

ROADTRIP | A Romp on the Red Line, Part I

WHERE: The Sunday Source's Metro train trip returns to explore the east half of the Red Line's 27 stops, from Glenmont to Metro Center.

WHY: A four-legged magician, a skiing pope and an energy makeover.

HOW FAR: 12.52 miles, or 28 minutes without stopping.

Hang onto your Metro ticket: The Red Line is heading straight for wild John Wayne country — by way of suburban Maryland. On an escorted equestrian adventure, trot through 1½ miles of woods and parkland near Glenmont's Wheaton Park Stables. Choose your ride from a chorus line of horses: Cowboy, Confetti, Bonnie, Chunky. However, before you saddle up, you might want to try out your horse's name: "Whoa, Pumpkin" sounds a tad My Little Pony, while "Whoa, Bandit" is worthy of the Duke himself.

After an hour of trailblazing, you'll be ready to swap your stirrups for a big bag of tricks. At Barry's Magic Shop in Wheaton, owner Barry Taylor will pull loose change from your ear or levitate your hard-earned buck. But Frankie the Amazing Collie really steals the show. He sits! He fetches! He finds — or rather slobbers over — your "mystery" card from a full deck. And we checked: Our three of diamonds did not have a lick of kibble on it.

At first glance, Mayorga Coffee Factory also seems like an illusion. At this java joint in Silver Spring, you don't need to speak Starbuckian to order. The Rainforest Alliance-approved coffee, which is roasted in Rockville, comes in old-fashioned 12-, 16- and 20-ounce servings. And when a double espresso doesn't have enough jolt, you can up the octane at the adjoining full bar. Indeed, raise your coffee martini to the bitty brown bean.

A few more stops down the line, you'll be ready to meet the Man in the Miter. The Pope John Paul II Cultural Center, near the Brookland-CUA station, does not possess the popemobile, but it does display a pair of holy skis and poles (the pope was an avid schusser). The institute also exhibits 500 years of papal portraiture, including paintings of Pius IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI and XII. On your way to the lower levels, see if you and the

Holy Father wear the same size glove by pressing your palm into a bronze casting of his. You can also try your hand at creation, by building a stained-glass window via computer or making a construction paper holiday card. Just don't hog the purple crayon . . . you never know who's watching.

If heading back into the District suddenly makes you anxious, pop into the Clover Horn Co. on Rhode Island Avenue for Paxil au naturel. The shop is like an herbalist's pantry and sells natural remedies for all that ails you: cholesterol, parasites, migraines, bland spaghetti sauce (try the oregano). Don't forget to load up on money, success and love (incense, that is), sold from giant wooden barrels near the door.

Day or night, the stars align by Union Station. Or, more specifically, they line up for a room or a meal at the Hotel George. The boutique property attracts politicians, such as a certain president non-elect whose name rhymes with berry; musicians such as the Black Eyed Peas and Foo Fighters; and actors-activists (hell no, Sean Penn won't go!). For discreet groupie gawking, plant yourself at the adjoining Bistro Bis bar and watch for a famous face to flash on the mirrored wall. If all else fails, check the back booth: It's Sen. Ted Kennedy's favorite table, which has room enough for a drop-by voter or two.

As your final destination nears, it's time for a stamina check. Based on 5,000 years of Korean tradition and techniques, the teachers at the Dahn Yoga & Healing will have you bend, stretch and breathe so they can assess your energy levels. If you are running low, they might prescribe acupressure (push thumb here, here and there) or perhaps some meditation and brain respiration exercises. However, if you "pass," you and your chakra are free to go back to Metro, a spiritual center of a different kind.

— **Andrea Sachs**
Metrorail's One Day Pass costs \$6.50 and is valid weekdays after 9:30 a.m. and all day on weekends and federal holidays, until the last trains depart. Passes are available online (www.umata.com) or at the electronic kiosks in all Metro stations.

Road Trip maps are available online at www.washingtonpost.com/roadtrip, as are addresses and hours of operation (be sure to check before you go). Have an idea for a trip? E-mail roadtrip@washpost.com.

