

SOUTHERN *West Virginia* MOTORCYCLE RIDE GUIDE



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*Welcome to the
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the mountains.*

Grandview, Raleigh County

SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA HAS IT ALL: rural retreats and country culture; steep hills and deep valleys; scenic vistas; serene retreats; and serious adventure! What's more, we're within a day's drive of 50 percent of the U.S. population. We invite you to discover the next great place to ride.

Southern West Virginia consists of the nine counties in the bedrock of our state. Each one has something to offer visitors at every turn. It could be an adventurous whitewater rafting trip, zipline tour, or perhaps a relaxing spa visit. It might be shopping or dining. Maybe it's our culture, history, or the arts. This area is unique—there's no other place like it. Escape from your daily routine and explore everything our region has to offer.

When you want a break from exploring on two wheels, there's no shortage of places to stay in West Virginia. From luxury resorts to mountain cabins in the woods, you can find all the lodging options you're looking for right here. Hotels in our area are plentiful and provide great service along with a great stay for road warriors.

To help you explore, we've developed a few suggested rides that take you off the beaten path, through our friendly towns, and into the heart of our area. There is a place to stop, something to do, and definitely things to see on every route.

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Head of the Dragon

VIA ROUTES 52, 161, 16, 83, & 80

91 MILES

Begin in Welch and head east on Rt. 52. (16.4 miles)

In Elkhorn, take 161 South. (24.9 miles)

In Bishop, take Rt. 16, heading northwest. (16 miles)

Then, take Rt. 83 heading west-northwest to Bradshaw. (9.7 miles)

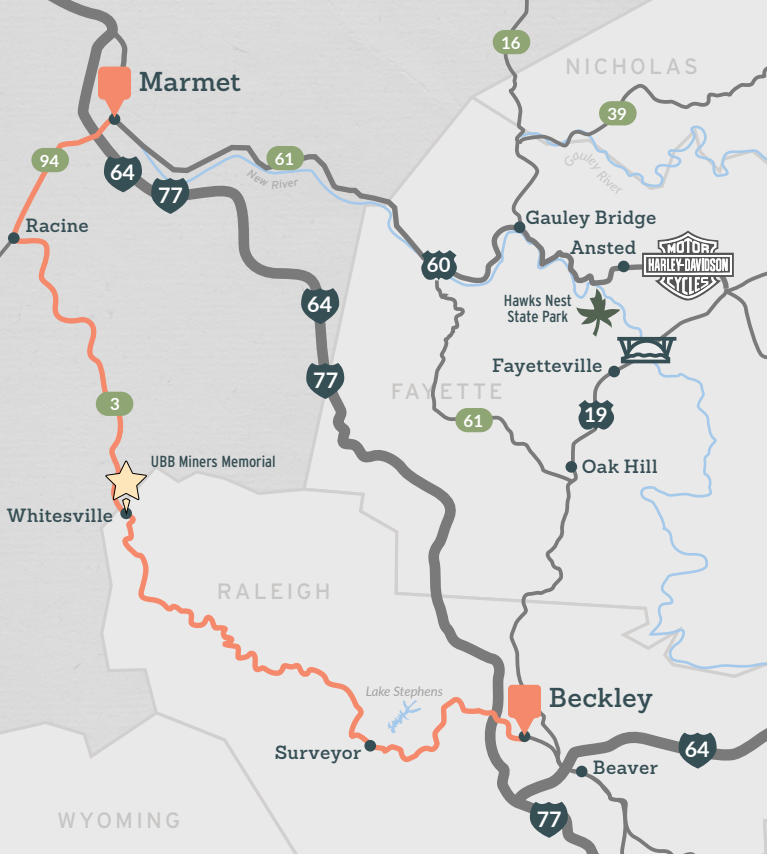
In Bradshaw, take Rt. 80 and head north towards Iaeger. (11.6 miles)

In Iaeger, get on Rt. 52 east back towards Welch. (17.2 miles)

91 miles of curvaceous country roads in McDowell County make up the Head of the Dragon. This day-long journey features dramatic mountain vistas and quaint small towns. History is alive here, too—this is the heart of coal country. Explore Welch, the county seat of McDowell County. The courthouse here played a pivotal role in the Mine Wars of West Virginia. Or, stay a little longer; trade your bike for an ATV and ride the Hatfield-McCoy Trails. The Head of the Dragon passes by connectors to the Indian Ridge Trail System in Ashland, Northfork, and Keystone.

This scenic loop completes the Body of the Dragon, which includes the Back of the Dragon and Claw of the Dragon in Virginia and Tail of the Dragon in Tennessee and North Carolina. Complete all four rides to become a Dragon Master!

The second annual Head of the Dragon Run will take place September 15, 2018. Starting at 9 a.m. in Welch, there will be stops for restrooms and food in small towns along this route.



Marmet to Beckley

VIA ROUTES 94 & 3

67 MILES

From Marmet, take WV-94 S. (10.5 miles)

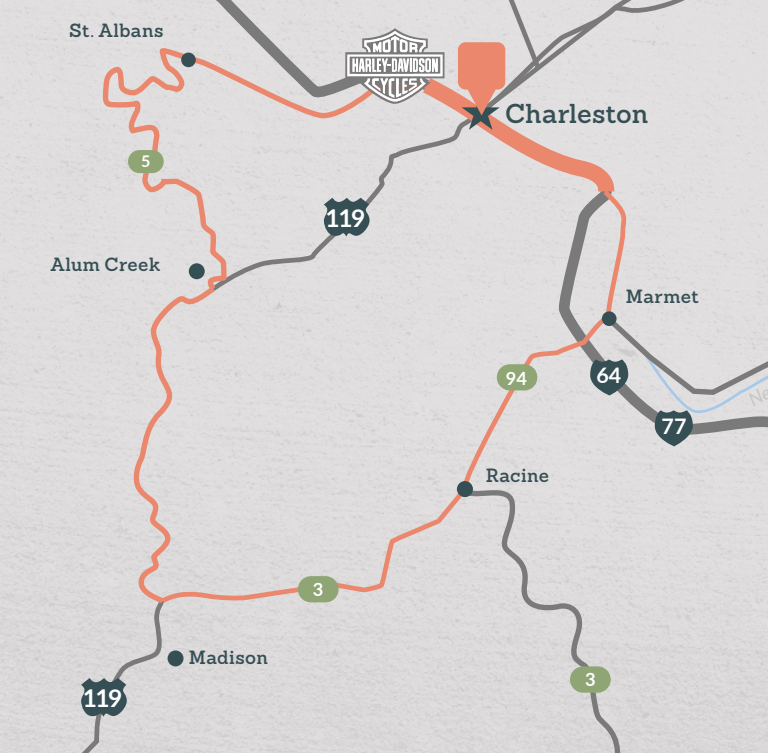
Turn left onto WV-3 S. WV-3 will lead directly into Beckley. (58.5 miles)



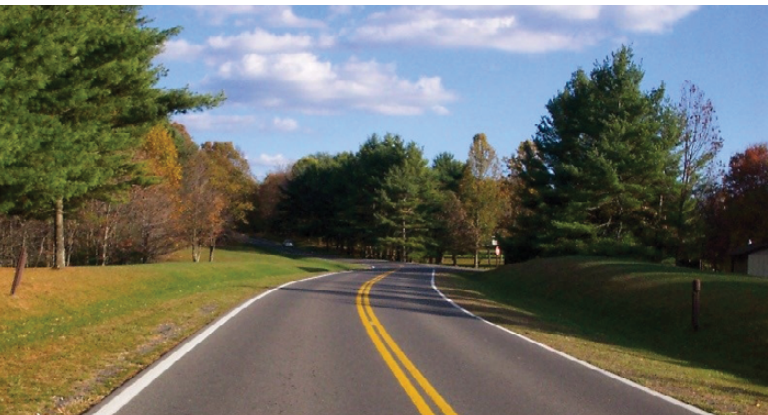
Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine

This route is spectacular for seeing new and old coal mines. Pass through small towns with walking bridges and small creeks, right by the road. There are pull-offs to take pictures of coal mines and scenic views, too. Loaded with twists and turns, WV-3 offers excellent road conditions as well.

In Whitesville, there is the Upper Big Branch Miners Memorial to honor those who were killed in the 2010 mine explosion.



This route hugs the Coal River in Southern West Virginia, then travels over mountains and through coal mining towns. It mostly consists of curving mountainous roads, but there are some four-lane highways, too. If you're seeking an off-road adventure, the Hatfield and McCoy ATV trail crosses this route. For another popular adventure, you can kayak on the Coal River.



Coal River Route

VIA ROUTE 119 & CR3

81 MILES

From Charleston, take I-64 W/US-119 S.

Merge onto US-119 S via EXIT 58A. (3.71 miles)

Take the WV-601 ramp toward So. Charleston/Davis Creek Rd. (0.23 miles)

Turn right onto WV-601/Jefferson Rd. (1.23 miles)

Turn left onto WV-601/Jefferson Rd./CR-12/Kanawha Turnpike. Slight right onto WV-601/Jefferson Rd. (0.38 miles)

Take the 1st left onto MacCorkle Ave. SW/US-60. (6.45 miles)

Take MacCorkle Ave./US-60 toward 6th St. (2.11 miles)

Turn left onto WV-817/W Main St./Old US-35. (0.8 miles)

Turn right onto CR-3/Coal River Rd. (4.65 miles)

Turn slight left onto Coal River Rd. (0.79 miles)

Turn left onto Upper Falls Rd. (2.46 miles)

Turn right onto Greenview Rd./CR-9. (3.53 miles)

Turn slight right onto Childress Rd./WV-214. (1.26 miles)

Take Childress Rd./WV-214 toward Larry Ln. (3.34 miles)

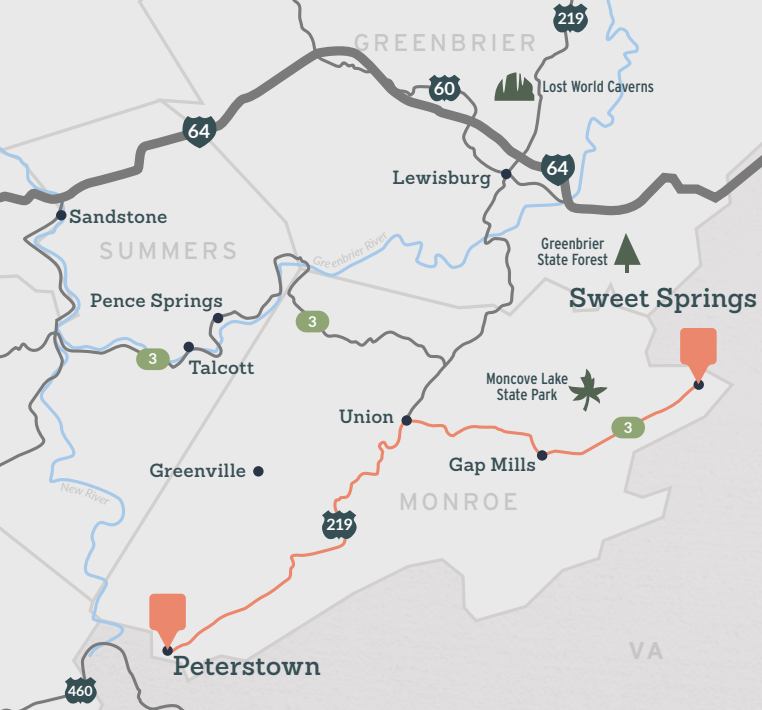
Turn left onto Alum Crk. (0.35 miles)

Turn right onto US-119 S. (13.58 miles)

Turn left onto WV-3/Rock Creek Rd. Continue to follow WV-3. (13.71 miles)

Turn slight left onto WV-94. (9.9 miles)

Merge onto I-77 N/I-64 W via the ramp on the left toward Charleston. (9.45 miles)



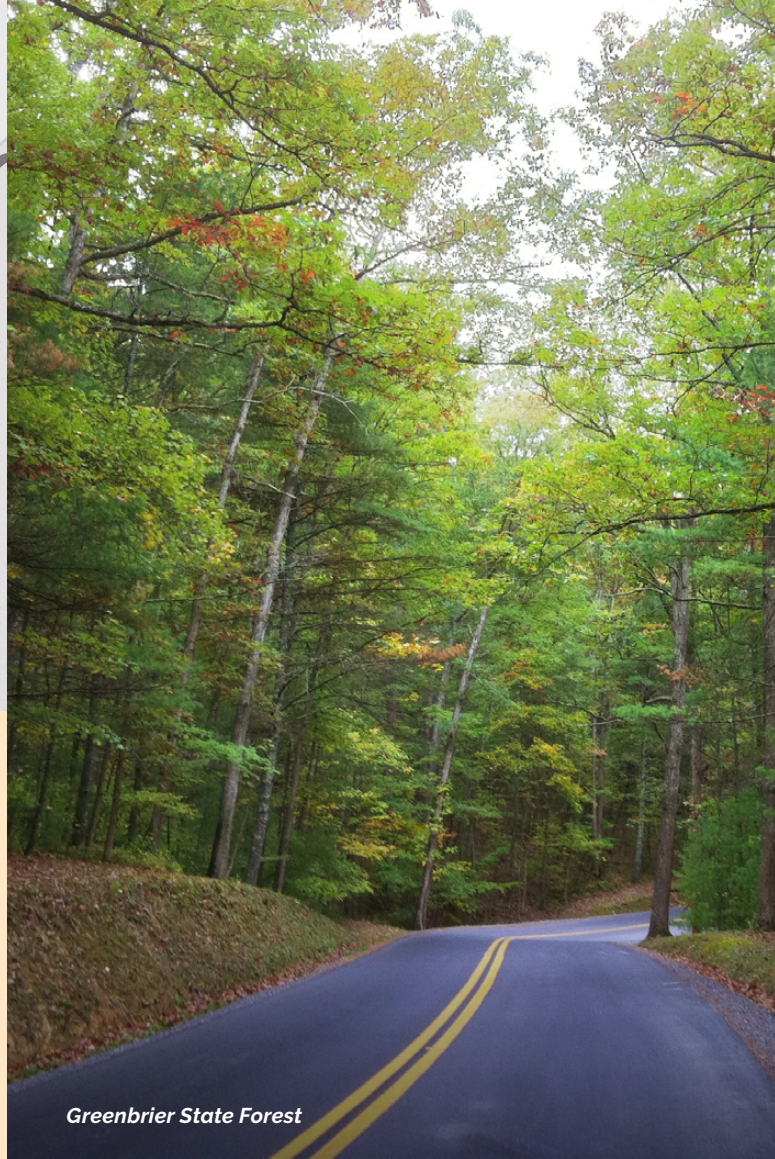
Peterstown to Sweet Springs

VIA ROUTES 219, 3 & 311

44 MILES

Begin in Peterstown, WV and head north on Rt. 219 toward Union. (24.5 mi)

In Union, turn right on Rt. 3 toward Gap Mills/Sweet Springs, WV. (19.4 mi)



Greenbrier State Forest

This scenic route passes through rolling hills, farms, mountains, and quiet, peaceful countryside. The road is well maintained with very few twists—just smooth, rolling hills. Shop along the way or pass through small, bucolic towns. Union is an ideal place to stop for a casual meal.



Coal Heritage Ride

NORTH

142 MILES

From Beckley, WV, travel I-77 N to Exit 48, Rt. 19. (3 miles, toll road)

Follow Rt. 19 N to Hico (26 miles), follow signs to Rt. 60 W.

Take Rt. 60 W to Gauley Bridge (16 miles), then to Montgomery. (11 miles)

Take Rt. 61 N to Marmet (18 miles), then Rt. 94 S to Racine. (10 miles)

From Racine take Rt. 3 E to Whitesville (18 miles), then to Glen Daniel. (27 miles)

Continue on Rt. 3 back to Beckley, WV. (13 miles)



Hawks Nest State Park

Dramatic overlooks and winding rivers make the Coal Heritage Ride a must. Travel north across the New River Gorge Bridge, the longest steel arch span in the western hemisphere and the third highest in the United States, and enjoy sweeping river views. Ride your bike over Route 60, which boasts stunning waterfalls and canyon views. Continue until you reach Kanawha Falls in Glen Ferris, where the Gauley and New rivers collide. As you travel these quality roadways, you will see many small towns that were founded in the late 1800s when coal was king.



Coal Heritage Ride

SOUTH

131 MILES

From Beckley, WV take I-77 S to Exit 42, Rt. 16. (2 miles)

Follow Rt. 16 S to Sophia (4 miles) then Rt. 54 S to Mullens. (14 miles)

Rt. 97 W to Pineville (12 miles), follow Rt. 16 S to Welch. (19 miles)

Take Rt. 52 S to Bluewell. (29 miles)

Rt. 20 N to Princeton (10 miles), follow signs to Rt. 19 N to Ghent. (26 miles)

Follow I-77 N (toll) back to Beckley, WV Exit 44. (15 miles)

Twin Falls Resort State Park

Travel over the mountain roads of the southern coal fields. Passing through Mullens, Pineville, Welch, and Keystone, you will see former boom towns. Stop at Twin Falls Resort State Park and enjoy the falls for which it is named. This is a quiet, scenic stop on Route 97 on the way to Pineville.

The town of Coalwood near Welch is the setting of the novel "Rocket Boys," the basis for the movie "October Sky." As you pass through these historic towns, note the unique architecture and brick company houses for miners. Step back in time in Bramwell and stop in Princeton to visit the Virginian Railroad Museum.



Farm Country

VIA ROUTES 219, 60, 12 & 20

111 MILES

From Princeton, WV take Rt. 460 E to Rich Creek, VA. (16 miles)

Take Rt. 219 N to Peterstown (2 miles), follow 219 N through Union to Lewisburg. (45 miles)

Take Rt. 60 W to Alta. (11 miles)

Follow Rt. 12 S to Alderson (12 miles), from Alderson, follow Rt. 3 W to Hinton.

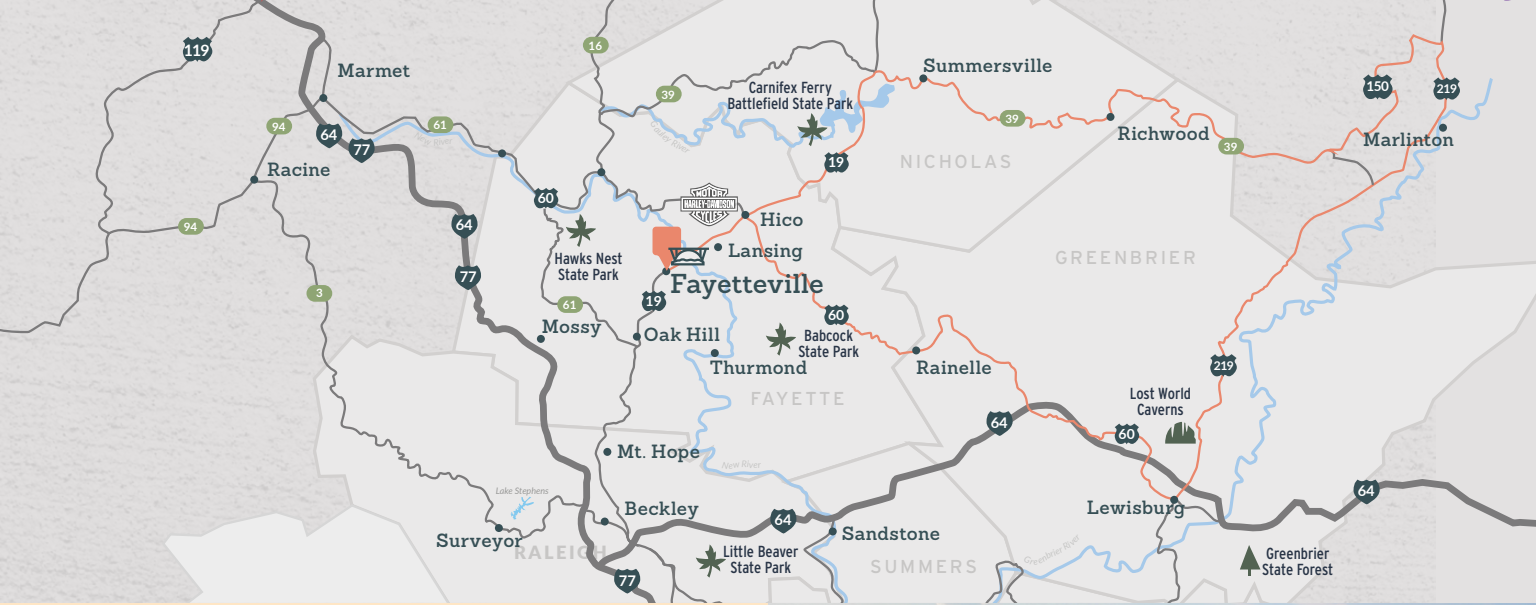
Take Rt. 20 S to Princeton, WV (25 miles), follow signs to Rt. 460.



Indian Creek Covered Bridge, Union

This ride takes you through some of the most beautiful farm country in West Virginia. Follow the ancient Seneca Trail "Warriors Trail" along Route 219 where Delaware, Seneca and Cherokee Indians lived and hunted hundreds of years before English settlers arrived. The roads are superb and the rugged, rural beauty will make you feel like you have left the real world behind you.

On Route 219, near Union, the Indian Creek covered bridge is a highlight. Historic Lewisburg is a great stop for shopping and dining. Once into Alderson on Routes 12 and 3 you will enjoy the quiet meander of the Greenbrier River. Cattle farms, corn, and hay fields dot the landscape throughout the region.



National Forest

VIA ROUTES 19, 39, 219 & 60

195 MILES

From Fayetteville, WV take Rt. 19 N to Summersville. (23 miles)

Take Rt. 39 E toward Richwood (23 miles), continue on Rt. 39 E to Cranberry Visitors Center. (23 miles)

Get on Rt. 150, Highland Scenic Highway and follow to Rt. 219 S. (23 miles)

Take Rt. 219 S to Marlinton then on to Lewisburg. (42 miles)

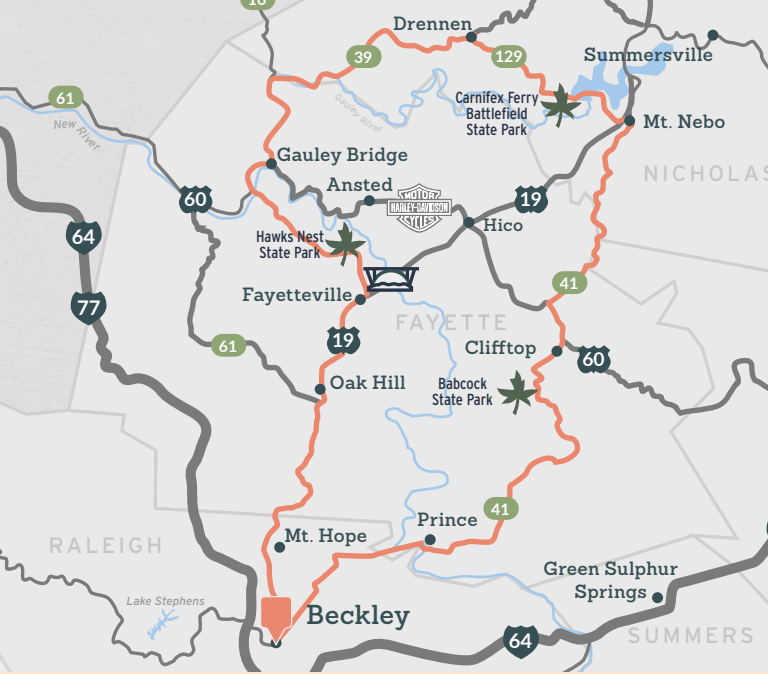
Take Rt. 60 W to Hico. (53 miles)

From Hico, take Rt. 19 S back to Fayetteville, WV. (8 miles)



New River Gorge Bridge

From a beginning elevation of 1800-feet, this ride travels through scenic plateaus and then rises to the dense forest of the Appalachian Mountains, elevation 4,545 feet. Enjoy the thrill of crossing over a 1,000 foot-deep gorge on the New River Gorge Bridge, the longest steel arch span in the western hemisphere and the third highest in the United States. Travel from Richwood to the Cranberry Glades Botanical Area, one of the most unique natural settings in North America, which showcases a northern bog climate in a southern setting. Traveling from Droop Mountain southward, a stop at Beartown State Park is in order. Descending from the highest road in West Virginia, you will enter into the lush farm country of Greenbrier County. The beauty of this area is only surpassed by the fun of riding through the rural setting.



National River

VIA ROUTES 19, 41, 129 & 16

123 MILES

From Beckley, WV take Rt. 3 E to Rt. 19 N.
(5 miles)

Follow Rt. 19 N to Rt. 41 N (3 miles), follow Rt. 41 N to Prince.
(9 miles)

Take Rt. 41 N to the junction of Rt. 41 N and Rt. 60 W.
(22 miles)

Continue on Rt. 41 N to Mt. Nebo. (16 miles)

Take Rt. 129 W to Drennen (12 miles), then Rt. 39 S to
Gauley Bridge. (20 miles)

From Gauley Bridge, take Rt. 60 E to Chimney Corner.
(5 miles)

Take Rt. 16 S to Fayetteville (9 miles), pick up Rt. 19 S to I-77 S.

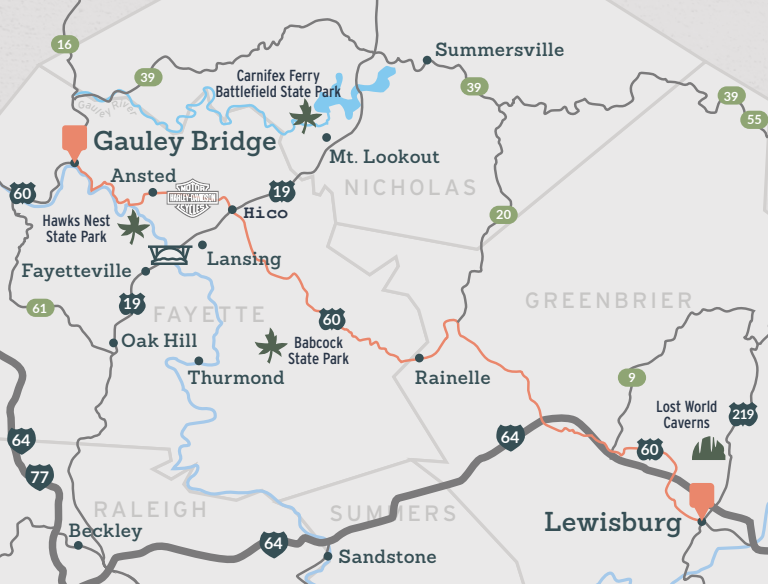
Follow I-77 S (19 miles, toll road) back to Beckley, WV, Exit 44.
(3 miles)



Summersville Lake

Travel along and across the ancient river valleys of the New River Gorge National River, Gauley River National Recreation Area, and the Meadow River. Spectacular winding roads will lead you past the C&O passenger train station in Prince, one of the last depots built for passengers along the mainline of the C&O Railroad.

The operating gristmill at Babcock State Park is one of West Virginia's most photographed spots and should be a stop on any tour through the area. Summersville Lake, the largest recreational lake in West Virginia, is home to a lighthouse, which offers stunning views of the lake and the Gauley River National Recreation Area from the top. The Gauley River is known worldwide for its raging whitewater rapids. And don't forget Cathedral Falls on Route 60; this waterfall is a much-stop photo opportunity.



Hairpin Adventure

VIA MIDLAND TRAIL US RT. 60

103 MILES

At Charleston (MM 59) access Rt. 60/Midland Trail East. (I-64 Exit 99)

Glen Ferris waterfalls (MM 92). (32 miles)

Gauley Bridge Cathedral Falls (MM 97). (5 miles)

Gauley Mountain/Hawks Nest/Ansted (MM 102). (5 miles—89 curves)

Hico (MM 110) Babcock Park (MM 120). (18 miles)

Top of Sewell Mountain. (MM 126) (6 miles—80 curves)

Bottom of Sewell Mountain/Rainelle. (MM 131) (5 miles—76 curves)

Sam Black Church, (MM 146), 15 miles; or Lewisburg (MM162). (31 miles)

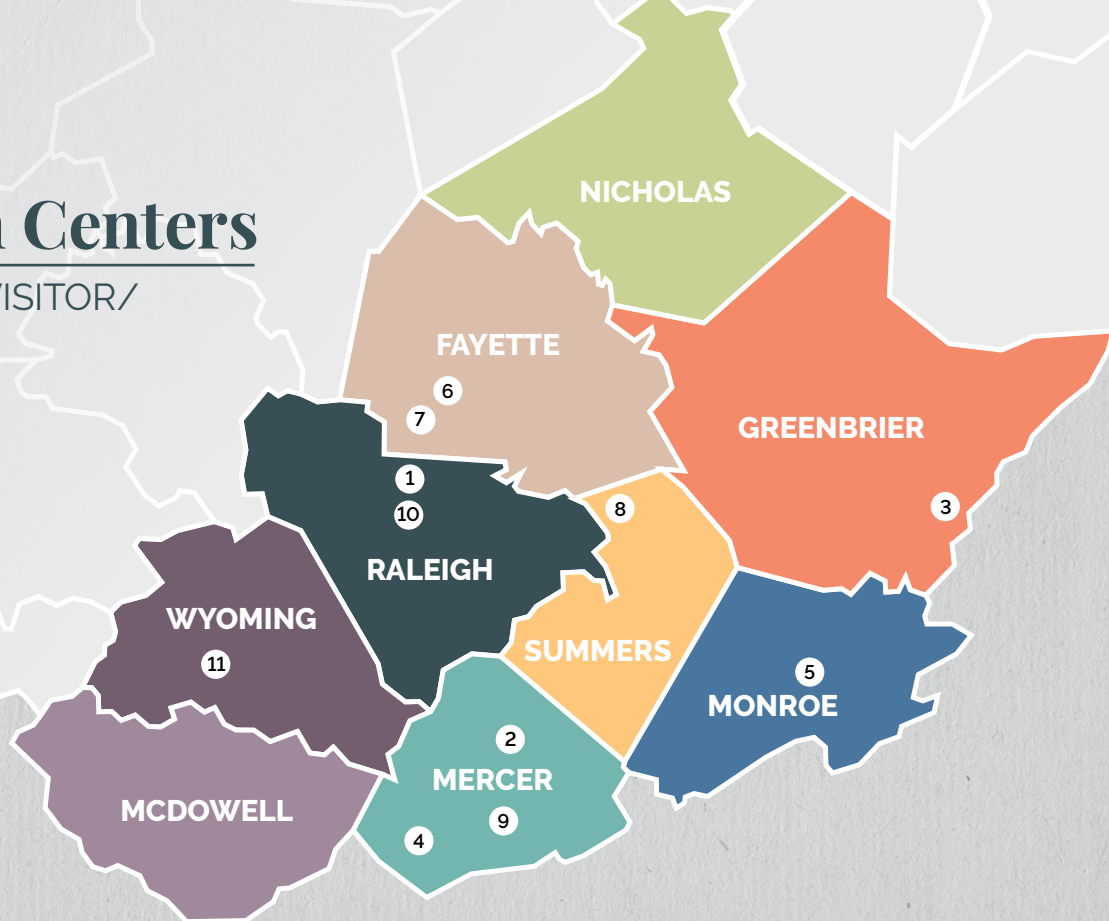
Total: Charleston to Sam BC 87 miles; to Lewisburg. (103 miles)

Waterfalls, beautiful vistas, and over 245 curves abound on historic US Route 60, one of America's oldest highways. Dubbed Midland Trail National Scenic Highway, Route 60 stretches 180 miles across WV's mid-section and is marked with mile markers (MM) west to east. Jump on at Charleston's state capitol (MM59).

Adventure begins just before Glen Ferris (MM 92-97), where 12 seasonal waterfalls line the roadside. At Gauley Bridge's photogenic Cathedral Falls, begin the curvy, scenic climb up Gauley Mountain. Sway around 89 curves (including many hairpins) in the five-mile trek to the top where Ansted's Hawks Nest offers breathtaking views of the New River Gorge (elevation: 2,546 feet). Don't be fooled by the straight-away respite near Hico; continue east for another 156 twists and turns as Route 60 snakes across Sewell Mountain (elevation: 3,211 feet)!

Information Centers

CONVENTION AND VISITOR/
TOURISM BUREAUS



1 Beckley Travel Plaza
Exit 45 on I-77 (WV Turnpike)
500 Van Kirk Dr., Beckley
304.256.6695

2 Bluestone Travel Plaza
I-77 northbound
(WV Turnpike)
Milepost 18 NB
304.384.7534

**3 I-64 Westbound
Information
Welcome Center**
White Sulphur Springs
304.536.4553

4 Mercer County CVB
621 Commerce St., Bluefield
304.325.8438 or
800.221.3206
visitmercercounty.com

5 Monroe Tourism
261 Health Center Dr., Union
304.772.3003 x15
travelmonroe.com

**6 New River Gorge
CVB & Visitors Center
Information Center**
310 W Oyler Ave., Oak Hill
304.465.5617 or
800.927.0263
visitnewrivergorge.net
officialbridgeday.com

**7 New River Gorge
National River Canyon
Rim Visitors Center**
162 Visitor Center Rd.,
Lansing.
304.574.2115 | nps.gov/neri

**8 New River Gorge National
River Sandstone
Visitors Center**
Exit 139 on I-64,
330 Meadow Creek Rd.,
Sandstone
304.466.0417 | nps.gov/neri



**9 West Virginia Tourist
Information Center**
Intersection of I-77 & Rt. 460,
Princeton | 304.487.2214

**10 Visit Southern
West Virginia**
1408 Harper Rd., Beckley
304.252.2244 or 800.VISIT.WV
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11 Wyoming County CVB
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5 Often Overlooked Ways to Stay Safe Motorcycling in WV

1. KNOW WEST VIRGINIA'S MOTORCYCLE LAWS

When driving in West Virginia, make sure you have all of the necessary and required safety gear: eye protection, a helmet, and a working headlight (even in the daytime). You can't carry a passenger unless your motorcycle is designed to carry another person, with a seat meant for two or an additional passenger car, and a footrest for the second rider.

2. BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR WILDLIFE

When riding through mountain areas, keep an eye out for animals. Deer often dash into the road, and stop in fear when headlights shine on them. They tend to travel in herds, so if you see one, there are probably more nearby. DO NOT brake or swerve at high speeds. That will make your bike more unstable, and you could lose control, or swerve right into oncoming traffic or another obstacle.

3. WATCH THE WINDS

Our mountain roads are curvy. Seriously curvy. Think you get that? No. Curvier. Much curvier than you're thinking.

If the road twists ahead of you and you can't see around the corner, ease up on the brakes. Sometimes what looks like a simple curve is actually a sharp turn that keeps on looping and looping around the mountain terrain. Be ready and don't accelerate until you can see the road stretching back out ahead of you.

4. WATCH FOR COAL TRUCKS

Mountain roads tend to be small in order to reduce the impact on the natural surroundings, which sometimes leaves barely enough room for two cars to pass. Some lanes might be tight for just one vehicle!

On one-lane roads, remain extra cautious, because large coal trucks might be heading toward you, taking up most of the road. They're bulkier than you, so stay out of their way. Anticipate them around every curve.

5. BE CAUTIOUS OF GRAVEL

Those large coal trucks can cause you trouble even if they're not around. They leave gravel and debris on the road that make for a bumpy ride, so keep your eyes on what's ahead of you.

Got it? You're ready for a scenic and thrilling ride in the hills of southern West Virginia!



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114 Dry Hill Road
Beckley, WV 25801



304.252.8661
125 Hylton Lane
Beckley, WV 25801



304.252.0671
1939 Harper Road
Beckley WV 25801



304.520.0156
1001 S. Eisenhower Drive
Beckley WV 25801



304.913.5101
107 Halls Ridge Road
Princeton, WV 24740



304.425.2200
111 Halls Ridge Road
Princeton, WV 24740



304.487.6101
135 Ambrose Lane
Princeton, WV 24739



304.325.6170
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