

# Pursuit of Happiness

## **Do it all or nothing at all in Shepherdstown, W.Va.**

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Needing a quick getaway but unwilling to join the masses huddled on interstates and at airports, my husband and I wound our way to Shepherdstown, W.Va., a charming college town that sits on the Potomac River across from Maryland and the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal ([nps.gov/choh](http://nps.gov/choh)). We wanted the option to be active or lazy, so the possibilities of biking, hiking, seeing a play, doing nothing and sitting by a pool were exactly what we wanted.

Our digs at the Bavarian Inn (304-876-2551 or [bavarianinnwv.com](http://bavarianinnwv.com)), overlooking the Potomac, were an odd mix, as if a frumpy Bavarian grandmother had left her furniture but upgraded the bathroom before she left. Being there made us feel young, since our presence brought the average age of the clientele down a few decades. But there's no arguing with the hearty and delicious food they serve, either in the casual Rathskellar or the more formal dining room.

Wandering around town, we found Shepherdstown Pedal and Paddle (877-884-2453 or [thepedalpaddle.com](http://thepedalpaddle.com)), a shop that rents bikes, kayaks and canoes. Good idea, given the town's proximity to the Potomac and the C & O Canal towpath, which is ideal for off-road biking.

The next day, we enjoyed a 20-mile cycling jaunt to and from Harper's Ferry. After a quick dip in the inn's pool, we headed into town to see a movie at the adorable Opera House (304-876-3704 or [operahouselive.com](http://operahouselive.com)), which offers beer, wine, pillows and popcorn with its films. Then we went next door for another great dinner, this time at the Press Room (304-876-8777).

Tuesday we drove into Maryland to meet the Appalachian Trail for a hike to Annapolis Rock ([www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/at.html](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/at.html)). We trudged in a drizzle, picking up the pace when a downpour let loose, pretending it wasn't thunder we heard. We passed thru-hikers clambering down, not having any fun, but still we planned our own thru-hike that we will never do. Instead, we drove to nearby Hagerstown, Md., where we thru-hiked the Prime Outlets at Hagerstown (888-883-6288 or [primeoutlets.com](http://primeoutlets.com)).

Mudpie sundae al fresco at Mimi's Ice Cream (304-876-8427) was the perfect entrée before walking to Shepherd University to catch a performance of *The Pursuit of Happiness*, part of the Contemporary American Theater Festival (800-999-2283 or [catf.org](http://catf.org)) that runs there annually. With plenty of culture and appealing restaurants to pursue, Shepherdstown wound up leaving us perhaps more well-rounded than we ought to be.

### ***A Highlight of the Trip***

Walk, run, or bike the 184.5-mile C & O Canal Towpath: It's perfect. Even during a heat wave, we rode 20 miles comfortably on its shady and nearly flat hard-packed dirt. Seeing people of all ages

cruising along with tents, dogs and bike-trailers, we decided to return and ride the whole thing some day. I'm already looking forward to a rest day and dinner in Shepherdstown.