



It's the People that make the Trip: A tandem tour in New York, Vermont, and Quebec

Of course, we love being on the bike—in our case, the tandem. Just to do a great bike ride each day is cycling nirvana! That is our favorite thing, and we've been enjoying these tours since the 1980s. But, we also love meeting and getting to know people along the way. *That is the heart of our trip*—making those connections, hearing about people's lives and adventures. It's their stories and friendship that give our trips *meaning*.

People extend their friendship in so many ways. Nicole and Luc, a couple from Montreal on a month long tour to Long Island, NY, helped us navigate our way to Chambly, Quebec and on to Montreal on day 4 of our tour. They were inspirational as they told us about their odyssey and then sent us on our way to the Jacques Cartier Bridge and into the big city.

Another couple, "warm showers" hosts, Lynn and Ferdinand, from Vermont, gave us an experience we'll never forget. We finally made it to their home (circa 1830) at the top of a steep hill, after some miles of pretty hilly terrain (to wind up a 74 mile day). They "may not be home," they said, but they had instructed us to "go in the back of the house, walk down the hill, and just go into the guest cottage." No one was home when we got there, but the cottage was ready for our use. It was big and rustic and, just as we finally settled in, Ferdinand came knocking to welcome us. They couldn't have been more hospitable as we talked endlessly about biking, travel, and more and as they prepared a wonderful meal—consisting of vegetables from their garden, Ferdinand's homemade bread, and Lyn's delicious preserved beets and other veggies. It's always a highlight to be welcomed into someone's home and treated like family.

Another special encounter involved meeting a couple on fully loaded touring bikes, with boots dangling off the rear panniers, on our last day of cycling. Two Austrians, Heidi and Markus—are you ready for this—had been on tour *around the world* for 2½ years and were still going strong! They were spry; they were smiling; they were cheerful. Incredible! We stood there a while. We couldn't get enough of their cycling tales. We had so many questions and were soaking up all their stories. When asked about their favorite places, they said (in this order) China, Uzbekistan, and Turkey. We couldn't get into too many details or we'd have stayed on talking for hours (and would have wanted to join them!). It was just a treat—and an inspiration—to get a chance to talk to people on this incredible journey. They weren't due home until 2016! Their bike card read—*2 road runners on tour by bicycle around the world*.

This is just a glimpse of some of the people we met on our tour this summer. We covered 750 miles, starting from Indian Lake in the Adirondacks Park, NY. Our loop, as we devised each day, took us into Vermont and the Champlain Islands, into Quebec province, Canada, and ultimately to Montreal, where we spent several days taking in the sights of this terrific city. We continued up the St. Lawrence River and then headed south and east to Vermont and back to the Adirondacks, and to our friend's, Peggy & Tom. It was wonderful to experience another successful tour. Success for us means being fully present in each moment of our adventure!

Happy cycling, Evie & Mike Reinsel