

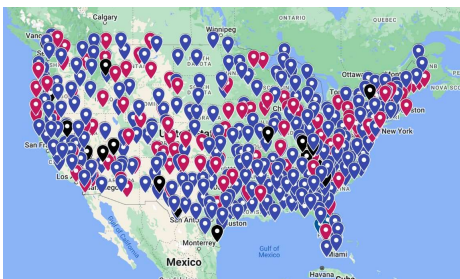
FAT 1000



Karen's 30th Iron Butt Ride

Since we didn't have any plans for the up-coming weekend, Karen said she was ready for an Iron Butt ride! Let's head south to warmer weather! We can stop at RTE locations along the way!

RTE-X-USA (Ride-To-Eat Across the USA) is a Facebook group that offers a new map every year of eating establishments.



2024 RTE Map

Typically, each establishment is worth 1 point for a picture of your bike next to the establishment's sign and another point can be earned if you enter the establishment during business hours and provide a picture as proof. Gas gift cards are won quarterly.

You can earn FAT (Five at a Time) status by visiting at least 5 RTE locations during an Iron Butt ride (at least 1,000 miles in 24 hours).

So, I created a 1,000-mile route that included 5 different RTE locations: Manning's BBQ in New Albany, MS; Changes Restaurant in Venice, LA (near the Most Southern Point in Louisiana); The Company Burger in

Downtown New Orleans, LA; Boudreau & Thibodeau's Cajun Cookin' in Houma, LA and Don's Seafood in Hammond, LA.

We started the ride at the local Circle K gas station in Hernando, MS. Official start time 3:49 am, Saturday, February 24, 2024.

It was 54 degrees! Much warmer than anticipated for a February morning. But as we rode toward New Albany on I-22 under the bright moon lit sky, the temperatures dipped down to 44 degrees.

Of course, Manning's BBQ was closed at 5:00 am. We jumped off the bike for the required picture to earn our point. Then, we hopped back on the bike and continued on I-22 toward Tupelo where we caught highway 45 south to Meridian, MS.

45 south is a nice 4-lane divided highway. Not much traffic, especially truck traffic! This took us down to Meridian where we jumped on I-59 toward New Orleans.

As the sun rose, so did the temperatures. By the time we made it into the New Orleans area, the temperatures were comfortable in the 70's.

We stopped in the suburb of Chalmette for a short ferry ride across the Mississippi River. As we

arrived, the ferry was departing. It was probably a half-hour wait as the ferry traveled the half-mile route across the river, then back again. Once back, it only took a few minutes to board, pay and park before we crossed the river.



Chalmette Ferry

On the other side of the river, we headed south on highway 23. This took us 71 miles down a narrow peninsula to the most southern point in Louisiana. Along the way, there was a lot of oil pipeline construction. But, other than that and some residential housing, there's really not much to see. We rode through a few small towns. Venice was at the bottom.

We ended up at the most southern point sign for a photo op. I had been here a couple of times in the past, once for the Mighty Mississippi ride and another for the Ride Around Louisiana. Karen had never been here. We recognized several of our Iron Butt friends stickers on the sign.

Although not well defined due to all the wetlands and waterways, we walked around the area to see where

the end of the Mississippi River meets the Gulf of Mexico.



Most Southern Point in LA

From here, we rode a few miles back into Venice to Changes Restaurant. It was closed, but good for 1 point! We could see why it was closed since there weren't many people around, a lot of boats though.

Back on the bike, we retraced our route up to New Orleans. Along the way, we could see many huge ships parked on the other side of the levy that paralleled the road. Evidently, those ships were waiting to get into the Port of New Orleans.

Our next stop was The Company Burger in the heart of New Orleans. City traffic at its finest! Slowly, we maneuvered through the narrow streets to the restaurant where we jumped off, took the outside picture, then I went inside for a second point picture.

It was around 3:00 pm when we left The Burger Company. We didn't eat there, we were waiting to eat at our next stop.

By now, the temperature was in the low 80's. We loved the temperatures along with the

sunshine! The 60-mile ride to Houma was nice once we got out of the city.

Boudreau & Thibodeau's Cajun Cookin' in Houma was our target restaurant for some great Louisiana food! We ate here in December for the "Big Tip Road Trip". As we were leaving from that ride, Karen told me that she'd do another Iron Butt ride just to come back for more! Well, here we are!



Houma, Louisiana

Karen started off with a cup of seafood gumbo while I had a half-dozen charbroiled oysters. Then, we both ordered the Boudreau & Thibodeau's Special; Shrimp and crab meat rolled in batter and deep-fried over a bed of angel hair pasta, covered in a crawfish sauce. Absolutely incredible!



Boudreau & Thibodeau's Special

It was 5:00 pm when we left Houma. We had 400 miles home with one more stop in-between. Our next stop was 87 miles away. It was a beautiful ride over bridges and waterways through the wetlands of southern Louisiana!

Don's Seafood Restaurant in Hammond, LA was our final RTE stop of the day. We jumped off the bike for our outside picture, then I went inside for our second point.



Hammond, LA

We are scheduled to eat here with some long-distance friends in October. We are already looking forward to that trip!

When I went inside, I told the hostess that I just needed a picture. I said I'm doing a scavenger hunt. When the hostess saw the RTE sticker that I was including in the photo, she said she knew of RTE's! She asked, "Do you know Reef and Ksolo?" I said "Yes!" Then she asked, "Are you coming back here in October for their RTE?" I said, "Yes, see you then!"

The sky was clear with a bright full moon as we headed north on I-55. The temperature was very pleasant until we got through Jackson, MS.



We'll see these Hostess' in Oct.

Then, the temperatures dropped the rest of the ride home. The lowest temperature was about the same as when we started earlier that morning, mid to low 40's.

The side of the interstate was covered in deer all the way up through Mississippi. The clear skies must have brought them out to graze. Though, none of them were a threat to us, all it would take is for one to get spooked and run out in front of us! We see them a lot on our trips. During those times, we're on high alert!

We made it back to the Circle K in Hernando. Official end time, 10:35 pm for a total of 1,060 miles in 18 hours, 46 minutes.

Well, we did it! A FAT 1000! Five RTE stops during 1,000 miles within 24 hours! It was a great ride to cure the cabin fever that we'd been suffering from over the past few months!

Also, this was Karen's 30th Iron Butt ride since our first one twenty years ago! That's quite the accomplishment for a pillion/passenger to sit back there

all those miles! I'm a lucky guy to have a wife to share these adventures with! I'm so proud of her! Here's to another 30, Karen!



2022 BMW K1600 GA

Distance: 1,060 miles

Time: 18 hrs, 46 min.

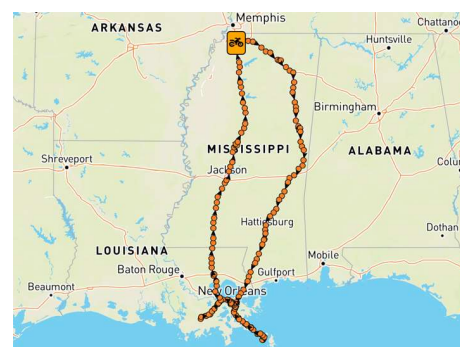
Average Speed: 56 mph

Fuel Used: 34.204 gal

Fuel Mileage: 30 mpg

High Temperature: 82°

Low Temperature: 44°



1,060 Mile Route

