

### **International World Capitals Ride**

After a few years of riding on the other H brand, Karen and I decided to get back on a Goldwing. What should we do and where should we go to break-in our new 2016 Goldwing? What should we do special for our maiden voyage? How about a ride to visit several International World capitals? That's it! That's what we'll do!

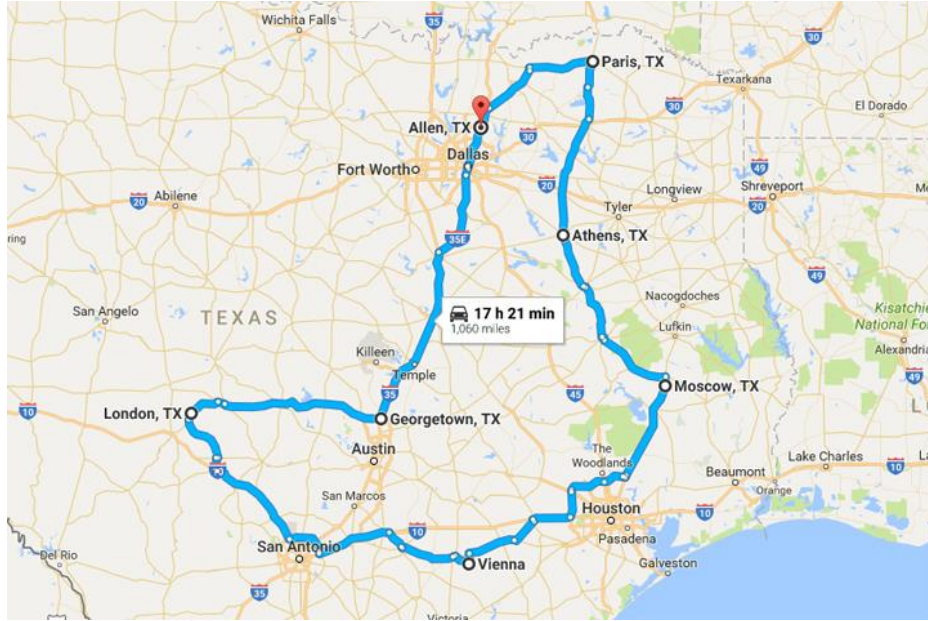


Rider Meeting

Karen and I have been active members of the IBA (Iron Butt Association) since 2004. The IBA just happened to be hosting the “Big as Texas” party in Dallas, Texas exactly a week after taking delivery of our new Goldwing. This would be a great time to break-in the new bike and visit with our IBA friends! Now, just how does the IBA party? With an Iron Butt ride, of course! And this year, the theme of the ride was International World Capitals. The ride would start in Dallas, TX and continue on to Paris, TX, Athens, TX, Moscow, TX, Vienna, TX, Georgetown, TX, London, TX and finish up back at party headquarters in Dallas, TX.

The ride would start on Friday morning, check-in at 5:30 am, Rider briefing at 5:45 am for a 6:00 am start. At check-in, you would receive a unique flag with a number on it. You would be required to get a picture of your flag at a specific landmark at each location and email the picture to IBA headquarters. You must ride to each location in the specific order provided. This would guarantee that you rode 1,000 miles. And, you must complete the ride within 24 hrs to be considered a finisher and receive an IBA certificate from the IBA President, Michael Kneebone, at the banquet the following day.

There were about 150 riders signed up to participate in the 1,000 mile ride or a similar 1,500 mile ride.



The 1,000 mile route

And of course, the IBA has a sick sense of humor! They never make the ride easy! Our route would include 3 of the largest cities in the USA on a FRIDAY (Dallas, Houston and San Antonio)! Those B@\$% @&+ \$!



Paris, TX City Hall



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Although 150 riders were signed up to participate, we don't ride together. Everyone rides their own ride at their own pace. Really, the only time we would see other riders was when we arrived at the specific destinations required for the ride. Other than that, we would go hours without seeing other riders.

Karen and I had a great time on the ride! We got to see a lot of different regions of Texas: the Prairie and Lakes Region, Piney Woods Region, Gulf Coast Region, South Texas Plains Region and Hill Country Region. All of it was awesome! Not only did we ride on the largest freeway on the planet in Katy, TX, but also on dirt roads in the middle of nowhere (Vienna, TX). One of the most memorable experiences was when we returned to Dallas at 1:30 in the morning. At the riders meeting that morning, they had advised us to get on I-20 to I-45 north to finish the ride through Dallas instead of riding straight up I-35. The night was clear, traffic was light, and the ride went right around the Dallas skyline! The tall skyscrapers were all lit up! It was a beautiful, serene sight to see! Almost surreal!

By the time we returned to the party headquarters, the IBA had approved our ride (since we had emailed the required pictures as we collected them). We were excited to have completed another awesome IBA ride! Now, time to get some rest and look forward to the banquet the following day. No wait! It is the following day! Well, later this day!

After we got plenty of rest, it was time to visit with our Iron Butt friends and meet some new ones before the banquet! At the banquet, there were several speakers that gave presentations of some awesome IBA adventures and certificates were awarded to the successful participants of this year's Texas World Capitals Ride! Karen and I are already looking forward to next year's party and the unique ride the IBA will host!



IBA Banquet



Mark & Karen with IBA President, Michael Kneebone