

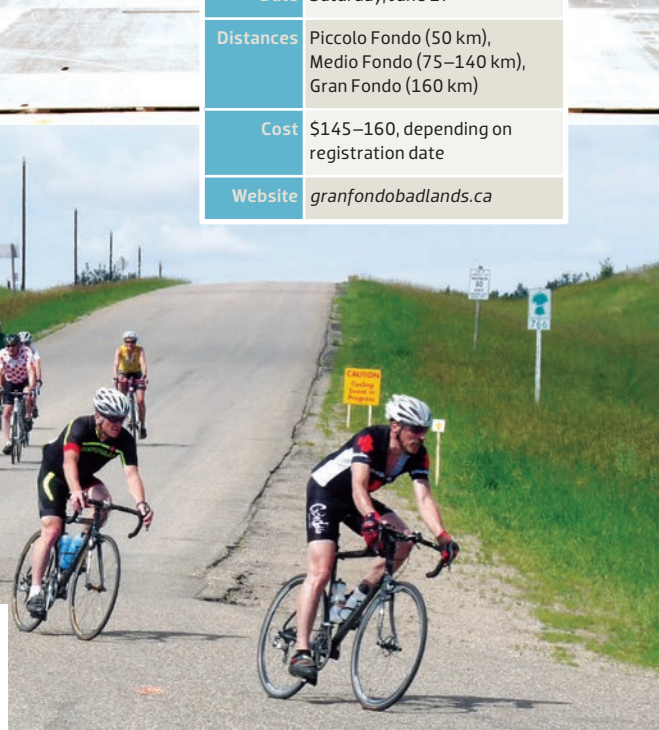
GRAN FONDO BADLANDS

It's not every day that you can say you saw a dinosaur on your morning ride, but signing up for Gran Fondo Badlands is one way to make that happen. The event is held in Drumheller, Alta., which is just far enough from Calgary to offer quiet roads but just close enough to make it easy to get to. Ride organizer Rick Skeith said the move from the foothills outside of Calgary to Drumheller after the first three years of the event opened up not just quieter roads, but also an opportunity to add some novelty to the ride. "Drumheller is an iconic little tourist town centred around the topography," he said. "The Red Deer River goes through it, there are lots of hoodoos, and then there's the dinosaur theme – we see little statues and big statues of dinosaurs throughout the town." In each of the distances, riders also take Alberta's only ferry – a short two-minute ride over the Red Deer River.

The organizers host a pre-ride dinner on Friday night as well as an unsupported second day of riding on Sunday. Even though the rides can be challenging, with the 160-km option including a 2-km climb at an 8 per cent grade, Skeith wants to temper any on-bike suffering with off-bike perks. "It is nice to be coddled when working out and our gran fondo lives up to this with a pre-ride breakfast as well as catered aid stations, a full lunch afterwards and special treats."



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| Location | Drumheller, Alta. |
| Date | Saturday, June 27 |
| Distances | Piccolo Fondo (50 km), Medio Fondo (75–140 km), Gran Fondo (160 km) |
| Cost | \$145–160, depending on registration date |
| Website | granfondobadlands.ca |



SASKATCHEWAN INDIAN GAMING AUTHORITY PRAIRIE GRAN FONDO

The overwhelming feedback we receive from past participants is about the incredible sense of beauty and freedom that a rider can only experience riding the quiet, wide-open space of our agricultural landscape in the presence of the never-ending clear blue Prairie sky," Jeff May-Melin, Prairie Gran Fondo's committee chair said. "Those who are fortunate enough to spend a little time and experience the prairie landscape are, I think, often surprised at the tranquil beauty of Saskatchewan and the Canadian Prairie region."

Even though the Prairies are flat, cyclists who sign up for one of the four distances ranging from the 40-km Piccolo Fondo option to the lengthy 185-km Gran Fondo Plus ride should not assume they are in for an easy ride. "An 18-km ride where a significant portion can be directly into a 30 km/h wind might have the experienced hill climber surprised at the challenge and might even have him or her wishing for a 10 per cent grade instead," May-Melin said. "I would rate our terrain as easy to moderate if there is no wind, however, if we have significant wind on event day, I would rate our route as moderate to hard."

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| Location | Saskatoon |
| Date | Sunday, July 5 |
| Distances | Piccolo Fondo (40 km), Medio Fondo (73 km), Gran Fondo (115 km), Gran Fondo Plus (185 km) |
| Cost | \$85 |
| Website | horizon100.com/prairie_gran_fondo |