

The all-purpose (challenging) winter ride

One ride that has it all-

- Steep climbs!
- Fast descents!
- City limit sprints!
- Great views!
- Awesome food!
- Friendly people along the way!
- And today, great weather!

Well OK, it didn't have tailwinds all the way, and in fact I recall headwinds but no tailwinds at all. Not that I'd admit to them if they were there. But if you want a near-perfect 100k ride out of Woodside that's challenging & fun and even allows for a shortcut if you get in over your head, this is it. But please note the word "challenging" in the description, because this ride has its share of climbing.

Steep climbs? Parts of Old LaHonda & Haskins (from the west side)Â qualify, but more assuredly West Alpine. Fast descent? Haskins & 84. City limit sprints? This has the classics- San Gregorio, Pescadero & Loma Mar. Great views? They're endless on this ride. The views of the Pacific from west-side Old LaHonda & Stage Road, the valley leading into San Gregorio, the creek along Pescadero Road, and the sweeping vistas on West Alpine and Skyline. Food? Pescadero's famous bakeries. Ollalieberry scone & turnover for me today, from a place that loves cyclists (unlike the San Gregorio General Store, where we're tolerated but not too welcome). Friendly people? Lots of cyclists out on the roads today, including one guy who flagged us down on Skyline... flat tire, no tube, no pump, and said we were the first cyclists in an hour and a half to come through (this was at the vista point just north of Page Mill).

And, as is so often the case this time of year, nicer weather on the coast side than near the bay.

It's certainly not as difficult as the Santa Cruz loops we've been doing so many of lately, but rather a ride that might be described as challenging but fun. Today, perhaps a bit more challenging than it should have been, as I'm getting over a nasty cold and got to watch Kevin ditch me on Old LaHonda. But later I got him on Haskins, and West Alpine saw us evenly matched.