

North Country Riding – It Never Gets Old!

Written by Christine Auclair

Riding through the Adirondack Mountains is considered by many to be one of the best and most scenic motorcycle journeys in the United States. As we approach the summer months, thousands are gearing up for the ultimate riding experience in the North County – Americade 2010, which will be held in Lake George from June 7 through June 12. Cycling enthusiasts attend to gather with other riders, embark on guided tours (such as the Eight Lake Loop or the Lake Placid Ski Jump) or browse through various wares that more than 200 vendors will be displaying and selling.

However, there are adventure-seekers too, such as my friend Bill Yakimetz, who prefers to map his own route and ride at his own pace. He enjoys the leisure of stopping along the way to photograph the awe-inspiring scenery and grabbing a bite to eat at a restaurant of his choice. One of his favorite routes is the “high peaks” ride from Keene Valley to Lake Placid, where the enormity of sheer granite cliffs rising above astonish him. Mystical swimming holes and spectacular waterfalls await those who wish to explore one of the trails along the awesome AuSable River. For a growling stomach, Bill recommends stopping at Tail O’ The Pup Bar-B-Q in Ray Brook (past Lake Placid, near Saranac Lake) on Route 86. The food never disappoints, and choices range from favorites such as chicken, burgers, ribs or even succulent Maine lobster.

Another favorite journey of Bill’s is to head on Route 30 North out of Northville and follow to Route 3 East (Tupper Lake Parkway) until arriving in Keene Valley. It is an approximately three hour and forty-five minute ride that leaves spectators spellbound from the outstanding scenery. Enchanting country roads pass dazzling lakes, old growth forests, breathtaking mountains and valleys, and many roadside attractions. A worthwhile stop along the way is Blue Mountain Lake and the Adirondack Museum. Blue Mountain Lake is considered the “crown jewel” of the Adirondacks. The unsurpassed beauty of the spring-fed lake surrounded by spruce-fir forests and mountains is one of the most stunning scenes in the Northeast. A trip would not be complete without a stop at the Adirondack Museum (called “the best of its kind in the world” by the New York Times), which astounds visitors with its collection of artifacts, photographs and exhibits depicting the history of life in this wilderness area. The gift shop alone is worth a visit for anyone looking for food, clothing, jewelry, and books or maps of the area. The unparalleled view of Blue Mountain Lake that is visible from the dining area will leave you breathless, so be sure to take a few minutes to catch your breath before getting back on the road.

For those interested in historic battles, a visit to Fort Ticonderoga via scenic Route 9 North would provide an eye-opening experience. Parts of battles from the French and Indian and Revolutionary Wars were fought here, and while touring the sacred grounds overlooking Lake Champlain, one cannot help but gain a sense of honor for the sacrifices that were made at this military fortress hundreds of years ago. Guided and self-guided tours are also available through the gorgeous gardens that are part of this magnificent estate.

The Adirondack Park is made up of six million acres of majestic beauty. Exploring by motorcycle allows you to breathe in the invigorating mountain air while viewing panoramic vistas that cannot be appreciated as profoundly while in a car or other vehicle. Bill has been traversing various routes in the North Country on his bike for more than twenty years, and as he enthusiastically states, traveling the North Country on his motorcycle never gets old!

*Christine Auclair is a writer, author and photographer, as well as an avid nature/outdoor enthusiast. Her children’s book, *You Can’t Find a Rainbow in the House!* was written to inspire children to get outdoors to enjoy the beauty and lessons that nature has to offer. The book, along with Christine’s photography, are available at www.ceilswheelspublishing.com.*