and a rest day for those that want to see Limoux or Carcassone, or ride on your own. Free Wi-Fi is available at the hotel, and a Laundromat is a few minutes' walk away. Airport pick-up and drop-off at Toulouse is included each Saturday morning. Saturday afternoon includes your bike fitting and a short "check-out" ride. For more information about the facility, see lemonastereadventures.com.

Le Monastere has quality road and hybrid bikes for your use. Chris will fit the bikes to your size and gear requests. Or bring your own bike and Chris will help you assemble and final tune it. Tandems are welcome (bring your own) and can be accommodated in the support vehicles. Registration is limited to 13 members (including the HeartCycle Coordinator) each week. There are four rooms with a Queen or Double bed for couples, and three rooms with two beds for couples or two roommates). Single Supplements are not anticipated to be accepted for this tour. Additional details will be provided to participants after being confirmed to the tour.

For additional information contact: Bob Rowe at: browe49@comcast.net



Colorado HeartCycle 2021 Tours

Springtime in Fredericksburg, TX

Fredericksburg, Texas

March 27 - April 3 Status: Cancelled
7 days, Intermediate \$1,490.00

Tina Vessels, tina.vessels@gmail.com
Kurt Arehart, klarehart@gmail.com

Basalt Groad Four Day Weekend

Basalt, Colorado

July 7 - 11 Status: Closed
4 days, Int./Adv. \$775.00

Ron Finch, blouie-rfinch@comcast.net
Robin Heil, rjsheil@bresnan.net

San Diego County

San Diego, California

April 18 - 27 Status: Cancelled
9 days, Advanced \$1,650.00

Scott MacCormack,
samaccormack@gmail.com
Jim Schroeder, jimmyschweb@gmail.com

North Puget Sound Favorites

Anacortes, Washington

July 24 - 30 Status: Wait List
6 days, Int./Adv. \$1,600.00

Richard Williamson at: richard6a@gmail.com
Dave Olausen at: d.olausen@comcast.net

Trek to the Tetons

Logan, Utah

June 12 - 20 Status: Complete
8 days, Int./Adv. \$1,680.00

Jim Schroeder, jimmyschweb@gmail.com
Scott MacCormack,
samaccormack@gmail.com

Oregon Wine & Surf Loop

Eugene, Oregon

August 21 - 29 Status: Full
8 days, Int./Adv. \$1,750.00

Cindy Alvarez, sindelou@cox.net
Judy Siel, bjsiel@msn.com

Le Monastere

Limoux, France

June 18 - 26 Status: Cancelled
8 days, Int./Adv. \$2,350.00

Bob Rowe, browe49@comcast.net

Black Hills of South Dakota

Custer, South Dakota

September 6 - 10 Status: Open
4 days, Int./Adv. \$800.00

Judy Siel, bjsiel@msn.com
Barry Siel, bsiel03@gmail.com

Tour de Sawtooth

Ketchum, Idaho

June 20 - 29 Status: Complete
9 days, Int./Adv. \$1,550.00

Joan Spilka, ljspilka@hotmail.com
Fred Yu, fredericky@comcast.net

Colorado HeartCycle 2021 Tours

Coast-to-Coast Northern Tier - Year 5

Rochester, New York

September 11 - 25 Status: Wait List
14 days, Int./Adv. \$3,390.00
Rich Crocker, richcrocker@hotmail.com
Patty Menz, pattymenz1@verizon.net

Southern Albania

Tirana, Albania

Sept. 28 - Oct. 9 Status: Cancelled
11 days, Int./Adv. \$1,700.00
Tina Vessels, tina.vessels@gmail.com

Ohio Appalachian Country

Columbus, Ohio

Oct. 6 - 14 Status: Wait List
8 days, Int./Adv. \$1,590.00
Scott MacCormack,
samaccormack@gmail.com
Jim Schroeder, jimmyschweb@gmail.com

Paso Robles

Paso Robles, California

November 6 - 13 Status: Full
7 days, Int./Adv. \$1,450.00
Becky Bottino bbottino7@gmail.com
Ken Condray condray3@gmail.com