

## HeartCycle Bicycle Touring Club Puget Sound Island Hopping 2024

- Dates:** August 3, 4 - 11, 2024
- Leaders:** Cindy Alvarez, Helayn Storch
- SAGs:** Martha MacCormack, Danna Korak
- Miles:** Approximately 320 miles with up to 13,200 vertical feet
- Rating:** Intermediate /Advanced
- Riders:** 26
- Price:** \$2560 double occupancy, single supplement \$3840 deposit \$650, balance due by May 4, 2024. NOTE: Limited number of Single Supplements due to hotel availability.
- Cancellation:** Standard [cancellation policy](#) applies. **Travel insurance is strongly recommended.**



### OVERVIEW

Set your mind to Island Time! Sparkling blue waters and deep green forests, silence broken only by birdsong. This journey is a semi-fixed base tour, with only two hotels, La Conner WA, and Friday Harbor on San Juan Island.

We begin our journey in La Conner and end this tour at the ferry landing in Anacortes WA. La Conner is located on the Salish Sea between Seattle and Vancouver, BC in the Skagit Valley on the Swinomish channel. The center of town is a historic district and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. With three museums, a plethora of culinary spots, wine tastings, boutique shops, art galleries, and strolling along the waterfront there is plenty to see and do. We will be exploring the Skagit Valleys farmland roads and small cities. Criss crossing around Fidalgo Island and onto Whidbey Island and across the iconic Deception Pass Bridge. La Conner is approximately 80 miles, a 1½ hour drive, north from Sea-Tac airport. There is a shuttle service, BellAir Airporter Shuttle, with service between Sea-Tac and the Anacortes Ferry Landing, with stops in La Conner. We will be staying for 4 nights at the La Conner Inn, a lovely hotel which has been recently renovated and updated. It is in the center of the historic district with just a one block walk to the channel and all the restaurants and shops.



From La Conner we will travel across the Puget Sound via the Washington State Ferry system to San Juan Island and Friday Harbor. The 55 square mile island has something new around every bend. Iconic lighthouses, a 20-acre sculpture park, rows of lavender and alpaca farms. The opportunity to visit the National Historical Park – American and English Camps to learn about the island’s history and culture, as well as the 1859-1872 Pig War. Our day off will give you the opportunity to stroll around and visit

Friday Harbors’ art galleries, bookshops, and boutiques. Along with the Whale Museum, Museum of Art, and Historical Museum. Our 4 nights’ stay here will be at the Discovery Inn, also newly upgraded, on nearly 2 acres of park like grounds.

Day trips via the ferry will include a day on Orcas Island which is considered “The Emerald Isle”. With 57 square miles of curving rural roads, stunning shoreline, and a handful of charming hamlets where talented artisans abound. We will visit the 5,424-acre Moran State Park and have the chance to climb up Mt. Constitution, the highest peak in the islands at 2,409 feet.



Another day trip will be to Lopez Island, called “The Friendly Isle”. Just 29 pastoral square miles of rolling farmlands, serene woodlands, and picturesque open spaces. Although not flat, Lopez offers some of the Islands’ easier cycling terrain and less trafficked roads. Life here runs more slowly than the other islands.

The tour includes snacks and lunch on daily rides, dinner is on your own. Continental breakfast is included at the La Conner Inn. The Discovery Inn does not include breakfast which will be on your own. There will be one group dinner which is included in your registration fees. Detailed route maps, cue sheets and GPS files will be provided to tour participants. Route miles and climbing are approximate and include the following but may not be in this order:

**Please note that some routes have narrow roads with little or no shoulders.**

## **ITINERARY**

### **Day 1: Saturday August 3<sup>rd</sup> - Orientation.**

We will meet in the La Conner Inn's conference room for our orientation meeting at 5:00 pm. Get to explore the La Conner waterfront and its many restaurants & attractions.

### **Day 2: Sunday August 4<sup>th</sup> - Skagit Valley ramble. 56 miles, 936 ft.**

We will visit the backroads and countryside of Skagit Valley, with its small communities of Mt. Vernon, Conway and then along the bayside through Bay View and Whitney.

### **Day 3: Monday August 5<sup>th</sup> - Chuckanut and the Samish Bay. 61 miles, 1890 ft.**

Today we travel north and loop around Lake Samish then west to Chuckanut Road which hugs Bellingham Bay and Padilla Bay. Fantastic views of the expansive bays and the islands beyond. Please note that this is a very scenic but narrow road with traffic.

### **Day 4: Tuesday August 6<sup>th</sup> - Deception Pass. 56 miles, 3470 ft.**

Traveling out and around Fidalgo Island, we will visit Washington Park with its park loop views, not to be missed. Then across the Deception Pass Bridge onto Whidbey Island and back.

### **Day 5: Wednesday August 7<sup>th</sup> - Transfer Day. 21 miles, 852 ft.**

We will move our cars (if driving) to the Anacortes Ferry Landing Parking area. Or, if you flew in, you will ride your bike to the ferry. Taking our bikes onto the early ferry to Friday Harbor on San Juan Island where the rest of the day is yours to explore the sights of this idyllic small town. Our stay here is at the Discovery Inn. Our truck will transport your luggage.

### **Day 6: Thursday August 8<sup>th</sup> - San Juan Island exploration. 47 miles, 3262 ft.**

Staying on the island we will circumnavigate visiting many of the historical sights here. A stop at the Sculpture Garden, English Camp, American Camp, San Juan Island Historical Park.



**Day 7: Friday August 9<sup>th</sup> - Orcas Island and Mt. Constitution. 40 miles, 4693 ft.**

Taking an early ferry to Orcas Island, we will travel to Moran State Park. Here you will have the challenging option to climb Mt. Constitution, 2100 feet of climbing in 5 miles with an average gradient of 6 percent and small early sections of the climb reaching 13%. The views from the top are epic. Or you can continue to explore the island and return to the town of East Sound with its many galleries and shops. We will return to Friday Harbor on a late afternoon ferry.

**Day 8: Saturday August 10<sup>th</sup> - Lopez Island loop, 34 miles, 2222 ft.**

Again, today we will take an early ferry to Lopez Island, with its gentle grades and back road farmlands. We will visit Spencer Spit State Park, and Shark Reef Nature Trail. Traveling through the small and charming Lopez Island Village. Return via ferry to Friday Harbor for our final night at the Discovery Inn.



**Sunday August 11<sup>th</sup>** - Our last night's stay is included at the Discovery Inn. So, say goodbye to your new friends, gather up your memories and get back on the early ferry this morning. We will again cross the Puget Sound and end the trip at the Anacortes ferry landing where your cars or shuttle will be available.

**TRAVEL INFO:**

Fly into Sea-Tac Airport, located between Seattle and Tacoma WA.

BellAir Shuttle service link: [Airport shuttle stops](#) see main page for more info on pricing and times.

**SPECIAL NOTES:** Electric bicycles, please read the e-bike restrictions and guidelines on the HeartCycle website > Selecting a Tour and E-bike guidelines: <https://www.heartcycle.org/selecting-a-tour>. For those traveling from the Denver, CO area the Sprinter will be available to transport bicycles to/from La Conner/Anacortes.

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