

Bike Rides From Sundance Hacienda

We chose our house in Tucson because of the varied cycling, and the fantastic weather during the winter in which to do it. Below are some of my favorite rides across gravel, road, and mountain. Don't hesitate to ask for more suggestions or ask questions.

Gravel

Your best bet for gravel near the house is to follow Tanque Verde Road until it turns into Redington Road, which remains paved for a few miles until it turns to dirt. The road gets more and more rutted the further you go. You'll encounter rock crawlers, pickup trucks, etc especially early on. The views are fantastic when you look back toward Tucson. I highly recommend planning a ride so that you can catch the sunset.

1. **Redington.** Here is a nice Redington out-and-back of 26 miles and 2.7K feet of climbing. You can easily extend it: <https://www.strava.com/routes/2886826217883161360>
2. I did this next route once which I called the **Mt. Lemmon Death Ride**. It goes up Redington, then around Mt. Lemmon through a patchwork of trails, then on multi-use paved paths for the last 40 miles or so. This route leaves from a nearby area but if you head to Redington road from Tanque Verde you'll meet the route. About 120 miles and 7.4k feet of climbing. If you do it, get a burrito in San Manuel and take a lot of water. <https://www.strava.com/routes/2886828089615152772>
3. **Mt. Hopkins.** If you want to go further afield, check out Mt. Hopkins, a mostly gravel beautiful climb with fantastic views at the top. 40 miles 5.6K of climbing (depending on where you park). <https://www.strava.com/routes/2886829275626756880>

For high quality aluminum gravel bike rentals call [Roadrunner Bikes](https://www.roadrunnerbikes.com) 520-790-9394.

Road

Loop access. The Loop is a hundred miles of paved, separated bike paths from East Tucson to Oro Valley. Here is our favorite way to access it from Sundance: <https://www.strava.com/routes/3286369529215504550>

1. **Lemmon.** The best road ride - and right outside our door - is Mt. Lemmon. You can go as far up as you like. The "real" Mt. Lemmon ride is to Summerhaven, which is a little ski town at the top, with a great restaurant called the Sawmill if you want to stop. Other popular turn-around points are Windy Point (about 10 miles from Summerhaven) and White Tail (about 6 miles from Summerhaven). 60 miles, 6.8k feet of climbing. Some tips:

- a. The only water is 19 miles from the base (about 23 miles from home) at Palisades, and that is sometimes dry, and of course at Summerhaven. I suggest taking more than two bottles if you are going beyond Windy Point.
- b. Look at the weather in Summerhaven - it can be 100 degrees at the base (~2500 feet) and 50 degrees with snow on the side of the roads at 8000 feet - the long descent can get pretty cold. Take good gloves and wind vest/jacket.
- c. Descent can get windy. I do not recommend riding on wheels that are greater than 40mm depth. And: check your brake pads before setting out!

<https://www.strava.com/routes/2886830653106489988>

2. **Saguaro National Park East.** This is the classic short ride from this area. Takes you to the Saguaro National Park East loop and back. Bring your credit card for daily/weekly/annual pass to the park. 22 miles 1.3K feet of climbing.
<https://www.strava.com/routes/2882013610941553582>
3. **Pistol Hill.** You can extend the above ride, or pass by the Saguaro loop altogether, and ride out toward Colossal Cave and do Pistol Hill. 40 miles 1.9k climbing. You can add the Saguaro Loop from the route above for an additional 8 miles.
<https://www.strava.com/routes/2886842921852616464>
4. **Gates Pass** is a popular ride on the west side of Tucson that takes you through Saguaro National Park West. You'll need to ride through the city to get there - it's not a bad ride - lots of bike paths, and you can choose to return on the Rillito River trail - a paved, multi use path. Here is one version that takes the Rillito back. 70 miles 2.6K climbing.
<https://www.strava.com/routes/2886844662497726084>
5. **Quickie.** Want to go out for an hour of flat riding in the neighborhood? Do this:
<https://www.strava.com/routes/2890843525659433662>
6. **Action-packed 2 Hours.** It crosses Sabino Creek wash where there is a small hike-a-bike and, during the rainy season, some rock-hopping. This also includes an optional out-and-back climb up Ventana Canyon (we just ride around the security gate at the guardhouse -sometimes they turn us back, for best results take the golf cart path on the far/west side of the entrance). 31 miles 1800 feet climbing.
<https://www.strava.com/routes/2890845314426664802>
7. **"The Shootout"**. The main Shootout is where hard core racers come out and play. Pros tend to frequent in winter. There is a slower ride that leaves 15 later. The departure times change depending on season.
<https://www.facebook.com/FairWheel-Bikes-Local-shop-438943912809836>
https://www.strava.com/clubs/73667/group_events/4580

Road Bike Rentals:

For high quality carbon road bike rentals call [Roadrunner Bikes](#) 520-790-9394 or [Mobilebikesmith](#) (they deliver) 520-609-1833.

E-bike Rentals:

<https://scottybike.com/> (they deliver) (931) 265-2658

<https://www.fairwheelbikes.com/our-services/rental-bikes/electric-bikes/electric-bikes/> (520) 884-9018

steer very clear of tucsonbikerentals.org* he's a known scammer

MTB

Mountain biking is great here, and some of the best trails are closeby. Below are the best trails on the eastside, where the house is. There are other networks on the west side about 45 minutes away (50 Year Trail, Starr Pass, Honeybee,) that are not included here.

Mount Lemmon has the best trails for all-mountain/enduro riding. Either shuttle with two cars, or be prepared to ride on the road - not a bad ride but takes time/effort out of your day. Another option is to join the weekend shuttles from <https://homegrownmtb.com/>. The shuttle departs from Le Buzz on Catalina, a 5 min drive from here. They also rent great MTBs, have great private and group coaching, etc. If you rent they drop off and pick up. Email owner tara@homegrownmtb.com.

I suggest a download of Trailforks app if you do not have it already. Go ahead and pay for it - it's worth it. Lots of YouTube videos on these trails. Beware the ones where they cut out the features because the videographer excludes footage of walking/ falling down.

Double Black: La Milagrosa

Black: Bug Springs

Blue: Molino Basin (also called Prison Camp, [rich history](#) there)

You can shuttle (from Homegrown, meets at La Buzz cafe) and do all three - Bugs-Prison Camp-Millie in local parlance. There are trails further up the mountain, but not as good/ some are closed.

Here's a good recap of Bugs/Mol: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bD4BaRGRuLs>

Most fun I've ever had on a bike.. La Milagrosa lets out just a few miles from the house, so you can ride home, or ride to Bear Canyon Pizza, the local post-ride venue of choice. Beware the intense hike-a-bike at the beginning of Bugs. Don't forget to stop at the tequila tree near the bottom of Milagrosa.

The Arizona Trail is great for XC or mellower riding. Beautiful desert riding. The CX portion of AZT starts north of Colossal Cave and goes south. A few patches of barely “blue” but mostly “green.” Going from Loma Alta to Three Bridges is a good route, although you can do portions of it where the trail intersects roads if you want to park elsewhere. Here is a nice out and back route: <https://www.strava.com/routes/2886852502143480592>