

An Awesome Day

Written by

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[Eugene](#), Oregon is in the heart of the Willamette Valley flanked by the Coast Mountains to the west and the Cascade Mountains to the east. The whole area is gorgeous with dozens of lakes, rivers and waterfalls nestled in a variety of terrain and often surrounded by thick cedars. Today even though we woke up to overcast skies, the forecast indicated a clearing by noon so we decided to go out on the motorcycle.

We both have leather jackets and chaps but because we had decided to head east into the Cascade Mountains we packed extra sweaters in the event we needed them later. From Eugene we headed east on Highway 126 through the small communities of Vida, Finn Rock and Blue River, pretty country running alongside the McKenzie River. We stopped for gas and donned our additional clothing because we could already feel the chill despite the radiant sunshine. We then headed south through the [Willamette National Forest](#) on a winding mountain road running beside the South Fork of the McKenzie leading to the beautiful Cougar Dam and Reservoir.

As we proceeded south, we came to a parking area and a sign indicating we were at the [Terwilliger Hot Spring](#)

! Imagine our surprise...a hot spring high up in the Cascade Mountains, something we were not expecting at all. We learned it was located a half-mile walk into the forest by way of a trail and were told by a few enthusiastic hikers/bathers that we should at least go see it. Our cowboy boots and leather togs are not the best hiking apparel but we made the effort anyway and were delighted to find a series of seven hot spring pools. Apparently, they vary in temperature with the hottest one at the top and each one below it getting progressively cooler AND the rule is "clothing optional" for bathers. Evidently, (by the lack of attire of the half dozen bathers) the option today was no clothing!

We got home at 6:00 PM, the sun was slowly sinking and we had just spent 5 and a half hours riding in the mountains. When we were 5,000 feet above sea level, it did get mighty cold and we were so thankful for having the foresight to bring our warmer clothes. We really had an awesome day, riding on some really awesome roads and seeing some amazing country!!