



Countryside tour and food-tastings over the border in the Coaticook Valley.

Note: This is a lovely route to take either by car or on bicycle!

Directions from Jackson's Lodge:

From Jackson's Lodge, turn right onto Route 114 West and drive about 9 miles to the Norton/Stanhope border crossing. You'll drive past the US Customs office on your left and straight ahead to Canadian customs. JUST AFTER you exit Canadian customs, look on your left for a tiny gravel road and turn onto it. Ride down that road and it will intersect with Chemin de Stanhope. This will turn into Chemin de Baldwin Mills-Stanhope. The road is partly paved and partly gravel. You'll reach a "Y" in the road, go left onto Devost. From there, take your first left onto Chemin May into the little village of Baldwin Mills. (about 6-7 miles)

Baldwin Mills:

There is public parking between the church and town office building, as well as public restrooms outside. It's nice to park, walk down the road to the bridge and look out over **Lac Lyster** to see the cliffs of **Mont Pinnacle**. You can continue walking, taking each left turn, to get to the public beach (with kayak and canoe rentals) on Lac Lyster. It's only about a 15 minute walk. You'll pass a steakhouse called something like **J-Bar-C**. I've heard it's good, but haven't tried it yet. If you do go to the beach area, take a moment to sit by the steel cut-out figure that is part of the Pioneer Trail (La Voie des Pionniers). You can listen to Walter G. Belknap tell his story (in English or French) about his role in the history of Baldwin Mills. History really comes to life in these pioneer stops because actors tell real-life stories as if they are the particular person- very engaging and not dry like history can sometimes be.

Or, you can follow the pedestrian route just a few feet back along Chemin de Baldwin Mills-Stanhope to access the **hiking trail up Mont Pinnacle**. Mont Pinnacle is a fairly easy hike (if you follow the blue markers)- less than an hour up and about half an hour back down again. The views from the top are spectacular, and you can often see peregrine falcons and eagles .

After your hike or walk, stop in the **general store (depannier)** for ice cream from the local creamery (Laiterie de Coaticook). The woman who runs it (Katherine) is very helpful with directions and information (she speaks English and French). Be sure to try the maple taffy and ice cream (“tire et pepites d’erables” - ice cream with a maple caramel-taffy and nuggets of maple). (I also recommend a visit to the actual creamery if you are going to Coaticook.) There is a nice deck with tables and chairs at the general store to sit and have your snack.

From the center of Baldwin Mills, take a left on Chemin Cabana, until it intersects with Chemin Houle. Take a right on Chemin Houle. You’ll take your second left onto Chemin de Ladd’s Mills, which then becomes Rue Merrill and takes you to Route 141. Turn right and you are in downtown Coaticook. (about 7-8 miles)

Alternatively, to stay on the countryside tour to Compton, turn left onto Route 141 and follow directions below to Compton.

Coaticook:

The city of Coaticook has numerous restaurants and shops in the town center. The **Beaulne Museum** is on Rue De L’Union, just a block from downtown. Located in a magnificent historical house, the museum also serves tea in a charming tearoom on Wednesdays during the summer. The **Parc De La Gorge** de Coaticook is a major attraction with the world’s longest suspended footbridge over a breath-taking gorge, hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, and camping. The Gorge is located on your right as you are driving north out of the city center on Route 147. Just beyond the Gorge, also on Route 147, you’ll see the **Laiterie de Coaticook** (Coaticook Creamery). The Creamery sells delicious ice cream using local milk from the surrounding farms in the Coaticook Valley. Be sure to try the maple taffy and ice cream (“tire et pepites d’erables” - ice cream with a maple caramel-taffy and nuggets of maple). Across the street from the creamery is a new microbrewery (**Microbrasserie Coaticook**), which serves good food as well.

For dining options in Coaticook, try any of the restaurants on Rue Child, which is your first left after you turn onto Route 141. New on this street this year, with outdoor and indoor seating, is **Restaurant DOKO**, fresh, healthy, tasty and affordable Asian food. There are number of other restaurants on Rue Child that we haven’t tried yet. Let us know if you try one you like. Back on Main Street, is **Bistro-Bar Ailleurs**, serving lunch and dinner- good food, and not too costly. Out towards the Parc De La Gorge, just before you enter the gorge, is another good restaurant with indoor or outdoor seating called **Coffret De L’Imagination**.

Continuing on the backroad tour to Compton: *From the intersection of Rue Merrill and Route 141 (above), you can stay on the countryside tour by turning left on 141 and traveling a short distance to Rue Morgan. Turn right on Rue Morgan, left on Chemin Davis, and then right onto Rue Grenier. Stay on Rue Grenier through until it intersects with Chemin Vaillancourt. Take a*

left on Vaillancourt until you see Chemin Pouliot on your right. Turn right on Chemin Pouliot and take it to Route 208. Turn right on Route 208 towards Compton.

Compton:

If you come into Compton on the back roads, just after your turn onto Route 208 from Chemin Pouliot, you'll see La Station artisan cheese factory on your right. Stop in to taste their specialty cheeses and take a look at their cheese cave. This is a farm that has been in the same family for generations. You can buy cheeses and other products in the shop. The staff are all bi-lingual and speak English or French.

Continue on Route 208 into Compton. You'll pass another steel cut-out figure on the Pioneer Path as you travel along Route 208 into Compton. This one is the story of Marie –Ange Vaillancourt-Genest, who left her mark as a community nurse and was highly involved in the municipality and school system.

At the intersection of Route 208 and Route 147, find a place to park and explore some of the wonderful foods in Compton. **Pause Gourmand** is an artisanal bakery- be sure to try the chocolate croissants and olive bread. Just a few houses down on the right, you'll find a magical chocolaterie- **XOCOLATL**- these handmade chocolates are some of the best we have ever tasted. New this year, on the same side of the street and near Pause Gourmand is **Que du Bonheur** café and take-out. Corrinne, who used to own the restaurant across the street, **The Fifth Element** (which is also very good!), has just opened this new café and take-out. She uses local products (breads from Pause Gourmand, cheese from La Station, smoked trout from Les Bobines, apples from Gros Pierre) and also makes her own specialty gelatos. Or, you can find an inexpensive meal of burgers and fries at **Terrasse Wood**, right across the street.

If you want, buy some treats from each of these vendors and then drive up Route 147 to **Domain Ives Hill** for a picnic at this black currant vineyard. You can't miss the sign along Route 147. Just turn right on Ives Hill and then left on Chemin Boyce. This vineyard offers tastings of their black currant and blackberry wines, as well as non-alcoholic products. They welcome you to walk on the grounds and they have picnic spots along the river.

For another option, you can visit the historic general store in Compton, **Louis S. St. Laurent**. Part of the Parcs du Canada system, this historic general store is open from June 27- September 27, Wednesday to Sunday and holidays, from 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is just \$3.90 for adults and \$1.90 for children, or \$9.80 for a family.

Return to Jackson's Lodge following the backroads, or, if you want to come back more quickly, just get on Route 147 and it will take you back to the Norton border crossing.