

Santa Cruz Randonneurs

TRES AMIGOS RAMBLE

A Permanent Populaire of 154 kms

RUSA Permanent Route #542

Time Limit: 10 hours, 16 minutes

Pre-ride Information—PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Unlike the calendared events of the Santa Cruz Randonneurs, this ride is a “permanent populaire”. Being a “permanent” means it is a self-conducted ride with a date and starting time of the rider’s choice, and “populaire” means it is less than 200 kilometers in length. This permanent route is sanctioned by Randonneurs USA, and counts toward its Distance Awards once per year for a rider’s kilometer total. In order to participate, you must be a current member of Randonneurs of USA.

Route Description: This ride goes north from Santa Cruz along the coast highway and offers fine cycling and scenery the entire way. There are no route turns besides the turnaround in Half Moon Bay, so the navigation is very simple. Overall, this route would be called moderately hilly and there is nothing extremely difficult except the one-mile climb in either direction between Tunitas Creek and San Gregorio. There is, however, a fair amount of altitude gain from the numerous short hills, and the steepest gradient encountered on this route is probably around 8%. The typical rider will be happy he or she brought a triple crankset along; by the end of the permanent entrants will have gained roughly 3,500 feet of climbing.

Weather: This ride can be done year-round, but cold winter rain storms will be tough to survive since they roll unimpeded off the Pacific Ocean. Strong coastal winds can also make the ride challenging any time of year, so come with a determined attitude to finish. This is a good summer ride when inland regions are suffering under high temperatures, but some out-of-area riders are surprised at how cold it can be along the coast during July and August mornings from drizzle and fog. In winter, the coastal highway is nearly always free of ice but you should still be prudent while crossing bridges when the mercury hovers around freezing. Overall, spring and autumn usually see the best weather on the coast. (During the winter months, you might spot some migrating gray whales near the coast, so keep an eye peeled.)

The main weather challenge for this route is the northwesterly winds that blow most days from March through October. They can be quite strong by 10 or 11 AM, so starting your ride around 7 or 8 AM in Santa Cruz is advised; that way you’ll be reasonably far along the route before it starts to howl. Most of the year, you can expect a tailwind to push you home from Half Moon Bay unless it is rainy weather. (Most storms come on southerly winds.)

Start Times: You should choose a start time between 5 AM and 4 PM in order to find the store or taqueria open at the turnaround to get receipts to prove your passage. This is not a good night ride due to the lack of services, but if you want to try it, that can be arranged. There are all-night businesses in Half Moon Bay a mile or two farther north from the normal turnaround at Kelly Avenue. (In the unlikely event of finding both businesses at Kelly Avenue closed during normal business hours, head north on Hwy 1 to the junction with Hwy 92; there are some 24-hour businesses there.)

Services: The services on the route are no more than 25 miles apart and you won’t need a Camelbak to do this ride. To find food and drink going outbound, you’ll pass stores and cafés in Davenport (mile 10), Gazos Creek (mile 24), and of course in Half Moon Bay (mile 48.) On the return ride south along the coast you’ll pass Gazos Creek again (mile 72) and Davenport (mile 86), and of course in Santa Cruz at the finish.

There are many state beaches and parks along the route with pit toilets that are easily accessible during the ride.

Start/Finish Location: This brevet begins and ends at the corner of Mission Street & Miramar Avenue in western Santa Cruz. There is a 24-hour Valero convenience store at the start/finish. You’ll need receipts from the start **and** the finish; the time imprint on each receipt is your verification or “control”. (It is okay to have store receipts which show times a few minutes off from the official start/finish times). If you want something different than can be had at the Valero, cross the street and use the Safeway market to get your receipts. Like the Valero, it is open 24/7.

If you drive to the start, there is on-street parking along Miramar Avenue, near the Valero or the nursery.

Control Procedures: In addition to using stores at the start/finish in Santa Cruz, you will need to get controlled in Half Moon Bay. Either the Tres Amigo taqueria or the More-For-Less convenience market are good stops for cyclists. Get a receipt or other proof of passage and mark your time on your brevet card.

You can ride this permanent alone or in a group; if you are with a group that stays together the entire way, then only one receipt is need for the group at each control (but everyone should mark their own cards with the time.) If the riders split up, they then need to get their own receipts. Tandem teams obviously only need one receipt for their team, not for each rider.

Each control has an opening and closing time. To get ride credit you must stay within these times, which are based upon the starting time and date you chose.

Be aware that there may also be secret controls during this brevet, so stay on the route. If you should get lost or go looking for food, backtrack to where you got off-course, otherwise you might miss a secret control. Failure to sign in at a

secret control means disqualification from the brevet. If there are any secret controls, they will be in plain sight and impossible to miss.

If you are late to the start, you can still begin the ride late and make the second control in time (if the north wind is not too strong.) If you arrive in Half Moon Bay after second control is closed, your permanent is officially over, but you can still enjoy a fine ride back to Santa Cruz.

In order to earn your ride credit you must be controlled properly at the following locations:

Control #1, Santa Cruz, Valero mini-mart, corner of Mission Street and Miramar Avenue, Mile/Kilometer 0.
Get a receipt a few minutes before your registered start time and begin your ride.

Control #2, Half Moon Bay, junction of Highway 1 & Kelly Avenue; Mile 48/Kilometer 77.
Opens 2h35m after your registered start--Closes 5h08m after your registered start.
Stop at either the Tres Amigos or More-For-Less and get proof of passage. Note your arrival time on your brevet card.

Control #3, Santa Cruz, Valero mini-mart, corner of Mission and Miramar Streets; Mile 96/Kilometer 154.5.
Opens 5h08m after your registered start--Closes 10h16m after your registered start.
Get proof of passage soon after you finish and note your arrival time on the brevet card.

After the permanent is done, return your brevet card and receipts to the ride organizer. Sign the back of the card and make sure all the times are recorded on the card for each control, and in 24-hour military time format. Don't compute your overall time on the back of the card, we'll do that part. Put all the receipts and your card into a baggie and put them under the doormat at 226 West Avenue (the street behind the Valero mini-mart.)

Or, you have up to 10 days to get them to us via the US mail or some other means. After 10 days your ride results will not be processed. Send your rider packet to:
Santa Cruz Randonneurs, 226 West Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Regulations: During your ride, all the normal rules of randonneuring apply. Go to the SCR and RUSA web sites to familiarize yourself with the regulations if this type of cycling is new to you. You **must** begin your ride on the date you selected, and any secret control opening and closing times will be based upon that start time & date. Per RUSA regulations, there are no "rain checks" for your permanent entry if you change your mind or have trouble getting to the start.

If you are riding at night, be sure you have all the required lights and safety gear outlined in the regulations; anyone found to be riding at night without them will be automatically disqualified.

If you should fail to start, or end the ride prematurely, please contact the ride organizer as soon as is practical. We have RUSA matters to attend to whether or not you finish the ride successfully. Please be considerate and not endanger your future participation in future SCR events or permanents by overlooking this essential detail. Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

Good luck and good riding! ☺