



Moon Blue Ridge Parkway Road Trip: Including Shenandoah & Great Smoky Mountains National Parks (Moon Handbooks)

By Jason Frye

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This full-color guide to road tripping along the Blue Ridge Parkway includes vibrant photos and helpful planning maps.

The Blue Ridge Parkway through Virginia and North Carolina draws visitors from all over the world, taking them from the majesty of the Great Smoky Mountains in North Carolina to the splendor of Shenandoah National Park in Virginia and offering stunning vistas, excellent hiking, and charming communities between. Experience them all with *Moon Blue Ridge Parkway Road Trip* as your guide.

Detailed driving instructions tell you how far you'll have to drive, how long it will take, and which highways you'll need to follow—including information on alternate routes and the best places to stop along the way.

Day-by-day itinerary suggestions tell you the best ways to spend your time:

The 10-Day Blue Ridge Parkway Road Trip

A Day in Shenandoah National Park

A Day in Stone Mountain State Park

A Day in Blowing Rock, NC

A Day in Asheville, NC

A Day in Great Smoky Mountain National Park

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Though **Jason Frye** calls the coast of North Carolina home, his heart is with the mountains. Born and raised in the rugged Appalachian foothills in southern West Virginia, he developed an affinity for hiking and exploring the woods, coves, and hollows of the hills. His family vacationed in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, deepening his love for this landscape with each visit.

Jason first encountered the Blue Ridge Parkway on a dark night, en route to the beach, when his family briefly followed this two-lane ribbon of highway across the Virginia mountains. Though the detour onto the Parkway lasted less than an hour, he knew he wanted to explore it further. In his 20s, he followed the Blue Ridge Parkway through Virginia, even continuing onto Skyline Drive for an *X-Files*-inspired road trip. When he moved to North Carolina, he discovered the beauty of the southern end of this drive. To this day, he takes the Blue Ridge Parkway any time he gets the chance.

Jason is the author of two Moon guidebooks—*Moon North Carolina* and *Moon North Carolina Coast*. He also contributes to *Salt* magazine, *AAA Go!*, *Our State* and *Our State Eats* food blog, the *Wilmington StarNews*—where he is a features contributor and dining critic—the *Raleigh News and Observer*, the *Charlotte Observer*, the blog of Virgin Atlantic Airlines, and a number of other print and online publications.

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From *Moon Blue Ridge Parkway Road Trip*

The Blue Ridge Parkway is a 469-mile ridge-riding ribbon that runs from Great Smoky Mountains National Park to Shenandoah National Park in Virginia. Along the way are opportunities for a multitude of recreational activities, including hiking, rafting, kayaking, as well as calmer strolls around stately historical sites. If you're road tripping from Knoxville to Washington DC, here's some ways to enjoy all the outdoor adventures the Great Smoky Mountains have to offer.

- **Newfound Gap Road:** Bisecting the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, the 33-mile drive offers plenty of long-distance views, short hikes, and streamside driving.
- **Andrews Bald:** Hike to one of the prettiest high-altitude meadows in the Smokies.
- **Catalooches:** Camping in this secluded valley with Milky Way views is bliss—and driving through isn't half bad either.
- **Hen Wallow Falls Trail:** An easy out-and-back day hike to a beautiful waterfall.
- **Cades Cove:** Cades Cove offers plenty of wildlife viewing and the largest collection of intact historic structures in the park.
- **Rick Mountain:** Hike up, up, up in the hills for gorgeous views of Cades Cove.
- **Dollywood:** Ride roller coasters and get a taste of southern Appalachian music, history, and culture at this theme park owned by a country music legend.
- **East Tennessee History Center:** Learn about the history and culture of Tennessee foothills at this downtown Knoxville landmark.
- **Knoxville Museum of Art:** This Tennessee marble building is filled with impressive contemporary pieces, including works by artists native to the city and region.

- **Tennessee Theatre:** The official state theater of Tennessee is an architectural marvel.

As you pull into the Shenandoah Valley, you'll find memorable places of both human and natural historical interest.

- **National Air and Space Museum:** Showcasing the crowning achievements of U.S. aeronautics, this museum displays everything from the *Wright Flyer* to space suits and artifacts from the Apollo missions.
- **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum:** This moving memorial illustrates the rise of Nazi Germany and the atrocities perpetrated upon European Jews and other ethnic and social groups during World War II.
- **Arlington National Cemetery:** The second oldest National Cemetery contains the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the gravesite of JFK, and monuments, memorials, and headstones marking major events in our history.
- **Manassas Battlefield National Park:** The site of two bloody battles during the Civil War, this battlefield is the place where General "Stonewall" Jackson earned his nickname and the Confederate army earned two early victories and opened the way for a Southern invasion of Northern territory.
- **Hogback Mountain Overlook:** From here you can spot 11 bends of the Shenandoah River and mountains as far as you can see.
- **Luray Caverns:** Just west of Skyline Drive, these caverns were discovered in the 1870s and found to contain human bone fragments embedded in a stalagmite. Today, more than 500,000 people tour the caves annually.
- **Mary's Rock Trail:** A moderate trail leads to a beautiful rock outcrop with sweeping views of the countryside.
- **Dark Hollow Falls Trail:** This short trail leads you to a beautiful 70-foot waterfall just off Skyline Drive.

Users Review

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Shirley Kistner:

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