

DMFTC Bike Rides

The days' rides are named by their destination. This is typical for the five days:

Monday: Alpine Day

Ride 27 miles out of the mountains to the pretty city of Alpine. Riders can take the bus back (bikes are trailered), or bike back to the Ranch (total 54 miles). Shorter rides can be done on this out-and-back course.

Tuesday: Scenic Loop Day

Ride the gorgeous and challenging Scenic Loop, starting by crossing Mount Locke where McDonald Observatory is. The most gorgeous part of the ride is Madera Canyon, which is like a Colorado mountain ride. There are 4 rest stops, with lunch provided at the third one. A "half-loop" is available where riders are bused to the back of the mountains and ride 42 miles back to the Ranch. A out-back of up to 34 miles is available. [Click here for a map of the Scenic Loop.](#)

Wednesday: Balmorhea Day

Everyone goes to Balmorhea State Park for a picnic lunch and swim in the spring-fed pool. Options are to bike directly there (36 beautiful and mostly downhill miles), add the Boy Scout Ranch Road (out-back) on to make a total of 58 miles, or be bused and dropped off at Wild Rose Pass and bike the last 20 miles to the pool. Hearty campers have been known to bike back from the pool to the Ranch! But most of us come back by bus, with the bikes being trailered.

Thursday: Marfa Day

Drive or carpool to Marfa and ride out-back on Farm Road 2810, that eventually turns to dirt and dead-ends at the Mexican border. Our last turnaround is where the pavement stops, at about 25 miles. Beautiful "high plains" rolling hills with views forever. The only traffic is a rancher or two and the border patrol. Any distance up to 50 miles. Also, riders can go out-back toward Alpine on Hiway 90, which is very smooth and flat. Cyclists can drive back to the Ranch for lunch or hang out in Marfa on their own.

Friday: Observatory Day

The Friday rides are on-your-own, with many riders going out-back from the Ranch to McDonald Observatory, about 11 miles one way. The challenging ride is to go all the way up the switchback road to the telescopes, with the last mile being the steepest public road in Texas. It is also the highest paved road in the state. The 11 miles back to the Ranch are a lovely downhill glide to close out the week's biking. For a longer distance, there is a pretty 85 mile loop ride which some cyclists do on their own. It is a triangle through Ft Davis, Alpine, and Marfa, then back to the Ranch. Food and water can be obtained in the towns, about 25 miles apart. It does not cross any big mountains.