Collectively, with its transitional scenery and exceptionally navigated routes, Mississippi has a multitude of indications to offer enthusiastic bicyclists. With its broad, flat landscapes, authentic natural hills, and moderate climate, Mississippi is ideal for year-round cycling.

As the bicycle culture increases in Mississippi, there is more focus on the importance of bicycle safety. Although riding a bicycle is a recreational cyclist activity and sports that every occupied bicycle on or near a Mississippi highway is recognized as a transportation vehicle, intended for the bicyclist traveling in a traffic stream, the rider should understand that it carries certain responsibilities and accountabilities of a motor vehicle handler. This includes riding on the right side of the road with the movement of traffic, exercising hand signals, and conforming to stop signs.

Individuals who want to bicycle for either transportation or recreation can find first-rate county and city maps as well as data on traffic volumes in the Map section of www.GoMDOT.com.

More of the local bicycle clubs exhibit their favored routes and have them published on their web sites. The route maps utilized in combination with the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) maps should provide cyclists with the finest information to establish the best courses for traveling to their endpoint.

Recreational Trails

State Parks and Lakes: www.mdwfp.com

Local Clubs:
Gulf Coast Bicycle Club: www.gulfcoastbicycleclub.com
Jackson Metro Cyclists: www.jmc.clubexpress.com
Oxford Bike Club: www.oxfordcycling.org
Hattiesburg City Cyclists: www.pinebeltpacers.org/HCOn/HCCPage.html
Natchez Bicycle Club: www.natchezbike.org
Jackson Bike Advocates: www.jacksonbikeadvocates.org
Starkeville in Motion: www.starkevilleinmotion.org
Hernando Bicycle Club: www.hernandobicke.com
Tri County Mountain Bike Association: www.tricountymtb.org

Mississippi Groups:
Bike Walk Mississippi: www.bikewalkmississippi.org
Mississippi Blues Trail: www.msbluestrail.org

National Groups:
League of American Bicyclists: www.bikeleague.org
Adventure Cycling Association: www.adventurecycling.org
National Center for Bicycling & Walking: www.bikewalk.org
Bikes Belong: www.bikesbelong.org

Bicycle Touring in Mississippi
The Natchez Trace: www.nps.gov/natr
The oldest and best known touring route in Mississippi is the Natchez Trace Parkway. Over 300 miles of the 444 mile-long Natchez Trace are in Mississippi. In association with the speed limit of 50 mph and numerous signs instructing cars to share the road with bicyclists, the Trace is a remarkable bicycle route.

The Longleaf Trace: www.longleaftrace.org
The Longleaf Trace is over 40 miles of 10-foot-wide asphalt. A designated National Recreation Trail, the Trace starts on the campus of The University of Southern Mississippi in the City of Hattiesburg and stretches through the cities of Sumrall, Bassfield, and Carson before reaching the final point in the City of Prentiss. Much of the trail is well-shaded with amazing natural landscaping.

The Tanglefoot Trail: The Tanglefoot Trail is a 44.5 mile-long, 10-foot-wide surfaced path for walkers, bicyclists, and horseback riders. The Trail will pass through 3 counties in rural northeastern Mississippi (Chickasaw, Pontotoc, and Union) and unite several towns on its journey from New Albany to Houston, Mississippi. The trail covers an abandoned railroad and suggests satisfying sights of woodlands and fields, as well as access to historic locations.

The Mississippi River Trail: www.mississippirivertrail.org
The Mississippi River Trail progresses along the Mississippi River from Minnesota to Louisiana. Approximately 300 miles are situated in Mississippi. The trail uses existing roads to take bicyclists through unique small towns, punctuated with rolling hills that pass through fields and forests. Adventure Cycling Routes: www.adventurecycling.org

Three of the routes on the Adventure Cycling Association’s National Bicycle Route Network cross Mississippi. Map 6 of the Southern Tier crosses the southern part of Mississippi. Maps 2 & 3 of the Great River Route bring bicyclists through Mississippi on the Natchez Trace from the Tennessee border to Natchez. Maps 1 & 2 of the Underground Railroad cross the east side of Mississippi going through Columbus, Fulton, and Burnsville before it reaches Tennessee. Vicksburg Military Park: www.nps.gov/vick
The Vicksburg National Military Park has 15 miles of roads on the historic bluff of Vicksburg. The Park charms bicyclists with the 15 MPH speed limit and the challenging hills.
MISSISSIPPI BICYCLE LAWS

Senate Bill No. 3014 of the Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature also known as the “John Paul Frerer Bicycle Safety Act” enacted in 2010 requires that while passing a bicyclist on a roadway, a motorist shall leave a safe distance of not less than three (3) feet between his vehicle and the bicyclist and shall maintain such clearance until safely past the bicycle. The Act also states that it is unlawful to harass, taunt or maliciously throw an object at or in the direction of any person riding a bicycle. Full text of the Act is available online at www.gomdot.com

House Bill No. 559 of the Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature was an act to make bicyclists subject to the provisions of traffic law applicable to the drivers of motor vehicles amended to state that every person riding a bicycle upon a highway shall have all the rights and duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle except those provisions which by their nature have no application.

Section 63-3-603 was amended to place certain restrictions on persons riding bicycles on a roadway. Persons riding bicycles upon a roadway shall not ride more than two (2) abreast except on paths or parts of roadways set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles. Persons riding two (2) abreast shall not impede the normal and reasonable movement of traffic and, on a multilane roadway shall ride within a single lane.

SEC. 63-7-13 Requirements as to lighting equipment. (4) Lamps on bicycles. Every bicycle shall be equipped with a lighted white lamp on the front thereof visible under normal atmospheric conditions from a distance of at least five hundred feet in front of such bicycle and shall also be equipped with a reflex mirror reflector or lamp on the rear exhibiting a red light visible under like conditions from a distance of at least five hundred feet to the rear of such bicycle.

SEC. 63-7-65 Horns and other warning devices. (3) No vehicle shall be equipped with nor shall any person use upon a vehicle any siren, whistle, or bell, except as otherwise permitted in this section. No bicycle shall be equipped with nor shall any person use upon a bicycle any siren or whistle.

BICYCLES ARE NOT ALLOWED ON ANY INTERSTATE HIGHWAY OR CONTROLLED ACCESS FACILITY IN THE STATE.