

BIKING in the City



By Jeremy Muenz

DC Bike Ride

Photo: Courtesy of Svetlana Legetic

It's springtime in the city, and bike enthusiasts and newbies alike can reap the benefits of DC's warmer months. Rated one of the best cities for biking, the District is chock-full of trails. Two local favorites include the Metropolitan Branch Trail, an 8-mile trail from Union Station to Silver Spring, and the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail, which runs along both sides of the Anacostia River. Both are wide, paved and go in both directions – perfect for beginners.

Need an event to kick off the season? Check out DC's Tour de Fat on May 21 in Yards Park, an annual event hosted by New Belgium Brewing Company. It's nothing short of a crazy bike party, and it's all free. New Belgium will also have their highly-rated beers available for purchase. Learn more here: www.newbelgium.com/Events/tour-de-fat/Washington.

If crazy parties aren't your thing, consider the DC Bike Ride (DCBR) on May 22, a 17-mile bike ride offering a car-free tour of DC. You'll pass many DC icons on the ride, and participants are invited to stay after for a festival with yoga and music performances. Tickets can be purchased at www.dcbikeride.com.

Another option is the 16th annual Bike to Work Day on May 20, a free event offering raffle prizes to those who register. There will be pit stops throughout DC with refreshments and entertainment. Register at www.biketoworkmetrodc.org.

For a delicious ride, look no further than the Tree House Tour de Cookie in Rockville, Md. on May 7, where you can bounce between cookie stands. Choose from 12-, 26- and 42-mile options. Stick around post-ride for entertainment and activities. Tickets can be purchased at www.treehousetourdecookie.com.

If you want to join a local bike organization, check out the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA), an association focused on creating a healthy, more livable region. Visit their website at www.waba.org. In Virginia, there's the NOVA-CBG (CBG stands for Casual Bike Group), a great option for beginners and intermediate bikers. Check

out their events at www.novacbg.org.

If you're looking to purchase an electric bike, check out Riide (1933 9th St. NW, DC), offering free three-day demos. For a reliable bike and repair shop in the city, visit District Hardware (1108 24th St. NW, DC). It's the oldest family-owned bike shop in DC, open since the late '60s.

For options in Virginia, visit Papillon Cycles in Arlington (2805 Columbia Pike), offering "the latest biking equipment, expert servicing and a gathering place for local bikers." Or, try Arlington's The Old Bike Shop (2647 N Pershing Dr.), which specializes in recycling old bikes. All used bikes include a 30-day warranty, and they even have some antiques.

If you don't own a bike, or aren't interested in purchasing one, consider the Capital Bikeshare program, which has stations all over the DC Metro area. Multiple membership options are available, ranging from 24 hours to annual. Visit www.capitalbikeshare.com for more specifics on the program. Happy cycling!



Riide electric bicycle

Photo: Courtesy of Amber Watson