ROADTRIP | Blues House 2003

WHERE: Winchester, Va.

WHY: The largest blues festival in the Shenandoah Valley, Slavic cuisine and one big apple.

HOW FAR: 72 miles west of the District, or 1.5 hours.

Winchester, called the "Apple Capital" for the 12 million bushels it harvests each year, is Virginia's oldest city west of the Blue Ridge. But the town, home to such historic spots as George Washington's Office Museum and Stonewall Jackson's Headquarters, is also hip to the groove: This weekend, it kicks off its fifth annual all-day Blues House extravaganza, which will find local artists and guests including guitarist Jeffrey "Skunk" Baxter, the Fabulous Thunderbirds and pianist-saxophonist Deanna Bogart belting tunes from a covered pavilion once used for apple cold-storage.

Of course, there's plenty to jive to on the drive there, as well. Before hitting Winchester—which changed hands 72 times during the Civil War—be sure to stop at Leesburg's Mighty Midget Kitchen, whose claim to fame is that it's "the smallest operating restaurant in the U.S." If you've got room for dessert, visit Mom's Apple Pie Bakery and pick up a mini-pie, sized for one. Next you'll drive through the Appalachian Mountains, which may get you contemplating a move to the country. And just shy of Berryville sits Holy Cross Abbey, where you can join Trappist monks in meditation—or grab a homemade fruitcake for the road.

Once at your destination, duck in to Winchester's beautiful Handley Regional Library, or gape in awe at the "world's largest apple" across the street. And for a break from the music, head a few miles south, where you can pay homage at country legend Patsy Cline's grave.

For Blues House information, see www.blueshouse.org. The music starts Saturday at 11 a.m.

— Andrea Caumont

We're planning a trip to Orange, Va. Got great suggestions for stops along the way? E-mail **roadtrip@washpost.com**.

BY JEROME COOKSON FOR THE WASHINGTON POST