Virginia

The National Scenic Byway Program

The National Scenic Byways Program, established by Congress in 1991, recognizes historic, scenic and culturally important roads and promotes tourism and economic development in nearby communities. The Virginia General Assembly passed the State Scenic Highway and Virginia Byways Act in 1966. This act came to be in response to a suggestion made by the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, known as the Virginia Outdoors Plan. Since its’ creation, over 3,500 miles of road have been designated. There are two scenic byways programs recognized in Virginia, one State and one National. The state program was established in 1999 and is managed by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). Across the state, there are three All American Roads, the highest honor the Federal Highway Administration bestows upon byways, as well as over 200 scenic byways in total.

Key points:

- Virginia has a total of 227 Scenic Byways, including 5 National Scenic Byways and 222 State Scenic Byways
- The NPS describes the George Washington Memorial Parkway, an All American Road, as “dotted with memorials and places with nationally significant history”; traversing the parkway will bring you from Mount Vernon and Fort Hunt to the Jones Point Lighthouse to the Alexandria Waterfront to the US Marine Corps War Memorial
- In addition to its’ other programs, Virginia established the Virginia Scenic Rivers Program in 1970 to celebrate the 49,000 miles of rivers and waterways across the state
- According to the 2018 Virginia Outdoor Plan, 67% of residents who responded said they enjoyed driving as a way to connect with nature
- 2018 domestic travel in Virginia generated $25.8 billion, a year-over-year increase of 4.4%, supporting 234,500 jobs within the state – 45 Virginia counties received over $100 million in domestic travel expenditures and 43 counties realized one thousand or more jobs directly supported by domestic travelers

The Blue Ridge Parkway journeys through mesmerizing mountains and vistas, boasting a plethora of scenic views and recreational activities such as hiking.
Scenic Byways in Virginia

- **National Scenic Byways**
  - Blue Ridge Parkway (1)
  - Colonial Parkway (2)
  - George Washington Memorial Parkway (3)
  - Journey Through Hallowed Ground Byway (4)
  - Skyline Drive (5)

- **State Scenic Byways**