

HeartCycle Bicycle Touring Club New York's Tug Hill and Thousand Islands Region

- Dates:** Orientation meeting Friday, May 15, 2026. Riding Saturday, May 16 – Saturday, May 23, with departure after the day's 50-mile ride on Saturday, May 23 (lodging last night excluded).
- Leaders:** Jim Bethell and Gail Golderman; **SAGs:** Mayoma Pendergast and Kathleen Schindler
- Miles:** Approximately 400 miles and 13,700 feet of elevation gain; 7 riding days and 1 rest day
- Rating:** Intermediate
<https://www.heartcycle.org/tour-ratings>
- Riders:** 28
- Price:** \$2,100 (double occupancy). \$500 due at registration. Balance due by February 14, 2026. Single supplement \$3,150.
- Cancellation:** [Standard cancellation policy](#)

Travel insurance is strongly recommended.

OVERVIEW

Please join us on this brand-new, semi-fixed base tour for HeartCycle in this beautiful area of Upstate New York. Experience the lightly traveled roads and scenic vistas, and cycle along the picturesque shores of the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario.



The Tug Hill and Thousand Islands Region is bordered on the east by Adirondack Park and on the west by the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario. Tug Hill is known for receiving the largest amounts of snowfall in the northeast due to the lake effect. Last year, the small village of Copenhagen received well over 250 inches and in one storm alone over 6 feet of snow fell. We will go through Copenhagen on our 2nd day; however, no need for snow gear—it should be green and pleasant by the time we get there. The St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario provide a major shipping channel from the Atlantic stretching all the way through the Great Lakes. During the War of 1812, the British came down through Canada and US troops manned forts along the St. Lawrence River to defend the largest inland port at the time. We will be visiting Sackets Harbor, Clayton, and Alexandria Bay where battles were fought and history was made.

This tour starts and ends in East Syracuse, NY, at a DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel that has an onsite restaurant and SYR Airport shuttle (call hotel to arrange transportation). <https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/syrdtdt-doubletree-syracuse/>

No bicycle transportation from the Denver metro area will be provided.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Saturday, May 16, 2026

East Syracuse to Boonville

61 miles and 2555 feet of elevation gain

The first day's ride will take us from Syracuse around Oneida Lake directly onto the Tug Hill Plateau where we'll stay at the Lodge at Headwaters.

<https://thelodgeatheadwaters.com/>

Day 2: Sunday, May 17

Boonville to Sackets Harbor

67 miles and 2121 feet of elevation gain

We'll traverse the east side of the Tug Hill Plateau north to Copenhagen, swinging back through the Tug Hill State Forest before dropping down to Sackets Harbor at Lake Ontario for a



2-night stay at the Sackets Harbor House Inn.

<https://www.sacketsharborhouseinn.com/>



Day 3: Monday, May 18
Sackets Harbor loop ride
40 miles and 1120 feet of elevation gain

Today's shortish leg-stretching ride will be in the areas of Black River Bay and Guffin Bay before returning to Sackets Harbor.

Day 4: Tuesday, May 19

Sackets Harbor to Clayton

52 miles and 1792 feet of elevation gain

We'll ride north following the Black and Perch Rivers towards Alexandria Bay before swinging back south to Clayton for a 2-night stay at the Thousand Islands Harbor Hotel and Resort. <https://www.1000islandsharborhotel.com/>

Day 5: Wednesday, May 20

Rest day in Clayton

You will find plenty to do in Clayton. You can take a boat ride on the St. Lawrence River to Boldt Castle, a popular tourist destination, or take a ferry to Grindstone



Island. If you choose to stay in town, you'll find unique shops and history to explore. You could take a short ride down to Tibbits Point Lighthouse where

the St. Lawrence River meets Lake Ontario. Or you may choose to just hang out at the resort.

Day 6: Thursday, May 21

Clayton to Altmar

60 miles and 2182 feet of elevation gain

Out of historic Clayton we'll ride southeast, traversing the Tug Hill Plateau on our way to Altmar. We will travel through farmlands and the Salmon River region, one of the most popular fly-fishing areas in upstate NY. Once in Altmar, we will be staying 2 nights at the Tailwater Lodge, a Hilton property right on the Salmon River. Once a School House has now been converted to a resort spa with a full restaurant and banquet/meeting rooms. We will have our group dinner here on our 1st night. www.tailwaterlodge.com

Day 7: Friday, May 22

Altmar loop ride

56 miles and 2757 feet of elevation gain

Today's ride is a clockwise loop around the Salmon River Reservoir region with quiet, lightly traveled roads throughout the many state forests; unfortunately, bathrooms will be scarce. We will return at the end of the day for our 2nd night at Tailwater Lodge.



Day 8: Saturday, May 23***Altmar to East Syracuse***

50 miles and 1557 feet of elevation gain

As we ride south out of the Salmon River region, we will be enjoying more of the many state forests on the Tug Hill Plateau while on our way back to the DoubleTree Inn. We'll say our goodbyes to those who have driven or are flying out that afternoon.

SPECIAL NOTES:

For those that need to stay overnight due to flight availability or want to explore the region further, a block of rooms has been reserved at the DoubleTree. Please contact Jim for a link to reserve and pay for a room for yourself at the HeartCycle rate. That night is not included in your tour registration fee.

For more information contact:

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