

A Spring Escape Aboard

Potomac Eagle

Scenic Railroad
Romney, West Virginia

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Photos courtesy Potomac Eagle

As if the unseasonably warm temperatures, budding trees, and blooming flowers weren't enough, a sure sign that spring is coming is the start of Potomac Eagle Scenic Railroad's 2019 season.

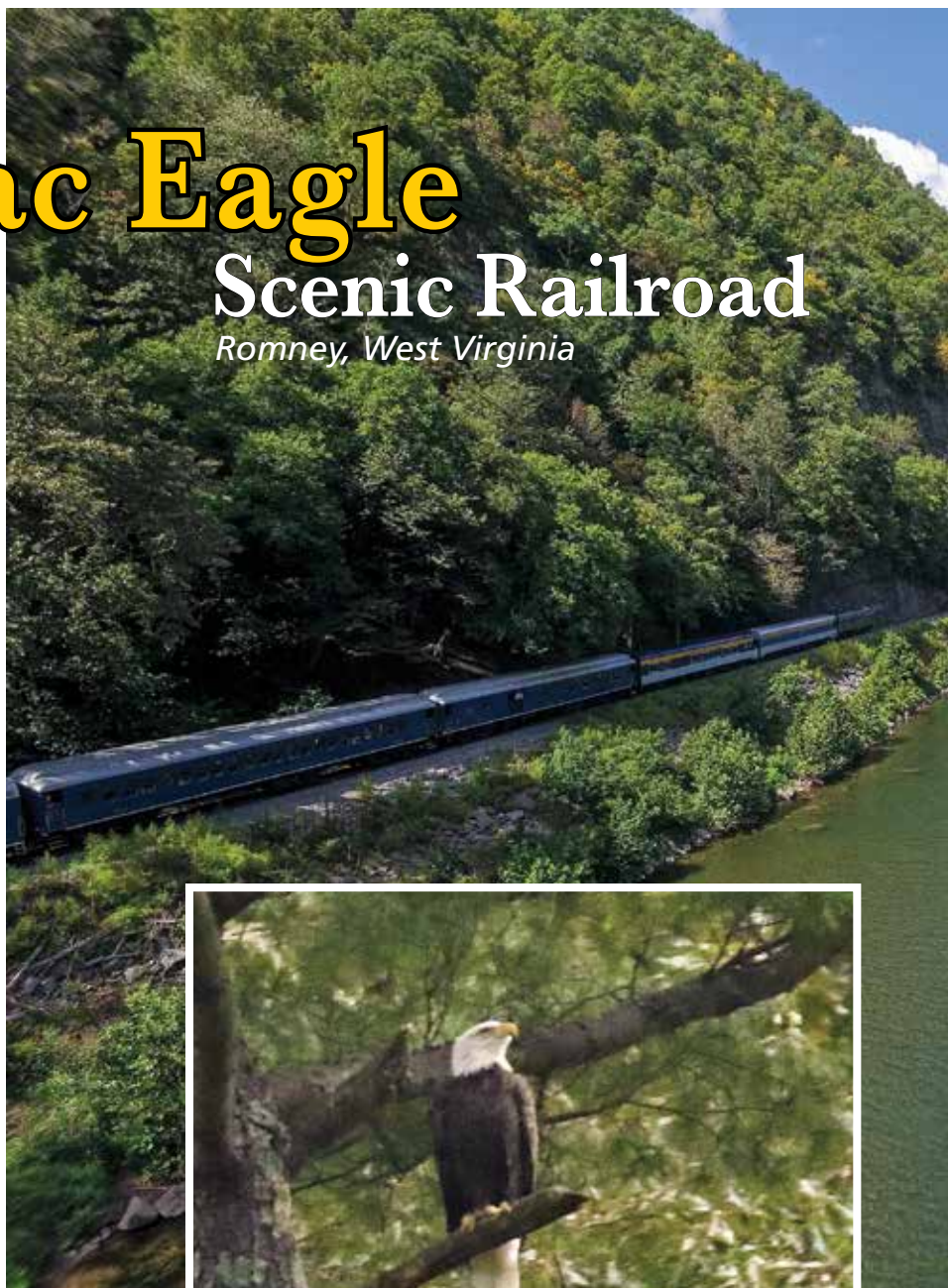
Located in the eastern panhandle of West Virginia, Potomac Eagle is less than three hours from Baltimore, Pittsburgh, and Washington, DC; close enough for a day trip, yet far enough away to escape the hustle and bustle of the every day.

Your journey begins at Wappocomo Station, situated next to a charming homestead and a sprawling view of the mountains. Enjoy the sounds of vintage diesels as they lead you through beautiful pastures and farms dating back to the 1700s. As you wind along the South Branch of the Potomac River, you'll enter a visually striking gorge known as the Trough. One of the most scenic spots along the South Branch, the Trough is home to American bald eagles.

Bald eagles need clean water and tall, mature trees for suitable habitat. The South Branch provides the perfect home. Plus, the Trough, the six-mile-long, steep, narrow canyon that the South Branch flows through, limits access to this area. This isolation is the most important need for bald eagles to thrive.

Top: Kayakers and canoers paddle through the Trough alongside the Potomac Eagle Scenic Railroad.

Right: A Bald Eagle at its nest along the South Branch of the Potomac River.





Mature bald eagles are easy to spot with their distinctive white head and tail feathers and yellow beak and feet. Juveniles have mottled-brown tail, head, and body feathers with some white in the wing linings while their talons and bill are yellow. Although eagles are spotted on over 90% of excursions, May and June are the best times to see the young eaglets.

While bald eagles are the main attraction for most passengers, Potomac Eagle offers something for everyone! A favorite way to view the scenery and those majestic eagles is a ride in one of our observation cars. One has a roof but



Top: Boarding the Potomac Eagle at Wappocomo Station, Romney, WV.

Middle: Dining in the 1950s lounge car.

Bottom: Watching for eagles from the gondola car at a stop on the South Branch Trough.



Above: The restored 1789 Isaac Kuykendall home is one of the various historical sites along the Potomac Eagle excursion.

Right: The Potomac Eagle leaving Wappocomo Station, for its scenic journey through the Trough.

Photo by Lance Bell

large open windows; guests can ride here anytime during the trip. The other observation car is the gondola. It is completely open with no roof. Passengers can ride there while traveling through the Trough.

Potomac Eagle offers two classes of service with unique passenger cars. Step back in time and ride in a 1920s passenger coach. Open a window and enjoy the breeze as the train travels along the South Branch. Or, treat yourself to Club, which includes meal service aboard a 1950s lounge car.

Excursions include narration about the railroad, local history, and things to do in the area. Romney is in Hampshire County, the oldest county in West Virginia, established in 1754. The 52.4-mile line runs through three counties—from Green Spring to Petersburg—and is an original Baltimore and Ohio Railroad line, over 100 years old. When West Virginia purchased the line in 1978, it



became the first state to own and operate its own freight service. Potomac Eagle began scenic excursions in 1991.

Learn more about Potomac Eagle Scenic Railroad at potomaceagle.com.