



## **Amtrak in Virginia Train Itinerary “To the Mountains!”**

More people than ever are choosing to take the train to travel around Virginia. With Amtrak, visitors to the Commonwealth can experience much of the state without relying solely on personal and rental cars. So, stow your luggage, settle into your seat, and prepare to embark on an extraordinary expedition that will take you from historic towns right outside our Nation’s Capital, to the idyllic mountain towns along Virginia’s Blue Ridge, all while unveiling the hidden treasures of Virginia.

### **Day 1 & 2 – Alexandria**

Begin your Virginia adventure either upon arrival via air at Dulles International Airport (IAD) or Reagan National Airport (DCA). Not flying into Virginia? Head direct to Alexandria, home of the northern-most Amtrak station in the state. For those flying into IAD, getting to Alexandria and the Amtrak station has never been easier with the opening of the Metrorail Silver Line extension. Now, travelers can simply take the Metro Silver Line from IAD to the transfer station in Rosslyn then take the Blue Line to Alexandria. For DCA arrivals, you’re only a couple quick stops away from Alexandria via the Blue Line.

Once in Alexandria, grab a quick bite at a local spot such as Mason Social, a neighborhood restaurant focused on local, creative food, craft beer and libations. Spend some time exploring historic Old Town Alexandria, a bustling center of local boutiques and impressive arts and culture, all nestled within a landscape of colonial-era architecture and cobblestone streets. As you take a stroll along the waterfront

enjoying the Potomac River views, consider a visit to the Torpedo Factory Art Center, a vibrant art venue showcasing local artists.

After exploring, treat yourself to a lovely dinner at Ada's on the River. An upscale, colorful setting right on the waterfront, Ada's is built around a wood-burning oven, the inspiration for most menu items.

Check-in for the night at the Lorien Hotel & Spa, or the lavish Morrison House, a AAA Four Diamond Hotel offering boutique luxury paired with unrivaled historic charm.



*Old Town Alexandria Waterfront*

Start your next morning with breakfast at one of the fine establishments along King Street and the surrounding blocks such as Fontaine Bistro or Café du Soleil.

Take some time out of the day to visit George Washington's Mount Vernon, the famous home of the United States' Founding Father and First President, George Washington. Tour the beautifully restored mansion, four distinctive gardens, and get a glimpse of Mount Vernon's working farm. For a more

scenic route, rent a bike from one of the many Capital Bikeshare stations and ride the Mount Vernon Trail along the river to the historic estate.



*George Washington's Mount Vernon*

Back in Old Town Alexandria, exploring King Street is one of the most iconic things to do and the free King Street Trolley makes covering ground easy. With stops every two to three blocks from Alexandria City Hall/Market Square to the King St – Old Town Metrorail station, trolleys provide on-off access to conveniently get around Old Town Alexandria.

Grab dinner and drinks along the waterfront at BARCA Pier & Wine Bar – the ultimate waterfront dining experience perched literally on the Potomac River, BARCA offers Spanish & Mediterranean influenced tapas, small plates, wine and cocktails as well as the best views around.

### **Day 3 & 4 – Alexandria to Charlottesville (approx. 2 hours by train)**

Arrive in beautiful Charlottesville, gateway to the Blue Ridge Mountains, home of Thomas Jefferson and the University of Virginia, and filled with a thriving artistic community.

Take a short rideshare or cab ride to Monticello, the commanding estate of Thomas Jefferson, the third President of the United States and the author of the Declaration of Independence. Take a tour of his mansion and explore the stunning gardens and grounds.

Back in city center, grab some lunch at Charlottesville's oldest restaurant, the Virginian, in The Corner district. Then tour the nearby University of Virginia (UVA), founded by Jefferson. Monticello and the Academic Village of UVA are jointly listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site due to Jefferson's significant contributions and knowledge of architecture and philosophy. Take a stroll through the picturesque campus, visit the Rotunda, and explore the various museums and galleries.

Fill the afternoon visiting the pedestrian-friendly Historic Downtown Mall. Visitors can quickly lose track of time in this vibrant area filled with unique boutiques and live entertainment all conveniently accessible by foot. Make a reservation for dinner at Fleurie, an intimate eatery offering upscale, modern French cuisine with à la carte & tasting menus.

When the day is ending, Charlottesville offers a range of great lodgings. The new Forum Hotel, recently opened right on the UVA grounds includes a pub, sports bar and coffee shop as well as five acres of natural green space featuring an arboretum and botanical gardens. Those looking to stay closer to the downtown mall might seek out the Quirk Hotel Charlottesville. This boutique hotel is centered around a robust art gallery and features a beautiful rooftop bar featuring exceptional views of the surrounding mountains.



*Charlottesville Historic Downtown Mall*

Grab breakfast at the hotel or at Bodo's Bagels, a Charlottesville original, New York-style bagel operation. Bodo's is a local favorite and a great spot to grab and go for breakfast.

After breakfast, immerse yourself in the local wine scene. The nearby Monticello Wine Trail includes more than 40 wineries within a 30-mile radius and the wines from this region are considered some of the best in the Eastern United States. Many of these vineyards offer exquisite lunch and snack options such as Pippin Hill Farm and Vineyards. Guided wine tours make it easy to narrow down your options and visit car-free.



*Pippin Hill Farm & Vineyards*

Stunning wineries are not all Charlottesville has to offer. The great outdoors beckon with nearby Shenandoah National Park and the surrounding countryside. Adventure seekers of all skill levels can find an outdoor activity to enjoy. Take a leisurely hike, try kayaking or tubing on the James River, or go cycling along scenic country roads.



*Old Rag Mountain*

After working up an appetite, try The Fitzroy on Charlottesville’s Downtown Mall, a kitchen and bar offering updates of comforting classics and a popular spot for dinner. Finish the night with some classic cocktails and breath-taking views at the Quirk Hotel Rooftop.

**Day 5 & 6 – Charlottesville to Lynchburg (approx. 1 hour 15 minutes by train)**

Hop back on the train and continue your trip to Lynchburg, the City of Seven Hills. Nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains on the banks of the James River, Lynchburg stands out for their outdoor recreation, scenic views, and varied activities, from historic sites to family-friendly museums.

As you meander through the historic downtown area, known for its beautiful architecture, including the Lynchburg Historic Courthouse and the Lynchburg Community Market, take time to check out the local

shops, galleries, and restaurants. Stop for lunch at El Jefe Taqueria and load up on fresh tacos before continuing to enjoy some of the activities throughout the town.

Outdoor enthusiasts can rent bikes from Bikes Unlimited and spend a few hours riding the Blackwater Creek Trail along the banks of the James River. This shaded, mostly paved pathway runs about eight miles over bridges and through the woods.



*Lynchburg*

When choosing a place to dine and stay in Lynchburg, the options are quite welcoming. The Virginian Hotel, a historic AAA Four Diamond luxury stay, dates back to 1913 when it opened as a grand Beaux-Arts-style hotel. The Virginian offers three on-site restaurants and beautiful rooftop views. The Craddock Terry Hotel, once a turn-of-the-century shoe factory, is now a boutique hotel blending the urban architecture of two landmark brick warehouses with the fashionable styling of a modern hotel. Onsite is the delicious Shoemakers Restaurant, serving steaks and fresh seafood in an elegant atmosphere.



*Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest*

Try out the mix of classic Southern breakfast fare and inventive dishes with breakfast at My Dog Duke's Diner. Then strike out to discover the historic side of the city with a guided walking tour. Make sure to visit the Anne Spencer House & Garden Museum, the former home of renowned Harlem Renaissance poet Anne Spencer.

Take a short trip outside of the city proper to tour Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest. It was Thomas Jefferson's private retreat and served him as a place of respite and intellectual inspiration. The site encompasses over 600 acres, including gardens, walking trails, and archaeological sites.

After a quick refresh back at the hotel, dine at RA Bistro, located just two blocks from The Craddock Terry Hotel. The restaurant serves seasonally inspired American cuisine in a sophisticated yet casual space.

#### **Day 7 & 8 –Lynchburg to Roanoke (approx. 1 hour 15 minutes by train)**

Next stop is Virginia's Star City, Roanoke. Situated right in the Virginia Mountains, Roanoke is an outdoor adventure mecca complemented by its unique history, fantastic food and drink, and a lively art and culture scene.

The downtown area is the heart of Roanoke and features all the things you come to love from a mountain town. Market Square, the city's main gathering place, hosts daily vendors, a weekly farmers market and various festivals throughout the year. Tour the Historic City Market building, home to local vendors and artisans. Check out Crafteria where you can shop and dine at this creative market featuring



more than 60 local craftspeople selling handmade goods from art, candles, chocolate, records, and just about anything in between, all housed in a beautiful mid-century building.



*Roanoke Star*

Once acclimated to the urban area of Roanoke, it is time to hit the road – or trail - on your next adventure. Roanoke has been making a name for itself as America’s East Coast Mountain Biking Capital. It is the only east coast community with a Silver-Level Ride Center designation by the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA). Of course, there are plenty of other cycling options around Roanoke and due to its convenient proximity to the Blue Ridge Parkway and

the Roanoke River Greenway, it has never been easier to rent a bike in town and find yourself a scenic paved trail in no time!



*Biking Along the Blue Ridge Parkway*

After a long day of fun and adventure, return to the city to check in to one of the many fine lodging establishments. The boutique [Liberty Trust Hotel](#), housed in the former historic First National Bank headquarters, offers a unique stay right in the heart of the downtown district. Near the train station, visitors will find the grand and historic [Hotel Roanoke](#), a AAA Three Diamond property that has exuded southern hospitality since it first opened in 1882.

When it's time to refuel, try [Fortunato](#), the area's only traditional Italian restaurant and Neapolitan-style pizzeria. Fortunato is the ultimate stop for delicious Italian fare as well as top-notch cocktails in a rustic chic setting.



*McAfee Knob*

Continue your outdoor adventure on day two by loading up on energy at Bread Craft Bakery & Café before heading out. Hiking enthusiasts will be pleased to learn that a complimentary new shuttle program has been started to transport hikers from city center to the McAfee Knob trailhead, one of the most popular spots on the Appalachian Trail. Or just a 10-15-minute taxi ride outside the city will take you to Carvins Cove Natural Reserve, Roanoke’s hidden outdoor gem where visitors can take advantage of over 60 miles of trails for hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding.

Alternatively, choose to stay within the city as there are plenty of local attractions to keep you busy throughout the day. Learn more about the cultural and historical prominence of Roanoke at the Taubman Museum of Art, Virginia Museum of Transportation, and Center in the Square.

And don’t forget to make a quick trip to check out the famous Roanoke Star situated on top Mill Mountain. Afterwards, wind down the day at 1882 Lobby Bar and Pine Room Restaurant, a stylishly rustic bar and restaurant located in the Hotel Roanoke where you can enjoy a lovely dinner and drinks before calling it a night.



*Taubman Museum of Art*

**Day 9 – Roanoke to Alexandria (approx. 4 hours 45 minutes by train)**

You've taken in Virginia's amazing scenery from right outside DC to the breathtaking Blue Ridge Mountains. Now, an almost five-hour train ride will finish the loop, taking you back to Alexandria where you can continue your train journey out of state or take the Metro back to Dulles International Airport. Alternatively, you can catch a flight out of Roanoke–Blacksburg Regional Airport, just five kilometers from city center.