

A SCENIC MOUNTAIN ROAD TRIP

I-81

Interstate 81 (I-81) is an 855-mile-long highway with 324.92 miles in Virginia. It is also the longest Interstate highway within the borders of Virginia. It stretches from the Tennessee state line near Bristol through the Shenandoah Valley to the West Virginia state line near Winchester. I-81 is a quicker alternative to the Blue Ridge Parkway but still offers scenic views along the way with easy access to the Blue Ridge Parkway and Shenandoah National Park.



VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS



Day 1: Abingdon

Abingdon voted "One of the Coolest Small Towns in America", is a place to experience the best of Appalachian history, culture and music. A Blue Ridge Mountain town rich in experiences with a culture of hospitality that enthusiastically welcomes groups. In Abingdon, you'll find a small town with big amenities, located in one of the most biodiverse landscapes in the country.



ITINERARY

Arrive in Abingdon and stop first at the Southwest Virginia's Cultural Center & Marketplace, the headquarters of The Crooked Road. Your group will have a step-on guide welcome and give a brief description of the center. Inside they will encounter an interactive display about The Crooked Road, Virginia's Heritage Music Trail, and you can arrange for a question and answer session with one of the personalities that can help people with a deeper understanding of what this musical heritage means to the Appalachian Mountain people and the current musicians today.

With your step-on guide, begin your journey to learn the history of Abingdon when you visit the Abingdon Muster Grounds, the original mustering grounds of the Virginia Militia for the Revolutionary War. Men and women in period dress will share how these Virginia soldiers endured the mountain challenges with mountain spirit to turn the tide of the Revolutionary War. The Muster Grounds is the northern trailhead of the 330-mile long Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail. Music history goes back to the revolutionary time and Appalachian Highlands Pipes and Drums can continue telling you the story that influenced the music of the region.

DAY 1: ABINGDON ITINERARY (CONT'D)

Check into one of Abingdon's group friendly hotels (brands to fit every budget including a 4 star historic hotel) and freshen up for an evening of food and fun.

Gather in one of Abingdon's unique independent restaurants, for cuisine that is truly "Rooted in Appalachia" and listen to local musicians play the mountain music with their own interpretation.

One of many evening entertainment options is to enjoy a show at the Barter Theatre. Barter is the oldest professional theater in the country and located in an 1832 historic building on Main Street in Abingdon. During the depression of the 30's Robert Porterfield returned home and founded the theatre with many actor friends referred to as "starving artist". The name comes from the practice of admission which was .35 cents or the equivalent in produce or farm goods. This method was known as "Ham for Hamlet". Many actors began their professional career here including Ernest Borgnine, Patricia Neal, Ned Beatty, Gregory Peck, and Hume Cronyn.

Wow, it may be time to depart but there is so much more to do in Abingdon...



ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Tasting at the Abingdon Olive Oil Company
- Shop for traditional and contemporary arts and crafts at Holston Mountain Artisans
- Visit Wolf Hills Brewing
- Bike or stroll along the Virginia Creeper Trail
- Experience a festival – Virginia Highlands or Mountain of Music Homecoming



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Day 2: City of Staunton

Pronounced "Stan-ton", this mountain town with the scenic Blue Ridge Mountains as the backdrop, is often named one of the most celebrated "Main Streets" in the United States. Its compact and walkable downtown make it ideal for groups and features a vibrant arts and music scene, rich history and architecture, and outdoor recreation. Staunton is the perfect choice for a getaway to Virginia's Queen City offering the best of mountains to Main Street.



ITINERARY

By bus or foot, take a tour of downtown Staunton visiting four of Staunton's Historic Districts with stops at Trinity Episcopal Church to see the original Tiffany stained glass windows; Sunspots Studios to watch live glass blowing demonstrations; and the R.R. Smith Center to visit the visual art and history galleries. Enjoy lunch and time on your own exploring this charming downtown.

Discover the life and legacy of the 28th President at the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library and Museum. Take a guided tour of the Presbyterian Manse where Wilson was born and spent the first year of his life. Next stop, is the museum which includes Wilson's Pierce-Arrow limousine, an interactive World War I trench and seven exhibit galleries which represent through historic photographs, documents and objects, the life and public service of Woodrow Wilson.



DAY 2: STAUNTON ITINERARY (CONT'D)

Check into your hotel and freshen up for a night out! Enjoy dinner at one of our local restaurants in downtown Staunton—you won't find any chains here! Visit Emilio's for its authentic Italian taste; Aioli's for its Mediterranean fare; Mill Street Grill for their barbecue ribs; or The Depot for American inspired dishes.

See a show! Shakespeare is serious fun at the Blackfriars Playhouse, the world's only re-creation of Shakespeare's indoor theater. Performing Shakespeare, contemporary works, and new plays year-round. Choose from over 15 performances including world premiere musicals like *The Willard Suitcases*, classics such as: *A Christmas Carol* and *The Grapes of Wrath* or Shakespearean staples: *Much Ado About Nothing*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and many more!

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Get the 101 lesson on cheese making and pair a final cheese tasting flight with the award-winning wines of Ox-Eye
- Be immersed in the daily life of early immigrants from Europe and West Africa at The Frontier Culture Museum
- Enjoy a southern inspired tea at the Inn at Meadowcroft, a beautifully renovated 1795 log home
- Take in the sights and scenes of the Shenandoah Valley with a driving tour along Skyline Drive or the Blue Ridge Parkway
- Add interactive play with a stop at Staunton's Crack the Code Escape Room



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Day 3: Loudoun County

Loudoun County is a culinary and heritage destination just 25 miles (40k) from the U.S. capital of Washington, D.C. Loudoun boasts award-winning wineries, breweries, distilleries, farm-to-table dining, country inns and estates, Northern Virginia's newest 5-star resort and more. Along the way, experience scenic vistas, rich American heritage and charming small towns. To help plan your visit, Loudoun offers a range of itineraries that feature one-of-a-kind experiences for both groups and individuals



ITINERARY

Arrive at Bluemont Vineyards and enjoy a Sangria-Making Competition at this Loudoun favorite. Sitting atop the first ridge of the Blue Ridge Mountains, soak in the view and enjoy the fruits of the land! This family owned winery celebrates what makes Loudoun County special, local ingredients and flavors that tell the story.

Head east to Purcellville and stop for lunch at Monk's BBQ. Known for its house-made meats, classic sides with a twist, unique sauces and specials, Monks is the epitome of 'Made in Loudoun.' This family owned BBQ joint is dedicated to making sure your BBQ experience is traditional and authentic.



DAY 3: LOUDOUN ITINERARY (CONT'D)

In historic downtown Leesburg, stop at George C. Marshall's Dodona Manor for a docent-led tour. George C. Marshall, the architect of the Marshall Plan following World War II, purchased the property in 1941 as a quiet haven from his Washington life until his death in 1959. Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work on economic relief following WWII, Marshall also held the role of Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense. Home to surprising art pieces, unique stories, and a rich history, Dodona Manor speaks to generations.

Take part in a chocolate making class at The Conche, Loudoun County's chocolate themed boutique restaurant. Infusing chocolate in not only the sweet, but also the savory, and adding it into their unique cocktails makes it a must-try. Don't forget to stop at the chocolate boutique to take some sweets home!

One of more than 30 breweries along the LoCo Ale Trail, Old Ox Brewery is the place to go and hang out with friends. It is named for one of the oldest roads in Loudoun County that originally connected the agricultural producers of Loudoun to the markets in Fairfax County and beyond- yet another way to bring the farm to table. Enjoy a tasting and tour at Old Ox Brewery and if time allows, set up a corn-hole tournament!

Top off the night and get interACTIVE at StageCoach Dinner Theater for a Murder Mystery Dinner Show. Whodunit? Everyone is a suspect! Was it you? Written and produced in house, these fun programs assign parts to members of the audience and the guilty party could be anyone!

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Take a tour through the art galleries and rare book room of the National Sporting Library and Museum
- Head up to Vanish Farmwoods Brewery, home to the only hops processing facility in the Mid-Atlantic for a tour and tasting
- Take a swing at TopGolf. This unique twist on a driving range is fun for any skill level
- Experience Polo in the Park (Saturday – July & August) at Morven Park
- Morven Park is a 1,000 acre historic estate featuring a restored Greek revival mansion that was once the home of World War I-era Virginia Governor Westmoreland Davis



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