

A 3,030-Foot Bridge by Day, Whitewater by Afternoon — A 3-Day New River Gorge Road Trip

DURATION
3 Days

BEST TIME TO GO
April – October
peak rafting season on the Lower New River, with the biggest whitewater during spring dam-release season (April–early June) and oak-hickory forest color peaking in mid-to-late October; most rafting outfitters close November–March

FROM
\$580 USD / person
for 2 people, incl. rental car, lodging, and tickets

West Virginia's New River Gorge in three days: a free boardwalk view of the 3,030-foot New River Gorge Bridge from the National Park Service visitor center, then a harnessed catwalk tour along its underside 851 feet above the river, a full day of Class III–V whitewater rafting on the Lower New River, and a last morning at the postcard Glade Creek Grist Mill, the cliff-edge Long Point Trail, and the wide cascade of Sandstone Falls — with real outfitters, real lodges, and 2026 prices for every stop.

Day 1

Fayetteville & the Bridge

Land at the regional airport and drive into Fayetteville, with the afternoon built around the New River Gorge Bridge — first from a free overlook, then from a harnessed catwalk slung beneath the deck itself.

Rental Car Pickup — Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Raleigh County Memorial Airport (BKW)

~30 minutes to Fayetteville · From \$65 USD / day

Major agencies operate out of this small regional airport in Beaver, a short drive from Fayetteville and the national park's main visitor center.

Enterprise Rent-A-Car

Canyon Rim Visitor Center & Bridge Boardwalk

~45 minutes, self-guided · Free

A boardwalk behind the National Park Service visitor center leads to the best free view of the New River Gorge Bridge — 3,030 feet long and 876 feet above the river, one of the highest and longest steel-arch bridges in the Western Hemisphere, completed in 1977.

Bridge Walk — Bridge Walk WV

~2 hours, guided, harnessed · \$79 USD / person

A catwalk suspended beneath the bridge deck lets walkers cross its full 3,030-foot length 851 feet above the New River, clipped to an overhead safety cable the entire way — the only way to get this close to the steel structure.

Bridge Walk · bridgewalk.com

Dinner — Pies & Pints

~1 hour · \$15–\$25 USD / person

A Fayetteville original since 2005 (now a small regional chain), serving inventive wood-fired pizzas — the Atomic Apple and Thai peanut chicken pies are regulars' favorites — alongside a serious craft beer list.

Pies & Pints · piesandpints.net

Overnight — Adventures on the Gorge

From \$175–\$250 USD / night, for 2 people

A sprawling resort on the rim of the gorge with rafting outfitters, cabins and a lodge on site — the closest overnight base to the bridge and to tomorrow's rafting put-in.

Adventures on the Gorge · adventuresonthegorge.com

Day 2

Whitewater on the Lower New River

A full day on the river, running Class III–V rapids through a gorge deeper than most canyons in the eastern United States, before a low-key dinner back in Fayetteville.

Full-Day Whitewater Rafting — ACE Adventure Resort

~6–7 hours, guided, 8–13 miles · \$119 USD / person, incl. riverside lunch

A full day of Class III–V rapids on the Lower New River Gorge, through a canyon deeper than most of the eastern United States — with calmer stretches for swimming between the whitewater and a riverside lunch included.

ACE Adventure Resort · aceraft.com

Dinner — Secret Sandwich Society

~1 hour · \$12–\$18 USD / person

A Fayetteville storefront sandwich shop with a cult following, built around a rotating menu of double-stacked burgers and specialty sandwiches — a low-key end to a long day on the river.

Secret Sandwich Society · secretsandwichsociety.com

Overnight — Adventures on the Gorge

From \$175–\$250 USD / night, for 2 people

A second night at the resort, with time for the pool or the on-site brewery before tomorrow's drive to Babcock State Park.

Adventures on the Gorge · adventuresonthegorge.com

Day 3

Babcock State Park & Departure

A last morning south of Fayetteville — the most-photographed mill in West Virginia, a cliff-edge trail for the classic bridge view, and a wide waterfall on the drive back to the airport.

Glade Creek Grist Mill, Babcock State Park

~30 minutes drive from Fayetteville, ~30 minutes self-guided · Free

A fully operational 1920s-style gristmill, built in 1976 from parts of three historic West Virginia mills — its red water wheel and Glade Creek backdrop make it one of the most-photographed buildings in the state.

Long Point Trail

~2 hours round trip (3.2 miles), self-guided, moderate · Free

A rolling trail through second-growth forest ends at a rock outcrop with the classic head-on view of the New River Gorge Bridge, framed by the canyon on both sides — no crowds and no fee, unlike the boardwalk view on Day 1.

Sandstone Falls

~45 minutes drive, ~30 minutes self-guided boardwalk · Free

A detour south along the river reaches Sandstone Falls, the widest waterfall on the New River, with a boardwalk out to viewing platforms above the cascades.

Departure — Raleigh County Memorial Airport (BKW)

~45 minutes from Sandstone Falls · Self-guided

Closes the loop on three days that ran from the bridge deck to the whitewater below it to the gristmill on the rim — return the rental car at the terminal and check carriers' recommended arrival times.