

Heart Cycle Bicycle Touring Club

COLORADO FRONT RANGE BIKE AND BREWERY TOUR

- Dates:** Orientation meeting: Friday, September 30, 2022
- Riding:** Saturday, October 1 – Saturday, October 8, 2022
- Departure:** Saturday afternoon, October 8, 2022
- Leaders:** Scott MacCormack and Jim Schroeder
- SAGs:** Kathleen Schnidler and Martha MacCormack
- Rating:** Intermediate with Advanced options.
Intermediate up to 320 miles (40/day avg.), up to 11,600 ft of climbing. Advanced options up to 400 miles (50/day avg.), up to 19,500 ft of climbing.
- Riders:** 28
- Price:** \$1,850 (double occupancy). Deposit \$450. Single Supplement \$2,775. Balance due by June 1, 2022.
- Cancellation:** [Standard cancellation policy](#). *Trip insurance is advised.*

Special Note: This tour has optional advanced loops that will not be followed by the SAG team, but will be within easy reach of the SAGs in case of an emergency.



OVERVIEW

Welcome to some of the best places to cycle in the US! And don't take our word for it. The Denver–Boulder–Fort Collins Front Range bikeway systems are continually rated in the top 10 places to cycle by several publications (Bicycling, Travel Channel, CNBC, REI, to name a few). Colorado is, of course, known for its trophy rides like Ride The Rockies, the Triple Bypass, and others. But what is not known, except to us locals, is how much fun and challenging the Front Range is for cyclists.

But even those of us who live on the Front Range don't often get out of our own home bases. This tour offers you a chance to link these great bike cities—to experience how to get from Boulder to Fort Collins, or from Downtown Denver to Boulder, with the fun of riding within a HeartCycle group and with the safety of well-planned routes monitored by our ever-trusty SAGs.

For you visiting cyclists arriving from lower elevations and coastal areas, we start easy and low, riding along the river trails and old Denver neighborhoods, staying around 5,200 ft of elevation. As the ride progresses and we skirt along the Front Range, the elevations stay pretty consistent, as the elevations in Boulder and Fort Collins are 5,330 and 5,003 ft, respectively. And for you avid riders that like to collect the tough hill climbs, we have a top-10 one included in this ride as well, look up Flagstaff Mountain for details. The advanced ride tops out at an elevation of 7,200 ft.

Oh, one more thing, as advertised, this is a bike and brewery tour. We will see and tour some of the best breweries around for you to experience (and taste on your own) as well! Here are a few on the list: Blue Moon, Epic, and Mockery in the RiNo Art District; Avery and Finkel & Garf in Boulder; Left Hand Brewery in Longmont, and Odell and New Belgium breweries in Fort Collins.

We start the tour in Denver in the vibrant and ultra hip new RiNo (River North) art district, near Coors Field Ballpark.



ITINERARY

Day 0: RiNo, Denver - orientation meeting. (Friday September 30).



Day 1: RiNo to Cherry Creek State Park (Saturday, October 1, 50.4 mi. 1,400 ft). Cyclists will leave RiNo along downtown Denver's urban bike lanes, heading out through beautiful old parks and neighborhoods to the Cherry Creek Bike Trail. We will bike along the trail out to Cherry Creek State Park without putting a foot on the ground. Our return will take us west along the southern edge of Denver to the Platte River Trail, the main artery of the Denver Metro bikeways.

Day 2: RiNo to the Southwest (Sunday, October 2, Advanced route, 60 mi. 2,788 ft, Intermediate route, 35 mi. 1,066 ft). The advanced route climbs out of downtown along the Platte River Trail where we exit to the west on another river trail to the south side of Golden (home of Coors Brewery), and then head farther south through the hogbacks to Red Rocks Park and Amphitheater (and Dinosaur Ridge), returning by way of Chatfield State Park and the south end of the Platte River Trail for our return to RiNo.



The Intermediate route follows the same route out of RiNo, turning to the south (east of the hogback climbs on the advanced route) to the Bear Creek Trail, then to the confluence of Bear Creek and the Platte River. After a short ride on the Platte River, this route heads east through the southern neighborhoods of Denver and back north along a great street route through a beautiful city park built a century ago, and back to our RiNo hotel.



Day 3: RiNo to East Boulder (Monday, October 3, 35 mi. 1,386 ft). The fairly recently opened Denver/Boulder bike path along US 36 allows easy and safe access to this perennial top-5 bike town, as well as my alma mater, the University of Colorado. CU, with its red tile roofs and local sandstone buildings is an Italianate-style campus and not to be missed! We leave downtown Denver and will head west before turning north and arrive in Boulder along the eastern edge of town between Boulder and its preserved open space area, dotted with picturesque ranches and farmland. We are based here for 3 nights near one of the best breweries in the world (at least to me), Avery, where you can sample an amazing assortment of barrel-aged beers not available anywhere else—all located near the hotel!

Day 4: Boulder (Tuesday, October 4, Advanced route, 59.7 mi. 5,500 ft, Intermediate route, 39.5 mi. 2,164 ft).

We head out as a group back towards the US 36 bike path and then turn west, heading up to El Dorado Springs for a look at Bastille Crack, considered one of the top-10 technical rock climbs in the world. If you look closely, you may see some brave (foolish?) souls climbing. I'm sure we can find a waiver if any of you want to climb, but you are on your own, no SAGs up there! From here, we head to the Colorado Chautauqua, one of only two original Chautauquas left. Afterwards, the advanced group gets a shot at climbing Flagstaff Mountain before rejoining the group. We then head to Boulder Canyon for a quick jaunt up and back, and then cut across the Pearl Street Mall in downtown Boulder before heading back to our hotel.



Day 5: Boulder (Wednesday, October 5). Enjoy a rest day and see your favorite site or brewery in Boulder.

Day 6: Boulder to Longmont (Advanced route, 62.9 mi. 2,619 ft, Thursday October 6). Intermediate route, 47.2 mi. 1,610ft). From Boulder, we work our way through some of the prettiest and most verdant farms in the country, with rich alluvial soil built up over eons of flooding from the many creeks that drain the eroded minerals down from the Rockies. Along these picturesque countryside roads you will not be alone—not many cars but many cyclists (and perhaps some professional cyclists who love to train in this area)—come see why! The advanced group gets to climb up to Carter Lake and then (carefully!) speed back down to join the group at the northwest corner of the route where they left us. Our brewery in this area is Longmont's Left Hand Brewery, on the banks of the mighty St. Vrain River. I hear they have a great milk stout!



Day 7: Longmont to Ft Collins (Friday, October 7, Advanced route, 78.9 mi. 3,970 ft, Intermediate route, 60.4 mi. 2,215 ft). From Longmont, we head north along the same pleasant country roads. Once again, the advanced group gets a chance to climb into the

foothills west of Horsetooth Reservoir, before intersecting with the Cache la Poudre River, where they turn and head southeast into town and to our hotel, which is located between the Odell and New Belgium breweries. Handy!

The intermediate group heads to the south end of Horsetooth, before heading east across the south side of Fort Collins along bike paths to intersect the Cache la Poudre River bike trail; they then will head northwest to the hotel.



Day 8: Fort Collins (Saturday, October 8, 34.4 mi, 1,344 ft). A short and scenic morning ride through Fort Collins and the beautiful modern campus of CSU before we head back home. Shuttle to DIA or Denver provided.



Bottoms up on the beers and wheels down on the bikes!

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