

## Coal Heritage Trail



**This journey through southern West Virginia's coal country takes visitors back to a time when coal was king and business was booming. Thousands of men came from all over the world making the coal fields a melting pot of race and religion. Mansions**

**built by wealthy coal barons and miners' shanties still stand in the storied coal towns that dot the Coal Heritage Trail. The National Coal Heritage Area preserves and protects the coal mining heritage of West Virginia through preservation of historical museums and displays.**

### **Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine**

But words can only do partial justice to the early mining experience, you have to see the mines and ride the man cars to fully appreciate this vital part of our nation's history. At the Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine, visitors may take a tour of the mine led by a retired miner and see the old tools and machines once used to dislodge the coal from the mountainside.

### **Hatfield-McCoy Trails**

Once you've left the cool air of the Beckley Exhibition Mine - usually 58°F - you might be ready for a little ATV action to really get your blood pumping. The Hatfield-McCoy Trails consists of over 500 miles of maintained trails open to hiking, mountain biking, ATVs, horseback riding, and dirt bikes. These mountainous trails are named after the infamous feud that took place between the Hatfield and

McCoy families over 100 years ago. Today, the ever-expanding trail system is open to riders carrying a state permit and users are allowed to bring their own off-road vehicles or rent one from one of several vendors located at the various trailheads.

## **Bramwell's Coal Boom**



Perhaps no other town can better attest to the rise and fall of coal's dominance in southern West Virginia than Bramwell. Several ornate mansions mark the landscape in one of the greatest coal boomtowns in the nation. Once you have seen the miner's shanty at the Beckley Mine, you can see how the other half lived at one of the many Victorian homes built by wealthy coal barons. Twice a year, the Millionaire Garden Club hosts a tour of almost all of the Bramwell mansions just in time to see the dogwoods in bloom or the homes decorated for Christmas.

## **Outdoor Fun**

River Gorge National River is home to the second longest single-arch steel bridge in the world as well as a large population of rare blue-winged warblers. This river along with the Gauley River also has some of the best whitewater rafting and canoeing in the country. Pinnacle Rock State Park's namesake Pinnacle Rock offers a unique view from this ponderous rock outcropping. Every room at Twin Falls Resort State Park's spacious inn has a balcony and access to the 18-hole golf course. There are also cottages available as well as a restaurant that is open year-round.

**Above all else, this byway offers an unsurpassed glimpse into West Virginia's colorful history. While some of the road may be windy and narrow, this helps to**

**further showcase the hardships of settling amongst West Virginia's many mountains. However, these same curvy roads are perfect for motorcycling and allow motorists to take their time so they can appreciate all of the wonderful mountain scenery. No matter what you drive, the Coal Heritage Trail is easily one of the best-preserved remnants of mining heritage in the nation.**