



## **8 Long Distance Bike Trails in the United States**

Long-distance bike trails offer cyclists the opportunity to explore the scenic beauty and diverse landscapes of the United States. From the rugged mountains to the tranquil coastlines, these trails provide a perfect combination of adventure and relaxation. Whether you're an experienced cyclist or just starting out, these long-distance trails are sure to offer an unforgettable journey.

### **1.Great Allegheny Passage (GAP)**

The Great Allegheny Passage is a 150-mile trail that runs from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Cumberland, Maryland. This trail offers a mix of natural beauty and historical significance, following old railroad lines and passing through picturesque towns. The trail is well-maintained and features gentle grades, making it accessible for cyclists of all skill levels. Highlights include the Big Savage Tunnel, the Eastern Continental Divide, and the stunning views along the Youghiogheny River.

### **2.Pacific Coast Route**

Stretching over 1,800 miles from Vancouver, Canada, to the Mexican border, the Pacific Coast Route is one of the most iconic long-distance bike trails in the United States. This trail takes cyclists along the breathtaking coastline of the Pacific Ocean, offering stunning views



of beaches, cliffs, and forests. Riders will pass through major cities like Seattle, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, as well as charming coastal towns. The route is challenging but rewarding, with numerous campgrounds and accommodations along the way.

### **3.The Katy Trail**

The Katy Trail spans 240 miles across the state of Missouri, following the path of the former Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad. This trail is the longest rail-trail in the United States and offers a relatively flat and easy ride through the scenic Missouri River Valley. Cyclists will enjoy the beauty of the Midwest, passing through forests, farmland, and historic small towns. The trail is well-marked and features numerous amenities, including bike-friendly accommodations and eateries.

### **4.The Natchez Trace Parkway**

The Natchez Trace Parkway is a 444-mile scenic road that runs from Natchez, Mississippi, to Nashville, Tennessee. While primarily a roadway, it is a popular route for cyclists due to its low traffic and beautiful landscapes. The parkway follows the historic Natchez Trace, an ancient trail used by Native Americans and early settlers. Cyclists will experience a variety of ecosystems, from hardwood forests to open fields, and can explore numerous historical sites and landmarks along the way.



## **5.The Erie Canalway Trail**

The Erie Canalway Trail stretches 360 miles across New York State, following the historic Erie Canal from Buffalo to Albany. This trail offers a unique combination of natural beauty and industrial heritage, with cyclists passing by old canal locks, aqueducts, and charming canal towns. The trail is mostly flat and paved, making it suitable for all levels of cyclists. Highlights include the bustling city of Rochester, the scenic Mohawk Valley, and the historic city of Schenectady.

## **6.The East Coast Greenway**

The East Coast Greenway is an ambitious project that aims to create a 3,000-mile trail from Maine to Florida. While still a work in progress, many sections of the trail are already complete and offer a diverse range of cycling experiences. Cyclists can explore the rocky coast of New England, the bustling cities of the Mid-Atlantic, and the warm beaches of the Southeast. The trail connects numerous parks, greenways, and bike paths, providing a safe and scenic route for long-distance cyclists.

## **7.The C&O Canal Towpath**

The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Towpath is a 184.5-mile trail that runs from Washington, D.C., to Cumberland, Maryland. This trail follows the path of the historic C&O Canal,



offering a peaceful ride along the Potomac River. Cyclists will pass by old canal locks, aqueducts, and historic towns, as well as beautiful natural landscapes. The trail is mostly flat and well-maintained, making it suitable for cyclists of all abilities. Camping is available along the trail, providing an excellent opportunity for multi-day trips.

## **8.The Southern Tier Route**

The Southern Tier Route is a cross-country bike trail that spans over 3,000 miles from San Diego, California, to St. Augustine, Florida. This trail takes cyclists through a variety of landscapes, including deserts, mountains, and coastal plains. The route passes through major cities like Phoenix, Austin, and New Orleans, as well as numerous small towns and rural areas. The Southern Tier Route is challenging, with long stretches of remote terrain, but it offers an unparalleled adventure for experienced cyclists.

These long-distance bike trails offer an incredible way to explore the diverse landscapes and cultural heritage of the United States. Whether you prefer the coastal beauty of the Pacific Coast Route, the historical significance of the Great Allegheny Passage, or the vastness of the Southern Tier Route, there is a trail to suit every cyclist's preferences and abilities. By embarking on these journeys, cyclists can enjoy the health benefits of long-distance riding, experience the beauty of nature, and create unforgettable memories.

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