

Doswell, Virginia

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It's great that you are coming to the International Rally in Doswell, VA, this summer! The Commonwealth of Virginia and its four Wally Byam Airstream Clubs are ready to welcome you! Especially because there's a good chance you are a Virginian but don't know it! If the year was 1755 instead of 2019, and if you were traveling in a straight line from the far west to get to Doswell, you would be starting and ending your journey in Virginia! How is this possible? Just consult the famous "John Mitchell"



Mitchell Map of 1755

map, published in the mid-1700s. Mitchell was a doctor and cartographer in Urbanna, VA. His map, the most accurate of its time, shows that Virginia's colonial boundaries started on the east coast of North America, extended westward to the Mississippi River, and then continued all the way through

unknown territory to the west coast of the continent. So, in 1755, if you lived anywhere between what is today Ohio/Kentucky and northern California, you would be a Virginia resident!

Of course, modern day Virginia is somewhat smaller, but its attractions are hugely popular with visitors. You will soon enjoy its colonial past, Civil War sites, and scenic beauty. In this, the second of six Blue Beret articles, we provide a list of significant Virginia places lying west of Doswell. While some can be seen during long "day-trips," most require a lengthier drive and more on-site time. You may wish to add them (and a few extra days) to your itinerary and your route of travel, especially if you are driving to Doswell from the west. Here are our picks:

- Jefferson's **Monticello**. Take a nickel out of your pocket or purse and look at its reverse side. What you see is the image of a spectacular home, built in the Palladian style, by the great man who served as our third



Monticello

U.S. president. Thomas Jefferson lived, worked, and is buried at his

beloved Monticello. He built his plantation atop a small mountain overlooking Charlottesville, VA. Tour his wonderful house, walk his spacious grounds, and spend some time in the adjacent museum to learn about the man who wrote the Declaration of Independence and whose name is synonymous with American democracy.

- While in **Charlottesville**, visit any of the three dozen wineries in the area, see the University of Virginia (original rotunda building designed by Jefferson), and shop/dine on Market Street, a downtown pedestrian mall. Nearby campground, "Misty Mountain," located just off Exit 107 of I-64, on U.S. 250 South, about 14 miles west of downtown.

- **Madison's Montpelier**. From Monticello, it's about a 30-minute drive through horse farm country to James Madison's home, "Montpelier," near



Montpelier

Orange, VA. Here, the "Father of the Constitution" and fourth president lived on a 3,000 acre sprawling plantation with wife, Dolly. The estate, purchased in 1901 and modernized by the William duPont family to serve as a horse farm, became a National Trust property in 1966. All of the duPont modifications were removed over a period of several years. Now the home is back to the way it looked when the Madisons lived there. On the grounds are a museum, a multi-media exhibit about slavery, a gift shop, and cafeteria. Nearby campground: Shenandoah Hills, on U.S. 29 in Madison, VA.

- Shenandoah National Park & Skyline Drive. The Blue Ridge Mountains rise to the west of Charlottesville and Orange. Situated along the crest of this mountain chain are Shenandoah



Blue Ridge Mountains

National Park and the Skyline Drive. If it's not raining or hazy, the viewpoints along the Drive are breathtaking. There are lots of hiking trails. Driving west from Doswell, you can enter the Skyline Drive at

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its southern end (Milepost 105) and drive northward. To do this takes several hours (best done slowly and WITHOUT a trailer in tow), but the brief stops you can make at 70 overlooks are worth it.

- **Luray Caverns.** If you like caverns, arguably the largest and most famous underground wonder in Virginia is Luray Caverns. You can



Stalagmite Organ Luray

exit the Skyline Drive at Thornton Gap (U.S. 211, between mileposts 32 and 31). The caverns are 11 miles west of the Skyline Drive on Route 211. The town of Luray has two campgrounds, KOA and Yogi Bear.

- **Shenandoah Valley, Staunton & Lexington.** Luray is in the northern half of the famous Valley. By continuing west on U.S. 211 to Harrisonburg (home of James Madison University), you can turn southward down the Valley on I-81, or better yet, take U.S. 11 (less traffic, slower, and nice towns along the way). You may want to stop in Staunton (pronounced STAN-ton) to see Woodrow Wilson's birthplace, museum, and presidential library; and nearby is the Museum of Frontier Culture, showing how the Shenandoah Valley was settled and who settled it. Further south is the lovely town of Lexington, home to the Virginia Military Institute (VMI) with its excellent George C. Marshall Museum; and Washington & Lee University, where Robert E.



Lee Chapel - R.E. Lee tomb location

Lee is entombed in Lee Chapel. Also in Lexington are Stonewall Jackson's home and grave. Nearby campground: Glen

Maury Park in Buena Vista.

- **Appomattox.** A bit further southward, if you are traversing Virginia east/west, you may be driving on U.S. 460. Along that route are several places of interest, including: Appomattox Courthouse National Historic Park—the site of Lee's surrender to Grant in 1865—hastening the end of the Civil War.

- **National D-Day Memorial.** Situated further west along U.S. 460 in Bedford, this large outdoor park tells the story of the June 1944 WWII Normandy landings. You will walk with a docent through picturesque monuments, fountains, and displays.

- **City of Roanoke.** Keep driving west on U.S. 460, to reach the City of Roanoke. Set along Blue Ridge and the Appalachian Trail, Roanoke



Roanoke

is southwest Virginia's largest city with a long history involving railroads and coal. You can visit the Virginia Transportation Museum, walk the historic City Market

where there are dozens of shops and good restaurants, and explore a new downtown art museum.

- **Highland Haven Airstream Park.** Located off the Blue Ridge Parkway and U.S. 221 in Copper Hill, this campground is about a



Highland Haven Sunset

25-minute drive from downtown Roanoke. This is a very special Airstream-only campground, perched atop a mountain. From its campsites you will see unsurpassed panoramas and sunsets.

Highland Haven offers Airstreamers a peaceful resting place after a long day of touring. Visit their website for reservations.

If you still don't see anything on this list that interests you, in the next issue of Blue Beret we will describe Virginia attractions you will encounter traveling southeastward from the Doswell rally site. Stay tuned!

For the preliminary schedule, tours, vendors and the most up-to-date information, go to <https://doswell.wbcci.net/>



Virginia Points of Interest West of The Meadow Event Park	# miles from Doswell (Driving time)	Website	GPS Coordinates
Monticello, Home of Thomas Jefferson 931 Thomas Jefferson Pkwy Charlottesville, VA 22902 434-984-9800	83.0 west (75 min.)	home.monticello.org	38.00566N -78.45297W
Montpelier, Home of James Madison 11350 Constitution Hwy Montpelier Station, VA 22957 540-672-2728, ext. 450	73.5 west (75 min.), or from Monticello: 29.5 northeast (35 min.)	www.montpelier.org	38.21766N -78.17074W Visitor Center
Charlottesville & Area Wineries More than 30 vineyards/wineries within a 20-mile radius of Charlottesville.	81.5 west to downtown (75 min.)	https://monticellowinetrail.com	38.03035N -78.48000W Town center
Luray Caverns 101 Cave Hill Rd, Luray, VA 22835 540-743-6551	104.1 northwest (120 min.)	https://luraycaverns.com	38.66374N -78.48371W
Skyline Drive and Shenandoah National Park (On the Blue Ridge Mountains) 800.847.4878	103.5 west southern end of Skyline Drive (90 min.)	https://visitskylinedrive.org/	38.03758N -78.85623W Rockfish Gap Ent. Skyline Drive
The Shenandoah Valley (Visit Staunton - Woodrow Wilson home; Lexington - VMI, George Marshall Museum, Stonewall Jackson house) 800-847-4878	120.3 west taking I-64 to Staunton, VA (110 min.), then to Lexington 38.0 southeast on I-81 (40 min.)	www.visitshenandoah.org	38.14989N -79.06857W Downtown Staunton, Woodrow Wilson Library
Appomattox Courthouse National Historic Park Lee's surrender to Grant, April 9, 1865 434-352-8987 x226	115.4 west (125 min.)	www.nps.gov/apco/index.htm	37.37486N -78.79833W
National D-Day Memorial 3 Overlord Circle Bedford, VA 24523 540-587-3619	157.5 west (160 min.)	www.dday.org	37.32968N -79.53608W
City of Roanoke Visitor Center 101 Shenandoah Avenue, NE Roanoke, VA 24016 540-342-6025	184.6 west (190 min.)	www.visitroanokeva.com	37.27373N -79.93833W Downtown Visitor Center
Highland Haven Airstream Park 6517 Highland Haven Road, NE Copper Hill, VA 24079 540-200-9567	213.5 west (220 min.)	vahighlandhaven.com/	38.05084N -80.19183W