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Sunday, July 4, 2004

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Pemaquid peninsula will reward experienced riders

By [MELISSA KIM](#)

If you're a cyclist who loves riding near the ocean, I'll bet you've studied the Maine map countless times, looking at all those tempting peninsulas that reach down into the ocean like gnarled tree roots. They look good on the map, but not all of them make for a rewarding bike trip.

The Pemaquid peninsula is one of my favorites to explore on two wheels. One reason is that you can make a loop, with only a little bit of backtracking, which is a rarity on these long skinny out-and-back peninsulas. On this ride, you'll have a variety of gorgeous seascapes to look at, nice backcountry roads with minimal traffic, an interesting place to start, and to seal the deal, a great ice cream place along the way.

The starting point is the Colonial Pemaquid State Historic Site and Fort William Henry. To get there, head south from Damariscotta on Route 130. Drive about 11.5 miles and watch for signs to Colonial Pemaquid. Turn right onto Huddle Road; it's about a mile farther to the entrance. There's lots to do right here - you can explore the fort, museum and grounds, or picnic at one of the nicely situated tables overlooking Pemaquid Harbor. You might want to save your picnic for after the ride, though, because you've got about 30 miles of moderately strenuous cycling to do, involving a few hills and some spots where you might have traffic to cope with. This is not the best ride for beginners or families (I'll suggest one in my next column).

Ride out the way you drove in, on Huddle Road, and turn right onto Route 130. This

MORE INFORMATION

ABOUT THIS TRIP:

At the Colonial Pemaquid State Historic Site, access to the grounds, picnic area and parking is free; there is a \$2 fee to tour the buildings. There are public restrooms at the museum. Call 677-2423.

COMING UP:

Cyclists will be converging July 9-11 on the coastal city of Belfast for the 16th annual Maine Bike Rally, which includes nearly 30 different guided bike rides and much more. Call the Bicycle Coalition of Maine at 623-4511 or visit www.bikemaine.org.

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takes you through the pretty village of New Harbor. Turn left onto Route 32 and you'll pass the ferry terminal where the Hardy Boat line takes passengers out to Monhegan Island. Ride with the ocean's edge on your right and summer homes on your left for about a mile, and you'll come to the Rachel Carson Salt Pond Preserve, where a small salt pond forms at every low tide. From the pebbly beach, you've got unrestricted views of the boats and islands in Muscongus Bay.

Ride six more miles on this lovely winding road and you'll come to Round Pond. Turn right on Back Shore Road and you'll see the wonderful Granite Hall Store, with penny candy, toys, gifts, outdoor picnic tables and highly recommended ice cream.

Thus fortified, get back on Route 32, ride for another four miles (up one long, steep hill) and turn left onto Damariscotta Road. In two miles, you'll have a steep downhill to a sharp left turn onto Fogler Road. This shady road glides along the edge of Biscay Pond, where you can sneak peeks at the lakeside summer cottages.

Going around the southern end of the pond, you'll come to a junction; turn left onto the unmarked Benner Road and, in about a mile and a half, turn left again onto Bristol Road (Route 130). Take the second left onto Lower Round Pond Road for a scenic, hilly ride across the peninsula back to Route 32, where you'll turn right and retrace your route to New Harbor and your starting point.

MELISSA KIM a free-lance writer in Portland, is the author of "New England Biking: 100 of the Best Road and Trail Rides," due out this winter from Foghorn Outdoors/Avalon Travel Publishing. She welcomes comments at:
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