

2017 STIHL Tour des Trees Paul Wood's Route Description

Day 1 - Sunday, July the 30th - The first official ride of the 2017 STIHL Tour des Trees, our annual seven-day cycling adventure, kicks off from National Harbor. There will be two route options today, one a 55-mile ride and a more adventurous 90-mile ride. We journey south, never venturing far from the Maryland side of the Potomac during the morning's ride. After making our way through the urban landscape of National Harbor and Oxon Hill we set out along the rolling terrain that borders the river before arriving at the first stop of the day, at the [Accokeek Foundation](#) in Piscataway Park. From there we turn inland and continue together until mile 32 where the two routes diverge. After we split, the shorter route turns north and makes its way back to the Gaylord for a relaxing afternoon, while the longer ride navigates through Port Tobacco and on to [Cedarville State Forest](#) for a picnic lunch before heading home. The ride today includes some pleasant rural roads through forested countryside along rolling terrain.

Day 2 - Monday, July the 31st - While we had the pleasure of departing National Harbor/Oxon Hill on a quiet Sunday morning to kick off the Tour, today will provide a few more encounters with the motorized public, so attentive and defensive cycling will be a must. We head northeast today as we set our sights on Annapolis, home of the Naval Academy, from which Mr. J. Eric Smith, TREE Fund President and CEO, graduated. Today we will once again offer a couple of route options, one to accommodate those who want to tackle a century, and a route with fewer miles for those who prefer a less strenuous afternoon. The two routes stay together again today for the first 32 miles and then the shorter option turns back toward National Harbor while the century route continues on to [Annapolis](#), which is sure to be one of the highlights of this year's Tour. The countryside between National Harbor and Annapolis is more of what we encountered on Sunday, rolling terrain with a few sustained climbs to keep it interesting 😊. After lunch in Annapolis we turn our bikes around and head back west along one of the more popular local routes as we make our way back to the hotel.

Day 3 - Tuesday, August the 1st - I am especially excited about this day, we have contracted with [Capital City Bike Tours](#) to operate private trips for us on the National Mall. There will be two departures, a 9:00 am and a 1:00 pm. The tour will take approximately three hours, and even if you have visited the Mall before, this guided trip is sure to be entertaining and educational. Also, if you weren't able to attend Saturday's warm-up ride, this will be your first opportunity to practice the bike trail cycling etiquette and best practices that we demonstrated during the warm-up since we will be on [Mount Vernon Trail](#) for the 22-mile round trip from National Harbor to the National Mall.

Day 4 - Wednesday, August the 2nd - Our second century of the Tour! Today will have a little bit of everything, although the dominant element of the day will be time spent navigating the extensive network of trails that make D.C. and its bordering communities so bikeable. We'll start out by combining the Mount Vernon and [Capital Crescent Trails](#) for 20 miles, which will take us from National Harbor to Bethesda. After we exit the trails, we cycle the scenic countryside of Maryland for 35 miles, with a stop along the way for a Professor Pricklethorn event at the Potomac Library. Our time in Maryland will end when we cross the Potomac via [White's Ferry](#), the last remaining ferry crossing the river. Upon departing the ferry, we'll make our way to lunch in Leesburg, VA. It is there that we will gain access to another of the major trail systems leading to D.C., the [W&OD](#) (Washington & Old Dominion). While we will have to slow down and share the trail with other users, the W&OD makes it possible to use the bike as a viable means of transportation through this densely populated part of D.C.

Day 5 - Thursday, August the 3rd - We leave our host hotel for a night and cycle to Gainesville, VA, site of Davey's [Wetlands Studies and Solutions Facility](#) (WSSI), where we'll be hosted for dinner. We begin our day on our old friend, the Mount Vernon Trail, but hey – this time we are actually heading south towards [George Washington's Mount Vernon](#). Upon leaving the trail we'll encounter a mix of urban, residential and rural roads on today's 80 mile route. Tonight we will be treated to a private tour of the WSSI and dinner prepared by our wonderful traveling caterers, the [Wandering Fork](#).

Day 6 - Friday, August the 4th - After a night away from National Harbor we depart this morning to head back via the beautiful countryside of Loudon County Virginia. Loudon County has long been a respite for Washingtonian power brokers and is also known as a wine and equestrian destination. We cycle north through the county to Purcellville, where we will intersect the western terminus of the W&OD trail at mile 37. For the remaining 50+ miles, we will once again utilize the D.C. trail network to make our way back to National Harbor. This is our last full ride of the Tour, so be sure to enjoy the ride!

Day 7 - Saturday, August the 5th - The final day of the 2017 STIHL Tour des Trees. We will continue our tradition of a processional slow roll and community engagement event to close out the Tour. We will slowly cycle to [River Farm](#), the headquarters of the American Horticultural Society.