

ROUTE 7 TOUR

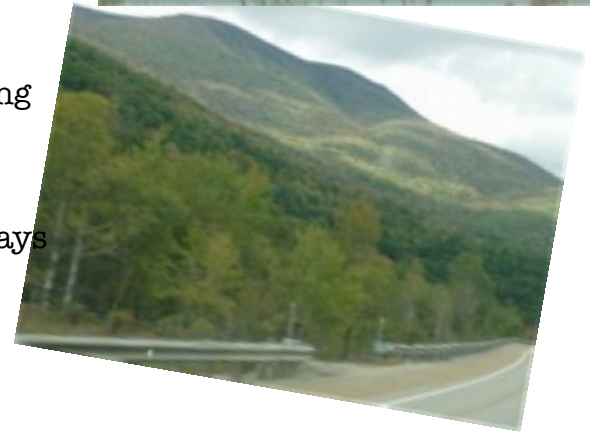


October 3, 2007
Weather: partly cloudy
My mood: partly cloudy
Left VCC: 8:05 am
Arrived VCC: 5:00 pm
212 miles

Dave and Skeff started my tour with a hug each, and made my drive down Route 7 much more pleasant. My thoughts kept turning to my best friend who's dad past away suddenly this week; and also to my really good friend Art, who had a seizure and doctors found a black mass on his brain. It makes me feel extremely vulnerable.

I was glad to have this task of visiting Friends because hearing people's stories and seeing them living their stories is interesting to me. I can always find some connection back to me and that makes me feel good. This interconnectedness. Makes the big world smaller.

Here are some of the beautiful sights I got to indulge in along Route 7:



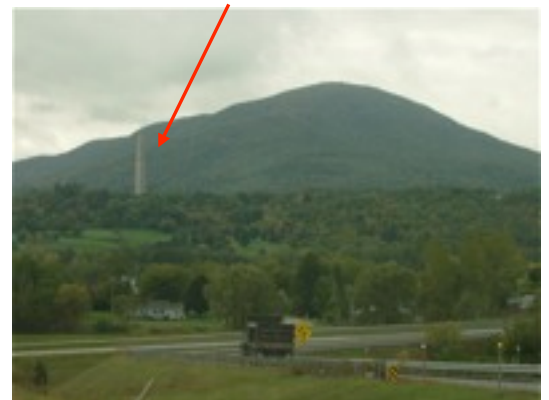
I arrived in Bennington around 10:30 am and took to finding a Mobil that had Speedpass. I found the only one in



Bennington, but only after accidentally pulling into the wrong driveway, wrong because it led me to a Drive thru

Starbucks! I drove through scenic Bennington only to realize The Price Chopper is off of Route 7A which is the Exit before Bennington. But I'm glad I got to see the town. The views are amazing!

Bennington Monument





It was Bernie's day off but I met Kevin, the Store Manager. He was very business-like, but he took some time with me as I showed him the new display that I changed out and he was glad to learn of the rotation date on the coffee. I did the usual rotation and organizing of the display.

We have a good piece of real estate on the corner of the coffee aisle. In the photo you can see that GMCR is hugging us pretty tightly. This connection between Paul Newman and GMCR is confusing to me. Can someone explain? Anyways, I made sure our "100% Fair Trade, 100% Organic" sign was prominent.

I headed north to Manchester.

A first-time visit for me. Oh so quaint.

I believe this is the World's Smallest Price Chopper, in the World's Smallest Shopping Plaza. I really appreciated its human scale after coming from that behemoth in Bennington.

We have a great location in the front of the store on a corner lot. The first coffee you see when rounding the corner. Chrystal says sales will increase over the next few weeks due to the leaf peepers.

Chrystal, who currently gives the on-hands to Cari, is leaving in two weeks for the Rutland Price Chopper and doesn't know who will take her place. Nonetheless, I showed her the rotation dates and hopefully she'll pass on this intelligence to the new person.

They don't use the scanned sign system as religiously as the other stores do but instead make handmade signs. They like our laminated sign but unfortunately glued the new prices over the top of it so I'd like to make them a better one. I took down the measurements.





1:20 pm

Left Manchester enroute to Rutland

This is our buddy Mike. The nicest darn person you're going to get on-hands from. When he met me at the Customer Service Desk and saw my FRIEND cap his face lit up and I thought he was going to hug me! But he didn't. He just seemed so genuinely happy to see me. I bet he makes everyone feel that way. I know this because as we walked through the aisles to the coffee display he had kind words to say to every employee along the way, and everyone said hi to him, like he was some kind of celebrity!

I thought about changing out this old display for the newer big one I had in the van, but this one works quite well and I didn't know if we had plans for all those other big ones. So I cleaned and rotated and culled 2 bags of coffee. I refreshed Mike's memory on the rotation numbers. He knew. Another good piece of real estate on a corner lot in Nature's Place.

I left at 2:36 and headed home.

I was tired of the big stores and wanted more intimate energy so on my way through Brandon I stopped at Wood's Market Garden. What a sweet and beautiful place and full to the rafters with all manner of vegetable and fruit and baked good. I wanted to get you all a treat. Elsie wanted me to get you a pie to have with coffee and I was in full agreement with her except that I know a certain someone wouldn't appreciate the gluten in it so I opted for the gluten-free heirloom apples! They're from Scott's Orchard, which I MUST visit someday. I picked the ones with my favorite names. They didn't have the Sheep's Nose though.

They had a few bags of our coffee left. They close for the season after this next weekend. My spirits were lifted considerably and I decided to end my Tour with a cup of coffee. So I headed to the Ball & Chain in Brandon.



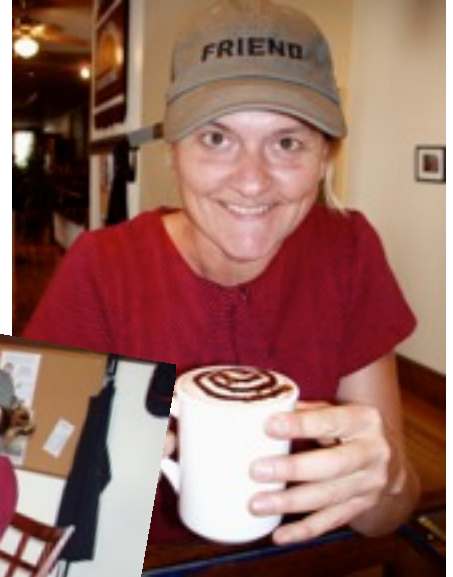
Now I'm in my element chatting with the Friends who are drinking our coffee. The few people in the upstairs café are in great spirits and I just feel happier by the minute. And then when Sarah made me a Mocha . . . well, I think the look on my face says it all.

I tried my hand at taste-testing the Tres Mariposas. I took advantage of the Wi-Fi and emailed Paul my findings right there at the café table! A patron snapped that photo of me and we both laughed at the thought of having an alibi in case you thought I was goofing off.

What a great place to end my tour.

Friend hugs all around.

Lily signing off



I love how they name the different sizes of espresso drinks.

Hot Chocolate, Espresso

	Haiku (Single 8.5oz)	Haiku Tall (Single 12.5oz)	Sonnet (Double 12oz)	Sonnet Tall (Double 16oz)	Epic (Triple 16oz)
Cappuccino Equal parts espresso, steamed and frothed milk	\$1.00	/	\$2.00	/	\$2.50
Latte Espresso steamed milk and a dollop of froth	\$1.50	\$1.75	\$2.00	\$2.25	\$2.50
Mocha Espresso, steamed milk and Torani chocolate sauce	\$2.25	\$2.50	\$2.75	\$3.00	\$3.25
White Mocha Espresso, steamed milk and Torani White Chocolate sauce	\$2.50	\$2.75	\$3.00	\$3.25	\$3.50

