

**Pioneering Industry Route**

Touring Montgomery, Pulaski, and Wythe Counties.

**Start Point:** Christiansburg

**End Point:** Rural Retreat

**Distance:** +/- 80 miles, ½ day ride

**Ride Time:** +/- 3½ hours

**Terrain:** Mostly rolling farm country threading together historic town centers

**Overall History:** The boom and bust of the Virginia Iron industry

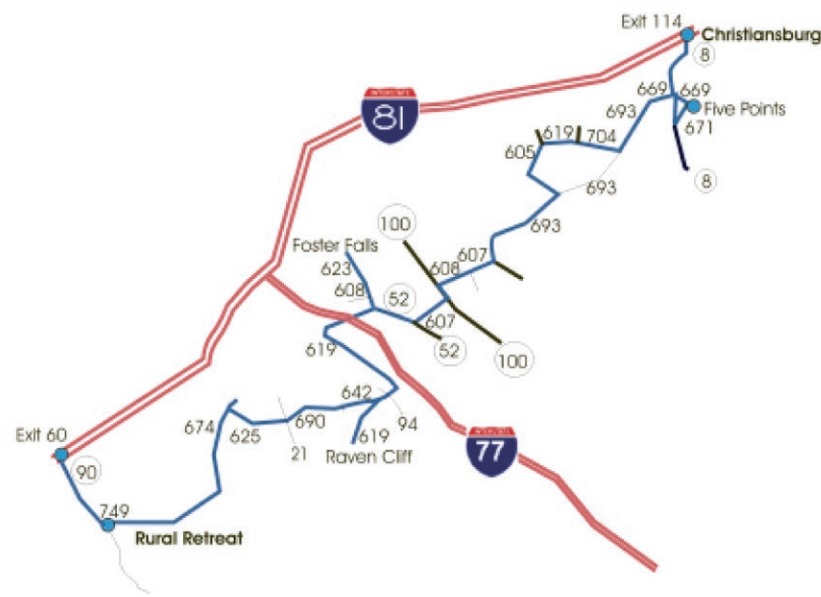
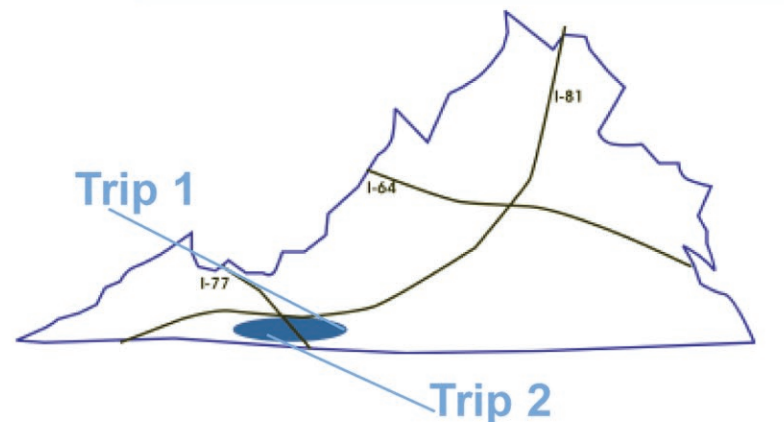
**Highlights:** Five Points, Snowville, Foster Falls, New River Trail State Park, Wytheville Cultural Fish Station, Raven Cliff Furnace, Carpenter's Grocery (old general store), and small "lost" communities.

Cumulative Mileage	Directions	Mileage To Next Points
.0	Begin I-81 Exit 114, Christiansburg	4.9
4.9	Route 8 South	0.4
5.3	Left 671/Five Points Rd	0.1
5.4	Cross Route 8 & continue on 669	4.6
10.0	Left 693/Childress Rd at T-intersection	2.3
12.3	Left over bridge (Still 693) onto Lead Mines Rd.	2.4
14.7	Right 704/Covey Hollow Road	0.2
14.9	Left 619/Bleak Ridge Rd.	0.7
15.6	Bear left 605/Little River Dam Rd.	1.6
17.2	Right 693/Lead Mines Rd.	3.0
20.2	Continue straight on 693 (now Julia Simpkins Rd.)	7.3
27.5	Right 607/Boone Furnace Rd.	2.0
29.5	Continue straight (road becomes 608)	2.5
32.0	Left Route 100\Wysor Hwy	1.6
33.6	* Right 607/Castleton Rd.	5.2
38.8	Right US Route 52	1.3
40.1	Right 608/Foster Falls Rd.	1.8
41.9	* Left Orphanage Rd/Route 623	0.2
42.1	Return to Route 52	2.0
44.1	Right US Route 52	2.0
46.1	Left 619/Austinville Rd.	6.7
52.8	Cross over Route 94/Ivanhoe Rd.	4.7
57.5	Left 619/Gleaves Road (to Raven Cliff entrance)	1.2
	Return to 619	
58.7	Right 619	1.2
59.9	Left 642/Mule Hell Rd	0.3
60.2	Bear left on 690/Slate Spring Branch Rd.	6.9
67.1	Cross US Route 21/ Grayson Tpk	2.0
69.1	Bear Right 625	1.1
70.2	Left 674/Ridge Ave	
	(becomes Rt 674/Ridgeway Ave/Rt 1112 at the end)	4.9
75.1	* Right 749/Main St./Rt 90	2.0
77.1	Intersection I-81 at Exit 60	

\* Possible sites or stops along the way

Use the Delorme "Virginia Atlas & Gazetteer" to reference local roads, as many routes are not included in maps such as the Virginia Department of Transportation State Map.

A visitor to Virginia's Blue Ridge will immediately notice the quiet of its mountains, the bold and murmuring tales of its creeks and rivers, and the deep time-etched songs of its changing years and seasons. Time seems to stretch back here to a place we all want to go. A deep appreciation of this landscape, its communities, and their shared mountain history can come through an investment of time and effort in getting to know them.



This brochure is an introduction to a forthcoming guidebook that seeks to bring to life the past and present characters of Virginia's "Lost" Communities by providing the traveler with a historical sketch of each community written in the words of its residents. Accented by a general narrative of the trends and motions of Virginia and U.S. history, the book will highlight those moments in time that make each community a unique part of our shared American story. For more information see <http://edac.arch.vt.edu> or call the Community Design Assistance Center at 540-231-5644.

**Grayson Highlands Route**

Touring: Wythe Grayson, Smyth, and Washington Counties

**Start Point:** Rural Retreat

**End Point:** Marion

**Distance:** +/- 100 miles, ½ day ride

**Ride Time:** +/- 4 hours

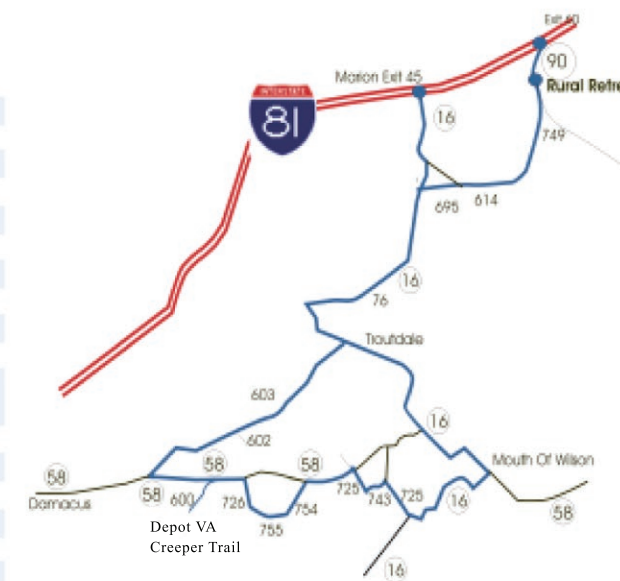
**Terrain:** Ascending and descending ridges and valleys on Virginia's highest plateau.

**Overall History:** The boom and bust of the Virginia Iron industry

**Highlights:** Mount Rogers National Recreation Area; Grayson Highlands State Park, Mouth of Wilson, old train depot, and small "Lost" communities.

Cumulative Mileage	Directions	Mileage To Next Point
0.0	Begin I-81 Exit 60, Rural Retreat	0.4
0.4	Route 90 South	6.6
7.8	Road turns into 749	7.7
14.7	Right 614	0.6
15.3	Left Route 16 South	18.5
33.8	Right 16 South	3.9
37.7	Right 725 (curvy)	4.2
41.9	Left 743	0.1
42.0	Right 725	0.8
42.8	Left 58 West (no road sign)	8.5
51.3	Left 754/turns into 755 after ½ mile (not marked)	2.0
53.3	Bear Right/Straight 726	1.5
54.8	Left 58 West (no road sign)	1.4
57.0	Left 600 [Depot and VA Creeper Trail]	0.4
56.2	Get back on 600 to return to 58	0.4
57.0	Left 58	4.3
61.3	Right 603 East (curvy)	1.0
62.3	*Right Azen Road/602 [Local Grocery/Gas]	0.3
62.6	Right Azen Road (to return to 603)	0.3
62.9	Right 603/Bicycle Rt 76 (shortly after BP station	11.0
73.9	Left 16/76	16.9
90.8	Intersection with I-81 at Exit 45 Marion	

\* Possible sites or stops along the way



# MOTORCYCLISTS GUIDE

## "Lost" Communities of Virginia's Blue Ridge

Riding the rural routes of Blue Ridge Virginia

Welcome to the back country roads of the Blue Ridge!



cd community design  
dc assistance center

College of Architecture and Urban Studies  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

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<http://cdac.arch.vt.edu>

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## "Lost" Communities

of Virginia's Blue Ridge

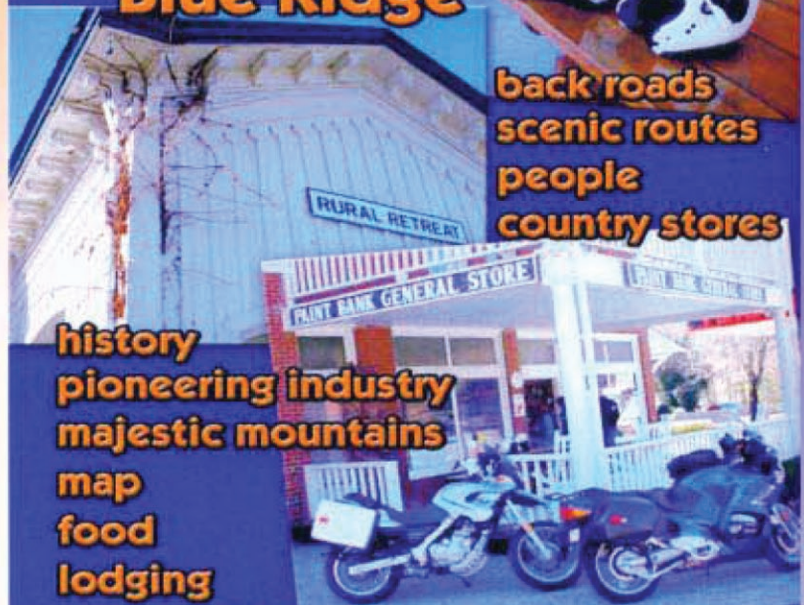
history  
pioneering industry  
majestic mountains  
map  
food  
lodging  
breathtaking vistas  
points of interest

Virginia is for Lovers

Blue Ridge  
Travel Association of Virginia

1-800-446-9670

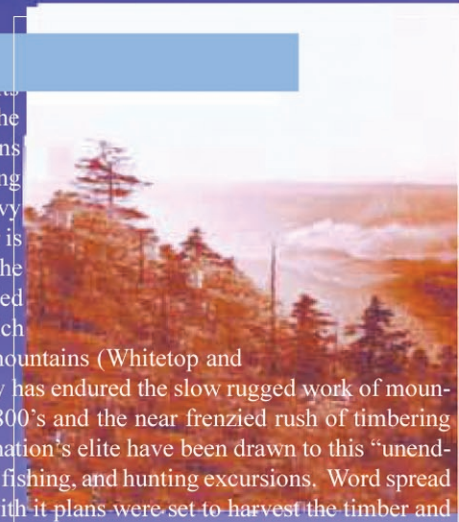
[www.viriniablueridge.org](http://www.viriniablueridge.org)



back roads  
scenic routes  
people  
country stores

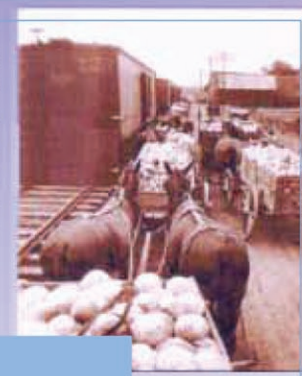
## Whitetop

Whitetop may have gained its name because of the way the high surrounding mountains collect the timelessly passing fog during the fall or the heavy snows in winter. Whichever is true, when the clouds part the view is spectacular. Nestled on the high plateau from which rise Virginia's two tallest mountains (Whitetop and Mt. Rogers), the community has endured the slow rugged work of mountaineer settlement on the 1800's and the near frenzied rush of timbering in the 1900's. Some of the nation's elite have been drawn to this "unending wilderness" for retreats, fishing, and hunting excursions. Word spread of the bounty of land and with it plans were set to harvest the timber and the railroad soon came to haul the trees. Springing into life in a short and sudden burst, the Hassinger Lumber Co. felled trees with great ferocity until all were gone. The band mill left soon after and the community was left with an echoing void of silence. Whitetop was resurrected as a mountain retreat and recreational destination. Today, many seasonal festivals, national parks, trails, and cabins help the community thrive through sustainable use of the mountain resources.



## Five Points Riner

Early in the 1800's, Five Points Riner was little more than a convenient stopping place at the intersection of three roads but by the end of the Civil War it had grown to include a post office, three stores, church meeting house, blacksmith shop, hotel, and three factories. At the heart of the cross-roads town was a well-stocked community store.

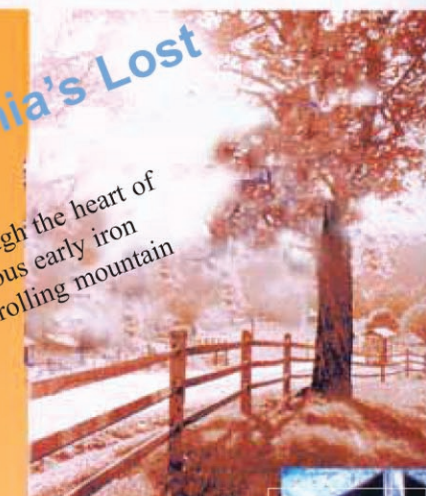


## Troutdale

The railroad, financed by the Phoenix Iron Ore Company and the U.S. Spruce Lumber Company and drawn by the abundance of iron ore and stands of "virgin timber", came to Troutdale in 1902. Troutdale held furniture and a chair factories, 3 hotels, 2 barber shops, hardware and general merchandise stores, a movie theater, ice cream parlors, a hat shop, and a printing plant. The town began to decline in 1920 when the forests were all cleared. Businesses supported by the declining factories began a domino effect decline as well. Today the town is surrounded by the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area, which offers protection to some of the Eastern U.S.'s most valued forests and works to preserve entirely barren landscapes left in the wake of early industrialization - lands on which future forests were hoped to grow.

## Discover Virginia's Lost Communities

on two routes traveling through the heart of this country's most prosperous early iron belt and most picturesque rolling mountain wilderness.



## Rural Retreat

Rural Retreat was acclaimed as the "cabbage capital" of Virginia and the U. S. where high farm hills and the agrarian German communities came together to grow thousands of acres of this hardy crop. The economy in Rural Retreat fluctuated as one hundred pounds of cabbage sold for between 30 cents and 2 dollars. This instability resulted from America's largely unregulated agricultural economy. In good years the Dix Cabbage Plant in nearby Crockett produced sauerkraut to be sold throughout the U.S. Rural Retreat is also proudly known as the home of Dr. C. H. Pepper who mixed in a local drug store fountain, the famous soda known around the world.



## Foster Falls

The first European surveyors came to call this majestic bend in the river the "Great Falls of the New River" because of the wide shallow falls found here. As early as 1880, an iron boom swept through southwest Virginia and the falls were used to provide power for a growing iron smelting industry. The process took thousands of acres of trees for the production of charcoal necessary to operations. By the early 1900's the boom ended leaving the Foster Falls community to be reborn as an orphanage, (the Abingdon Presbyterian Children's Home) which provided refuge and life training for children left behind by the Great Depression. In 1985 the Norfolk and Western Railroad right of way was abandoned and it became the New River Trail State Park.

