

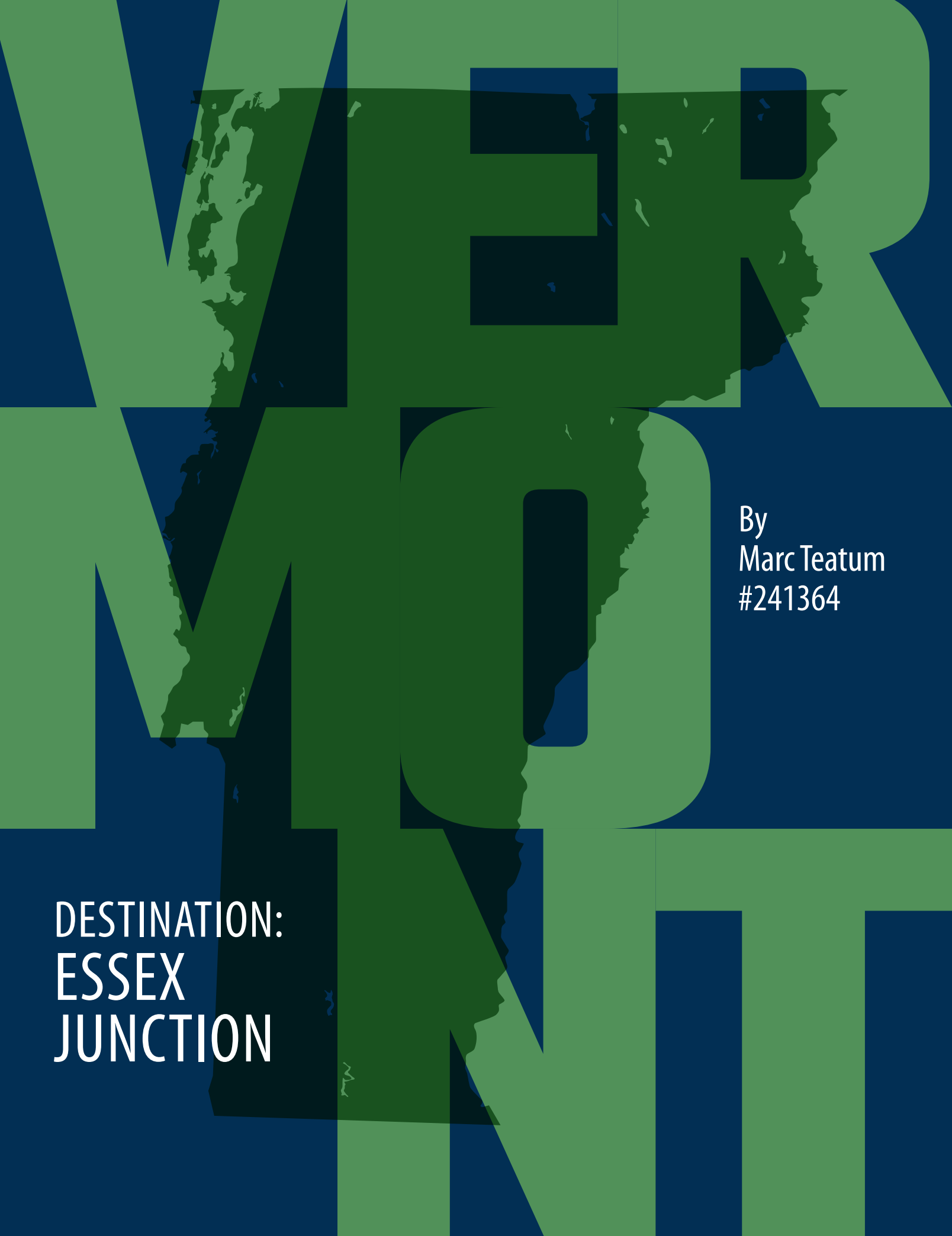
BMW OWNERS NEWS

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By
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DESTINATION:
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It's not that I don't like interstate highways, but they do have their purpose. Created by the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1921 and expanded by President Eisenhower in 1956, it seems like they've been around forever. Despite the torture created by the buffeting turbulence of semis or mind-numbing long straightaways seemingly laid out by a civil engineer snapping down a chalk line, they are a good way to quickly move from Point A to Point B. If that's the point of your trip, then go ahead and use them.

However, if the journey itself is the highlight of your trip, I recommend taking smaller back roads. These roads may add more miles to your odometer and require more riding time, but the experience of soaking in the local landscape and culture is unparalleled. With the MOA National Rally coming to Essex Junction, Vermont, I'd like to offer some suggestions for non-interstate routes to get there. New England has few major east-west roads, so no matter where you're starting from, there are plenty of fantastic back roads to explore.

From the East

If you're coming from the east, let's start your journey near Damariscotta, Maine. One of the best aspects of riding in from this direction is that if you head out in the morning, the sun will be at your back for almost the entire ride—definitely a plus when you're out twisting the throttle. This route will take you through south central Maine, past Bates College, over the Kancamagus Pass Highway across New Hampshire into Vermont through its capital, Montpelier, and on up to Essex Junction. It's a 235-mile trip that's just shy of six hours. Along the way, you'll get a full taste of this part of the country, starting with the Atlantic coast and then deep into the White Mountains of New Hampshire and the Green Mountains of Vermont.

Fill your tank, check your machine over and have a quick breakfast at Barn Door Baking at the Bookstore at 162 Main St. in Damariscotta (barndoorbakingcompany.com) before pushing the starter and hitting the road. For the first seven miles of your trip, you will have to be on U.S. Highway 1 South. But up here, it's just another two-laner. It's not a commercialized, choked with industry or retail type of road and in a few minutes you'll be riding over the Sheepscot River and taking a right turn onto Rt 27 North into the town of Dresden, then jumping on Rt 197 North. Rt 197 is a wonderfully smooth, gently winding road past farms and fields. When it intersects with Rt 126, take this west toward Bates College in Lewiston. Bates College is a private liberal arts college anchored by an historic quad with a small urban campus which includes 33 Victorian houses. Founded in 1855,



it is the first co-educational college in New England providing undergraduate instruction in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and engineering.

Riding through Lewiston is easy, it's a small New England town after all, but you'll need to follow signs to the towns of Youngs Corner and Minot a few miles further west. You're looking to ride out on Rt 119 North. Here's where sign reading is going to be fun as you'll wonder if you've left the United States as at the intersection of Rt 118 you'll see signs with places named Norway, Sweden, South Paris, and Poland, but fear not. This isn't Europe, it's just a collection of town names that add a little bit of interest! Take Rt 118 West to Rt 37 North to Rt 93 through all these towns to Rt 5 South into the town of Fryeburg on the Maine/New Hampshire border.



At this point, you've put almost 100 miles on your tires and the next leg of the journey is through the White Mountains and the glorious Kancamagus Highway. Now would be a good time to fuel up. Rt 302 West will take you to Rt 113 North and through Conway, New Hampshire, until you get on Rt 112 West. In my opinion, this is going to be the best part of your journey. The Kancamagus Highway is nearly 80 miles of long mountain views, with several opportunities to enjoy from several of the large pull off parking spots. Hancock Overlook, the Pemigewasset Overlook and Sabbaday Falls are just to name a few of the nearly 20 choices. Sabbaday Falls is very popular and may be a bit crowded and features a series of cascades over moss covered rock, each dropping into a pool before changing direction and dropping again.

I haven't taken into account the timing of stops along "The Kanc" as it referred to, so the six hours travel time could be longer, but I can almost guarantee that stopping is well worth it.

At the other end of The Kanc is the town of Lincoln, New Hampshire, and if your breakfast was light and you've been in the saddle for just over three hours with twisty, mountain road riding, I'll bet you're hungry. As the Loon Mountain Ski Resort is located here, there are many options. Being a diner aficionado, if I were riding through, I'd go to the Lincoln Diner, (6 Pollard Rd. (thecman.com/lincoln-diner), as it's a classic. There's

also White Mountain Bagels (25 Main St., whitemountainbagel.shop), which offers quick and casual service. However, if you're wanting something pub-like, there's Black Mountain Burger (264 Main St., blackmtnburger.com). You really can't go wrong with any of them.

Leaving Lincoln, get ready for some more beautiful rides through forests and woodlands as the next stretch to the Vermont border is glorious. Taking Rt 112 to Rt 302 West is a joy as it runs along the Ammonoosuc River in western New Hampshire just before the Vermont border over the Connecticut River at Woodsville, New Hampshire. In Vermont, stay on Rt 302 West to Rt 62 West into Montpelier/Barre, Vermont. At this point, if you didn't stop in Lincoln, riding time is around four hours, maybe more if you stopped to sightsee a bit. If you haven't eaten yet, pull off into Vermont's capital, Montpelier and both Yellow Mustard Café (28 State St., ymdeli.com) or Café Noa at 8 Putnam St. are good choices. From Montpelier to rally point in Essex Junction is an easy and short trip of about a half an hour, just jump on Rt 2 as it parallels the interstate.

Left, Sabbaday Falls, New Hampshire.

Below, The Ammonoosuc River in Littleton, New Hampshire.





The beautiful Adirondack Mountains.

From the West

Leaving the shores of Lake Ontario in Oswego, New York, and heading east, you'll be riding through the heart of the Adirondack Mountains. Eat a hearty breakfast, fill up your fuel tank and start early if you're coming from this direction. This first leg of the trip is a four-and-a-half-hour ride and you'll rack up 210 miles. Out here, once you leave Oswego, the roads are small and you'll joyfully ramble through town after village after hamlet.

From downtown Oswego, take Rt 104 East and before long you'll see the city in your rearview mirror. On the other side, there's over 100 miles of nicely paved asphalt through deep woodlands and forests to get to the Fort Ticonderoga Ferry, which will take you over to Vermont.

I'm getting ahead of myself here, because the first part of this route consists of riding for five miles then turning, then riding a mile and then making another turn and then riding a couple of miles again. While it may look dizzying, there's a method to this madness; it keeps you out of the city of Rome, New York. Now, I'm not saying I don't like Rome, it's just that my goal is to keep to the back roads and soak up the glorious forests and countryside that are the Adirondacks. This means passing through nearly a dozen state forests, like Stone Hill, Florence Hill, O'Hara, Tri-County, Big Brook, Swancott Mill, and Cottrell State forests just to name a few. The Adirondack Mountains cover approximately 5,000 square miles, more than 100 peaks, and over 200 lakes. Even in June, the average temperature is rarely over 75 degrees during

the day while dropping into the low 50s at night.

The plan is to cruise along the north side of the Hinckley Reservoir on Rt 365 and hop onto Rt 8 heading east. Rt 365 East will take you along West Canada Creek, a 76-mile waterway interestingly having nothing to do with our neighbor to the north. In this instance, Canada is derived from kanata, an Iroquoian word for "village."

Both roads will reward you with smooth surfaces and amazing forest views and the sweet aroma of the many bodies of fresh water, like Piseco Lake, Oxbow Lake, and Lake Pleasant along the way.

Outside Oswego is where the zig-zagging part of the journey is at its best. Remember when I said there's nothing more boring than a long ride on a completely straight interstate? Certainly not the problem here!

Take Rt 104 to Rt 104B to Rt 3 North to Rt 13 East to Rt 2 North. Rt 2 has you riding north of Salmon River Reservoir to Rt 17 to Rt 27 to Rt 39 to Rt 45 to Rt 46 to Rt 294 to Boonville. At this point you've put a little more than 70 miles between you and breakfast. If you haven't yet topped up your tank, now would be a good time. Restarting on Rt 294, ride on until you see signs for you to take Rt 12/Rt 28S to Rt 365E to Rt 8E alongside the lakes I mentioned. By the time you arrive in Schroon Lake, New York, you've done 190 miles from kickstand up and if you didn't fuel up before and are lucky enough to have a well-maintained machine that



Schroon Lake, New York.

gets good mileage, now's the time to head to the pump. After moving again, continue north on Rt 8 North then Rt 9 East into Rt 74E, then straight into Fort Ticonderoga.

At this point, you've been hanging on to the handlebars for four and half hours and it's time to take a break and put some fuel into your belly. Fort Ticonderoga is as small as many of the other towns you've just passed through. Luckily there are a couple of places to grab a bite to eat in Ticonderoga.

Burleigh's Luncheonette (121 Montcalm St., burleighluncheonette.com) is a retro-style chrome, Formica and vinyl diner, painted red and teal place that can't be beat. There's also Hot Biscuit Diner (14 Montcalm St., hotbiscuitdiner.com) with an emphasis on country-style cooking, friendly service, and affordable pricing. This diner has been family owned and operated since 1993. It'll be tough to choose between the two.

After the food, you're in for a real treat to get to the next leg of your journey with a short ferry ride on the southernmost point of Lake Champlain between New York and Vermont. The Fort Ticonderoga Ferry (forttiferry.com) began operation in 1823 and

is one of the last remaining cable service ferry operations. It only runs between May and October on a first come first serve basis. Operators do not take reservations and it's cash only, with no credit or debit cards accepted. The ferry has a capacity of just 18 vehicles per trip and the wait is typically not more than 15-20 minutes, as the ferry runs back and forth all day. Crossing takes approximately seven minutes and typically makes three round trips per hour. This is a fun experience that shouldn't be missed.

Once on the other side of Lake Champlain and in Vermont, it's a much shorter ride of only 50 miles up to the Rally site. Take Rt 74 North into Middlebury, home of Middlebury College, a private institution specializing in arts and literature. Hop onto Rt 7 North for a short five-mile jaunt before making a right onto River Road taking that for three miles to Rt 116 North. When Rt 116 North intersects with Rt 17, everyone will probably turn right to stay on Rt 116. Ignore them. Continuing straight onto Burpee Road (yes, named after the famous seed company) and the other names it turns to (Bristol Rd., Silver St., and finally back onto Rt 116). Follow Rt 116 through Hinesburg, until you see signs for Rt 2A. Rt 2A is an enjoyable back road ride that brings you through Williston, Vermont, a thriving suburb of Burlington, the largest city in the state of Vermont and then into Essex Junction. The Rally is at the Champlain Valley Exposition Center, 105 Pearl St. (Rt 15), a left off of Rt 2A in the center of Essex Junction.



Overall, this is five and half hours in the saddle, adding approximately 260 miles to your odometer. Well worth the experience of riding through some of the most gorgeous state parks in the east for sure!

From the Boston area

If you're starting out from the Boston area, like myself, there is absolutely no way to avoid interstate highways to get out of town. It's the double-edged sword of living in or near a city that has so much to offer in the way of arts, education, entertainment, and history. The phrase that all our roads were originally cow paths is easy to believe as our streets aren't straight for more than a mile. The road surfaces make riding one of the BMW Adventure models a wise decision.

However, the "smahtest" choice is to get yourself to Rt 2 on the other side of I-95/Rt 128 near Concord, Massachusetts. The Cambridge Turnpike (Rt 2) is a tight two-laned route that will take you west past locations steeped in our country's past, such as the towns of Lexington and Concord, where Henry David Thoreau penned his classic book *Walden*, a reflection upon simple living in natural surroundings, and his essay "Civil Disobedience," an argument in favor of citizen disobedience against an unjust state. Traffic on Rt 2 West could be heavy until you get past Gardner, when it drops off precipitously and the surrounding landscape becomes less congested.

Out here in the middle of Massachusetts, Rt 2 is one of the most

pleasurable roads to travel, running alongside Millers River, past Orange State Forest and crossing the Connecticut River between Erving and Gill on the French King Bridge. A cantilever arch, the bridge sits 140 feet above the water and when opened in 1932, was immediately named the Most Beautiful Steel Bridge by a steel industry institute. The structure was rebuilt in 1992 and refurbished between 2008 and 2010.

Unfortunately, just past Turners Falls, at the town of Greenfield, you are forced to utilize I-91 as Rt 2 West overlaps. Luckily, it's for less than five miles. On the other side, back on Rt 2 West, the next 45 miles are pure joy on a hardly traveled nicely wooded road.

By now, you've been riding for over an hour and half and if you're ready for a break, Shelburne Falls Coffee Roasters (1207 Mohawk Trail, shelburnefallscoffee.com) is one of my favorites along this route for a quick stop for fresh roasted coffees, delicious light meals of sumptuous pastries or savory soups.

I think now would be a good time to admit that I lied a little. Well, more like a half truth. If you enjoyed Rt 2 in Massachusetts, you're going to be in heaven for the rest of the journey. But first you better fuel up. On the next leg into Vermont and up to the Rally site, you aren't going to want to be checking your gauge. You'll be too busy being thrilled by the journey on a fabulous road up through the Green Mountains to have to be thinking about anything other than, downshift, throttle up, upshift, lean, accelerate (then repeat again) as you wind your way along.



With your belly full and your tank topped up, just across the road from your quick stop on Rt 2 West you'll see signs that say Colrain/Shelburne Road. Take this right turn and head to Colrain. In Colrain, Rt 112 West will come in on your left and become the road you've been riding on. Rt 112 will take you up to the Massachusetts border and into Vermont. In Jacksonville it terminates and becomes Rt 100N.

Rt 100 in Vermont is just about my favorite road in all of New England, 216 miles in length from the Massachusetts state line to Troy, just shy of the Canadian border, where it swings east. Count your blessings that you're doing this route in early summer. In the fall, between the leaf peepers and other tourists, Rt 100 can be as crowded and slow moving as the Beltway around Washington, D.C. Variety is what you get on Rt 100. You won't find another route in New England that compares with the choice scenic opportunities; waterfalls, (Warren Falls and Moss Glen Falls are two of the best, [alltrails.com/trail/us/vermont/moss-glen-falls--2](https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/vermont/moss-glen-falls--2)), barns, (there's the oft-photographed red barn in Hancock, Vermont), churches, covered bridges, ponds, and small towns with iconic general stores.

After three and half hours or around 170 miles from your last coffee stop it's time to think about real food in truly one of the best Vermont country stores. Warren General Store (warrenstore.com) is "almost world famous," to quote their tag line. It's the perfect place to stop. Right off Rt 100, perched above Freeman Brook, within sight of a quintessential covered bridge, the menu offerings range from sandwiches, soups and salads to a wide range of pastries, cookies, tarts, brownies and more, all baked fresh daily. Relax outside on some of the small tables provided or climb down and sit on the rocks listening to the water rush by. But timing is everything as the grill for sandwiches typically closes by 2 pm. The bakery is open until 5 pm, with coffee, tea, and soft drinks available all day.

After being satiated and knowing it's time to hit the road again, point your front wheel back to Rt 100N and ride on through Waterbury, Vermont, onto Rt 2 North to Richmond. There, pick up Rt 117 as it parallels the Winooski River just about all the way into Essex Junction. From Warren to Essex Junction is a hair over 40 miles and under an hour.

At just over seven hours and 285 miles traveled, this is a long day in the saddle. I guarantee you that between the roads and the views, it will be a journey that you will talk about with all your friends and new acquaintances you share time with at the Rally!

Regardless of your direction, you're now at this year's BMW MOA National Rally. It doesn't matter if you're a Rally first-timer or veteran, there's so much going on during the three days there's no way you won't be entertained and educated at the same time. If this is your first, don't be shy. Speak up, ask questions of your fellow riders. If this is your fifth, don't be shy either. Speak up, be there for your fellow riders to help them with your experiences. We're all in this community together!

From the New York City Area

First things first: Get yourself to the Taconic Parkway and head north. The Taconic is a smaller road than Interstate 87 and doesn't have nearly the volume of Route 9. It's a very nice two laner that has great gentle sweeps and curves that aren't taxing or tiring. The downside is that there are no active gas stations located directly on the Taconic State Parkway. It's a parkway, remember? You have to exit to fuel up, but the ride out of New York City on this road is worth it. Having grown up in New York City, I know what heartache it is to get clear of the city; that's why after about 110 miles—which could take up to two and half hours—you're going to want to take a break. Maybe pie and a cup of coffee or a chicken salad sandwich. In the form of a gift from the heavens, in Caryville, right off the Taconic, on Rt 23 is the Martindale Chief Diner. This is one of the great classics with vinyl-covered benches in booths with perfectly patterned Formica topped tables, chrome pedestal padded counter stools that spin, clean restrooms, and delicious food.

Hop back on the Taconic and keep going north until you get to the exit for Rt 295. Take Rt 295 E to Rt 22 N all the way north to Rt 22A crossing over the border into Vermont. Shortly, you'll make a right turn onto Vermont Rt 74 North riding into Middlebury, mentioned above. Hop onto Rt 7N for a short five-mile jaunt before making a right onto River Road taking that for three miles to Rt 116N. From there, follow the directions in the "From the West" section.



Marc Teatum has been a motorcycle enthusiast for over 30 years. He is a founding board member of the Massachusetts Motorcyclists Survivors Fund charity. He has authored four novels and two collections of short stories. He was a monthly columnist for The Motorcyclists Post magazine for three years and has been a guest columnist for the AMA members magazine. His work has also appeared in The Boston Globe and several regional magazines. Visit his website at www.marcteatum.com.