

# TRAIL TRIP

## Morgantown & Fairmont, West Virginia

Easily accessible from Pittsburgh and Cumberland, these Mountain State rail-trails offer solitude and scenery as well as access to West Virginia's most known college town. Bike up to 84 miles on four connected trails, or pick and choose based on your interests.



Meredith Tunnel photo by Mon River Trails Conservancy



Industrial  
Heartland  
Trails  
[www.hearttrails.com](http://www.hearttrails.com)

## Day 1

Start your trip in Fairmont, about 30 minutes south of Morgantown. Explore town by car before hitting the trail. We recommend **Joe 'N' Throw**, where coffee shop meets pottery studio and becomes a community gathering place. You might also check out **Country Club Bakery**, perhaps the reason Fairmont claims the title "Pepperoni Roll Capitol of the World." For decades, bakeries from Clarksburg to Morgantown have been baking pepperoni rolls. Legend has it that Italian immigrants first cooked up the savory rolls as a no-fuss lunch for coal miners.

Next, drive over to **Prickett's Fort State Park**, your base for your day's biking adventure. Bike south 2.5 miles on the **MC Trail** to experience Meredith Tunnel. The trail and tunnel offer a lot of scenery for such a short jaunt. Backtrack to the fort and head north to Morgantown. Go all 20 miles or simply as far as you care to. (Note: You'll be riding north along the **Mon River Rail-Trail** most of the way and then seamlessly connect to the paved **Caperton Trail** once in the city.)



## TRAIL INFO:

Allow 2-3 days to complete the full itinerary.

MC Trail – 2.5 miles paved

Mon River Rail-Trail (between Prickett's Fort and Morgantown Warf) – 19 miles mostly crushed limestone (within Morgantown city limits, the trail is paved and known as the Caperton Trail)

Deckers Creek Trail – 19 miles mostly crushed limestone, steeper than the others with 2% max grade (transport shuttle available Monday through Friday)

The trails can be remote between locales. Carry provisions for maximum enjoyment.

Most stops are reachable by bike. Some require a vehicle and are noted below. Rentals are available locally.



Right along the trail in Morgantown are **Mountain State Brewing Co.** (wood-fired pizza is a staple here) and **Table 9**, which features seasonal menus and local beers. You can explore Morgantown more if you like, although this will be your base for the next day, so you might wait until you return with your car.

After you are back to Prickett's Fort, load your bikes and drive to Morgantown. You'll notice signs for **Heston Farm** from the interstate. Make the side trip and you'll find a restaurant, brewery, distillery, and winery all on a single remote property. It's worth the trip down the hollow to sample spirits that pay homage to the region (Mason Dixon and Copperhead whiskeys, Ramp Shine).

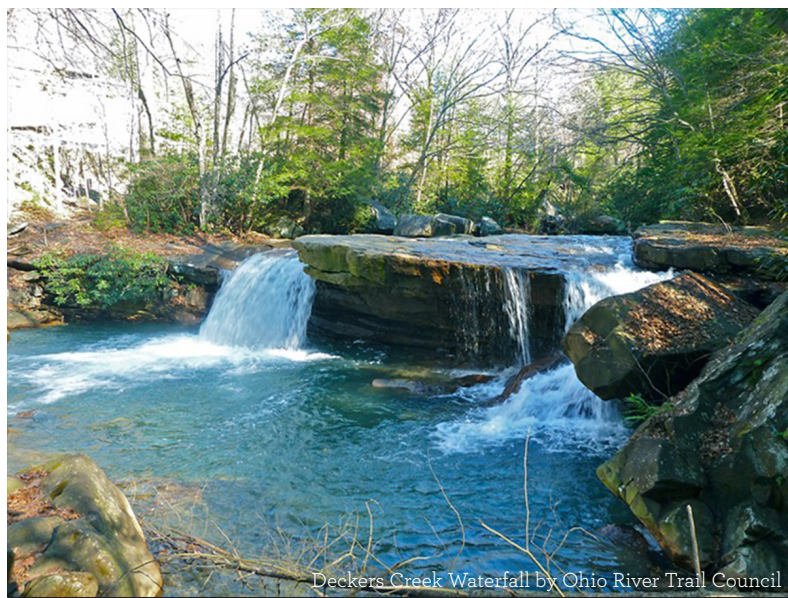




# Day 2

Start your day at either **Blue Moose Café** or **Terra Café** (Terra is directly on the Caperton Trail), or you can pick up some rations at **Mountain People's Co-op**. Then pump out 38 miles round trip on **Deckers Creek Rail-Trail** and dedicate the rest of your day to exploring.

To reduce your trail miles, catch the **Buckwheat Express** at the Morgantown Depot Monday through Friday. It makes stops at Masontown (near mile 13.5) and Reedsville (near mile 17). Hop off and cruise back to town.



Deckers Creek Waterfall by Ohio River Trail Council

Take a break from the trails to have a late lunch at **Black Bear Burritos**. It's a Morgantown favorite that carries local brews. Nearby **High Street's** many eateries are interspersed with shops.

A 6-mile drive will take you to the **West Virginia Botanic Garden**, open daily. If the gate is closed, don't worry. You can park in the upper lot and walk down to tour the grounds. Northeast of the gardens is **Cooper's Rock State Forest**. For a short excursion, check out the iconic overlook with a view of the **Cheat River Gorge**, only a five-minute walk. Longer hikes, mountain biking, rock climbing, and rappelling are also available on the forest's 50 miles of trails.



Photo by Milly Mullins on Eyes on West Virginia

If you visit on a summer Saturday, check out **Chestnut Ridge Regional Park's** summer bluegrass concert series. The park is located on the northern end of the state forest. Otherwise, time your trip for a Wednesday and you can end your night with the **Old Time Appalachian Jam Session** at Morgantown Brewing Company (starts at 9:30).

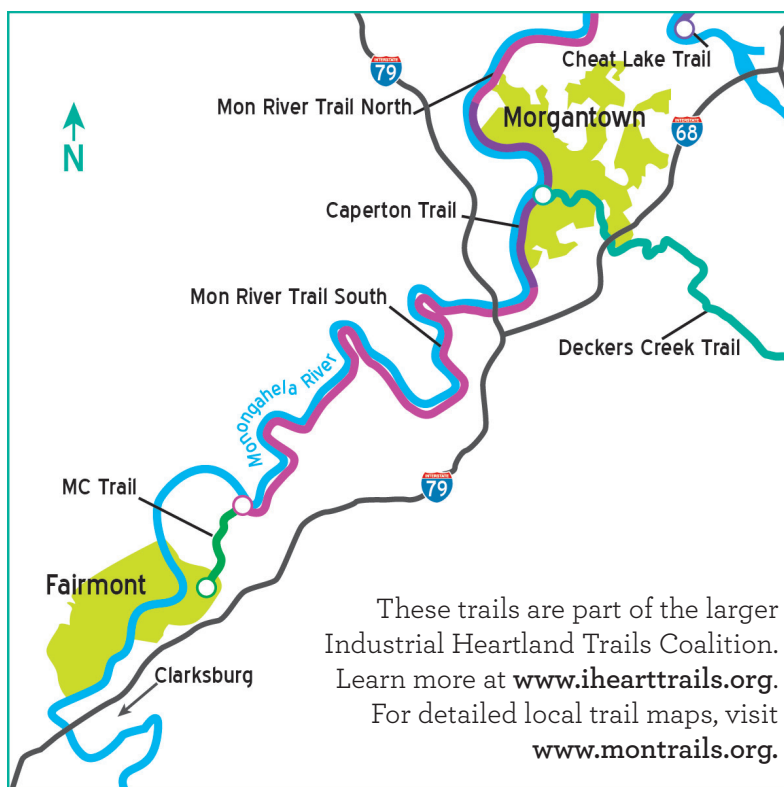
## Extend Your Trip

If lodging in Morgantown, head north to the **Cheat Lake Trail**. It's a beautiful 4.5 mile rail-trail that borders Cheat Lake and has some beautiful bridges over inlets, playgrounds, restrooms, and fishing piers.

If lodging in Fairmont, check out **Clarksburg**, a city that calls for carrying your camera to capture the great architecture and storefronts. Head to the Glen Elk neighborhood, where **Tomaro's Bakery** (open since 1914) puts out a Clarksburg-favorite pepperoni roll. Nearby **D'Annunzio's Italian Bakery** and Country Club in Fairmont also consider themselves *the* pepperoni roll place. Try them all and decide for yourself.

Follow savory with sweet at **Almost Heaven Desserts & Bakery** in nearby **Bridgeport**. Their top seller? It's the Chambord cheesecake.

To add some long-distance cycling to your trip, lodge in Fairmont or Clarksburg and head west to the **North Bend Rail-Trail**. There are a whopping 13 tunnels along the 70-mile stretch. The eastern terminus is 5 miles west of Clarksburg in Wolf Summit. You can also take the popular Ellenboro-Cairo section of the trail to explore **Cairo**. A state park shuttle runs weekends (call ahead to confirm). The **Log Cabin Homestead B&B** in Cairo is a handcrafted cabin recreated to look like an Appalachian cabin of the 1820s (modern amenities are available to guests).



These trails are part of the larger Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition. Learn more at [www.ihearttrails.org](http://www.ihearttrails.org). For detailed local trail maps, visit [www.montrails.org](http://www.montrails.org).