

WV TOUR 1 - PART C: GUIDE

1. From Fayetteville, enjoy the scenic and curvy Rt 16 as it meanders north toward the New River. After passing over the New River, you will meet up with Rt 60 shortly.
2. (OPTIONAL SIDETRIP - ALLOW 30 MINUTES - If you turn right/east on Rt 60 just a few miles, you will reach the overlook at Hawks Nest State Park. There is a small parking lot. The overlook is just a short walk - maybe 100 meters. One of the iconic overlooks in West Virginia.)
3. At Rt 60, turn left/west and continue to Gauley Bridge. WATCH YOUR SPEED AS YOU ENTER TOWN! The Gauley Bridge Police Dept strictly enforces the speed limits. There is a nice view of the confluence of the Gauley River and the New River to form the Kanawha River, which flows through the capital city of Charleston.
4. At the town of Gauley Bridge, turn north on Rt 39. If you're low on gas, you may want to top off as there are not many stops between here and Summersville about 30 miles away. Rt 39 is a challenging road in places with sharp curves and hills. Watch for fine gravel in corners as there are many large trucks on this road.
5. At Summersville, there are dozens of restaurants and several gas stations. Again - WATCH YOUR SPEED! Summersville was infamous not too long ago for being voted the speed-trap capitol of the USA! Really! I would recommend topping off with gas as stations are few and far between the next hour or two.
6. On the north side of Summersville, by the Lowes and Go-Mart gas station, turn right/east on Rt 41 toward Craigsville and Camden-On-Gauley. Shortly before Craigsville, you will meet up with Rt 55 east. In Craigsville, watch for Rt 20 north-east. Get ready for some very desolate, curvy, and scenic views on Rt 20 from here to Webster Springs.
7. In Webster Springs, if you need gas, turn right when you get to the stop downtown. There is a Go-Mart just around the court house. No bathrooms though!?!? Otherwise, turn left and continue north on Rt 20. After you pass the small town of Diana, the road start getting very interesting. The next 35-40 miles are some of the best riding in West Virginia - lots of curves and (as of 2015), very good pavement. DO WATCH for fine gravel in corners from the large trucks. And, if you get stuck behind a large truck, pull off and take a break, because passing spots are very rare the next 35-40 miles. Nothing worse than following a large truck 10MPH up the mountains for an hour.
8. About 8-10 miles north of Diana, just before you get to Hacker Valley, watch for an old light-brown trailer with "Rella's Diner" signs right by the road. Rella is a feisty great-grandma who makes home-made pies and good home-cooked meals out of an old trailer 7 days a week. She welcomes riders. We've had up to 60 riders meet there for ride&eats. Save room for pie!
9. Continue on Rt 20 north through some GREAT riding about 20 miles to Rock Cave. At the 3-way intersection, bear right and continue on Rt 20 north into Buckhannon. Just past the downtown and by the junction with Rt 33 is a new Sheetz gas station with good, quick food. Easy in and out.
10. Continue north on Rt 20 from Buckhannon about 6 - 8 miles, just past Hodgesville, and watch for Rt 119 to turn off to the right. Follow Rt 119 into Philippi. In Philippi, be sure to stop and see the historic covered bridge, site of the first land battle in the Civil War. The bridge was almost completely destroyed around 1990 when a gasoline tanker spilled fuel and it ignited. Careful restoration work for several years using traditional tools and materials preserved the bridge for years to come.

11. Pass through Philippi (you may have to take the bypass loop), and continue on Rt 250 south about 5 miles. Just past the Phillipi Inn (older hotel and restaurant), watch for Rt 38 to turn off on the left. (If you get to the straightaway with the high school, you went a mile too far). Follow Rt 38 through scenic farmland and forests for about 7 - 8 miles. Be sure to stop at the old iron furnace at Valley Furnace. At the stop sign, turn left and go about 100 meters, then turn right to continue on Rt 38. After about 15 miles, you will come to a stop sign at Rt 72.
12. At Rt 72, turn right and go south to Parsons. Once again, WATCH YOUR SPEED! Parsons strictly enforces its 25-MPH limits. Stop at the Sheetz gas station for gas and food, and walk across the street to view the very nice Veterans' Memorial. It is quite a memorial, and especially for such a small town!
13. At the Sheetz, turn onto Rt 219 and pass by the court house downtown. Continue on Rt 219 north-east to Thomas. At the stop sign in Thomas, turn right onto Rt 32 south-east to Davis, just about 5 miles away. Continue past the Rt 93 turnoff about 1 mile and watch for the sign to Blackwater Falls. Follow the road back about 2 miles to the visitor center. From there, you can park and hike down about 300 steps to a great view of this iconic landmark of West Virginia. When you are done, return to the main road, turn left about a mile, and turn on Rt 93 east.
14. Rt 93 follows a high-elevation plateau through Canaan Valley (pronounced kuh-nane). After passing the Mt Storm Lake power plant, the road ends at a large gas station/convenience store and the junction with Rt 42. Here, you can see the progress made on the Corridor H 4-lane that will eventually connect I-79 (at Weston) with I-81 (near Winchester VA). Turn right and (carefully) enjoy the winding curves as the road descends down the steep mountain. I often turn around at the bottom and ride up&down again as this is one of my favorite stretches of road in WV.
15. Finally, enjoy Rt 42 south through old farmland and forests as you finish the route to Petersburg. You can stay in Petersburg (I recommend the Fort Hill Hotel - simple, nothing fancy, pretty clean) and rest so that tomorrow you can head out in any direction exploring or simply going home. Hope you enjoyed the past 3 days!