

Things to do in Roanoke

Roanoke is the perfect place to get outside and connect with friends and family



Mill Mountain, and all of its beauty, is right at your fingertips. Take advantage of the breathtaking views of this city, as well as local landmarks and the Blue Ridge Mountains. Discover the city's many cultural hotspots, and you and your family can join the celebration of art, auto racing, science and craft beer.

1. Science Museum of Western Virginia



Bring the whole family to the Science Museum of West Virginia, where they can explore endless possibilities. Take a journey through the cosmos at the planetarium, or ignite your imagination at the museum's Open Lab, where families work together to perform scientific experiments. With a number of wacky interactive exhibits, you're sure to leave with a big brain and a bigger smile.

2. Blue Ridge Beerway



Journey down the Blue Ridge Beerway to discover Roanoke's lively craft beer scene, and the locals who make it tick. You can cruise along this self-guided tour, sampling stouts, porters and lagers at eight breweries that perfect their craft in Roanoke and nearby communities. Experience some exclusive brews at the cozy Big Lick Brewing Company, where innovative lagers and ales are produced one small batch at a time and rarely repeated. Cheers!

3. Mill Mountain Zoo



Kids go bananas for the Mill Mountain Zoo! Spanning five acres, the zoo is the perfect destination for an exotic experience, and to tire out your little ones. See with your own eyes endangered animals like the regal snow leopard and red panda. Take a break from walking, and hop on the Zoo Choo for a leisurely ride past the zoo's habitats. This mini train departs from the station every 30 minutes, so it's never a long wait to hop aboard.

4. Taubman Museum of Art



Awaken your creative spirit at the Taubman Museum of Art. More than 2,000 art pieces are on display; the museum is primarily filled with works resembling regional American, visionary and folk art. Unleash your imagination and take classes that cover a variety of mediums, from drawing to 3D printing.

5. Roanoke Star



Don't leave your camera at home when visiting the iconic, Roanoke Star, one of the area's most picture-worthy sites. Since 1949, the 88-foot-tall star structure has been perched atop Mill Mountain, and is symbolic of Roanoke being the "Star City of the South." You can see its red, white and blue lights shine nightly over the town, or drive by during the day to enjoy stellar views of the valley and the Blue Ridge Mountains.

6. Martinsville Speedway



Feed your need for speed with a day trip to the Martinsville Speedway at Ridgeway, just 56 miles from Roanoke. Billed as "a half-mile of mayhem," this short-track racing venue gets your adrenaline shifting into high gear. It's NASCAR's oldest, and the shortest track in the Sprint Cup Series.