

# Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway

*The Quiet Far Reaches of Delaware*



3 Days/2 Nights

Gateway City: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



In the quiet far reaches of New Castle County in northern Delaware, nature stitched together a tapestry of meandering creeks, narrow stream valleys, steep wooded hillsides, and bucolic farmlands into a complex, interconnected water system known as the Red Clay Creek Watershed. The protected area sustains an abundance of plants, animals, and some of the richest old growth forests in the region. Its exceptionally scenic landscape is considered a hidden gem in the mid-Atlantic. You can enjoy this delightful landscape on the Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway, a 27-mile route that mimics a winding road and river network once traversed by horse and buggy, that links historic homes, quaint small towns, and pastoral flood plains. Discover a unique story of the valley as you twist and turn over ridge lines, underneath covered bridges, on backroads that conform to the contours of the land, linking quiet pastures to the urban center of development. From rivers and marshlands, to backroads and working farms, Delaware's heritage is on full view along the Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway, where water, roads, and history intertwine.





### **Touring the Byway**

We recommend starting your journey in Philadelphia, before traveling to Wilmington, the largest city in Delaware and the economic hub of the Red Clay region. Tour Nemours, a splendid country estate with the largest formal French gardens in the country, discover over 12,000 works of art and the 9-acre sculpture garden at the Delaware Art Museum, and visit the DuPont Environmental Education Center located in the Russell Peterson Wildlife Refuge. At night, step back in time in a room at the historic and elegant Hotel DuPont.

On Day Two, head north on DE-52, one of the winding roads linked to the Red Clay Creek and its watershed, to visit Winterthur Museums and Gardens, before turning northwest to the start of the Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway. Visit Auburn State Park, before walking the nature trails and Important Bird Area of Ashland Nature Center, and a stop at Ashland Covered Bridge, which has been protecting

the creek below since 1860. Afterwards, relax in a luxurious room at the Inn at Montchanin Village and Spa.

Continue meandering along the Byway route on Day Three, before exploring the gardens at Mt. Cuba Center, home to some of the most spectacular wildflower displays in the region, and a pause at the 1850 Wooddale Covered Bridge. Cap off your trip with a ride on the Wilmington & Western Railroad, an antique steam locomotive that travels throughout the Red Clay Valley.

From there, we wish you a safe passage if you're continuing on another Delaware Scenic Byway, or a safe and pleasant journey home.

## MAP

## DAY ONE



### **Philadelphia**

Walking the streets of this very historic and well preserved city, it is hard to imagine that once at the water's edge, women "had lighted their fires on the bare earth and slung their kettle between two poles on a stick traverse," outside of the caves they lived in. It's even harder to imagine that the part of the city laid out by William Penn, now only encompasses a few blocks amidst the thriving metropolis. It must have been rousing when the delegates and townspeople cheered as the Declaration of Independence was read and the Liberty Bell rang out. If you have not previously visited Philadelphia, be sure to tour Independence National Historical Park and the world-renowned Philadelphia Museum of Art, with lunch at the Reading Terminal. It's a very short distance from Philly to Wilmington, DE.



## **Wilmington**

This largest and most populous city in the state of Delaware was built on the site of Fort Christina, the first Swedish settlement in North America in 1638. It evolved through a Dutch period beginning in 1655 and British colonization in 1664, and finally granted a charter by the English King in 1739. Wilmington found its foothold as a major American city when E.I. du Pont began making gunpowder in a mill on the Brandywine River just outside of Wilmington in 1802.

The DuPont company became a major supplier of explosives to the U.S. military and subsequently had a profound impact on Delaware, fueling the economy for decades. In addition to being first in production of gunpowder, by 1868, Wilmington was producing more iron ships than the rest of the country combined, plus ranked second in carriages and leather. Post-war prosperity introduced residences west of the city, creating the beginning of "suburban development".

Over the years, the duPont family and their affiliates continued to act as devoted patrons of the arts and dedicated conservationists. Today, the former grand homes and properties located throughout Wilmington, and the surrounding Brandywine Valley, have become cultural attractions with international appeal on their own.





### **Nemours Estate**

Alfred I. du Pont loved showering his new wife with gifts, including building her a 47,000 square foot French neoclassical home, complete with “jardin a la francaise” formal gardens, with 105 rooms spread out over five floors, surrounded by 3,000 acres. Even though the home is classic architecture, it was equipped with the latest technology available in 1907. Nearly 160 jets at the center of a one-acre pool in the spectacular garden, shoot water 12 feet into the air. When they are off, the entire “Long Walk” extending from the mansion to the reflecting pool is reflected in the water.

1600 Rockland Road, Wilmington, DE 19803, 302-651-6912, Tu-Su 10AM-5PM, Adults \$12

## **Delaware Art Museum**

The museum features 12,000 works of art that were produced, exhibited and collected in the Brandywine region, including historical and contemporary American art, British pre-Raphaelite art, American illustration and storytelling, the 9-acre Copeland Sculpture Garden, and the Helen Farr Sloan Library and Archives. Highlights include significant holdings of work by John Sloan, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and Howard Pyle.

2301 Kentmere Parkway, Wilmington, DE 19806, 302-571-9590, W, F-Su  
10AM-4PM, Th 10AM-8PM, Adults \$14.





## **DuPont Environmental Education Center/Russell Peterson Wildlife Refuge**

The DuPont Environmental Education Center on the Christina River, is located on the edge of the 212-acre freshwater tidal Russell W. Peterson Urban Wildlife Refuge. The refuge is home to bald eagles, wood ducks, beavers, dragonflies, river otters, and painted turtles. The Visitor Center features panoramic river and marsh views, a 10-acre ornamental garden, a quarter-mile handicap-accessible pond loop extending into the marsh, and trailhead access to the 5.5-mile Jack A Markell Trail. Pond loop audio tour also available.

1400 Delmarva Lane, Wilmington, DE 19801, 302-656-1940, Tu-Sat 11AM-5PM, Sun Noon-4PM, Free





### **Destination Distinctive Accommodations**

**Hotel DuPont** 42 W. 11th Street, Wilmington, DE, 19801, 302-594-3100 Once the headquarters for the DuPont Company, guests are transported back to the Gilded Age in a landmark example of Italian and Renaissance architecture.

### **Destination Distinctive Dining**

**Le Cavalier** 42 W. 11th Street, Wilmington, DE, 19801 302-594-3153 Located inside the Hotel DuPont, Le Cavalier is a new school, modern brasserie. Reservations recommended.

**Chelsea Tavern**, 821 North Market Street, Wilmington, DE 19801 302-482-3333, Popular gastro pub using only the freshest local ingredients complemented with craft beers.

**Big Fish Grill at the Riverfront** 720 Juston Street, Wilmington, DE 19801 302-652-3474 Highly rated local seafood.

**Banks Seafood**, 101 South Market Street, Wilmington, DC 19801, 302-777-1500 More great seafood.

### **Destination Distinctive Retail**

**Riverfront Market**, 3 South Orange Street, Wilmington, DE 19801

**A.R. Morris Jewelers** 802 Market St., Wilmington, DE 19801, 302-888-2436 A wide selection of engagement rings, wedding bands, jewelry, watches, and other fine gifts.

**Town and Shore**, 221 North Market Street, Wilmington, DE 19801, 302-648-4516 Clothing, accessories, luxury handcrafted leather goods.

**Morgan's of Wilmington**, 222 Delaware Street, Wilmington, DE 19801, 302-658-0968 Women's boutique.



## DAY TWO

### **Winterthur Museum and Gardens**

This incredible estate is more than a historic home. The former residence of Henry Francis du Pont, renowned antiques collector and horticulturist, holds one of the most important collections of Americana in the United States, displayed in 175 period rooms, filled with 90,000 objects. The collection, spanning 1640 to 1860, contains some of the most important pieces of American furniture and fine art in the world. The Winterthur Library includes more than 87,000 volumes and approximately 500,000 manuscripts and images, mostly related to American history, decorative arts, and architecture. The mansion is surrounded by gardens that reflect the artistic vision of DuPont, spread over nearly 1,000 acres of forests, meadows, farmland and waterways, a masterpiece of color and design with a year round succession of blooms. Enjoy the gardens on foot or on a narrated tram ride. 5105 Kennett Pike, Winterthur, DE 19735, 800-448-3883, Tu-Sun 10AM-5PM, Adults \$20





## **Auburn Valley State Park**

One of the more unique State Parks in the country, nestled on Red Clay Creek, holds the world's largest operating collection of Stanley Steamer cars, along with the historic Marshall Brothers Paper Mill, left completely undisturbed, and the Queen Anne mansion owned by the brothers. Outside the former National Vulcanized Fiber site, the estate is surrounded with forest and wetlands, plus 19<sup>th</sup> century bridges that were brought to the property to help tell the story of industrialization in the area. On selected days you can ride a vintage steam car, stroll along Red Clay Creek, hike the Oversee Farm Trail, tour the paper mill, as well as the mansion and museum.

3000 Creek Road, Yorklyn, DE 19736, 302-239-5687, Park Free Daily 8AM-Sunset, Mansion and Museum tours by appointment, Adults \$14





### **Ashland Nature Center**

Enjoy 130 acres of woodlands, meadows, and marshes, and four miles of nature trails, including the Succession Trail, the Floodplain Trail and the Covered Bridge Loop Trail, at the headquarters of the Delaware Nature Society. Part of the Red Clay Valley Important Bird Area, the property is filled with birds at the Hawk Watch, Bird Blind, and Hummingbird Haven. Stop at the Butterfly House for a look at local species.

3511 Barley Mill Road, Hockessin, DE 19707, 302-239-2334, Trails open daily dawn to dusk, Adults \$5.

### **Ashland Covered Bridge**

Spanning Red Clay Creek since 1860. 3540 Barley Mill Road, Hockessin, DE 19707





### **Destination Distinctive Accommodations**

**Inn at Montchanin Village & Spa** 528 Montchanin Road, Montchanin, DE 19710  
302-888-2133 Enjoy the natural beauty and gracious hospitality at this Historic Hotel of America with peaceful grounds, stunning gardens, and luxury accommodations.

### **Destination Distinctive Dining**

**Krazy Kats at the Inn at Montchanin** 528 Montchanin Road, Montchanin, DE 19710  
302-888-2133 Dine at the Inn, in this award winning restaurant.

**Buckley's Tavern**, 5812 Kennett Pike, Centerville, DE 19807, 302-656-9776 Well prepared classic comfort food.

**The Copper Dram**, 3826 Kennett Pike, Greenville, DE 19807 302-256-0535 Specializing in craft cocktails, served with awesome food on the side.

### **Destination Distinctive Retail**

**Indulgence Jewelers**, 4001 Kennett Pike, Wilmington, DE 19807

**Chaddsford Winery** 632 Baltimore Pike, Chadds Ford, PA, 19317, 610-388-6221

Headquartered in a renovated 17th century colonial barn, this premium winery produces 30,000 cases of wine yearly.

**Brandywine River Antiques Market** 878 Baltimore Pike, Chadds Ford, PA, 19317,  
610-388-2000 A multi-dealer co-op offering a selection of antiques, estate furniture, accessories, and collectibles in various styles and periods.



## DAY THREE

### **Mt. Cuba Center**

The former estate of Lamont du Pont Copeland is now a botanical center that produces some of the most spectacular displays of wildflowers in the mid-Atlantic region. With over 500 acres of natural lands surrounding the gardens and managed landscapes, the grounds consist of steeply rolling hills, stream valleys, rock outcrops, and deciduous forests. Educational programs and science-based research projects and collaborations allow Mt. Cuba Center to focus on restoration and conservation of the area's natural lands.

3120 Barley Mill Rd, Hockessin, DE 19707, 302-239-4244, W-Sun 10AM-6PM, Adults \$15.



### **Wooddale Covered Bridge**

This 72-foot covered bridge is built with traditional lattice trusses.

Seven DE-4, Wilmington, DE 19804

## **Wilmington and Western Railroad**

Take a leisurely 1 ½ hour trip through the Red Clay Valley from Wilmington to the Mt. Cuba Picnic Grove, where, at that point, you have two options: enjoy a half hour layover at Mt. Cuba to have a picnic or just enjoy nature, or continue further up the line through Ashland and Yorklyn, before returning to the station. Selected trips are powered by diesel locomotives or antique steam trains.

2201 Newport Gap Pike, Wilmington, DE 19808, 302-998-1930, 12:30PM and 2:30PM departures on selected dates, Adult \$21

