

# Skyline Drive

During its over seventy year history, Skyline Drive has offered travelers the opportunity to view many of the most scenic vistas in the eastern United States. The experience combines the protected setting of Shenandoah National Park with two visitor centers, miles of hiking trails, and opportunities for wildlife viewing.



Length: 105 miles / 168.0 km  
 Time to Allow: 6 to 8 hours to enjoy the byway.

## Local Information

**Shenandoah National Park**  
 540-999-3500

## Visitor Services

### Fees



There is a fee to enter Shenandoah National Park.

### Camping



There are places to camp along this byway.

### Food



There are places to buy food along this byway.

### Gasoline



Gasoline is available.

### Information



Visitor Centers located at Dickey Ridge (mile 4.6) and Harry F. Byrd Visitors Center/Big Meadows (mile 51) offer a full range of publications about the park, including maps, general guides, hiking guides, books about various aspects of flora and fauna, geology and related interpretive material. An audio guide for Skyline Drive is also available.

### Lodging



There is lodging available at the Masanutten Lodge.



### **Phone**

Public phones are available along this byway.



### **Restrooms**

There are toilet facilities along this byway.



### **Retail**

There are places to shop along this byway.

## **Special Considerations**

If you are going through the Skyline Drive, please be aware that it is located in the Shenandoah National Park.

## **Restrictions**

From November to early January, Skyline Drive is closed from dusk to dawn each night to allow park rangers to concentrate on problem boundary areas related to poaching during hunting season. Hunting is prohibited in the park.

During winter months Skyline Drive is occasionally closed for short periods following snow storms or during icing conditions in order to insure visitor safety.

## **Seasons**

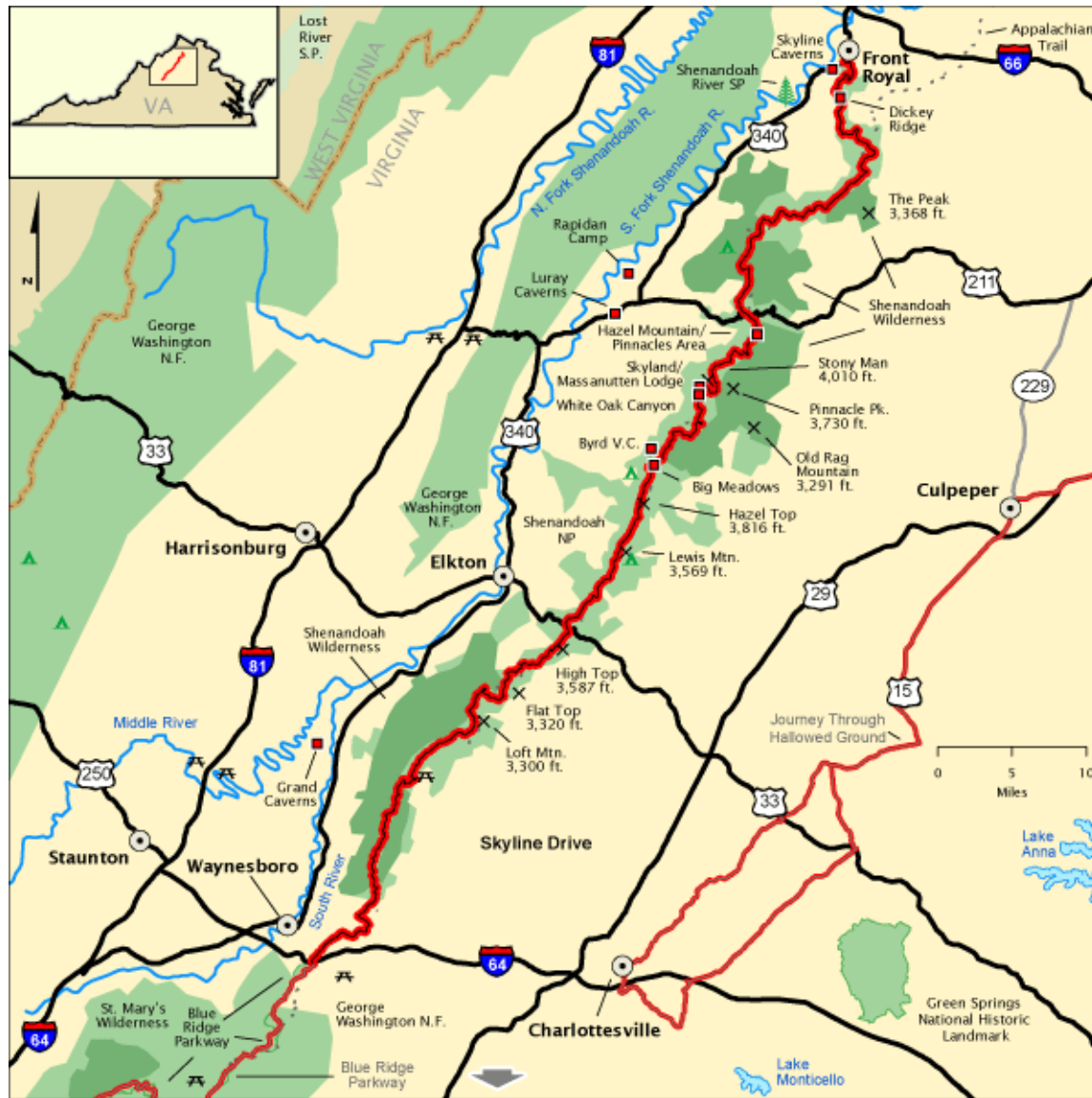
### **Best Time to Drive**

Fall is the most popular time, due to the incredible array of colors found in the foliage along the entire length of Skyline Drive and at overlooks.

### **High Season**

October weekends are the most popular time for visitors on Skyline Drive due to the peaking of the fall foliage.

# Map and Directions



## Legend:

Point of Interest	Campground	Featured Byway	Water	State Border
Park	Picnic/Rest Area	America's Byways	Wildlife Refuge	Urban Area
Mountain	Interstate	Other Byway	Wilderness Area	Tribal Nation
City	U.S. Highway	Other Road	Other Federal Lands	Military Base
Capital	State Highway	Trail	Other State Lands	

## Driving Directions

- The byway starts at the intersection of U.S. Hwy. 340, Stonewall Jackson Hwy. and Skyline Dr. southwest of Front Royal, VA.

- Drive southeast on Skyline Dr. through the Shenandoah National Park to the beginning of the Blue Ridge Parkway, where the byway ends.

### Getting to the Byway



#### Nearby airports

**Baltimore/Washington International Airport (BWI), MD**  
(104 miles / 167.37 km, 1 hour 55 minutes)

**Start:** ✈ Aviation Loop  
N 39.190° W 76.680° [?]



- From the Baltimore Washington International Airport, get on Aviation Loop, which runs around the whole airport, and get on I-195, heading north.
- Take exit 4B to loop onto I-95, heading south.
- Take exit 27 to merge onto I-495/ Capital Beltway, heading west.
- Take exit 49 to merge onto I-66, heading west. \*Take exit 13 to leave the interstate and turn left onto Apple Mountain Rd.
- Turn right at John Marshall Hwy.
- Turn left onto S Royal Ave.
- Turn left on Browntown Rd and another left on Stonewall Jackson Hwy.
- After about 0.3 miles, veer right to where the byway begins.

#### Directions:

\*In good traffic, it takes about 2 hours to drive from Baltimore Washington International Airport but be prepared for at least 3 if traffic is bad.

**Junction with byway:** ✈ Stonewall Jackson Highway  
N 38.906° W 78.201° [?]

**Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA), VA**  
(72 miles / 115.87 km, 1 hour 23 minutes)



**Start:** ✈ Airport Access Road  
N 38.851° W 77.042° [?]

**Directions:**

- From Ronald Reagan National Airport, head north on the Airport Access Road and get on George Washington Memorial Parkway heading north.
- Take exit 10B to loop onto Henry Shirley Memorial Hwy/US 1, heading southwest.
- Take exit 8B and merge onto Jefferson Davis Hwy/SR 110, heading north.
- After about 2 miles, merge onto I-66, heading west.
- Take exit 13 and turn left on Apple Mountain Rd.
- Turn right on John Marshall Hwy/SR 55.
- Turn left on S Royal Ave/US 340.
- After about 0.5 miles turn left onto the beginning of Skyline Drive.

**Junction with byway:** ✳ Intersection of S Royal Ave/US 340 and Skyline Drive  
N 38.907° W 78.201° [?]

**Washington-Dulles International Airport (IAD), VA** (55.2 miles / 88.84 km, 1 hour 5 minutes)



**Start:** ✈ Saarinen Circle  
N 38.954° W 77.444° [?]

**Directions:**

- From Washington-Dulles International Airport, use Saarinen Circle to get on Hirst Brault Expy, heading north.
- After about 0.5 miles, merge right onto SR 28 heading south.

- Merge right onto I-66 heading west after about 9 miles.
- Take exit 13 and turn left onto Apple Mountain Rd.
- Turn right onto John Marshall Hwy/ SR 55.
- Turn left onto S Royal Ave/US 340.
- After about 0.5 miles turn left onto the beginning of Skyline Drive.

**Junction with byway:** \* Intersection of S Royal Ave/US 340 and Skyline Drive  
N 38.907° W 78.201° [?]



## Nearby cities

**Washington, DC** (68 miles / 109.44 km, 1 hour 30 minutes)

- Start:** ● I-66 westbound, Washington, D.C.  
N 38.896° W 77.099° [?]
- Take I-66 west to Shenandoah Farms.
- Directions:**
- Get on VA-55 going west to Front Royal.
  - Take US-340 south to Skyline Drive



**Junction with byway:** \* Intersection of US-340 and Skyline Dr Front Royal, VA  
N 38.906° W 78.200° [?]

## Road Trip: A Visit to Shenandoah Park

**Departure:** Front Royal, Virginia

**Destination:** Waynesboro, Virginia

**Time to allow:** 2 days

This scenic drive includes the best outlooks and activities offered along the Skyline.

### Day 1

- **Start: Front Royal**



- **Stop 1: Dickey Ridge**



**From previous stop:** 10 minutes / 4.9 mi (7.8 km)

**Directions:** Head south down S Royal Ave. and turn southeast onto Skyline Drive. The visitor center is 4 miles from the entrance to Shenandoah National Park.

**Suggested time at this stop:** 1 hour

Dickey Ridge is a popular first stop for visitors driving south along Skyline Drive from the north entrance. The visitor center has a staffed information desk to answer visitor questions. There are new exhibits and a film which introduce the visitor to the many opportunities for recreation and education in the park. From the visitor center you have views to the east and west and get a preview of the drive experience. Nearby is a picnic area where visitors can enjoy a rest.

- **Stop 2: White Oak Canyon**



**From previous stop:** 1 hour / 38 mi (60.8 km)

**Directions:** Head south from the visitor center along Skyline Drive to the White Oak Canyon parking lot.

**Suggested time at this stop:** 4 hours

A guide to the park characterizes White Oak Canyon as a "scenic gem and a place of wild beauty - a shady place of great boulders under tall hemlocks, of cascades and pools and sheer rock walls, and a steep gorge with six waterfalls." You have to get out of your car and hike to enjoy this spectacular setting which is one of the park's most visited features.

- **Stop 3: Limberlost Trail**



**From previous stop:** 5 minutes / 0.4 mi (0.6 km)

**Directions:** Head south to the Limberlost Trail parking lot.

**Suggested time at this stop:** 30 minutes

The Limberlost Trail is the park's only accessible trail, with a crushed greenstone walkway, wooden boardwalk, a bridge and many benches. The trail was originally laid out to permit visitors to view beautiful stands of hemlocks. Unfortunately an invasive foreign pest, the hemlock woolly adelgid, has had devastating effects on the hemlocks. The Limberlost Trail now serves as an example of the consequences of this particular invasive species and the regeneration of a forest. June is the best time to view the impressive heights of the mountain laurel.

- **End: Skyland**



**From previous stop:** 5 minutes / 1 mi (1.6 km)

**stop:**

**Directions:** From the White Oak parking lot there is a short trail that leads west to the resort.

The Skyland Resort, much older than the park, played a role in its establishment. It was developed by George Freeman Pollock a colorful character who induced a group of well-to-do city people to build vacation homes in this area, now part of the park. Pollack joined with a group of others who actively promoted the establishment of a national park in the southern Appalachian highlands. One of the original buildings, the Massanutten Lodge, was restored in 2004.

### Totals for Day 1

**Total Distance Traveled:** 44.3 miles / 70.9 km

**Total Travel Time:** 1 hour 20 minutes

**Total Stopping Time:** 5 hours 30 minutes

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## Day 2

- **Stop 1: Big Meadows**



**From previous stop:** 13 minutes / 7.37 mi (11.8 km)

**stop:**

**Directions:** Go south from the White Oak parking lot on Skyline Drive to the Harry F. Byrd, Sr. Visitor Center.

**Suggested time** 1 hour

**at this stop:**

The Harry F. Byrd, Sr. Visitor Center at Big Meadows is a must stop. Explore the highly interactive exhibits at the center that relate the park's history, and enjoy a magnificent view of Big Meadows from the balcony. Stroll through the meadow and view a variety of birds and other wildlife that frequent the area.

- **Stop 2: Grand Caverns**



**From previous stop:** 58 minutes / 37.3 mi (59.7 km)

**Directions:** Head south on Skyline Drive and turn west on US-33. Turn south on East Side Highway/US-340. Turn west on 2nd Street then south on Caverns Boulevard. Turn west on Grand Caverns Drive and follow it to the entrance to the Grand Caverns.

**Suggested time at this stop:** 1 hour 30 minutes

While you are in the area, take a sidetrip outside Shenandoah National Park to visit the Grand Caverns. The Grand Caverns have been open continually since 1806, without even the Civil War stopping business. Visited by both Confederate and Union soldiers during the "Valley Campaign" of 1862, rumors say that even Thomas Jefferson took a peek at the majestic caverns.

- **End: Waynesboro**

**From previous stop:** 27 minutes / 15.7 mi (25.1 km)

**Directions:** Head east on Grand Caverns Drive. Continue south on Caverns Boulevard, then turn east onto 2nd street. Turn south at East Side Highway/US-340. Turn west at E Main Street/US-250/US-340. Turn left at S Wayne Avenue to arrive in Waynesboro.

Spend the afternoon in downtown Waynesboro. The pedestrian-friendly environment is home to businesses like specialty and service providers, museums, arts and cultural centers, unique restaurants and lodging opportunities. The South River runs through downtown, one of only two urban fisheries in the State.

## Totals for Day 2

**Total Distance Traveled:** 60.37 miles / 96.6 km

**Total Travel Time:** 1 hour 38 minutes

**Total Stopping Time:** 2 hours 30 minutes