

# Bikes and Berries ~ Driving Tour

www.bikesandberries.com

Bikes and berries is the theme as you drive through this unglaciated area. Travel through cranberry country and enjoy the spectacular wildlife. More than 2500 acres dot the countryside in the northern part of the county. Enjoy one of our seven museums, the Amish countryside, Fort McCoy, the Wegner Grotto and beautiful rolling hills as you travel through the area.

Check out the world's largest bicycle in Sparta. The Elroy-Sparta Bike Trail and the LaCrosse River Bike Trail offer some of the road tours you're sure to enjoy. Come and explore our class A trout streams, public hunting, kayaking, canoeing and hiking opportunities.

## WARRENS

The tiny, bustling community of Warrens welcomes visitors in a big way. Warrens is the "cranberry capital of Wisconsin". Cranberry marshes, sphagnum moss beds and Great Blue Heron nesting spots are all things to watch for as you drive through this area. Pick up an area map at any of the Warrens businesses to help you find your way around.

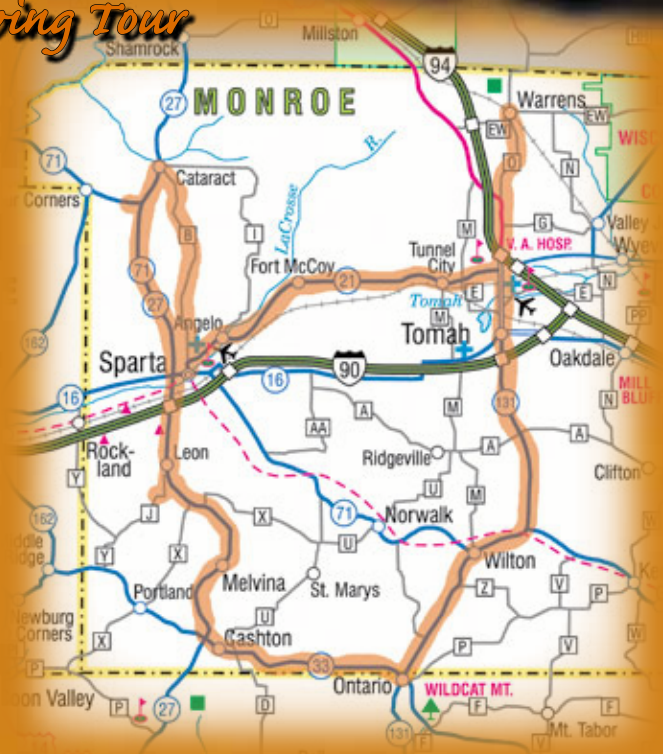
**Wisconsin Cranberry Discovery Center**, 204 Main St., 608-378-4878, an entity dedicated to the cranberry industry in Wisconsin. Learn all about the challenges of growing cranberries, and their history in Wisconsin. Gift shop – featuring cranberry products, glassware, books, and gifts. Bakery.

Warrens offers restaurants for your dining pleasure and an array of unique shopping experiences, featuring the work of many local artisans.

The **Cranberry Festival**, held each September, features more than 800 art and craft booths, 350 antique and flea market booths and 100 farmer's market booths. The annual festival brings more than 100,000 visitors to the area each fall.

**McMullen Memorial County Park** offers excellent camping opportunities and a small lake for fishing and swimming. The 71 site park, situated on 1,000 forested acres, also offers a 3/4 mile hiking trail around the bluff and wetlands area.

*Travel south on County O out of Warrens, 4 miles to Hwy. 12. Turn left (south) on Hwy. 12 and travel 4 miles to Hwy. 21 in Tomah.*



## TOMAH

Tomah is located between I-90 and I-94, where the "T" divides—the gateway to "cranberry country". Tomah is home to the **Budweiser Dairyland National Tractor/Truck Pull**, held in late June. This rip-roaring event brings competitors from across the nation to Tomah. The **Monroe County Fair** is also held at **Recreation Park** in Tomah. Three golf courses, a walking trail, a variety of fascinating restaurants, unique shops and great hospitality bring people back time and time again.

**Humbird Cheese** has more than 100 different cheeses to sample and carries a huge selection of Wisconsin souvenirs as well.

The **Little Red School House** and the **Tomah Area Historical Society Museum** offer a glimpse into Tomah's past. The museum has memorabilia on farming, manufacturing, railroading, the military and the veterans' hospital.

*Take Hwy. 21 west from Tomah, nine miles.*

## FORT MCCOY

Fort McCoy, situated between Tomah and Sparta, on Highway 21, has a **World War II Commemorative Area**, **Historical Center**, and a **Military Equipment Park**. Admission is free.

Five WWII buildings depict a soldier's life in the 1940s. The **History Center** highlights Fort McCoy's role in the armed forces since 1909.

**Pine View Recreation Area** has a beach, boat rentals, campsites, miniature golf and fishing. The **Whitetail Ridge Recreation Area** has facilities for downhill and cross-country skiing, a snow tubing slope, snowmobile trails and a chalet. They have rentals, and offer ski lessons. Toll free: 800-531-4703.



Continue west on Hwy. 21, 7 miles into Sparta. Follow Hwy. 21 onto Montgomery St. at the first stop sign. Turn left (south) on to Water St. at the first stop light. Go several blocks to Main St. Turn right on Main St. and go to the intersection of Main and Court.

### SPARTA

This is the only corner in the State of Wisconsin that has four **State Historical Markers**, designating the importance of the buildings' history—The **U.S. Post Office**, the **Sparta Free Library**, the **Monroe County Courthouse** and the **Masonic Temple**.



The **Deke Slayton Memorial Space and Bicycle Museum** and the **Monroe County Local History Room** are housed in the **Monroe County Museum Complex Building**, also known as the **Masonic Temple**.

This museum has three permanent exhibits exploring the bicycle revolution, local aviation history, and the life of **Mercury 7 Astronaut Donald Kent "Deke" Slayton**. Exhibits include antique and vintage bicycles, a full-scale home built Piety airplane, and one of Deke's original astronaut space suits. The **Kid's Area** is filled with building blocks, books to read, an interactive quiz wall, and a loft to fly paper gliders from.

The **Local History Room** contains the pioneer history of the area, illustrating farming, industry and life in a typical home in years gone by. It also has a state of the art research room, including microfilm copies of all area newspapers, state and federal census info, as well as a cemetery card file.

Go one block east back to Water St. Turn right, (south) and continue to the second stop light on Wisconsin St. (Hwy. 16) Turn left (east) and then right immediately into the first driveway.

Sparta is home to the "**world's largest bicycle**". The fiberglass structure stands 30 feet tall and the rider, "**Ben Bikin**", will speak to you when you stop by. A great photo opportunity.

Sparta celebrates "**Butterfest**" the second weekend in June. A three-day event dedicated to the rich dairy industry in the area, it includes a carnival, flea market, quilt show, auto show and softball tournaments. It features live family entertainment and a huge parade on Sunday.

Drive back up to Hwy. 16 (Wisconsin St.) Turn right (east). Turn around when you can and head west on Hwy. 16 (Wisconsin St.) to Hwy. 27 (Black River St.) Turn right on Hwy. 27 (north). Go 9 miles. Turn left onto Hwy. 71. Go 1/2 mile. Turn left into the driveway.

### CATARACT

The **Wegner Grotto** is a grass roots art environment. This garden park includes concrete structures decorated with a brilliant mosaic of shattered glass and broken crockery, including an American flag, a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary cake, a prayer garden, a glass church and a peace monument.

Turn right (east) onto Hwy. 71. Go to the first stop sign at Hwy. 27. Turn left (north), into **Cataract**, about 2 miles. Turn right onto County Hwy. B. Travel 1 mile. Turn left onto Hwy. 11. Go 1 mile and look for the caboose.

A magical experience awaits you in the **Little Falls Railroad and Doll Museum**. More than 1600 dolls grace the museum, which also includes a gift shop. Evaluations and repairs are also available.

The **Railroad Museum** serves as a reference library for over 1,000 books and magazines dating back 100 years. You'll find a telegrapher's office, lanterns and a gallery of railroad art. The campus includes a picnic shelter, outdoor garden railroad, a caboose tour, children's train rides and a miniature train on which children may play.

Exit back onto Hwy. 11 and turn right (west). Go 1 mile. Turn left on Hwy. B. Go 10 miles back into Sparta Turn right at the first stop light onto Montgomery St. Travel several blocks to the next stop light. Turn left (south) onto Hwy. 27 (Black River St.) Travel 15 miles to Highway 33 in Cashton.

### CASHTON

Cashton sits atop a scenic hill, and is home to Wisconsin's largest Amish settlement. Drive through the beautiful countryside yourself or take an Amish tour. You'll find unique shops, a cheese factory, and plenty of friendly eateries in this cozy town.

Follow Hwy. 33 east 10 miles to Ontario and Wildcat Mountain State Park.

Drive through **Wildcat Mountain State Park**. High bluffs and narrow valleys make this a spectacular scenic area.

Return to Hwy. 33. Turn right (west) and travel 2 miles to Hwy. 131. Turn right on Hwy. 131 (north) and go 11 miles into the Village of Wilton.

### NORWALK-WILTON-KENDALL

The communities of Norwalk, Wilton and Kendall parallel the **Elroy-Sparta National Bike Trail**.

Norwalk boasts a beautiful community park that offers relaxation and camping.

Wilton is a charming community. It offers several restaurants, a small motel, camping and several bed and breakfasts. It is considered the heart of the trail.

Trail headquarters to the **Elroy-Sparta Trail** is the restored **Kendall Depot**. Fishing enthusiasts can enjoy the scenic **Baraboo River** that flows through the village park in Kendall.

Turn right onto Hwy. 71/Hwy. 131 and travel four miles to Hwy. 131, turn left (north) and travel 10 miles back into the community of Tomah.

Take a leisurely auto tour and enjoy all that Monroe County has to offer.



**Kinney Valley Alpacas** is nestled in the hills between Ontario and Wilton.