

The Viking Trail



Icebergs Floating by Newfoundland from Greenland

The Viking Trail from mustdocanada.com:

Snaking its way along the Northern peninsula coast, the Viking Trail is one of Canada's best road trips. At 489 km (304 miles), the journey can be done in as little as five hours. However, to truly appreciate what the route had to offer, you'll want to spend as much time as you can. With so many scenic communities, coastline, historical sites, and majestic Gros Morne National Park, one could spend an entire month here and not get bored. Whether you love nature, culture, wildlife, or simply a scenic drive, the Viking Trail is one for the bucket list.

To celebrate our 44th wedding anniversary, we decided this year's "Ride of a Lifetime" would be to Newfoundland to ride the Viking Trail and hopefully catch a glimpse of some icebergs!

We started Friday after work. We left at 3:00 pm and had an uneventful ride to Franklin, KY where we spent the night. *(Daily total 268 miles)*

Saturday, June 18, was our anniversary! We celebrated with a Skyline Chili lunch in Cincinnati, OH and some original Buffalo wings at the Anchor Bar in, where else but, Buffalo, NY. Then to Batavia, NY for the night. *(Daily total 700 miles)*



Anchor Bar in Buffalo

Sunday, we were up early and on the road. We stopped in Kittery, Maine for some clams and a lobster roll! Notice the theme here? We enjoyed the local cuisine as we headed north! We stopped in Calais, ME at the Canadian border for the night. McDonald's was the only thing opened for dinner ☹️. *(Daily total 740 miles)*

Monday morning, we crossed the border. One of the easiest border crossings we've ever done. We had downloaded the ArriveCAN app which required us to download our passports and vaccine cards. Two days before arriving at the border, we submitted our information thru the app. They were expecting us! Easy peasy!

Now, we were ready to slow down and see some things on our ride through New Brunswick. It was a rainy morning as we rode along the Bay of Fundy to Hopewell Rocks. Due to the weather and a detour, I thought we had missed the low tide. It was our lucky day! The low tide

was at 11:00 am today! Perfect timing!



Hopewell Rocks Low Tide

The Bay of Fundy is where they have record 45-foot tides! Every 12 hours, the tide comes in and out! When the tide is out, you'll see boats of all sizes laying on the ocean floor! The piers have long ladders extending down to the ocean floor. It's incredible!

We continued through New Brunswick and Nova Scotia that day. It was raining during one gas stop when Karen found a screw loose in her foot peg. Since we didn't carry any tools, we stopped at Walmart and bought a set of Allen wrenches. I tightened the pegs in the parking lot as the rain continued. After that, we headed to North Sydney to catch our ferry to Newfoundland.



Ferry to Newfoundland

We entered the ferry terminal at 9:00 pm. We had plenty of time until the 11:15 pm departure. WRONG! Motorcycles board first and we start boarding in 15 minutes! What? We were hoping to change into regular clothes at the terminal prior to boarding. We pop open the trailer and start digging through our stuff. We needed to get our things together because once we park the motorcycle on the bottom deck of the boat, we are not allowed to go back until the ferry docks in Newfoundland! Whew! We made it just in time! *(Daily total 498 miles)*

Once on the ferry, we tied down the bike, grabbed a couple bags with our pillows and blankets, then caught the elevator to the ninth floor where our reserved recliners were located. We found our seats and dropped off our bags. Then, we went to the lounge on the seventh floor to chill for a few minutes while everyone else boarded the boat.



Our Bed for the Night

The ferry departed at 11:15 pm and arrived in Newfoundland at 7:00 am Tuesday morning. We were up at 5:30 am and ready for breakfast. The restaurant next to the lounge on the seventh floor opened at 6:00 am.

After breakfast, we started hearing announcements telling everyone to prepare to depart the ship. We grabbed our bags and headed down to parking deck. Once we untied the bike and loaded our bags in the trailer, the crew was ready for us to exit the ship at Port aux Basques, Newfoundland! We made it! *(ferry total 98 miles)*



We Made It!

We headed to the small town of Rocky Harbour where we had hotel reservations the next two nights. On the way, the ride was beautiful! Newfoundland was bright green and the fresh smell of spruce and fir trees was in the air the entire time we were there! *(Daily total 208 miles)*

That night at the Hotel's Anchor Pub they held a "Kitchen Party". The host passed out home-made tambourines and noisemakers so the crowd could get involved. All the women were invited up to the dance floor to do the "Newfie Stomp".

Noisemakers were part of the dance and added to the enthusiasm! Afterward, all the men were invited up to do the same. This got the crowd pumped-up for the rest of the evening!



Kitchen Party Host

At the end of the evening, all first-time visitors to Newfoundland were invited up to dance floor. They were going to get “Screeched In” as honorary Newfoundlanders or “Newfies”! Since I was “Screeched In” on my first visit in 2018, I was excited to watch Karen’s ceremony. All involved had to dance a jig, sing a song, kiss a cod and be sworn in.



Karen Kissing a Cod

Prior to COVID everyone kissed the same fish. Now, after COVID, everyone was given their own fish sealed in a plastic bag. Not only did Karen kiss the cod, but she also bit off its head! She’s one tough cookie! It was a fun time, not only

for the participants, but also for the spectators!

Wednesday morning, we ate breakfast across the street then went to the local laundry mat. Later that day, we visited Lobster Head Cove and did some hiking.



Lobster Head Cove Lighthouse

We toured the lighthouse, then hiked down to the shore. It was a beautiful area that faced the town of Rocky Harbour which was across the cove.

That night, we had tickets to watch “Anchors Aweigh”, a group of local musicians that have become relatively famous on the island. They sang songs and told stories. Not only was it a great show and funny, but also a learning experience about the history and culture of Newfoundland!



Anchors Aweigh

Thursday, we headed up the Viking Trail. Our first stop was at Western Brook Pond for a boat tour. From the parking lot next to the main road, we hiked 3 km (2 miles) to the lake (fjord) within the canyon created by glaciers millions of years ago.



Western Brook Pond

The 2-hour boat tour was just breath-taking! Lush green canyon walls were beautiful! Waterfalls were everywhere from the melting snow. Our tour guide was very entertaining and knowledgeable about the area.

As we continued up the Viking Trail along the Gulf of St Lawrence, we stopped at The Arches Provincial Park. These beautiful rock formations were definitely worth the stop!



The Arches

From there, we continued to the St Brendan's Motel in St Lunaire for the next two nights. *(Daily total 216 miles)*



St Brendan's Motel

So far, the weather had been constantly changing. One day, the high temperature would be in the low 50's and light rain. The next day, the sun would shine and be 70 degrees.

As we were riding around the small town of St Lunaire, we followed a sign that pointed to an iceberg viewing area. This took us around a cove into a small neighborhood. We saw several icebergs off in the distance at the mouth of the cove. We rode there several times and saw one or two different icebergs each time. It was awesome! We couldn't wait to go on a boat tour for a better view!

Friday morning, we headed to L'Anse aux Meadows, a Viking settlement approximately 1,000 years old. Since Karen and I both have some Viking blood in us, we were excited to see this re-created area and learn about our ancestors.

Leif Erikson had stopped here and made the northern tip of this peninsula an intermediate stop

during their travels. Here, the Vikings could repair boats and hold tight while the winter passed, then they would have an early jump on spring to travel around North America.



Viking Settlement

That afternoon, we had reservations with Dark Tickle Boat Tours. It was a great 2-hour tour on a 28-foot Zodiac boat through "Iceberg Alley", one of the best places in the world to see icebergs!



Iceberg Alley

Saturday, we rode back to Rocky Harbour for our last 2 days in Newfoundland. We also got caught up on our laundry again. *(Daily total 208 miles)*

Sunday, we rode over to see The Tablelands in Gros Morne National Park. The Tablelands are a unique area of terrain where two continents

collided millions of years ago. This forced the center of the earth to break through the surface. Here, one area is brown and desert like while the rest of the area surrounding is green and lush.



Tablelands

Riding through the small villages along the shore of the harbor was a real treat! Beautifully colored houses and cottages stood out! We ate at some local Mom and Pop cafés that served great food! Most people couldn't believe we rode our motorcycle all the way up here from Mississippi. *(Daily total 100 miles)*

Monday, we rode back to Port aux Basques to catch the overnight ferry back to North Sydney, Nova Scotia.



Ferry to Nova Scotia

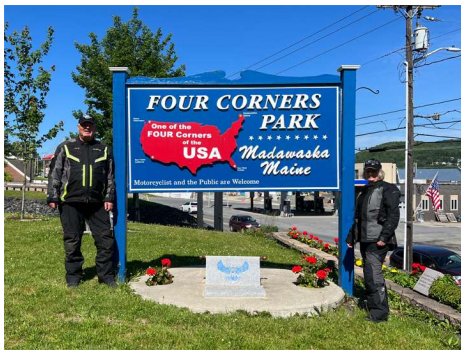
Tuesday, we landed in North Sydney at 7:00 am. We untied the bike and threw our overnight bags

in the trailer. Shortly after that, we disembarked the ferry! We rode in light rain as we traveled through Nova Scotia. Later, the sun came out as we entered New Brunswick. It was a beautiful ride through Canada!

The border crossing at Houlton, Maine was a breeze. The border agent asked a few questions, then waved us through. We spent the night at a travel lodge not far from the crossing. Now, we were back in the USA! (*Daily total 474 miles*)

Wednesday morning, we rode up to the most northeastern corner of the U.S., Madawaska, Maine, to visit the Four Corners Park. This is where I ended my USA 4-Corners True-X ride in 2021. I had told Karen about this place, and she was excited to see it!

This is a great park that is dedicated to the 4-Corners ride. We found some friends' pavers around the fountain that were laid as tribute to their rides.



4-Corners Park

Keith & Sharon Burkingstock completed the USA 4-Corners ride in 2013. We remember when they started their journey. We had been

camping with them and other friends near Deal's Gap on Memorial Day Weekend 2013. They left from there to start their USA 4-Corner adventure!



Keith & Sharon's Paver

We also got to see my paver from last year's ride. It's an honor to have a paver along with these other 4-corner finishers here in this park!



Mark's Paver

From Madawaska, we continued on to the beginning of U.S. Route 1 in Fort Kent, ME for a photo op. We have been to the end of Route 1 in Key West several times.

From there, we hit Highway 11 south through some remote areas. It was a beautiful ride up and down hilly terrain in the Maine wilderness. At Sherman, we jumped back on the interstate (I-95), south

to Freeport for the night. (*Daily total 447 miles*)



Maine Wilderness

Thursday morning, we were up early and out on the highway. We rode down around Boston, then, over through Connecticut, New York and into Pennsylvania where we stopped in Wilkes Barre for the night. (*Daily total 424 miles*)

Friday, we headed to Greensburg, PA to visit Karen's sister, Sarah, and brother-in-law, Robert Gregerson. Sarah is a nurse at a local clinic and Robert is the President of University of Pittsburg Greensburg campus. Also to our surprise, their youngest son, Drew, was visiting! Drew had just graduated from Dental school! It was great to spend a couple days visiting with them!

Saturday morning, Drew headed back to Georgia to join a Dental Practice in Savannah. The rest of us went to visit the "Flight 93 National Memorial". On the way, we stopped for some of the best donuts! The memorial was very moving. A lot of courage from the passengers and crew saved many other lives!



Family

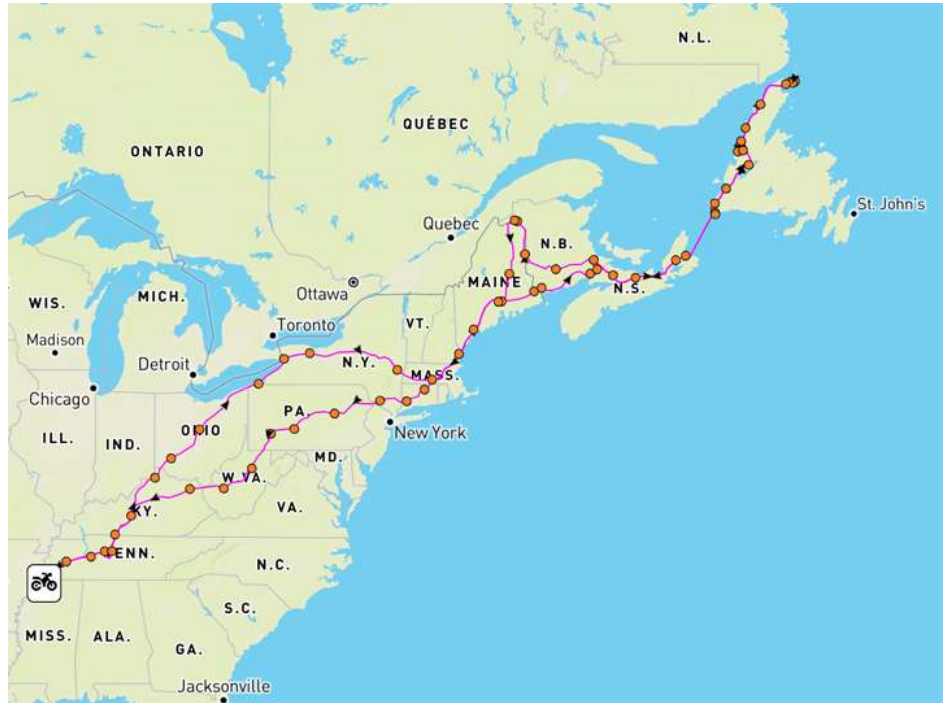
Later that day, we left Greensburg. Our goal was to ride a couple hundred miles that night. We stopped in Charleston, West Virginia after riding on the winding interstate through the hills and valleys. As the sun went down the forest rats (deer) came out! *(Daily total 214 miles)*

Sunday, we headed to Spring Hill. We arrived around 2:00 pm. Marilyn cooked us some fabulous steaks! Then, the 2022 Euchre Championships began! It was no contest this year as Mark and Marilyn crushed the competition! Karen and Derek will have to wait another year to try and regain the title! *(Daily total 400 miles)*

Monday, July 4, we were on the bike early and made it home before noon! What a great trip! *(Daily total 230 miles)*

In two weeks, we rode up to Newfoundland, where we spent a week enjoying the island. Then on

the way home, we had a chance to visit family! It was another great "Ride of a lifetime"!



6,051 Miles Celebrating our 44th Wedding Anniversary



Western Brook Pond, Newfoundland