



Biking the Eastern Townships & Route Verte of Quebec

The Eastern Townships include the historical region of south-eastern Quebec that was first inhabited by the native Abenaki people. After the American Revolution in the late 1700's, Loyalists (people living in America loyal to the British crown) moved into the area and were granted 200 acre lots. Now the area is the playground for Montrealers, home to people looking for a more laid back lifestyle and a year round tourist destination.

The area lies south of the St. Lawrence River and roughly one hour east of Montreal by car. To the south, is the United States, specifically the State of Vermont. There are lots of small towns including some of Quebec's Most Beautiful Villages. The largest city in the townships is Sherbrooke with a population of 151,000. The city is located close to the midway point on the Chemin des Cantons, a driving and on- road biking route through the townships.

The Eastern Townships are a year round vacation destination with lots of outdoor activities for both summer and winter. Obviously you've bought this biking itinerary but if downhill or cross country skiing appeal or skating and snowmobiling then you might consider the region from December until late March.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- Beautiful, rolling farm country
- Some of Quebec's Most Beautiful Villages
- Scenic wine country and wine tastings
- Fall colours in September and October
- St. Benoit du Lac Abbey – for the setting, architecture, cider and cheeses
- Excellent cuisine
- Francophone culture and friendly people
- Quiet cycling along The Green Route
- Small cafes with excellent coffee and pastries
- Well appointed and friendly B&B's with the option of 5 star accommodation

A week long bike trip in the Eastern Townships on a combination of mostly quiet backroads and dedicated bike paths is a great way to get a sense of the place and the delightful locals. La Route Verte, otherwise known as The Green Route, traverses the area for a total of 225 kilometres and could be accomplished over a long weekend. Then there are additional loops to cycle which include the wine region, the hilly but beautiful ski country near Sutton, a ride on both sides of Lake Memphremagog which can incorporate a side trip to Saint Benoit's Abbey, a visit to Stanstead on the US/Canada border to admire the magnificent 19th century buildings and the towns of Ayer's Cliff and North Hatley on Lake Massawippi.

Late spring, summer and early fall are the best times

to visit if this is going to be a cycling only trip. The accommodation options range from B&B's to small inns to five star resorts that are worth a few days stay themselves. Restaurants are generally excellent and have an ever increasing focus on the large assortment of locally produced food. This area is famous for its cheeses, apples, pates, Brome Lake duck, and a wide variety of maple products.

ITINERARY OVERVIEW

Presented below is a quick overview of the itinerary followed in later sections with the full details of the trip.

Day 0

Arrive in Magog and take time to explore the waterfront and the lively downtown. Pick up your rental bike before the bike store closes.

Day 1

Leave Magog by heading west along The Green Route through Mount Orford National Park towards Granby, about 82 kms away.

Day 2

Continue cycling along the Green Route to Farnham. Then head for the wine route and some of Quebec's Most Beautiful Villages. Take time for a few wine tastings. Spend the night in Lac Brome (Knowlton), a village that entreats you to wander. Today's distance is 112 kms.

Day 3

It is an ambitious day (with 95 kms planned) which starts by heading to the Sutton area, one of Quebec's finest ski resorts. The cycling is hilly but very scenic. Cycle along Lake Memphremagog but stop at Saint Benoit's Abbey to pay your respects and

purchase some cheese. Continue back to Magog, your home for the night.

Day 4

Head south along Lake Memphremagog to the village of Stanstead on the border with Vermont. You'll cycle through Georgeville and past the summer homes of Canada's 'bluebloods', then past a covered bridge and a lavender farm. You will have time to try the locally made honey wine. It's a very short day of only 43 kms.

Day 5

Head north on quiet roads to the small towns of Ayer's Cliff and North Hatley both of which are on Lake Massawippi. It's an easy 38 kms of cycling so there is plenty of time to poke around antique shops and galleries.

Day 6

Pick up the Green Route again and cycle through peaceful countryside to Lennoxville, through Sherbrooke and along the St. Francis River to Richmond. Continue to Danville, a pretty town close to asbestos mining country. It's roughly 90 kms of mostly flat cycling.

Day 7

It's another long day with a minimum of 106 mostly flat kilometers. Retrace your steps to Sherbrooke and then continue onto Magog, either by remaining on the Green Route from start to finish, but a pleasant and shorter option is to turn off in Sherbrooke and continue on bike paths to meet up with the Green Route in Rock Forest. Return your bike and enjoy one of the excellent Magog restaurants before embarking on the next leg of your journey.

Getting to Magog

Montreal is easily reached by air from all major Canadian cities and most major American cities. From Montreal you can take a bus or arrange a private transfer to Magog or Granby.

Visit www.transdev.ca for the bus schedule to Granby, Magog and Sherbrooke. It is a 1¼ hours ride by bus for a price of \$30.75 to Magog, taxes included.

Limousine services are relatively expensive for one person travelling though most limo services can transport four plus people making it a practical alternative. Expect pricing in the \$180-\$220 range for the trip from Magog directly to the airport or a hotel in Montreal or vice versa. Contact one of the following:

MONTREAL QUARTZ LIMO

www.montrealquartzlimo.com/

Ph: 866-737-5466 or 514-878-2789

MONTREAL LIMO

www.montreallimousine.ca/

Ph: 514-875-5466

MONTREAL LIMOUSINE WORLDWIDE

www.montrealworldwidelimo.com/

Ph: 877-679-7674

Bike rentals

VELOGARE

www.velogare.com

71 Denison Street East, Granby Ph: 450-777-4438

They rent by the hour, day and week but are quite disorganized. I was quoted 3 prices by three different people so expect to pay between \$20-\$30 per day based on a weekly rental. You will need to bring everything but the bike rack. I found them to be very unhelpful. Little things like filling a water bottle weren't even done in the store. They suggested going to McDonalds to do that. No maps were provided either.

SKI VELO

www.skivelo.com

39 rue Principale Ouest, Magog Ph: 819-843-4277

They rent bikes by the hour, day and week. A weekly rental will be \$119 plus tax and will include a lock and helmet. The Green Route is only a few blocks away.

Magog Accommodation

LA MAISON DREW

www.maisondrew.com

206 des Pins Ph: 888-639-9941

Rooms are large, hosts are very helpful and the B&B is in an area of gracious, older homes, only a few blocks from downtown. Rates are \$90-\$110 per night.

AU MANOIR DE LA RUE MERRY

www.manoirmerry.com

92 rue Merry sud Ph: 800-450-1860 or 819-868-1860

They are only a few minutes from the restaurants and downtown area. Enjoy an in-ground pool in the summer and helpful hosts. Breakfasts are delicious. Rates are \$95-\$120 per night.

LA MAISON DE VILLE

www.lamaisondeville.ca/

353, rue St- Patrice Ouest Ph: 819-868-2417

Rooms are \$83-\$128 per night. It is given very good reviews on Trip Advisor.



HOTEL DU GRAND LAC

www.grandlac.com/

40 Merry Sud Ph: 800-267-4039 or 819-847-4039

The hotel is located just a few minutes away from the beach. Rates are \$128-\$198 per night.

Magog Restaurants

The choice is astounding for a small center. Consider any one of the following found in close proximity in downtown Magog. There are many additional restaurants.

PANIER PIC-NIC

362, rue Principale Ouest Ph: 819-843-9111

Buy roast chicken and beef, homemade soups, hot and cold sandwiches and tarts and cakes. Great place to pick up lunch supplies for the next day's ride.

AU GARDE-MANGER DE MARIE-PIERRE

460, rue Principale Ouest Ph: 819-843-0030

A small place specializing in Québécois products.

B&G SMOKED MEAT FACTORY

290, suite B, Principale Ouest Ph: 819-847-5077

BOULANGERIE OWL'S BREAD

www.owlsbread.com

428 Principale Ph: 819-847-1987

Traditional French bakery plus pates, cheeses and chocolate cake.

PIAZZETTA

www.lapiazzetta.ca

399, rue Principale Ouest Ph: 819-843-4044

Excellent gourmet thin crust pizza to take out or eat in.

LES PECHES DE PINOCCHIO

www.lespechesdepinocchio.com

469, rue Principale ouest Ph: 819-868-8808

Playful menu with traditional dishes reinvented.

LE MARTINBEAULT,

341, rue Principale Ouest. Ph: 819-843-3182

Try them for French and Italian food.

GUACAMOLE Y TEQUILA

www.guacamoleytequila.com

112 rue Principale

Ph: 819-868-0088

A very busy place and an instant hit with locals and tourists alike. A family run restaurant serving excellent authentic, beautifully presented Mexican food.

Francois Tourigny runs a gourmet restaurant called Table Tourigny, near Georgeville, that is considered by some to be a once in a lifetime experience. Reserve ahead by calling 819-868-2894 (wait for the English message if you first get French). The restaurant is found south of Magog on Highway 247, north of Georgeville on the east side. You can bring your own wine. Perhaps a group of people could hop in a taxi and share the costs!



Magog Activities

When most people arrive in Magog for the first time they are very pleasantly surprised by the town. It is young, dynamic, vibrant and teeming with things to do – certainly not what I expected. Here is a smattering of activities outside of the obvious cycling.

TROISIÈRE GUIDE EN PIROGUES

Ph: 819-574-0039

This is a guided boat trip on Lake Memphremagog that runs from June until October. You ride in a small covered boat for \$15 per hour or \$20 for the 1 1/2 hour sunset cruise. Wine is served on this one and it is very popular!!

LES EXCURSIONS L'AIR DU LAC

www.lairdulac.com

Ph: 819-345-7450

This company runs boat trips, fishing trips and even a trip for the cycling enthusiast. You can bring your bike on board and 1 hour later you will be let off at the Abbey. From there you can cycle back the 18 kms to Magog. That price is \$22.

ORFORD EXPRESS TOURIST TRAIN

www.orfordexpress.com

Ph: 866-575-8081 or 819-575-8081

The train operates from early May until late October and offers a variety of gourmet meals whilst enjoying the scenic countryside between Sherbrooke (where you need to board) and Eastman, west of Magog.

DAY 1 — Magog to Granby

Pick up picnic supplies or snacks in Magog or Orford because there is nothing until you reach Waterloo.

TOTAL DISTANCE

About 82 kms (51 miles)

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Moderate through Mount Orford National Park; easy after you are through the park.

HIGHLIGHTS

Lovely ride through Mount Orford, pretty countryside en route to Waterloo, fast, flat and easy biking from Waterloo to Granby

ROUTE DESCRIPTION FROM MAGOG TO GRANBY

From the intersection of rue Merry and rue Principal in downtown Magog, head south one block on rue Merry towards the Magog River. Look for the 'La Route Verte' signs on your right and head right (west) onto the paved multiuse path. This section of the Green Route is known as La Montagnarde which is very well signed ALL THE WAY to east of Waterloo. Look for signs every kilometer on the Montagnarde section. Follow it north-westerly as it passes by Lake Memphremagog with views down the lake to Owls Head Ski Resort.

The path continues for roughly 2.5 kms and then turns right (north) onto Chemin Roy. Stay on Chemin Roy for 1.5 kms. Just after you cross Highway 10 the path turns left (west) and parallels the highway for just over 3 kms before heading north. From here it is less than 10 km to Orford.

The Green Route now alternates between sections in the woods and fields. You will pass numerous, what appear to be, second or recreational homes as you wind your way north then east to the small





community of Orford. You will also go through a small residential area and if you want to purchase food, look for a few small convenience stores visible from the Green Route in Orford.

When you leave the town of Orford and head into the Mont Orford National Park there are small hills to contend with. Through the park the signage is frequent, BUT if for some reason you haven't seen a kilometre marker in a while, retrace your steps to the last known marker. If you are not concentrating in the park you could conceivably end up on a cross country ski trail and then who knows where?? There are some areas that feel remote, so be aware. It is about 15 kilometres up and through the park to the west side.

After leaving the park, it is 8.5 kilometres to reach the turnoff to the small hamlet of Eastman (very basic services), accessible by a bike path. Otherwise continue along hilly roads past Spa Eastman (www.spa-eastman.com/).

From the turnoff to Eastman to Stukely-Sud it is 16.6 kms along a secondary highway with a dedicated bike path. Don't get your hopes up for much in Stukely Sud though as there are no services to speak of.

At about the 57 kilometre marker, along a non-descript piece of this secondary highway you will pass

from the 'La Montagnarde' section of the Green Route to 'La Campagnarde' section although this is not shown on the map. Another 9 kms or so of easy cycling will take you to Waterloo where there are a few cafe type restaurants.

At the north end of the lake in Waterloo ensure that you head west when you get to the l'Estriade trail. DO NOT CONTINUE north on the La Campagnarde trail! To get to Granby, follow this l'Estriade section, a very fast and totally flat 21 km ride.

On the way into Granby enjoy the views over Lac Boivin. You will pass the St. Christophe Hotel on the lake, before the MacDonald's Restaurant. Otherwise continue on to reach your accommodation.

Granby Accommodation

ST. CHRISTOPHE HOTEL

www.hotelstchristophe.com/

255 Denison East Ph: 877-405-4782 or 450-405-4782
Conveniently located on The Green Route overlooking Boivin Lake and minutes away from a bike rental shop on foot. Rates start at \$134 per night.

A LA MAISON DUCLAS B&B

www.maisonduclas.com/

213 Nenuphar Street Ph: 450-360-0641
Rates are \$82 per night.

UNE FLEUR AU BORD DE L'EAU B&B

www.uneffleur.ca/

90 Drummond Ph: 450-375-0141

Pool available. Rates are \$75-\$100 per night.

Granby Restaurants

CAFE DE LA BRULERIE,

4 rue de la Gare Ph: 450-372-2200

Fine for coffee and lunch with an outdoor patio in nice weather.

LA CLOSERIE DES LILAS,

21 Rue Court

Ph: 450-375-3597

It is known for fondue.

DA THERESA RESTAURANTE,

13 Rue Court Ph: 450-777-7300

Offers Italian food.

CHEZ PLUMET,

1507 Rue Principale Ph: 450-378-1771

This place is an institution and has been around since 1956. Offers French cuisine.

LA PETITE MARMITE

www.lapetite-marmite.com

77 rue Drummond Ph: 450-378-9617

Serves Swiss food.



Day 2 — Granby to Lac Brome (Knowlton)

TOTAL DISTANCE
112 kms (67 miles)

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY
Moderate to hard because of the distance and long rolling hills in places

HIGHLIGHTS
Beautiful wine and apple country, rolling hills, wine tastings

ROUTE NOTES
Directions for the route begin at the St. Christophe Hotel on the Green Route.

Continue west on the dedicated bike path which is paved for the first few kilometres. The Green Route is called La Montereigiade and it will take you all the way through to Farnham over the course of 25 kms. It is easy cycling along this section.

In Farnham at the intersection of rue Saint-Paul (Hwy 235) and rue Principale est (just over the river) turn left (southeast) and continue on rue Principale est for 2.1 kms where rue Principale est makes a hard right. Don't turn right but continue straight on Chemin du Cure- Godbout for 0.5 km and then make a right (south) onto Chemin du Golf. Stay on Chemin du Golf for 4.1 kms.

Turn left (south) at Rang Audette and in 0.4 kms turn right (west) onto Rang Tringle. Go about 100 metres and then take the first left (south) onto Cinquieme Rang N. Continue heading south for 9.2 kms until you end at Rang de l'Eglise S. Turn right (west) and follow it 1.6 kms to Route 235.

Turn left (south) on Route 235 and follow it south for 4 kms until you reach Bedford. Turn left (east) onto rue de la Riviere and follow it as it becomes Route 202 for a total of 3 kms until you reach Chemin Ridge. Turn right (south) and continue on Chemin Ridge for 5.6 kms until a T intersection and then make a right (west) on Chemin Guthrie.

Stay on it for 3.7 kms until you reach a T intersection at Chemin de Saint Armand. Turn left (east) on Saint Armand and stay on it for 9 kms all the way to Frelighsburg, one of Quebec's Most Beautiful Villages. You are in prime apple country now.

In Frelighsburg turn (left) northwest on Route 237 and in about 9.5kms you will be in Stanbridge East, another of Quebec's Most Beautiful Villages. It has a pretty mill on the river to admire and some lovely old homes though don't expect to find any food.

In Stanbridge East turn right (east) on Route 202 and enjoy the scenic views of apple orchards and vineyards. There are several wineries where you can stop and enjoy a wine tasting with the white wines seemingly the best in this area.

Continue 9.7 kms east to Dunham, a quaint town with a great bakery. You can also stay there. Visit www.gitcetaubergedupassant.com/doucesheures for more information.



Head north out of Dunham on Rue Principale for 3.2 kms. This road mostly has a decent shoulder but to enjoy a quieter road turn right (east) onto Chemin Vail. Continue on this road for 7.6 kms to reach Route 104 and carry on Route 104 in the same direction (easterly) all the way to Lac Brome, 14 kilometres away. Route 104 is a busy road with a wide shoulder until you get to the Sutton turnoff in 8 kms. For the next 6 kilometres past the turnoff to Sutton (still on Route 104), the shoulders disappear off and on though it is quiet enough.

Chemin Knowlton /104 is mostly gently rolling hills with nice views south to the bigger hills. Once in Lac Brome there are lots of accommodation and restaurant options. You've completed another long day through some wonderful countryside. Enjoy wandering the streets of Lac Brome with its three beautiful churches and an old post office.

Lac Brome (Knowlton) Accommodation

AUBERGE KNOWLTON

www.aubergeknowlton.ca/

286 Knowlton Road Ph: 450-242-6886

Room rates are \$120 per night without breakfast.

ANCESTRAL KNOWLTON B&B

www.bbcanada.com/7404.html

402 Knowlton Road Ph: 450-243-0011

Rates are \$80-\$115 and I heard positive reports.

AUBERGE DU JOLI -VENT

www.aubergedujolivent.com/

667 Bondville Road Ph: 866-525-4272 or 450-243-4272

Outside of the town of Lac Brome but with all services on site including private access to Lac Brome. Rates are \$125 to \$145 per night.

Day 3 — Lac Brome to Magog

TOTAL DISTANCE

95 kms (57 miles)

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Moderate to difficult with lots of hills

HIGHLIGHTS

Extremely beautiful countryside for most of the day, St. Benoit's Abbey, small towns with delicious food

ROUTE NOTES

From the main intersection of Lac Brome (where Knowlton, Lakeside and Mont Echo Roads converge) head south on Chemin de Mont Echo for 12.1 kms of rolling hills. Along the way, there will be one short jog of 0.2 kms right (west) on Turkey Hill then left (south) again on Mount Echo.



Stump carving at the Domaine les Boises Lee Farm in Stanstead

After 12 kilometers, you get to the intersection of Mount Echo with Chemin Parameter. Continue straight ahead on Chemin Parameter for 5 kms which becomes Chemin Poissant. Follow Chemin Poissant for another 1.4kms and then in turn Pois-

sant becomes Maple which takes you into Sutton, about a kilometer away. This is scenic and hilly country, famous for its wintertime skiing. You will also find plenty of hiking (80 kms worth of trails) and shops featuring local craftsmen and artists.

Sutton offers cafes and plenty of places to pick up food. Fortunately on today's ride there are lots of little towns with delicious offerings.

Leave Sutton on rue Principal S (route 139) heading south. Continue for 2.1 kms south and then turn left (east) on Chemin Brookfall and follow it for 0.4 kms east. Take the first right (south) onto Route Scenic, which lives up to its name, and will provide you with wonderful vistas.

Continue south on Route Scenic for about 7 kms. Then it bends east where it in about 3 kilometers merges with Chemin De la Vallee Missisquoi. Continue easterly on this road for 14 kms until you reach Route de Mansonville. Turn left (north) and stay on Route de Mansonville for 3.5 kms until you reach the town of Mansonville. This is a pretty spot with a good bakery and a nice park to rest in.

To leave Mansonville head east on Chemin de Vale Perkins. There is some more climbing but then a lovely downhill that takes you right into the hamlet of Vale Perkins 9 kms away at the intersection

of Chemin du Lac. There is a country store in Vale Perkins where you can enjoy a chat with friendly locals and pick up any other snacks you might need.

From Vale Perkins turn left (north) on Chemin du Lac and after a short climb, stop to take in the views of Lake Memphremagog and Owl's Head Ski Resort. This is a very scenic section. Continue north on Chemin du Lac for 7.1 kms until you reach Chemin Cooledge.

Turn left (west) at Chemin Cooledge and stay on it as it forks onto other roads and eventually heads north. Continue on Chemin Cooledge for a total of 4.6 kms to a T-intersection.

At this T-intersection with Chemin Nicholas Austin turn right (east). You will encounter rolling hills all the way to Austin, 2.3 kms away. Again you can pick up food at a corner store in Austin including delicious croissants and cheeses.

Saint Benoit's Abbey is accessed from Austin. The abbey is situated on a peninsula and enjoys superb views up and down the lake. To get there turn right (south) onto Chemin

Fisher just as you enter Austin and follow it for an easy 2 kms south. It is also well signed. You are supposed to be appropriately attired to enter the abbey though I don't know what you're supposed to do if you're a cyclist; do take your helmet off. Check out the Abbey's store which features cheese and cider too. Their acclaimed choir recites prayers at specific times everyday in Gregorian chants. Visit www.st-benoit-du-lac.com/ for further information. Backtrack north on Chemin Fisher to return to Austin after your abbey visit.

From Austin, to carry on to today's destination of Magog, head east on Chemin Nicholas Austin towards Lake Memphremagog and then northerly beside the lake. Stay on it for a total of 8 kms until it becomes Chemin des Peres. Continue northerly on Chemin des Peres for 5.1 kms. You will be able to see Magog off in the distance at the end of the lake.

At the north end of the lake, when you get to Chemin Southiere turn right (east) and follow it for 1.9 kms. Turn right (east) on rue de Versant for 0.3 kms, followed by a left on rue Desjardins. Follow it down for 0.5 kms to Chemin Francois - Hertel and turn right (east). Look for the Green Route signs again - in fact you may recognize some of the territory you previously cycled on your way to Mount Orford National Park.

It is less than 2 kms to downtown Magog. The cycling path is just north of the lake and will be very obvious. Follow it to the intersection with rue Merry and look for your accommodation from

there. You'll be ready for the hot shower and one of the great restaurant meals after so many hours in the saddle.

Sutton Accommodation

GREEN MOUNT COTTAGE B&B

www.bbsutton.com 1

8 Maple Street Ph: 450-538-3227

Rates are \$85-\$95 per night.

HOTEL-MOTEL HORIZON

www.hotelhorizoninc.com/

297 Maple Street Ph: 877-538-3212

Room rates are \$85-\$125 per night.

ST. AMOUR INN & RESTAURANT

www.auberge-st-amour.com/

1 Pleasant Street Ph: 888-538-6188

Rates are \$105-\$250 per night. They serve both breakfast and dinner.

Day 4 — Magog to Stanstead

TOTAL DISTANCE

43 kms (26 miles)

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Easy with a good possibility of being in Stanstead in just a few hours.

HIGHLIGHTS

Scenic hamlets, rolling foothills of the Appalachians, blooming lavender farm in the summer, honey wine tasting.

ROUTE NOTES

From the intersection of rue Merry and rue Principale in Magog head south along rue Merry / Route 247. Initially the shoulders are narrow but the traffic dies out quite quickly. After 2 kms rue Merry becomes rue Georgeville.

Stay on rue Georgeville for about 14.5 kms until you reach the small community of Georgeville. You will climb a series of rolling hills and enjoy the occasional great view over the lake. You can't help but notice the gorgeous estates overlooking the water, summer home of many of Canada's blue blood families.

Georgetown has been in existence since 1797. It used to host a ferry service that connected both sides of the lake. Now you'll find a general store and the beautiful St. George's Anglican Church. The Auberge Georgeville is worth a visit too. It has just changed hands but will reopen as an inn again sometime soon, though probably under a different name. It boasts a beautiful location.

From the main intersection in Georgeville continue south onto Chemin Channel / Route 247 and its few hills for 2.7 kms. Then turn left (east) onto Chemin Sheldon / Route 247 and follow it 4.6 kms to Fitch Bay. It's a nice bit of down to get

to Fitch Bay. Don't miss a visit to see the witch on the weathervane. (A block down Remick on the right from the intersection of Chemin Narrows and Remick).

Leave Fitch Bay by turning south onto Chemin Narrows / Route 247. Continue on it for 3.4 kms to the bridge. Look right and you can admire the Narrows covered bridge dating back to 1880.

Continue southerly on Chemin Narrows / Route 247 and in just half a kilometre you will reach Bleu Lavande, the largest lavender farm in Canada with over 200,000 plants. You can visit an interpretation center, picnic and buy lavender products from the onsite boutique. There is an admission charge.

You are also in the neighbourhood of Bernard Bee Bee's honey and honey wine. You absolutely will not miss his brightly coloured barn as you head towards Beebe Plain.

Continue on Chemin Narrows which becomes Chemin Griffin for about 5 kms until you reach the intersection with Chemin Lapierre on your left. The riding along this section is scenic with good shoulders. At the intersection with Chemin Lapierre you have two choices.

A
Continue south on Chemin Griffin to Beebe Plain (part of the Stanstead group of villages) all the way down to the US border, 5.7 kms south. The ride to the main business area of Stanstead Plain would then require a ride for about 3 kms east on Canusa Avenue/ Route 247 which becomes rue Railroad. This is a busy section and not recommended. However, check to see where your accommodation for the night happens to be since the town of Stanstead is spread over quite an area. The other issue is that the only food of note is a fry shack OR

B
Turn left (east) onto Chemin Lapierre and follow it for 2.6 kms. Turn right (south) onto Chemin de Stanstead and stay on it for 3.9 kms until you reach rue Maple at a T-intersection. Turn left (east) on rue Maple for 1.8 kms to reach rue Dufferin. If you turn right (south) on rue Dufferin and follow it south to the border, then in 1.5 kms you will run into Millie's Diner and The Old Customs Restaurant. Accommodation choices are nearby.

The Town of Stanstead is a result of the 1995 amalgamation of three smaller towns namely, Stanstead Plain, Rock Island and Beebe Plain. It sits right on the Vermont border and is home to only 3000 people. The town is one of the members that make up the Quebec Association of Most Beautiful Villages and is a stop on the driving trail called the Chemin des Cantons.

The town boasts fantastic old stone buildings dating back to the Victorian era and earlier. Some of the more worthwhile buildings to see are the Colby-Curtis Museum, the Haskell Opera House, Stanstead College, the former Eastern Townships bank, the Masonic Lodge and the Centenary Church. Wandering around any of these small villages will always lead you to the many beautiful churches.

Stanstead Accommodation

DOMAINE LES BOISES LEE FARM

www.domaineleafarm.com

20 rue Notre Dame Ouest Ph: 819-876-5115

The B & B sits on large grounds with a hot tub and swimming pool. Hosts are very helpful. The home once belonged to Lady Banting, wife of co-discoverer of insulin, Sir Frederick Banting. Rates are \$90 and up for well appointed rooms.

RIVERMEAD - STANSTEAD B&B

www.bbcanada.com/10751.html

1265 Stage Rd, East Stanstead Ph: 819-876-2267

Rates are \$125 per night and it is located two miles out of town.

A LA CLAIRE FONTAINE

www.gitescanada.com/9344.html

71, rue Principale, Stanstead Ph: 819-876-7617

Rates are \$90-\$95 per night.

Stanstead Restaurants

There aren't a lot of options in this town.

MILLIE'S DINER

www.millies.ca/

237 Dufferin Street Ph: 819-876-7885

Run by a very interesting ex Hollywood guy who is extremely knowledgeable about the local area. Not much choice in meals (3-5 options/night) but appealing Eurasian fusion cuisine at very reasonable prices. Favourably reviewed by the New York Times and the Montreal Gazette. Closed Mondays.



OLD CUSTOMS RESTAURANT

232 Dufferin Street Ph: 819-876-2776

Go for the burgers and chicken brochettes. It is the only restaurant in town with a liquor license.

STEVE'S PIZZARIA, SUBWAY, REST-O-COQ

You will find pizza, subs, chicken and a few bakeries to round out your eating choices.

LE RESTO-CREPERIE LE TOMIFOBIA

www.letomifobia.com/

2 Elm Street Ph: 819-876-7590

Within biking distance on long summer evenings. Reportedly excellent food in one of Stanstead's ancestral homes.

Day 5 — Stanstead to North Hatley

TOTAL DISTANCE

38 kms (23 miles)

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Easy

HIGHLIGHTS

Lovely, quiet cycling through pastoral country, small towns, antique shops and cafes

ROUTE NOTES

There are two routes to Ayer's Cliff – one on road and the other on an old railway bed. I confess to not knowing about the off road version until I was home and found it on a map, despite talking to locals about biking.

The off road path is called Le Sentier Nature Tomifobia. To get to the trail, head north out of Beebe

on Rue Principale / Route 247 and look for the trail on the east side about 1 kilometer north of Rue Junction. This 19km trail leads north to Tomifobia and then northwest parallel to the Tomifobia River. It will deposit you just east of Ayer's Cliff where you can meet up with the on road trip notes to North Hatley. There is reportedly a section starting in Rockland which leads west to Beebe and then north to join up with the above noted section. I would suggest getting specific starting directions from a local familiar with the bike path.

The on road version is as follows:

The road is quiet with an excellent shoulder for the first 8 kms. Then it has a lot of cracks in the pavement which may require your attention to avoid getting caught in a rut. You'll pass through rolling farmland and enjoy distant views of the hills while enjoying a mostly downhill ride to Ayer's Cliff.

From the intersection of rue Dufferin / Route 143 and Boulevard Notre Dame / Route 247 in Stanstead head north on rue Dufferin / Route 143 for 1.8 kms. You will pass Stanstead College, the Colby-Curtis Museum and some beautiful churches.

Turn right on Route 143 and after crossing Highway 55 take the first left to stay on Route 143. Continue north for 15 kms until you reach the intersection with Route 141.

Turn left (northwest) onto Route 141 to reach Ayer's Cliff. Continue 2.7 kms to reach the main street in town. Ayer's Cliff is a small place so it won't take long to explore it.

Leave Ayer's Cliff by heading east (right as you are coming into town) on rue Tyler/ Route 208 O. You'll do a slow climb on quiet roads towards Massawippi where you'll find lovely homes in pretty settings. Stay on the road for 4.4 kms until you reach Route 143. Turn left (north) and stay on Route 143 for 10.7 kms until you reach the Chemin Sherbrooke intersection on your left.

At Chemin Sherbrooke turn left (northwest) and continue for 3 kms until you reach the main street in the town of North Hatley. There are just a few commercial streets with restaurants, cafes, antique shops and galleries. There is a nice public park at the end of the lake which is perfect for lazing and watching the world go by. Almost all the accommodation options are within a few blocks of the park.

Additional Activities in the North Hatley Area

Try a tour at Capelton Mines, an old copper mine. Visit www.minescapelton.com/ for information on their tours. They are located between North Hatley and Lennoxville at 800 Route 108. Ph: 819-346-9545 to make a reservation.

In the summer you can enjoy a guided tour of Lake Massawippi in a mahogany boat. Contact Croisiere Massawippi at 819-842-2279 for more information. The boat can hold ten people.

Explore the shores of Lake Massawippi or wander through the shops.



North Hatley/Ayer's Cliff Area Accommodation

All price points and levels of accommodation are covered in North Hatley and Ayer's Cliff. The B&B's below are a sampling of what is available.

AUBERGE RIPPLECOVE & SPA

www.ripplecove.com

700, rue Ripplecove, Ayer's Cliff

Ph: 819-838-4296 or 800-668-4296

Rates are \$158 to \$355 per person including dinner. This is a luxurious full service resort that is consistently given good ratings.

MANOIR HOVEY

www.manoirhovey.com

575, chemin Hovey, North Hatley Ph: 819-842-2421

A 5 star Relais and Chateaux property on Lake Massawippi with all the goodies that go with that rating. Rates are \$160-\$395 per person per day which includes breakfast and dinner.

MANOIR LE TRICORNE

www.manoirletricorne.com

50, chemin Gosselin, Canton de Hatley

Ph: 819-842-4522.

Rates are \$125 to \$225 per night and 10% off from Sunday to Thursday.

LA CANARDIERE

www.bbcanada.com/canardiere

400, chemin de la Riviere, North Hatley

Ph: 819-842-2279

Run by a lovely woman. Situated on the river. Free canoe, paddleboat and swimming are available. Very helpful. Rates are \$95 per night but bathrooms are shared. Cash only but likely retiring in 2010. Worth a call.

LA CHOCOLATIERE B&B

www.lachocolatieredhatley.com

985, rue Massawippi

Ph: 819-842-1604

Run by a charming lady who will indulge you with chocolates. Private pool. Rates are \$95-\$150 per night.

B&B VILLA MASSAWIPPI

www.villamassawippi.com

361, chemin Hovey, North Hatley

Ph: 819-842-1689

Located beside the lake with a private beach. It is a 15 minute walk into town. Room rates are \$135-\$145 per night.

AUBERGE LA RAVEAUDIERE

www.laraveaudiere.com

11, chemin Hatley Centre, North Hatley

Ph: 819-842-4530

Nicely appointed rooms. Rates are \$130-\$175 per night.



North Hatley Restaurants

RESTO-BAR LE HOB NOB

www.restobarlehobnob.com
70, rue Main Ph: 819-842-3330

CAFÉ MASSAWIPPI

www.cafemassawippi.com
3050 chemin Capelton Ph: 819-842-4528
Duck, foie gras and other local specialities.

PILSEN RESTAURANT & PUB

www.pilsen.ca
55, rue Principale Ph: 819-842-2971
Casual dining located right on the river.

MANOIR HOVEY

www.manoirhovey.com
575, chemin Hovey, North Hatley Ph: 819-842-2421
They have an extensive wine list and specialize in innovative Quebecois cuisine.

PICALILLI RESTAURANT

225 Mill Street Ph: 819-842-3222
Serving lunch and dinner.

AUBERGE LA COUER D'OR

www.aubergelecoeurdor.com
85, rue School
Ph: 819-842-4363

The menu changes weekly with a few choices of appetizers and mains for \$38 per person. Bring your own wine.

Day 6 — North Hatley to Danville

TOTAL DISTANCE

Approximately 90 kms (54 miles)

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

The cycling is mostly flat and easy but it's a longer day in the saddle.

HIGHLIGHTS

Lovely riverside sections of biking, pretty city and farmland vistas, mostly car free cycling

ROUTE NOTES

Before leaving North Hatley pick up lunch supplies for the day as there are some lovely picnic spots along the way. There is almost no food available on

the Green Route itself but you will be able to find food if you go off the Green Route into the nearby towns. There is a convenience store near the Kruger Plant in Bromptonville.

Pick up the Green Route in North Hatley by crossing to the north side of the bridge on Main Street and look for the signs on your right (northeast) for the Green Route. You will initially cycle along the north side of the river.

Leave North Hatley and head towards Lennoxville on the Green Route trail that consists mostly of stone dust. You'll head through quiet woodland and will follow the river all the way to Lennoxville, 15 kms away. This part of the trail is called Axe de la Massawippi. There are signs marking off each kilometer all the way to Lennoxville.

Once you reach Lennoxville you need to pay attention. Follow the Green Route until you come to the first intersection with a major road. This is Chemin de Golfe/ Rue Massawippi. Look for the Green Route signs and turn right (south) to cross the bridge over the river. Once you are over the



bridge, in about 150 metres you will turn left (east) into the golf course. Weave your way through the parking lot keeping to the left until the paved path becomes visible.

This well signed paved section will take you up to and through Bishop's University to a major road called Rue College. Go north across Rue College onto Rue St. Francis and cross over the bridge. Immediately after the bridge, go left (west) along the path beside the river.

The kilometre markers are absent in the next section though you will see signs for Axe de la Saint-Francois. These are the signs you want to follow. Sherbrooke is only about 10 kms from Lennoxville and is a flat easy ride beside the river. The only issue of note is the intersection of Axe de la Saint-Francois and Axe du Ruisseau-Dorman. Ensure that you stay on Axe de la Saint-Francois and you'll be fine.

As you cycle through Sherbrooke you can admire some of the impressive buildings downtown from

afar. Continue on the dedicated bikeway all through Sherbrooke. For the next 3-4 kms you'll have company on the trail but then as you continue towards Bromptonville you'll find the numbers of cyclists dropping off.

As you head northwest towards Bromptonville, Windsor and Richmond you will be cycling parallel to the Saint Francois River on a combination of paved shoulders, bike lanes and stone dust trails

It will be a total of about 20 kms from downtown Sherbrooke to Bromptonville but don't count on any kilometre signs. Just continue to keep an eye out for Axe de la Saint-Francois signs and road signs with a bicycle symbol or a bicycle/car combination.

The Green Route takes you past Bromptonville and around the Kruger plant. Then head southwest over the river and continue northwest on the west side of the river towards Windsor. Once you've past the Kruger plant you are on the Sentier de la Rive

section of the Green Route for 24 kms until you reach Richmond. Unfortunately the next 6 kms primarily parallel the highway until you reach Windsor so your sense of peace might be breached for awhile.

When you reach the outskirts of Windsor do not cross the bridge into town unless you are looking for food. Instead turn left (northwest) just before the bridge and follow the quite intermittent signage past gravel plants, and then into nice country on wide dirt paths with occasional picnic benches. The views across the river through this section are quite pleasant. You will see Richmond off in the distance.

Getting through Richmond may take some time, especially with bridges under construction. When you get into the outskirts of town there are initially frequent bicycle signs. Follow them as they take you across the first bridge (Rue Bridge / Rue Craig) that you come to. I had a very difficult time after crossing the bridge but perhaps by the time you are

doing this the construction will be over and the signage much improved. However, in the absence of good signage do the following so that you'll get to the next section of trail.

Continue straight up the road directly in front of you (rue Craig) past a large supermarket on your right and stay on that road for just under a kilometre until you come to another bridge (again under construction). IMMEDIATELY after crossing that bridge, get off your bike and go right on a dirt path down to a paved multiuse path and head left!! The next section of the Green Route is called Sentier de la Vallée. Once again there are signs every kilometre. It is straight and flat but remarkably scenic as you make your way through lovely farm country. Stay on this path for 20 kms until you reach Danville. The one item of note is that this section has a feeling of being very isolated so as a lone female cyclist I felt uncomfortable at times.

As you approach Danville there is a large barn like building on your right with a sign that says 'Centre Cycliste Regional', a place where you can get your bike fixed and buy ice cream. Do not follow the bike path straight ahead towards Warwick (another 12 kms away). Instead cross the lawn on your right to the road Rue de Depot and turn left

(north) and follow it a 100 metres or so to rue Daniel-Johnson.

Turn right (east) on Route Daniel Johnson/Route 255 and follow it just over 600 metres to the T-intersection with rue Grove. Now you're in the heart of the commercial area and restaurants are all nearby. Accommodation is also only blocks away.

Danville Accommodation

AUBERGE JEFFREY

www.aubergejeffery.com

91, rue Water Ph: 819-839-2711 or 888-302-2711

Rooms are in a grand old house. Each room has a phone, TV and high speed internet access. For the price you can't go wrong. Rates are \$75 to \$130 per night.

GITE MCCALLUM

www.gitemccallum.com

216, rue du Carmel Ph: 819-839-1118

Well appointed room are \$95 to \$110 per night.

Danville Area Restaurants

There isn't a lot of choice especially on Sunday and Monday nights.

LE TEMPS DES CERISES

www.cerises.com

79, rue Du Carmel, Danville

Ph: 819-839-1157

Their restaurant is housed in a renovated church and the menu is probably the most interesting one in town.

There are a few bistro bar type restaurants - one just by the Green Route as it comes into Danville and one at the corner of Grove and Daniel-Johnson. Otherwise look for pizza and Chinese food. The eclectic storefront of La Binnerie du Care welcomes you for breakfast and lunch. You can also find a few cafes and a store selling Belgian chocolate, all around the intersection of Water and Grove Streets.

Day 7 — Danville to Magog

TOTAL DISTANCE

106 kms (64 miles) via the shortcut through Sherbrooke or about 128 kms (77 miles) via the Green Route and North Hatley

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Moderate to difficult because of the length of the day



HIGHLIGHT

Pretty farmland near Danville, river sections, bike-way along the lake at Sherbrooke, mostly quiet cycling

ROUTE NOTES

You actually have three choices when you leave Danville.

OPTION ONE

Retrace your route all the way to North Hatley and then continue on the Green Route to Magog.

OPTION TWO

Retrace your route to Sherbrooke and then head to Magog on paths that will take you through the city of Sherbrooke and along the north shore of Riviere Magog. Connect back with the Green Route in Rock Forest and continue onto Magog.

OPTION THREE

If you are less than keen to retrace your route all the way to North Hatley or Sherbrooke then consider taking the Velo Taxi to either of those spots. You can complete the cycle into Magog from either place by following the directions for Option One or Two respectively. Call the Velo Taxi for a pickup at 877-766-VELO (8356). It would be wise to book the night before.

OPTION ONE

This involves retracing your route all the way

from Danville to Richmond to Windsor to Bromptonville to Sherbrooke to Lennoxville to North Hatley. From North Hatley go north on the Green Route to Rock Forest and west over to Magog by following the mostly well placed signs as follows:

From the bridge in North Hatley continue north along Main Street for about 150 metres to reach Chemin Magog / Route 108 which veers to the west. Continue cycling for just under a kilometre to Chemin Virgin and turn right (north) and follow it for about 650 metres to Chemin de l'Université and bear right and continue up the hill.

Look for the signs on your right hand side for the trail that takes you onto a steepish dirt trail.

The Green Route follows a mixture of dirt road and pavement. It heads past homes, through local parks on snowmobile trails and then down a long stretch of dirt road to Chemin Saint Catherine. Signage is frequent here and the distances to Rock Forest are posted. Follow Chemin Saint Catherine north to the intersection with Chemin Saint-Roch Sud.

Turn left (north) onto Chemin Saint Roch Sud, follow it north and cross over the river on Chemin Saint -Roch Sud. You are now south of Rock Forest. Turn left to continue west along Rue Emery Fontaine / Avenue du Park. From this point the

route back to Magog is the same as Option Two so jump down below to INTERSECTION WITH GREEN ROUTE FROM NORTH HATLEY and follow the instructions to Magog.

OPTION TWO

Retrace the route from Danville to Richmond to Windsor to Bromptonville to Sherbrooke; a total distance of 70 kms. Consider buying picnic supplies in Danville so you can have a scenic stop at one of the picnic benches before you reach Sherbrooke.

Once you reach the northern outskirts of Sherbrooke look out for the first bridge over the river. The goal is to cross that bridge so look for the one sign on the Green Route pointing to the 'Axe de Magog' which directs you up a road and left (southwest) into the bike lane over the bridge on rue Terrill. The Axe de Magog is actually very well signed from the bridge onward.

After crossing the rue Terrill bridge in Sherbrooke look for Rue Dufferin and make a right (northwest) onto rue Dufferin and almost instantly you are transported to an area with some lovely older homes. Follow rue Dufferin to the end (150 metres), turn left (southwest) go a short distance and then turn right (northwest) on rue Prospect. Continue 250 metres to Boulevard Queen Victoria and turn left (south).



Follow Boulevard Queen Victoria south all the way down to the water at rue Esplanade, a distance of about 1.2 kms. There are lots of park benches and people in this area. Views to the downtown core are excellent. Here you have a Choice A and Choice B based on your hunger quotient and food supplies since you won't be passing any food stops on the described route except near Deauville.

Choice A is heading left (east) towards downtown in search of food. You will find cafes and restaurants in no time at all. After you are done this side trip, you will have get back to the foot of Queen Victoria and Esplanade to carry on to Magog.

Choice B is to carry on the route towards Magog. Turn right (west) onto the bike path that parallels rue Esplanade and head west towards Jacques Cartier Park and from there continue to follow the Axe to Magog signs heading in a westerly direction.

At about 4.5 kms from the intersection of Boulevard Queen Victoria and Esplanade there is a trail intersection near the bridge at which you will turn left (south) and head down close to the river. Head down but DO NOT cross the river. Instead keep right and continue west to parallel the river and eventually you will merge again with a road. The route to Rock Forest is chiefly along this road with a decent shoulder.

Intersection with Green Route from North Hatley

South of the town of Rock Forest you will meet up

with the Green Route which comes in from North Hatley over Chemin Saint -Roch Sud on the bridge. DO NOT CROSS THE BRIDGE unless you want to go back to North Hatley. To carry on the Green Route to Magog continue west along Rue Emery Fontaine / Avenue du Park as it takes you 6 kms to Deauville.

Near an 11 kilometer marker there is gas station about half a block off of the route with some refreshments. I'm not sure why it is marked 11 kilometers as it is more than 11 kilometers to Magog. Once on the La Montagnarde section there are markers every kilometer.

You'll feel that when you get close to Magog the Green Route takes you on a more roundabout route. It will have you following a trail south of the Magog River. It will take you a little longer to get to the downtown core than you might think.

As you come into Magog you follow rue Saint-Patrice Est until just west of Rue Elie and Rue Buade. Then turn left (south) on the Green route. The Green Route winds down to rue Principale E which IF you turned right (west) on rue Principale would lead you to the downtown area BUT it is busy alternative. SO instead turn left (east) and cross the small bridge and then immediately turn right (south) onto rue du Belvedere. About 700 metres south look for the cycle trail on your right. The trail will take you all the way to rue Merry. You will be back in familiar territory now and will find the main downtown core just 2 blocks north.

Your tour is complete – all 566 kilometres or so of it. Now it's time for a celebration!

Tour Companies

As an alternate to doing a self guided trip you may prefer to have someone else do the detailed organizing. Don't worry. You won't hurt my feelings but do be prepared to pay a little more. These are all good companies but make sure you ask lots of questions so you get the trip you want.

RANDONNEE TOURS

www.randonneetours.com/

Ph: 800-242-1825 or 604-730-1247

They offer 5 night/6 day trips for \$1650 per person.

GREAT EXPLORATIONS

www.great-explorations.com

Ph: 800-242-1825 or 604-730-1247

They have a guided 5night/6 day trip for \$1950 Canadian plus a bike rental.

FREEWHEELING ADVENTURES

www.freewheeling.ca

Ph: 800-672-0775 or 902-857-3600

They offer 6 night/7 day trips for \$2295 plus the cost of a bike rental.



GABRIOLA CYCLE AND KAYAK

www.gck.ca/

Ph: 250-247-9738

The trip isn't on their website yet but chances are a very reasonably priced trip will be offered in 2010.

WOOD AND WESTLAND

www.woodandwestland.com/

Ph: 866-858-3030

They offer a 6 day guided and self guided tour. Contact them for pricing.

Suggestions

There are a surprising number of trucks, even on some of the smaller roads so be vigilant about sticking to the shoulders.

Lots of cracks in the pavement running parallel to your bike tires need your attention to avoid getting caught in them. Exercise caution.

At times on the Green Route, food stops are few and far between, especially on a Sunday when some stores and cafes close. Carry a few bars with you to keep you from 'bonking.'

Order free maps ahead of time from www.eastern-townships.org. Click on 'publications' to get a Townships Trail Map and a Green Route Map mailed to you.

I highly recommend:

LES BONS MATINS

www.bonsmatins.com/

1401 Argyle. Avenue in downtown Montreal

Ph: 514-931-9167 or 800-588-5280

Rates are \$129 and up in cycling season and they are only a few blocks from downtown and one block from the easy to use subway. The stop closes to them is Metro Lucien-L'Allier.

Helpful Websites/Phone Numbers

MAGOG, QUEBEC WEATHER

www.theweathernetwork.com/weather/CAQC0325

CURRENCY CONVERTER

www.xe.com

MILEAGE CONVERTER

1 kilometre = 0.621371192 miles or visit

www.metric-conversions.org

VELO TAXI

You can call them 24/7 for a pickup covering 6 areas over 225 kms of the Green Route. Ph: 877-766-VELO (8356). Consider it if you are too tired, you've broken down or you just don't want to re-trace part of the route. Rates start at \$40 for 30kms and then you are charged on a per kilometre basis after that.

Helpful French Words

ROUTE VERTE --- GREEN ROUTE

PONT --- BRIDGE

RUE --- STREET

CHEMIN --- ROAD

BONJOUR --- HELLO

AU REVOIR --- GOODBYE

MERCI --- THANK YOU

OUI --- YES

NON --- NO

BIENVENU --- YOU'RE WELCOME

HOW MUCH? --- COMBIEN?

WHERE IS THE BATHROOM? --- OU EST LA SALLE DE BAIN?

MY NAME IS --- JE M'APPELLE _____.

AU SECOURS --- HELP. SAVE ME.

You will see a lot of small stores that say Dépanneur. This is where you can find drinks and snacks.

All businesses mentioned were operating when this guide was published and rates are accurate as of the time this was published. Contact the companies directly for current rates.

