

Piedmont Pathways

Day Rides & Sunday Drives From Culpeper, Virginia

Which way do you want to go?

When you're touring the central Piedmont,
you'll soon discover it doesn't matter.

A good ride awaits you in any direction.

The perfect ride begins and ends in Culpeper, Virginia, where you'll find history, art, antiques, and exceptional shopping and dining. Beautiful countryside, farms, and wineries surround our vibrant town. Walk the streets on a tour of historic landmarks and learn what really happened when the Rebels and the Yanks rode in to town. When you're ready to roll, you can't go wrong no matter which way you go.

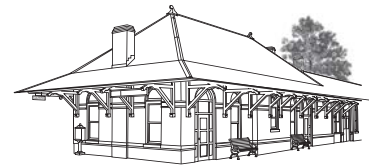
- A Quiet Ride Through History - Turn south and east from Culpeper and follow many of the same trails made famous by Confederate and Union troops as they fought for position in the eastern theater of the Civil War.
- Challenging Hills and Thrills - Roads to the north and west offer tighter curves and bigger thrills as the hills rise to meet the Blue Ridge Mountains. Stop by a country store for provisions and set up a picnic lunch along one of the lesser traveled sections of the renowned Skyline Drive.
- The Perfect Place for Your Charity Ride or Rally - Cruise Culpeper's quiet, tree-lined streets and relax in our rider-friendly lodging, from intimate bed-and-breakfast inns to hotels suitable for regional events.

This guide provides a glimpse of what you'll find cruising the central Piedmont. Whatever direction you turn, whatever road you seek, the perfect ride begins and ends in Culpeper.

The Department of Tourism would like to thank Culpeper native, Dale Coyner, author of *Motorcycle Journeys Through The Appalachians*, for his enthusiasm and expertise in developing this guide.

www.dalecoyner.com

Historic Downtown Culpeper



Culpeper Department of Tourism
www.visitculpeperva.com

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Since colonial times, Culpeper has been a center of commerce for the Piedmont. During the Civil War, its strategic location assured it would play a major role. Confederate and Union troops moved constantly through the area, resulting in skirmishes that were often the precursor to larger battles.

This tour follows many of the roads used by troops as they maneuvered for position before and after the battles of Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Wilderness and Brandy Station. It is a shorter route than others, allowing you ample time to visit the many markers and memorials along the way.

Follow VA 3 east out of Culpeper past Mount Pony, a hilltop used throughout the war by scouts for signaling and monitoring the movement of enemy troops. During the Cold War, the Federal Reserve built a facility for holding currency reserves to replenish the American economy in case of nuclear attack. Today the facility houses the Library of Congress National Audio-Visual Conservation Center.

VA Route 3 was originally a stagecoach route from Fredericksburg to the Blue Ridge. The journey to Stevensburg marked about one day's passage along the route and thus became a popular stopover for travelers. It also had a reputation as a center for many vices earning the nickname "Wicked Bottom." During the winter of 1863-1864, the Union Army hunkered down in the hills here between Brandy Station and Stevensburg to wait out the foul weather before the war campaign resumed in the spring.

Some sections of Route 3 are referred to as "Plank Road," due to an early road construction technique. Rainy weather made early roads nearly impassable, especially for heavy wagons. Timber planks were laid across the road, creating a solid road foundation for wagons and other heavy vehicles. Today you'll find Route 3 has broad turns and long straights that make you feel like you're floating on a magic carpet.

At Wilderness, turn right on VA 20 and make your way south for about two miles, then turn left on Hill Ewell Road. This approach brings you through some of the back country contested in the Battle of Wilderness. This was the opening of the definitive and final Union campaign led by Ulysses Grant. The battle was a tactical draw, but Grant did something no other Union general had done. Instead of pulling back and waiting for a new Confederate advance, he gathered his troops and began a relentless

push toward Richmond. This action ultimately led to the Confederate surrender at Appomattox.

At Orange Plank Road (VA 621) turn left. At the intersection with Route 3, turn right and continue east toward Chancellorsville where a battle took place that changed the course of the war.

In this fight, from April 30 to May 6, 1863, Lee's Army of Northern Virginia of roughly 60,000 men outmaneuvered and divided a vastly larger Union force of more than 130,000 troops, forcing them to retreat in a humiliating defeat. The significant Confederate victory was tempered by the wounding of General Stonewall Jackson, Robert E. Lee's most trusted and competent field general. Scouting along Orange Plank Road at night, Jackson was hit by friendly fire and his arm was amputated as a result. Jackson contracted pneumonia and died on May 10th. Ask a park ranger at the Chancellorsville visitor center for directions to Ellwood where Jackson's arm is buried in the family cemetery.

From Chancellorsville, turn left onto VA 610, Elys Ford Road, then right onto VA 620, Edwards Shop Road. Both roads will treat you to a roller coaster ride of hills, valleys, and sharp turns. Kelly's Ford, at the intersection of Route 620 and Route 674, marks another memorable chapter of Civil War history. Opposing cavalry units met here in March 1863, foreshadowing the clash that would take place a few months later at Brandy Station. The dashing artillery commander John Pelham was mortally wounded at Kelly's Ford.

Continue from VA 620 on VA 674, now labeled as Kelly's Ford Road. As you draw near US 29, stay left on VA 678 (Elkwood Crossing) to VA 676, Berry Hill Road. (This will allow you to cross busy US 29 with the benefit of a traffic light.)

Continue for a short distance on VA 676, Beverly Ford Road, then make a left onto VA 685, Fleetwood Heights Road. This route takes you directly through the area contested during the Battle of Brandy Station, known as the largest cavalry engagement ever to take place in the western hemisphere. The engagement revealed the

improvement the Union had made in its ability to conduct cavalry warfare and marked the opening of the Gettysburg campaign.

At the intersection with Alanthus Road, continue straight. Route 685 becomes Auburn Road, then turns left to become Chestnut Fork Road. At VA 229, turn left to return to Culpeper.

ROUTE SUMMARY - 62.7 miles

TURN	ONTO ROAD	THEN GO
Depart	Culpeper Visitors Center	
Straight	East Davis Street	2.0 blocks
Left	Main Street south	0.6 miles
Left	VA 3	19.1 miles
Right	VA 20 south	1.8 miles
Left	Hill Ewell Drive	3.3 miles
Left	VA 621 (Orange Plank Road)	2.8 miles
Right	VA 3	1.0 mile
ARRIVE AT CHANCELLORSVILLE VISITOR CENTER (Watch for entrance on left)		
Continue	VA 3	0.8 miles
Left	VA 610 Elys Ford Road	13.4 miles
Right	VA 620 Edwards Shop Road	5.3 miles
ARRIVE AT KELLY'S FORD		
Cont.	VA 674 Kelly's Ford Road	4.7 miles
Stay Left	VA 678 Elkwood Crossing Road	0.2 miles
(Do not cross railroad tracks)		
Right	VA 676 Berry Hill Road	0.1 mile
Cross	VA 29	
Cont.	VA 676 Beverly Ford Road	0.2 miles
Left	VA 685 Fleetwood Heights Rd.	2.2 miles
Cross	Alanthus Road	
Cont.	VA 685 Auburn Rd.	4.1 miles
Left	VA 685 Chestnut Fork Road	1.0 mile
Left	VA 229 (Rixeyville Road)	2.1 miles
ARRIVE IN CULPEPER		

Romancing the Hills

Skyline Drive and the Blue Ridge Parkway have a well deserved reputation that draws motorcyclists from around the world. But can these be the only roads in the area that offer a rewarding ride?

Hardly. Few riders realize that as they stand at the overlooks along the Parkway, hundreds of miles of roads more challenging and byways equally scenic lie just to the east of Skyline in the Piedmont. This route covers some of the best.

Follow VA 229 north out of Culpeper and turn left onto VA 729, Eggbornsville Road. Within just a few miles, the rhythm of the road changes as it rises, falls and twists over the hilly countryside. The Blue Ridge suddenly looms close and at the top of each hill you reach, the mountains provide the perfect backdrop for great photographic moments. Route 729 changes direction abruptly several times to keep you on your toes. In Rappahannock County it becomes Richmond Road.

At US 211, turn right and head east toward Warrenton. Unlike most dual-lane highways, Route 211 is lightly traveled and a pleasurable ride through the countryside. Look for a sign marked "Hume/Orleans" and turn left onto VA 688, Leeds Manor Road.

At Hume, turn left following Route 635 west along the upper foothills of the mountains. It's along this stretch of road

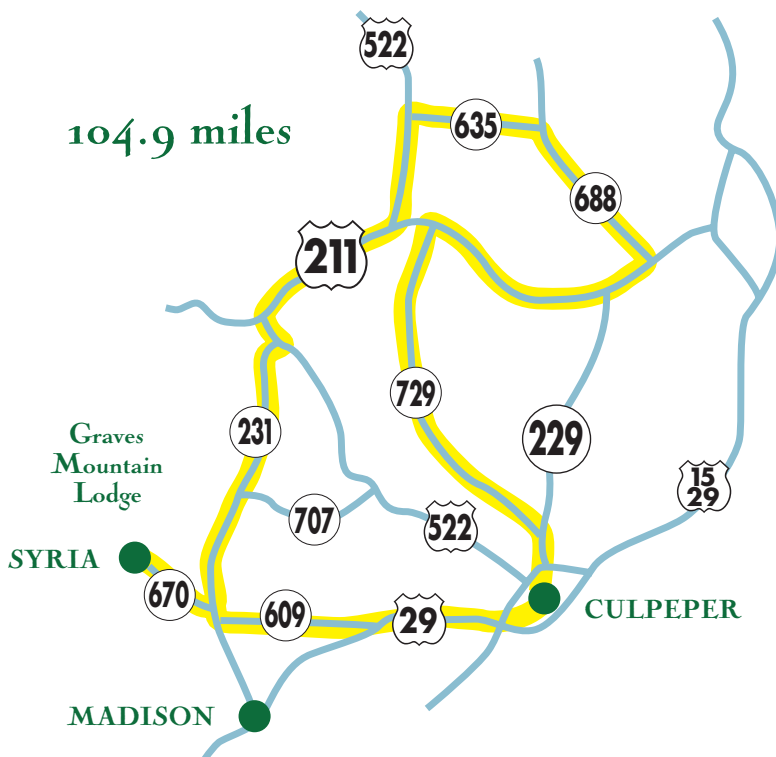
you'll find the Marriott Ranch, a working farm owned and operated by the Marriott family.

At the end of Route 635, turn left onto US 522 heading south. At the junction with US 211, turn right and continue to follow US 522 through Sperryville. Sperryville has always catered to tourists, a fact you'll soon discover by the many family-run roadside stands that line the shoulders of the road. Many sell locally grown vegetables throughout the year, but the highlight is autumn when just-picked apples and freshly-pressed cider are available.

Continue on US 522 out of town, then turn right on VA 231 just outside of town. You'll soon be convinced this road was built just for Sunday drives.

At Banco, turn right onto VA 670 and follow this old alignment of the Blue Ridge Turnpike to Syria, home of Graves Mountain Lodge. Graves is famous for its down-home cooking served family style, a tradition that dates back over 135 years. After lunch, sit a spell on the front porch and let your meal settle. Who's in a hurry?

Make your return following Route 670 out of Syria to Banco. Turn right on VA 231, then left after a half mile on Route 609. This returns you to US 29 just a few miles from downtown Culpeper.



ROUTE SUMMARY – 104.9 miles

TURN	ONTO ROAD	THEN GO
Depart	Culpeper Visitors Center	
Straight	East Davis Street	2 blocks
Right	Main Street	0.5 miles
Straight	VA 229 (North Main Street)	1.3 miles
Left	VA 729 (Eggbornsville Road)	18.7 miles
	(At 13.7 miles, VA 729 turns to the right)	
Right	US 211	11.0 miles
Left	VA 688 (Leeds Manor Road)	12.1 miles
Left	VA 635 (Hume Road)	7.2 miles
Left	US 522	7.8 miles
Right	US 522/US 211	8.0 miles
Left	US 522 (Left at stop sign in town)	0.6 miles
Right	VA 231 (FT Valley Road)	15.0 miles
Right	VA 670	3.7 miles
	ARRIVE AT GRAVES MOUNTAIN LODGE	
Return	VA 670	3.7 miles
Right	VA 231	0.5 miles
Left	VA 609 (Hoover Road)	9.3 miles
Left	US 29	5.5 miles

ARRIVE IN CULPEPER

Footsteps of Our Fathers

In times past, the central Piedmont was home to many of the nation's leaders. Today, it is recognized as one of the world's finest wine producing regions. This loop connects the past and present with wide country lanes, historic homes, vineyards, unspoiled panoramic vistas, and a splash of moonshine.

The route begins heading south out of Culpeper on US 15, known earlier as the Carolina Road. Once an Indian trace, the Carolina Road was a critical commercial link between the young states. When Thomas Jefferson left his beloved Monticello in 1803 to assume the presidency, he traveled along the Carolina Road to Washington.

Beyond the suburbs, the terrain returns to the familiar agrarian landscape, save for a low, broad hill to the left. To students of the Civil War, this wooded hillock is known as Cedar Mountain, where forces led by Confederate General Stonewall Jackson met the Union Army's newly-appointed leader John Pope. Scattered and confused, rebel troops began to give ground to Union forces until Stonewall Jackson rode into the thick of the battle. Reaching for his sword, Jackson intended to rally his troops. It would have been a stirring moment, except there was a problem — Jackson's sword was rusted in its scabbard. Undeterred, Jackson lifted the sword and scabbard together and charged into action. With order restored, the Rebels rallied to sweep Union forces from the field.

At VA 230, turn west to head toward Madison by way of Radiant and Aroda. At Pratts, turn left onto VA 231 along the Blue Ridge Turnpike. Along the way, you'll pass a long-closed country store bearing a sign that reads "Uno" (read "you know"). According to local legend, Uno's name arose when moonshining was widespread. When someone local had a thirst that could only be quenched with a shot of white lightning, they'd head to this well known spot. When asked where they were going, they'd reply "You know."

At Old Somerset, turn right on VA 20 and ride south to Barboursville. Follow Route 20 as it crosses US 33. You'll make a left turn, duck under the railroad tracks, then turn right to leave US 33. Shortly after, turn left onto VA 678, right on VA 677, and then right at the first lane.

This brings you to Barboursville Vineyard and the ruins of the Barbour mansion.



77.7 miles

Thomas Jefferson's hand is clearly visible in the design of the house built on this estate for Governor James Barbour in 1822. An octagonal parlor room at the front of the home was Jefferson's signature design. Tragically the estate burned on Christmas Day in 1884. Jefferson's interest in wine growing is well documented, but the delicate French vines he tried to grow could not tolerate the heat, humidity and unfamiliar diseases. Barboursville Vineyard, established in 1976, marked the realization of Jefferson's dream. Advances in plant science have allowed vineyards to thrive and produce award-winning wines in Virginia.

Leaving the vineyard, return to VA 20 and follow it north toward Orange, Virginia. Stop at Montpelier Station to visit the home of James Madison, the fourth U.S. president. The home tour highlights the many architectural changes made over the years and the work done to restore the home to its original layout. Be sure to take some time to linger on the front porch of the home for an amazing view of the Blue Ridge, appearing like a giant tidal wave poised to sweep over the Piedmont.

From Montpelier, turn east toward Orange, Virginia. In town, VA 20 becomes Main Street. Continue through town on Main Street past the intersection with US 15. Main Street becomes VA 615. You'll pass through the historic towns of Rapidan and Mitchells, where you'll see several beautiful and architecturally significant churches. After the intersection in Mitchells, VA 615 ends at US 522. Turn right onto US 522 South, and follow for 2 miles to Belmont Farm Distillery. Owned and operated by Chuck and Jeanette Miller, Belmont Farm is the only legal distiller of corn whiskey, aka "moonshine" in the State of Virginia. The Millers

grow all the corn used in production on their farm and distill the whiskey in an authentic copper still. Miller carefully follows a secret family recipe used by generations of Millers.

Turn left from the distillery and Cedar Run Rd. onto U.S. 522 to return to Culpeper.

Clearly, there's more than one way to follow in the footsteps of our fathers.

ROUTE SUMMARY - 77.7 miles

TURN	ONTO ROAD	THEN GO
Depart	Culpeper Visitors Center	
Straight	East Davis Street	2.0 blocks
Left	Main Street South	0.6 miles
Left	VA 3/US 15 East	0.1 miles
Right	US 15 South	15.9 miles
Right	VA 230 West	8.5 miles
Left	VA 231 South	9.9 miles
Right	VA 20 West	5.5 miles
Left	US 33/VA 20	0.25 miles
Right	VA 20 West	0.1 miles
Left	VA 678 (Governor Barbour St)	0.5 miles
Right	VA 777 (Vineyard Road)	0.3 miles
ARRIVE BARBOURSVILLE VINEYARD		
Left	VA 777	0.3 miles
Left	VA 678	0.5 miles
Right	VA 20	0.1 miles
Left	US 33	0.25 miles
Right	VA 20	8.1 miles
ARRIVE MONTEPELIER STATION		
Cont.	VA 20	3.8 miles
Straight	East Main St. (VA 615)	13.7 miles
Right	US 522	2.0 miles
Right	Cedar Run Rd. (to end of lane)	
ARRIVE BELMONT FARM		
Left	US 522	5.7 miles
Left	US 522/VA 3	1.6 miles
ARRIVE CULPEPER		

Skyline Secrets

Almost everyone knows about Skyline Drive. It's a famous destination for riders from around the world who come to enjoy its endless views of the Shenandoah Valley to the west and the Piedmont to the east. This route includes a section of Skyline but approaches it in a direction that is taken by fewer visitors, resulting in a ride that allows you to enjoy the rhythm of the road.

Begin your tour out of Culpeper on US 522N. This road in itself is a delightful ride from Richmond, Virginia all the way into Pennsylvania. You'll quickly slip into the picture-perfect countryside of western Culpeper and soon begin to catch glimpses of the Blue Ridge directly ahead.

In Boston, turn left onto VA 707, Slate Mills Road, venturing through high pastures and hill top orchards.

At VA 231, turn left and head south. Not surprisingly, VA 231 is a designated Scenic Byway, running parallel to the Blue Ridge and offering some great photographic opportunities. That ragged mountain that stands out from the rest of the Blue Ridge is Old Rag, an extinct volcano that is a popular day-hike destination.

In Madison, follow Route 231 briefly as it joins US 29. Continue for just a few miles on US 29 and make the right turn on VA 230 to head west toward the mountains once again.

In Stanardsville, turn right onto US 33 and follow the trail originally blazed by the Knights of the Golden Horseshoe. In

the early 1700's royal governor Alexander Spotswood led an expedition into the interior of western Virginia, along Swift Run to the summit of the Blue Ridge and into the Shenandoah Valley. Legend has it that Spotswood gave each officer a horseshoe-shaped pin made of gold to commemorate the successful completion of the journey. Soon after, members of the expedition became known as the Knights of the Golden Horseshoe.

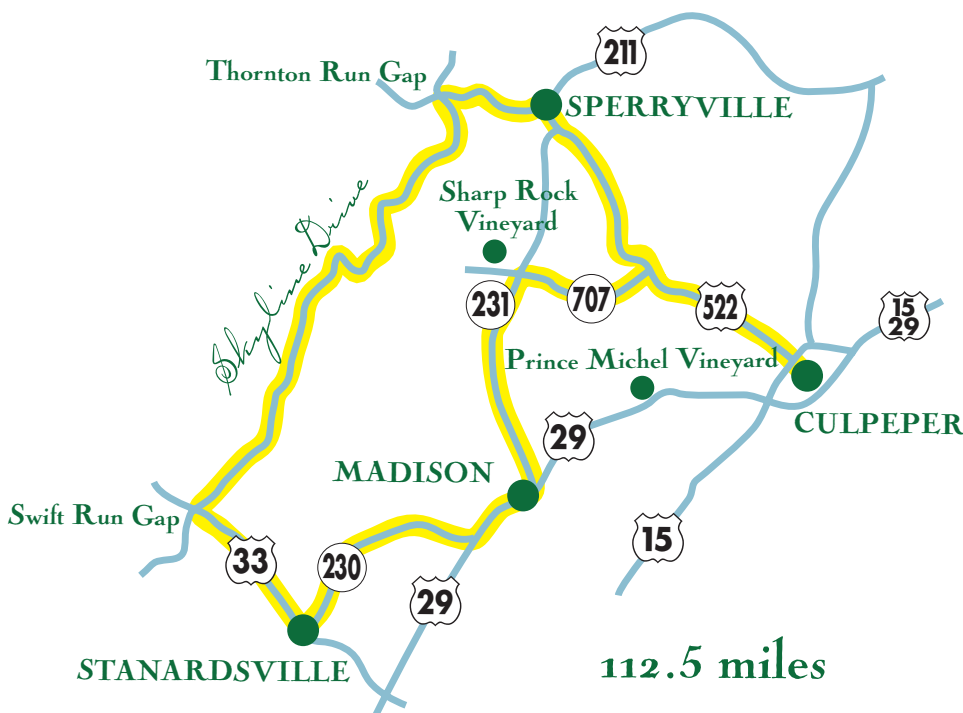
If you're thinking about enjoying a roadside lunch, Stanardsville would be a good place to pick up provisions.

At Swift Run Gap, turn onto Skyline Drive and follow it north. This section between Swift Run and Thornton Gap includes some of the most entertaining stretches of the 115 mile route through the national park with stacked sets of curves and numerous overlooks. Always be mindful of wildlife along Skyline, particularly deer.

At the Thornton Run Gap, exit Skyline onto US 211 east toward Sperryville. This fun run down the mountain includes numerous tight switchbacks in a rapid descent. (For more on Sperryville, see Romancing the Hills.)

The good times hardly stop here. In town, pick up US 522 for the return ride back to Culpeper. As you return home through the high country, you'll have a great time recounting the day's many highlights.

The only trouble you'll encounter on this loop will be the difficulty in deciding which way to ride the next day.



ROUTE SUMMARY - 112.5 miles

TURN	ONTO ROAD	THEN GO
Depart	Culpeper Visitors Center	
Straight	East Davis Street	2 blocks
Right	Main Street	0.25 miles
Left	US 522 North (Sperryville Pike)	8.7 miles
Left	VA 707 (Slate Mills Road)	7.4 miles (VA 707 bears left .3 miles off 522)
Left	VA 231 South	13.1 miles
Right	US 29 Bus. S/VA 231 (Main St.)	1.3 miles
Merge	US 29 South/VA 231	2.9 miles
Right	VA 230 West	10.6 miles
Right	US 33 West	8.4 miles
Right	Skyline Drive North	33.6 miles
Exit	Thornton Gap Exit	
Left	US 211 East	7.0 miles
Left	US 522 South	19.2 miles

ARRIVE IN CULPEPER