

(Free) Bicycling the Blue Ridge: A Guide to the Skyline Drive and the Blue Ridge Parkway

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Elizabeth Skinner, Charlie Skinner : Bicycling the Blue Ridge: A Guide to the Skyline Drive and the Blue Ridge Parkway before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Bicycling the Blue Ridge: A Guide to the Skyline Drive and the Blue Ridge Parkway:

31 of 31 people found the following review helpful. 550 mile road testBy Rick FleeterI have been a long distance cyclist for about 40 years on and off -since long before I could drive. Though I've lived in Virginia for20 of those

years, for some reason I never thought about the Skyline Drive and Blue Ridge Parkway! Amazing - since I've ridden up and down parts of the East and West coasts, to the midwest, and through parts of Europe and Australia. My brother suggested I ride the lengths of the two parkways, and I bought *Riding the Blue Ridge*, plus several other books, to help my planning. I just returned from riding 550 miles on those two roads. Though my riding style is different from the Skinners', I travel on a racing bike carrying minimal equipment plus credit cards, I found their book by far the most helpful, and its pages, which I tore out and then discarded after passing through various sections, became the Bible of my trip. The descriptions of the ride and places along the route were accurate and brief enough to fit into a portable and readable book. A good example of how the brief descriptions were so apt is the small hotel and store at Bengie Gap: the book mentions it's easy to "zip by" - and given that the rain and wind were fierce as I approached, I really did not want to miss that stop. Those few words of caution did the trick - I found it no problem but otherwise would definitely have zipped by! Like all the places they mention, the description of what was there was 100% reliable and accurate. Besides my background in long distance riding, I have also raced and I am still a strong hill climber. I found the greatest inaccuracy of the book that it does not adequately describe the difficulty of this ride. I appreciate that the book is written by people who are accomplished riders, and that a mission of the book is to introduce this ride to a wider group of people. But, for instance, the book might leave the impression that riding from, say, Front Royal to Big Meadows is a reasonable stage on the bike for the average tourist who takes her time. While that may be true for some, I would suggest it mention explicitly that this ride includes over 5000 feet of total climbing, most of it at grades greater than 5%, and should be considered difficult. As another example, the ride going South from Volunteer Gap to Peaks of Otter is among the most challenging anywhere in the East including a single climb of over 3300 feet at a steady 6% grade. There is no mention in the book that this segment is difficult even for highly capable cyclists. I feel the book could be improved by, for example, adding a separate section describing the level of challenge involved in the rides, as is done in many hiking and cross-country ski guides. Not to scare the reader or create some elitist idea about riding, but so that people are prepared both in their training and in their daily planning. Any rider is advised to plan fewer daily miles along these roads than they are accustomed to. I used the book to engineer each day's ride, and to make reservations for each evening. It was immensely helpful and I'm truly grateful to the authors and for the book - it made my trip possible and enjoyable. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent starting point resource By W. Vetter Just back from a ride from Front Royal to Blowing Rock on Skyline Drive and The Blue Ridge Parkway. Used this book as my primary guide book/resource for the almost 475 mile journey. For the most part the book was spot on locating supplies and campgrounds along the way. The Fourth Edition is dated 2009, so beware that there are a few minor changes (closed lodges and eateries) along the way. The authors are careful to avoid writing much about setting exceptions on travel distances per day and the difficulty of various sections of road. I suggest that people planning trips consult other resources (i.e. travel blogs) when calculating on trip itinerary. During the trip I ended up ripping the pages of the book associated with that day's route. If the authors are reading these reviews, one suggestion: copy the route profile maps to the end of the book where they can be easily removed on riding days. 7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Anticipates Everything By Redbeard There are many cycling guides, but this is one of the most practical and well-organized. As other reviewers state, the real value of the book is its collection of information on camping, nearby hotels, access points, points of interest, etc. The authors also have a wonderful "you can do it" attitude in their narrative style. Their encouragement inspired me to ride the Skyline Drive last fall, to my great enjoyment. I would quibble, by the way, with their elevation profiles. I certainly discovered hills that they don't tell you about! Supplement your planning with one of the fine topographic map products for a better sense of what awaits you.

There is no ribbon of highway more ideal for cycling than the Skyline Drive and Blue Ridge Parkway they both entice the senses and physically challenge the body. The new edition of *Bicycling the Blue Ridge* continues as the definitive guide to this cyclists dream road, offering completely updated information on lodging, bike shops, campgrounds, road crossings, points of interest, bed and breakfasts, panoramic views, groceries, and more. Written with racers, touring cyclists, and recreational cyclists in mind, this milepost-by-milepost guide covers every inch of the 574-mile path between Front Royal, Virginia, and Cherokee, North Carolina.

...information on weather, lodging, needed equipment and clothing...point-by-point descriptions of each of the day trips...elevation gains. -- Fran Farlow, *The Gaston Gazette*, July 16, 2004 If you plan to tour...by bike, pack this guidebook...describe(s) the parkway by mile markers and by elevation profiles. -- charlotte.com, August 15, 2004 Point-by-point descriptions of rides...includes elevation profile charts, maps, locations of lodging, campgrounds, restaurants, stores, bike shops. -- *Asheville Citizen-Times*, July 2, 2004 From the Back Cover The Skyline Drive and the Blue Ridge Parkway are arguably the two most quintessential scenic roads east of the Mississippi. This 575-mile strip of continuous road flows between Front Royal, Virginia, and Cherokee, North Carolina, traverses the Shenandoah National Park, and connects to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park along the eastern rampart of the Appalachian Mountains. *Bicycling the Blue Ridge* is the definitive guide to this ribbon of highway and is ready to help you plan the perfect trip. Open these pages and you will find detailed, mile-by-mile descriptions that provide

information on lodging, restaurants, stores, and bike shops on or near these united roads. Newly designed maps and elevation profiles are also included. Whether your interest is recreational cycling, touring, or racing, whether you are out for the day or a month, *Bicycling the Blue Ridge* is an indispensable tool for anyone interested in bicycling this incredible highway.