



THE ROAD THAT BUILT THE NATION

FREDERICK COUNTY / FREDERICK CITY

Directions

- » Crossing MD 75, you enter New Market. This 19th Century turnpike stopover, now on the National Register of Historic Places, is a mecca for antique hunters on the weekends.
- » Continue west, going under the I-70 bridge and turning right to stay on MD 144. Crossing to the west bank of the Monocacy River, you can't miss the Jug Bridge Monument. This 10-ton stone jug, for which the 1809 stone bridge over the Monocacy was named, was relocated when the old bridge was replaced. One of the bridge's builders is said to have sealed a demijohn of whiskey inside the jug when it was installed at the span's eastern end. Also on the west bank of the river -- at the original pike crossing -- are the toll house and toll collector's residence for the old National Pike.
- » The pike, MD 144, enters Frederick City via East Patrick Street. Mention the Frederick Fairgrounds. When the National Pike connected Baltimore and Frederick, the town flourished as a commercial center. Its Historic District includes numerous homes and public buildings representing two centuries of architecture.
- » Continue west on Patrick Street, which becomes US 40 when you pass the US 15 interchange. Continue for a mile, and bear left on the older and more scenic US 40 Alternate, or Old National Pike.
- » Braddock Heights stands at the summit of Catoctin Mountain on US 40 Alternate. The town is named for British General Edward Braddock who oversaw the construction of this western mountain road during the French and Indian War. George Washington was a young officer serving with Braddock and the British forces. The mountaintop town was created as a resort at the turn-of-the-20th-century when a new trolley line linked it with Frederick and Hagerstown to the west. Only the large two- and three-story Victorian cottages remain from the complex that included hotels, an observatory, and a large amusement park.
- » As you descend the mountain, the town you see below is Middletown. Although surrounded by modern suburbs, the town's historic district is a vivid reminder of an 18th Century farming village. The Middletown Valley was a north-south route that brought German immigrants to this area. This German heritage is evident in Middletown's two Lutheran Churches, Christ Reformed Church, built in 1818, and Zion Lutheran Church, built in 1859.
- » Beyond Middletown, US 40 Alternate ascends South Mountain, a formidable obstacle to early settlers. Finally in 1775, General Braddock's forces constructed a road through Turner's Gap, a route that was later incorporated in the National Pike. This is a good place to get out and hike the Appalachian Trail through South Mountain Park.