

Driving Directions

Day One

Visit Red Hill, Prestwoud, and Occoneechee State Park.

Accommodations at Berry Hill Plantation Resort.

Travel to Red Hill. From US-501 in Brookneal, go east and north on SR-40 or Wickliffe Ave. Turn right on Dog Creek Rd. Take next right on Patrick Henry Rd and next right on Red Hill Rd. Follow Red Hill Rd to Visitor Center.

From Red Hill go north on Red Hill Rd. Turn left onto Staunton Hill Rd. Name changes to Patrick Henry Rd. Turn right onto Mt. Calvary Rd. Turn right onto SR-40 (Wickliffe Ave) and travel to Charlotte Courthouse. From Charlotte Courthouse take SR-47 southeast to US-15. Turn right on US-15 and continue to Prestwoud Drive on right. Continue on road to entrance to Prestwoud.

Return to US-15 and turn right. Continue to junction with US-58 and turn left. First entrance road on right is to Occoneechee State Park. Return to US-58 and turn left. Follow US-58 to South Boston and US-501. Turn right on US-501 and go through town to Greens Folly Rd on left. Turn left on Greens Folly Rd which becomes River Rd. Continue on road to Berry Hill Plantation Resort entrance on left.



AMERICAN DRIVING VACATIONS
PRESENTS:

Travel Southern Virginia Driving Tour 3: Meet Southern Virginia's Most Notable Citizens 3 Days/2 Nights

If it's history you're looking for, we have it all. The Travel Southern Virginia region is a place where you can find history outdoors, visit historic museums, meet Southern Virginia's notable citizens, stroll historic towns and tour historic buildings. Our attractions range from Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest and the National D-Day Memorial to the Sutherlin Mansion, Patrick Henry's Red Hill and the R.J. Reynolds Homestead. Meet them all. Try our Driving Tour to easily visit the many locations.



Day One

We've directed you first today to Patrick Henry's Red Hill, the Patrick Henry National Memorial. It's not as grand as the homes of America's other founding fathers, yet there is a certain serenity at Red Hill. Having lived in 11 other locations, this is the property where Henry retired in 1794 to live out the last five years of his life. Henry chose Red Hill as "one of the best garden spots of the world." Looking out over the Staunton River, one can understand the appeal of the property and its landscapes. Altogether there are seven historic structures to explore, as well as a museum with more Henry memorabilia than any other location. Even though Henry's Law Office is the only original structure remaining on the property and the remainder are reconstructions on original foundations, that fact does not take away from the history of this remarkable man.

A short distance away, Prestwoud, constructed in 1760, is a massive combination Georgian-Federal style house that amazingly stayed in the family of Sir Peyton Skipwith and Lady Jean (a cousin of Thomas Jefferson) until 1914, after being inherited by their second son. The interior of the home is best known for its 18th and 19th century wallpapers which have been copied in a special collection offered by Scalandre. Tradition has it that the property, once home to Blue Stone Castle, was won by Sir Skipwith in a three day card game with William Byrd, II, of Westover on the James River. Substantial African American interpretation exists on the property as well.

From there, it's over to the Occoneechee State Park, named after the Occoneechee Indians who lived on an island on the Roanoke River near the present day park. They were ultimately slaughtered by Virginia Councilman Nathaniel Bacon and a group of men from Henrico County. Unfortunately his attack succeeded only in destroying Indians who were perhaps the friendliest to settlers in the Commonwealth. Nearly 200 years after the attack,



William Townes built a plantation on this land by the water, complete with an 1839 20-room mansion, horse stables, a smokehouse, servants' quarters and beautiful terraced gardens. The mansion caught fire and burned in 1898 but the landscaping and gardens can still be seen in the park today. Exhibits at the Visitor Center illustrate "The Occoneechee Story" in a living hut and artifacts

As you approach Berry Hill Plantation Resort for your accommodations this evening, you'll be marveling at one of the finest examples of Greek Revival architecture in Virginia. Moving up the tree-lined drive, you'd almost expect Scarlett to slip through the massive columns and glide down the stairs to meet you. Built in 1842, this eight-columned home is the quintessential southern antebellum mansion, once the seat of one of the most successful tobacco plantations in the region. Previous owners of the property included Colonel Edward Carrington, who fought alongside General Nathaniel Greene in the Revolutionary War. Berry Hill lay in ruins for nearly 50 years before being meticulously restored to its original pre-Civil War grandeur.

Day Two

Visit Sutherlin Mansion, Lady Astor's House, R. J. Reynolds Homestead.

Depart from Berry Hill Resort and turn right on River Road. Continue on Greens Folly Rd to US-501 and turn right. Go south on US-501 to US-58 and turn right. Follow US-58, 360 to Danville. Turn left on US-29 Business (Main St) and go to Sutherlin Mansion.

From Sutherlin Mansion go southwest on Main St to Broad St and turn right to Lady Astor's House at 117 Broad St.

From Broad St, return back to Main St and turn right on US-29 Business. Go to US-58 and go southwest to Martinsville. Go around Martinsville on US-58 to Abram Penn Highway and turn right. Continue to Homestead Lane on left beyond Critz to R. J. Reynolds Homestead.

From R. J. Reynolds Homestead return to US-58 and turn left. Go back towards Martinsville and turn north on US-220. Continue on US-220 north to SR-122 at Rocky Mount. Take SR-122 northeast to Bedford.

Day Two

Today, your first stop was once considered "the grandest house in Danville." Sutherlin Mansion was built as a city home by William Sutherlin in 1856. This allowed him to oversee the second largest tobacco factory in Virginia, still standing at the corner of Lynn and Loyal Streets. Serving as the Quartermaster for Danville, after resigning as Mayor, Sutherlin worked diligently to ensure that supplies reached the front lines. The Mansion served as the "Last Capital of the Confederacy" when President Jefferson Davis made his way from Richmond to points farther south. The government remained in Danville until receiving news of Lee's surrender at Appomattox in April 10. Now home to the Danville Museum of Fine Arts and History, the house has been restored to appear as it did when Jefferson Davis was in residence.

Still in downtown Danville, you'll be visiting the Viscountess Nancy Astor, born Nancy Langhorne in Danville in 1879. She ultimately became the first woman to sit in the British House of Commons. Her sister Irene, married artist Charles Dana Gibson, who immortalized his wife as the famous "Gibson Girl," the international fashion ideal at the turn of the century. The Langhorne House is open by appointment only.

From there, a drive into Patrick County takes you to the 1843 restored home which was the birthplace of Richard Joshua Reynolds, founder of the highly successful R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. The descendants of his parents, Hardin and Nancy Reynolds, have brought together many of the heirlooms that originally furnished the house and property, to return it to its pre-Civil War appearance when the family was in residence. Possessions tell the story of the life of a 19th century farmer, who was also a successful tobacco grower and manufacturer. Another son, Richard Samuel, was the founder of the Reynolds Metal Company in Richmond.



Day Three

Your first stop this morning is Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest, that was wrenched from near ruin in 1984. Jefferson used this country retreat to escape the constant guests and hospitality of Monticello. Begun in 1806, Jefferson's writings reveal his pleasure in the quality of the design of his octagonal retreat, "When finished, it will be the best dwelling house in the state, except that of Monticello; perhaps preferable to that, as more proportioned to the faculties of a private citizen. It was a place where Jefferson got to play with his grandchildren, read in his study and relax in the mountain air without the trapping of a statesman. As the house deteriorated, passing through multiple ownerships, the 4,800 acres that Jefferson amassed gave way to local subdivisions. Today, with the restorations nearly complete, you can see how Jefferson lived at Poplar Forest and explore the artifacts that have been uncovered right around the house.

In nearby Bedford, you can begin to feel the might of the forces as you approach the massive granite-clad Operation Overlord Monument. Don't think for a minute that this is any ordinary monument. By the time you have explored the whole presentation, you'll realize that the monument has not only memorialized the soldiers who fought in this famous World War II battle, but also taught you about how the battle occurred and how it felt. Strategically placed water "bullets" zing past the sculptured soldiers leaving the landing craft and more soldiers can be seen just barely reaching the top of the precipice over which they had to climb to reach their goal on Omaha Beach. For those not familiar with the battle, this is a great piece of living history. For those who are, you can see and feel the action.

A bit further south, you'll learn the story of Booker T. Washington, born on a small tobacco farm in southern Virginia in 1856. He overcame near-impossible odds to become one of the most influential black men of his time. He learned the love of education after carrying the books of his master's daughter to school. "I had the feeling that to get into a schoolhouse and study would be about the same as getting into paradise. After migrating to West Virginia and working in a salt mine, beginning at 4AM, to earn money for education, Washington walked most of the 500 miles to Hampton, Virginia to enroll in Hampton Institute. He worked his way through college and later founded the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama in 1881. His famous autobiography, "Up From Slavery," reveals the story of a man driven to learn and to teach others the importance of education, economic prosperity and the value of hard work.

Day Three

Visit Poplar Forest, National D-Day Memorial, and Booker T. Washington National Monument.

Travel from Bedford east on US-221, 460. to SR-811. Go north on SR-811 to Bateman Bridge Rd and turn right. Turn right on Fox Hall Rd and go to Poplar Forest. Return on Bateman Bridge Rd to SR-811 southwest and turn right on US-221, 460. Go to Bedford and turn right on Burks Mill Rd, SR-122 Business. Turn left on Overlord Circle to National D-Day Memorial.

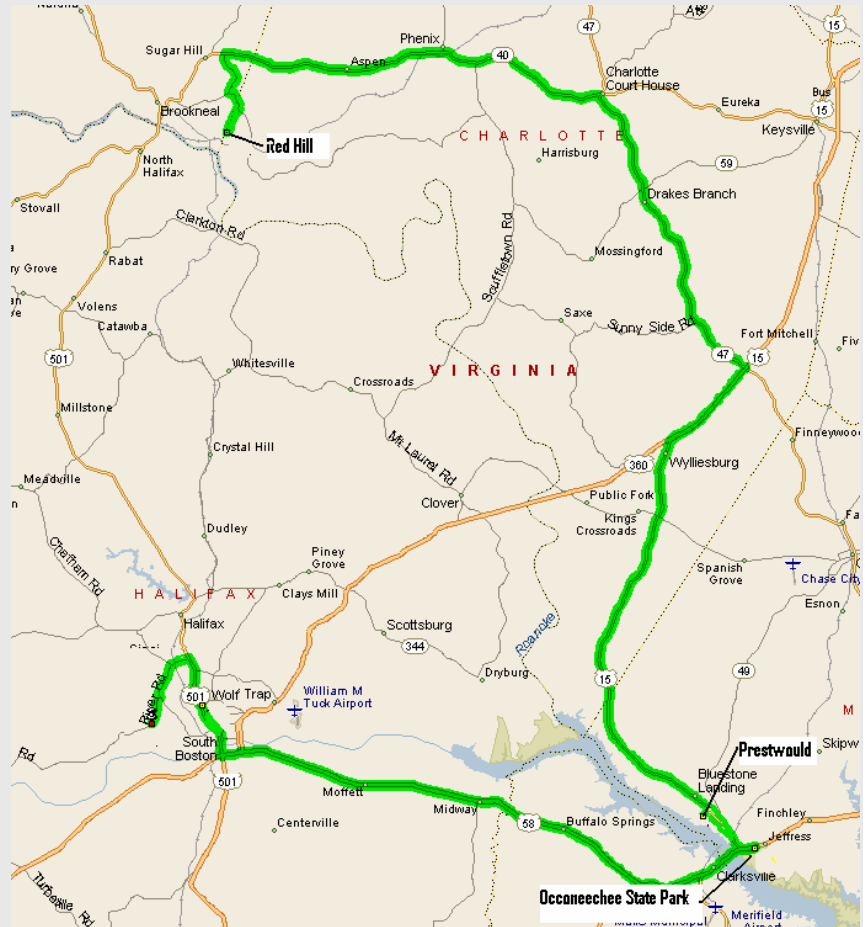
From National D-Day Memorial return south on SR-122. Pass over Smith Mountain Lake bridge and go 4.5 miles to entrance to Booker T. Washington National Monument.

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Day Two

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