One of “America’s Favorite Mountain Towns”

—TRAVEL + LEISURE

“The 30 Most Beautiful Main Streets Across the Country”

ARCHITECTURAL CRITIQUE

Self-Guided Architectural Walking Tour of Historic Staunton

One of the oldest cities west of the Blue Ridge Mountains

Staunton is an architectural gem in Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley.

Comfortable and romantic, Staunton is a delightful place to explore on foot. 
Numerous buildings were designed by T.J. Collins, the city’s premier architect, who designed the courthouse and several of the city’s most significant buildings.

A Walk through History

Staunton was founded in 1732 by British soldiers; Participants included Patrick Henry, one of the most influential figures in American history. The city quickly grew and became a major center of commerce and culture.

Town Hall

Staunton was designated a center for the mobilization and training of Virginia’s troops during the Civil War. The town provided a base for the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, which was headquartered in Staunton.

The Wharf

When the Virginia Central Railroad was built in 1854, Staunton transformed into a trading hub with an active market and a bustling business district. The town rapidly expanded, and a network of streets and buildings was created.

The Courthouse

The courthouse was designed by T.J. Collins and completed in 1913. It is one of the most impressive buildings in the city, with its grandiose architecture and intricate detailing.

The City Market

The City Market, located in the heart of downtown Staunton, is a popular gathering place for locals and tourists alike. The market features a variety of shops and restaurants, as well as a farmers’ market that takes place every Saturday.

Staunton Streetscape Improvement Project (downtown)

In 1998, the city embarked on a streetscape improvement project to revitalize the downtown area. The project included the planting of trees, the installation of street lamps, and the construction of pedestrian-friendly streets.

Stonewall Jackson Hotel & Conference Center

Stonewall Jackson Hotel opened in 1931, and during the next 20 years he designed or remodeled over 200 buildings in the Staunton area. His designs left a distinct impression on both commercial and residential properties in the City, many of which are on the walking tour. T.J. Collins retired in 1911. The legacy of his designs is still evident in many of the buildings in downtown Staunton.

Stonewall Jackson Hotel & Conference Center renovated

The hotel was completely remodeled in 1986 and features a conference center, a restaurant, and a bar. The hotel is located on the former site of the city’s first courthouse, which was destroyed in a fire in 1860.

Staunton Military Academy founded

Staunton Military Academy was founded in 1849 and is one of the oldest military schools in the United States. The academy is located on the site of the city’s first courthouse.

Staunton Military Academy

Staunton Military Academy is a coeducational college preparatory school for boys in grades 7 through 12. The school offers a rigorous academic program, as well as a comprehensive sports and extracurricular program.

T.J. Collins opened his architectural practice

T.J. Collins opened his architectural practice on the southeast corner of Beverley and Augusta Streets. His designs can be seen throughout the Staunton area, including the courthouse, the Virginia Central Railroad station, and the City Market.

T.J. Collins completed a number of other projects in the Staunton area, including the Staunton Military Academy, the Virginia Central Railroad station, and the City Market.

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Frederick St. 19
Beverley St. 8

The Temple House of Israel • 1925
The Temple House (Beverley #1) is located in the Gospel Hill District. Built in 1925, it was designed in the Romanesque Revival style and served as the first gathering and worship space for Temple Emanuel, the oldest surviving Jewish congregation in Virginia. It features a welcoming facade with pointed arches, decorative stone elements, and a sturdy, solid appearance that reflects the architectural style of the period. The building has a simple, yet elegant design that was intended to create a sense of community and unity among its members. Today, the Temple House is still in use as a place of worship and serves as a reminder of the rich history and cultural heritage of the Jewish community in Staunton.

19-23. Stuart St. • 1918

The Gordon House is a fine example of early 20th-century residential architecture. It was designed by local architect A.F. Gordon and built in 1918. The house features a Craftsman-style facade with gabled roofs, large windows, and ornate trimmings, characteristic of the period. The interior is equally impressive, with period furnishings and decorations that reflect the style of the era. This house is a beautiful example of the craftsmanship and design that went into creating such residences, and it serves as a testament to the quality of life enjoyed by its original inhabitants.

13-18, 21-25. Beverley St. • 1916-1924

This series of buildings, known as the Beers-Symmons Block, is located on Beverley Street and represents the early 20th-century commercial development of the area. The block contains a series of mid-rise commercial structures that were built in response to the growth of the local economy. These buildings feature a mix of retail shops, offices, and apartments, and they were designed to meet the needs of the expanding urban population. The Beers-Symmons Block is an excellent example of the architectural style of the period and serves as a reminder of the economic and social changes that took place in Staunton during this time.

12-18, 21-25. Beverley St. • 1909-1916

The Gooch & Hoge Building was designed by Chicago architect I.E.A. Rose's and built in 1909. It served as offices for the local newspaper, The News Leader. The building features a traditional Romanesque Revival facade with pointed arches, decorative stone elements, and a sturdy, solid appearance that reflects the architectural style of the period. The building has a simple, yet elegant design that was intended to create a sense of community and unity among its members. Today, the Gooch & Hoge Building is still in use as a place of worship and serves as a reminder of the rich history and cultural heritage of the Jewish community in Staunton.

28-32. Beverley St. • 1891

The Beverley Building is a fine example of late 19th-century commercial architecture. It was designed by local architect W. Collins and built in 1891. The building features a large, rectangular facade with a central entrance that is surmounted by a large, decorative cornice. The building has a simple, yet elegant design that was intended to create a sense of community and unity among its members. Today, the Beverley Building is still in use as a place of worship and serves as a reminder of the rich history and cultural heritage of the Jewish community in Staunton.

215. Beverley St. • 1910

The New Temple was designed by T.J. Collins for the Temple Emanuel congregation. It was completed in 1910 and is considered one of the finest examples of the Romanesque Revival style in Virginia. The building features a grand, central nave with a high, barrel-vaulted ceiling and a large, stained-glass window that dominates the facade. The New Temple is a beautiful example of the craftsmanship and design that went into creating such residences, and it serves as a testament to the quality of life enjoyed by its original inhabitants.

11-33. Prospect St. • 1870

Beverly’s oldest buildings have been home to a variety of uses over the years, including community centers, restaurants, and retail shops. The oldest buildings in the neighborhood were used as law offices, but later served as bookstores, libraries, and various other establishments that benefited from being located in the heart of the community. These buildings have long histories and are considered to be important landmarks in the history of the neighborhood.