

A FREE GUIDE FOR YOUR MOVE TO VIRGINIA'S BLUE RIDGE

Roanoke Valley Relocation Guide

Find the area that fits your life. Then find the home.

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START HERE

A house is easy to find online. The right area takes a closer look.

This guide helps you narrow where to live in the Roanoke Valley and around Smith Mountain Lake before you fall for a listing.

Your local point of contact

I am Leslie Epperly. I have lived in the Roanoke Valley since 1995 and raised my family here. I have been a licensed REALTOR® since 2020. You work with me directly, and I listen first.

What this guide is for

Use it to narrow your search, plan a visit that tells you something, and spot the questions worth a closer look. No single area is right for every move.

1

Start with your week

Write down your work address, the days you commute, airport trips and regular stops. “Roanoke” is too broad to test a routine.

2

Rank your tradeoffs

Pick your top three priorities. More land, a shorter drive and a newer home often point to different places.

3

Compare real addresses

Drive the streets, time the route and compare homes in your budget. An area name cannot answer every question.

You do not need a move date or a favorite neighborhood to start. Call or text 540-314-3706 and we will talk through your move.

BUILD YOUR SHORT LIST

Roanoke, area by area.

These are starting points for your research, not rankings. Compare each home and its surroundings at the same level of detail.



Downtown Roanoke

Start here if you want to be close to the City Market, restaurants and the Amtrak station. Compare condos and loft buildings on parking, building rules, noise and your route to work.

Grandin Village + Raleigh Court

Walk the Grandin Road shops and the Grandin Theatre block, then the streets around them. Many homes here are older, so compare condition, updates and the walk from each address.

South Roanoke

Close to Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital, the Roanoke River Greenway and Mill Mountain. Compare homes street by street, and test the drive across town at the times you would travel.

Cave Spring

Southwest Roanoke County, outside the city limits. Shopping and services line Route 419 (Electric Road) and Brambleton Avenue. Test those roads at rush hour.

Vinton

A town on the east side of the valley, inside Roanoke County, near the Blue Ridge Parkway and Explore Park. Owners pay county and town taxes, so compare the full bill.

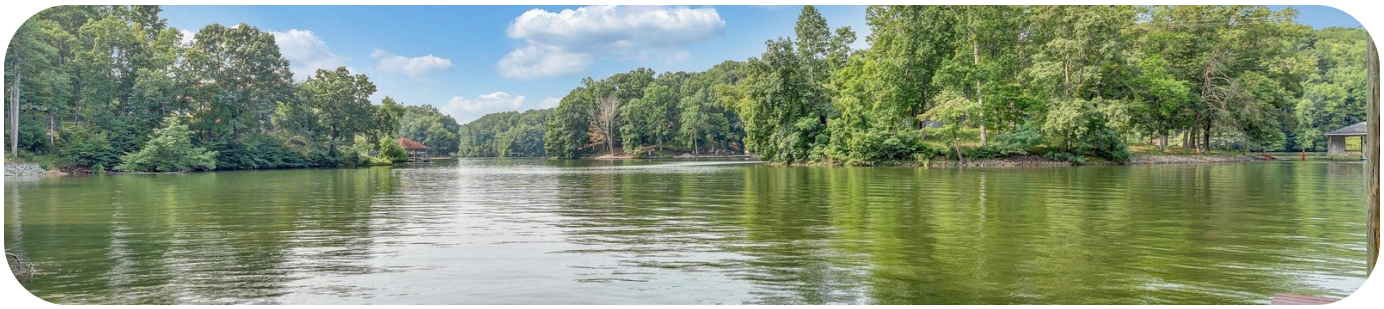
City, county or town?

Virginia cities are separate from counties. Roanoke City, Roanoke County and Salem each set their own taxes, schools and services. A mailing address does not tell you which one a home is in. Verify it.

BEYOND THE CITY

Same region. Different routines.

A mailing address, town boundary, school assignment and county are not interchangeable. Verify each one for the home you are considering.



Salem

An independent city west of Roanoke with its own downtown, schools and services, and home to Roanoke College. Walk Main Street, then test the I-81 or Route 419 drive from each house.

Daleville + Botetourt County

North of Roanoke along US 220 and I-81. Compare newer subdivisions around Daleville with acreage near Troutville and Fincastle. The Appalachian Trail crosses US 220 here.

Bedford + Bedford County

East of Roanoke on US 460. The Town of Bedford has a historic center, and the county reaches from the Blue Ridge to the lake. Drive times vary widely, so map each address.

Franklin County

South on US 220. Rocky Mount is the county seat, and Boones Mill sits closer to Roanoke. Separate inland properties from lake properties when you compare prices and drives.

Smith Mountain Lake

More than 500 miles of shoreline in Bedford, Franklin and Pittsylvania counties. Waterfront, water access and “near the lake” are three different things. Docks need an Appalachian Power permit, so verify the dock before you offer.

A useful comparison

Choose three addresses, not ten town names. Run the same commute, budget and property checks on each. I can set up that comparison with you.

HOUSING + COST OF LIVING

Compare the whole cost.

A valley-wide average is not a budget. Ask me for current listings and recent sales in the areas and home types you are considering.

Monthly ownership

Compare principal and interest, property taxes, insurance, HOA dues and mortgage insurance when it applies. Add utilities and realistic upkeep.

Cash beyond the down payment

Plan for inspections, lender and settlement costs, prepaid items, moving costs and a reserve after closing. Ask your lender for a written estimate.

Rent first or buy now?

Renting gives you time to learn the area when your job or location is still uncertain. Buying deserves a closer look once your plans, financing and priorities are clear.

Taxes change at the line

Each city, county and town sets its own real estate tax rate, and Virginia localities also tax vehicles each year. Compare the full tax picture for each address, not only the price.

Land, wells and the lake

Outside city limits, many homes use a well and septic system. Budget for those inspections, check internet options at the address, and ask about flood zones near rivers and the lake.

Selling a home first?

Tell me early. The timing of your sale, your financing and your move date all shape which offers make sense here.

Before you make an offer in Virginia

Contract terms differ from state to state. Before you sign, we walk through the earnest money deposit, inspection terms, financing and appraisal deadlines, and your settlement date. Your signed contract controls. For the step-by-step, see my free Buyer Guide at **leslieepperly.com/buyer-guide**.

GET AROUND BEFORE YOU MOVE

Test the trip you will take.

Drive the route at the time you would really travel. A weekend visit cannot tell you everything about a weekday.

Roads

I-81 runs along the west and north side of the valley. I-581 and US 220 run through Roanoke, and US 460 heads east to Bedford and west toward Blacksburg. The first and last miles matter most, especially on mountain and two-lane roads.

Flights + trains

Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport (ROA) has nonstop flights to hub airports including Charlotte, Atlanta and Dallas Fort Worth. Amtrak's Northeast Regional links downtown Roanoke with Washington, D.C. and points north. Check current schedules.

Transit needs a door-to-door check

Valley Metro buses serve Roanoke, Salem and Vinton. Check routes and service hours from the actual address. Most daily trips in the region are made by car.

Schools + healthcare

Each city and county runs its own school division. Verify school assignments with the division, using the property address. Carilion Clinic and LewisGale both have hospitals in the valley, so check your insurance network and the drive.

YOUR ROUTE TEST

Work address: _____

Travel days / arrival time: _____

Three regular stops: _____

What changed after driving it? _____

Not sure which route to test? Send me the work address and I will suggest areas to drive first.

LIFE BEYOND THE HOUSE

Make time to explore.

A good scouting trip includes the ordinary parts of life and a few of the reasons you are excited to move.





The Appalachian Trail

The trail passes close to the valley. McAfee Knob, Tinker Cliffs and Dragon's Tooth are well-known hikes. Check parking rules, trail conditions and daylight before you go.

Greenways + Carvins Cove

The Roanoke River Greenway is the paved backbone of the valley's trail network. Carvins Cove Natural Reserve has more than 60 miles of trails. Check access and pass rules first.

Blue Ridge Parkway + Mill Mountain

The Parkway runs along the edge of the valley, and the Mill Mountain Star overlooks downtown. Parkway sections close for weather and repairs, so check before a drive.

Smith Mountain Lake

Boating, fishing and a state park with a public beach. Research public lake access separately from the housing near it.

Food, arts + everyday stops

Visit a coffee shop, a grocery store and a restaurant near each area on your list. Walk the City Market blocks downtown. Check current hours instead of planning from an old list.

A personal note

I hike the local Appalachian Trail sections (Dragon's Tooth is my favorite) and run the Greenway. If the outdoors is part of your move, tell me, and trail access goes into the search from the start.

YOUR ARRIVAL CHECKLIST

Settle in with fewer surprises.

Confirm providers and requirements for your actual address. Services differ between cities, counties and towns.

Before moving day

- [ ] Set up electricity, water, gas if needed, and internet
- [ ] Verify availability with each provider at the address
- [ ] Confirm trash service and any HOA requirements
- [ ] Check moving truck access and parking

Keep one essentials folder

- [ ] ID and insurance documents
- [ ] School and medical records
- [ ] Pet records and medication
- [ ] Closing documents and service confirmations
- [ ] Keep it with you, not on the truck

Virginia license + vehicle

Per Virginia DMV. Confirm current rules at dmv.virginia.gov.

- [ ] Get a Virginia driver's license within 60 days
- [ ] Title and register your vehicle within 30 days
- [ ] Register the vehicle with your city or county too; some require a local decal

After you arrive

- [ ] Update mailing and billing addresses
- [ ] Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- [ ] Find the water and gas shutoffs
- [ ] Register to vote at your new address
- [ ] Set up healthcare and emergency contacts

If you bought from out of town

- [ ] Confirm the walkthrough, funds, closing and possession timing with me and your settlement agent
- [ ] Verify wire instructions by calling a phone number you already trust, never one from an unexpected email

YOUR NEXT STEP

Let’s make the valley a shorter list.



Leslie Epperly

REALTOR® with Real Broker, LLC - Daleville, licensed in Virginia. I have called the Roanoke Valley home for more than 30 years, and I help people relocate to the Roanoke Valley, Smith Mountain Lake and nearby Southwest Virginia.

Tell me three things

Where you expect to work, when you hope to move, and what you want your next home to do better. You do not need a final move date or a favorite area. We use those three answers to build a focused search.

Talk through your move with me.

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lesliepperly.com

USEFUL LINKS

- Moving to Roanoke: what to know
- Moving to Smith Mountain Lake
- My free Buyer Guide
- Homes currently for sale
- Virginia DMV: new residents
- Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport
- Roanoke Valley Greenways maps
- Smith Mountain Lake shoreline rules

November 2026 edition. Verify current requirements, costs, school assignments and availability with the relevant provider. Area descriptions are starting points for your own research. Your signed contract controls. This guide is not legal, tax or lending advice. Photos supplied by Leslie Epperly. Equal Housing Opportunity.