

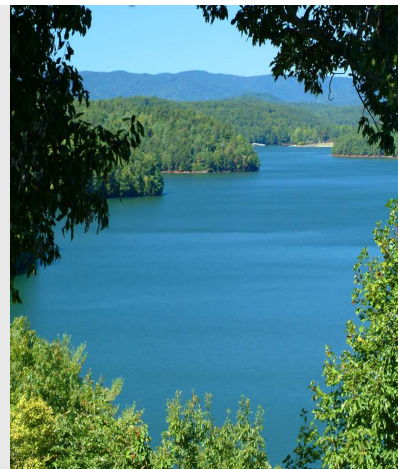
## Driving Directions



AMERICAN DRIVING VACATIONS  
PRESENTS:

## Travel Southern Virginia Driving Tour 4: Peaceful Places, Lush Landscapes 3 Days/2 Nights

There are many ways in Southern Virginia to enjoy the outdoors, watch wildlife and savor the countryside. There are 35 different locations at which you can hike our trails, ply our lakes and reservoirs, watch our wildlife, discover our history outdoors, canoe, and cruise. No less than five Virginia State Parks await, two with outstanding history outdoors. Smith Mountain Lake and Buggs Island Lake have 1,200 miles of shoreline between them. Two dinner cruise boats let you relax on the water while dining. Eight major trails are ready for hiking, plus all of the trails in the State Parks.



### Day One

Visit Peaks of Otter at Blue Ridge Parkway, Abbot Lake Trail, James River Park.

From Bedford take SR-43 northwest to juncture with Blue Ridge Parkway. Peaks of Otter Visitor Center and Peaks of Otter are nearby.

From Peaks of Otter Visitor Center travel northeast on Blue Ridge Parkway to milepost 85.7 for Abbott Lake Trail. Trail loops around Abbott Lake.

From Abbott Lake Trail go northeast on Parkway to milepost 63.6 to the James River Visitor Center. Take a walk to the other side of the river to the restored James River Lock.

Return to Bedford by returning southwest on The Blue Ridge Parkway to SR-43 and left back to Bedford.

Our 10 watchable wildlife locations are also great for birding. Try our Driving Tour to visit the highlights.

### Day One

Some consider it the most scenic highway in America. Welcoming hundreds of thousands of visitors each year, the 459 mile long Blue Ridge Parkway is one of the premier National Scenic Byways in the United States. Built by the Civilian Conservation Corps during the depression, the highway has been meticulously maintained to allow travelers to have one of the most serene and awesome drives through unspoiled forest, punctuated every so often with a scenic overlook, where "on a clear day, you can see forever." As you climb up toward the Parkway from Bedford, the Peaks of Otter loom majestically overhead. The Peaks of Otter Visitors Center is near the junction of Virginia Route 43 and the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Abbott Lake Trail is a one-mile loop around the lake at Peaks of Otter Lodge.

At Milepost 63.6 on the Blue Ridge Parkway, you can learn about the James River and the Kanawha Canal as well as the actual restoration of Lock No. 7 that had lain in ruins for more than 100 years before it was restored by the National Park Service. The Lock can be reached by a foot bridge that was gracefully hung beneath the highway bridge.

An avid Appalachian Trail hiker, William Foot created his vision for a better bridge over the James River. Previously hikers had to cross the river on a narrow two lane highway bridge that was often shared with logging trucks and other traffic. The bridge rests on five abandoned railroad piers purchased for one dollar. Valued at over a quarter of a million dollars, the piers provided the financial leverage needed to construct the bridge. Nine years in the planning, the new bridge was dedicated in 2000.



## Day Two

Travel from Bedford to Fairy Stone State Park, Philpott Lake Park, and The Riverwalk on the Dan, and Banister Lake.

From Bedford take SR-122 south for 35 miles till it meets SR-40. continue south on SR-40 for 12 miles to Timber Line Rd and turn left, go .3 miles. Bear right onto Ingramville rd for 3.8 miles. Turn left at Henry Rd, then right at Fairy Stone Park Rd. Go 3.9 miles. Road name changes to Union Bridge Rd for 4.5 miles. Turn left onto SR-623 and Fairy Stone State Park Visitor Center is at next intersection with SR-346. From Visitor Center take SR-346 southwest .9 miles to SR-57 and turn left. Go 6.7 miles to Philpott Dam Rd for .8 miles to Visitor Center. Return south to SR-57 and turn left. Go 6.1 miles on SR-57 to US-220. Take right on US-220 and go 9.4 miles. Road name changes to US-58 and follow to east side of Danville and Business US-29. Take right and go 2<sup>nd</sup> street on left and turn left on Craghead Rd. Go to The Crossing at The Dan area for parking and start for The Riverwalk on the Dan. Return to Business US-29 and turn right. Go to US-360 and turn right and go 29.7 miles to US-501. Turn left and go 7.3 miles to south end of bridge and boat launch at Banister Lake

## Day Three

Visit Staunton River Battlefield State Park, Staunton River State Park, Tailrace Park and Tobacco Heritage Trail.

## Day Two

This morning your day starts in the Virginia State Park. Legend has it that long before Chief Powhatan's reign in southern Virginia began, fairies were dancing around a spring of water playing with naiads and wood nymphs, when an elfin messenger arrived with news of the death of Christ. When the creatures of the forest heard the story of the crucifixion, they wept. As their tears fell, they crystallized to form beautiful crosses. The staurolite material of the crosses crystallizes at between 60 and 90 degrees Fahrenheit, which accounts for the cross like structures. These rare stones are found elsewhere but not in such abundance as at Fairy Stone State Park.

Nearby, nestled in the rugged foothills of the Blue Ridge, adjoining Fairy Stone State Park, the clear water and natural shoreline of Philpott Lake creates over 6,000 acres of land surrounding 3,000 acres of water. Philpott Lake has nine different recreation areas: Bowens Creek, Deer Island, Goose Point, Horseshoe Point, Jamison Mill, Philpott Park, Ryans Branch, Salthouse Branch and Twin Ridge. Each have a different variety of recreational opportunities and costs, ranging from boat ramps, campgrounds and picnic areas to hiking trails and sanitary facilities. An exhibit museum is located at Philpott Park.

In Danville, alongside rushing water under lush shade trees, you can enjoy the three and one half mile Riverwalk Trail that connects the Crossing of the Dan with Anglers Park. Utilizing a converted 1856 iron railroad bridge, the trail has a magnificent view of the Dan River and many opportunities for wildlife watching. Trail walkers are often flanked by ducks, geese, frogs and other wildlife. Strategically placed picnic tables and benches let you have a bite to eat or just sit surrounded by nature.

From there, it's on to enjoy Banister Lake, a 400-acre lake that borders the Town of Halifax that is best known for crappie and cat fishing. A public boat landing is located by the bridge on Virginia Route 501 North. Residents of Halifax enjoy the benefits of Banister Lake, which adds the atmosphere of a resort to the quaint historic town.

## Day Three

This morning as you approach the bridge over the Staunton River, you can see how that critical location that is now the Staunton River Battlefield State Park was defended from the elaborate Civil War trenches in June 1864, when Union Cavalry forces moved south on the Richmond & Danville Railroad, destroying track as they approached the Staunton River Bridge.

Part of the Wilson-Kautz Raid, during which 492 old men and young boys assisted 296 Confederate troops in defending the Staunton River Bridge, the bridge itself represented the final goal in Wilson's objective of destroying train routes throughout Southern Virginia. Lying silent today, the Earthworks that so stoutly defended the bridge have been ranked among "the most well preserved earthworks in the State of Virginia and have been included on the National Register of Historic Places.

Nearby, Staunton River State Park takes its name from the river that borders the park, named for Captain Henry Staunton who, before the



Travel northeast from South Boston on US-360 to SR-344 (Scottsburg Rd) and turn right and travel 10 miles to Staunton River State Park.

Return on Sr-344 to US-360 and turn right, go 5.1 miles. Turn left onto SR-92 (S. Main ST) for 2 miles as name changes to Clover Rd. Bear left onto Black Walnut Rd for 2.5 miles. Turn right on Fort Hill Rd to Staunton River Battlefield State Park.

Return to Black Walnut Rd and take first left. Keep going to right and return to SR-92 and turn left. Continue on SR-92 through Chase City and south to US-58 at Boydton. Go left (east) on US-58 for 5.8 miles and turn right on SR-4. Go 6.4 miles to Tailrace Park at John H. Kerr Dam.

Return north on SR-4 to US-58 and turn right. Go 12.6 miles to La Crosse and turn right at North Main St. Look for Tobacco Heritage Trail. Trail goes east to Broadnax on former railroad road bed

Revolutionary War, commanded a company of soldiers to protect early settlers from Indian attacks. This section of the Dan River became known as Captain Staunton's River and later, Staunton River. Forty years later, when the river became an important means of transporting tobacco, many large plantations were built in the area, most of which were destroyed during the Civil War. From 1933 to 1935, a unit of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) built most of the buildings and facilities that are still seen today at the park. Nearby Buggs Island Lake was formed with the construction of the Kerr Dam in 1952. Various interpretive programs are available.

Located immediately below the John H. Kerr Dam, the Wildlife Observation Platform of Tailrace Park is one-tenth of a mile on this wheelchair accessible nature trail. The platform offers excellent viewing of migratory Bald Eagles from December through March. Benches are provided for viewing the Dam, Tailrace and Buggs Island.

At the end of the day, you can enjoy the first completed four mile segment of this newly developed Rails-to-Trails project in southern Virginia that will ultimately be built on 100 miles of abandoned railroad corridor throughout the counties in the region. Serving as a link to nature for its users, the off-road trail is limited to pedestrians, hikers, bicycles, and horseback riding. Portions will also be accessible to those with mobility limitations.



## Day One

Visit Peaks of Otter at Blue Ridge Parkway, Abbot Lake Trail, James River Park.

From Bedford take SR-43 northwest to juncture with Blue Ridge Parkway. Peaks of Otter Visitor Center and Peaks of Otter are nearby.

From Peaks of Otter Visitor Center travel northeast on Blue Ridge Parkway to milepost 85.7 for Abbott Lake Trail. Trail loops around Abbott Lake.

From Abbott Lake Trail go northeast on Parkway to milepost 63.6 to the James River Visitor Center. Take a walk to the other side of the river to the restored James River Lock.

Return to Bedford by returning southwest on The Blue Ridge Parkway to SR-43 and left back to Bedford.

## Day One



**Day Two**

Travel from Bedford to Fairy Stone State Park, Philpott Lake Park, and The Riverwalk on the Dan, and Banister Lake. From Bedford take SR-122 south for 35 miles till it meets SR-40. continue south on SR-40 for 12 miles to Timber Line Rd and turn left, go .3 miles. Bear right onto Ingramville rd for 3.8 miles. Turn left at Henry Rd, then right at Fairy Stone Park Rd. Go 3.9 miles. Road name changes to Union Bridge Rd for 4.5 miles. Turn left onto SR-623 and Fairy Stone State Park Visitor Center is at next intersection with SR-346.

From Visitor Center take SR-346 southwest .9 miles to SR-57 and turn left. Go 6.7 miles to Philpott Dam Rd for .8 miles to Visitor Center. Return south to SR-57 and turn left. Go 6.1 miles on SR-57 to US-220. Take right on US-220 and US-58 and follow to east side of Danville and Business US-29. Take right and go 2<sup>nd</sup> street on left and turn left on Craghead Rd. Go to The Crossing at The Dan area for parking and start for The Riverwalk on the Dan. Return to Business US-29 and turn right. Go to US-360 and turn right and go 29.7 miles to US-501. Turn left and go 7.3 miles to south end of bridge and boat launch at Banister Lake

**Day Three**

Visit Staunton River Battlefield State Park, Staunton River State Park, Tailrace Park and Tobacco Heritage Trail. Travel northeast from South Boston on US-360 to SR-344 (Scottsburg Rd) and turn right and travel 10 miles to Staunton River State Park. Return on Sr-344 to US-360 and turn right, go 5.1 miles. Turn left onto SR-92 (S. Main ST) for 2 miles as name changes to Clover Rd. Bear left onto Black Walnut Rd for 2.5 miles. Turn right on Fort Hill Rd to Staunton River Battlefield State Park. Return to Black Walnut Rd and take first left. Keep going to right and return to SR-92 and turn left. Continue on SR-92 through Chase City and south to US-58 at Boynton. Go left (east) on US-58 for 5.8 miles and turn right on SR-4. Go 6.4 miles to Tailrace Park at John H. Kerr Dam. Return north on SR-4 to US-58 and turn right. Go 12.6 miles to La Crosse and turn right at North Main St. Look for Tobacco Heritage Trail. Trail goes east to Broadnax on former railroad road bed.

**Day Two**



**Day Three**

