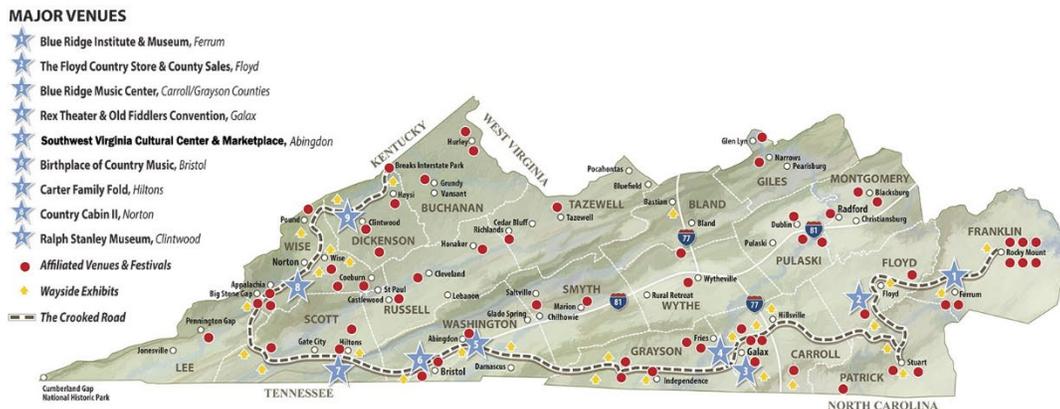


VIRGINIA IS FOR MUSIC LOVERS™

A Music Lover's Getaway in Virginia

Virginia's music roots go deep and continue to have a wide-reaching influence around the country and the world. Virginia's Heritage Music Trail, The Crooked Road (map below), is a nearly 300-mile self-driving trail that twists and turns its way through the Appalachian Mountains from the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Coalfields region, following U.S. Route 58. This trail connects major heritage music venues, such as the Birthplace of Country Music Museum, the Blue Ridge Music Center, and the Carter Family Fold.



Music genres along the trail range from traditional gospel, bluegrass, and mountain music – all passed down through the generations. In addition to music, the towns located along the trail feature a variety of handcrafted artisanal treasures at numerous quaint stores and workshops, inviting you to stop in and browse.

Day 1 – Abingdon & Bristol

Your gateway to Southwest Virginia and The Crooked Road begins at the Southwest Virginia Cultural Center & Marketplace, located in Abingdon, where you will be introduced to the craft music, food, and culture that make Southwest Virginia such a unique destination. While in Abingdon, visit the The Barter Theatre, the State Theatre of Virginia. Opened during the Great Depression and named for the barter system that allowed locals to trade food for attending a performance, it is the nation's longest running professional theatre. For outdoor adventure, rent a bike and explore the Virginia Creeper Trail, a popular rails-to-recreation trail.

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Next up is Bristol, the congressionally designated official Birthplace of Country Music and home to The Birthplace of Country Music Museum (pictured right), an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution. The notable “Bristol Sessions” occurred in Bristol in the summer of 1927 and are considered by many to be the “Big Bang” of country music. These sessions included performances by the Carter Family (known as the first family of country music) and Jimmie Rodgers, who is referred to as the “Father of Country Music” and was also the first person inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame.



The Birthplace of Country Music Museum in Bristol

If it's a Saturday, you're in luck! Visit the nearby Carter Family Fold where you'll enjoy some of the latest local acts – either by watching a performance, or by getting on the dance floor to cut a rug! The locals are more than happy to take you by the hand and teach you the fine art of flatfoot dancing, all at the original home of the legendary Carter family. Turn in for the night at The Bristol Hotel, a property dating back to 1925, featuring a rooftop bar with sweeping mountain views.

Day 2 – The Crooked Road

Hopping back on The Crooked Road, you will pass through the small town of Damascus, which is often referred to as “The Friendliest Little Town Along the Appalachian Trail.” This will soon be followed by Galax, a city home to the most famous fiddlers’ event of all time, The Galax Fiddlers’ Convention. Galax also features The Rex Theater, another notable venue along The Crooked Road.

Your journey will then bring you to Hillsville, home of the Hillsville Concert Series and Hillsville Jam Sessions. Nearby, the Blue Ridge Music Center greets you with toe-tapping sounds from fiddles, banjos, and guitars! The Blue Ridge Music Center is also home to the interactive Roots of American Music Museum Exhibit and the starting point for two scenic hiking trails.



The Floyd Country Store

Floyd is your next stop along The Crooked Road. Situated in the gorgeous Blue Ridge Mountains, Floyd is known for its “Friday Night Jamborees,” which take place weekly at the famous Floyd Country Store (pictured left). In the warmer months, the Jamborees even spill out into the streets, creating a town-wide party that will undoubtedly have you tapping your toes in no time!

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Day 3 – The Crooked Road & Roanoke

Your third day begins with one final excursion along The Crooked Road to Ferrum. Here, you will explore the Blue Ridge Institute & Museum, the official State Center for Blue Ridge Folklore. Located across the street is the Blue Ridge Farm Museum, a re-created 1800s Virginia-German farmstead with living history demonstrations and a variety of hands-on activities. Finally, you will arrive in Rocky Mount, home to the Harvester Performance Center, where you can hear live music, including folk, bluegrass, country, rock, and more.

Your sampling of The Crooked Road ends here, with a short drive taking you to the city of Roanoke, known as the “Star City of the South.” Recently dubbed America’s East Coast Mountain Biking Capital, this city is full of opportunities for outdoor adventure. Popular attractions to explore include the Virginia Museum of Transportation, the Roanoke Star Overlook at Mill Mountain for sweeping views of the city and mountains, the Taubman Museum of Art, and the Roanoke Pinball Museum. Enjoy a restful night at the Hotel Roanoke, a Tudor-style hotel built in 1882 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



The Roanoke Star Overlook at Mill Mountain

Day 4 – Roanoke

Before heading home, be sure to visit Black Dog Salvage, featuring a stunning variety of antiques and countless other unique items. Black Dog Salvage is also the home of the popular television series, *Salvage Dawgs!* When it’s time to depart Roanoke, take a ride on the famed Blue Ridge Parkway, known for some of the nation’s most spectacular mountain views.



The Blue Ridge Parkway

Questions? Contact Brigitte B elanger-Warner for more information on Virginia vacation ideas.