

Rideau Lakes Cycle Tour

Information Session

February 2026



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3 Bushtukah Info Sessions:

Feb 8th : Stittsville

Feb 15th : Westboro

Feb 22nd : Orleans

1 More

In-depth Information Session

Targeting committed participants

March 24

Evening, 1-2 hours

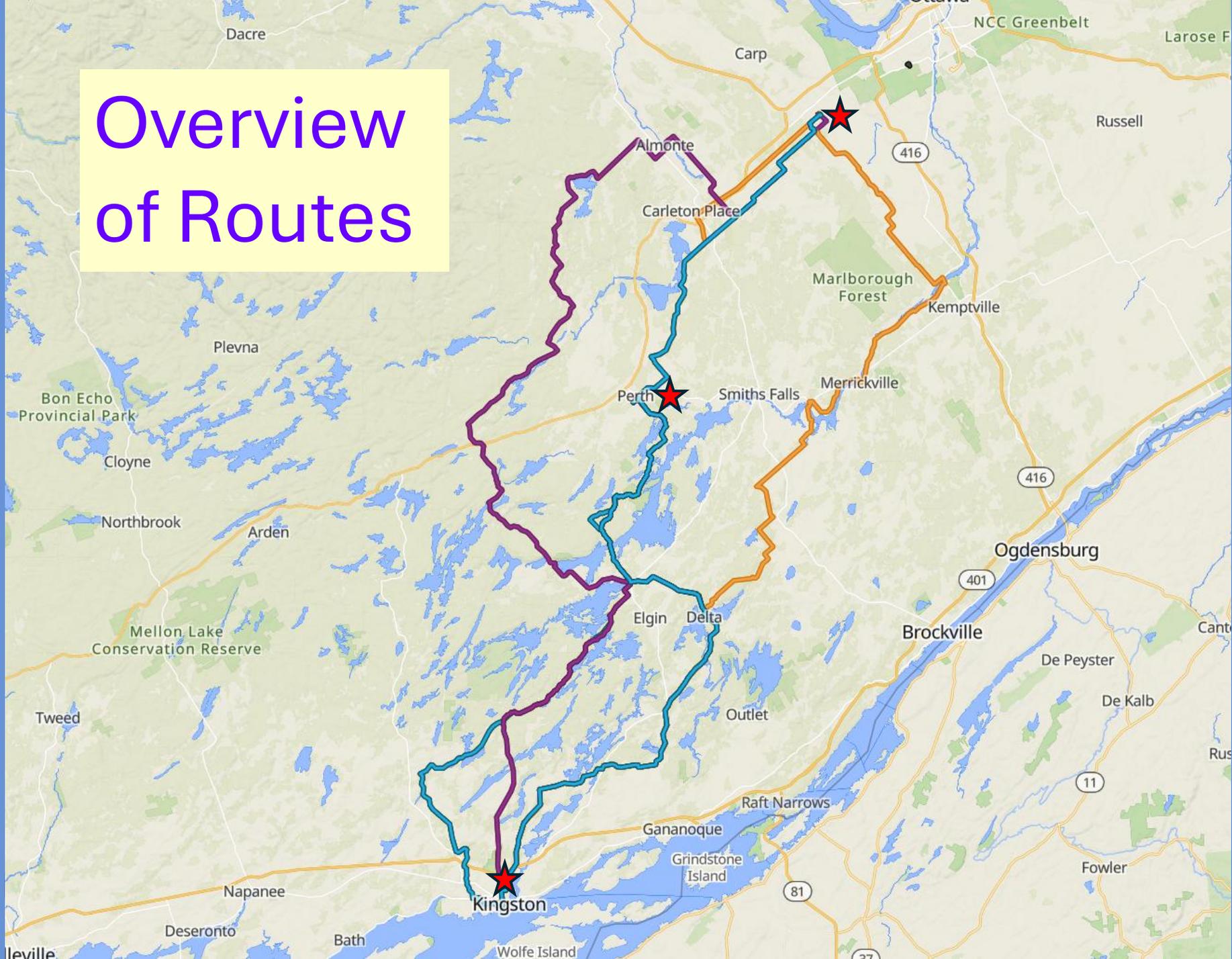
Hintonburg Community Centre

Details to follow

Choosing a Route

<https://ottawabicycleclub.ca/rlct/routes/>

Overview of Routes



Choosing a Route : Considerations

- Supported vs Unsupported (i.e. is help available?)
- Distance
- Hills (cumulative climbing enroute)
- Your experience in distance riding
- Your fitness level
- Your equipment (road; gravel; hybrid; mountain)
- Riding alone or with others
- Weather (temp; winds; precip)
- When does the BBQ shut down?

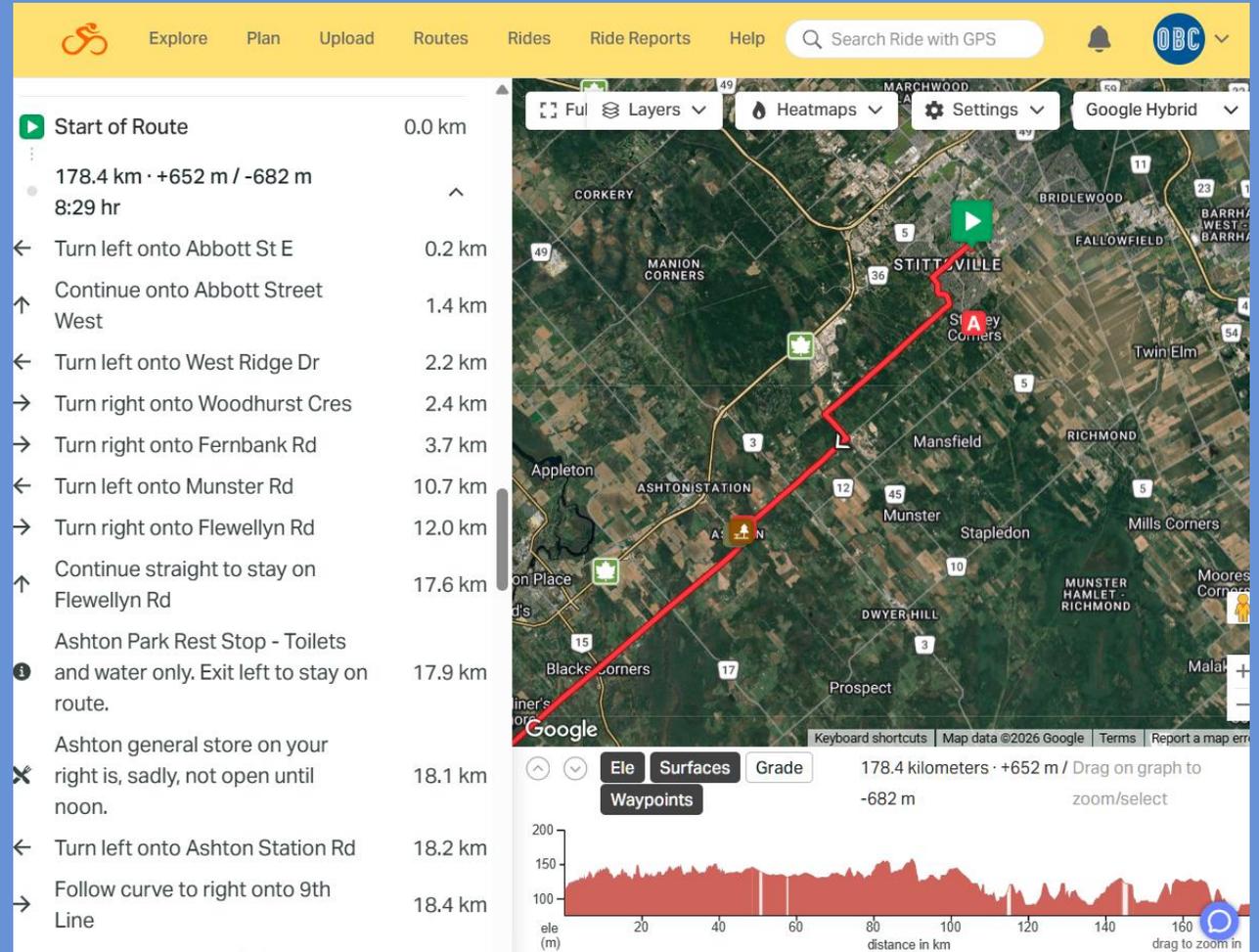
Supported or not supported?

- Unsupported
 - You are on your own and must be self-sufficient
- Supported :
 - Routes have directional (e.g. “turn here”) signage
 - Designated rest stops with water and toilets
 - Food available for sale at certain locations
 - On-route, mobile pro repair services
 - Minor repairs are no charge
 - Support vehicles & radio comms network
 - Police supervision

Every unsupported route has some sections that are supported where they overlap with supported routes

Navigation aids (GPS; Cue sheets)

- All routes have GPS files (Ride With GPS)
- All riders have turn-by-turn voice navigation, if desired
- Printable turn cue sheets
- Devices: Android; iPhone; Garmin; Hammerhead; Wahoo
- Get set-up early
- tinyurl.com/RLCT-tech-guide



Distance & Hills

ROUTE	CHARACTER	KM	CLIMB (METRES)
CENTURY PLUS (pavement) (100% supported)	Rolling, scenic hills; variety of traffic from (mostly) quiet to quite busy.	118	404
CATARAQUI (gravel/pavement) (30% supported)	Pavement 57%. Gravel/ Rail Trail 43%. Rolling, paved hills; rail trails/ gravel for about 50 kms; quite sheltered from wind; excellent hard-packed stone dust bed could get messy in rain; 34km combined overlap with Century Plus (supported) between Perth & Crosby.	118	400
CATARAQUI PLUS (gravel/pavement) (30% supported)	Stittsville -- Perth: Rail trails, via Carleton Place, flat and straight for 28km (unsupported). Pavement 35km (supported). Can also follow Classic route Stittsville -- Perth (pavement; supported). Perth – Kingston: see Cataraqui route description.	177	592
CLASSIC (pavement) (100% supported)	Wide open and flat Stittsville-Perth; winds can be friend or foe. Follows the Century Plus between Perth and Kingston.	178	652
CRUISE (pavement) (30% supported)	To the south through Merrickville and other small towns; less travelled but loved by those who have discovered it. The route with the closest connection to the Rideau River and Canal.	183	670
CHALLENGE (pavement) (10% supported)	Follows the Classic to a little beyond Ashton (supported), then turns north (unsupported) through Lanark County before descending to Westport. New routing Westport – Kingston. Very scenic and rewarding if you have the legs and stamina.	214	1,000
BENCHMARK : Gatineau Park - TACHE BD - CHAMPLAIN LOOKOUT	Where knowledgeable people go to get their hill training; you should too!	21	490

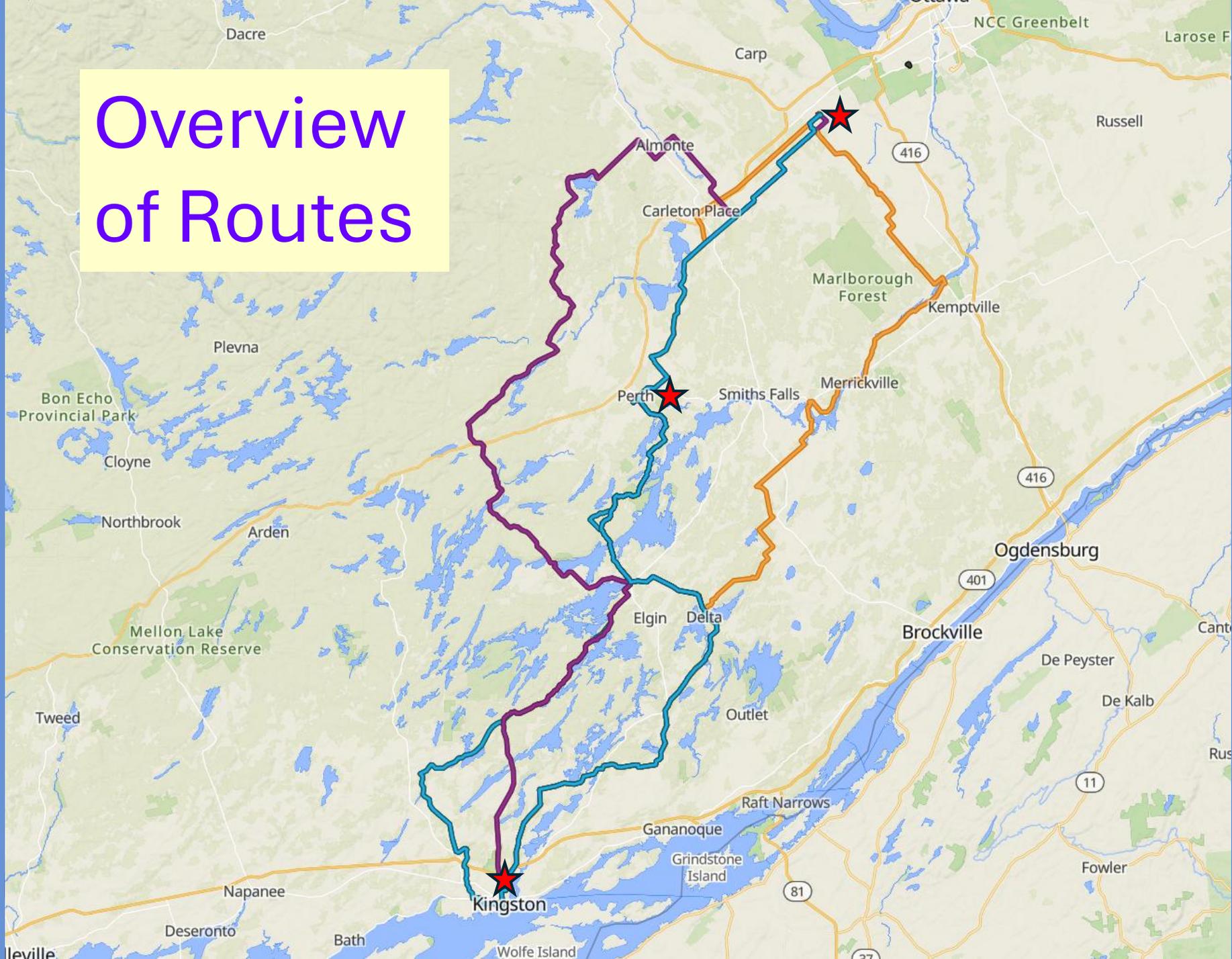
Notes on distance & fitness level

- When you set out, there should be no question in your mind that you can accomplish your goal, whatever the conditions on the day.
- When you register, you are not committing yourself to the selected route; you can change it.
 - E.G. You are registered for an Stittsville departure but there is a howling west wind (i.e. headwind) on departure, as there was in 2024. Once you have checked-in in Stittsville, nothing is stopping you from driving to Perth and starting there.
- A steady pace does wonders; as does a 2km/h reduction in speed.
- Remember that you will be cycling for (for most) at least 6 hours
- Please do not think that 120km cross-country is no more strenuous than 35km on the bike paths.

Your experience alone & group riding

- Are you an experienced distance rider?
- Are you riding with others and are you experienced in group riding?
 - Enormous benefits from group riding
 - Join the OBC
 - Watch some YouTube “group riding” videos to get a minimal idea
- What about riding in “inclement” weather?
- Only you know your capability
- If this is to be a challenge for you, ensure that you get in plenty of riding before the tour dates, so you have a good idea of your capacity. You may surprise yourself.

Overview of Routes



Equipment

- RLCT has been completed on many types of bikes: road; mountain; hybrid; gravel (likely not a fat bike)
- Importance is to know that you can achieve the goal with the bike you have
- Wear good cycling shorts and make sure your backside and your saddle can maintain a good relationship for many hours.
- Checkout Spring, pre-season sales, if any, at local bike shops to get a new pair of shorts with a good bum pad (chamois).
- Make sure your bike is in good shape; take it in for a tune-up
- Carry what's needed to change a flat tire (minimally)

Weather – sun, rain, wind, heat, cold

- The distance you are able to ride in a day has a large dependency on the weather. Check the weather along your entire route.
- Headwinds can be debilitating; tailwinds are a gift
- Let the weather inform your choice of route and, again, be open to a route change.
- Be sure to look at the forecast for the entire weekend; even if Saturday weather is fabulous, Sunday might look horrible!
- Within the RLCT history books there are tales of all kinds of weather, from “absolutely delightful” to “the work of the devil”.
- Pro tip: A forecast of “showers” can end up a steady downpour (2023).

How to Prepare for the Ride

- Training : getting in shape
- Timing : hours enroute in the saddle
- Nutrition : feeding the beast during the ride
- Bike check : bicycle fitness
- Code of conduct : expectations of rider behaviour
- Bike packing : what to carry, and how?
- More info: <https://ottawabicycleclub.ca/rlct/preparing-for-rlct/>

Training

- More kms ridden beforehand = more enjoyable ride
 - 700 – 1200km cumulative (depending on route distance)
 - Training plan on website – 3 or 4 rides / wk over 10 to 11 weeks
 - Hills (hello, Quebec!) and long distance – many routes available in OBC public route library (ridewithgps.com/clubs/3471-ottawa-bicycle-club/routes?); great resource!
- Start small & work up to riding the route distance before the day
- Include back-to-back training rides
- Group riding is encouraged; be familiar with it if it's your plan
- OBC members have lots of opportunity
- <https://ottawabicycleclub.ca/rlct/preparing-for-rlct/>

Timing : how many enroute hours should you expect?

ROUTE	DISTANCE (KM)	KM/H	ELAPSED TIME
CENTURY PLUS	118	20	7H00
		32	5H30
CATARAQUI (GRAVEL) (a little slower than Century+ for a given power output)	118	20	7H00
		28	6H00
CATARAQUI PLUS (GRAVEL) (a little slower than Classic for a given power output)	177	20	10H30
		25	8H30
CLASSIC	178	20	10H00
		32	7H00
CRUISE	183	20	10H00
		32	7H30
CHALLENGE	214	28	10H00
		32	9H00
ELAPSED TIMES INCLUDE ESTIMATED REST STOPS			

Nutrition enroute:

- During training, try different types of bars, gels, drinks, fruit.
 - E.g. Clif bars & Powerade; banana
 - Lots of products on the market; or homemade - **experiment**
 - Easily digested sugars (~60g carbs per hour)
 - Electrolytes in H2O to replenish lost salt
- **Drink and eat before you need it** (rather than hitting a wall and eating to recover)

Bike fitness check

- Ensure your bike is prepared and no parts are about to break on you
- Checklist on website
- Options for a pro checkover
 - Local bike shop
 - OBC may have a bike check available at early bib pick-up

Bike packing

- Myriad bags now on the market, hanging off of every part of your bike!
- Consider carrying:
 - Food
 - electrolytes
 - Drink
 - **Rain gear** (if showers are forecast along the route (not just Stittsville) – bring it! You will shiver if caught in rain in shorts and a jersey). Tie a rainjacket around your waist, if need be (MAKE SURE IT NOT AT RISK OF CATCHING IN REAR WHEEL)
 - Repair kit (minimum: spare tube (2?); pump; tire levers, etc.)
 - Know how to repair a flat
- What you carry will depend on the weather & route
 - Rain – rain gear
 - Cold – extra layer
 - Hot – more fluids
 - Unsupported route – carry a more complete repair kit
- Pack Sunday gear in your overnight bag

Cost & Extras

Cost-wise, you have three options

1. Full Tour \$\$\$ Saturday there, Sunday back
2. Ride Only \$\$ Saturday there, Sunday back
3. One Day \$\$ Saturday there, Saturday back on bus

What's included?	FULL TOUR	RIDE ONLY	ONE WAY / BUS
Curated routes (4 road; 2 gravel)	✓	✓	✓
Luggage transport to/from Kingston	✓	✓	✓
Personalized bib with your emergency contact info	✓	✓	✓
Event T-shirt (if desired)	✓	✓	✓
Organized rest stops on Classic and Century+ (i.e. supported) routes	✓	✓	✓
Water supplied at official rest stops	✓	✓	✓
Enroute directional signage (on supported routes only)	✓	✓	✓
GPS navigation (RWGPS phone app; other devices; all routes)	✓	✓	✓
Queen's arrival BBQ (burger; chips; pop. Closed at 17:00)	✓	✓	✓
Bike repair services on supported routes	✓	✓	✓
Emergency radio services (supported routes)	✓	✓	✓
New, single room residence accommodation (2 rooms share 1 bath)	✓		
Substantial dinner and breakfast at Queen's dining hall	✓		
Same-day return to Perth or Stittsville via bus			✓

Costs

1. Full Tour : 250.00 + CCN fee + HST
2. Ride Only : 150.00 + CCN fee + HST
3. One Day : 180.00 + CCN fee + HST
4. Companion : 100.00 (OBC member)
(room/meals) 115.00 (non-member)

Add-ons (optional)

**purchase during sign-up

Sunday arrival BBQ (Perth) :	\$15.00**
Queen's meals (ride-only reg'ns) :	\$40**

Extra expenses

Parking overnight Saturday (Stittsville) :	NO COST
CardelRec canteen (Stittsville) :	à la carte
Enroute incidentals: food & drink	\$10 - \$40
Bike repairs, beyond minor (parts only)	as charged