



A Weekend In Coal Country | Suggested Itinerary for Non-Trail Riders

Friday

Arrive in Williamson by lunch! The reason? 34:Ate is a local favorite and they're open from 11AM-3PM Monday through Friday. They offer guests incredible local specials and is one of Williamson's most unique dining experiences. Tell the girls that the CVB sent you!

After lunch, walk up 2nd Avenue and you'll pass by some of Williamson's retailers including Melisa's Baskets Galore (this is a stop that will definitely make the girls happy in your group). Don't worry guys, just up & across the street is Williamson Gun & Archery.

Just past the Mingo County Courthouse is the Tug Valley Chamber of Commerce located inside the World-Famous Coal House. Built of 65 Tons of bituminous coal, the building has served as Williamson's most popular tourist destination since 1933. The Coal House has welcomed guests from 49 out of 50 states and over 30 countries. Spend some time inside to check out local artifacts in the display case and this is a great place to ask questions about the area. There's also a gift shop with some items celebrating the legacies of our area.

Once you're finished at the Coal House, continue up 2nd Avenue and walk into the Mountaineer Hotel. The hotel welcomes visitors and has hosted notable guests throughout its history including President John F. Kennedy, Loretta Lynn, Hank Williams, and many more! Each room is named after the guest who stayed in that specific room. In the lobby, there's plenty of historic memorabilia and we recommend you look "UP"! In the center of the lobby hangs a massive chandelier that is the same as ones that are located inside the White House.

After the Mountaineer, take a walk back down 2nd Avenue to Logan Street and head toward the floodwall (sloped grass area with steps). You'll pass the Mingo Memorial Building which is now our public library. Across the street and just around the corner of the City Insurance building is a "Must-See" stop. All of the historic floods are marked on the wall for folks to see just how high the mighty Tug Fork River has reached over its history. Look at the record setting flood of 1977 and keep in mind, we didn't have the modern flood wall until 1990.

Cross the street and walk up to the top of the flood-wall. Here, you can head north or south and have a nice walk along one of the two downtown sections of flood-wall. This is a particularly neat location to see in the evening as the sun sets across the valley.

For Dinner, check out Sazon Mexican Restaurant on Prichard Street and make sure you get some fried ice cream for dessert!

After dinner, check in to your hotel, lodge, or B&B and get rested up! Your weekend in Coal Country is just getting started!

(If you need lodging recommendations go to: visitcoalcountry.org)

Saturday

Head to Tracks End restaurant on 2nd Avenue for a traditional made-to-order country breakfast.

If you're in town between May & October, head by the Williamson Farmers Market (located at the corner of 3rd Avenue & Harvey Street). Locally grown produce, honey, and handmade crafts can be found. There's often local musicians being featured and more!

After the Farmer's Market (or if you're here out of their season), hop in the car and head north on US-119 for 12.5 Miles. You're in for a real Mingo County adventure. Look for Rt. 65 North toward Lenore and you'll turn left off of US-119. At Lenore (2.8 Miles later), turn right onto county road 3/04. Before this was a county road, this was the main-line of the Norfolk & Western Railway. You'll pass over several single-lane railroad bridges and after 6.5 miles, you'll reach a hidden gem of Mingo County: Laurel Lake! The lake is a great place to get out and take in the sites and if you fish, definitely bring your tackle box.

Next, you'll jump back on county road 3/04 and continue to head past Laurel Lake toward the community of Dingess. As you come around the final curve, you'll see it right in-front of you: The Dingess Tunnel. This incredible feat of engineering opened in 1892 and is 3,327' Long (4/5 of mile). It was the main-line tunnel of the Norfolk & Western Railway from 1892 to 1904 and then became a single-lane highway tunnel in 1913 as it has remained to present day. Driving through the tunnel is one of the coolest experiences you can have while in "Coal Country" no matter when you're here. Be aware though, where it is a single lane tunnel, you can not enter until all oncoming traffic has passed entirely through. Once you travel through, you can turn around at the next intersection and head back toward Williamson on the way which you came in (Rt. 65 South and US-119 South).

On your way back into Williamson, watch for "Victory Lane" road on the left and pull off at Sport Stop Gas Station. Sport Stop offers daily specials for lunch and we highly recommend their pizza rolls, as well as any deserts they have on the day you're there!

After lunch (or grab your lunch to go, for a picnic), take a hike to Death Rock; Williamson's best scenic overlook! A map with parking/hiking information can be found on our website. The hike is not extremely difficult but takes around 1 Hour to 1 ½ Hours to reach the top. Williamson sits at roughly 650' and Death Rock is above 1200' so the elevation profile is a quick climb! There's even a picnic table located at the top for your convenience!

Once you return off the mountain, head back to your lodging facility to get ready for dinner.

Saturday Night in Williamson means you'll be dining at Starter's Sports Bar & Grill, a local favorite and a "happening" place to be on Saturday Night. Be sure to have a Devil Anse beer while you're there and sometimes, there is live music performing.

Speaking of live music, afterwards head to Delbarton's Opry House for live country and bluegrass music which occurs every Saturday Night starting at 6PM!

Sunday

Wake up and head to Tudor's Biscuit World for a big breakfast in South Williamson. Then, jump back in the car and visit the Hatfield McCoy Feud Sites! There's a driving tour map that you can print off on our website (visitcoalcountry.org). Departing from Williamson will take you by The McCoy Well, Hog Trial Cabin, and Paw Paw Tree Shooting site before arriving into Matewan.

Matewan is the epicenter of history in the area. Not only were Hatfield McCoy Feud occurrences right in its back-yard but so was the Matewan Massacre. As you cross the bridge into the town, turn left into the Matewan Depot Replica Museum. This is the best local museum to visit and houses some incredible historical artifacts.

When you're finished at the Depot, walk down Mate Street and visit the site where bullets are still lodged in the building from the Matewan Massacre. If you want to meet a real-life Hatfield, stop in at the Historic Matewan House Bed & Breakfast.

Once you're finished up in Matewan, head north on Rt. 65 to the King Coal Highway (US-52) atop Mary Taylor Mountain. Turn right and enjoy Mingo County's most scenic 9.5 Mile Drive. The King Coal Highway is the highest road you can drive on in our county and reaches nearly 2,200'. The views on both sides of the road are incredible and if you pull off at Mingo Central High School's Harless Stadium you are able to see West Virginia, Kentucky and Virginia! (Nearly 35 Miles on a clear day). We should also mention the Miners were the 2016 Class "AA" State Football Champs, the only undefeated team in the history of Mingo County at 14-0.

Continue out the King Coal Highway and turn left at the intersection toward Horsepen Mountain. At the next intersection, head straight onto Rt. 44. You'll go 6 Miles and pull off the right side of the road at the Hatfield Family Cemetery. This is the burial site of Devil Anse and worth the short hike up the hill to see his Italian marble statue that stands over his gravesite. This is also a great photo-up and a common stop for visitors and trail riders alike.

After the Hatfield Family Cemetery, head back south on Rt. 44 to Horsepen Mountain and turn left onto Rt. 52 South (Toward Gilbert). You'll drive a little over 11 Miles and watch on the left for "Twin Hollow Campground & Cabins", turn left. You'll slowly ascend this awesome mountain-top vista where Trail 12 BBQ is located. This is the ultimate ending to your Sunday and the sunset at Twin Hollow is hard to beat.

Following a great meal and sunset, jump back onto US-52 North and head back to Williamson to wrap up your stay and weekend. We do recommend taking the King Coal Highway back (as opposed to "Old US-52" as it cuts around 10 minutes off the trip).

The final portion of this trip is the most important; Be sure to come back and see us! Each season presents a different environment around you but while the leaves change, our people don't! We look forward to seeing you on your next journey to Coal Country!