

Outdoor Adventures Begin at Three Stallion Inn

Hiking, Biking and Horseback Riding

by Charles Sutton

This is the time of year you see a lot of bicyclists on back country roads often alerting us to their presence with colorful little flags.

In particular, the White River Valley area of central Vermont around Randolph has attracted a growing number of bicyclists, thanks to bike tour groups and in particular to the Three Stallion Inn, having served both traditional and mountain bikers for many years.

The popularity of bicycle touring began about 30 years ago when Vermont Bicycle Tours director John Frieden asked Sam Sammis to fix up his inn, then a rustic lodge for cross-country skiers, to accommodate bicyclists. This was done, and the tour has been booking there ever since. Today two other tour groups, Bike Vermont, and a newcomer, New England Adventures, also stay at The Three Stallion Inn for three nights of their week-long tour.

The superb meals served at the inn's Morgan's Pub and Lippett's Restaurant, the comfortable lodging, saunas, hot tub and massage therapists are just what bikers are looking forward to after that workout on the road. "When the bikers come back for their last two-night stay," Sammis said, "they say they wished they'd never left."

Bicycle Magazine called Randolph the "Moab of the East." (Named after Utah's adventure capitol). The up-and-down routes going east and west of Randolph are suitable for and a challenge to the more experienced and technical biker; routes in the north-south direction follow valley floors and are ideal for beginners or those who want to enjoy an easier outing.

For those adventurers who would like to stay at the inn and head out on their own traditional or mountain biking day trips, a pocket-size guide entitled *Randolph Vermont Biking* (Priced \$4.95) shows over 500 miles of mapped trails, bike tours with difficulty ratings, a topographic map, and interesting comments like "a good place for food and a swim" or "chicken crossing" and go past "sheep farm."

There's no chance to get lost with exact odometer readings listed at each turn and what to look for exactly spelled out. For example, the directions included for the Quarry Hill Loop, a 13.2-mile, easy mountain bike ride, reads "at mile six, sharp left at 'Y' intersection across from utility poll #32 with green trail signs, follow the dirt road up hill to reach a beautiful northern view of Randolph valley; then at 7.8 miles onto the Class IV road to the left of dairy farm, pass mobile home; and at 9.2 miles before the brown house on left, follow road into woods, stay left."

The booklet contains eight such trips for mountain bikers; six paved road trips for bicyclers; and 10 scenic back road trips with such inviting names as Stone Soup Loop, Berry Billy Goat and Kelsey Challenge. The guide would be especially helpful on a windy day as it folds up neatly, and one's trip for the day with map is compacted into a six by four inch space!

One also can have a challenging or leisurely day



photo by Brian Hartigan

Exploring the many miles of trails at Three Stallion Inn is a perfect way to experience Vermont. Pictured here are Megan Kresock (left) on Echo, a Quarter Horse/Paint cross, and Alessa Chittenden (right) on Chance, a Quarter Horse.

outdoors without leaving Three Stallion Inn property on the Green Mountain Stock Farm with its 35 km of groomed hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding trails spread throughout 1,300 acres of woods and open areas. The Montague Golf Club, an 18-hole private course open to the public, and the second oldest in Vermont, is adjacent to the inn.

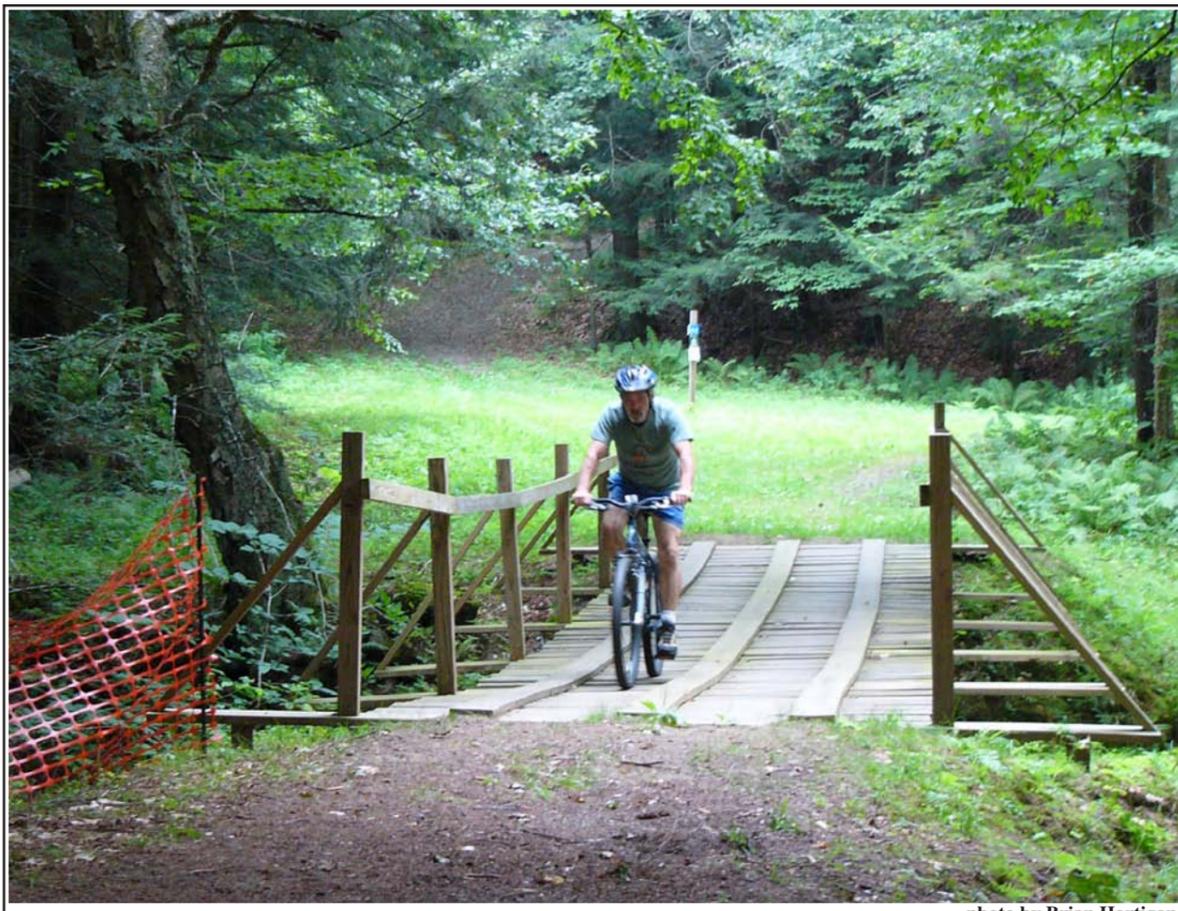
Day hikers will find a good choice of trekking opportunities in the area from arduous to easy with many peaks nearby in the Green Mountain National Forest. One of the most popular is the 3-5 hour round-trip climb of Camels Hump (elevation 4083). The summit area is above the timberline and provides a panoramic view of the Green Mountains, the White Mountains, and the Adirondacks, with views from Mt. Mansfield south to Mt. Ascutney. The mountain is only a 45-minute drive from the inn.

Also inviting is Allis State Park in Brookfield, a 20-minute drive from Randolph. Its Bear Hill hilltop setting provides memorable views of central Vermont, and there are several hiking trails including a loop within the park that is considered strenuous.

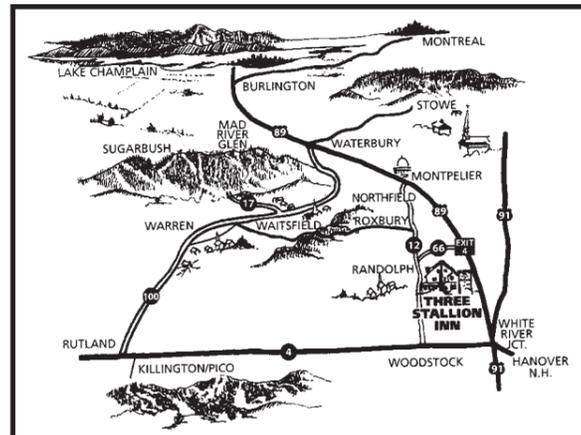
Finally if a guest would rather go horseback riding than bike or hike, the inn provides free lodging for your horse, including fenced pastures, a riding ring, and eight well-maintained indoors stalls. There are veterinarians and farriers in the area if needed. Half-day trail rides can also be arranged for guests at the nearby T-N-T Stables in Barre, VT.

For those who would like to bring their own horse for a trail riding vacation, the inn offers a package for \$200 per night (per person, double occupancy). This includes hiking, biking and trail riding with free bike rentals, unlimited use of the inn's trail system, a country breakfast cooked to order each morning, and use of all inn amenities including the fitness center, swimming pool, saunas, hot tub, and tennis courts. And of course, deluxe accommodations for your horse in the inn's beautiful stables.

For more information and reservations contact the Three Stallion Inn, 665 Stock Farm Rd., Randolph, VT 05060 or call (800) 424-5575 or (802) 728-5575. Visit threestallioninn.com.



Mountain biking through the woods and trails at Three Stallion Inn. photo by Brian Hartigan



Mountain bikers take to the woods during fall foliage.