

HeartCycle Bicycle Touring Club OLD MAN RIVER



- Dates:** Orientation meeting Friday, October 14, 2022. Riding Saturday, October 15 to Saturday, October 22, with departures Sunday, October 23 (lodging last night is included)
- Leaders:** Jim Schroeder, Scott MacCormack
- SAGs:** Mayoma Pendergast, Kathleen Schindler
- Miles:** 550 miles with 25,000 feet of climbing
- Rating:** Advanced
- Riders:** 30
- Price:** \$1660 (double occupancy), Single supplement is \$2490.
\$400 at registration, balance due by July 14, 2022
- Cancellation:** [Standard cancellation policy](#). *Trip insurance is advised.*

OVERVIEW

Ever since the days of Tom Sawyer, the mighty Mississippi River has always been known as “Old Man River.” This tour starts at the Gateway Arch in St Louis saluting all the pioneers that crossed the Mississippi to settle the West. We, on the other hand, will travel south along the river and cross over to Illinois and Kentucky, crossing the Old Man’s son, the Ohio River. All of this area is rich in Native American history. The rivers played an important part in this country’s economic growth, and the control of it was vital during the Civil War. Floods are commonplace and these rivers have changed their course many times.

Geographically, there is always a high side and low side, and the first couple of days in Missouri will be the high side. This means that the first couple of days will be the toughest of the tour with many short but steep uphill, so be ready!

Kentucky will greet you with some of the best country roads to ride on. The last days in Illinois will be flat, but I added a couple of climbs into the bluffs to break the monotony. Of course, riding this area in October is a gift to you—mother nature's colors.

Don't expect a lot of traffic out here as we travel from one county seat to another. Our day off will be in Paducah, Kentucky, which is home of the National Quilt Museum, and it has many restaurants and brewpubs along the old downtown beside the river.

No riding on the day off, as the next day is a century loop onto the Land Between the Lakes. However, there will be a 52-mile out and back for those less inclined!

As always, route maps with cue sheets are included along with RWGPS event links to all riders. Flashing red taillights and white front lights are strongly recommended in order to be seen by the locals. There will be some rechargeable USB ones available for use.

Bring clothes for both hot and cold weather. It should be dry, but rain is possible. We hope for it to be a crisp fall tour in order for those leaves to turn for us.

ITINERARY



Friday, October 14 is orientation at 8pm but please try to attend our 20-mile warmup ride to Forest Park, the site of The World's Fair in 1904, and now home to many museums, a zoo, and plenty of bike paths. Check out nearby Gateway Arch too.



Saturday, October 15. We head out and pass Busch Stadium, then the famed brewery district with its distinctive smells. Riding through Grant's Civil War Headquarters and its national cemeteries, one can contemplate our history. Finally, the hills of Missouri will challenge those legs of yours all the way to St Genevieve. (85 mi / 5286 ft climbing)



Sunday, October 16 will be more rolling as rich farmland takes over and we will be crossing the Trail of Tears before we reach Cape Girardeau. (82 - 86 mi / 4909 ft climbing))

Monday, October 17. We leave Missouri and head east into Illinois and south into Cairo, about as river town as one can get. This was quite the town during the age of steamboats and paddlewheelers. Yes, we get to cross that behemoth bridge over the Ohio River into Kentucky to Paducah. (79 - 82 mi / 2452 ft climbing)



Tuesday, October 18 is our day off at the Holiday Inn Riverfront. Close by is the National Quilt Museum and the old downtown. Our group dinner will be at the hotel.

Wednesday, October 19. We will have an opportunity to ride a century, or close to it. The Land Between the Lakes is not quite an island, but it sure feels like it. We'll be riding in the northernmost area of this quiet part of nature. I compare this with the rollers on the Natchez Trace. There is a 52-mile out & back, which is all west of the Land Between the Lakes. (99 mi / 5044 ft climbing)





Thursday, October 20. We cross north into Illinois on quite a long iron-grated bridge for a super ride to our morning food stop in Metropolis. Yep, this is the highlight of today's ride. Not much else through the wetlands of Southern Illinois to Anna. (60 mi / 2664 ft climbing)

Friday, October 21. We actually ride back into Missouri without crossing the Mississippi River at our morning stop. Walk all the way to the banks, and you'll see the Grand Tower Island. Afterwards, we climb inland just to make things exciting for lunch in Ava, and then more hills to Chester. (71 mi / 2664 ft climbing)



Saturday, October 22. Well, the first 20 miles will get your blood flowing either by climbing up the bluffs at mm15 or by looking at Modoc Shelter Rock at mm21. We finish the ride through East St Louis and cross the Mississippi River back to the Arch. (74 mi / 2230 ft climbing)

Any questions? Contact the tour leaders:

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