champlain islands bikeways

five loops of the lake champlain bikeways network

lake champlain bikeways

champlain islands bikeways

grand isle county, vermont

Disclaimer: Users assume all risks, inherent and not inherent, in the use of materials recommending routes of the Lake Champlain Bikeways network and all affiliated organizations, and individuals disclaim any and all liability on their part for damages or injuries to persons or property should they occur. Routes are chosen, designated and/or signed because: they are popular, or are preferred, or provide continuous routes to destinations, or are lightly traveled, or are scenic, or have more room for cars and bikes, or possess a combination of these attributes.

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Cover image: Aerial of causeway/Shirley Chevalier

lake champlain bikeways

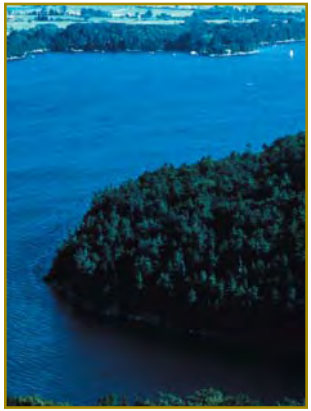
1,355 total network miles

northern adirondack coast bikeways
adirondack coast bikeways
franklin county routes
champlain islands bikeways
local motion routes
addison county bikeways

38 interpretive theme loops

the lake champlain region at a glance

- Lake Champlain: 120 miles long, 12 miles wide, 580 miles of shoreline, and the most historic body of fresh water in North America
- a 363-mile route around the entire Lake called the "Champlain Bikeway"
- 992 miles of theme loops ranging from 10 to 60 miles along a vast network of quiet back roads
- Adirondack Mountains to the west--Green Mountains to the east
- Taconic Mountains to the south--Richelieu River to the north
- agricultural landscapes, historic hamlets, and picturesque villages
- gently rolling terrain to undeniably hilly
- scenic Lake crossings by way of ferry system
- connections to trains with bicycle carriage
- museums, forts, and historic attractions
- within a few hours drive from Boston, Montreal, and New York City
- accessible via plane, train, bus, car, and, of course, bicycle!



Lake Champlain/Gary Randorf

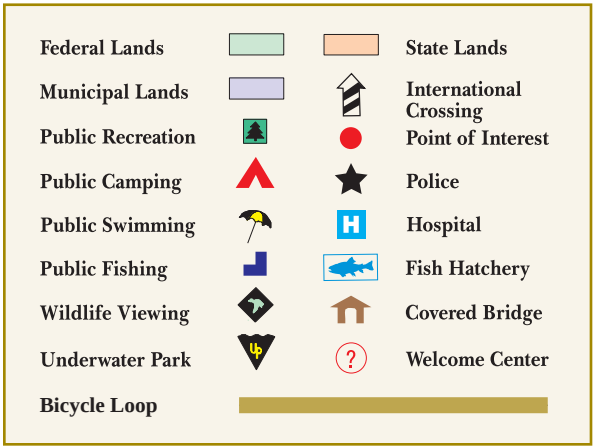
an interconnected, international network of bicycle routes around Lake Champlain in New York, Vermont and Quebec.

the champlain islands

The Champlain Islands–located between urban Montreal, Quebec and Burlington, VT–retain a quiet rural charm. The landscape sports waterside farms, orchards, a vineyard, and the largest sand beach in Vermont. Recreational opportunities include year around fishing, boating, swimming, skating and bicycling. There are also several historic Revolutionary War villages. St. Anne's Shrine on Isle La Motte, where Samuel de Champlain landed in 1609, and Herrmann's Lipizzan Stallions in North Hero draw thousands of visitors each summer. Modern geographers explain the Lake's creation through the collision of the North American and European continents. Great blocks of land between the Green Mountains and the Adirondacks dropped down, forming the Champlain Valley. Over time, glaciers changed the shape of the valley as they plowed over the land. The Island's land mass rebounded from the weight of the glaciers, and divided the glacial waters into the main Lake and the Inland Sea.

Saint Anne's Shrine, Isle La Motte/Saint Anne's Shrine

map legend



Maps and legend produced by Northern Cartographic. North is up on all maps.

temp & precipitation

average temperature in degrees fahrenheit

	j	f	m	a	m	j	j	a	s	o	n	d
hi	27	30	40	54	67	76	80	78	69	57	45	33
lo	05	07	19	33	44	54	58	56	48	37	28	14

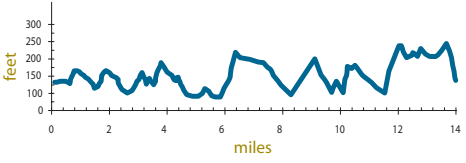
average precipitation in inches

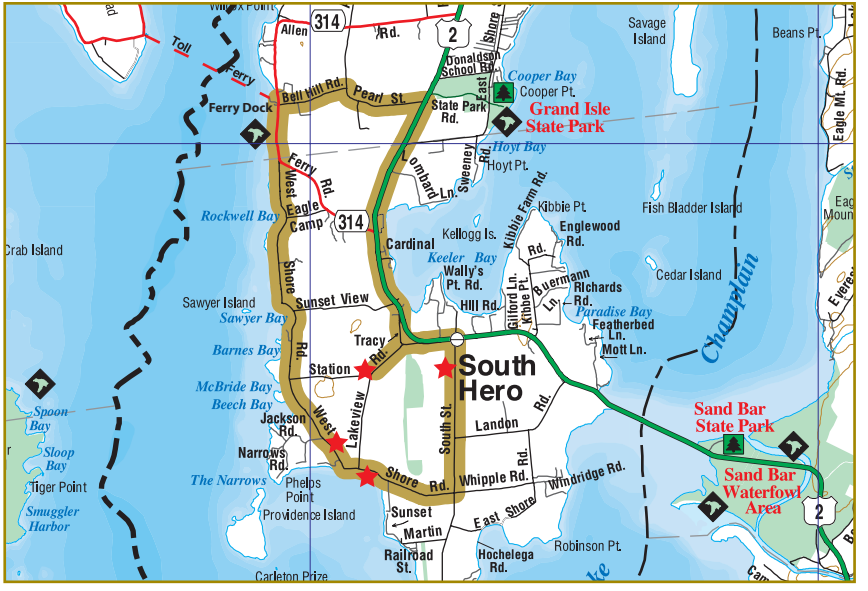
j	f	m	a	m	j	j	a	s	o	n	d
2.4	1.9	2.9	3.1	3.2	3.8	3.9	4.7	4.4	3.5	3.5	2.5

stone castles - 15.0 miles

easy

mile	
0.0	Grand Isle Ferry Dock.
0.0	R on VT Route 314.
0.7	R on West Shore Rd (unpaved).
4.4	Stone castle on left (red stars on map).
4.8	Stone castle on right.
6.2	L on South St. (paved).
7.7	Stone castle on left opposite school.
8.1	L on US Route 2.
8.8	L on Station Rd. (use caution)
9.5	Stone castle on right - turn around at intersection.
10.0	L on Tracy Rd.
10.2	L on US Route 2.
13.0	L on Pearl St.
14.1	L on Bell Hill Rd.
15.0	Grand Isle Ferry Dock

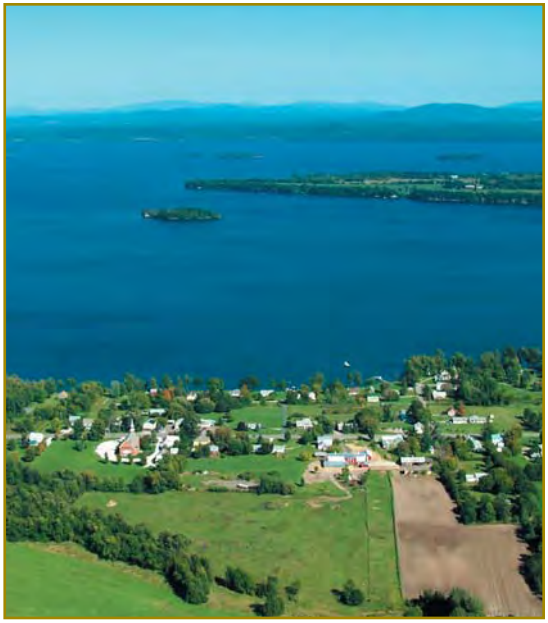




route description

For over thirty years, gardener Harry Barber found a unique way to blend his native country of Switzerland with his new home in Vermont. He created miniature buildings from local Vermont field stone. Five castles, three houses, and several garden structures remain in the Islands. They vary in complexity. Some castles feature glazed windows, interior fireplaces, or dungeons. Others are wired for electricity and have the capability of running water in the moat.

Stone Castles leads you through the South Hero countryside, where you can see examples of Barber's craftsmanship. All his creations are privately owned, and public access is not permitted). Four out of the five castles can be seen from the road. *Stone Castles* also passes through three large orchards, with a spring profusion of blossoms, luscious summer fruit, and a fall harvest celebration. For a short side trip, turn right on South Street (caution, narrow road). The panoramic view from the top of the hill is spectacular.

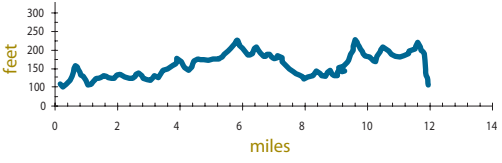


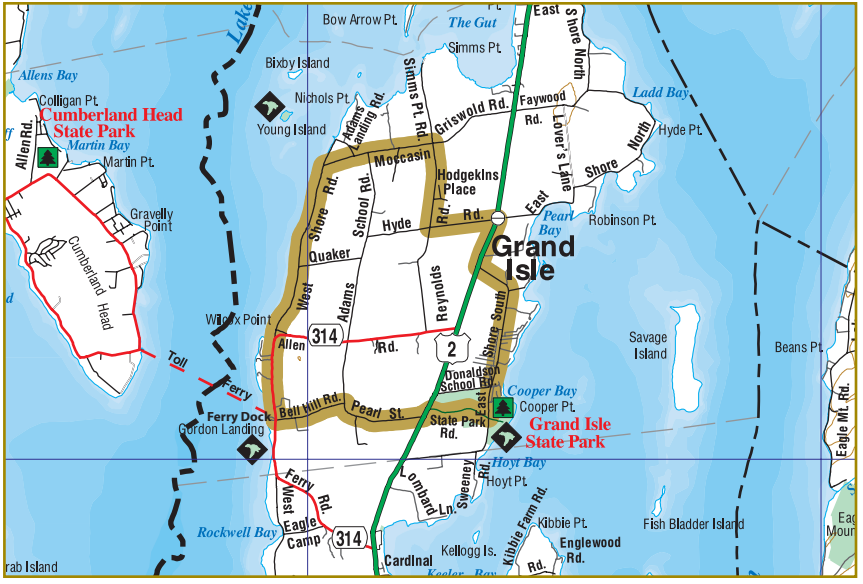
Aerial of Keeler Bay/Shirley Chevalier

island life - 11.6 miles

easy

mile	
0.0	Grand Isle Ferry Dock.
0.0	L on West Shore Rd.
1.0	L staying on West Shore Rd.
3.1	R on Mocassin Rd.
4.5	R on Reynolds Rd.
5.5	L on Hyde Rd.
6.1	R on US Route 2.
6.9	L on East Shore South.
8.9	R on State Park Rd.
9.6	L on US Route 2.
9.7	R on Pearl St.
10.8	L on Bell Hill Rd.
11.6	Grand Isle Ferry Dock.

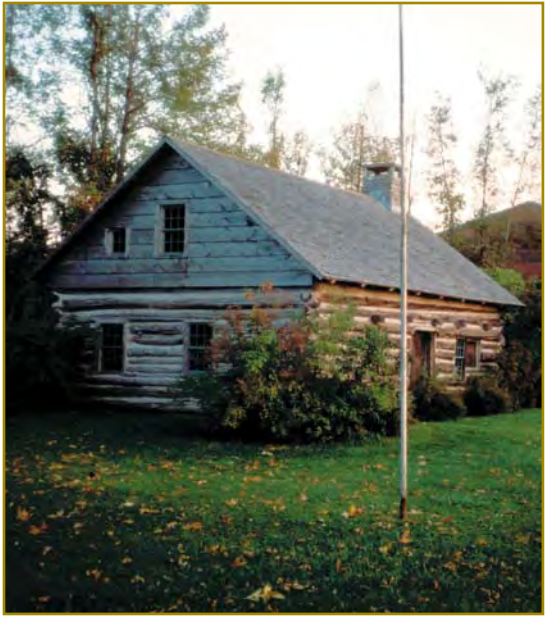




route description

Island Life roams the back roads and shoreline of Grand Isle for a reflection of Island living, past and present. Island life historically focused on Lake Champlain as a transportation corridor for ferries and steamships. Today, the Islands and Lake Champlain provide recreation opportunities for boaters, anglers, and other water enthusiasts.

On the hill behind Gordon House is the Ed Weed Fish Culture Station, open to the public with a self-guiding tour. There is a former one-room schoolhouse at the corner of Moccasin Avenue and Adams School Road. The Hyde Log Cabin, now a museum located on US 2, was moved from the corner of Reynolds and Hyde Roads. Built in 1783 by Revolutionary War hero Jedediah Hyde, the Cabin is one of the oldest in the United States. Popular Grand Isle State Park offers swimming, boating and interpretative programs. Its nature path offers an expansive view across the Inland Sea to Mount Mansfield and the Green Mountain ridgeline.

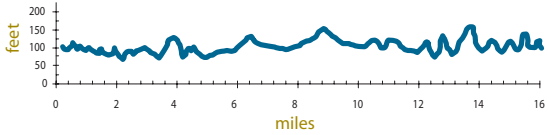


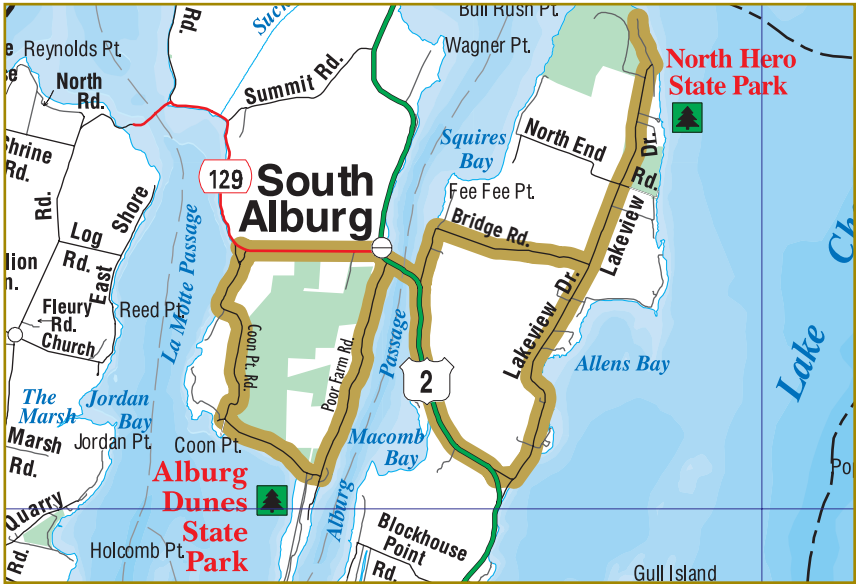
Hyde Log Cabin/Burnt Rock, Inc.

a trail to two beaches - 17.5 miles

easy

mile	
0.0	Alburg Dunes State Park parking lot.
0.2	Exit park past gate on Beach Rd. (unpaved).
0.9	Cross road, down hill, left on Poor Farm Rd.
2.7	R on US 2, cross bridge and continue south.
4.8	L onto Jerusalem Place as US 2 bears right.
5.1	L onto Lakeview Dr.
8.7	L into North Hero State Park.
9.8	State Park Beach, turn around point.
10.9	Exit park, right onto Lakeview Dr.
12.6	R onto Bridge Rd.
14.3	R onto US 2, cross bridge and continue N.
14.7	L onto VT Route 129.
15.8	L onto Route 129 ext (0.6 to end unpaved).
16.0	Road becomes Coon Point Rd.
17.5	Enter Alburg Dunes State Park.





route description

Alburg Dunes is a 625-acre natural history showcase. It provides the nicest sand beach in the state. The park's dune system acts as a barrier island. Sand erodes from low bluffs, and lake currents transport it to the beach area. When seasonal lake levels are low, wind blows the sand back from shore, forming the dunes. The area is also the largest deer wintering area in the islands. Notice the lack of low vegetation and cedar limbs clipped up to the browse line in the forest. Core samples from the black spruce bog along Rt. 129 show peat to depths of 26 feet. These bogs are typical of colder, more northern climates.

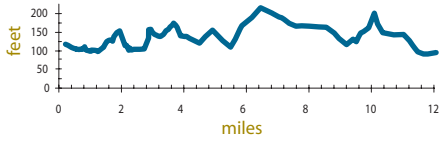
North Hero State Park may be the state's oldest campsite. Prehistoric stone projectile points discovered and on display in the park are more than 5,000 years old! Seasonal fluctuations in the Lake's water level subject the park to spring flooding, burying the park road under water. It is not uncommon to see fish swim across it, en route to spawning beds in the forest.

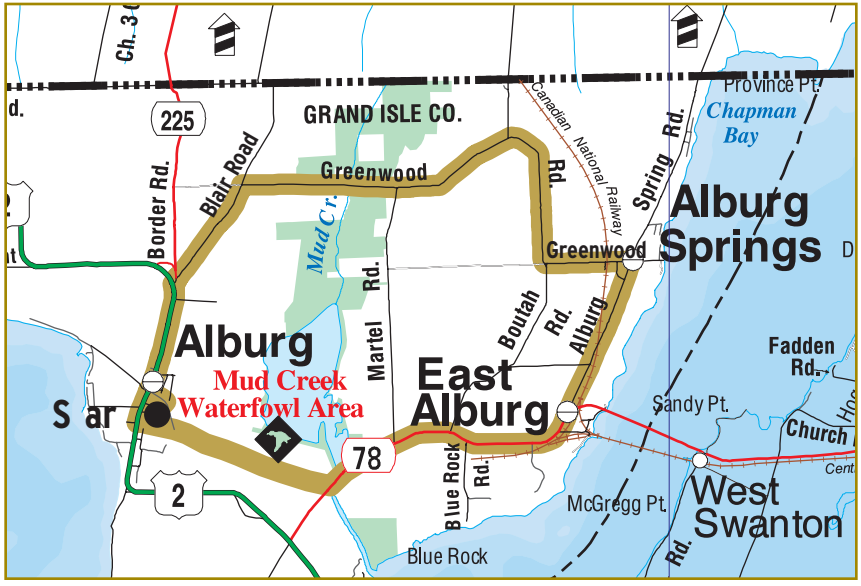
Alburg Dunes State Park/VT Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation

liquid elixir - 11.7 miles

easy

mile	
0.0	Alburg Rail Trail parking area.
0.0	Head east (unpaved for 1.5 miles).
1.5	L on VT Route 78.
3.8	L onto Alburg Spring Rd.
4.9	L onto Greenwood Rd.
5.7	Bear R onto Greenwood Rd.
6.9	Keep left at intersection with cemetery.
8.0	Intersection with Martel Rd.
9.1	L onto Blair Rd.
10.3	L onto Route 2.
10.5	Welcome Center on left.
11.4	L to Industrial Park Rd.
11.7	Alburg Rail Trail parking area.





route description

Water seeps through the Alburg Peninsula. The wave has a timeless flow and is a liquid elixir for Alburg's human inhabitants. *Liquid Elixir* is for hearty cyclists who don't mind an occasional mud patch, bumpy roads, and/or soggy trails. Look for water's impact on the Alburg landscape. Roads and homes built higher than surrounding land keep roads stable and houses dry.

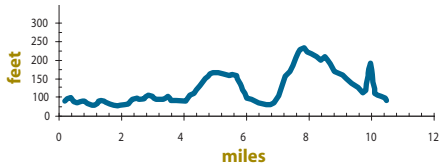
Launch your trip from the Alburg Rail Trail. The trailhead is unmarked, but you'll find it in the Industrial Park's first turnout as a black cinder track leading away from the village. A low mound of earth 50 feet to the right of the trail is a former railroad line plagued by flooding from Lake Champlain's annual high water levels. The Mud Creek Wildlife Area bisects the Alburg Peninsula and hosts a tremendous variety of life.

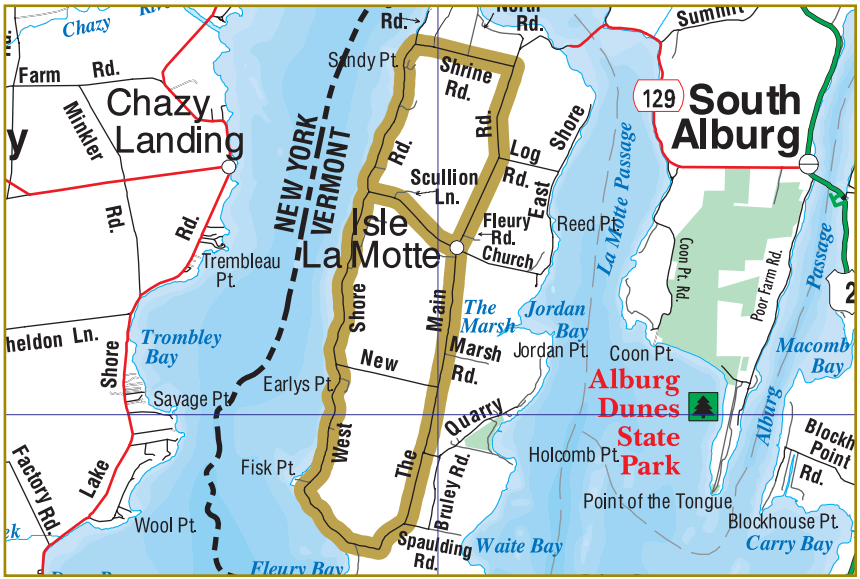
Great Blue Heron/USFWS, Lee Karney

a legacy of ancient stone - 10.1 miles

easy

mile	
0.0	St. Anne's Shrine pavilion.
0.0	L onto Shrine Rd/West Shore Rd.
1.1	Stay straight on W. Shore Rd. at School St.
2.4	Public lake access.
3.7	Unpaved until the Main Rd. (1.3 miles).
5.0	Keep L on Main Rd. (pavement resumes).
7.4	Village of Isle La Motte four corners.
8.0	L onto Shrine Rd.
9.0	Bear L at the "Y" following paved road.
10.1	St. Anne's Shrine pavilion.

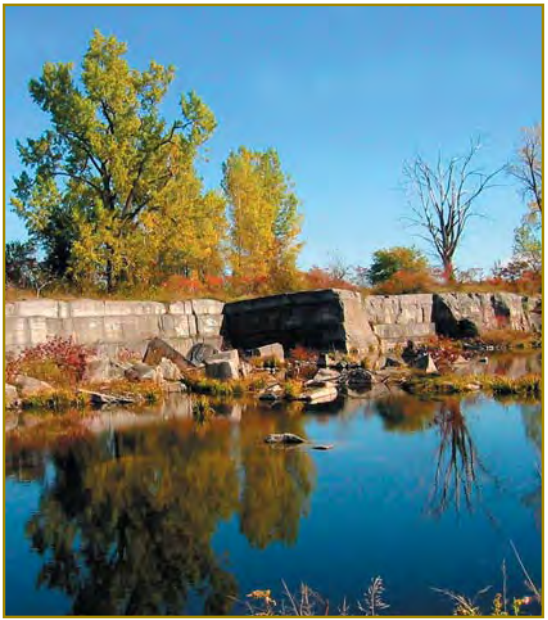




route description

Isle La Motte is one of the world's richest sites for the study of geology. Its unique feature, the world's oldest coral reef, underlies the southern third of the island. You can see successive ages of the Chazyan Reef exposed in outcrops at the southern end of the island (oldest), at the Fisk Quarry, and near the Isle La Motte Historical Society Building (youngest). Five quarries operated here during the 19th century, building upon the island's historic use of both Black River and Chazy limestone as mortar and building stone. Isle La Motte's famed "black marble" limestone was shipped throughout the country for use in buildings as famous as New York City's Radio City Music Hall. For a close-to-home view of Black River limestone, visit the Vermont Statehouse in Montpelier. Only one quarry is active today, but a number of stone buildings still stand.

A Legacy of Ancient Stone starts at St. Anne's Shrine, the site of Fort St. Anne, built by the French in 1666 and the oldest



Fisk Quarry/Linda Fitch

route description (continued)

European settlement in Vermont. A statue of Samuel de Champlain marks his landing on Isle La Motte in 1609. Cyclists are welcome at the Shrine and may swim at its sandy beach. Riding south along the lakeshore provides spectacular views of the Adirondacks and Lake Champlain.

The Fisk Farm and Fisk Quarry also welcome visitors. Vice President Teddy Roosevelt was visiting here when he learned that President McKinley had been shot. The Quarry features ancient fossils, called stromatoporoids, which are visible as white rounded shapes in the quarry walls. Help protect this ancient resource by not collecting artifacts and not trespassing at any sites along the loop.

The Isle La Motte recreation park on School Street has a unique, fossil-shaped sculpture, constructed of Isle La Motte limestone. Cyclists may rest here and enjoy great views.

Bike Shed Rentals, Isle La Motte/Burnt Rock, Inc.

visitor information

If you are planning a bicycling trip to the Champlain Islands, take advantage of accommodations as well as fine dining all through the 27-mile length of the Islands. Services are located in the villages along US 2. Lodging ranges from State Park campgrounds to B&Bs to comfortable inns in all five Island communities. Restaurant fare ranges from gourmet fine dining to pizza to deli sandwiches, home made ice cream to maple creamies. Register at one of the Vermont State Parks, request a receipt and get free day admission to all.

For information on where to eat and stay, call the Lake Champlain Islands Chamber of Commerce, 800.262.5226 or 802.372.8400. Check the website for listings and a calendar of things to do in the Islands: www.champlainislands.com.

Bikes are available for rental, as well as repair, equipment and amenities.

Grand Isle Canoe, Bike and Kayak
300 U.S. Route 2, Grand Isle - 802.372.4753, 802.372.3777. Bike rentals, sales and repairs. Authorized dealers of E.V. Global Motors Electric bicycles. We-No-Nah Canoes, Jamis Bicycles, Cignal Tandems, Quiver Sail Kayak sails, and Camelback hydration systems.

Hero's Welcome,
3537 U.S. Route 2, North Hero - 802.372.4161. General store, marina and canoe and bike rentals www.heroswelcome.com.

Loon's Landing Properties,
6931 U.S. Route 2, North Hero - 802.372.8951 www.loonslandingproperties.com.

vermont islands and farms regional attractions

State Parks

North Hero
Alburg Dunes
Knight Island
Grand Isle
Sand Bar
Burton Island
Kill Kare
Woods Island
Knight Point

Sites

St. Anne's Shrine
Herrmann's Royal Lipizzan Stallions
Hyde Log Cabin
Ed Weed Fish Culture Station
Fisk Quarry
Mud Creek Wildlife Area
Gordon Center House
Lake Champlain Ferry Dock
Missisquoi Wildlife Refuge

For more information on bicycling in the islands and farms region:

Islands and Farms Regional Marketing Program, PO Box 213, North Hero, Vermont 05474, 800.262.5226; 802.372.8400, islandfun@champlainislands.com, www.islandsandfarms.com; www.champlainislands.com; Visit the Champlain Islands Chamber of Commerce, 3501 US Rt. 2, North Hero, Vermont.

Hermann's Royal Lipizzan Stallions

making connections

Cyclists enjoying the Champlain Islands can explore other cycling destinations through day trips.

Promoters of the **Island Line Trail** envision a trail connecting downtown Burlington, the Champlain Islands' orchards and vineyard, Quebec's Valley of the Forts, and Montreal. Currently, the trail includes 1.5 miles from Martin Road to Lake Champlain in South Hero and 13 miles from Oakledge Park in Burlington to Causeway Park in Colchester. The trail segments are linked on August weekends when a bicycle ferry operates across "The Cut". For more information, contact Local Motion at 802.652.2453.

Connect to the **Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail** via the Island Runner ferry or through the Champlain Bikeways route in South Hero. The Rail Trail winds its way through 26.4 miles of pastoral farm and forest lands in Franklin County from St. Albans east to Richford. Visitor amenities are available in St. Albans, Sheldon, Enosburg, East Berkshire and Richford. For more visitor information, contact the Franklin County Regional Chamber of Commerce at 802.524.2444.

Plattsburgh's Waterfront Trail connects downtown to the Gordon Bike Path (south of the city) as well as the Karen Fleury Bike Path (north of the city), and connect the college with downtown via Brinkerhoff and Court Streets.

Connect with **La Route Verte (the Green Route),** Canada's 3,400-kilometer bicycle network from the Rouses Point, New York customs station, which is just west of Alburg. This portion of the route features the nearby Chambly Canal Bike Path. La Route Verte can also be reached by going north from Richford at the end of the Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail.

safety guidelines

Motorists and bicyclists share scenic roads. Use caution on narrow, winding or unpaved roadway. Follow traffic laws and ride safely. Bicycles are vehicles by law and have the right to use public roads. You are responsible for operating your bicycle under all conditions.

when cycling, please follow these guidelines:

Source: Mad about Cycling

1. WEAR A HELMET and cycling gloves.
2. Ride with the flow of traffic.
3. When using travel lanes, follow motor vehicle laws. Obey all traffic signs and signals. Do not cut corners.
4. Use clear hand signals when making turns or stopping.
5. Ride in a straight line at least 3 feet from parked cars or curbs.
6. If you must ride at night, use lights and reflectors.
7. Ride defensively! Be aware of motorists' actions.
8. Be aware of train tracks and other road conditions.
9. Ride single file.
10. Carry items in panniers or a handle-bar pack.

Cyclists touring the Champlain Bikeway/Gary Randorf

about lake champlain bikeways

Lake Champlain Bikeways promotes bicycling throughout the Lake Champlain regions of New York, Vermont and Québec for the purposes of increasing opportunities for bicycle recreation and transportation, improving the quality of life, enhancing the economic vitality, advocating for sustainable communities, encouraging healthy lifestyles and raising public awareness and appreciation of inherent scenic, historic, cultural, natural, and recreational resources throughout the area.

A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Bikeways depends on contributions from individuals, businesses and organizations to carry out our mission. We are proud to be able to provide helpful information and brochures for cyclists who come to the Champlain Valley to enjoy our beautiful countryside, vistas and hospitality. We currently provide this information at no charge when requested through our Clearinghouse at www.champlainbikeways.org. If we are to continue to provide this service and pursue our other goals of encouraging bicycling in the basin, we need the support of like-minded bicyclists.

Be a part of the movement! Please contribute via credit card at PayPal.com (payable to "join@champlainbikeways.org"), or send your check to: Lake Champlain Bikeways, c/o Local Motion Trailside Center, 1 Steele Street #103, Burlington, VT 05401. Your donation is tax deductible.

A variety of Lake Champlain Bikeways publications, as well as other regional bicycling information, is available through our web site at www.champlainbikeways.org or by phone at 802.652.BIKE (2453).

acknowledgements

Champlain Islands Bikeways was developed through a partnership among Lake Champlain Bikeways, Northwest Regional Planning Commission, the Islands and Farms Regional Marketing Program, Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, Lake Champlain Byways Council, Lake Champlain Islands Chamber of Commerce, and local bike enthusiasts. The Lake Champlain Basin Program and Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing provided financial assistance. The partners of this brochure support the efforts of Lake Champlain Bikeways. We are proud to be included in their 1,355-mile network.

Voies Cyclables Du Lac Champlain
Lake Champlain Bikeways

Northwest
Regional Planning Commission

Vermont Islands & Farms

Forests, Parks & Recreation
Vermont
Agency of Natural Resources

Lake Champlain Islands
Chamber of Commerce

Lake Champlain Basin Program

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