

Drive Instructions

MINIs On the Dragon 2018

The Unofficial Texolina Run

For my old MINI friends from Texas, my new MINI friends from the Carolinas and anyone else we find along the way!

NOTE: THIS IS THE FIRST YEAR FOR THIS MAP PACKET... TREAT INSTRUCTIONS AND MILEAGES AS ESTIMATES!

Organizer: Aaron Granger

Route created for MOTD 2018. Questions?
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On Motoring Alliance and NAM: agranger



Date/Time: SATURDAY: 1:30pm on May 5, 2018

The Route: It spans 100 miles and runs from the end of the MOTD 2018 Ice Cream Run (Soda Pops at 125 Everett St, Bryson City, NC), down 28 towards Franklin, west across Wayah road and then back to Fontana via Robbinsville (food, gas, etc).

Duration: This is a 3.5 hour drive when there are no stops and no traffic. We will plan for a stop quickly in Franklin for gas and bathrooms.

Cost: There is no cost for this event. You must be a registered participant for MOTD to participate in this drive. If you are going to attend the Ice Cream run, I suggest you sign up for that Drive on the MOTD site so the organizers of that drive will know you are coming.

Meeting Place: The Ice Cream Run will get you from Fontana (immediately after the panoramic photo around 11:30) to Soda Pops Ice Cream Shop in Bryson City. We will meet at the Swain County Courthouse parking lot at 1:30pm to depart for this run (101 Mitchell St, Bryson City, NC). It is about 1 block behind the Soda Pop shop. I'm 6'4" tall and 300+lbs, so I'm hard to miss (at MOTD, my uniform is jeans and a grey fleece). Rufus, my Chili Red R53 is also easy to spot. Look for us in parking lot marked with the big green blob on the picture to the right.



Radios: FRS radios are wonderful for this type of event. We will run on Channel 8 (no sub-channel or sub=0).

The Drive: This is a SPIRITED drive. We will keep the pace brisk, but will happily respond to radio requests to slow down a bit. The most important thing is the safety of everyone involved.

Warnings: Unlike most sharp turn signs (especially in a MINI), the speed warnings for turns in the Smoky Mountain park are very accurate... Take them seriously. Mind your speed on anything that resembles a highway... radar WILL be present.

Logistics: We will stop quickly in Franklin for gas and bathrooms at "The Hot Spot" (459 E Main St, Franklin, NC 28734). This will happen about 30-45 minutes into the drive (35 miles). Please ensure that you start the trip with enough gas to get you here. Gas isn't always plentiful in the mountains and sometimes the Fontana station gets low and they limit purchases to 2-3 gallons at a time. If you get the chance to fill up with quality gas while at MOTD, do it! I have no idea about bathroom cleanliness, but I don't expect a lot.

If you don't have enough gas to get the 35 miles to Franklin, there is a Shell station 2 blocks from our starting point. Get an early start to grab gas (just follow the first few instructions on the drive, below) and join in when we drive past. If desperate for a bathroom and the Soda Pop lines are too long, there is a new McDonalds a few blocks past the Shell station. Get an early start and join in as we pass. Keep your radio on and I'll try to call the turns so you know we are coming.

We will also be passing through Robbinsville on our way home. This is the best place for groceries and gas near Fontana (about 25-30 minutes away). I'll be stopping for gas here as well, to be topped off for my Sunday drive home.

HOW TO DRIVE THE DRAGON (Reprised from an article by Ron Johnson at www.tailofthedragon.com):

Drive the Dragon at your skill level - don't try to push it or keep up with faster vehicles.

STAY IN YOUR LANE, There are videos available for sale that show vehicles cutting the corners and taking chances that might appear "fun" while sitting in your easy chair. **BEWARE !** This style of driving on the Dragon can cost you dearly. The challenge of the Dragon is to take the many curves in the best line possible and both lanes IS NOT "the line". Drive Florida if you like to straighten out the curves.

Do NOT sightsee. The Dragon is to drive, not to watch the sights. On many runs I don't even see what is on the side of the road. I'm watching the roadway way ahead.

Look far ahead at the road, curves, bushes, other vehicles, etc. If you haven't seen the hazards right in front of you, you are going to hit them anyway, so you might as well pay attention to what you have time to avoid.

We have seen deer, bear, turkeys, and wild boar on the roadway. Be ready to brake and slow. When we say brake we **DO NOT** mean slamming on the brakes. That will get you turned around in a hurry and it's no fun looking at where you've been at any speed.

Maintain a "safe zone". Keep a safe distance between you and the vehicle ahead of you. Watch your rear view mirrors for faster vehicles. If you see a faster rider/driver coming up behind you, pull over to the right of your lane, slow down just a little, and wave them around. It is much safer to let a faster vehicle around you than to try to outrun them. **NEVER** stay left trying to keep someone from passing you. **NEVER** pull off the road onto the shoulder unless it is at one of the pull-off parking areas. It may be illegal to pass on the Dragon, but I'll let a faster vehicle get around me to protect my safe zone.

There will always be faster drivers than you. Don't try to be the King of the Dragon.

Drive the Dragon many times before trying to challenge it. Then you still need to respect it at all times.

DO NOT STAND ON THE BRAKES if you see danger ahead. You are much better off to tap the brakes and maintain control. Some 90% of the accidents on the Dragon are due to speed and then over-braking. If you see another vehicle coming at you in your lane, hug the white line in your lane. In all likelihood you can avoid trucks and trailers if you stay alert and watch ahead.

DO NOT be spooked by other vehicles. **DO NOT** make sudden avoidance moves. You might have to adjust your line to avoid a car, truck, or bike, but **DO NOT** lay on the brakes or turn off the roadway suddenly unless that is the only out you have. Motorcycles might dent your car, but that is better than going off the bank and hitting a tree sideways. If a cycle is in your lane that is their mistake and problem ... don't let them force you into a worse situation for yourself.

Trucks are usually traveling at a very slow speed and you should have time to stop and back-up if you see one coming at you and taking the whole corner. Watch for signals from drivers/riders coming at you. Many times they will escort a big truck over the Dragon and wave a warning to you to pull over. **DO NOT** ignore these warnings.

Avoid driving hard on the Dragon in heavy traffic times. Weekends from 11 am to 5 pm are the busiest. These are the times to lay back and enjoy watching the "show" go by.

The early mornings (before 11 am) and the late afternoons (after 5 pm) have the least traffic.

ALWAYS stay 100% alert. You do not have the advantage of relaxing on the Dragon.

Make sure your vehicle is mechanically sound and that your tires are good.

Plan to make several runs, the first is always a nervous one then you can have fun on the second and third.

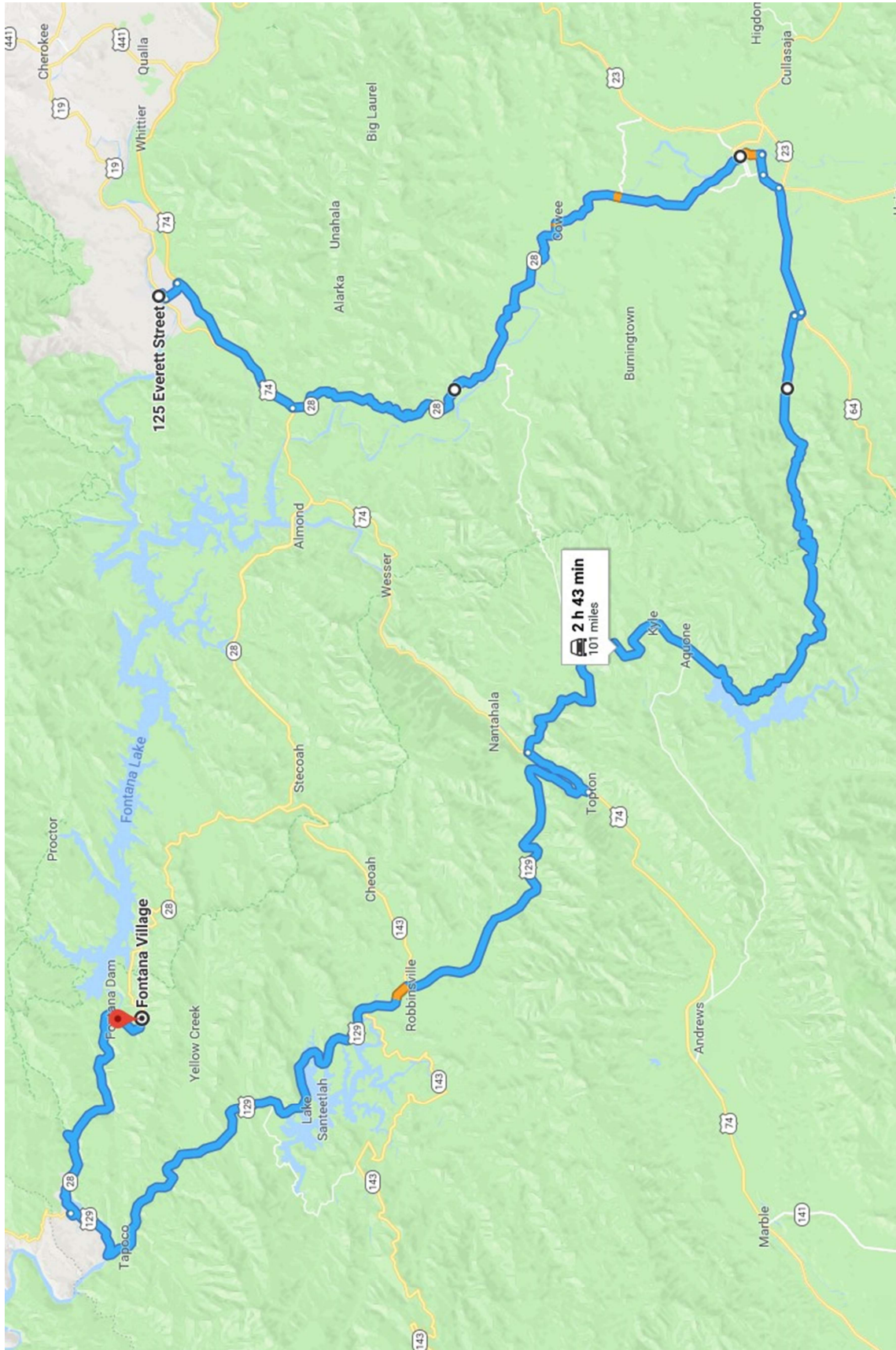
DO NOT over-use your brakes. Use your gears and **DOWNSHIFT**. A good Dragon driver **WILL NOT** use a lot of brakes.

Focus - do not daydream. Watch the road, your mirrors, and pay attention to other bikes/cars/trucks.

99% of the accidents on the Dragon come from the following:

- Too much speed
- Too much brakes
- Inattentiveness
- Driving above your abilities

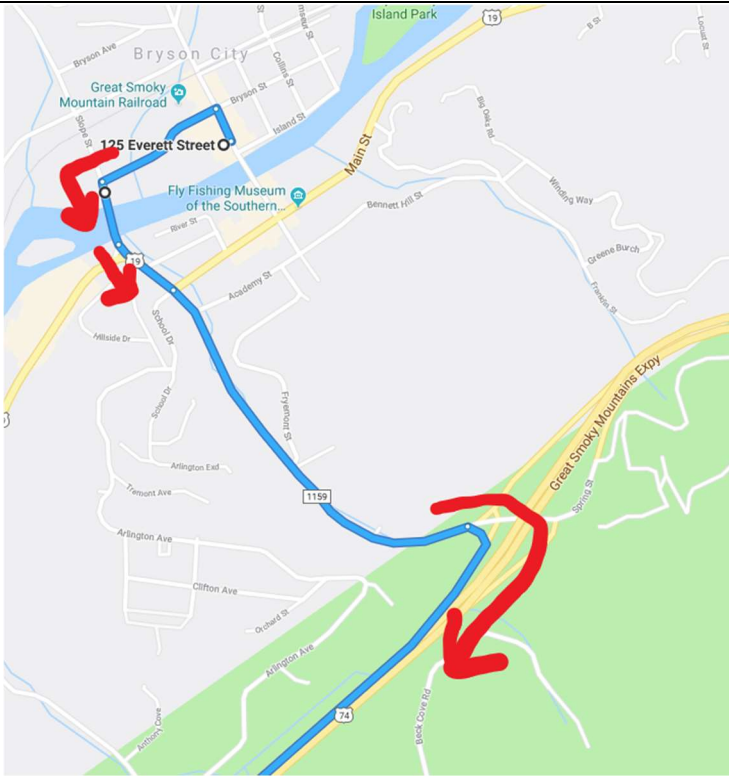
An Overview of the Route:



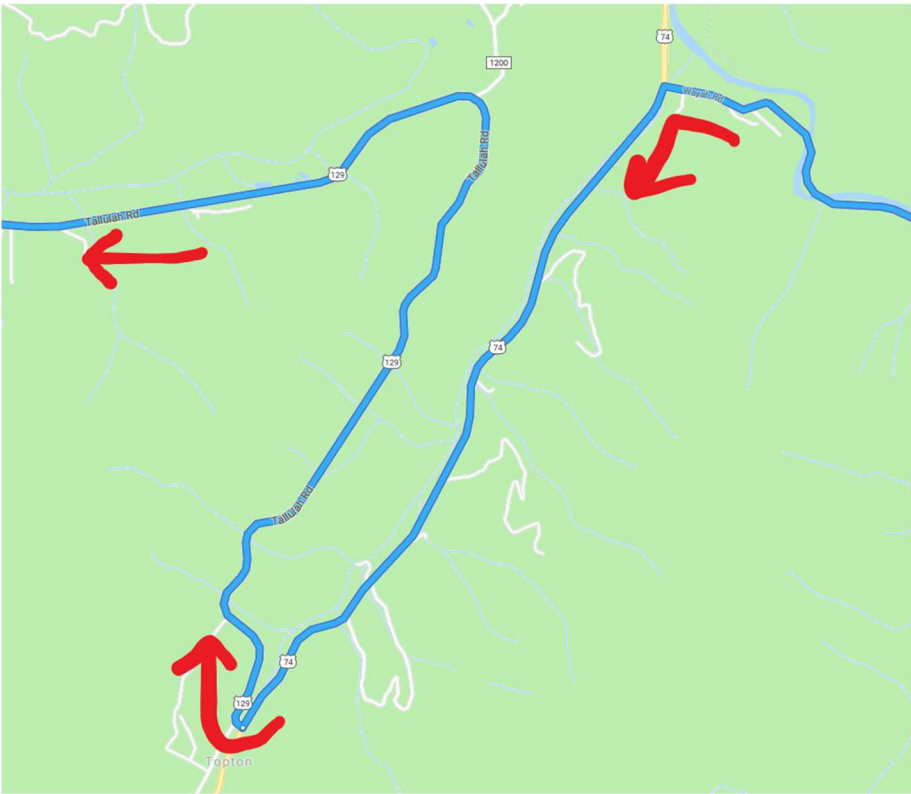
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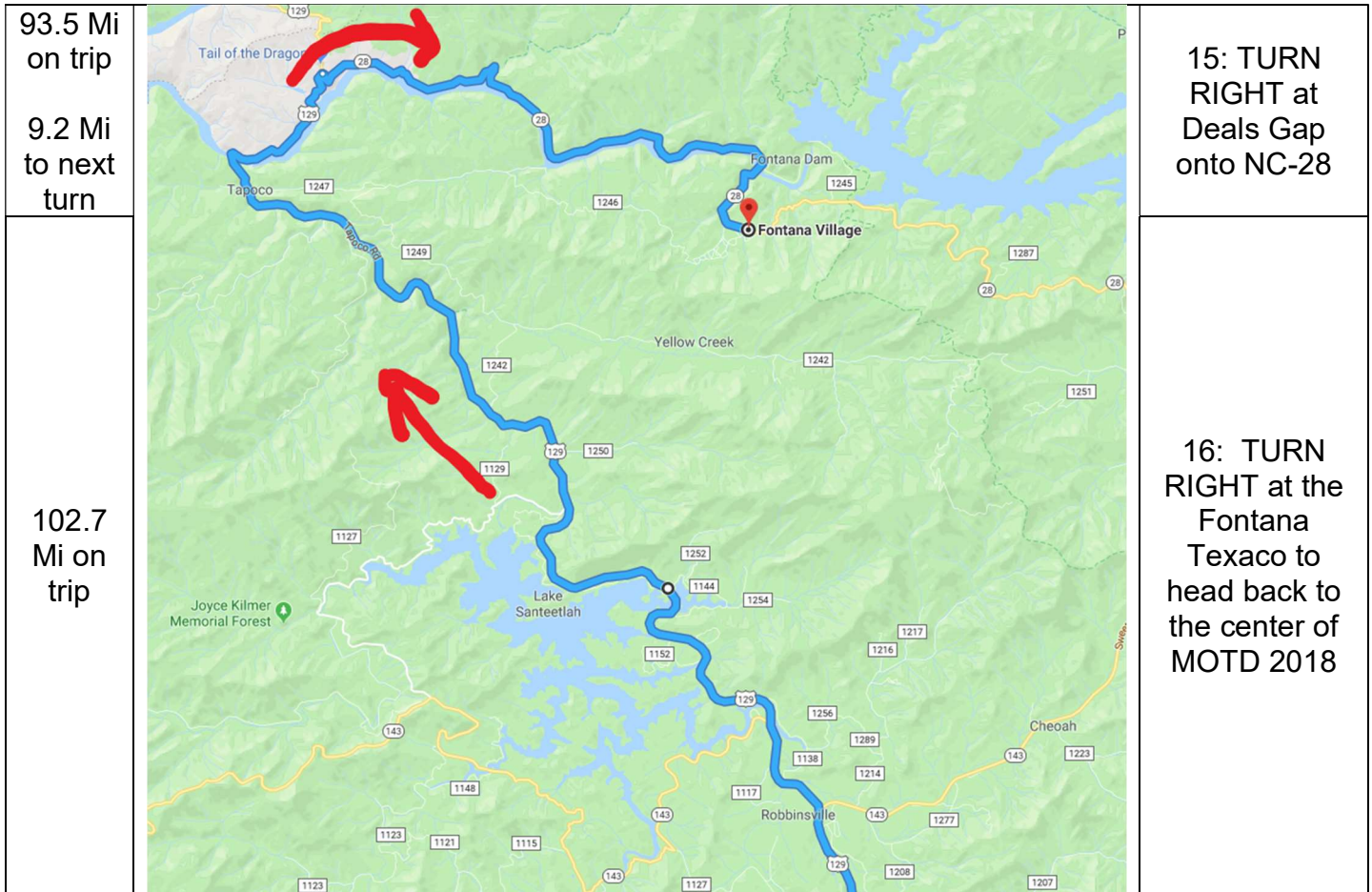
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Step by step instructions:

Miles	Map	Directions
<p>0 Mi on trip</p> <p>1 block to next turn</p>	<p>We will be leaving the Swain County Courthouse parking lot at 1:30pm</p> <p>101 Mitchell St, Bryson City, NC</p>	<p>1: Depart the staging area,</p> <p>TURN LEFT onto Mitchell St</p> <p>Reset your trip meter as you make this turn.</p>
<p>0.1 Mi on trip</p> <p>1 block to next turn</p>		<p>2: TURN LEFT onto Slope St.</p>
<p>0.1 Mi on trip</p> <p>0.6 Mi to next turn</p>		<p>3: Stay STRAIGHT at Walgreens, joining US-19</p> <p>(Shell gas staion on your right, 2-3 blocks ahead)</p>
<p>0.7 Mi on trip</p> <p>5.2 Mi to next turn</p>		<p>4: TURN RIGHT onto 74 West towards Murphy (Great Smoky Mtn Expy)</p>

<p>5.9 Mi on trip</p> <p>20.7 Mi to next turn</p>	<p>This is a busy road, but there is a dedicated turn lane for the left turn at the end. Take your time and be safe. We will pull over and allow the group to join up after the turn... no worries!</p>	<p>5: TURN LEFT onto NC-28 towards Franklin.</p>
<p>26.6 Mi on trip</p> <p>0.2 Mi to next turn</p>		<p>6: TURN LEFT onto E Main St.</p> <p>GAS Stop at "The Hot Spot" if needed</p>
<p>26.8 Mi on trip</p> <p>1.2 Mi to next turn</p>		<p>7: TURN RIGHT onto Highlands Rd (follow NC-28 South) just past McDonalds</p>
<p>28.0 Mi on trip</p> <p>5.8 Mi to next turn</p>		<p>8: TURN RIGHT onto US-64 West</p>
<p>33.8 Mi on trip</p> <p>0.3 Mi to next turn</p>		<p>9: EXIT RIGHT and then TURN RIGHT onto 1442 North (Patton Rd)</p>
<p>34.1 Mi on trip</p> <p>28.0 Mi to next turn</p>		<p>10: TAKE FIRST LEFT (at the Marathon Gas Station) onto Wayah Road / 1310</p>

<p>62.1 Mi on trip</p> <p>0 Mi to next turn</p>		<p>11: Regather the group at the end of Wayah Road (large parking lot on right when the road ends)</p>
<p>62.1 Mi on trip</p> <p>2.1 Mi to next turn</p>		<p>12: TURN LEFT onto US-74 (Nantahala Gorge Rd) at the end of Wayah Rd.</p>
<p>64.2 Mi on trip</p> <p>10.9 Mi to next turn</p>		<p>13: TURN RIGHT onto Tallulah Rd bridge (US-129) and bear right as you cross the bridge</p>
<p>75.1 Mi on trip</p> <p>18.4 Mi to next turn</p>		<p>I'll be stopping for Gas and maybe a bathroom in Robbinsville. I prefer the McDonalds / Shell combo that will be on your right, but it's up to you (Address: 374 Rodney Orr Bypass, Robbinsville, NC 28771)</p> <p>Your tour is officially over here, but you are welcome to tag along w/ me after gas at the Shell station, or follow the instructions back to Fontana.</p>



NOTE: The Farewell Dinner doors open at 5pm tonight.
 The event itself starts at 6pm (food service & announcements).

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BACK OF A PACKET WHEN
PRINTED DOUBLE-SIDED.

One Page Instructions for the Unofficial Texolina Run – MOTD 2018

1	Trip: 0 mi 1 block to next turn	Depart Swain County Courthouse parking lot at 1:30pm (101 Mitchell St, Bryson City, NC) – TURN LEFT onto Mitchell St.
2	Trip: 0 mi 0.1 to next turn	TURN LEFT on to Slope St.
3	Trip: 0.1 mi 0.6 to next turn	STAY STRAIGHT at Walgreens, joining US-19 (Shell gas station on your right, 2-3 blocks ahead)
4	Trip: 0.7 mi 5.2 to next turn	TURN RIGHT onto 74 West towards Murphy (Great Smoky Mtn. Expy.)
5	Trip: 5.9 mi 20.7 to next turn	TURN LEFT onto NC-28 towards Franklin (dedicated turn lane)
6	Trip: 26.6 mi 0.2 to next turn	TURN LEFT onto E Main (get gas at ‘The Hot Spot’ if needed)
7	Trip: 26.8 mi 1.2 to next marker	TURN RIGHT onto Highlands Rd (follow NC-28 South) just past McDonalds
8	Trip: 28.0 mi 5.8 to next turn	TURN RIGHT onto US-64 West
9	Trip: 33.8 mi 0.3 to next turn	EXIT RIGHT and immediately TURN RIGHT onto 1442 North (Patton Rd)
10	Trip: 34.1 mi 28.0 to next turn	TAKE FIRST LEFT (at the Marathon Gas Station) onto Wayah Rd / 1310
11	Trip: 62.1 mi 0 to next turn	REGATHER the group at a parking lot on the right, at the end of Wayah Road
12	Trip: 62.1 mi 2.1 to next turn	TURN LEFT onto US-74 (Nantahala Gorge Rd) at the end of Wayah Road
13	Trip: 64.2 mi 10.9 to next turn	TURN RIGHT onto Tallulah Rd bridge (US-129) and bear right as you cross the bridge
14	Trip: 75.1 mi 18.4 to next turn	GO straight through Robbinsville (stop for gas/food/groceries)
15	Trip: 93.5 9.2 to Fontana	TURN RIGHT at Deal’s Gap onto NC-28
16	Trip: 102.7	TURN RIGHT at the Fontana Texaco station to head back to the center of MOTD 2018