

## Northern Amish Countryside

Exploring northeast Lancaster County farmland  
and the town of Ephrata

*Begin your journey in Ephrata and travel through Amish countryside, past five historically-preserved covered bridges. You'll journey across back roads, past Amish farms and schools and find many things to do on the way. Enjoy a hearty meal at a popular smorgasbord, stroll around a farmers' market and experience a trip through time to learn about a 1700s religious community.*

- 1) Beginning in downtown Ephrata, take highway 322 to the west end of town; this will turn into Main St.

**Point of Interest:** On W. Main St., you'll find the Ephrata Cloister, one of the country's earliest communal societies. Here, discover the history and heritage of a group best known for its art, music and medieval German architecture.

- 2) Turn onto highway 272 / N. Reading Rd. and proceed for 3.1 miles.

**Point of Interest:** Along 272 on the left hand side is Ten Thousand Villages Store, Restaurant and Oriental Rugs, which offers a wide variety of unique, handcrafted items from 35+ third world countries.



**Point of Interest:** Further north on the right is the Green Dragon Farmers' Market and Auction, which is open on Fridays. This market features Amish-made items, crafts, toys, food, holiday items, home furniture and much more.

To proceed on trail, continue north on Rt. 272 to Cocalico Creek Rd.

- 3) Turn right on Cocalico Creek Rd. and proceed for 0.3 miles.

**Covered Bridge:** Bucher's Mill Covered Bridge, built in 1881, is nestled among the trees hidden on Cocalico Creek Rd. Unfortunately, the original bridge was destroyed in 1881, but it was rebuilt the following year, and today is the second shortest covered bridge that is still open to traffic.

- 4) Proceed on Cocalico Creek Rd. for 0.1 miles.
- 5) Turn right onto Creek Ln., which has no street sign, and proceed for 0.3 miles.
- 6) Turn left onto Reamstown Rd. and proceed for 1.8 miles.
- 7) Turn right onto East Church St. and continue proceed for 1.2 miles.
- 8) Turn left onto Red Run Rd. and proceed for 1.9 miles.
- 9) Turn left onto Martin Church Rd.



**Covered Bridge:** Unfortunately, Red Run Covered Bridge is privately owned and no longer open to traffic, but it still holds its historical value, having been built in 1866. This bridge is also known as Run Red Grist Mill Bridge, and Red Bank Bridge. In 1961, a new concrete bridge was built to bypass the older covered bridge.

- 10) Turn around on Martin Church Rd. and turn left onto Red Run Road, continuing for 1.5 miles; follow the road as it turns sharply to the left.
- 11) Turn right onto Maple St. and proceed for 0.2 miles.

12) Turn left onto West Main St. and proceed for 3.8 miles. You'll cross the intersection of Reading Rd. and highway 625. This road will turn into Union Grove Rd., and then into Churchtown Rd.

13) Turn right at Weaverland Rd. and proceed for 0.6 miles.

**Covered Bridge:** Once called White Hall Mill Bridge, Weaver's Mill Covered Bridge was built in 1878 and is frequently used by the Amish and their horse and buggies.



14) Turn around and proceed on Weaverland Rd. for 0.6 miles.

15) Turn right on Churchtown Rd. and proceed for 1 mile.

**Detour/Point of Interest:** If you continue driving on Churchtown Rd, it will lead you into quaint, historic Churchtown, which dates back to the pre-Revolutionary era and today is set among Amish and Mennonite farms. For a nice break to relax and stretch your legs, stroll along the streets lined with antique shops, bed and breakfasts and historic inns.

To return to the trail, re-trace Churchtown Rd. until you reach Pool Forge Rd.

16) At Pool Forge Rd., turn right and proceed for 0.2 miles. (Note: If you took the detour, you will be turning left.)

17) Turn right onto highway 23/Main St.

18) Make a quick left onto Pool Forge Rd.

**Covered Bridge:** Pool Forge Covered Bridge has a unique history, for it supposedly was the bridge where President James Buchanan met his fiancé, as historical records explains, but she died before they could marry, and he remained a bachelor. Built in 1859, this bridge is also known as Yohn's Mill Bridge.

19) Turn around and re-trace Pool Forge Road to Rt. 23/Main St.; turn left and proceed for 4 miles.

**Point of Interest:** For a hearty lunch, take a break to enjoy the buffet at Shady Maple Smorgasbord, presenting 200 feet of a variety of delicious food prepared Pennsylvania Dutch style. Also on site are Shady Maple's extensive gift shop and famers' market. The complex is along Rt. 23 on your left—you can't miss it!



**Point of Interest:** Interested in purchasing furniture? Country Home Furniture, also on Rt. 23, carries the finest, handcrafted hard-wood furniture for every room, built by local and regional Amish and Mennonite craftsmen.

To proceed on trail, continue on Rt. 23 until you reach Rt. 322

20) At the intersection with highway 322, make a hard right and proceed for 4.3 miles.

21) Turn left onto Farmersville Rd. and proceed for 0.3 miles.

22) Turn right onto Goods Dr. and proceed for 1.5 miles. After a few sharp turns, turn right again onto Goods Road.

23) Bear right onto Cats Back Rd. at the stop sign.

**Covered Bridge:** Bitzer's Mill, also known as Martin's Mill Bridge, Eberly's Cider Mill Bridge and Fiantz's Mill Bridge from previous mill owners, was built in 1846, making this the county's oldest covered bridge

still in use. In fact, because this bridge is so old, and because it rests over a shallow creek, steel “I” beams were installed under the floor to help support the foundation.

24) Continue on Cats Back Rd. for 0.4 miles; this road will turn into Cider Mill Rd.

25) Turn right onto Willis Pierce Rd. at the “Y” intersection and proceed for 0.2 miles.

26) Turn left onto Pleasant Valley Rd. and proceed for 1.4 miles.

27) Turn left onto Rt. 322 and proceed for 0.9 miles to return to town of Ephrata.

**Point of Interest:** Back in Ephrata, check out the Doneckers Community, located on N. State Street. Here, browse a wide selection of stores dedicated to fashioning the family and home, including elegant dresses, sportswear for men and women, fine furniture, artwork and more!

