

7 Barrington Cruise

Given the bustle of the surrounding suburban landscape, the rural character of this ride seems unlikely. As you encounter the oak-covered hills, sprawling marshlands, and farms mixed in with a scattering of often-palatial houses, you'll find yourself congratulating the local residents who fought to preserve the area's rural charm.

Start: Lions Park, located on the shore of the Fox River in Fox River Grove.

Length: 28.9 miles.

Terrain: You'll encounter woodland, prairie, wetlands, and hills—some are steep, but none are very large.

Traffic and hazards: The two short stretches on Lake-Cook Road tend to be busy. Approach these sections of roadway with care.

Getting there: *Automobile:* Take I-90 northwest of Chicago to Barrington Road and head north. In Barrington, turn left on Northwest Highway (US 14). Turn left on Algonquin Road and then turn right on River Road. Park in Lions Park at the end of the road. *Public transportation:* The ride starts a half mile from the Fox River Grove Metra station on the Union Pacific District Northwest Metra Line. From the Metra station, take Lincoln Avenue left (southwest). Turn right on Beachway Drive, left on Millard Avenue, and right on River Road. Start from Lions Park on the right. Coordinates for starting point: 16T 398604E 4672193N

The Ride

When Chicago businessmen and their families began coming to Barrington after World War I, they were attracted to the rural setting and saw the potential to create a genteel atmosphere in the Chicago suburbs. They transformed old farms into estates and established numerous horse farms and riding facilities. Many houses were built to mimic English countryside manors or, in some bizarre cases, fortified castles from medieval England. Reinforcing this carefully cultivated air of English gentry, the area is sometimes referred to as “the Barringtons” because five local communities have “Barrington” in their names.

The first part of the ride takes you over the wooded bluffs that rise along the Fox River. Hills that line the opposite shore of the Fox occasionally peek through the trees while you're passing over the high point of the bluff. Descending to the river's edge, you'll follow a wavy ribbon of asphalt that parallels the 150-yard-wide waterway. River homes with big porches and inviting yards line the sides of the river.

Leaving the river behind, you'll make a short but steep climb back up the bluff. Spring Creek Road takes you through a landscape of cropland, wooded spots, various types of farms, and a small cemetery dating from 1842.

Lake-Cook Road marks the beginning of Spring Creek Valley Forest Preserve—4,000 acres of densely tangled woodland, tranquil prairie, and reedy marshes



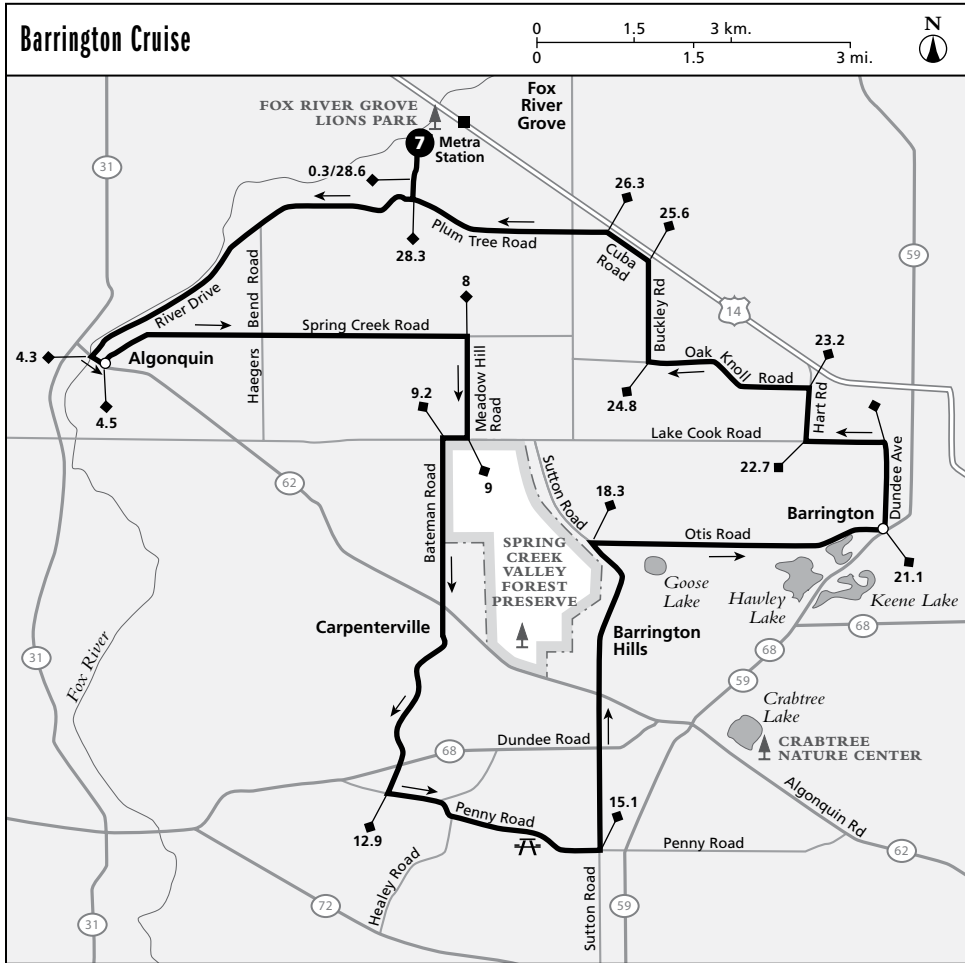
Barrington's farmland is mostly gone, but some barns remain.

active with birds. Signs along the road indicate efforts to rid the area of invasive plants and restore the native landscape. Interrupting the savannas and wetlands are oak- and hickory-laden hills—some of which may prompt you to drop into the granny gear while climbing. Mixed in with the woods and open space are horse farms, scattered houses, and the occasional lavish estate.

Before turning on Otis Road, a vast marshland with acres of cattails and open water is cradled by the landscape on the left. More wetlands and a sprinkling of little lakes accompany the route into the village of Barrington.

Given the tony atmosphere of Barrington, one wouldn't guess it was the location of the final shootout between the FBI and the notorious gangster "Baby Face" Nelson. During the 1934 shootout, two FBI agents were killed; Nelson died a short time later from 17 bullets wounds.

Soon after Barrington, the route cuts through the links at the Barrington Country Club and then passes the Grigsby Prairie, a swath of grassland managed by local citizens. Near the end of the ride, along the rolling wooded hills of Plum Tree Road, you'll pass an enormous mansion-castle (you may expect to see archers standing guard on its turrets). Returning to Lions Park, take some time to relax on the shore of the Fox River before heading home.



Miles and Directions

- 0.0** From Lions Park, head south (away from the Fox River) on River Road.
- 0.3** Turn right on Algonquin Road, then follow it left through a sharp turn. Stay right on Algonquin Road at the junction with Old Hunt Road and Plum Tree Road. At Haegers Bend Road, Algonquin Road becomes River Road.
- 4.3** Turn left on SR 62/Algonquin Road. This road is typically very busy; use care riding along this stretch or consider walking your bike on the sidewalk for this 2-block stretch.
- 4.5** Turn left on Highland Avenue, which soon turns into Spring Creek Road.
- 8.0** Turn right on Meadow Hill Road (watch closely for a somewhat hidden street sign).
- 9.0** Turn right on Lake-Cook Road (stay close to the shoulder on this busy road).
- 9.2** Turn left on Bateman Road.

- 12.9** Turn left on Penny Road. Bear right at the slightly confusing intersection of Penny Road and Healy Road. The Penny Road Pond picnic area is the only forest preserve picnic area you'll encounter.
- 15.1** Turn left on Old Sutton Road.
- 18.3** Turn right on Otis Road.
- 21.1** Turn left on Dundee Avenue (access downtown Barrington by turning right on Station Avenue).
- 22.0** Turn left on Lake-Cook Road.
- 22.7** Turn right on Old Hart Road (the next street after Hart Road).
- 23.2** Turn left on Oak Knoll Road.
- 24.8** Turn right on Buckley Road.
- 25.6** Where Buckley Road ends, turn left on Cuba Road (no street sign). On Cuba Road immediately turn right on West Cuba Road (no street sign).
- 26.3** Bear left on Plum Tree Road.
- 28.3** Turn right on Algonquin Road.
- 28.6** Turn left on River Road.
- 28.9** Return to Lions Park.

Local Information

Barrington Area Chamber of Commerce: 325 North Hough St., Barrington; (847) 381-2525; www.barringtonchamber.com.

Chicagoland Regional Tourism Development Office: 2301 South Lake Shore Dr., Chicago; (312) 795-1700; www.chicagolandtravel.com.

McHenry County Convention and Visitors Bureau: 5435 Bull Valley Rd., Suite 324-B, McHenry; (815) 363-6177; www.visitmchenrycounty.com.

Local Events/Attractions

Crabtree Nature Center: Features some of the best hiking trails in the area; 3 Stover Rd. (enter on Palatine Rd., between Barrington Rd. and Algonquin Rd.), Barrington; (847) 381-6592.

Goebbert's Pumpkin and Farm Market: Large market with a cafe; 40 West Higgins Rd., South Barrington; (847) 428-6727; www.pumpkinfarms.com/SBarrington.html.

Lake County Discovery Museum: Impressive local museum contains largest postcard collection in the world; 27277 Forest Preserve Dr., Wauconda; (847) 968-3400; www.lcfpd.org/discovery_museum.

Restaurants

Barrington Chocolate and Ice Cream Shop: Also sells homemade fudge and pie; close to the route; 140 South Cook St., Barrington; (847) 381-9973; www.barringtonchocolate.com.

Egg Harbor Cafe: Local chain serves up breakfast and lunch; 210 South Cook St., Barrington; (847) 304-4033; www.eggharborcafe.com.

Millrose Brewing Co.: Steak, seafood, and sandwiches; 45 South Barrington Rd., South Barrington; (847) 382-7673; www.millroserestaurant.com.

Port Edward Restaurant: Seafood and steak; dining areas overlook the Fox River; 20 West Algonquin Rd., Algonquin; (847) 658-5441; www.portedward.com.

Accommodations

Days Inn Barrington: 405 West Northwest Hwy., Barrington; (847) 381-2640.

Victorian Rose Garden Bed and Breakfast: 314 Washington St., Algonquin; (847) 854-9667; www.sleepandeat.com.

Bike Shops

Prairie Trail Bike Shop: Located on the Prairie Trail; 315 Railroad St., Algonquin; (847) 658-1154.

Village CycleSport: 203 West Northwest Hwy., Barrington; (847) 382-9200; <http://villagecyclesport.com>.

Restrooms

Start/finish: Portable toilets in Lions Park.

Mile 5.4: Presidential Park has restrooms and water.

Mile 14.4: Penny Road Pond picnic area has a portable toilet.

Mile 22.0: The Starbucks in Barrington has restrooms.

Maps

USGS: Barrington quad, Crystal Lake quad, Streamwood quad.

DeLorme: *Illinois Atlas & Gazetteer*: Page 20.

8 Beverly–Oak Lawn Ramble

This ride opens with a short stint on a heavily wooded section of the Major Taylor Trail, one of the newest trails in Chicago. The route in Beverly takes you by a collection of historic mansions, including one that was modeled after an Irish castle. From Beverly, you'll head west through the quiet streets of Mount Greenwood and pass some of the local cemeteries for which the area is known. After tours of the suburban towns of Oak Lawn and Evergreen Park, you'll return to Beverly to gawk at more of the sprawling mansions.

Start: Dan Ryan Woods Forest Preserve, parking lots 15 and 16, near the intersection of Western Avenue and 83rd Street.

Length: 17.9 miles.

Terrain: Flat urban residential neighborhoods, with occasional small hills in the Beverly area.

Traffic and hazards: Most of these streets are quiet; a few short sections of the route follow busier roads.

Getting there: *Automobile:* Take I-94 south from downtown Chicago. Exit at 79th Street and head west to Damen Avenue. Turn left on Damen Avenue, then turn right on 83rd Street. Park in the Dan Ryan Woods Forest Preserve's parking lots 15 and 16, located on the right. *Public transportation:* Take the Rock Island Metra Line to the 91st Street station in Beverly. The Major Taylor Trail runs along the east side of the railroad tracks. Coordinates for starting point: 16T 443571E 4621316N

The Ride

Known for its historic homes, tree-lined streets, and racially integrated population, Beverly is one of the most likeable neighborhoods in Chicago. The large lawns, hilly topography, and close-knit community atmosphere give the area an unusual appeal. Along Longwood Drive, you'll encounter a progression of mansions built in various styles, many with wooded surroundings and landscaped yards and gardens.

Before arriving in Beverly, though, you'll follow the first leg of the Major Taylor Trail as it gradually curves along an old railroad embankment on the eastern edge of