

WV TOUR 1 - PART A : GUIDE

1. Begin in Berkeley Springs. Visit the springs in downtown at the park. When you are ready to ride, find Rt 9 West (just a few blocks north of the springs). As you start up the first hill, watch for the Berkeley Springs Castle on your right. It's a famous landmark. Continue west on Rt 9 another couple of miles and watch for the turnout to the right for Panorama Peak. Nice overlook where you can look across the Potomac River to Maryland and (on a very clear day) Pennsylvania.
2. After about 20 miles, you will come to a stop sign and "T" intersection with Rt 9. (OPTIONAL SIDETRIP - The town of PawPaw is just a couple of miles to the north - WATCH YOUR SPEED COMING DOWN THE HILL INTO TOWN!!) Turn left (south) and follow Rt 29 to the next intersection, turning right (west) and continuing on Rt 29 to Slanesville. On the right, there is a gas station/grocery store. Turn right onto Slanesville Pike (CR3) and follow it through old farms and small towns. Pass through Points and go to Springfield. There, turn left (south) on Rt 28 to Romney. Just as you are entering Romney, note the Potomac Highland Railroad on the right. They offer rides throughout the year, and are very popular for leaf-peepers in the fall.
3. Romney is a good spot to eat and fill your gas tanks. Head out of town on Rt 50 East about 12 miles to Hanging Rock. There, turn right (south) on Rt 29. Enjoy the scenery of old farms and scenic mountain ridges as you pass through Delray and Rio on your way to Baker. (OPTIONAL SIDETRIP - At Baker, take OLD 2-lane Rt 55 east to Wardensville. It's about 10 scenic miles and there are a few gas stations and restaurants there)
4. At Baker, take OLD Rt 55 West (2-lane) toward Moorefield. You will parallel the new 4-lane and even pass under/over a couple of times. Old Rt 55 comes out in the old downtown section of Moorefield. (OPTIONAL - If you want food and/or lodging, turn right on Rt 220 north for about a mile and you will come to the "new strip" with restaurants and a nice hotel - South Branch Inn - just north of the 4-lane).
5. At Moorefield, turn left (west) on Rt 220/28 toward Petersburg. There are several gas stations and restaurants (fast food) in Petersburg. I would recommend filling your gas tank here. At the stoplight in downtown, turn right and follow Rt 28 up the hill and straight out of town toward Seneca Rocks. If you are ready to stop for the night, Fort Hill Motel is on Rt 28 as you leave town, just a mile or so past Sheetz Gas. Nothing fancy, but decent rooms for a reasonable fee.
6. At Seneca Rocks, visit the Discovery Center located just past the 3-way intersection and to the left. If you have time (allow 1-1/2 to 2 hours unless you are a marathon runner), hike the well-maintained trail up to the top. At the main intersection, try Harpers Front Porch Restaurant for a nice view of the rocks while you eat outside on the porch.
7. (OPTIONAL) If you are ready to stop for the day and are camping, Seneca Shadows Campground is just a mile south on Rt 28 and to the right. Watch for a very small sign. State maintained and very clean.
8. Continue south on Rt 28 to Riverton. (OPTIONAL SIDETRIP - ALLOW 45 MIN to 1 HOUR- If you would like a very scenic ride up on a ridge to see the cemetery where John Dahle - namesake of Dolly Sods - is buried, take the Germany Valley road CR9 at Riverton about 1 mile and watch for Horse Ridge Road on the right. It's narrow, but paved with some chip-seal and fine gravel in spots, but easily manageable if you take your time. After about a mile or two, the road forks - bear to the left. Follow this narrow winding road out another 2-3 miles or so and you will come to a historical marker on the right. After reading the marker, you may want to hike straight up the hillside (semi-steep) about 250 yards to the tree line. The cemetery is at the edge of the woods. John Dahle's gravestone is next to an old tree. Return to Rt 28 the way you came in. Just before you go down the last steep hill on Horseback Road, stop and enjoy the view straight ahead of the rock formation, and of Germany Valley to your right.)

9. (ANOTHER OPTIONAL SIDETRIP - SHOULD BE MANDATORY - ALLOW 1 HOUR) About a mile south of Riverton, watch on the right for signs to Spruce Knob, the highest point in West Virginia. Gateway Restaurant is at the junction and is a good landmark. Meals are OK, but nothing special. Follow Briery Gap Road up the mountain a couple of miles to the first fork in the road - bear left. Road narrows a bit. Continue another mile or two and bear right as the road suddenly narrows quite a bit. This next part was gravel until just a couple of years ago. Take your time and allow for vehicles approaching on your side going around blind corners. At the top of the mountain (about 12 miles from the main highway) you will see the intersection and turnoff to the right for Spruce Knob Summit (NOT SPRUCE KNOB LAKE). Follow this another 2 miles to the parking lot. There is a 5-minute hike to the observation tower. ALSO - It's a good photo op to take a photo of your bike in front of the sign at the entrance to the parking lot. Return down the mountain the way you came up. As you start down, pull off at the turnoff/scenic view for another view east toward Virginia.

10. At the Gateway Restaurant, continue south on Rt 28/33 to Judy Gap. After about 2 miles, watch for the turnoff on the right for Rt 28 to continue south. (YET ANOTHER OPTIONAL SIDETRIP - ALLOW 20 MINUTES - Continue on Rt 33 east toward Franklin. The road climbs a steep mountain and becomes very twisty with good pavement. When you reach the top, turn and come back. Less than a mile from the summit westbound is a turnoff with one of the greatest views in the state - Germany Valley)

11. At Judy Gap, continue south on Rt 28 past Circleville and Cherry Grove. Enjoy the nice road and scenery. When you meet up with Rt 250, bear to the right (actually almost going straight) and continue to Bartow. At Bartow, there is a good restaurant, gas, and a hotel if you're ready to stop for the day.

12. At this point, your cell phones will have no signal for about the next 40 miles. South of Boyer about 10 miles is the National Radio Observatory at Green Bank. No cell phone towers - No wifi - nothing that can cause radio interference. Enjoy it!! The Radio Observatory is a must-see. There is a free visitor center, and free bus rides back by the huge dishes. Allow an hour or more for this.

13. (OPTIONAL SIDETRIP - Just south of Green Bank and the Radio Observatory, watch for State Rt 66 to turn to the right toward Cass. At Cass, they have old coal/steam locomotives that used to haul timber out of the mountains, now converted to haul passengers up to the top of the mountain. Even if you don't take the ride, the old train station is neat to see. They also have a diner there with burgers and other quick meals.) Return back to Rt 28 south.

14. South of Green Bank, watch for Rt 92 to cut off to the left. If you miss it, don't worry - Rt 28 will meet up with the route again soon. Follow Rt 92 south to Minnehaha Springs and turn right (west) to continue on Rt 92 into Marlinton. This is a small town with just a couple of restaurants and limited lodging, so call ahead.

CONTINUED ON WV TOUR 1 - PART B