



Bike Routes on Cape Breton Island

8

Main à Dieu Loop

Area: CBRM

50.0 kms

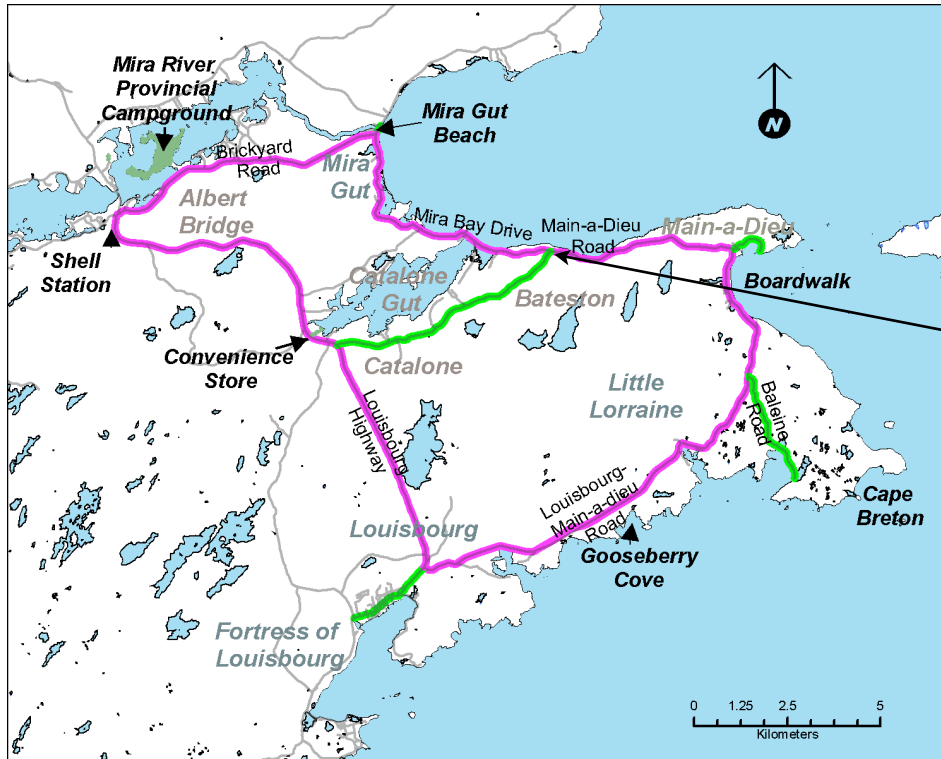
Rating: ♥♥

Traffic: 🚲🚲

Type of Bicycle: Road or Hybrid

Maximum Climb: m.

Total Climb: m.



Cue Sheet	
0.0	Start. Albert Bridge, Gas Stn.
0.1	Across Louisbourg Hwy on Brickyard Road
2.5	Entrance Mira Rvr. Prov. Park
7.8	Marconi Trail, Hwy 255. 0.5k side Loop to Mira Gut Beach.
15.1	Bateston Intersection. Straight on Main-à-dieu Rd. or Right to Catalone 7k.
20.5	Intersection. Left. 1.0k side Loop to Burkes Point Lookoff or Right Marconi Trail, parallel to boardwalk & 2.2k sandy beach
24.0	Side tour to Baleine (6k return)
30.0	Little Loraine
35.2	End of road. Intersection.
	Side loop to Louisbourg. Railway museum, Fortress, Light-house.
35.2	Right on Louisbourg Hwy.
42.0	Catalone Convenience Store
50.0	End of ride

Adjacent Routes: #

Comments: by: Andrée Crépeau

This ride explores a historic route along a shore favoured by the early Portugese, Basque and French fisherman who came yearly to harvest cod and used the shingle or gravel beaches to dry their catch. Sections of the road were built by the French after establishing Louisbourg in 1713. As you shift from inland to the shore temperatures can change dramatically- be prepared.

The route starts on the Brickyard Road and the first stop- the Provincial Park offers a picnic area and fresh water swimming. Pedal along the scenic Mira river past summer homes and working farms to its mouth and a white sand beach. The road turns and follows the shoreline. At Catalone Gut it hugs the gravel dunes of a long barrier beach typical of Cape Breton's eastern shore. It is ideal for observing shore birds. At Main-a-Dieu consider stopping at the Big Wave cafe for excellent home cooking. Turn left at the intersection and access a walking trail with panoramic ocean views including Scattarie Island once a busy fishing community.

In Baleine visit the site of Beryl Markham's crash landing in September of 1936. The first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic from east to west, she exited her plane, hailed two fisherman and said 'I'm Mrs. Markham and I've just flown from London'. You will also find a plaque commemorating the first but short lived Scottish settlement of 1629. The walking trail at the end of the road takes you to Cape Breton, the island's namesake.

The highway travels through the typical coastal forest dominated by spruce, fir and birch tree. This forest changes dramatically at the waters edge. Explore this ecosystem at Gooseberry Cove (.8k return). The land meets the water with rock outcrops, berry bogs and thickets of dwarfed spruce. During August the crowberry bogs are frequented by flocks of migrating Whimbrels.

The last part of the shore route is through Little Lorraine a fishing village perched right on the ocean. The route overland to the end of the ride will provide the only hilly portion of the route. Take a rest at the top of the major climb at Catalone. The vista will give you a sense of the typical topography - valley and ridges. The ride ends with a descent into Albert Bridge.

Emergencies: dial 911

Pit Stops: Mullins Shell Station at Start/End
Main-à-Dieu, Big Wave Café 20.5k
Louisbourg, 36k.
Catalone, Convenience Store, 42k.

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