

## Past years route notes for the Wine & Waves 400K, 0600 start

Download location for GPS track at <http://www.gpsies.com/map.do?fileId=vcmabkktkaultphpp>

- 1) MOTELS: There are two Motel 6's in San Luis Obispo, about ¼ mile apart on Calle Joaquin. We are based at the NORTH one, which is past the ARCO station. If you find that you are staying at the south one, over near Margie's Diner and the Marriott, then you aren't far away.
- 2) RESTAURANTS: closest is Margie's Diner open from 0630 to 9pm with traditional American diner fare. There are about a half dozen good neighborhood restaurants about a mile away, further down Los Osos Valley Rd at Madonna Rd, in the Albertons/CVS shopping center (best Chinese in town, gourmet pizza, sushi, Burger King, more). On Madonna Rd near the freeway there is a Dennys and Madonna Inn Coffee Shop. Starbucks and McDonalds are on Madonna Rd in front of Ralph's, nearly across from Dennys. Hometown Buffet and Tahoe Joes are located behind the Applebees, Taco Bell and Forever 21 store.
- 3) PAPERWORK: You can pick up your brevet card and route slip on Friday night between 6-8pm, or after 0500 on Saturday morning. There will be a roll call and safety briefing before the 0600 start.
- 4) LIGHTS: you need them. There's about 12 hours of daylight from 0615-1845. Most riders will have several hours of darkness. Just about everyone will need lights to reach SLO the first time. Plan accordingly, and then bring an extra battery, too.
- 5) Don't expect to set a PR on this ride. It is challenging, and there is a lot of vertical during the day on Saturday. Not overly steep, just relentless. Pace yourself. Enjoy the countryside, it really looks good, although it is too early for wildflowers.
- 6) WEATHER: Assume it will be chilly at night, so bring full gloves, headband, buff, balaclava and a jacket. Knickers and tights are probably a good idea late at night. Maybe you won't need them, but better to have the option....
- 7) RIDE RIGHT: drivers here are usually courteous around bikes, please return the favor. Many roads past Paso Robles are rather deserted. However, when cars/trucks pass, single up, even wave. It helps us all.
- 8) TIME CHANGE: is March 8 in 2015. Ride is on Daylight Savings Time.
- 9) BIKE SHOP: Better Bike Zone in Paso Robles is the only one open at the hours you're coming through. Phone 805-237-2453, 712 Paso Robles St, open 9-5 on Sat. If you need something elsewhere, call Vickie, maybe we can get it to a control ahead of you, or in SLO at the dinner stop.
- 10) NO PERSONAL SAG. Someone coming along for the trip? Great! Send them wine tasting or to Hearst Castle. Not on the route.

## THE ROUTE – PARTICULARS

This ride is a real tour of SLO County, as it goes through every single city except for Creston and Shandon. Get up to the first control at San Miguel without wasting time. Slower riders won't have a lot of time to spare due to the climb on Cuesta Grade. Make sure you stay ahead of the calorie curve, there is a lot of climbing.

CUESTA GRADE is about 3 miles of 5-6%, with a very wide shoulder. DO NOT TAKE THE BIKE PATH, it is gravel. Ride up the shoulder. Watch for cars entering/exiting near the base, they are not looking for you. It is often very gusty/windy at the base where the canyon narrows for ¼ to ½ mile. It gets better, and this wind has no bearing on the rest of the day. The descent is only about a mile, not as steep, and can be done very quickly. Get off at the first exit, be aware of exiting cars. Consume calories.

SANTA MARGARITA has a good little coffee shop called The Porch, in an old time-style building in the middle of town on the LEFT. They have a bathroom.

ATASCADERO you pass right down the main street for a couple miles. Like strip malls? They used to have a couple good coffee shops, not now, as far as I know.

TEMPLETON: small farm town, cute. Good place to get water and bathroom, turn left at 5<sup>th</sup> St and go one block to the traditional city park.

SAN MIGUEL: the 1<sup>st</sup> control. Small farm town, has a mission at the south end, but you aren't riding by it. I recommend stopping at the Mission Market and Deli for your receipt at the corner of River & Mission. There's also a small mexican market and a coffee shop. Make sure you leave with full water bottles, you will be climbing. The steepest hill on the ride is on 10<sup>th</sup> St, at 18%. But it's only a half block long. Go under the freeway and follow the signs to enter US 101 SOUTH on the frontage road, aka Cemetery Rd.

PASO ROBLES WINE REGION: No whining. There's a secret control here somewhere. You're on the freeway for less than a mile, then turn off (not an exit ramp) on San Marcos Rd, which is a lovely roller with two shallow paved water crossings. Take them slow and straight. Then Nacimiento Rd, where you will see the Chimney Rock on the left. Take Chimney Rock Road and climb, climb. Its lovely, but relentless. Drink that water. Some pre-riders called this section Tour de Cemetery, there are several pioneer plots. Until Vineyard Rd, there is little traffic. Vineyard Rd brings a whole lot of tasting rooms and tourists. Zinfandel is the main grape. Use caution, tourists buying wine are unpredictable. Make sure you leave Vineyard with full bottles (of water), yes, you have a bunch more climbing to the crest of Hwy 46, and it's in the sun.

HWY 46: You have two major climbs on Hwy 46, each over two miles long, at about 4-6% on wide shoulders. Once you summit 46, you have fantastic views of the coast and the green velvet hills. The descent is about 5 miles, with wide shoulders. It gets tiring to be in a tuck that long. Expect some gusty winds across the ridge tops.

CAMBRIA, 2<sup>nd</sup> control: Ride on into Cambria and EAT something. The Cambria Marketplace (open until 11pm) is a very good gas station/convenience store with clean bathrooms inside. Hungrier types might consider the Main Street Grill just down the block, but those burgers may be heavy for riding.

COAST HIGHWAY TO RAGGED POINT: 3<sup>rd</sup> control. Expect a strong northwest headwind as you head up the coast. Form groups. Watch for zebras in the fields before Hearst Castle. They look like grey horses, and are usually near the cattle. Pass the elephant seal beaches full of mommas, babies and yearlings. The bulls are gone now. The nice shoulders go away after the seal beaches. Stay single file, be aware of traffic. Pass Piedras Blancas Lighthouse. After a fast descent to San Carpoforo Beach, you have a sudden climb of 2 miles to reach Ragged Point at the southern terminus of the Big Sur region. Get a receipt at RP, they have a coffee bar, a snack bar that closes about 5pm, and a convenience store with a surly proprietor. It also has terrific flowers and views in the gardens, and the bathrooms are left of the snack bar.

HEADING SOUTH TO SAN LUIS OBISPO: This goes much faster, now you have a tailwind for nearly 60 miles. There are several towns you can choose to stop in for food/water: San Simeon, Cambria, Cayucos, Morro Bay. If you are riding near the closure times, it will be dark and there will be few businesses open other than bars, liquor stores and fine restaurants. Around here, we roll up the sidewalks at 8pm.

SLO CONTROL @ MOTEL 6: food and drinks, change clothes, etc. There will be soup, hot dishes, V-8, Coke, Coffee, tea, water, cookies... Get set for a long night. If you are running near closure times, not much is open.

SOUTH THROUGH 5 CITIES & GUADALUPE ON PCH 1: (Shell Beach, Pismo Beach, Grover Beach, Oceano) many riders will be too late for open businesses. There is a 7-11 just past downtown Pismo Beach on the right. Nothing is open in Guadalupe after 11pm. There is nothing else but broccoli, cilantro, and maybe a strawberry field. You will climb onto the Arroyo Grande Mesa on Hwy 1 – Mesa View Dr. Past dog issues on the climb seem to be ok now. Actually, I expect that you won't see any loose dogs on the ride (anywhere). Stay single file on the mesa, there's local traffic. Drop off the other side to the farm fields around Guadalupe.

SANTA MARIA control on Broadway at the 7-11 at Bunny (a block before Donovan) or at the Chevron Extra Mile convenience store at 739 E Donovan just before the 101 freeway on the left. I recommend the EM. Head out of town across the Santa Maria River and through Bull Canyon, a short climb. Take Hwy 166 (wide shoulder) back to the highway, but then take the frontage road.

NIPOMO won't have anything open for most riders near the route. If you really need something, turn left on Tefft at the traffic light and go ½ mile to the freeway area, with convenience stores.

ARROYO GRANDE: Proceed on mostly flat roads to AG, the last of the 5 Cities. AG will be closed for most riders. If you need something, turn left when you reach Bridge St instead of right, and go about ¼ mile and cross the freeway. There is a 24 hr ARCO convenience store and McDonalds that opens early.

INFO CONTROL out at Huasna Rd and Orcutt Rd. Turn onto Orcutt and immediately pull over at the 55 MPH Speed Limit sign. Orcutt is a nice rolling ride in, begins with a little hill.

FINISH. Eat more. Tell stories, sleep.

Enjoy the Ride!

Vickie Backman