

Maine: Bar Harbor & Acadia National Park

Bike Vacation Only

Nothing could be more seamless than VBT's spectacular self-guided tour of Acadia National Park. A three-night stay at a scenic oceanfront resort just outside downtown Bar Harbor gives you the flexibility to ride as much—or as little—as you like each day. And with VBT's audio-guided navigation app, finding your way around is a breeze! Mount Desert Island's extensive network of carriage trails are carefully graded—providing optimal conditions for riding one of VBT's beautifully-fitted and maintained gravel bikes, with local VBT support available 24/7. This is the perfect getaway for riders of all interests and abilities—whether you're looking to challenge yourself with a climb up Cadillac Mountain, explore Acadia's charming coastal shops and villages, or relax with a luxurious spa treatment at your hotel. The choice is yours!

Cultural Highlights

- Ride along Rockefeller's historic, car-free carriage roads through Acadia National Park.
- Browse Bar Harbor's enticing shops, art galleries, and seafood bars.
- Ride through a refreshing and unspoiled landscape of rugged coastline, forested coves, and idyllic fishing harbors.
- Pause at Jordan Pond's pristine waters reflecting the beautiful curves of the Bubbles, two of Acadia's distinctive small peaks.
- Sample the Pine State's famous mouth-watering scones, pies, cobblers, and martinis infused with Maine blueberries.

What to Expect

This tour offers a full range of easy terrain and moderate hills and is ideal for beginner and experienced cyclists. Please verify your bike selection for this tour as changing bikes once you arrive is not always possible. Travel with your friends and family—we can accommodate multiple guests on this self-guided vacation. Our 24/7 support system is available if needed.

Tour Duration: 4 Days

Average Daily Mileage: 8-26 miles

Average Cycling Time: 1-3 hours

Climate Information

Average High/Low Temperature (°F)

April 67°/50°, May 65°/45°, June 74°/54°, July 79°/59°, August 78°/59°, September 70°/52°, October 59°/42°

Average Rainfall (in.)

April 2.39, May 4.6, June 4.1, July 3.5, August 3.3, September 4.5, October 5.3

DAY 1: Your VBT Vacation Begins

VB T Pre-Tour Extension Guests:

Please enjoy an included breakfast at your hotel. Lunch is on your own before the tour begins.

VB T Tour-Only Guests:

Make your own independent arrangements for travel to Bar Harbor, the charming coastal town that will serve as your hub for exploring Acadia National Park by bike. If you're flying to Maine, Bangor International Airport

is the closest option. For detailed guidance on reaching Bar Harbor, please refer to your *Vacation Preparation Handbook*.

Your accommodations for the duration of the tour are at the Atlantic Oceanside Hotel, a scenic oceanfront property nestled along the shores of Frenchman Bay, just one mile from downtown Bar Harbor. Each guest room features a semi-private balcony or patio with beautiful ocean views, offering a quiet place to relax and take in the coastal scenery. This spacious and well-appointed resort offers direct beach access and an array of amenities designed for comfort and rejuvenation. Enjoy the indoor and outdoor swimming pools, soak in the hot tub, or stroll the beautifully landscaped grounds. The hotel also features a casual, full-service restaurant, oceanview terraces, a fitness center, and an on-site bar—perfect for unwinding after a day of cycling. While the setting feels peaceful and removed, guests enjoy complimentary access to the Island Explorer shuttle, which stops right at the hotel and provides convenient transportation into Bar Harbor and Acadia National Park.

The vibrant seaside town of Bar

Harbor is known for its walkable streets, boutique shops, galleries, and exceptional dining scene—from casual lobster shacks to upscale restaurants with ocean views. VBT provides city information with restaurant recommendations, suggested activities, and local highlights to help you make the most of your time here.

Guests driving to the tour may leave their vehicle in the Atlantic Oceanside Hotel's parking lot for the duration of the tour at no charge.

All Guests:

As you begin your Acadia National Park biking adventure, you'll meet your VBT Local Host and any other arriving guests in the lobby of the Atlantic Oceanside Hotel at 1:00 p.m.

Join your Local Host for a Welcome Orientation, followed by your first ride to Schooner Head, with optional walks to Sand Beach and Great Head Trail. Your official Acadia National Park entry pass will be provided during this meeting.

Dinner is on your own tonight. Choose from one of Bar Harbor's many excellent restaurants.

Today's Ride Choices

Bar Harbor to Schooner Head — 9.8 miles

Sand Beach and Great Head Hikes — 2.5 miles

What to Expect:

Ride to Schooner Head Scenic Overlook along paved roads and enjoy sweeping ocean views before returning the way you came. You may choose to lock your bike at the parking area overlooking Sand Beach and Great Head, where you can enjoy one or both short walks. Stroll down to Sand Beach, a striking crescent of white sand nestled between rocky cliffs and lapped by the waters of Newport Cove, or hike the Great Head Trail—a moderately easy loop with some rocky footing and uneven terrain, offering dramatic coastal views from atop the headland.

DAY 2: Park Loop Road to Jordan Pond Loop OR Eagle Lake & Paradise Hill Loop / Stay Put Day

Today's biking routes in Acadia National Park offer a variety of scenic options and flexible mileage, allowing you to tailor the day to your interests. One popular route begins with a ride from your hotel through Bar Harbor and onto the Park Loop Road. Your first optional stop is the Sieur de Monts Spring and Wild Gardens of Acadia, home to cultivated native plant gardens, a nature center, and the original Abbe Museum—an ideal spot to get a deeper sense of the park's natural and cultural heritage. As you continue along the Park Loop, you'll pass some of Acadia's most iconic coastal landmarks—starting with Sand Beach, a dramatic shoreline nestled between steep granite cliffs.

From there, the road continues past Thunder Hole, where crashing waves produce a natural, echoing roar; Boulder Beach, Otter Cliffs, and the Otter Point Overlook, each offering sweeping ocean views and opportunities to pause and take it all in. The Fabbri Memorial Picnic Area, tucked into a quiet wooded setting, makes an ideal stop for a break or snack.

Your ride then brings you to Jordan Pond, a glacial lake famed for its still waters and views of the rounded twin peaks known as the Bubbles. Here, you might stop at the historic Jordan Pond House for lunch or tea—this classic spot is known for its house-made popovers served with jam—or take a peaceful walk along the Jordan Pond Path, a flat, 3.3-mile shoreline loop offering beautiful scenery at every turn. Afterward, continue onto the Aunt Betty Pond Carriage Road, a tranquil forested route that leads past Aunt Betty Pond and along the northwestern shore of Eagle Lake—one of the park's largest and most scenic lakes, surrounded by forested hills and frequented by loons and paddlers—before returning to your hotel.

As an alternative—or addition—to the Park Loop ride, you might choose a route that loops fully around Eagle Lake

on the carriage roads, then continues north to Witch Hole Pond, a serene, wildlife-rich area in the Paradise Hill

section of the park. From there, you'll cross the stone bridge at Duck Brook Falls, a cascading three-tiered waterfall, before making your way back to your hotel.

This evening, choose from one of Bar Harbor's many acclaimed restaurants, or enjoy a relaxed, oceanfront meal at the Atlantic Oceanside Hotel, where the views of Frenchman Bay provide the perfect backdrop for your dinner.

Today's Ride Choices

Park Loop Road to Jordan Pond House — 14.2 miles

Jordan Pond House to Aunt Betty Pond to Bar Harbor — 10.7 miles

Eagle Lake & Paradise Hill Loop — 15.3 miles

What to Expect:

Park Loop Road to Jordan Pond House Loop

Depart Bar Harbor on the paved Park Loop Road for approximately 14 miles, circling the base of Day

Mountain to reach the Jordan Pond House. After your visit, join the carriage roads for about 8 miles, passing Aunt Betty Pond and tracing the edge of Eagle Lake. Continue onto the Witch Hole Pond Carriage Road, passing Breakneck Ponds and Halfmoon Pond, then cross Duck Brook Falls, a cascading three-tiered waterfall. From there, return to your hotel via approximately 2 miles of paved roads.

Eagle Lake & Paradise Hill Loop

This loop departs Bar Harbor on paved roads for just under 4 miles before joining approximately 9.5 miles of carriage roads near Eagle Lake. Enjoy a gentle ascent as you circumnavigate the lake, then continue north along the Witch Hole Pond Carriage Road through the Paradise Hill area, with its quiet wetlands and reflective ponds. From there, cross Duck Brook Falls before completing your ride with a 2-mile return on paved roads back to your hotel.

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 3: Carriage Roads to Jordan Pond via Day Mountain & Around the Mountain Loop / Stay Put Day

Today's route through Acadia National Park connects you with some of the most iconic and scenic stretches of the park's historic carriage road system. Begin by joining the carriage roads at Eagle Lake, riding along its eastern shore before crossing over Park Loop Road to follow a tranquil route along Bubble Pond and through Bubble Valley, flanked by the twin rounded peaks of North and South Bubble Mountains. After crossing Park Loop Road once again, the ride continues with a gradual ascent of Day Mountain, offering a unique inland perspective of the park and sweeping views through the trees.

Looping back on the Day Mountain Carriage Road, you'll merge onto the Jordan Pond/Wildwood Carriage Road, passing over the picturesque Cobblestone Bridge, one of the first and most beloved bridges in the park, before reaching Jordan Pond House—a perfect place to pause for lunch or tea on the lawn overlooking the still waters of the pond.

From here, your return to Bar Harbor follows the Around the Mountain Loop, widely considered one of the most spectacular rides in the carriage road network. This route ascends through dense forest and open ridgelines, offering stunning summit views over the Western Mountains of Mount Desert Island, including Sargent, Cedar Swamp, and Penobscot Mountains. Along the way, you'll pass a series of remarkable Rockefeller-era bridges and

waterfalls, including Cliffsides Bridge, Amphitheater Bridge, Hadlock Brook Bridge and Falls, and Maple Spring Bridge—each seamlessly integrated into the surrounding landscape.

The loop includes a sustained three-mile climb, with some stretches reaching a 6% grade, and passes the scenic Somes Sound Viewpoint before cresting at approximately 790 feet—the highest elevation in the carriage road system. From this high point, you'll enjoy a winding descent along the western edge of Eagle Lake, eventually leading you back to Bar Harbor.

This afternoon, you may wish to continue exploring with an optional activity (at your own expense). Conveniently located on the hotel property, Acadian Boat Tours offers a variety of scenic cruises, including nature tours, puffin and lighthouse cruises, and sunset excursions in Frenchman Bay—an ideal option just steps from your room. Guests may also choose to venture into town for a sea kayaking tour or a sunset sail aboard the schooner *Margaret Todd*; however, please note that these in-town activities are approximately one mile from the hotel and are best accessed via the Island Explorer shuttle, which stops on-site and provides free, regular service to downtown Bar Harbor. Whether you spend the afternoon on the water or browsing Bar Harbor's charming boutiques, it's a perfect way to unwind after a day of unforgettable riding.

Today's Ride Choices

Carriage Roads via Eagle Lake to Day Mountain and Jordan Pond House — 17.3 miles

Jordan Pond House to Around Mountain Loop to Bar Harbor — 15.6 miles

What to Expect:

Depart your

hotel and join the carriage roads of Acadia National Park, descending along the east side of Eagle Lake and past Bubble Pond

to Day Mountain. A gradual ascent winds up this modest peak, rewarding you with unique views across the park and a fun, flowing descent to the Jordan Pond House. From there, return to Bar Harbor on the Around Mountain Loop, following rolling terrain along the west side of Eagle Lake and past the Breakneck Ponds, completing a scenic and satisfying loop through the heart of the park.

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 4: Witch Hole Pond Loop OR Cadillac Mountain Loop / Your VBT Vacation Ends

This morning, you may choose to ride the carriage roads of Acadia National Park one last time. Several scenic loops are available, including an easy route around Witch Hole Pond that departs directly from your hotel in Bar Harbor. For a more challenging finale, consider a ride up the Cadillac Mountain Summit Road. This iconic ascent climbs approximately 1,000 feet over 3.5 miles along a paved roadway with wide, sweeping turns. The steady grade makes it a manageable climb for strong riders, and the reward at the top is well worth the effort: panoramic views of Frenchman Bay, Bar Harbor, and the surrounding islands—plus the satisfaction of reaching the highest point on the U.S. Atlantic coast at 1,530 feet.

You may depart at your leisure today. Hotel check-out is at 11:00 a.m.

For travel options from Bar Harbor, please refer to your *Vacation Preparation Handbook*.

Today's Ride Choices

Witch Hole Pond Loop — 8.8 miles

Cadillac Mountain Loop — 14.4 miles

What to Expect:

Witch Hole Pond Loop:

Depart your

hotel, skirting the edge of town before joining the carriage roads at the Duck Brook Carriage Road trailhead. This counterclockwise loop offers peaceful views of Witch Hole Pond and its surrounding wetlands, with an optional stop at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center before returning to Bar Harbor.

Cadillac Mountain Loop:

For those who love to climb, depart the hotel and ride approximately 3 miles on paved roads to the base of the Cadillac Mountain Summit Road. From here, begin the 3.5-mile ascent to the summit, gaining around 1,500 feet total in elevation. Enjoy sweeping panoramic views at the top before a thrilling descent back the way you came. An early morning departure is highly recommended to avoid vehicle traffic and make the most of the experience.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations

May vary depending on departure date.

Atlantic Oceanside Hotel (Days 1-3)

Ideally located on 12 acres of oceanfront property, the Atlantic Oceanside hotel offers beautiful views, waterfront access, and walking distance to historic downtown Bar Harbor. Just a mile from Acadia National Park, this stunning hotel embodies the authentic Maine experience. With six different buildings to choose from, the accommodation options range from the historic estate to newly renovated portside rooms, each with ocean views and modern amenities. All of the 153 rooms also come fully equipped with a private balcony, complimentary WiFi, air conditioning, and a flatscreen TV. With 500 feet of private beach, as well as nature cruises around Frenchman Bay, the hotel also features indoor and outdoor swimming pools, as well as indoor and outdoor dining serving local and international cuisine.