

A Waterfall House by Day, Whitewater by Afternoon — A 3-Day Pittsburgh & Laurel Highlands Road Trip

A 3-day self-drive loop out of Pittsburgh and into Pennsylvania's Laurel Highlands: a night in the city's inclines and sandwich shops, a tour of Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater — a house built directly over a waterfall — a whitewater run on the Lower Youghiogheny River, and a quiet morning at the Flight 93 National Memorial before heading home. Everything is an easy hour to ninety minutes apart, so the pace stays unhurried.

DURATION

BEST TIME TO GO

FROM

Warmer months keep the Youghiogheny raftable and Fallingwater's grounds in full green; October adds fall color to the drive

for 2 people · hotels, Fallingwater tour, rafting trip & gas

DAY 1

Pittsburgh: Inclines & Sandwiches

An afternoon and evening in the city before heading for the hills in the morning.

Point State Park

~1 hour · free

The wedge of parkland where the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers meet to form the Ohio, anchored by a 150-foot fountain and the reconstructed walls of Fort Pitt — the obvious place to get oriented before exploring the rest of the city.

Duquesne Incline — Mount Washington Overlook

~1 hour round trip · fare ~\$5 USD round trip

A restored 1877 cable car climbs 400 feet up Mount Washington in about two minutes, to the overlook that gives Pittsburgh its postcard view: the three rivers and the whole downtown skyline laid out below.

Dinner — Primanti Bros., Strip District

~1 hour · sandwiches from \$10–14 USD

The original 1933 location of Pittsburgh's signature sandwich shop, where the French fries and coleslaw go inside the sandwich, not beside it — open late and usually busy.

Primanti Bros. (Strip District) · primantibros.com/location/strip-district

Overnight — Omni William Penn Hotel

historic downtown hotel · from \$220–280 USD / night, for 2 people

A grand 1916 hotel in the heart of downtown, built by Henry Clay Frick and still the city's best-known address — an easy walk to Point State Park and the Cultural District.

Omni William Penn Hotel · www.omnihotels.com/hotels/pittsburgh-william-penn

DAY 2

Fallingwater & Ohiopyle Whitewater

An hour and a half southeast of the city, into the Laurel Highlands for architecture in the morning and rapids in the afternoon.

Drive — Pittsburgh to Mill Run

~1.5 hours / 70 miles

A straightforward drive southeast on the Pennsylvania Turnpike and then two-lane roads into Fayette County's forested ridgelines.

Fallingwater Tour

~1 hour guided tour · advance tickets recommended

Frank Lloyd Wright's 1939 masterpiece, cantilevered directly over a waterfall on Bear Run for the Kaufmann family of Pittsburgh — widely considered Wright's finest work, and still furnished as the family left it.

Fallingwater · +17243298501 · fallingwater.org

Whitewater Rafting — Lower Youghiogheny River

~2.5–4.5 hours · from \$87–135 USD per person

A Class III–IV run through Ohiopyle State Park on “the Yough,” one of the busiest commercial whitewater rivers in the country, with a guide steering through named rapids like Entrance and Dimple Rock.

Wilderness Voyageurs · +18002724141 · wilderness-voyageurs.com

Overnight — The Historic Summit Inn

1907 mountaintop resort · from \$140–180 USD / night, for 2 people

A sprawling white-columned resort atop Chestnut Ridge that's hosted guests since 1907, with wraparound porches, a nine-hole golf course and long valley views — a short drive from both Fallingwater and Ohiopyle.

The Historic Summit Inn · www.summitinnresort.com

DAY 3

Flight 93 Memorial & Kentuck Knob

A quiet morning at a national memorial, a second Frank Lloyd Wright house on the way out, then the drive home.

Flight 93 National Memorial

~1.5 hours · free admission

A National Park Service memorial on the reclaimed strip-mine field in Shanksville where United Flight 93 went down on September 11, 2001, with a visitor center, the Wall of Names, and a walking path out to the crash site boulder.

Kentuck Knob Tour

~1 hour guided tour · advance tickets recommended

A second, smaller Frank Lloyd Wright house a few miles from Fallingwater, built in 1956 for a local ice-cream company owner around a hexagonal module, with a sculpture-lined meadow and Laurel Highlands views from the hilltop grounds.

Kentuck Knob · kentuckknob.com

Drive Home — Laurel Highlands to Pittsburgh

~1.25 hours / 65 miles

A final run back over the ridgelines to Pittsburgh International Airport or the city, closing the loop.