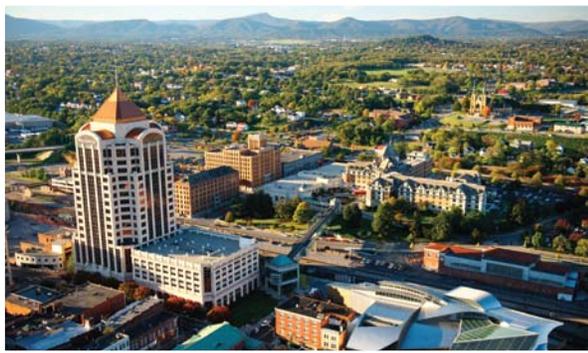




CAPTURE AN INSPIRING BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAIN POINT OF VIEW



PUBLIC RELATIONS CONTACT

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Virginia's Blue Ridge – Urban Sophistication Amid Majestic Mountains

The Roanoke Valley is a picturesque community nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. As the largest metropolitan center in western Virginia, the Roanoke Valley is a vibrant region with an impressive arts community, rich history and an amazing culinary scene.

The mix of scenic beauty, outdoor recreation and urban sophistication makes the Roanoke Valley an ideal destination for families, couples or friends.



Roanoke Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau – www.visitvablueridge.com

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Story Ideas

Surrounded by mountains means outdoor adventure all around

The Blue Ridge Mountains offer endless outdoor fun and adventure. The famous *Blue Ridge Parkway* – the most visited unit of the National Park Service – is an ideal place for a scenic drive or a relaxing bike ride. More biking is available on mountain bike trails around the valley or 20+ miles of continuous greenway along the Roanoke River. Hikers can stretch their legs on miles of trails, including the famed *Appalachian Trail*, that lead to waterfalls, mountain views or even secluded swimming holes. For water recreation, there is boating on *Smith Mountain Lake* or paddling and fishing on the many streams and rivers, including the acclaimed *Upper James River Water Trail*.



A unique railroad past that is always present

Once a sleepy little village called “Big Lick,” Roanoke became a prosperous and bustling city with the arrival of the railroad. It’s still a hub of rail activity. The influence of the railroad can be seen in many ways across the Roanoke Valley, especially in places like the *O. Winston Link Museum*®, the *Virginia Museum of Transportation* and the railwalk.

Treasure in the Roanoke Valley: A Shopper’s Delight

Modern day treasure hunters are encouraged to explore the eclectic shopping scene in Virginia’s Blue Ridge. Whether you’re seeking fine antiques or fine wines, fashionable trends or inspiring artwork, the boutiques and specialty shops in the Roanoke Valley yield wonderful surprises for all who love to shop.



Hitting the high notes with live music and festivals

As the largest metropolitan region in Virginia’s Blue Ridge Mountains, the Roanoke Valley hosts many great festivals and big name concerts. It’s also home to a thriving music scene that includes the

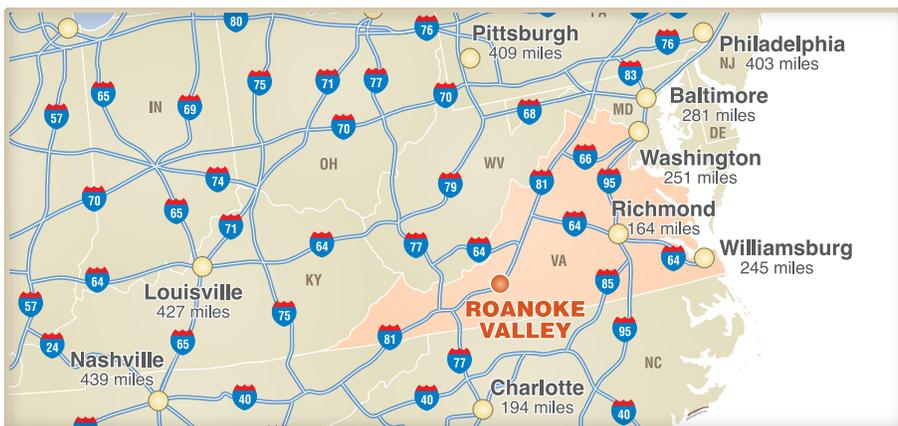
Roanoke Symphony Orchestra, *Opera Roanoke* and world-class venues like the *Jefferson Center*. Just south of Roanoke, *Franklin County* in Virginia’s Blue Ridge is the eastern gateway to *The Crooked Road – Virginia’s Heritage Music Trail*.

What’s New?

Center in the Square has been a treasured part of the Roanoke Valley’s cultural life for three decades. In 2013, *Center in the Square* unveiled its extraordinary \$30 million renovation. The seven-story complex, located in the heart of downtown Roanoke, now includes a butterfly habitat, two 500-gallon jellyfish aquariums and a rooftop garden with an overlook deck.



Food Network Magazine included newly opened Roanoke restaurant *The River and Rail* in its recent feature “50 States, 50 Ice Cream Treats.” *The River and Rail* was noted for its unique banana pudding served in a small jar with jalapeño coconut sorbet.



Destination Facts

POPULATION:

288,000 (MSA)

LOCATION:

Interstate 81

Main Exit - 143 (Interstate 581)

Blue Ridge Parkway

Mileposts 106, 112, 120, 121

Virginia is for Lovers ♥

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