

HEARTCYCLE BICYCLE TOURING CLUB BIG BEND-THE FORGOTTEN PARK TOUR

Dates: Orientation meeting Saturday evening, May 4, 2019;
Ride May 5-11; Departure May 12, 2019

Leaders: Nate Dick & Larry Harris; SAGs Kathleen Schindler & Carol Nies

Rating: Intermediate/Advanced- 50-78 miles with 2,000 to 6,000'
of climbing

Riders: 30 plus leaders and sags

Price: Total: \$1950.00 (double occupancy); \$400.00 at
registration. Balance due February 1, 2019
Single Supplement fee \$975.00 (subject to room availability)
Standard cancellation policy applies
Travel insurance is strongly recommended

OVERVIEW

Join us for Texas' best bike tour! You can ride and explore one of the last remaining wild corners of the United States, experiencing unmatched sights, and solitude. See abundant wildlife, smell the creosote bush, listen for the scream of a mountain lion, and gaze at the stars. This tour goes through the Chisos Mountains, winds along the Rio Grande on the famous Camino del Rio, and through the Big Bend National Park. Your tour group will visit the McDonald Observatory, (a major astronomical research facility), explore the ghost towns of Terlingua and Shafter, and see the mysterious lights of Marfa. On the rest day, you can hike the many trails of Big Bend or just sit back and enjoy the beauty. Many nights are spent in small historic hotels with charm and good food. The Big Bend and surrounding country is yours to discover.

WEATHER

The average temperature range is from 40 to 90 degrees as we explore terrain including mountains, foothills, riversides and deserts.

TRAVEL & LODGING

The first day of tour lodging is Saturday, May 4, 2019 in Marfa, Texas. The last night included is Saturday, May 11, 2019 in Ft. Davis, Texas.

If flying, fly to either El Paso, Tx or Midland-Odessa, Tx. Both are approximately 190 miles (3 hours) from our starting and ending towns.

You may rent a car from either airport to get to Marfa. There is free parking for the week. The leaders can help to coordinate those who are arriving about the same time to carpool to Marfa on Saturday.

Bikes may be transported from Denver and return for \$100.00.

Day One: May 4th, 2019 - arrive at Marfa, Texas

Accommodations: El Paisano Hotel

A city in the high desert of the Trans-Pecos in far west Texas. Founded in early 1880's as a railroad stop. Marfa is a tourist destination and a major center for minimalist art.

It is famous for the mysterious Marfa lights. We will be staying in the El Paisano Hotel which is listed on the National Register of Historic Landmarks. The hotel housed many of the film crew of the movie "Giant" which was filmed in and around Marfa.

Day Two: May 5th, 2019 -Marfa to Presidio, 60 miles/1900 feet

Accommodations: Three Palms Inn

The Burro and Chinati mountains line the 59 mile route from Marfa to the border town of Presidio. The scenery consists of large cattle ranches and the ghost town of Shafter.

Presidio, a small city of 2.6 sq. miles, is located near the confluence of the Rio Conchos and Rio Grande Rivers. Across the Rio Grande from Presidio is the city of Ojinaga, Mexico.

Day Three: May 6th, 2019 - Presidio to Lajitas, 50 miles/2850 feet

Accommodations: Lajitas Resort

Today is one of the shortest but hardest rides of the tour. We follow the Rio Grande River with numerous dry creek beds crossing the road, short steep drops, wide flat bottoms, and steep climbs up the other side. We ride over the "Big Hill" which is one of the steepest sections of road in Texas; 15% grade for one mile. A National Geographic writer once called this road "the prettiest drive in all America". The trail ends in Lajitas, an authentically re-created old western town.

Day Four: May 7th, 2019 - Lajitas to Chisos Basin in Big Bend National Park, 62 miles/ 6110 feet

Accommodations: Chisos Mountain Lodge

This route takes us through the Ghost Town of Terlingua before entering the Big Bend National Park. In Terlingua you will find old decaying buildings, mine shafts, ruins, tall tales, crotchety old timers and a few semi-friendly rattlesnakes. In the past few years it has been slightly revitalized. It is a must stop-over to visit. To enter the basin we must climb 5 miles with 6 to 8% grade. The Chisos Mountain Lodge has a breath-taking view of the spectacular mountain range.

Day Five: May 8th, 2019 - Rest Day

Accommodations: Chisos Mountain Lodge

There is much to do this day or you can do nothing. You can hike to the Lost Mine or the South Rim or the Window, all of which offer panoramic mountain and desert views from high atop the peaks of the Chisos Mountains. And, if you really want to ride, you may climb out of the Basin and either ride to the Rio Grande Village or to Castolon and then return.

Day Six: May 9th, 2019 -Chisos Basin to Marathon, 78 miles/2840 feet

Accommodations: Gage Hotel

Cattle ranches populate the area into Marathon, The ranches in this area are sized by sections, not acres. The town of Marathon was once a major shipping outlet for cattle.

The Gage Hotel was built in 1927 as headquarters for Alfred Gage. Guests are surrounded by reminders of Indian influence. Guest rooms in the original hotel, as well as the new addition, hold interesting artifacts and antique furnishings.

Day Seven : May 10th, 2019 - Marathon to Ft. Davis, 54 miles/2090 feet

Accommodations: Limpia Hotel

Today, we will ride through the beautiful community of Alpine, a tree-abundant oasis in the Chihuahuan Desert and on to Ft. Davis. Ft. Davis was founded in 1854 and protected by the U.S. Army Post of the same name. It is located in the heart of the Davis Mountains. There are many remnants of the past sprinkled around the town, which add to its unique flavor. We will spend two nights here.

Day Eight: May 11th, 2019 - Observatory Scenic Loop ,75 miles/4150 feet

Accommodations: Limpia Hotel

Along this route is the McDonald Observatory. It is one of the preeminent observatories in the world. The mountain top complex consists of five telescopes, one of which is the second largest in the world. There are guided and self-guided tours throughout the day. Evening programs are also offered. If you are up to it and wish to ride from the visitor center to one of the observatories, you will ride a 17% grade. Have fun!

The route from the Observatory goes from miles of alpine trees to the desert, and passes by Mount Livermore, the tightest peak in the Davis Mountains.

Day Nine: May 12th, 2019 - departure from Fort Davis

We pack-up and say our good byes to our old and newly acquainted friends.

For further information contact Nate Dick npdick@gmail.com or Larry Harris thepedalers@aol.com