

## WV TOUR 1 - PART B : GUIDE

1. (OPTIONAL SIDETIP - ALLOW 1 HOUR+ : Cranberry Wilderness Scenic Highway. From Marlinton, head north on Rt 219 about 5 miles and watch for Rt 150 / Cranberry Wilderness Scenic Highway to the left. This road loops around counterclockwise through some high, scenic vistas and is especially colorful in the fall. You will eventually end up back on Rt 39, where you turn left onto Rt 39 East back into Marlinton)
2. From Marlinton, head south on Rt 219. After about 12 miles, watch for signs to Droop Mountain Battlefield. This was a historic Civil War Battle, and there are tours and a visitor center. Continue south on Rt 219 through Renick and lots of scenic farmland and forests. There is a great view to your left as you come down the last mountain into Lewisburg, but not many places to pull over.
3. At Lewisburg, there are dozens of restaurants and hotels. This is the last big town for quite a while, so if you're hungry, you had better eat now. Be aware that in the fall, this is a "headquarters" for leaf-peepers so hotels may be limited. Also, watch in late summer and you can catch the WV State Fair here.
4. Continue south on Rt 219 to Ronceverte (with an optional sidetrip to Organ Cave if you like that). At Ronceverte, take Rt 63 west toward Alderson, then catch Rt 3/12 along the Greenbrier River west toward Talcott. When the two routes split, stay on Rt 3 into Hinton.
5. After crossing the New River at Hinton, follow Rt 20 south toward Princeton. You will pass the Pipestem and Bluestone recreational areas. Follow Rt 20 through Princeton and continue west until you meet Rt 52 just north of Bluefield. (OPTIONAL - If you are stopping for the night, Bluefield has several hotels and restaurants, but they are spread out around town)
6. At Rt 52, head north just a mile or two and watch for Pinnacle Rock on the left. Nice scenic landmark. Continuing north on Rt 52 another mile or two, watch for the turnoff to Bramwell on the left. This was once the "richest town in America", with all of the coal barons building expensive mansions here. The old train depot is also a museum. Interesting bit of history.
7. Continue on Rt 52 for a winding ride to Welch. This is coal country(!) so watch for trucks who think they own the road. Just remember - they weigh 50X what you and your bike weigh. Pull off and let them pass if you need.
8. (OPTIONAL SIDETRIP - ALLOW 1 - 2 HOURS - At Welch, head south on Rt 16 down a VERY winding road about 6 - 8 miles to the turnoff for Coalwood. If you watched the movie "Rocket Boys", this is the actual town where they grew up. Coalwood high school is nearly in ruins, half-hidden in the forest, but several other landmarks are still there. NOTE - The movie was not filmed here, so you will not see familiar sights. However, the general layout is easily understood. )
9. At Welch, follow Rt 16 north for a fun, winding ride to Pineville. On the outskirts of Pineville, you will turn right/east onto Rt 10/16. After about 8 miles, you will reach the town of Itmann. Stop and explore the old company store where the coal miners shopped years ago. The historical marker gives a lot of useful information. Then, continue until the road splits, taking Rt 16 into Mullens. Although this town at first appears to be deserted and dead, there are several businesses downtown, including Kountry Kitchen, a great - and very clean - diner.
10. After crossing the railroad tracks in Mullens, turn right and continue on Rt 16 north toward Beckley. Rt 16 is one of the popular riding routes in southern West Virginia. Beckley is a major town, offering dozens of restaurants, hotels, and motorcycle shops for repairs. Great place to spend the night if you are ready to stop.
11. In the middle of Beckley, watch for Rt 19 north and follow that as it turns into 4-lane for about 20 miles to Fayetteville. This is a major headquarters for whitewater rafting in West Virginia, so call ahead for lodging.

12. (OPTIONAL SIDETRIP - New River Gorge Bridge and Old Route: Continue up Rt 19 north just a few miles and you will cross what was, at one time, the largest single arch bridge in the world. After you cross, there is a turnoff for the visitor center on the north side. Great views of the bridge from nearby boardwalks. You can also buy a ticket to go out on the catwalk under the bridge if you aren't bothered by heights. After this, go back out to the 4-lane and go north about 1/4 mile and turn right on Lansing Edmond Road. Follow this road about 1/4 mile and watch for Fayette Station Road to the right. This very narrow lane (paved) turns into 1-way and you start your descent to the river. There are several pull-offs along the way with great views and informational plaques. Eventually, you will reach the old bridge where you can park and walk out to enjoy a fabulous view of the new bridge above. Once a year, on the anniversary of the bridge opening, they close the bridge to all traffic and allow BASE jumping. It attracts thousands of people each year to watch hundreds take the dive from nearly 1,000 feet above. After the bridge, the road slowly climbs and winds its way back out to the 4-lane Rt 19. Fayetteville is just south of where you are now sitting.)