



THE ROAD THAT BUILT THE NATION

ALLEGHENY COUNTY / CUMBERLAND

Directions

- » Scenic 40 closely parallels I-68 and then crosses the freeway to the north side, picking up the original course of the pike over Town Hill Mountain. The restored Town Hill Hotel has been serving travelers along the Historic National Pike for more than a century. Inside and out, it recreates a 1920s-era resort atmosphere.
- » Cross Green Ridge Mountain, and turn right on MD 144 near Exit 62 to stay on the old pike. Part of the Allegheny Mountain chain, Green Ridge State Forest covers 40,000-acres of mountainous terrain known for its network of unpaved roads and scenic overlooks.
- » Continue west along Scenic 40 keeping a watchful eye for older, more winding paths of the National Pike that have been bypassed by a more direct route thanks to improved earth moving technology. The road crosses Polish Mountain and Town Creek and then enters Flintstone, a valley town surrounded by Polish, Martin, and Warrior Mountains. In this relatively unspoiled setting are several well-preserved 18th-century farms that survive as an example of the pioneering spirit that settled the western part of Maryland.
- » The Flintstone Hotel still stands much as it was when it was built around 1807 as a 22-room inn on the National Pike. Farther along is Rocky Gap State Park, which covers almost 3,000-acres and includes a 243-acre manmade lake, a new multi-million dollar convention center, and a golf course.
- » Before entering Cumberland, the National Pike crisscrosses I-68 several times and finally merges with it near Wolfe Mill.
- » As you continue west on I-68, consider turning off at Exit 46 on Ali Ghan Road to visit the site at Folck's Mill, built in 1790 as a tavern on the National Pike.
- » Return to I-68 west where you will turn off again at Exit 44.
- » At the end of the ramp, turn right on MD 639, or Willow Brook Road, which becomes Baltimore Avenue, and follow it down the ridge to enter Cumberland.
- » Currently the Byway is not routed through Downtown Cumberland due to the complexity of the one-way system of streets in Cumberland.
- » To get to Cumberland from the currently signed Byway route, follow Baltimore Avenue into downtown Cumberland.

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- » At the bottom, turn left on Henderson Street, then right on Harrison. This will take you to the Western Maryland Station Center, home of the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad, C&O Canal National Park Visitor Center, and the Allegany County Visitor's Information Center. Here you will find ample parking and information about Cumberland.
- » Cumberland lies in a valley at the junction of Will's Creek and the North Fork of the Potomac River. Mountains tower more than 1,000-feet around the city. As wagon roads improved, Cumberland became a gateway to the Ohio River Valley and in 1811, work began on the Historic National Road from Cumberland west. The road had reached Wheeling, West Virginia, by 1818 and Vandalia, Illinois, by 1837.
- » The Historic National Road starts at Baltimore Street and heads west on Center Street, which becomes Alternate US 40 as it crosses the Cumberland city limits. Here Will's Creek flows beside the highway in a concrete floodway.
- » The creek, road, and two railway roadbeds pass through the Narrows and the craggy bluffs of Will's and Haystack Mountains. Before the Narrows was discovered as an opening to the west, the vanguard of Braddock's army had cut and hauled its ways directly over the mountain. Greene Street actually follows Braddock's road from the fort site and curves to the west over Haystack Mountain.
- » To stay on Alternate US 40, turn left at MD 36, and follow the road into Lavale. Cumberland's first streetcar suburb grew out of the farm furrows when a developer bought a ½ mile strip along the road in 1909.
- » The Lavale Toll House, the National Road's sole remaining tollhouse in Maryland, flanks a mile marker on the western fringe of town. An aged sign still displays the tolls collected from travelers in the early 1800s.
- » Continue west along the old road into tiny Clarysville. Recently destroyed by fire, the Clarysville Inn was built in 1807 and served as a wagon-stand and stage house to early travelers and teams. During the Civil War it was the headquarters of a federal hospital camp. Just west of the former inn site is a preserved stone arch bridge that once carried the Historic National Road.
- » Continue west past the Eckhart Mines, which grew as the center of the region's early coal mining industry because of their position on the National Road.
- » Frostburg, a coal mining center and main stop on the National Road, is the home of Frostburg State University. The town grew up around Catherine and Meshach Frost's tavern situated along the National Road. St. Michaels Catholic Church was built on the site of Frost's property when a large population of Irish and Welsh immigrants settled here to work the mines in the mid-1800s. As you enter town, you will pass a neighborhood of Victorian and Greek Revival homes once occupied by mine officials.
- » Turn right on Depot Street to visit the newly restored 1891 Depot Center, which is the western end of the Scenic Western Maryland Railroad operating out of Cumberland since 1989. Near the depot are a tunnel, turntable, and hotel. Here also is the restored warehouse that serves as the Thrasher Carriage House, one of the nation's finest repositories for historic stagecoaches, hearses, sleighs, and carriages.
- » Leaving Frostburg, notice the gateposts on each side of the pike that marked the second toll house 13 miles from Cumberland. Farther west, at the summit of Big Savage Mountain, you will enter Garrett County. Little Savage Mountain rises just beyond Big Savage Mountain.