

# **Diverse Directions: Self-Guided Cycling Tours in Vermont**

## **Vermont Gay Get-Away Tour Itinerary**

Arrival Day: Arrive Brattleboro - Sightsee, Attend Orientation, Dine, Relax - Spend 1 or more nights.

We ask all tour participants to arrive in Brattleboro on Sunday by 5:00 pm and to attend an orientation session at 6:15 pm.

Brattleboro is a lively southern Vermont arts and cultural center ideal for window shopping, gallery hopping, people watching, participating in a walking tour, canoeing on the Connecticut River, hiking the trails of the Brattleboro Retreat or visiting the Retreat's Petting Farm, buying Vermont handcrafts, relaxing over a locally brewed beer, catching a movie or some live music, and of course, enjoying any one of a variety of exciting eateries and fine restaurants.

Accommodation options for your stay in Brattleboro include a downtown 1930's art deco style hotel, several lovely bed and breakfasts, and for the budget-minded, a variety of motels.

Required Cycling Day 1: Bike Pick-Up & Fitting - Cycle from Brattleboro to Newfane - Distance: 26 miles - Spend 1 or more nights in Newfane.

Following breakfast you will pick-up and test ride your bicycle and then begin your first day's journey from Brattleboro to Newfane via the Townshend State Park.

Following the crystal clear waters of the West River, you'll pass cascading waterfalls and the Dummerston Covered Bridge, the first of five historic covered bridges may see on this tour, and Vermont's longest covered bridge still in use. As you hug the river's edge you'll bypass Newfane (returning to it later), pass the Winchester Stables, and wind your way through the picturesque village of Townshend. From there you'll cycle through the Townshend State Park via the Scott Covered Bridge!

Along your way today, you'll be tempted to stop (and we encourage you to do so) to sample locally grown produce and, of course, our world famous Vermont cheeses and maple products. But save time for horseback riding at the stables, swimming in the refreshing waters of the West River at the Townshend Lake Recreational Area, shopping for teddy bears at the world famous Mary Meyer's Teddy Bear Store, or hiking to the summit of Bald Mountain in Townshend State Park.

You'll conclude today's journey with a visit to Newfane, the loveliest of Windham County's so-called 18th Century "White Villages" and finally, cycle on to where you'll retreat for 2 days of gay Vermont summer fun.

Accommodation options for your stay in Newfane include a traditional inn, a men-only bed & breakfast / massage oasis, a gay-owned stand-alone tourist accommodation, and an economy motel.

Optional Free Day(s) in Newfane - Cycle (optional), Hike, Swim, Sunbathe, Play in the Woods, Relax

Whether you choose to retreat to our featured men-only, clothing-optional bed & breakfast and massage oasis atop Newfane Hill or a more private, gay-owned accommodation a short hiking distance to the Rock River's famous gay nude swimming hole and wooded cruise area, your two-night stay in Newfane will delight your senses from head to toe in a uniquely southern Vermont way.

Time and energy permitting, you may wish to return to Townshend State Park and/or the Townshend Lake Recreational Area for more hiking. Trails in both parks offer outstanding views of the entire West River Valley.

Required Cycling Day 2: Cycle from Newfane to Wilmington - Distance: 27 miles - Spend 1 or more nights in Wilmington.

Not long after the start of your journey from Newfane to Wilmington you'll pass through the sleepy village of Williamsville, cycling through its tiny picturesque Williamsville Covered Bridge. From there you will

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venture far off-the-beaten path into a dense forest down a tiny, dirt road. For many miles, you'll be surrounded by the sights, sounds, and aromas of unspoiled woodlands interrupted only by the babbling streams and brooks running through them.

Departing the shaded canopy of the forest, you will abruptly begin a challenging climb up Hogback Mountain. After conquering the Hogback, you'll be rewarded with its locally famous "100 Mile View" followed by an exhilarating 4-mile descent into the fun and lively village of Wilmington.

In Wilmington you'll find a myriad of boutiques, coffee shops, brew pubs with live music, and lots of wonderful restaurants!

Accommodation options for your stay in Wilmington include several very well-appointed inns, two charming bed & breakfasts, and two unique motels.

Optional Free Day(s) in Wilmington - Cycle (optional), Hike, Swim, Sunbathe, Hook-Up, Kayak, Tour a Winery or Maple House, Shop, Relax, Dine

For your rest day in Wilmington you'll have a variety of options from which to choose, including a scenic bike ride on a retired rail bed along the western shore of beautiful Lake Whitingham (also known as the Harriman Reservoir) and / or an exploration of the lake's crystal clear waters and pristine shoreline in a rented canoe or kayak.

Should you need a break from the saddle however, you may choose instead to visit "The Ledges", another uniquely Vermont gathering place for gay men featuring more naked fun in the sun on Lake Whitingham. From sunbathing and swimming to enjoying a picnic and hooking-up, you're sure to be rejuvenated by this excursion.

Or, you may find that a visit to a local winery for a free tour and wine-tasting and / or a visit to a local Sugar Maple House is in order.

However you choose to spend your free day in Wilmington, be sure to set aside some time to relax -- many accommodations offer pools and spa facilities -- and to explore Wilmington's eclectic mix of shops, boutiques and fun places to eat and drink!

Required Cycling Day 3: Cycle from Wilmington to Brattleboro - Distance: 27 miles - Return Bicycle - Spend 1 or more nights in Brattleboro.

For your journey from Wilmington back to Brattleboro, you'll have two distinctively beautiful routes from which to choose (your route instructions will include additional information for selecting the route that's best for you.)

Our "southern route" is a bucolic delight featuring quiet, winding, dirt roads through rich woodlands and working farms (many of them organic). You'll cycle under the canopy of magnificent maple trees and follow the path of the meandering Green River until you reach the romantic Green River Covered Bridge. Entering Brattleboro via its foothills, you'll pass through the fifth historic covered bridge of your tour, the old-world Creamery Bridge.

On the other hand, our "northern route" features sights that fill the pages of classic Vermont wall calendars! From the quintessential Vermont town of Dover to the colorful wooded hillsides of your long and thrilling descent back into the West River Valley, these final images of the Vermont countryside will stay with you for a lifetime.

In Brattleboro, you'll return your bicycle, shop for keepsakes made by Vermont artisans and enjoy a final evening of fine dining and entertainment before heading home.