

# ROADTRIP | Visit Martha Stewart in Jail

**WHERE:** Alderson, W.Va.

**WHY:** Penny-wise bowling, a media-overrun general store, a prison-turned-inn and America's best-known diva in detention.

**HOW FAR:** 235 miles, or five hours from Centreville.

The holidays are full of creatures to pity: kids whose parents don't let them eat sugar; office-party pariahs; tiny, angry dogs forced into green-and-red sweaters. Then, this year, there's Martha Stewart. Formerly queen of wreathmaking and tree decorating, her conviction for lying about a stock sale and subsequent sentencing to five months at the Alderson Federal Prison Camp have ripped her from her *raison d'être*: holiday crafting. Reports are that the camp holds an annual holiday decorating contest, but you know that just won't be the same as sharing babka and a homemade Noah's ark diorama on "Larry King Live." Our answer? Extend the spirit of holiday giving by day-tripping to see the imprisoned doyenne of domesticity.

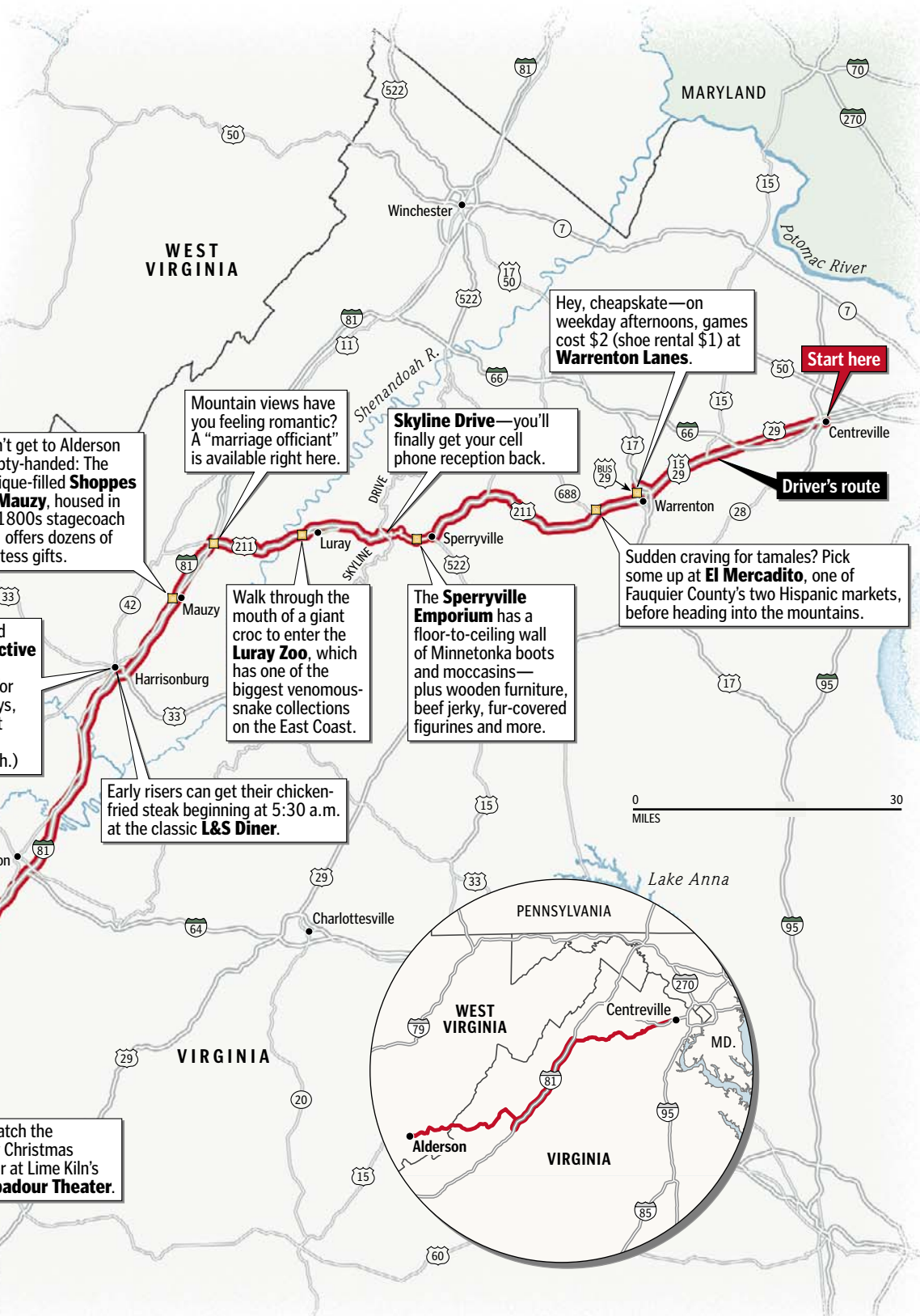
Of course, you won't be able to actually see Martha. In fact, unless you're on her approved visitors list (or know someone else incarcerated at Alderson), you're not getting past the prison gates. But fulfillment can be found other ways. After sending Martha good vibes (you may or may not be shooed away by guards, depending how rowdy or numerous you are), feel free to explore Alderson. Downtown you can see the restored Victorian train depot or check out Alderson's Store; the now off-quoted proprietress, Betty Alderson, is married to a descendant of Baptist minister

John Alderson, who settled the town in 1777. Cross the pedestrian bridge to the north side of town and you'll find Joyce Renee Mott, an artisan who fashions one-of-a-kind glass jewelry in her namesake store. Or, for a creepy glimpse at prison life, drive eight miles south on Route 3 and take a self-guided tour of the Historic Pence Springs Resort—formerly the West Virginia State Prison for Women. Best photo op? Third floor, second cell from the right.

The drive to Alderson is long, so to take full advantage, schedule a whole day and make overnight reservations in Alderson or nearby Lewisburg. Stopping in Warrenton will put you in the Martha mindset: Arrive in the early afternoon on a weekday, and you can pinch a few pennies with Warrenton Lanes' cheap afternoon bowling rates. In Harrisonburg, think about your other heroes by having lunch under the watchful eyes of Bob Dylan and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. at the socially committed Little Grill Collective. And if you've come this far, don't miss driving through Goshen Pass and seeing the spectacular views along the Maury River. Someone's got to: Martha won't be out till March.

— Emily Messner and Sandy M. Fernández

Road Trip maps are available online at [www.washingtonpost.com/roadtrip](http://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](mailto:roadtrip@washpost.com).



The media hordes stayed at the swanky **General Lewis Inn**, but you might try the smaller **Lynn's Inn Bed & Breakfast**, which serves an eggs-laid-that-morning meal.

No need to get out of the car: You can see the 150-foot **Falling Spring Falls** from the road leading to its small parking lot.

Take a swig for Martha: **Rockbridge Vineyard** makes a sweet, citrus-y "ice wine."

Hi, Martha!

Carved out by the Maury River, **Goshen Pass** offers gorgeous views—and, in spring, great whitewater rafting.

It's the last day to catch the spoofy "A Broadway Christmas Carol" at the Theater at Lime Kiln's 100-year-old **Troubadour Theater**.

Don't get to Alderson empty-handed: The antique-filled **Shoppes at Mauzy**, housed in an 1800s stagecoach inn, offers dozens of hostess gifts.

The worker-owned **Little Grill Collective** has been feeding college students for decades. (Mondays, you can pitch in at the "Free for All" soup-kitchen lunch.)

Mountain views have you feeling romantic? A "marriage officiant" is available right here.

Walk through the mouth of a giant croc to enter the **Luray Zoo**, which has one of the biggest venomous-snake collections on the East Coast.

Early risers can get their chicken-fried steak beginning at 5:30 a.m. at the classic **L&S Diner**.

**Skyline Drive**—you'll finally get your cell phone reception back.

The **Sperryville Emporium** has a floor-to-ceiling wall of Minnetonka boots and moccasins—plus wooden furniture, beef jerky, fur-covered figurines and more.

Hey, cheapskate—on weekday afternoons, games cost \$2 (shoe rental \$1) at **Warrenton Lanes**.

Sudden craving for tamales? Pick some up at **El Mercadito**, one of Fauquier County's two Hispanic markets, before heading into the mountains.