

Columbia Gorge Explorer '14 Itinerary and Points of Interest

updated 2/15/2014

Day #	Day	Date	Start	End	Mileage=232
1	Fri	5/23/2014	Vancouver, WA	Home Valley Co.Pk	51
2	Sat	5/24/2014	Home Valley Co.Pk	Deschutes River St.Pk.	63
3	Sun	5/25/2014	Deschutes RiverSt.Pk	Viento St.Pk	54
4	Mon	5/26/2014	Viento St.Pk	Vancouver, WA	64

© 2001-3, J. O'Horo all rights reserved

Day 1: Vancouver, WA to Home Valley, WA Approx. dist.: 51 mi. Est. riding time @ 12 mph: 5 hrs. Our route travels east from Vancouver on city & county roads, through Camas & Washougal to Washougal River Rd. where we turn north and then east passing north of Cape Horn to join Hwy. 14 east of the Cape. This route, though a few miles longer than getting on Hwy. 14 at Washougal, has less total climbing, and what there is has a gentler grade. We also avoid heavy truck traffic with little or no shoulder on that segment of Hwy. 14. The price is sacrifice of a fine view of Beacon Rock looking east up the Columbia Gorge. Once on Hwy. 14 we follow it with a few relatively flat side loops to take advantage of views, possible attractions and get an occasional break from hwy. traffic. The day ends at a small county park campground (More info. at <http://www.skamania.org/>) with flush toilets, sink, NO SHOWERS, on the south side of Hwy. 14. Home Valley Park is a non-alcoholic facility.

Attractions along the way (in the order encountered):

1. Prindle School: an historic one-room schoolhouse.
2. Franz Lake wildlife area: a viewing platform overlooking a wetland waterfowl reserve. No fee.
3. St. Cloud: abandoned farmstead and old apple orchard. Interpretive area, gravel paths, tables restroom, view of Multnomah Falls. No fee.
4. Doetsch Ranch: day use area, restroom, water, interpretive signs, paved ADA trail. No fee.
5. Beacon Rock State Park: state park with camping, flush toilets & showers includes 600 ft. Beacon Rock, the world's 2nd largest monolith – only Gibraltar is larger. Bring a stout lock for your bike if you're going to sight see here! Parking lot thievery has been a persistent problem here. More WA State Park info. at: www.parks.wa.gov
6. Sams-Walker Nature Area: an easy walk through wildflower meadows to views of the Gorge and an old farmsite. No fee.
7. Bonneville Hot Springs Resort: 1 mile off the main route. (509) 427-7767 More info. at www.bonnevilleresort.com/
8. Ft. Cascades National Historic Site: day use area, 1.5 mi. gravel interpretive trail, picnic tables. No fee.
9. Bonneville Dam: national historic landmark with interpretive exhibits & fish ladder with underwater viewing windows. No fee. Info. on current activities & possible security restrictions at: www.nwd.usace.army.mil On the map, click on Portland District, and then on Recreation. Must be entered from Dam Access Rd., NOT directly from SR-14. No fee.
10. Columbia Gorge Interpretive Ctr./Skamania County Museum: exhibits include historical fishing & forestry, a multimedia show explaining the geologic origins of the Columbia River Gorge, Native American artifacts, WWII memorabilia and the world's largest rosary collection (a good spot to stop & pray for no rain). Stop to learn about She Who Watches (See also Day 2, Attraction #4 below). Website: www.columbiagorge.org Admission: \$7.00
11. Rock Creek Park 710 SW Rock Creek Dr. Adjacent to Skamania Co. Fairgrounds has available camping and coin Operated showers. Next campground is Home Valley Pk., 8 mi, has no showers.

Day 2: Home Valley, WA to Deschutes River State Rec. Area www.oregonstateparks.org Approx. dist.: 63 mi., (72 mi. if riding up the Maryhill Loops Rd.) Est. riding time @ 12 mph: 5 hrs., 6 hrs. with options. The route continues east from Home Valley on Hwy. 14, passing through Bingen. A side loop on Old Hwy 8 parallels Hwy. 14 for several miles, traveling on a bluff overlooking the Columbia & passing several attractions along the way to Lyle. After Lyle the route continues east beyond US97 to Stonehenge Rd. for the steep descent to the river, returns to US97 and turns south & west. The day ends at Deschutes River State Rec. Area (showers & flush toilets in the main restrooms near the park entrance) 4 miles after crossing the Columbia River.

Attractions along the way (in the order encountered):

1. Bingen: a small town organized around a Bavarian theme. More info. at: www.skamania.org
2. Gorge Heritage Museum, 202 E Humbolt, Bingen (509) 493-3228/(509) 493-3573. Summer hours: Th–Sun, 11A–4:30P
3. Coyote Wall Hiking/Mountain Bike Trail: A 3-mile climb to wildflower meadows & a spectacular view from 1,800 ft. above the river MTB's allowed but must stay on path.. This spot is visible from the Mosier tunnels on the opposite side of the river. See also article in Oregonian, 3/28/04 page T5 by Terry Richard. More info. from Friends of the Columbia Gorge 503-241-3762 No fee.
4. Catherine Creek Natural Area: Walking paths & interpretive displays with Columbia River overlook. No fee.
5. Balfour-Klickitat hiking trail: an easy 1-mile hike through an old homestead. See also article in Oregonian, 4/29/07 page T6 by Terry Richard. No fee.
6. Columbia Hills State Park (formerly Horsethief Lake SP): camping, flush toilets, NO showers. On Fridays & Saturdays @ 10:00AM the park offers guided interpretive hikes to see petroglyphs, including one of She Who Watches I. See also articles in Oregonian, 3/28/04 page T1 by Terry Richard and Columbian, 5/16/04 page D1 by Kathie Durbin. No sandals, allow 2 hrs. Reservation required – call the park office at 509-767-1159. More WA State Park info. at: www.parks.wa.gov 1 Columbia Hills SP, a National Historic Site, offers guided tours (25 person limit) of pictographs If you reach answering machine, leave message with: group size, date(s) desired, your name & phone number. If no return call, call again. NO TOUR without prior verbal confirmation from a ranger. RESERVE AT LEAST 3 DAYS AHEAD - tours fill fast.
7. Maryhill Museum: the heart of the day's sightseeing: fine art exhibits with many paintings by Rodin, Russian religious icons, collection of antique chess sets, Native American artifacts, antique toy collection, interpretive exhibits. Website: www.maryhillmuseum.org See also 3 articles in Oregonian, 10/21, 10/28 & 11/4/01 by John Terry. Admission: \$9.00
8. Maryhill Loops Rd.: restored for bike & ped. use in 1998. Climbs 850 ft. with 5% max. grade. Find out more about this life-size preserved engineering experiment zone at the Maryhill Museum. See also articles by John Terry listed above. No fee.
9. Stonehenge Memorial: replica of the British original dedicated to WWI troupes. See also articles by John Terry listed above. No fee.
10. Maryhill St. Park: camping, flush toilets, showers. More WA State Park info. at: www.parks.wa.gov
11. Deschutes River State Rec. Area: hiking trails and birdwatching info. Campground, showers. No fee for hiking, 17 mi. MTB trail. See also article in Oregonian, 3/31/02, p. T7. More OR State Park info. at: www.oregonstateparks.org

Day 3: Deschutes River State Rec. Area to Viento State Park. More OR State Park info at: www.oregonstateparks.org Approx. dist.: 54 mi. Est. riding time @ 12 mph: 5 hrs. Today we travel west following Frontage Rd. to Celilo where we join I-84 until The Dalles. At The Dalles we exit at the marina and follow the River Trail to the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center/Wasco County Museum, then join Hwy. 30, the old Historic Hwy. and follow it through Hood River. At the west end of Hood River we reenter I-84 for the last few miles to the end of the day at Viento State Park (showers). Two large climbs between The Dalles and Hood River can be avoided by traveling on I-84, but lost in the process are some of the most spectacular scenic vistas of the tour. Also missed will be the chance to see some local wildlife - there are rattlesnakes in the area near the Mosier tunnels. Don't be pokin' yer hands into dark holes around here, and watch where ye're steppin'!

Attractions along the way (in the order encountered):

1. Celilo Rest Area: interpretive exhibits explaining Native American fishing history at the falls. Camping (8-10 tables) – water, toilets but sprinklers come on EVERY night. No fee.
2. Rock Fort, a Lewis & Clark historical site. No fee.
3. Columbia Gorge Discovery Center/Wasco County Museum, 5000 Discovery Dr., The Dalles, just off Hwy. 30 west of town. Website: www.gorgediscovery.org Admission: \$8.00
4. Rowena Crest: spectacular climb up the Rowena loops ends at a high bluff overlooking the Columbia. Interpretive plant exhibits & walking path. No fee.
5. Mosier tunnels: tunnels blasted through and along cliff face high above the Columbia. More info. at: www.oregonstateparks.org or at: www.traveloregon.com No fee.
6. Hatfield interpretive center: a building housing displays of historic and cultural interest regarding the Historic Hwy. More info. at: www.oregonstateparks.org or at: www.traveloregon.com No fee.

7. Hood River County Museum, Port Marina Park, Hood River (541) 386-6772. Summer hours: 10A–4P Mon–Sat, 12P–4P Sun.

8. HCRH State Trail fr. Viento St. Pk. to Starvation Ck. St. Pk. Flat out & back section of the original HCRH. Interpretive exhibits @ Starvation Ck. 2.3 miles round trip. No fee.

In addition to all of the above there are tourist attractions beyond counting in both The Dalles and Hood River.

Day 4: Viento State Park to Vancouver Approx. dist.: 64 mi. Est. riding time @ 12 mph: 5.5 hrs.

The tour continues west on I-84 for 8 mi., exits and travels through Cascade Locks, passing under the Bridge of the Gods. We reenter I-84, exit again at Warrendale and follow the Historic Hwy. to Troutdale. From Troutdale we follow local roads to the I-205 bridge, re-cross the Columbia River and return to the start. As with Day 3, the hills on the Historic Hwy. can be avoided by staying on I-84, but again, the price is loss of scenic views and attractions.

Attractions along the way (in the order encountered):

1. Cascade Locks Historical Museum, Port Marine Park, Cascade Locks (541) 374-8535. Main focus is on paddlewheel steamers which once plied the Columbia River. Summer hours: M–Th noon to 5P, Fri & Sat 10A–5P, Sun 11A-5P.
2. 7 named waterfalls between Ainsworth and the start of the climb up to Crown Point.
3. USFS exhibits at Multnomah Falls. No fee.
4. Crown Point/Vista House: views of the Columbia Gorge. Historic displays. No fee. More OR State Park info. at: www.oregonstateparks.org
5. Women’s Forum Park: views from the west end of the Gorge. No fee. More OR State Park info. at: www.oregonstateparks.org
6. Harlow House Museum (built in 1900), 726 E Historic Columbia River Hwy, Troutdale,
7. Rail Depot Museum (built in 1907), 473 E Historic Columbia River Hwy, Troutdale. Summer hours for both: June–Sept, Wed–Sat, 10A–4P; Sun 1P–4P.