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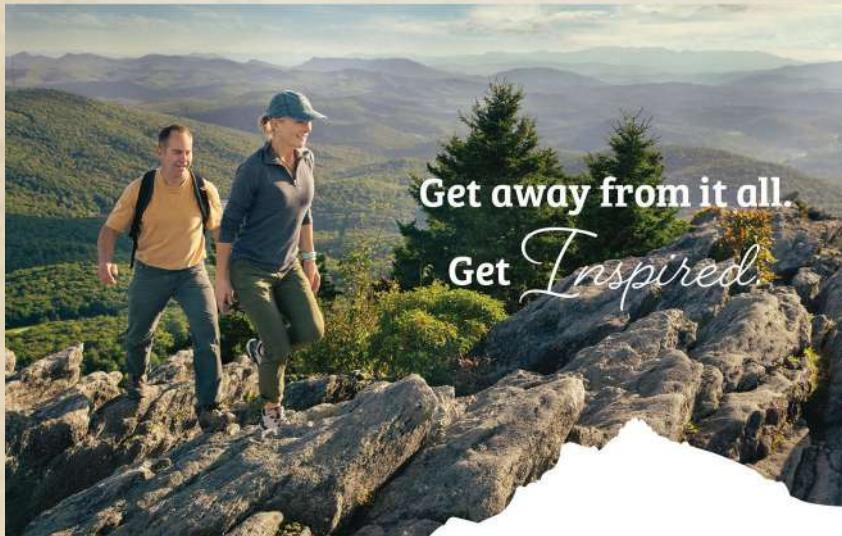
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above it all

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this place will bring it out.



The Outer Banks[®]
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INFO FOR *TRAVELERS*

WELCOME CENTERS AND REST AREAS

North Carolina's welcome centers and highway rest areas offer opportunities for convenient, brief stops, and they provide easy roadside access to public restrooms, snack and drink machines, drinking water, and telephones. Welcome centers also offer picnic tables, family restrooms and even displays of North Carolina crafts.

Professional travel counselors at each welcome center offer detailed travel information and distribute *The Official North Carolina Travel Guide*, the Department of Transportation's official state map and other marketing publications exclusively about North Carolina. They offer free assistance with booking room reservations for visitors staying overnight in the state.

The welcome centers are open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, except New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Rest areas are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For more information about traveling in North Carolina, go to visitnc.com.

STATEWIDE TRAVEL INFORMATION

Information on travel conditions is available online at ncdot.gov/travel, where you can search by region, route or county for current traffic, incident or adverse weather conditions that might affect your trip. Via phone, visitors can access updated travel information, including construction and traffic delays along interstates and major highways, by dialing 511. To speak to a VisitNC representative, call (800) VISIT NC (847-4862).

FERRY INFORMATION

The North Carolina Department of Transportation's ferry system includes 22 vehicle ferries that operate 365 days a year on seven routes along the coast, including Bayview-Aurora, Currituck-Knotts Island, Cedar Island-Ocracoke, Swan Quarter-Ocracoke, Hatteras-Ocracoke, Cherry Branch-Minnesott Beach and Southport-Fort Fisher. Ferries can accommodate motorcycles and any size car, trailer or RV that can operate on the highway. A passenger-only ferry between Hatteras and Ocracoke Village operates in the summer months.

Ferries provide links to lighthouses, pristine beaches, historic sites, outdoor recreational activities and more. Reservations for the Cedar Island-Ocracoke or Swan Quarter-Ocracoke routes can be made by calling (800) BY-FERRY (293-3779) or visiting ncferry.org. Motorists must claim their reservation at least 30 minutes prior to departure, or it will be canceled. All other ferry routes operate on a first-come, first-serve basis.

AMTRAK TRAIN SERVICE

Amtrak service to North Carolina is your gateway to your getaway, with daily Amtrak passenger trains serving 16 North Carolina cities. There are also daily round-trip train services between Raleigh and Charlotte and connecting Thruway Service to the North Carolina coast. Plan your trip to and within North Carolina and purchase tickets online at ncbytrain.org or call (800) BY-TRAIN (298-7246).

DISABILITY ACCESS

Information for travelers with disabilities is available online or via download in English and Spanish in *ACCESS North Carolina: A Vacation and Travel Guide for People with Disabilities*. This publication provides information about parking, paths, entrances and restrooms for hundreds of attractions, and it rates how accessible each attraction is for different types of disabilities. Email accessnorthcarolina@gmail.com to inquire about the vacation guide or accessible tourism. View the guide at ncdhhs.gov/documents/access-north-carolina-vacation-and-travel-guide-people-disabilities.

The Americans with Disabilities Act establishes a variety of standards for different types of properties. Visitors with disabilities and accessibility needs are encouraged to contact the accommodations or attractions directly to learn about their accessibility features.

SAFETY AND ALERTS

Safety tips regarding hiking, swimming, camping, and visiting beaches and waterfalls are available at visitnc.com/safety.



DEAR TRAVELERS,

Welcome to *The Official 2024 North Carolina Travel Guide*, your passport to explore a state with boundless opportunities. Whether you're a first-time visitor or a lifelong resident like me, this guide will cater to your desire for adventure, discovery and a host of other pursuits in all 100 North Carolina counties.

For 2024, this guide unites the timeless appeal of North Carolina's scenic beauty with the dynamic appeal of what's new. Travelers craving the great outdoors can find compass points for parks and preserves, wildflower fields, and stargazing locales with tips from the Outdoor NC initiative marking the path to sustainability. With the return of the U.S. Open to Pinehurst, trip planners can survey the manicured greens there and at other courses from the Smokies to the coast. Cities and towns come to life in features that highlight dining, attractions and outdoor spaces in destinations that grow even better with time.

As you travel the state, I encourage you to take in the best of what's here, from nature's bounty to our culture, cuisine and spirit of innovation. The rewards are as endless as the views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roy Cooper". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "C".

Governor Roy Cooper

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Have a barrel of fun when you visit Steel String Brewery at Pluck Farm in Mebane. The small-batch operation concocts beers full of local flavors, using hops and other ingredients grown in their on-site fields.

FRESH SIPS

Raise your glass to an ever-growing craft beverage scene brimming with new wines, beers, spirits, ciders and mocktails that are sure to quench your thirst for fun.



Perry's Berry's Vineyard and Winery, Morganton



PAW of approval
Sit, stay and sip at Perry's Berry's. Well-behaved leashed dogs are welcome in designated areas. (Paws off the blueberry bushes and the farm store, please.)

Wineries

Pop the cork and drink in your surroundings with some of North Carolina's newest wines and ciders.

Perry's Berry's Vineyard and Winery

📍 Morganton

For years, this family farm has been a favorite destination for its U-pick blueberries and sweet wines made from fruit grown on-site. Now they produce hard ciders too. Crack open an apple-blueberry, peach-mango or pear-apple cider and sip the fruity drinks in a pastoral setting.

Sotrio Vineyards and Winery 📍 Ronda

A passion for making wine led Bill and Teresa Piastuch to straddle the fertile Yadkin Valley and Swain Creek American Viticultural Areas (AVAs). The couple began constructing their tasting room in 2023, which also features microbrews. Enjoy more vino at nearby Raffaldini, Piccione and new Castello Barone vineyards.

Stone Ashe Vineyard 📍 Hendersonville

Hendersonville has a similar climate to several of the most beloved grape-growing regions in France, allowing Stone Ashe to produce Bordeaux, Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon and Riesling wines. Make a reservation to visit the vineyard and sample some classics that pair perfectly with the mountain setting.



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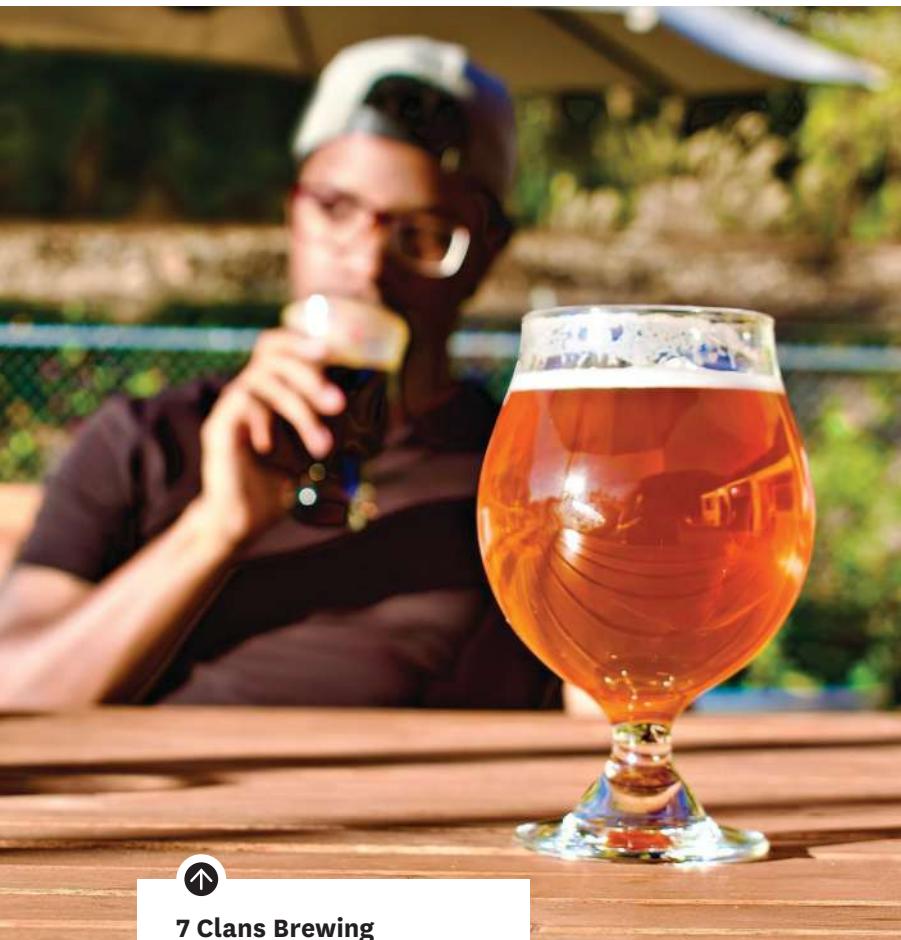
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Breweries

Among 400-plus breweries and brewpubs (more than any other state in the American South), these are a few truly sud-sational finds.



7 Clans Brewing

📍 Asheville

Long before Asheville became a hub of craft brewing and restaurants, it was an ancestral home for Cherokee tribes. Indigenous-owned 7 Clans Brewing celebrates the union of cultural customs and the thirst for local beer with brews such as Hop-Rooted IPA, 7 Clans Blonde Ale and Bended Tree Chestnut Brown.

NC Beer Factory

📍 Rocky Mount

This veteran-owned nanobrewery (yes, that's even smaller than a microbrewery) makes seasonal beers in limited-release batches. Head to the taproom for a pint of their latest creation, grab a bite

from the occasionally appearing food truck, and play games or relax by the firepit on the patio.

SouthEnd Brewing Co.

📍 Boone

A new outpost of the already popular SouthEnd Brewing in Greensboro, the family-owned brewery rolls out barrels of hospitality under the ownership of the Kevorkian family. Drinks like The Lightest Thing We Have pilsner and Intrepid Goat IPA join forces with Bavarian pretzels and tuna poke nachos.



SIP AND STROLL

A 2021 North Carolina law allows cities to create **social districts** that permit licensed establishments to sell alcoholic drinks to go. Cities including Asheville, Greenville, High Point, Raleigh and around 40 others (with even more in the planning stages) make it possible to imbibe between local breweries, bars, restaurants, stores and landmarks. In Raleigh, for example, you can purchase a pint of beer, pour of wine or a cocktail to go and drink it while strolling past a diverse lineup of shops and murals on your way to dinner. Participating shops in the Raleigh district also allow you to bring your beverages inside while browsing.

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Distilleries

While the era of bootleggers racing along North Carolina's back roads has passed, you'll want to rush to these spirited stops that are raking in awards.

Buffalo City Distillery

📍 Point Harbor

Buffalo City was once hailed as the Moonshine Capital of the World for its abundance of stills, and that tradition lives on here. The distillery uses locally grown grains to make its handcrafted concoctions. East Lake Whiskey, the flagship spirit, honors the libations served in local speakeasies 100 years ago.

Oxford Oaks Distillery

📍 Oxford

Make a reservation to enjoy light bites or upscale dining and craft cocktails in this former 1920 hardware store. The downtown microdistillery partners with local farmers to source grains and botanicals for its artisan whiskey, gin, vodka and rum.

Walton's Distillery

📍 Jacksonville

Learn how spirits are made during free tours and indulge in complimentary tastings of their award-winning booze. Their menu of barrel-aged and traditional spirits includes whiskey, bourbon, vodka, rum and moonshine bottled in Mason jars.



LOW-PROOF party

No booze? No problem! **Mocksie** (the first nonalcoholic bar and bottle shop in Wilmington), Charlotte's ultrachill **Sugar Lounge** and plant-forward **Umbrella Dry Bar** in Raleigh are some of the newest arrivals in the state's rapidly growing craft mocktail scene.



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THRILLS ON WHEELS

Call it Newton’s first law of emotion: Velocity equals excitement. Whether that speed is generated by a race car or mountain bike, North Carolina exhilarates fans of fast-paced sports.



Auto Racing

Trackhouse Motorplex, Mooresville

Bootleggers running moonshine through the woods fueled North Carolina’s auto racing legacy. Celebrate NASCAR’s past and present at history-rich venues — and get a shot of adrenaline at your own speed.

NASCAR’s roots run deep in North Carolina, especially at historic **North Wilkesboro Speedway** in Wilkes County, site of some of the circuit’s earliest races. After idling in abandonment for years, the short track recently revved into revival mode and began hosting NASCAR events again. Another comeback track is **Rockingham Speedway**. Opened on Halloween in 1965 (and now renovated), The Rock features Big Rig Series races and concerts. They’re also hoping to bring back NASCAR. Besides watching the Coca-Cola 600 and other world-class races, visitors to **Charlotte Motor Speedway** in Concord — aka America’s Home for

Racing — can go on a behind-the-scenes tour or test their driving skills in a real race car on the 1.5-mile quad oval. At the nearby **NASCAR Hall of Fame** in Charlotte, take a lap through racing history. Learn about the sport’s colorful drivers, see their signature cars and try the Pit Crew Challenge — change a tire with an air gun and fill the fuel tank while the clock is ticking. Experience smaller scale racing at **Trackhouse Motorplex**, an outdoor kart facility in Mooresville that’s modeled after the Kartdromo Parma circuit in Italy. Put yourself behind the wheel and try to master the 0.7-mile track at speeds reaching 55 mph.



ACCESSIBLE *fun for all*

One of the racing simulators at Charlotte’s **NASCAR Hall of Fame** is wheelchair-accessible, so more people can feel the thrill of driving a virtual race car.





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Mountain Biking

Make challenging climbs, descend steep slopes and go with the flow at these scenic mountain biking destinations that test your mettle on the pedals.



Butter Gap Trail Brevard

A steep technical downhill leg starts this singletrack route that descends its namesake gap in Pisgah National Forest. The trail levels off into a flat scenic ride along Grogan Creek. There's a nice waterfall too. An ongoing facelift is increasing the length and durability of the trail.

Weed Patch Mountain Trail

 Lake Lure

Nonprofit land trust Conserving Carolina won a national award for this 8.6-mile trail, which traverses rugged mountain terrain through a remote wilderness area in Buffalo Creek Park. Ride through old-growth forest, race past streams and climb to stunning viewpoints like Eagle Rock.

Ride Rock Creek Bike Park

 Zirconia

Downhill racer Neko Mulally founded this park that backs up to DuPont State Recreational Forest. Ride a shuttle to the top of the mountain, then choose from seven trails for various skill levels. On-site rentals, gear and repairs are available.

Rocky Knob Mountain Bike Park Boone

The rousing PBJ Jump Trail — that's for pumps, berms and jumps — is a favorite among this park's 11 miles of looping trails and five skills areas, including a new state-of-the-art paved pump track. The Keendergarten Trail indulges novices, while Ol' Hoss climbs to the summit.



OUTDOOR NC PRINCIPLE *Tips for Mountain Biking*
Before pedaling through North Carolina, be sure to review these helpful guidelines to keep our trails enjoyable for generations of future biking enthusiasts.

Tsali Recreation Area

 Bryson City

Old logging roads help you cut to the chase on 40 invigorating miles of trails in four big loops. Named for a Cherokee tribal member, it's considered one of the region's top biking spots. Pause between runs for views of Fontana Lake and Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Fire Mountain Trails

 Cherokee

More than 11 miles of singletrack and multiuse trails thread the Great Smoky Mountains. Expect good flow and surprises around every turn, with berms, switchbacks and quick hits of elevation. Kessel Run helps you build speed and make serious jumps. Spearfinger and Tinker's Dream hone skills.

WHERE NAPA
VALLEY LIFESTYLE
MEETS BLUE RIDGE
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INDOOR EXPLORERS

Adventures aren't limited to the outdoors in North Carolina.

These indoor destinations are action-packed for kids of all ages who are ready to run, climb, create and learn.



Watch paleontologists slowly unearth this *Tyrannosaurus* skull from a rock slab at *Dueling Dinosaurs* in the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences.



North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences Raleigh

How's this for a ferocious encounter? More than 67 million years ago, a *Triceratops* and small *Tyrannosaurus* were buried mid-battle in a single grave. The dinosaurs' bodies became frozen in time, their bones completely fossilized. The grappling giants remained entangled underground until 2006, when a team of fossil hunters unearthed the pair and dubbed them the *Dueling Dinosaurs*. This incredibly rare find is unique for

two reasons — not only because the remains were found engaged in an apparent predator-prey encounter, but because these Cretaceous creatures are two of the most complete dinosaur fossils ever discovered. And now they're calling North Carolina home. This year, the state's most-visited museum is unveiling their new SECU DinoLab, a cutting-edge facility where visitors can come face-to-face with the remains, talk with paleontologists as they remove the fossils from rock slabs and gain insight into the natural mysteries of the past.

Check In and **BLISS OUT**

Surround yourself in European-style luxury with premium leisure amenities in the heart of downtown Highlands, NC with heated pools, farm-fed restaurants and live music venues.



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RELAIS &
CHATEAUX

More to Explore

Don't wait for a rainy day! Curious kiddos can explore the world around them at these spots year-round. Discover more indoor exploration options at [VisitNC.com/museums](https://www.visitnc.com/museums).



Children's Museum of Alamance County Graham

Forget some of the standard house rules here; little ones are encouraged to climb colorful displays and paint on the walls. When you're ready to wind down, relax on the swivel stools in Jane's Cafe while kids take orders in the play diner.

Discovery Place Kids

 Huntersville and Rockingham

Inspire youngsters to be whatever they want to be with skill-building exhibits at these sister museums. Change race car tires as part of a pretend pit crew in Huntersville, or bandage stuffed animal boo-boos in the Rockingham play vet's office.



Marbles Kids Museum Raleigh

Two levels of hands-on exhibits and experiences make this a family hit. Splash in a space designed for water play, plant pretend veggies in *Seedlings*, get creative with crafts and building in the *imagiFAB* exhibit, and watch films on the IMAX screen.

Exploration Station Lumberton

Imaginations run wild at this interactive learning center where young visitors can assume the roles of bank tellers, pirates and train conductors in child-size exhibits. Take a break from pretend time by gathering under Pops the talking tree while he shares local stories.

Kaleideum Winston-Salem

Discover the stars, watch movies and experience musical laser shows under the Digital Dome at Kaleideum's new location in the heart of downtown Winston-Salem. The experiential learning museum also hosts live animals and interactive displays.



Nido & Mariana Qubein Children's Museum High Point

Furniture is big business here, literally. Climb through a chest of drawers and under a giant chair in the larger-than-life *GiNormous* exhibit, which nods to High Point's home furnishings fame. Step beyond home goods by exploring secret passages in the *Hall of Mysteries* and scaling to the top of the two-story *Courage Climber*.



ACCESSIBLE *fun for all*

The **Nido & Mariana Qubein Children's Museum** is one of more than a dozen locations with sensory-friendly offerings in High Point, the East Coast's first Certified Autism Destination.





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Carowinds

Oyster Bay Golf Links,
Sunset Beach

GOLF GETAWAYS

Near all these topflight golf destinations, you'll find drive-worthy attractions beckoning you to extend your stay. In other words, save a day to go intentionally off course.

Coast

Two Brunswick Islands courses offer unbeatable vistas along with a taste of seaside, links-style golf that has roots on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean.

Leopard's Chase Golf Links 📍 Ocean Isle Beach

One of four big-cat-themed courses at Ocean Ridge Plantation, Leopard's Chase is full of surprises that seem to leap out of nowhere. Scene-stealing highlights include greens tucked away on an island (hole four) and behind a waterfall (hole 18).

MAKE IT A GETAWAY

Ocean Isle Inn offers three great advantages: location, location, location. It's right on the beach, with rooms providing ocean or island views. The outdoor pool overlooks the water, too, and there's a surfside gazebo for watching sunsets. Plenty of local restaurants and shops are walkably close.

Oyster Bay Golf Links 📍 Sunset Beach

Marshes, freshwater lakes and the Calabash River come into play on this water-guarded course where the back nine includes two par-3 holes with island greens — and alligators ready to claim errant tee shots.

MAKE IT A GETAWAY

You may have an easier time scoring birdies just across the Intracoastal Waterway at **Bird Island Reserve**, an undeveloped barrier island ecosystem. More than 1,400 acres of sandy white beaches, dunes, salt marshes and creeks provide a home for diverse wildlife and plant species.



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Pinehurst Resort Pinehurst



Pinehurst is a name synonymous with golf greatness, especially the resort's world-famous course No. 2, a Donald Ross-designed masterpiece. It has hosted more championships than any other American course — and the U.S. Open returns in 2024. In all, seven of Pinehurst's 10 courses make the North Carolina Golf Panel's list of top public-access courses. Pinehurst No. 10, opening this year, boasts dune-lined fairways and 75 feet of elevation change along with signature pine trees that act as silent spectators.

MAKE IT A GETAWAY

Satisfy your hunger for history and food in the surrounding Village of Pinehurst (which actually existed before the first golf course). Learn the legacy of the site through artifacts at **Tufts Archives** (named for village founder James Walker Tufts), including Donald Ross' original golf course maps and Mr. Tufts' 19th-century marble-and-silver soda fountain. Start the day with fresh coffee and French pastries at **Agora Bakery and Cafe**, a family-friendly breakfast and lunch bistro that radiates joie de vivre. The aromas of oak- and hickory-smoked meats, Neapolitan-style pizza, and brewing beer fill **Pinehurst Brewing Company**, set in a historic steam plant. The brick exterior boasts corbels, arches and a rebuilt smokestack. Interior walls bear black scars from boilers.



Piedmont

Two of the state's most iconic names — Pinehurst and Duke — are attached to venerable golf courses and places to discover local history, flavors and beauty.

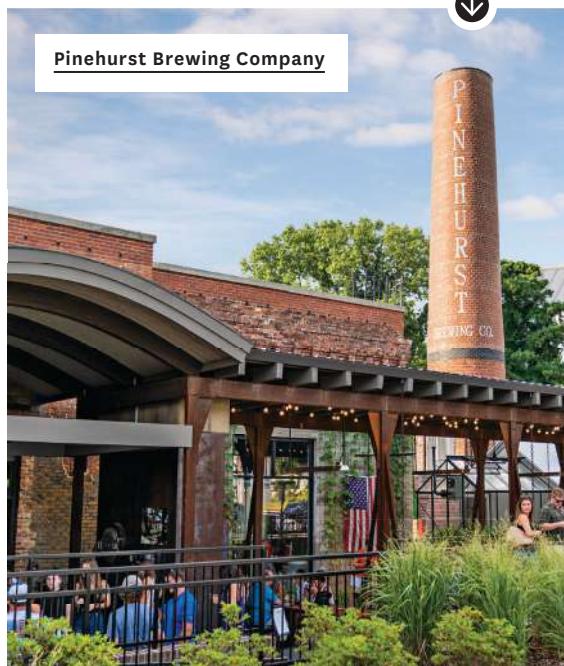
Washington Duke Inn & Golf Club Durham

Right in the thick of Blue Devils territory, the Duke University Golf Club course was designed by famed architect Robert Trent Jones and later updated by his son Rees. Towering pines and hardwoods frame broad fairways, while contoured greens bedevil players.

MAKE IT A GETAWAY

A Durham visit is not complete without a stop at **Sarah P. Duke Gardens**, 55 acres of botanical bliss with scenic overlooks and peaceful ponds on the Duke University campus. Two beloved spots are the red-arched Meyer Bridge in the W.L. Culberson Asiatic Arboretum and the Italianate-style Terrace Gardens.

Pinehurst Brewing Company





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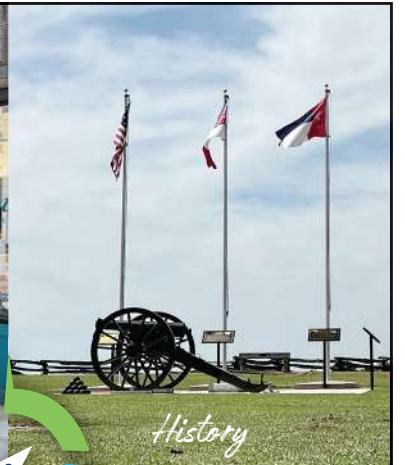
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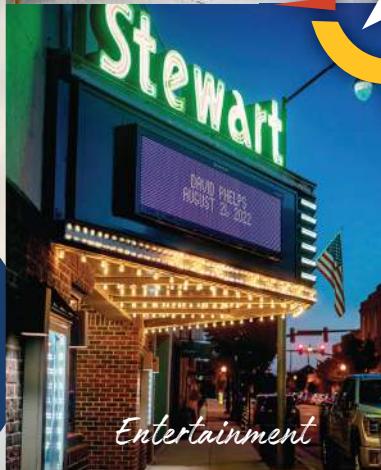
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History



Entertainment



Dining



Mountains

Elevate your golf game on courses that add mountain majesty to every round, then find refreshments, retro fashions and recreation in settings high and low.



Mountain Aire Golf Course

📍 West Jefferson

Amazing Appalachian Mountains panoramas and few water hazards make this course a pleasure to play, though dramatic elevation changes will definitely keep you on your toes. The scenery is especially stunning on the second, third and 18th holes.

MAKE IT A GETAWAY

More vivid vistas await in **Mount Jefferson State Natural Area**. Take the steep but short Summit Trail to the top of the dark 1,600-foot mountain (it's colored by black metamorphic rock) for multistate views. Get a closer look at the rocks on the Rhododendron Trail.

Waynesville Inn & Golf Club

📍 Waynesville

A major redesign has turned the club's three 9-hole courses into one 18-hole layout. The new front nine incorporates the club's original Donald Ross-designed Carolina course that opened in 1926. The other two courses, Dogwood and Blue Ridge, have been curated into a rugged new back nine with views of the Great Smoky Mountains. The extensive renovations also added a short course, driving range, new practice greens and a unique Himalayas-style putting course.

MAKE IT A GETAWAY

Waynesville's Historic Frog Level business district — named for its low-lying creekside location — is full of hoppin' spots, such as **Frog Level Brewing**. Enjoy a Frogger Lager or other microbrews in their dog-friendly outdoor beer garden, which doubles as a live music venue from spring until fall. A global spirit permeates **The Funky Fern Emporium**, purveyor of fun vintage furniture, clothing and decor. Fans love the friendly staff and support of local artists. Get your hippie boho chic on at **Soul Sisters Depot** with graphic tees, bell bottoms, artisan candles, jewelry and purses. Scavenged objects, such as old doors and car parts, display retro merch. **Axe and Awl Leatherworks** handcrafts durable leather goods like belts, wallets, totes, duffels, and dog collars and leashes. Just how tough is their stuff? They make suspenders and gear straps for firefighters.



The Funky Fern Emporium



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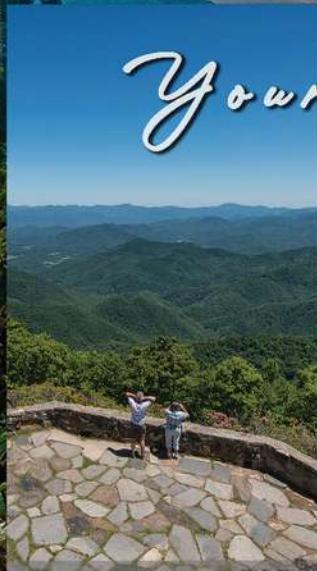
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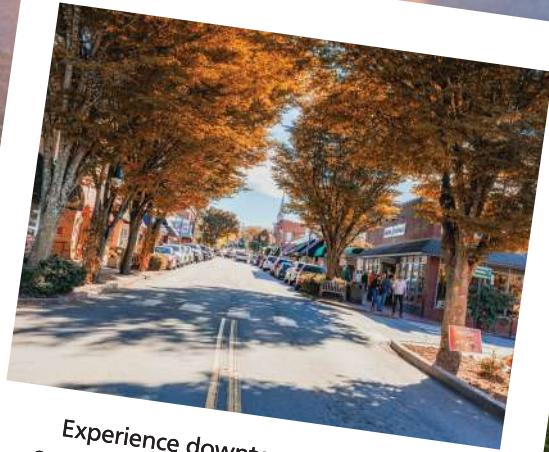


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HAYWOOD YOU LIKE TO EXPERIENCE THE NC SMOKIES?



Experience downtown Waynesville's one-of-a-kind boutiques, farm-to-table restaurants, and seasonal markets.

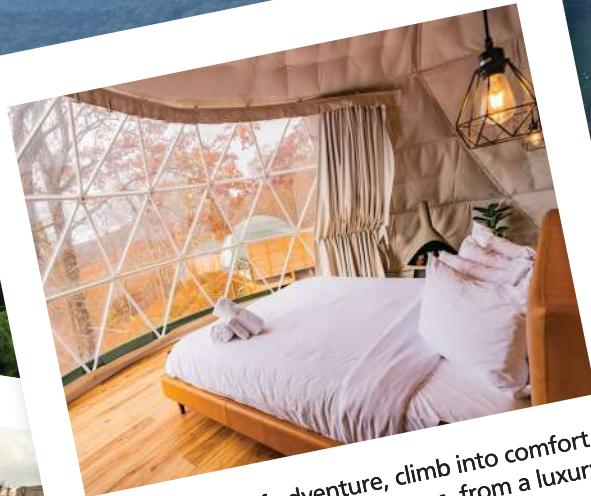


Witness Maggie Valley's beautiful elk in Cataloochee Valley graze the landscape and roam the hillsides with their majestic presence.

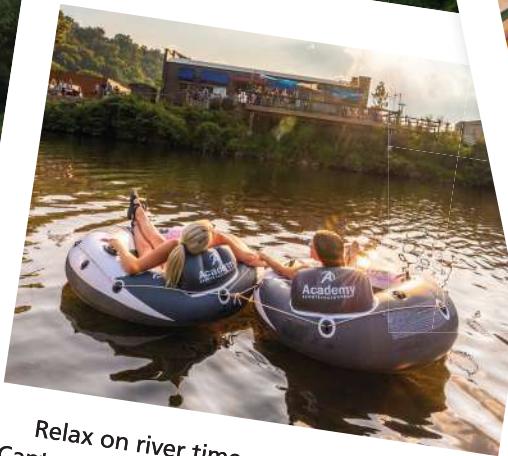
Make Haywood County your base camp for an unforgettable NC Smokies adventure! From weekends away to extended vacation stays, discover all the things you can see, and the fun you can have, in our charming mountain towns.

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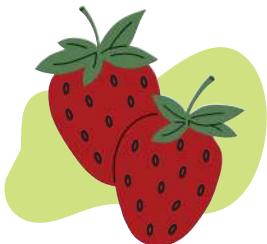


Relax on river time as you float through Canton, refreshed by the crisp, clean waters of the Pigeon River with family and friends.

VISITNC  SMOKIES

SMALL TOWNS, BIG EVENTS

Fish and figs. Mayberry and strawberries. White squirrels and woolly worms. These annual festivals will blow you away with their displays of local pride and hospitality.



Carolina Strawberry Festival

📍 Wallace 📅 May

A berry good time is guaranteed with the Little Miss Strawberry Pageant, the pet-friendly 5K featuring strawberry doggie treats, bushels of vendors selling handcrafted goods and regional bands jamming on the downtown stage. Fresh strawberries abound atop funnel cakes and other sweet and savory items.



White Squirrel Weekend

📍 Brevard 📅 May

Nobody knows for sure where the town's signature white squirrels originated (legend claims they escaped a carnival truck), but regardless, locals raise a glass to them at a beer garden, food court, music stage and art walk. If you're looking for the wily white creatures themselves, try the Brevard College campus or Franklin Park.



Ocracoke Fig Festival

📍 Ocracoke Island 📅 August

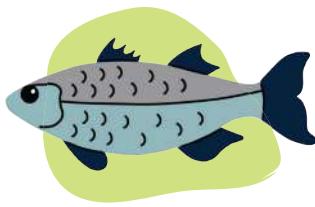
Bring your date and get figgy among the island's signature fig trees, dancing to live music, savoring an abundance of fig preserves and biting into straight-up Ocracoke figs. Each year, an award-winning North Carolina chef helps judge the prized Fig Cake Bake-Off. You'll want to stick around for a free sample from the winning entry.



Mayberry Days

📍 Mount Airy 📅 September

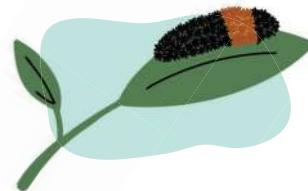
In the hometown of Andy Griffith, you'll feel like you've teleported into an episode of *The Andy Griffith Show*, thanks to the pork chop sandwich-eating contest at Snappy Lunch, the Goober Says "Hey" Bale Toss, folksy musical performances, and a parade featuring vintage squad cars and occasional actors from the original show.



Swansboro Mullet Festival of North Carolina

📍 Swansboro 📅 October

Along the coast, sporting a fresh mullet can mean two things: You either just went to the hair salon or you've caught one of the little blue-gray fishies that swim the region's waters. This event celebrates the latter with a fish fry, a Mullet Toss competition and a Blessing of the Fleet that honors boat owners.



Woolly Worm Festival

📍 Banner Elk 📅 October

Meteorologists need not apply here. The annual "Reading of the Worm" provides a delightfully quirky (if somewhat unreliable) read on winter weather, with the woolly worm's 13 colored segments predicting the upcoming season's temps and precipitation. Around 20,000 visitors join the fun, which also includes food and crafts vendors.



👉 Scan the QR code for a full lineup of uniquely North Carolina events and festivals.



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Feeling a little landlocked? Wilmington and Beaches can help you hit refresh with miles of scenic beaches and adventures minutes away from historic Wilmington. Enjoy tours and cruises, historic sites, live music events and fresh-to-table cuisine.

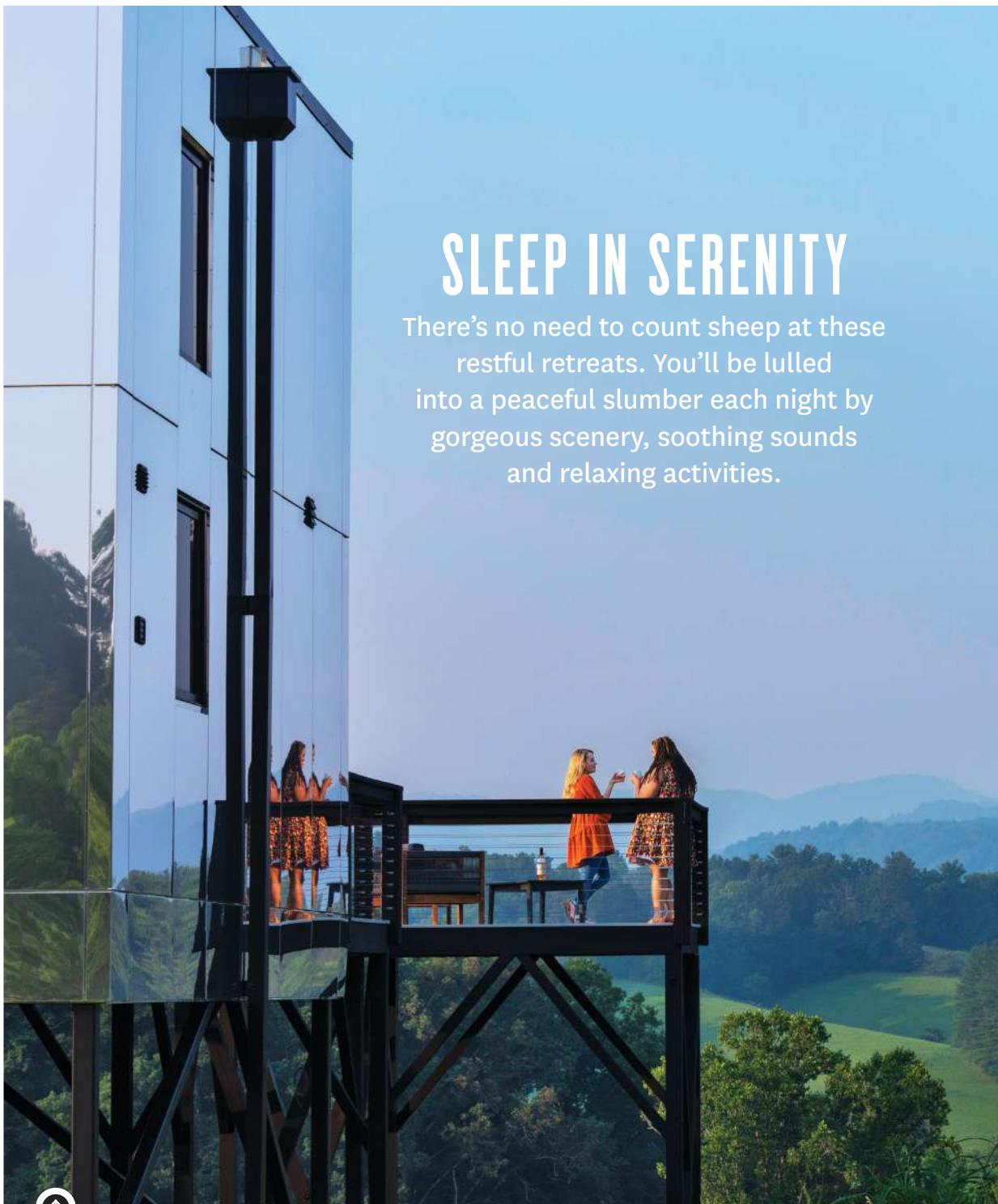
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SLEEP IN SERENITY

There's no need to count sheep at these restful retreats. You'll be lulled into a peaceful slumber each night by gorgeous scenery, soothing sounds and relaxing activities.



Mirror Hotel 📍 Marshall

Talk about lodgings that blend into their surroundings. This assortment of luxury mountain cabins comes wrapped with reflective exterior panels that mirror the natural beauty of the secluded setting, rendering the structures nearly invisible. The units also reflect an emphasis on elevated hotel-style amenities. Each cabin has a custom kitchen and bath, a terrace for morning yoga and late-night stargazing, and 15-foot-tall windows that maximize views of forests and mountains. For the utmost guest privacy, each unit includes its own hot tub, pergola, patio with firepit and alfresco pizza oven. The cabins can fill up a year or more in advance, so it's best to start dreaming up a future getaway now.



Bramabella

📍 Moravian Falls

Guests at this estate in the Brushy Mountains say it has a definite Garden of Eden feel. The five-bedroom, three-bath home sits on a 40-acre site with a hillside vineyard, butterfly garden, blueberry orchard and stream with waterfalls. A seating area in the heart of the garden begs for “me” time. Meander along easy hiking trails and enjoy ample bird-watching.

Sugarneck 📍 Sanford

Hip meets history on the grounds of a longtime haven near the Cape Fear River. New glamping tents have joined The Cabin (built in 1874) as overnight options. The Cabin features a chef’s kitchen and private bath with a walk-in shower, while the glamping tents come with dedicated bathhouses, hot water, gas cooking and firepits.

Treehouse Vineyards

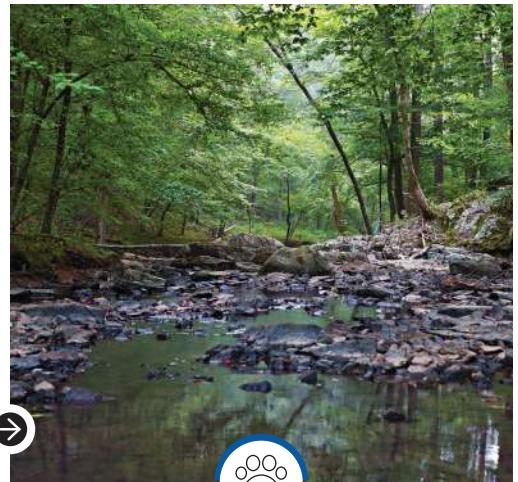
📍 Monroe

Choose from two overnight tree houses at this country winery. Horsefeathers Hideaway is a modern and spacious option, sleeping six comfortably. Papa’s Dream provides a cozy cocoon for two with a sleeping loft. A third tree house, rustic Date Night, is available for an afternoon or evening of vino with views.

Respite in the Round

📍 Berea

Venture from your two-story round tree house to spot blue herons and other creatures at Cub Creek. Set in a rare Piedmont alluvial forest, the house sleeps six to eight people amid modern amenities. If you want to stay closer to nature, there are three campsites available — two along the creek and one deeper in the forest.



PAW
of approval

Pets are welcome at **Respite in the Round**, which provides ample space for leashed scampering and sniffing among green spaces and woods.



Buffalo Creek Vacations 📍 Clyde

Engineer a getaway to this ranch where bison roam and refurbished cabooses have literally gone off the rails to provide accommodations posher than any Pullman car. The Gray Caboose and Orange Caboose both sleep five, each with a full kitchen, bath and loft bed in the cupola for kids. Choose from more traditional cabins too. Interacting with buffalo, llamas, goats and mini horses is all part of the family fun.

Lakeview at Fontana

📍 Bryson City

Disconnect from the everyday and reconnect with nature, yourself or someone else at this rustic-chic spot, a refurbished 1950s motor court. Book a comfy single room or a suite with a kitchenette, living and dining areas, and separate sleeping quarters. To help unplug, there's no in-room TV or Wi-Fi — it's a place to nap, read, chat, swim, hike and lounge. For ultimate relaxation, soak in a treetop tub with views of Fontana Lake and the Smoky Mountains.

Cashie River Tree Houses

📍 Windsor

An elevated walkway connects four tree houses nestled along the Cashie River, where the sights and sounds of nature put you in a state of bliss. Each home includes a queen-size sleeping platform, loft, and outdoor gathering area with chairs and benches for basking in the fresh air and views. All the dwellings are ADA-accessible and pet-friendly too. Get a closer look at the river on a kayak or canoe excursion (rentals available), and go hunting and fishing.



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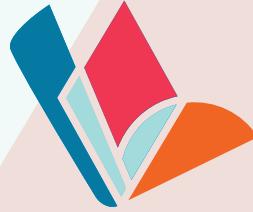
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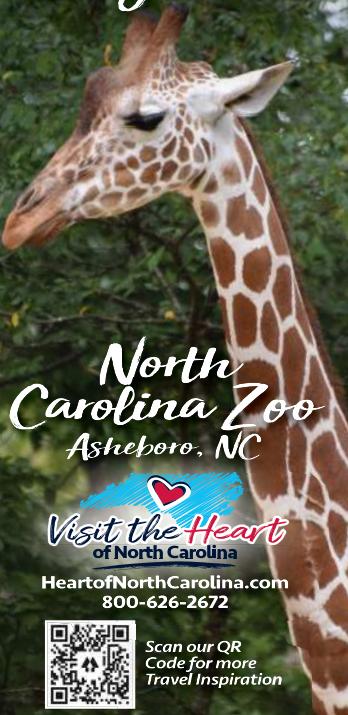
Piedmont

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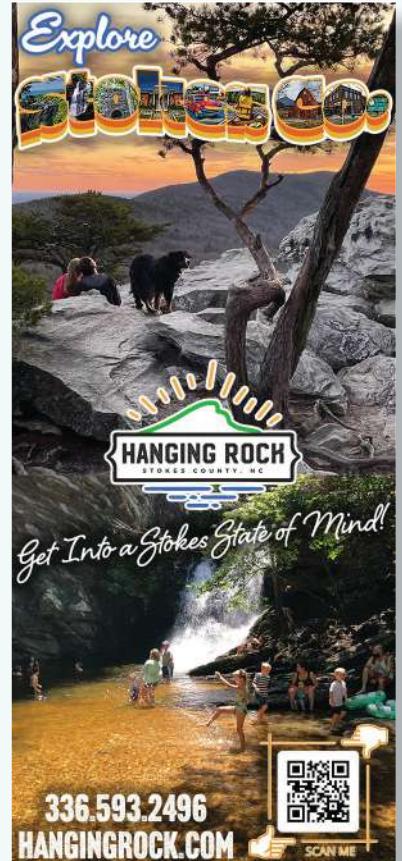
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WHERE THE LOCALS GO

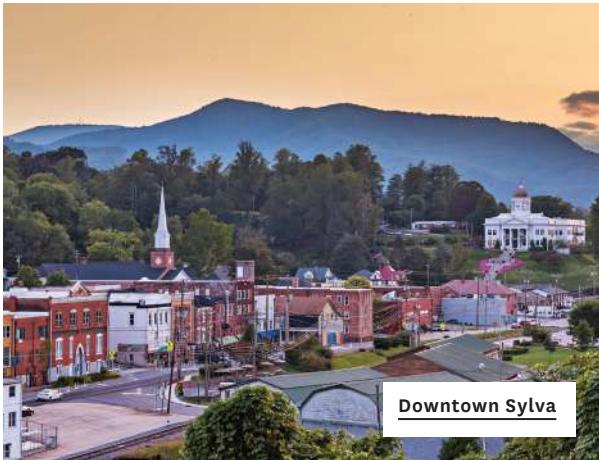
Big cities may grab the headlines, but North Carolina's small towns delight in surprising ways. Local insiders give tours of the places they call home.



Meatballs Pizzeria



Santé - The Wine Bar



Downtown Sylva



Ilda

Sylva

Cozy up to the Great Smoky Mountains in this picturesque burg for a generous serving of Appalachian appreciation.



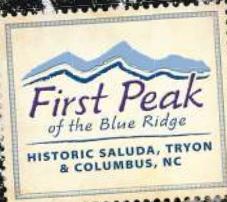
Chef Santiago Guzzetti espouses a simple theory: There is abundance in the Great Smoky Mountains; honor it and source respectfully.

Case in point: **Ilda**, just one of several establishments Guzzetti owns with his wife, Crystal. (They also own **Meatballs Pizzeria** and **Santé - The Wine Bar** in town.) Named for Guzzetti's Sicilian grandmother, Ilda melds

Appalachian ingredients with classic Italian cooking techniques. Bolognese with locally raised lamb smothered handmade pasta, and the team weaves mountain-grown greens into many menu items, such as a pork chop milanese with charred lemon and an Italian veggie stew.

As for other local treasures, Guzzetti recommends Main Street store **Snake Song**, whose florists bundle area blooms into lush bouquets and mix dried herbs into bath salts and aromatic teas. At **White Moon Cafe**, sunshine filters through the coffee shop's windows, warming regulars reading on the wooden bench near the front. Starting at 6 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays, find the entrance near the back of White Moon and walk into **Dark Moon**, a speakeasy slinging specialty cocktails.

Just beyond Sylva, stand in Appalachian riverways on a fly-fishing tour with **Tuckaseegee Fly Shop**. Or enjoy the rushing water from a distance on the **Deep Creek Loop Trail**, a favorite hike of Guzzetti's 30 minutes from town.



We provide your playlist.



Take a Mountain Road Trip! The scenic mountain vistas around the First Peak of the Blue Ridge are beautiful in every season. Historic Saluda, Tryon & Columbus, NC • 800-440-7848 • firstpeaknc.com •



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Downtown Highlands, North Carolina

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Head out on the Greenway Trail from our back door.

New Bern

At the confluence of the Trent and Neuse rivers, New Bern feels like a postcard with green spaces, waterfront views and shopkeepers ready to wait on you.



Sisters Lindsay Sims and Winnie Smith grew up in **Mitchell Hardware**, their father's shop. When he passed away, their memories of perching on the counter and sweeping the sidewalk at sunrise beckoned

them to take up the family business, which they continue today. Both nostalgia and new delights inform an ideal day in their hometown.



Union Point Park



ACCESSIBLE *fun for all*

Call ahead to set up accommodations, such as a sign language interpreter, at the **North Carolina History Center**. All videos have captions, and the museum provides wheelchairs to transport visitors through exhibits about coastal geography, early settlers and more.



Mitchell Hardware



Downtown New Bern

8:30 A.M. While a hardware store may seem like a strange vacation stop, it's worth popping into **Mitchell Hardware**. Ask a staffer about upcoming events (they host date nights) once you're done admiring the historical building's original tin ceilings.

9:00 A.M. Pair earthy espresso with **Mayte Sweets'** flaky Pain au Chocolat, and be sure to snag some macarons for a midday snack.

10:00 A.M. Pastel posies peek over hedges in the Carraway Garden, one of the lush scenes surrounding **Tryon Palace**, the first permanent Capitol of North Carolina.

2:00 P.M. Guides point out historic landmarks from yesteryear, like the New Bern Academy Museum — a school established in 1809 — during the 90-minute **New Bern Historic Trolley Tour** that snakes through the town.

4:00 P.M. Local artist Janet Francoeur's painted pottery combines local architecture and nature. **Carolina Creations** sells her work along with other tempting souvenirs.

5:00 P.M. Dunk fried shrimp in **MJ's Raw Bar & Grille's** tartar sauce, which is accented with tongue-tingling Jamaican spices.

7:00 P.M. Seagull calls ricochet off the water's surface at the **Union Point Park** boardwalk. Snuggle under the gazebo to watch the sunset over the river.

8:30 P.M. The mixologists at **Baxter's 1892** conjure sips like the Bircher Old Fashioned with demerara syrup and a twist of orange.



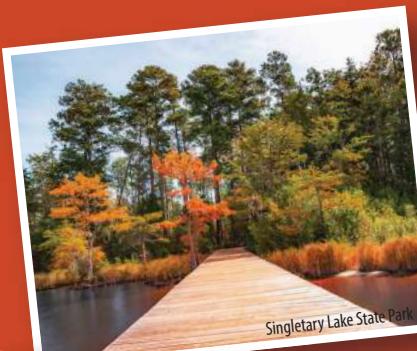
Hammocks Beach State Park



Haw River State Park

North Carolina State Parks

Great trails are there for you to follow. Don't go off the trail to help make sure these parks will be there tomorrow.



Singletary Lake State Park



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Shelby

Bring your picnic basket to the southwestern foothills. You'll need it to carry all the produce and farmers market goodies you're about to score.



Keia Mastrianni, the owner of farm-based cottage bakery **Milk Glass Pie**, knows which dessert her customers love most: pies stuffed with in-season fruit. Luckily for Mastrianni and Shelby locals, she knows where to find the freshest stuff in and around her bucolic hometown. And she's happy to dish on where visitors can scope out the goods too.

Visit **Davis & Son Orchards** and explore the 90-acre, family-owned property from which Mastrianni sources fruit. Peaches, apples and other fruits

dot the trees like jewels waiting to be plucked. Cool off with a scoop or two of hand-dipped ice cream at the on-site farm store while sifting through produce to snack on later.

Back in the heart of town, the din of farmers and artisans hawking their wares reverberates within the Bobby Bell Pavilion, which shelters the **Foothills Farmers' Market** on Saturdays. Snag one of Mastrianni's sweet treats (regulars adore the strawberry pie with cornmeal crumble), along with beverages made by Jamie Swofford, Mastrianni's husband and owner of **Old North Shrub**. Delicate floral notes from

hibiscus and rose hips dance in the juice of muscadines (North Carolina's state grape) and other ingredients. Bring your bounty to **Court Square**, Mastrianni's favorite spot for a sensory-filled picnic. As the munching subsides, listen for live music drifting from the market.

If your best efforts to subsist on pie and fruit alone fall short, head to **The Shelby Cafe** for extra nourishment. Mastrianni recommends the Mayor's Special: eggs scrambled with cheddar cheese, a bit of mayonnaise and livermush (a crispy-on-the-outside patty of ground pork products that's become a Southern classic).



Milk Glass Pie

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Tita's Cake House

Salisbury

The couple behind a reborn bakery in Salisbury quickly fell for this Piedmont town. Here's why.



When the original owners of **Tita's Cake House** returned home to Chile in 2022, they asked Colombian Navy officer-turned-baker Manolo Betancur to take over the Salisbury shop. Between constructing elaborate

tres leches cakes at **Manolo's Latin Bakery** in Charlotte and serving scoops at **Artisen Vegelato** in Matthews, Betancur doubted his bandwidth to do it all.

Luckily, his wife, Leidy Ospina, wanted to helm Tita's after years of helping Betancur launch his own culinary empire. Now, customers line up for creamy gelato and milhojas — dulce de leche layered between crispy puff pastry. Betancur pops by several times a week, ostensibly to check in and help Ospina run the business.

But if that's just a guise for spending more time in Salisbury, it's hard to blame him. These are some of Betancur's favorite local spots (not counting Tita's, of course).



Downtown Salisbury

1 A Marvelous Mojito

The fresh mint in **Mambo Grill & Tapas'** version of the rum-based cocktail tickles your nose while tart lime cuts the soda's fizz. Betancur recommends pairing it with *sopa de pollo* — chicken soup with Creole flavors.

2 Verdant Retreats

Bell Tower Green at Stanback Square, a 3-acre garden space named for the redbrick structure looming over the lawn, hosts numerous community events. Stretch muscles sore from a canoe trip to **Eagle Point Nature Preserve** at a yoga class on the Green.

3 Simple, Greasy Goodness

For savory cravings, Betancur heads to **Hap's Grill**. Melted cheddar practically enrobes the hand-pattied burgers, a delicacy best washed down with *Cheerwine*, the locally invented, cherry-flavored soda classic still served in glass bottles.

Good times
PICKED DAILY

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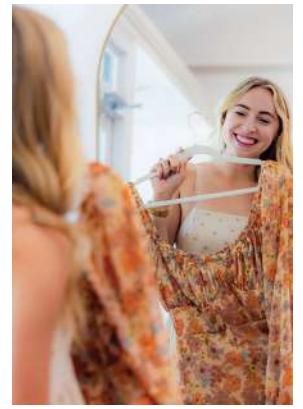
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MOMENTS THAT MATTER



HAPPEN HERE

DOWNTOWN GREENS

Green spaces in the heart of North Carolina’s towns and cities bring recreation and relaxation while honoring local legends.



Downtown Cary Park 📍 Cary

This sparkling new park opened last year after more than 20 years of planning. The \$68 million space features curving walkways and ADA-accessible paths that loop around areas for bikers, children, dogs and performers. Watch the kids climb into a giant cardinal at The Nest play area, or take the pooch to a dog park with a Bark Bar (serving beverages for pets and humans). Game courts, gardens bursting with native plants, water features and a busy programming schedule add to the energy.

Dale Earnhardt

Tribute Plaza 📍 Kannapolis

Celebrate a NASCAR legend and hometown hero. A 9-foot-tall, 900-pound bronze statue of “The Intimidator” stands at the center of walkways and gardens designed to symbolically reflect the race car driver’s career. Seven steps descending into the plaza represent Earnhardt’s seven NASCAR Cup championships; an oval walk resembles a racetrack; and benches, shrubs and flowers sit in groups of three (Earnhardt’s car number). For more racing history, take a self-guided local tour of more than a dozen Earnhardt-related attractions along The Dale Trail.

Pack Square Park 📍 Asheville

You’ll find a strong sense of community throughout Asheville, including this airy downtown gathering place. Listen to the splash of fountains, wander under the shade of native trees and pay tribute at the Veterans Memorial. A stage partially comprised of handmade ceramic tiles hosts live music and other events.

Waterfront Park

📍 Elizabeth City

Picnic tables and benches invite relaxing along the Pasquotank River boardwalk. The park’s pavilion — an open-air structure with a historic green dome roof — frames river views for the perfect photo op.



Town Square 📍 Burnsville

Brick walkways, benches and trees surround a 1909 copper statue of Otway Burns in his namesake town. Sit in the shadow of Burns standing in his formal naval dress — a fitting depiction for the War of 1812 seafaring hero who served as a state legislator and owned the kilns that fired some of the bricks for Fort Macon.



OUTDOOR NC PRINCIPLE *Canine Etiquette*

We know there’s nothing better than getting outside and adventuring with your furry friend. Follow these tips next time you head out with your dog to ensure you both have the best time.



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Another hidden gem

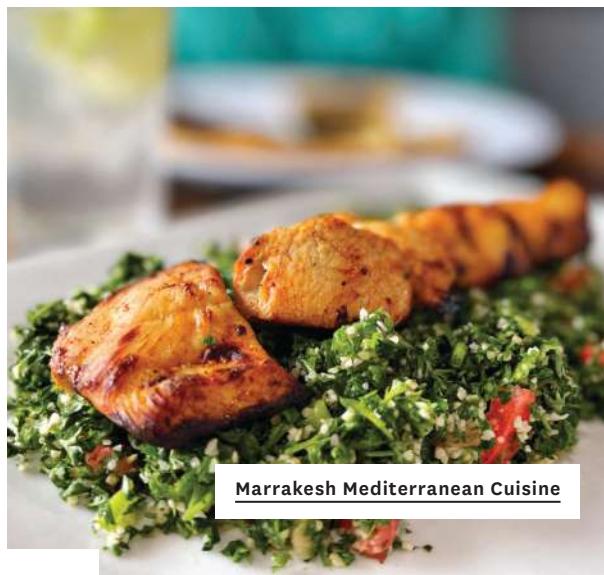
Your adventure begins with mandatory "pit stops" at B's, Skylight Inn, Sam Jones BBQ and all the places that put whole hog 'cue on the map. Make it a picnic in Town Common, lose yourself in the Downtown District and explore one-of-a-kind art sculptures along Dickinson Avenue. NC's Emerald City is filled with countless hidden gems.

Greenville
NORTH CAROLINA

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SIGNATURE EATS

Have food, will travel. North Carolina is a culinary destination defined by fresh narratives, countless cultures and fruitful traditions.

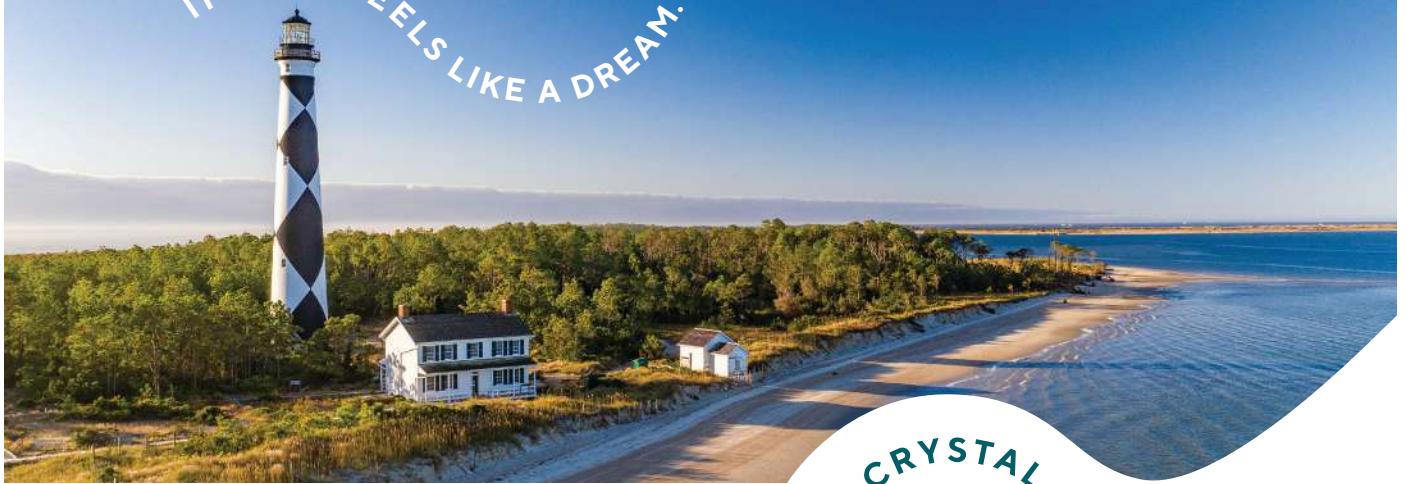


International Food Trail *Jacksonville*

Home to U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, Jacksonville is a gateway to the globe. Many restaurateurs and proprietors have culinary ties around the world and choose to share their heritage through the cultural exchange of food. The 27 restaurants, bars and cafes of the International Food Trail are more than economic enterprises; they're builders and keepers of the community they serve. Best of all, no passports are required to eat your way through the lineup of family- and veteran-owned establishments.

Make your way to Manila with a stop at **Filipino Cuisine**, fill up on Vietnamese soup and noodle dishes at **Pho 7**, touch down in the Middle East and savor stuffed grape leaves and succulent kabobs at **Marrakesh Mediterranean Cuisine**, or cruise over to **The Milk Road** for coffee roasted on-site and caramelized Liège Belgian waffles. These treasures serve a mere sampling of the region's melting pot of cuisine made with some of the freshest ingredients. Wherever you wander, bring an open mind and a willingness to try something new.

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 Tryon Palace

Battle of the Barbecue

North Carolina's storied riffs on barbecue conjure up a lighthearted rivalry. The only sensible solution for first-timers: Try both.

WHOLE HOG EASTERN-STYLE

The state's love for 'cue has been documented as far back as 1730, when a Virginia aristocrat wrote vividly about North Carolinians' penchant for pork. Utilizing a whole hog approach to cooking the meat, Eastern-style barbecue is served with a piquant and peppery vinegar-based "mop sauce," mayonnaise-dressed coleslaw and hush puppies. Pitmasters Pete Jones and his grandson, Sam Jones, brought fame to this style in Pitt County, where **Sam Jones BBQ** and **Skylight Inn BBQ** go "full boar" in serving up the Eastern-style version.



LEXINGTON-STYLE

Born in the center of the state, Lexington-style barbecue features a vinegary, tomato-laced "dip" for flavor, along with the meat of sliced, chopped or pulled pork shoulder. It's traditionally served with a red-tinted slaw flavored with the dip and more of those hush puppies. For more than 60 years, popular haunts **Lexington Barbecue** and **Speedy's Barbecue** have served up platters in Lexington, where 12 barbecue joints cater to longtime locals and new generations. For dessert, look no further than the towering (and very shareable) banana split from **Barbecue Center**.

Coastal Delicacy

MARSHALLBERG FARM, located on the Crystal Coast in Smyrna, is the largest Osetra sturgeon and caviar producer in North America. Go behind the scenes of the recirculating aquaculture facilities (you'll learn what that means on the tour), housing more than 30,000 sturgeon. For a luxe touch, cap off the experience with a caviar flight tasting paired with sparkling wine and locally distilled vodka.

Seafood Bash

Once claiming a seafood restaurant for every 10 residents, Calabash is a small fishing village that knows how to reel in hungry visitors. Since the 1940s, the town has boasted its Calabash-style method of lightly breading and frying the fish to a perfectly crispy consistency. Treat yourself to a platter of cornmeal-battered flounder, shrimp, scallops, oysters or crab cakes at **WATERFRONT SEAFOOD SHACK**.

Bonkers for Sonker

Cobblers, crisps, crumbles, buckles, slumps, grunts and pandowdies are all cousins of Surry County sonker, made with dough and a fruit or sweet potato base and served with a sweet drizzle or scoop of vanilla ice cream. Eight locations make up the Surry Sonker Trail, and **MISS ANGEL'S HEAVENLY PIES** in Mount Airy is known for adding a special twist. (Don't be surprised if you taste moonshine in the creamy glaze.)



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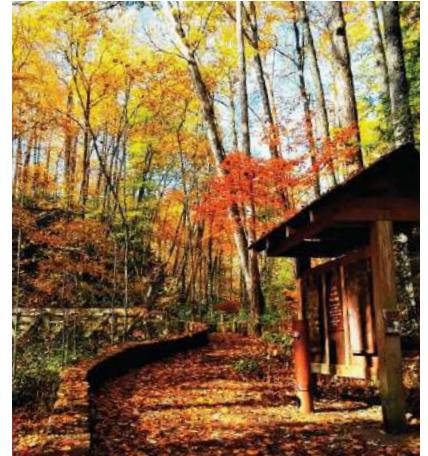
AUTUMN GLOW

Glorious foliage blazes through North Carolina every fall. Capture the spectacle during journeys along the water, through the woods and atop mountains.

Autumn's wave of brilliant color starts in the mountains around mid-September before unfurling across the Piedmont's cities and surrounding forests, ultimately reaching the Coastal Plain in October. While mountain colors begin to fade by mid-October, the splendor often extends into November on the coast. No matter where you choose to enjoy

your leaf-peeping, the first trees to turn are usually sourwoods and black gums, but what colors you'll see is up to chance. Sweet gums, for example, might sport reddish-purple or yellow leaves, while sassafras might turn yellow, red, orange or purplish. Discover hiking trails, paddling adventures and other autumn excursions at [VisitNC.com/fall](https://www.visitnc.com/fall).

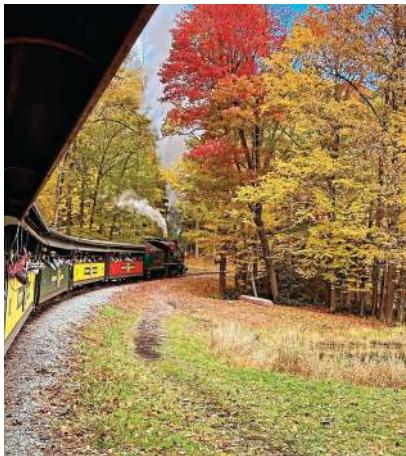
HANG TIME Get the best of woody and watery worlds at Jackrabbit Mountain Campground in Nantahala National Forest near Hayesville. [@nos_kaleo](https://www.instagram.com/nos_kaleo)



BEYOND WORDS Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest teems with a variety of rare old-growth tree species near Robbinsville. [@dingman_photography](https://www.instagram.com/dingman_photography)



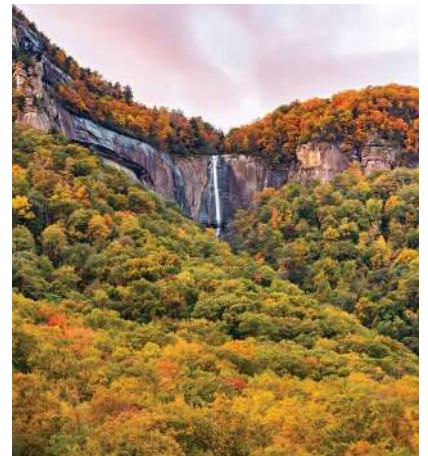
MILLING ABOUT Float among cypress and gum trees covered with Spanish moss at Merchants Millpond State Park near Gatesville. [@intrepid.tar.heel](https://www.instagram.com/intrepid.tar.heel)



ALL ABOARD Blowing Rock's Tweetsie Railroad has provided steam locomotive rides and family fun in the Blue Ridge Mountains for 67 years. [@joyeride_life](https://www.instagram.com/joyeride_life)



LIQUID PARADISE Boating, fishing and paddling options abound on the sprawling 50,000 acres of Kerr Lake north of Henderson. [@twodogsandtheirfamily](https://www.instagram.com/twodogsandtheirfamily)



FALL RUSH Hike to the base of 40-story Hickory Nut Falls, which cascades through Chimney Rock State Park in Chimney Rock Village. [@bfunphoto](https://www.instagram.com/bfunphoto)



OUTDOOR NC PRINCIPLE *Plan Ahead and Prepare*
Before you travel, learn about your destination, its regulations and safety matters. Choose lesser-known areas to reduce your impact, and have a backup plan if a location is crowded.

HOME BASE North of Leasburg, 3,750-acre Hyco Lake anchors getaways packed with camping, nature walks, disc golf, picnics and memories. 📍 @jamcullen



HEART SONGS Near Windsor, navigate Roanoke River National Wildlife Refuge via the Charles Kuralt Trail while listening for songbirds. 📍 @carolinapsalms



ELEVATED VIEW Morrow Mountain State Park's 30-plus miles of trails sit in the shadow of the Uwharrie Mountains near Albemarle. 📍 @horseinabar



STAND TALL Trails lead to the twin peaks of Crowders Mountain State Park in Kings Mountain. On clear days, spot Charlotte in the distance. 📍 @petrat_dogphoto

COZIEST SEASON

Celebrate the most chill time of the year with holiday events, comfy overnights and soul-warming beverages.



Warm Getaways

Old Edwards Inn and Spa, Highlands

Make winter your North Carolina “go time” to take advantage of smaller crowds, nostalgic celebrations and restorative retreats.

Fireside Chats

Snuggle up in a luxury guest room at **OLD EDWARDS INN AND SPA** in downtown Highlands. Calming qualities of the surrounding Blue Ridge Mountains inspire spa treatments. Wellness and rejuvenation are the goals here, as is reconnecting with a warm or spiked beverage by the fire.

Ride and Learn

An enclosed trolley provides a winter-friendly way to see Edenton. The onboard narrator of an **EDENTON TROLLEY TOUR** details the history of North Carolina’s first Colonial capital as riders roll past the most intact Colonial courthouse in America, the 1886 Roanoke River Lighthouse and Maritime Underground Railroad locations.

Destination: North Pole

In November and December, the mountain town of Bryson City transforms into a storybook scene from *The Polar Express*. Pajama-clad kids and their families board the **GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS RAILROAD** for a magical evening of hot chocolate and sleigh bells.

Moravian Days

OLD SALEM MUSEUMS & GARDENS in Winston-Salem tells the 250-year history of this Moravian settlement through authentically restored buildings, costumed interpreters and hands-on experiences with craftspeople. Salem Saturdays (on select days throughout the winter season and beyond) offer interactive lessons in homemaking, crafting and playing. At Winkler Bakery, the sweet scents of sugar cake and Love Feast buns waft through America’s oldest continuously operating bakery (built in 1800). Staff introduce visitors to the space and share how it’s been utilized over the years. Throughout the season, cascading Moravian stars decorate the Heritage Bridge, providing a favorite photo op for families and couples.

Healing Waters

Naturally occurring hot mineral water established Hot Springs as a healing haven centuries ago. Guests soak in outdoor jetted tubs at **HOT SPRINGS RESORT AND SPA**, whose waters have eased stress and pain since 1778. Extend your stay at a cabin or campsite.



Add dashes of snow to your winter vacation plans with skiing, snowshoeing, hiking and more. Your full lineup of cool-weather fun awaits at [VisitNC.com/winter](https://www.visitnc.com/winter).

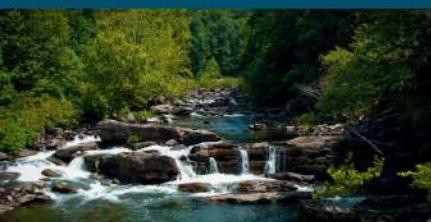


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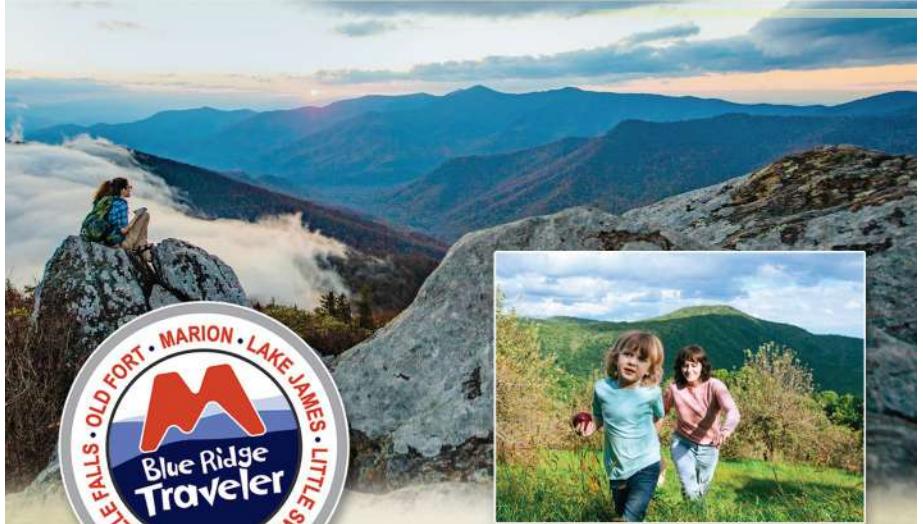


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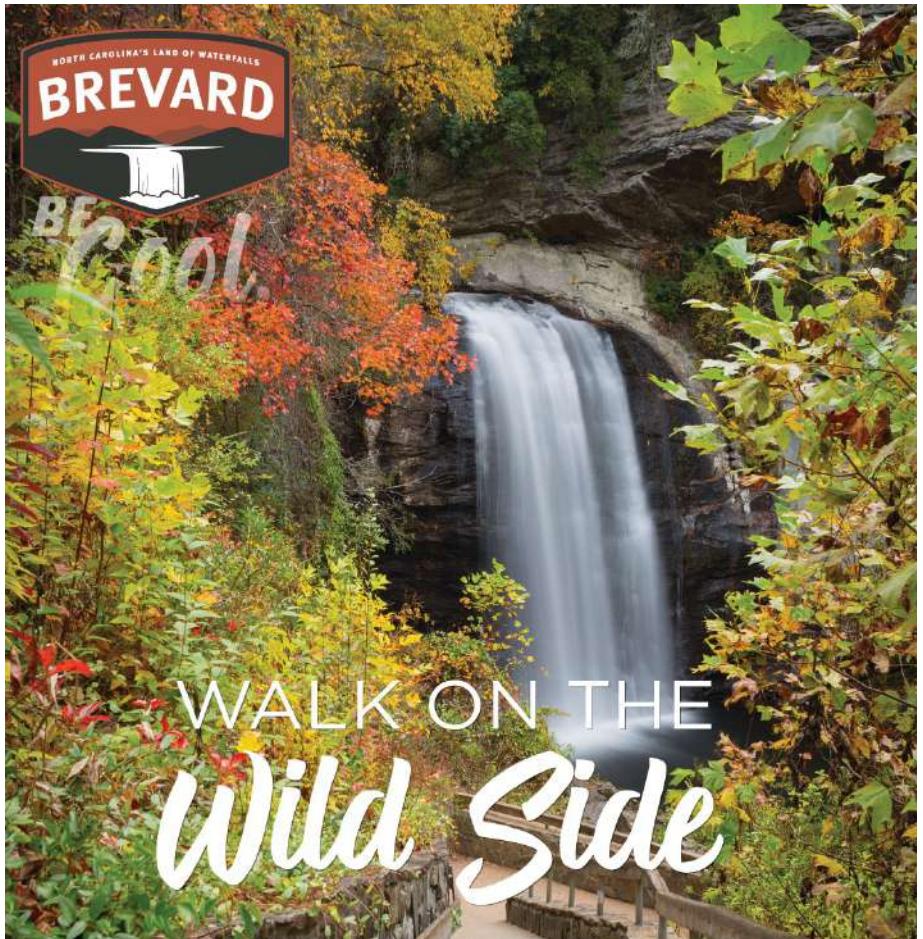
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COCOA MOTION

Chocoholics, unite! From late November through early January, the river town of Elizabeth City becomes the Hot Cocoa Capital of the World. Approximately 30 businesses participate in the annual **Hot Cocoa Crawl**, spotlighting cocoa-themed drinks, desserts and gifts. Sip your way through a hot chocolate bar with marshmallows galore, dig into a chocolate bombe dessert and toast the tasty tradition with a mocha latte stout.

Hot Drinks

Caffeine isn't the only powerful force in coffee. These shops expand the potential of a warm beverage.

Kickin' Coffee

Approximately 20 percent of the Morganton population traces its roots to Guatemala. Their culture comes through in every aspect of **LITTLE GUATEMALA**, where indoor soccer, street food, coffee, chocolate and crafts combine. The shop roasts Guatemalan coffee beans from three growing regions.

Greater Good

BREW 2 RESCUE CAFE occupies a stylish storefront in downtown Hertford, and the nonprofit cafe makes its mission clear. Above a logo of hands holding a coffee cup is the tagline #EndHumanTrafficking. Proceeds from lattes, cinnamon rolls and other treats support awareness and prevention of international trafficking.

Cuppa Knowledge

Tucked into the woods along Franklin Street and a short drive from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, **CAFFE DRIADE** creates space for students poring over notes and people of diverse backgrounds engaging in multilingual conversations. Responsibly sourced java from Carrboro Coffee Roasters brings the buzz.

Sugar Rush

Sweet lattes such as the Milky Way complement breakfast and lunch offerings at **MUG SHOTZ** in Ahoskie. No matter what you order, plan to savor warm, friendly customer service at this hometown cafe. Later on, try one of the seasonal suds from sister business, **QUICK TRIGGER BREWING**.

Finders Keepers

Dive into your favorite drink at **THE WORKSHOP** in Wrightsville Beach. This shoreside coffee shop pairs the owner's passions: fresh coffee and scuba diving. Sip a cup prepared with roasted-in-house beans and peruse the souvenir selection of shark-teeth jewelry.



SHELBY CITY PARK 1907 CARROUSEL



UPTOWN SHELBY



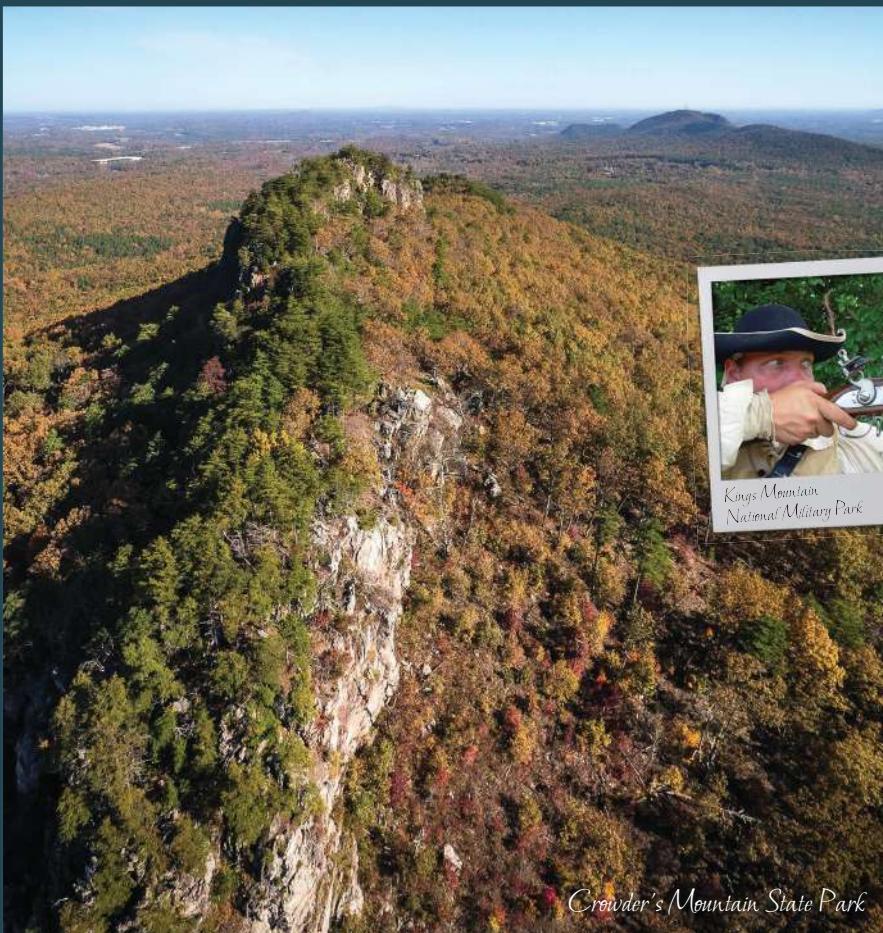
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Catawba Two Kings Casino

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- Hike the serene, forested Gateway Trail or venture into Crowder's Mountain State Park
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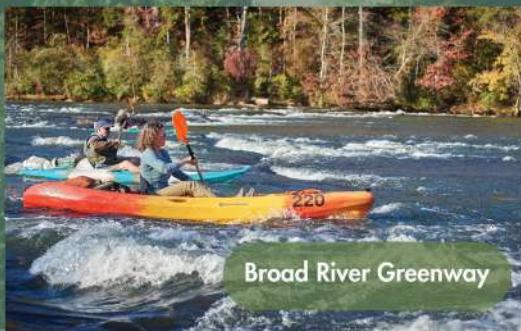
Broad River Campground



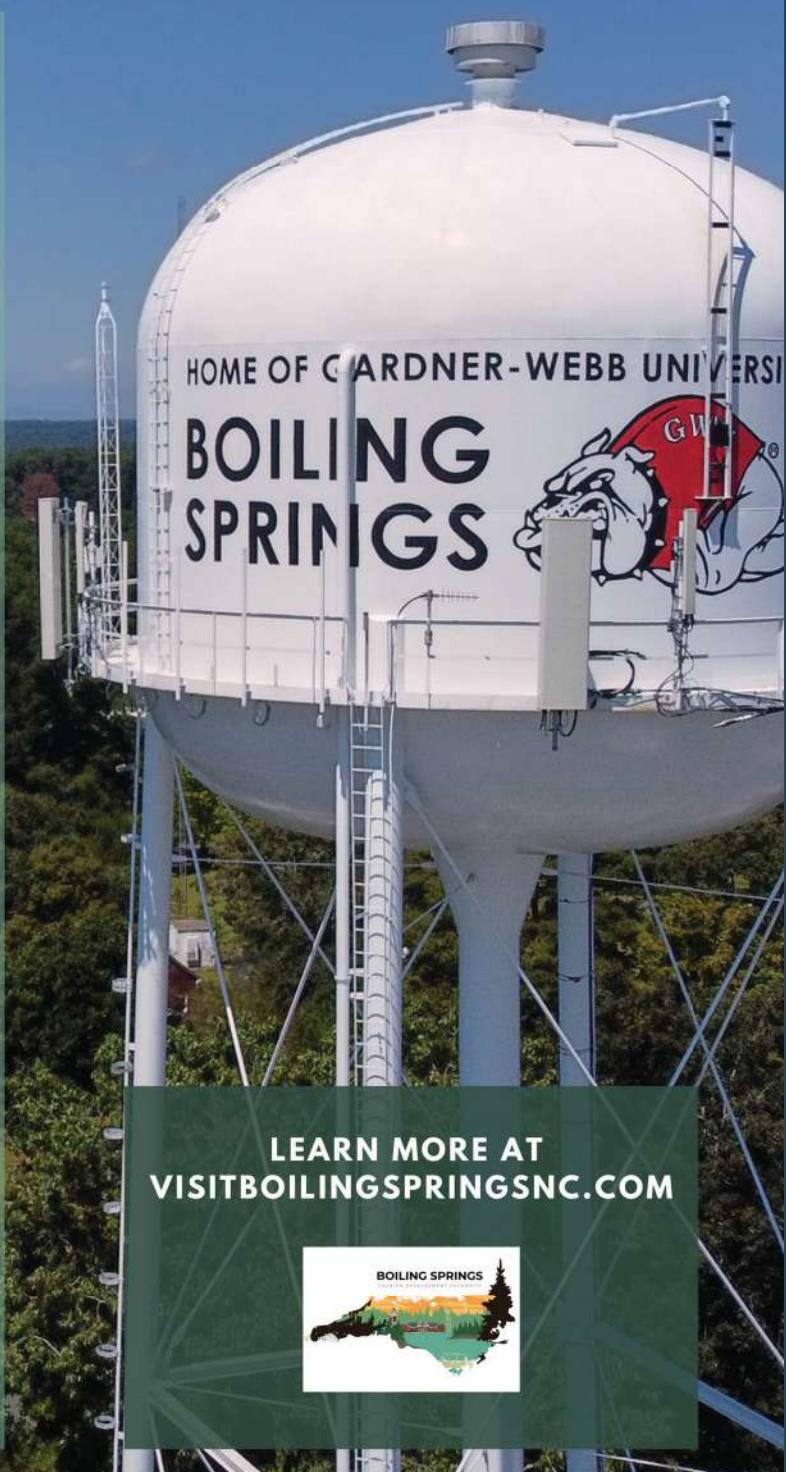
Shadyside Dragway



The Vintage Dog



Broad River Greenway

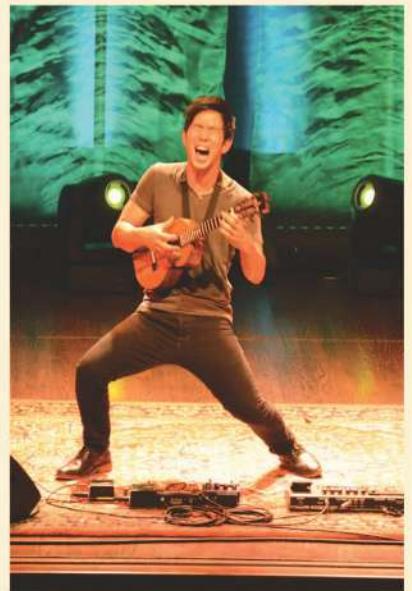


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Tread lightly as you wander into wonder.

writer **JASON FRYE** *illustrator* **JESSE WHITE**



PARKS AND REFUGES

Encounter native plants, captivating creatures and fantastic scenery across these sustainably minded spaces.



Carolina Beach State Park

📍 Carolina Beach

While hiking through the coastal park, you might spot a Venus flytrap or pitcher plant along the trail. If you want a closer look at these carnivorous plants, stop by the new Bog Garden. Behind the Visitor Center, this area replicates the sensitive, shrinking environment these insect-eating marvels need to thrive.

Croatan National Forest

📍 Havelock

Experience the breadth of coastal ecosystems within these 160,000-acre woods.

The 22-mile Neusiok Trail links beaches, salt marshes, wetland bogs, savannas and pine forests. The Saltwater Adventure Trail offers a 100-mile paddling route that circumnavigates the national forest.

Ledge Creek Forest Conservation Area

📍 Stem

Across North Carolina, groups like the Tar River Land Conservancy work to preserve wild spaces such as this one, featuring easy, well-maintained pathways. Six lightly trafficked trails encircle pretty ponds, follow creekside game trails and ensure everyone can experience a patch of Piedmont forest.

Palmetto-Peartree Preserve 📍 Columbia

Birders flock to this 9,700-acre patch of piney woods bordered by the Albemarle Sound and Alligator River to catch a glimpse of the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker. Other species vary by season and include bald eagles and songbirds like the yellow-billed cuckoo.

Tuttle Educational State Forest 📍 Lenoir

Scenic pathways crisscross this 362-acre section of the Blue Ridge Foothills, traversing crystalline streams in a forest of pines and hardwoods. Views of

Grandfather Mountain, interpretive signage, and remains of the old farm and one-room school await.

Carolina Raptor Center

📍 Huntersville

Located on the Latta Nature Preserve, the ¾-mile Raptor Trail is home to birds of prey from around the world. See more than 30 avian ambassadors along the trail, or meet them during special programs offered throughout the week. The center also houses a Raptor Hospital that treats up to 1,000 sick, injured or orphaned birds of prey each year.

North Carolina Zoo 📍 Asheville

The world's largest natural habitat zoo has raked in awards for its green initiatives, including the composting of nearly 2,000 tons of organic waste and manure each year. From April to October, hop into an open-air safari vehicle for a Zoofari tour of the Watani Grasslands and an up-close look at rhinos, gazelles and antelopes.



OUTDOOR NC PRINCIPLE *Leave It as You Find It*

North Carolina is home to an amazing diversity of indigenous plants and animals. Adhere to laws that prohibit the removal of natural objects from national parks and other protected places.



FOOD AND DRINK

North Carolina's culinary scene begins in local fields and fisheries, cultivating the freshest items for your dining pleasure.



The Fearrington House Restaurant, Pittsboro

Dinner and a Stay

Two notable restaurants redefine local dining with extensive kitchen gardens and culinary farms, all while adding a dash of overnight luxury into the mix.

At The Umstead Hotel and Spa in Cary, the Culinary Team grows and sources its heirloom fruits, vegetables and herbs from The Umstead's own One Oak Farm. These ingredients find their way onto plates in myriad ways at **Hérons**, the hotel's Forbes Five-Star restaurant. In Pittsboro, **The Fearrington House Restaurant** relies on deep relationships with local farmers. In addition, their on-site gardens grow herbs for the kitchen and provide flowers for the restaurant. After dinner at either property, indulge in a stay that offers spa services such as manicures infused with aromatherapy.

A Seafaring Journey

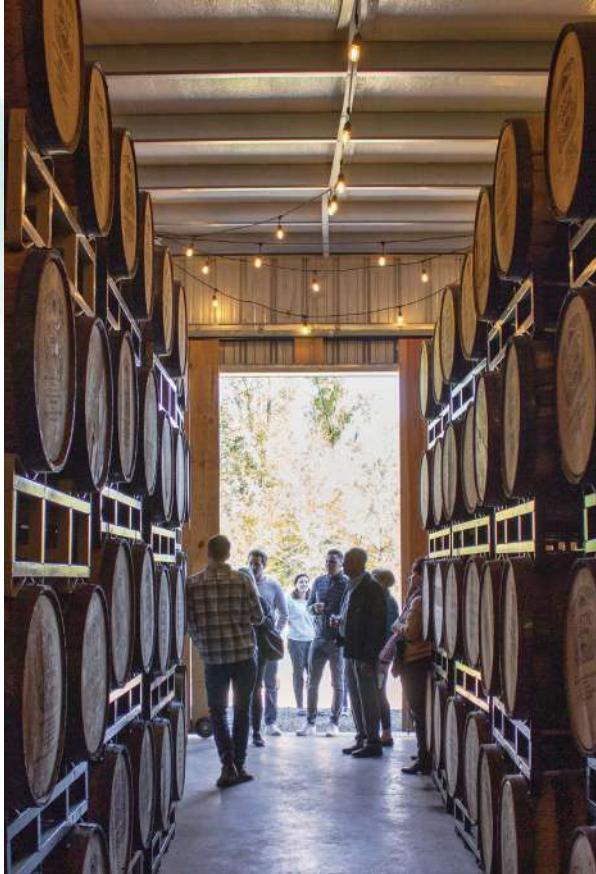
Cool water with the perfect salinity gives North Carolina oysters their distinct flavor. Join **Ghost Fleet Oyster Tours** for a behind-the-scenes peek of their oyster farm in Hampstead. See where and how their signature "Topsail Jewel" oysters grow and learn about their benefits to local waterways before feasting on oysters plucked fresh from the water.

From-Scratch Bites

Southern sweets, treats and hearty eats — like the cheese-stuffed Biscuit Bombs and barbecue-smothered mac and cheese — are just part of the reason you'll want to visit **Farmer and the Dail** in Snow Hill. Baking and decorating classes, plus a springtime market packed with local artists and artisans, round out a soul-filling stop.

Elevated Comfort

Local Roots and Provisions works with farms and ranches near Lincolnton and across the Piedmont region to create tasty riffs on Southern cuisine. Dine on Southern-inspired egg rolls, green bean casserole or a hearty seasonal salad. Or tuck into a thick steak, bowl of shrimp and grits, or fried chicken sandwich. Always save room for banana pudding.



Sustainable Sips

Local sourcing keeps things fresh at a distillery and brewery within short drives of buzzy cities.



Near Durham, **Mystic Farm & Distillery** grows the grain in their bourbon's mash bill and creates traditional, flavor-infused bourbons along with a bourbon liqueur. Swing by for a tasting or stay for a tour of the farm to see how their beverages make the journey from grain to glass. **Steel String Brewery at Pluck Farm**, just west of Chapel Hill, is home to a 57-acre farmstead, bar and brewing facilities. Fresh strawberries flavor their Berliner Weisse, and farm-grown watermelons lend notes of juicy sweetness to the Wild Ale.



Fresh Picks and Family Fun

Sample year-round goodness at **The Farm**, a family-friendly spot in Dobson where spring sees bright fields of U-pick strawberries and summer brims with blackberries and interactive camps. Come back in autumn to enjoy the pumpkin patch and sunflower field, and warm up with s'mores-making around firepits during the holidays.



PAW of approval

Your pooch will paws-itively love **Steel String Brewery at Pluck Farm**. There's plenty of room to roam and play — with enough beer, food and music to keep humans entertained as well.



STARGAZING

Take in the celestial sights from high peaks, remote campgrounds, planetariums and Dark Sky Parks.

**Bare Dark Sky
Observatory,
Burnsville**

Dark Sky Parks

Three North Carolina sites have earned special recognition from the International Dark-Sky Association for hosting some of the world's finest stargazing.

Bare Dark Sky Observatory

📍 Burnsville

As the state's largest public telescope, the Sam Scope brings the moon so close into focus, you can imagine you're flying by in a spaceship. Also see Saturn's rings and Jupiter's eye. For perfect stargazing conditions regardless of weather, the **Glenn & Carol Arthur Planetarium** offers astronomy shows and science presentations.

Cape Lookout National

Seashore 📍 Harkers Island

On clear nights, the first Atlantic coastal Dark Sky Place in the National Park Service puts on a stellar show. Stars and planets fill the sky, meteors streak overhead, and the opportunities for deep-space observation are boundless. Pack the binoculars or a telescope for gazing or bring a tripod and try your hand at astrophotography.

Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute

📍 Rosman

With NASA-built radio telescopes and nearly a dozen optical telescopes at their disposal, the crew here helps researchers and visitors fall in love with space and plumb its mysteries. Contact the institute in advance to book a guided tour of the 200-acre campus or schedule an overnight camping retreat with friends and family.



Great Smoky Mountains National Park

📍 Cherokee

The daytime views from the 6,643-foot-high summit of Clingmans Dome are spectacular, but for a truly awe-inspiring sight, visit at night when the Milky Way stretches overhead, and it's nothing but stars. (Parking tags are now required within the national park. Order one online or purchase them on-site, including at the Clingmans Dome kiosk.)

Morehead Planetarium and Science Center

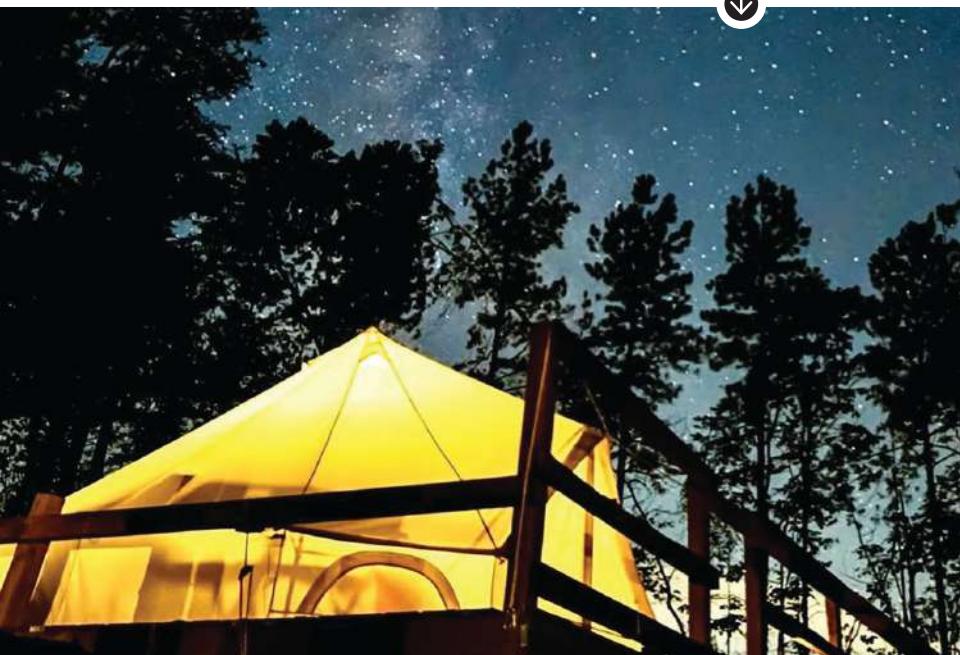
📍 Chapel Hill

You don't have to wait until the sun dips below the horizon to take in the starry skies. On The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill campus, watch the *Carolina Skies* planetarium show and learn what heavenly bodies are on display and how to identify them. Spark your curiosity further through live science demonstrations.

Starlight Hills Campground

📍 Bostic

With little light pollution spoiling the view, the stars and planets seem to hang just out of reach as you kick back at a primitive tent site or rustic cabin near South Mountains State Park. Follow one of the wooded trails past the camping area and creek and you can practically hear the stars twinkle in the sky. Pets are also welcome to join the serene escape.



OUTDOOR NC PRINCIPLE *Be Careful with Fire*

If you choose to have a campfire, check regulations, secure a permit if needed and keep the fire small. Before leaving, check that the fire is completely out and the ashes are cold.

Discover More

These educational experiences satisfy everyone's natural curiosity.

The science of forestry was born in North Carolina, and **Cradle of Forestry** in Brevard celebrates the work it takes to maintain and preserve stands of trees, empowering visitors to connect deeply with the woods around them. Along the Pamlico River in Washington, **North Carolina Estuarium** sheds light on the marshes, estuaries and sounds that make up our inner coast. Interactive displays, boat rides and hands-on activities impart the importance of these ecosystems. From the Paw Paw Nature Trail to the critter-filled *Creature Cavern* exhibition, **Discovery Place Nature** in Charlotte has treated kids to natural fun since 1947 with a mix of friendly camps and hands-on activities. On **Grandfather Mountain**, hiking trails, wildlife habitats and the Mile High Swinging Bridge lean into the spectacle and fragility of nature. Innovative and interactive displays for all ages foster a deeper appreciation for the natural world at Grandfather's on-site **Wilson Center for Nature Discovery**.



this is our story

With more than
100,000 Native Americans
— each from unique
cultures and traditions —
North Carolina offers a rich
tapestry of living history to
celebrate and explore.

writer **RAQUEL PAINTER**

MEET THE AUTHOR

Raquel Painter, a Marine Corps veteran who served more than 26 years, is the current president of United Way of Onslow County. She's also the founder of the Onslow Veterans Pow Wow and a member of the Isanti Sioux and Winnebago tribes of Nebraska.



**Dix Park Inter-Tribal
Pow Wow, Raleigh**

Native Americans

have profoundly impacted North Carolina's history and culture. They were the original stewards of the lands on which we now live, influencing language, food, art and spirituality. Many Indigenous communities remain here, preserving their identities.

North Carolina is home to eight state-recognized Native American tribes; the Eastern Band of the Cherokee is the only fully federally recognized tribe in the state. The Cherokee's Kituwah Mound, also known as the Cherokee Mother Town (near present-day Bryson City), is considered the Cherokee's place of origin.

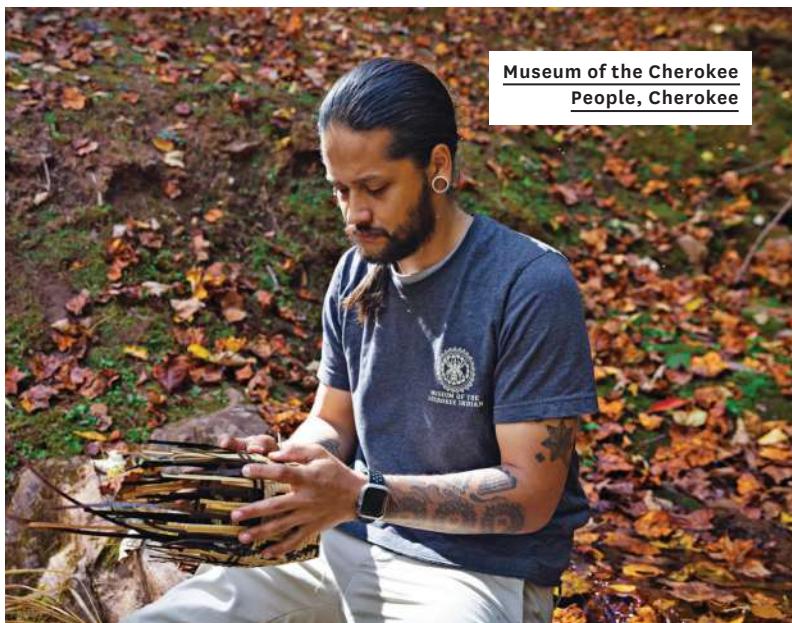
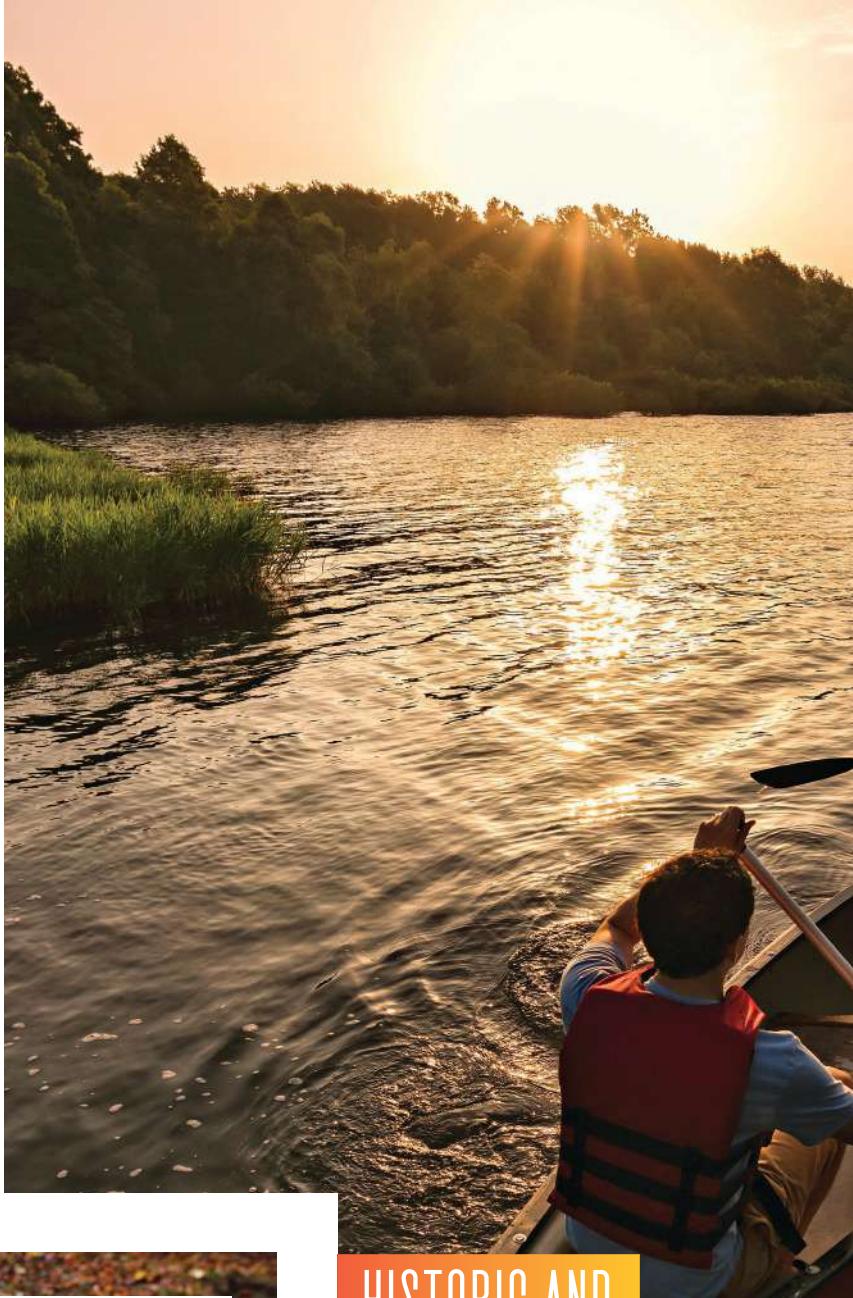
The remaining tribes are the Coharie, Haliwa-Saponi, Meherrin, Sappony, Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation, Waccamaw-Siouan and the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina. The Lumbee Tribe is the largest tribe in the state and the ninth largest in the nation with more than 55,000 members. (Their name is rooted in the Lumber River, originally known as the Lumbee.) At the request of the Lumbee Tribe, North Carolina established the Croatan Normal Indian School in 1887, the only state-supported school in the country created by and for Native Americans. It's now the University of North Carolina at Pembroke.

To learn more about the rich heritage of the state's Indigenous peoples, plan to visit North Carolina's museums, historical sites and powwows. These places and events tell the story of Native Americans and their customs and serve as a critical reminder of the state's complex history.

MUSEUMS

These enlightening sites preserve Native American artwork and artifacts, telling the stories of beloved traditions and tight-knit communities.

On the campus of the University of North Carolina at Pembroke, the **Museum of the Southeast American Indian** exhibits fine arts and provides interactive experiences that highlight the vibrant cultures of Southeastern Native Americans. A rare 1,100-year-old dugout canoe showcases the ingenuity of early Native American craftsmanship. In Cherokee, the **Museum of the Cherokee People** invites you to immerse yourself in the history, culture and stories of its people through collections, events and programs. The **Cherokee County Historical Museum** in Murphy serves as a center for the **Trail of Tears National Historic Trail**. Murphy was the site of Fort Butler, one of the main holding areas for Cherokees who were forcibly removed from North Carolina in the 1830s. The museum contains more than 2,000 authentic artifacts of the Cherokee Nation and 40 exhibit panels that interpret its history and culture.



Museum of the Cherokee People, Cherokee

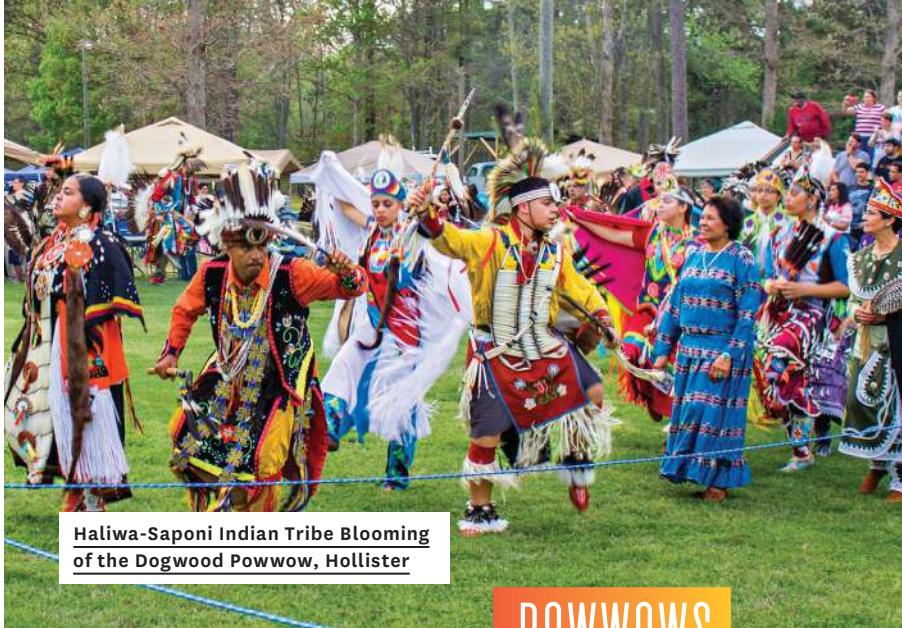
HISTORIC AND SACRED SITES

Native Americans hold various places — including mountains, springs and caves — as sacred because of their spiritual significance. Some national monuments, parks and other sites also contain cultural resources tied to tribal nations.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (CHEROKEE) COURTESY OF MUSEUM OF THE CHEROKEE PEOPLE (PETTIGREW) DANNY FULGENCIO, (DOGWOOD) COURTESY OF HALIFAX COUNTY CVB, (ON SLOW) JOCELYN PAINTER



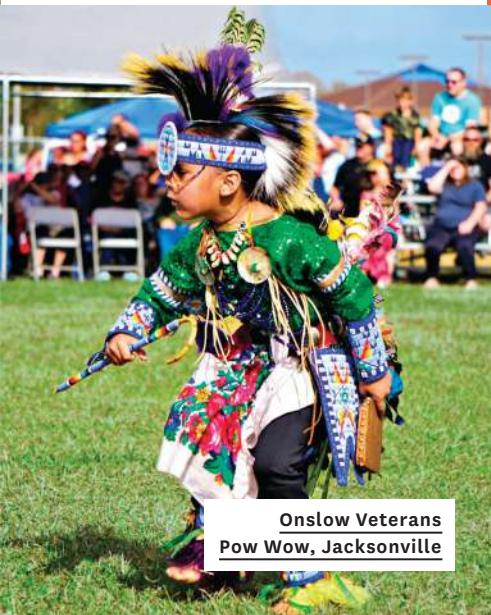
Pettigrew State Park, Creswell



Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe Blooming of the Dogwood Powwow, Hollister

POWWOWS

Join tribal nations as they participate in traditional dance and song, connect through cuisine, and celebrate their distinctive identities.



Onslow Veterans Pow Wow, Jacksonville

Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe Blooming of the Dogwood Powwow

📍 Hollister 📅 April

The oldest powwow in North Carolina celebrates state recognition of the tribe in 1965. The powwow's timing coincides with the annual blooming of the dogwood tree, which, in addition to its medicinal uses, holds significant cultural value for the tribe.

Dix Park Inter-Tribal Pow Wow

📍 Raleigh 📅 late summer/early fall

Set near downtown Raleigh in Dorothea Dix Park, this recently established event features a day of dancing, music and vendors, uniting and celebrating all Indigenous tribes in North Carolina. Be sure to taste warm, puffy fry bread from The Cookhouse and Goins's Kitchen.

Onslow Veterans Pow Wow

📍 Jacksonville 📅 November

Coinciding with Native American Heritage Month and Veterans Day, the colorful celebration attracts visitors from the largest Marine Corps base on the East Coast, making it a popular event for active-duty military and veterans.

Serving as a reminder of the tribe's presence in local history, the **Occaneechi Village Replica Site** is home to a reconstructed 17th-century village on the banks of the Eno River in Hillsborough. The layout is based on excavations of Occaneechi Town, a nearby anthropological site. Similarly, Morganton visitors can walk through the **Living History Center at Catawba Meadows Park**, a grouping of structures modeled after a 16th-century Catawba Indian village that once stood here. In Mount Gilead, **Town Creek Indian Mound** is the only state historic site dedicated to Native American heritage. See the

reconstructed mound and learn about the farming traditions of the South Appalachian Mississippian peoples, who inhabited this area from 1000 to 1450 C.E. The lands currently known as **Cliffs of the Neuse State Park** (west of Seven Springs) were once the ceremonial grounds for the Tuscarora and Saponi tribes — and a gathering place for hunting parties. Although the tribes relocated, the cliffs remain virtually unaltered. Within **Pettigrew State Park**, more than 30 dugout canoes have been discovered in Lake Phelps, some dating back 4,000 years. The lake holds other relics dating as far back as 11,000 years.

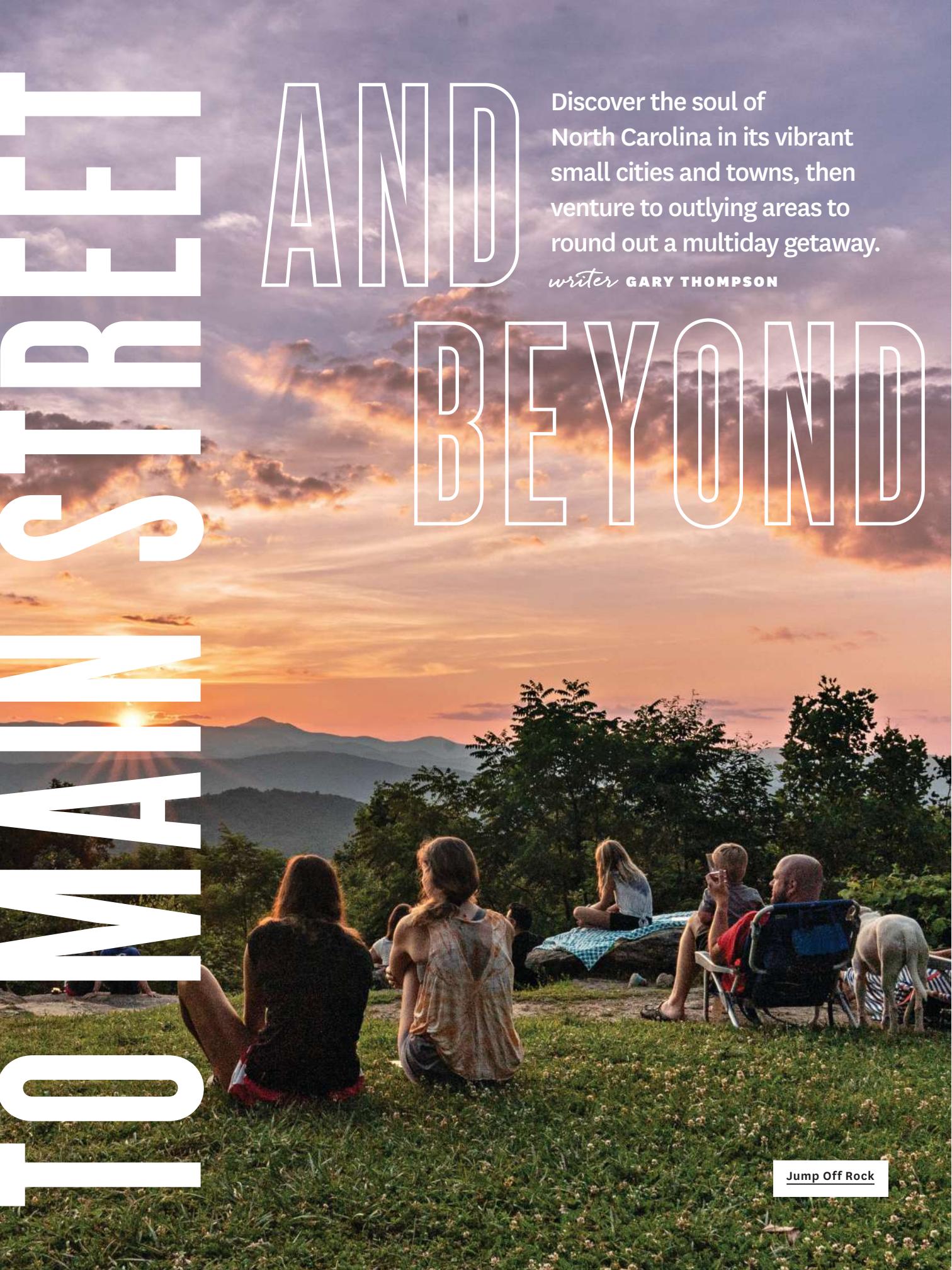
TO MAIN STREET

AND

Discover the soul of North Carolina in its vibrant small cities and towns, then venture to outlying areas to round out a multiday getaway.

writer GARY THOMPSON

BEYOND



Dairy Detours

Get your licks on Hendersonville's new **Ice Cream Trail**, an adventure à la mode that includes 12 spots for frozen treats — more than 200 flavors in all — in Henderson County. Besides traditional ice cream, you'll find dairy-free and vegan options, paletas (ice pops), and frozen custard.



Kilwins Hendersonville



Appalachian Pinball Museum



Mountain Gems

📍 HENDERSONVILLE

In this charming Blue Ridge Mountain community, the sidewalks on Main Street are wide, and so is the variety of fun and flavors you'll find in the area.

There's always bumper-to-bumper traffic inside the **Appalachian Pinball Museum** on Main Street, where you'll flip for more than 80 vintage pinball and arcade games from the past seven decades. It's free to come in and look at the machines' artwork and innards. Play them all day for a flat fee.

Down the street, the **People's Museum and Walk of Fame**, part of **Hands On! Children's Museum**, celebrates BIPOC history and culture in Henderson County and honors the legacies of local trailblazers. One exhibit tells about the Kingdom of the Happy Land — a colony founded by formerly enslaved people after the Civil War.

Just a couple of miles away, experience the joy of tea at **A Southern Cup**, a boutique tearoom serving some of the finest loose-leaf varieties and infusions. Afternoon tea includes sandwiches and assorted desserts.

If you seek resort-caliber lodging, farm-to-table dining and luxury spa services, you're in luck: **The Horse Shoe Farm** on the outskirts of Hendersonville nails it. Stay in a home, cottage or loft that's your size and style, sample local flavors at **The Silo Cookhouse**, and get a massage in a converted stable.

Paddle a less-traveled stretch of the French Broad River with help from **Lazy Otter Outfitters** in Mills River. Set off in a kayak or canoe on a calm, uncrowded trip, including the Sierra Nevada Express to the namesake brewery. If you want to stay high and dry, take the short drive from downtown to **Jump Off Rock** for tree-framed mountain vistas.



PAW of approval

Three hiking trails at **Jump Off Rock** are shaded and dog-friendly. Enjoy the view from the overlook and offer your pooch a drink from the hand-pump water station.



Fresh Takes

📍 HICKORY

Historically a stronghold of furniture design and manufacturing, this city in the foothills also showcases the culinary arts, the fine arts and the art of relaxation.

Get the lay of the land on the new **Hickory Trail**, a nearly 10-mile-long bike and pedestrian route that connects popular destinations throughout town and includes the serene **Riverwalk** over Lake Hickory along the Catawba River.

Burgers, bento boxes, sushi and spirits tempt taste buds at **Cowa Saké**, a Japanese-style restaurant with sleek touches. Their Chicken Lettuce Wraps are packed with wok-seared meat, mushrooms and water chestnuts.

Do amazing grazing with help from **Simply Jam'n Boards**, creators of custom charcuterie boards, boxes and tablescapes for all kinds of snacking scenarios. Get a grab-and-go box or book a group charcuterie workshop.

For more than 20 years, community coffeehouse **Taste Full Beans** has been bringing folks together to express themselves over espresso and smooth things over via smoothies. They're also known for their scratch-made vegan and vegetarian munchies.

Take your best shots — and maybe do a few — at **Dive Bar**, an adult-oriented arcade and billiards spot. Play pool, basketball and pinball while enjoying cold bevies and satisfying bar food.

The **Hickory Museum of Art** was founded in 1944 with eight works. Today the collection encompasses more than 1,500 art objects, including Hudson River School paintings, Southern contemporary folk art, pottery, studio art glass and photography.

Venture to nearby Newton to sample craft spirits at family-owned-and-operated **Warehouse Distillery**. A behind-the-scenes tour ends with a tasting flight, and the cocktail lounge serves concoctions made with their rye, bourbon and maple whiskey.



ACCESSIBLE fun for all

Young visitors to the **Hickory Museum of Art** can pick up a sensory backpack that contains noise-canceling headphones, a weighted lap pad, fidget toys and other calming items.



Riverwalk



The Candy Factory



Red Donut Shop

Liquid Journey

Tour vineyards, breweries and tasting rooms the safe, convenient way: aboard an **Uncorked Touring Company** shuttle bus. Their six-hour Boozy Field Trip stops at four places of your choosing. Other tours focus just on wine. And the first round is on them; enjoy free beer, wine and cider en route.

Modernized Classics

LEXINGTON

Lexington warrants more than a pit stop for its famous barbecue. Linger in longtime favorites, meet artisans with compelling backstories and take in nature's bounty.

Although **Speedy's Barbecue** has a new home less than a mile from its decades-old location, that's the only thing that has changed. The place is still all about 'cue and the three Qs: quality, quantity and quick service. Prepare for extra-large portions of meat and crispy hush puppies.

An apt candy-striped awning makes it easy to spy **The Candy Factory**, a nostalgic nexus of classic sweets, antiques and collectibles. Look for the patina on the well-trod wooden floors, peruse the shelves loaded with sweets and sample the store-made fudge.

Yummy frosting and filling choices lure carb cravers to **Red Donut Shop** for long johns, fruit fritters and more. It's run by brothers whose family escaped war-torn Cambodia in the 1970s, moved to America and learned to make doughnuts.

Find doubly purposeful pottery at **Missions Pottery and More**. The pieces themselves are functional — like kitchenware, vases and business card holders — and the store's profits support global Christian missions. Potter Tommy Davis leaves a small hole in each piece to "symbolize the void that faith can fill."

Wake your senses at **Elevated Wake Park**, the area's first full-size cable wakeboarding park. The design makes it fun for beginners and expert riders. A small water park lets kids climb, jump and slide on a playground of floating inflatables.

Whether your adventures lead you on the water or over dry land, **Rock Outdoors** has the gear you need: boats, kayaks and other watercraft (including rentals); fishing tackle and bait; equipment for hiking and camping; and apparel for active pursuits.

Hops and History

📍 KINSTON

Grin from beer to ear as you indulge in the sensory pleasures of this town on the Inner Coastal Plain. Taste rich flavors and hear echoes of earlier eras.

Crafting beers close to nature is the philosophy at **Mother Earth Brewing**, which uses locally grown hops and occupies an eco-friendly facility. Enjoy their Reef Keeper IPA and other happily hoppy offerings in a 100 percent solar-powered tap room and beer garden.

The **CSS Neuse Civil War Museum** is a see-worthy interpretive center housing the remains of a Confederate steam-powered gunboat built near Kinston. Thousands of artifacts were recovered from the scuttled vessel in the 1960s. One of the museum's engaging interactive displays allows visitors to steer the ship's wheel.

Professional baseball in Kinston dates to 1908 and includes decades of Minor League teams playing for Major League affiliates. Today, you can watch the Carolina League's Down East Wood Ducks, a single-A affiliate of the Texas

Rangers, play at historic **Grainger Stadium**, built in 1949.

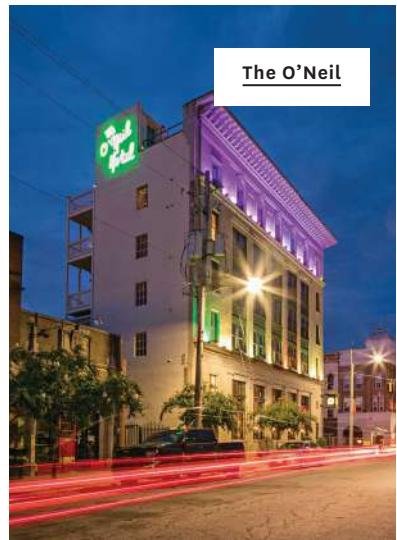
Celebrate the town's African American musical heritage at **Kinston Music Park** in the Sugar Hill district where Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong and James Brown's band once played. See a large sculptural medley of famous performers from the region and stroll a walkway of song titles and lyrics.

Having taken over a 1924 bank building, **The O'Neil** is now a night depository for people. The hotel lobby retains the original vault (16-ton door and all), and one room features bunk beds built into a bank vault.

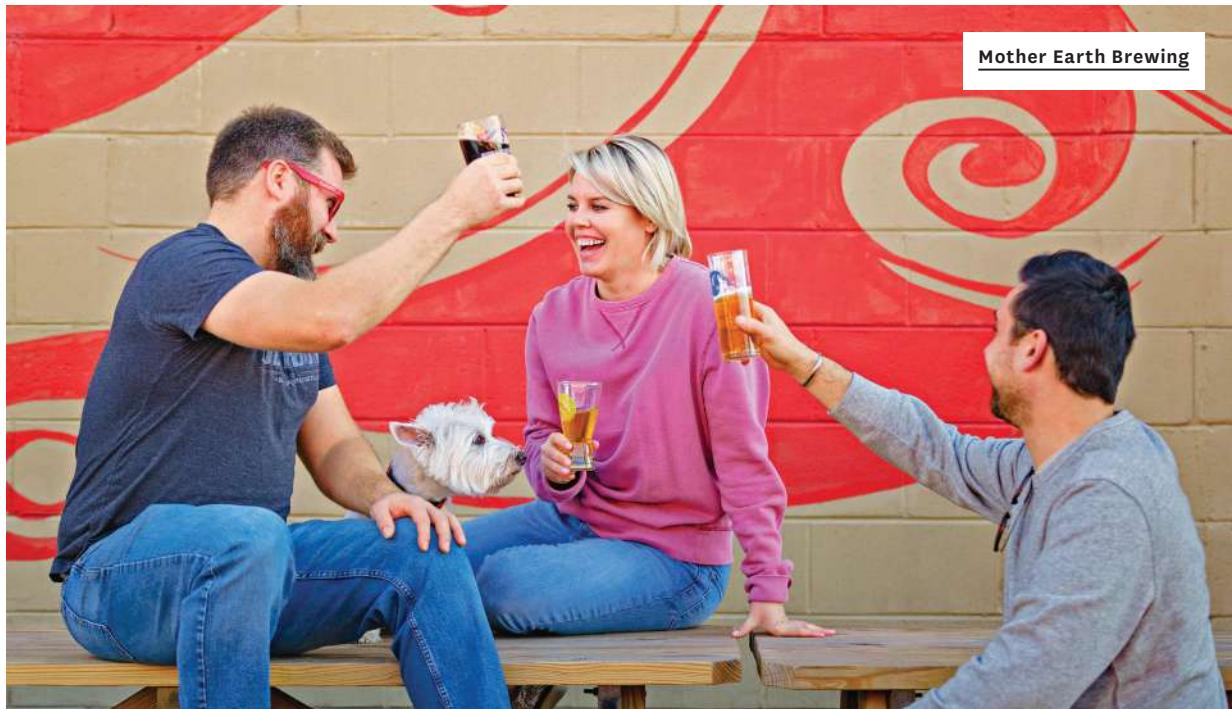
Mad Men's Don Draper would dig **Mother Earth Motor Lodge**, a retro retreat named for its sister brewery. Built in 1963, it boasts Route 66-style neon signage, mid-mod furnishings and a pool set amid palm trees.



Mother Earth Motor Lodge



The O'Neil

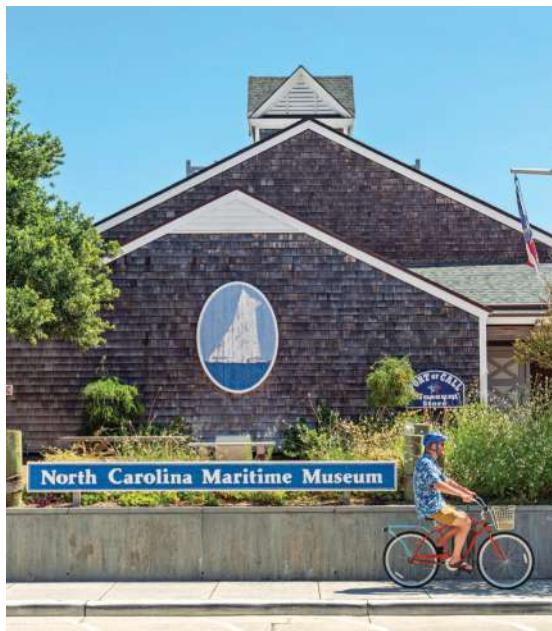


Mother Earth Brewing



PAW of approval

Beaufort Hotel sets aside some rooms for four-legged guests (for an additional fee). Ask about their dog-friendly package.



Lore on the Shore

📍 BEAUFORT

Three centuries' worth of stories await in the state's third-oldest town, once a fishing village and now a multifaceted jewel on the Crystal Coast.

Notorious pirate Blackbeard's ship, *Queen Anne's Revenge*, sank near Beaufort. View recovered artifacts — cannons, grenades, belt buckles and beads — at the **North Carolina Maritime Museum**. You can also learn the story of Echo, the sperm whale whose heart and bones are displayed.

Unearth more of Beaufort's 300-year history at **Old Burying Grounds**, established in the early 1700s. Along with weathered tombstones, see graves marked by shells, bricks and wooden slabs. In one case, a wooden plaque shares the story of a child who died at sea and was buried here in a keg of rum.

Go on a reconnaissance mission to **Fort Macon State Park**, a restored pre-Civil War fort in nearby Atlantic Beach. Tour the fort and watch a cannon or musket demo. There's a beach for swimming and strolling, plus trails that traverse a salt marsh and dunes.

A window to 18th- and 19th-century North Carolina opens up on guided tours through the homes and buildings of the **Beaufort Historic Site**. See where patriots, privateers, merchants and skilled tradespeople lived, plus a courthouse, jail and apothecary-doctor's office.

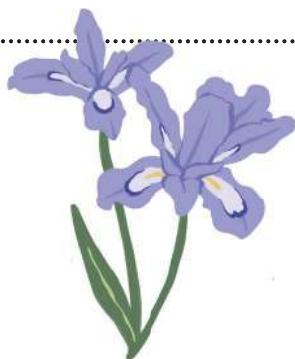
If you're fishing for a place to spend the night, **Beaufort Hotel** offers boutique accommodations in a waterfront setting where a factory once processed menhaden — "the fish that built Beaufort." You'll be lured by the views and coastal decor.

WILD *for* FLOWERS

Indulge your inner flower child by visiting lush gardens, vibrant vistas and U-pick farms.

writer **BRIAN KRAMER**

illustrator **EMMA ISENHART**



FALLING FOR FLORALS

After two summers of renovations, the **Catawba Falls Trail** near Old Fort will sport a new boardwalk and stairs for summer 2024. One thing that hasn't changed: the March-through-May symphony of wildflowers throughout the mossy valley, including deep purple dwarf crested iris, wild geraniums in shades of pink, three-petaled trillium, lacy foamflower and delicate chickweed.



BOUQUET YOUR WAY

Early August is prime time to walk the mountaintop fields of flowers and berries at family-owned **Jeter Mountain Farm** in Hendersonville. Assemble your own bouquet of Technicolor zinnias and 10 varieties of sunflowers (some up to 9 feet tall), then kick back and enjoy a hard cider or latte while the kids explore a 6,000-square-foot indoor playground.



LILIES OF THE MOUNTAIN

You don't need a rod and reel to catch trout lilies, an early spring beauty with six bright yellow petals and mottled leaves that resemble frolicking fish. Six miles of hiking trails at **Rocky Face Mountain Recreational Area** between Taylorsville and Hiddenite take you through woodland and sloping environs where colonies of this native perennial bloom from February through April.



INTO THE WILD

The trails, particularly Campbell Creek and Little Creek, at **Raven Rock State Park** in Lillington step up their appeal with a bounty of spring wildflowers. Mountain laurel in several shades of pink are impossible to miss, but keep your eyes on the ground for patches of bloodroot, yellow bellwort and trailing arbutus (which makes up for its understated flowers with an intoxicating jasmine-like scent).



A COLORFUL BUNCH

All summer long you can wander the fields of **Vollmer Farm**, a fifth-generation acreage in Bunn. Pluck whatever blossoms tickle your fancy and embellish classics like zinnias and cosmos beside texture-rich show-offs including sunflowers and celosias.



FOLLOW THE LEADER

Adam Bigelow, a self-proclaimed plant nerd, has been studying Southern Appalachian flora for more than 20 years. Join short walks led by **Bigelow's Botanical Excursions** most Fridays from March through November.

Bigelow can take you to numerous spots in and around Cullowhee to discover and photograph more than 50 species of plants and flowers.



SUNNY DELIGHTS

Get lost in a colorful maze of yellow and gold blooms during a visit to **The Fields at Sunflower Trail**. This outgrowth of Brock and Tabitha Holbrook's reception venue in Mocksville showcases more than 30 varieties of sunflowers and opens its gates to the public twice each year: in mid-June and late September.



GREEN REVIVAL

Nearly 20 years ago, a community horticulture club transformed an overgrown dumping site in Yanceyville into the **Caswell Community Arboretum**, a 2-acre sanctuary for trees and plants. Follow a half-mile trail past water features; a restored one-room schoolhouse; and gardens dedicated to evergreens, butterflies and seed-producing plants.

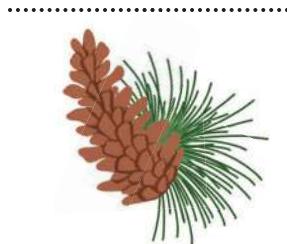
Since 1948, Wilmington has heralded the arrival of spring during the **North Carolina Azalea Festival** (April 3-7, 2024). Tour azalea-adorned porches throughout the city and check out a bustling street fair.



THINK PINK

A tidal wave of magenta washes over Roan Mountain every June. Head to

Pisgah National Forest to take in miles of Catawba rhododendron, then stop in Bakersville for art, music and the mid-June **North Carolina Rhododendron Festival**.

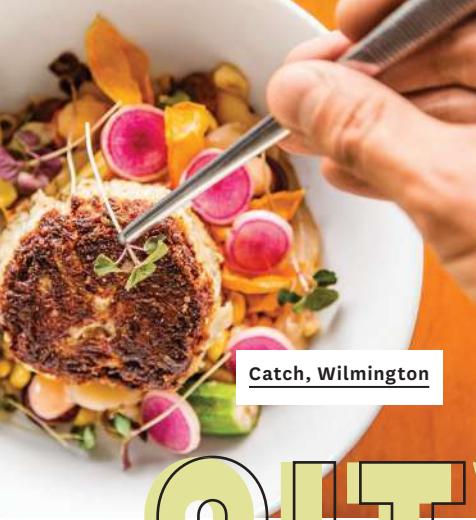


PINE AND DANDY

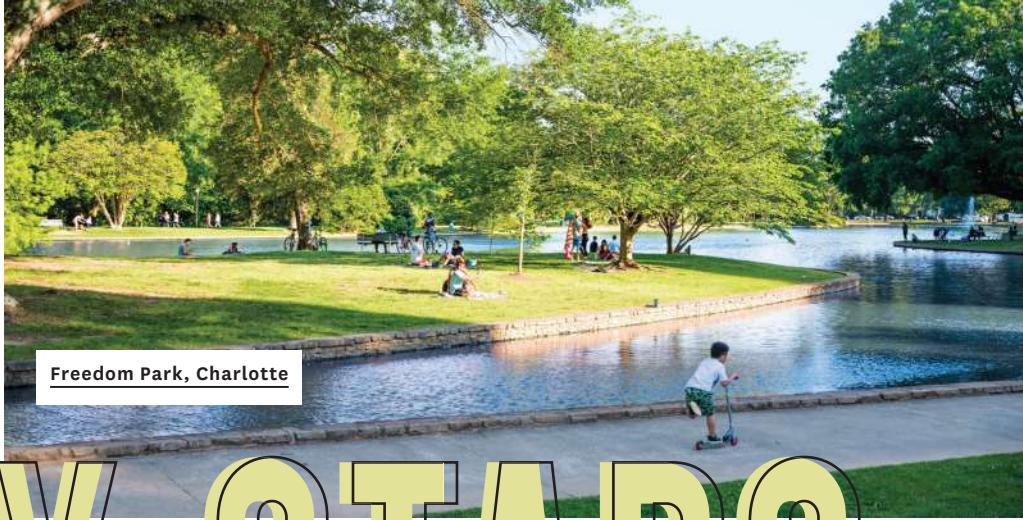
No ordinary stand of evergreens, the **Calloway Forest Preserve** near Raeford is home to hundreds of mature longleaf pines. While you roam among these 80- to 100-year-old wonders, don't miss the pops of color poking through wire grass understorey. In April and May, wild lupine launches blue spires, goat's rue offers pastel-color blooms and wild indigo betrays its name with clusters of bright yellow buds.



OUTDOOR NC PRINCIPLE *Stick to Trails and Overnight Right*
Keep to designated trails and durable surfaces to protect trailside plants. In the backcountry, confine your impact to places that already show use — and limit the area of disturbance.



Catch, Wilmington



Freedom Park, Charlotte

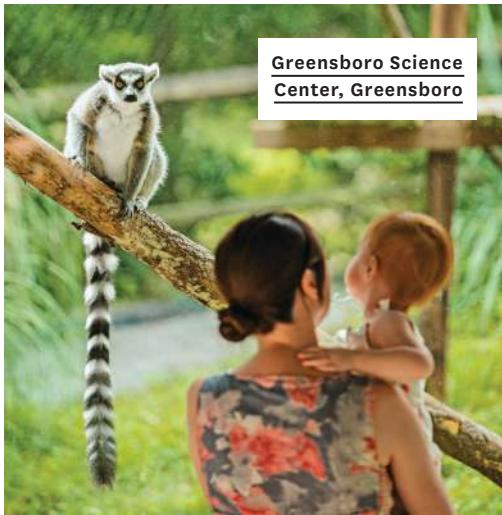
CITY STARS

Some spots in these magnificent seven cities rise to the top of bucket lists. Others fly under the radar. All of them are ready to shine.

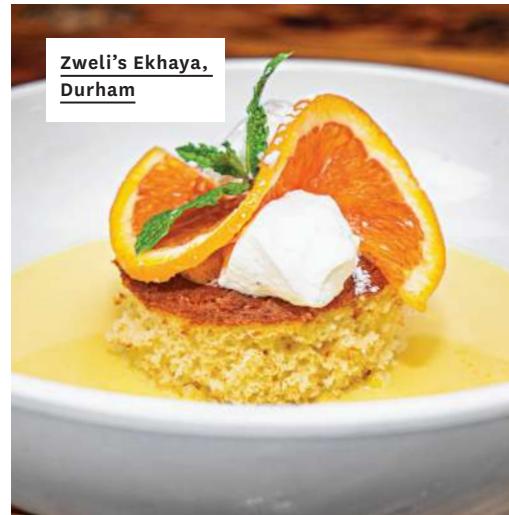
writer **NIKKI MILLER-KA**



Wildwood Park, Greenville



Greensboro Science Center, Greensboro



Zweli's Ekhaya, Durham



Biltmore, Asheville



International Folk Festival, Fayetteville



Citizen Vinyl

asheville

In this mountain city known for its creative culture, you'll find public art and a crafty food and drink scene.

Citizen Vinyl

Records and deli sandwiches... this city says *why not?* In the historic *Asheville Citizen-Times* newspaper building, watch vinyl being pressed into playable discs and enjoy artisan coffee or a cocktail while you peruse the record selection.

River Arts District

Bound by bike paths and greenways, the RAD weaves together paintings, murals and graffiti adorning repurposed buildings along the French Broad River. The colorful exteriors lead to art studios, galleries, cafes, breweries, restaurants and music venues.

The Radical

Transforming the River Arts District skyline, the 70-room boutique hotel was born out of an old factory building. Retro-luxury trappings (think curtained headboards) and a James Beard Award-nominated chef bring 1920s style into the present.

Biltmore

At George and Edith Vanderbilt's dream estate, the 8,000-acre grounds are as lavish as the palatial home with 65 fireplaces and 43 bathrooms. Stroll gardens designed by esteemed landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, then explore nearly 22 miles of hiking trails through meadow and forest.

SIPS AND BITES

CHOW CHOW FOOD + CULTURE

FESTIVAL Celebrating the foodways of the Southern Appalachian region, the September festival features panel discussions, tasting bazaars and dinners focused on an equitable food system.

NENG JR.'S The cozy 17-seat marvel is Asheville's first Filipino restaurant — and a James Beard Award finalist for best new restaurant in 2023. Chef Silver Iocovozzi serves up lumpia (spring rolls), adobo and jasmine rice with modern flair.

NORTH ASHEVILLE TAILGATE MARKET

On Saturday mornings, mill around the region's oldest outdoor market. Dozens of vendors offer local goods and specialty products. At J. Chong Eats, score top-notch Cantonese cuisine, such as handmade dumplings, wontons and sauces.

OWL BAKERY Old World Levain Bakery specializes in naturally leavened bread and European-inspired pastries. With shops in West and North Asheville, owner and founder Susannah Gebhart revels in finding organic sources for baked goods, including citrus curd tarts with crystallized herbs.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (CATCH) RYAN DONNELL, (FREEDOM) COURTESY OF CHARLOTTE REGIONAL VISITORS AUTHORITY, (WILDWOOD) AARON HINES/CITY OF GREENVILLE, (GREENSBORO) SAM DEAN, (ZWEI) ST. COURTESY OF ZWELI'S EKHYA, (BILTMORE) COURTESY OF BILTMORE.COM, (FOLK) COURTESY OF DISTINCTLYFAYETTEVILLENC.COM, (VINYL) COURTESY OF EXPLOREASHEVILLE.COM



Incorporated

1797

Population

93,776

Nickname

The Land of the Sky



ACCESSIBLE fun for all

At **Biltmore**, guests can request a neckloop telecoil coupler and a printed transcript of the audio guide for the estate tour.



Amelie's French Bakery and Cafe



Incorporated
1768

Population
897,720

Nickname
The Queen City

charlotte

A cosmopolitan city with rural roots, Charlotte serves up avant-garde culinary offerings within a grid of world-class art and outdoor spaces.



Mizu

Bechtler Museum of Modern Art

Capture a selfie with *The Firebird* statue (nicknamed Disco Chicken by locals) before ascending to the fourth-level main gallery to view selections from a collection of more than 1,400 twentieth-century artworks.

Freedom Park

Connect with nature and go geocaching along trails leading to the Little Sugar Creek Greenway. For an interactive experience, visit the **Discovery Place Nature** museum or climb Freedom Park's decommissioned steam engine.

Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture

Dedicated to Charlotte's first Black mayor, the center celebrates the arts, culture and history of people of African descent. Encounter quilt designs from the Underground Railroad, live performances and an array of rotating exhibits.

SIPS AND BITES

AMELIE'S FRENCH BAKERY AND CAFE

Savor sweet treats or an afternoon pick-me-up at four locations across the city. Tea cakes and other pastries featured in the dining car scene of *The Hunger Games* offer a taste of the good life.

BAYHAVEN FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL

Founded by chefs Greg and Subrina Collier in 2021, the October festival honors tastemakers of the African diaspora by celebrating Black culinary legacies. Tasting events and parties feature industry veterans alongside up-and-coming chefs.

MIZU

This restaurant sits atop the Hyatt Centric Charlotte SouthPark with panoramic views of the horizon. The menu sizzles with its focus on fresh seafood and wood-fired preparations on a traditional Japanese robata grill.

SALUD CERVECERIA

What began as a craft-beer bottle shop in 2012 is now a brewery, taproom and coffee shop in the artsy NoDa district. The Latino-owned destination was nominated by the James Beard Foundation for outstanding bar in 2023. Take home a few bottles of regional and international brews.

greensboro

With a welcoming spirit, Greensboro fosters a strong sense of community through inclusive events, public parks and educational opportunities.

Greensboro Science Center



Incorporated

1808

Population

301,115

Nickname

The Gate City

PHOTOGRAPHS: (AMELIE'S) KATE MAGEE PHOTOGRAPHY, (MIZU) ANDREW CEBULKA, (SCIENCE) SAM DEAN, (BREWING) DAN WHITTAKER



PAW of approval

At Joymongers Brewing Co., pull up with your favorite four-legged friend and enjoy a cold craft brew in the LoFi district on the edge of downtown.

GET OUTDOORS

GREENSBORO SCIENCE CENTER

It's an aquarium, museum, zoo, zipline and treetop adventure park — all in one. In Revolution Ridge, meet pygmy hippos and cassowaries or watch vets at work.

NC FOLK FEST Experience the state's cultural heritage through dance, handmade crafts and food trucks each September. Vibe to the free lineup of global artists, roots performers and regional musicians.

TANGER FAMILY BICENTENNIAL GARDEN Created to honor the nation's bicentennial in 1976, the lush grounds make for a perfect daytime stroll or afternoon picnic. Request a guided garden tour or reflect while listening to water babbling from a replica 1780s mill.

THE CAROLINA THEATRE

Step into restored 1920s opulence, catching a live performance or classic film. Once a stop for the vaudeville circuit, the theater hosts productions by Greensboro Ballet, Community Theatre of Greensboro and Greensboro Opera.

INTERNATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS CENTER & MUSEUM

In the former F.W. Woolworth Co. Building, see the lunch counter that became a true turning point in the journey to end segregation. Film reenactments depict discussions by the Greensboro Four before their sit-in.

Unique Overnights

Two amenity-rich hotels allow you to reconnect with history while looking to the future. Sip afternoon tea or listen to live jazz at the reimagined **O. Henry Hotel**, named after one of Greensboro's most famous former residents. At **Proximity Hotel**, the sustainable LEED Platinum design includes lofty rooms with large windows.



Durham

Incorporated

1869

Population

332,680

Nickname

The Bull City

durham

Nationally recognized eateries, deeply rooted legacies and impressive displays of public art call the thriving city home.

SIPS AND BITES

BOXYARD RTP Repurposed shipping containers house food vendors and shops, framing community gathering spaces. Dig into brisket from Lawrence Barbecue and indulge in campfire vibes with the toasted marshmallow-topped s'mores cupcake from BuzzyBakes.

MATEO BAR DE TAPAS Chef Matthew Kelly puts a Southern twist on tapas, serving deviled eggs with chorizo and farmer cheese with Espelette pepper jelly. Slivers of country ham dance next to paella and pan con tomate (bread with tomato).

ZWELI'S EKHAYA Chef Zweli Williams, founder of the country's first Zimbabwean restaurant, crafts next-level food at this upscale outpost of Durham's original Zweli's. A Nigerian spice blend elevates steak and chicken kabobs, and peach chutney pairs with tender beets.

American Tobacco Campus

Everything old is new again at this former epicenter of the American tobacco industry. Downtown Durham lies adjacent to the repurposed factory grounds, now anchored by the **Durham Performing Arts Center** and **Durham Bulls Athletic Park**. Shopping and dining abound.

Hayti Heritage Center

Near an area once known as Black Wall Street for being a hub of Black business activity, attend an exhibit by local artists or move to the beat of an African dance or yoga class. Don't miss the Black American Music Series, featuring performances every second Sunday of the month.

Museum of Life and Science

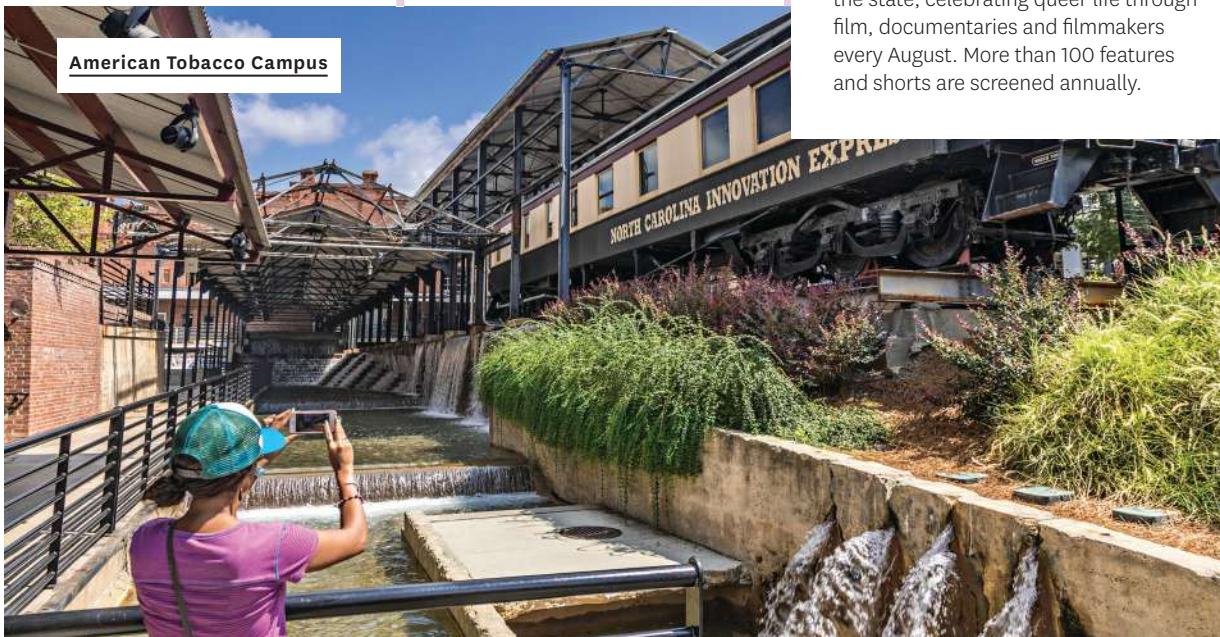
Blast off to see a collection of Apollo-era NASA artifacts, join an interactive fossil dig, visit a butterfly zoo and tropical conservatory, and wander through indoor and outdoor exhibits featuring a menagerie of protected animals.

OUTSOUTH Queer Film Festival

What began in 1995 as a salute to Pride is now the largest LGBTQ+ film festival in the state, celebrating queer life through film, documentaries and filmmakers every August. More than 100 features and shorts are screened annually.



American Tobacco Campus





Incorporated
1783

Population
208,873

Nickname
America's "Can Do" City



GET OUTDOORS

CAPE FEAR BOTANICAL GARDEN

Wander more than 80 acres of specialty gardens bursting with ornamental plants, trails and overlooks nestled beside the Cape Fear River. The carefully tended gardens and natural forest sit a mere 2 miles from downtown.

DEEP CREEK ATV PARK If you have an ATV in tow, this is paradise for off-roading. Zoom across more than 2,500 acres of wide dirt trails, splashing through ponds and puddles along the way.

TAKE ME OUT Root for one of two home baseball teams. The collegiate Fayetteville Chutes play at J.P. Riddle Stadium, while the Class A Minor League Fayetteville Woodpeckers knock homers out of Segra Stadium.

Cape Fear Regional Theatre

Watch the curtain rise on classic and contemporary shows. The live theater performances — which include *Cinderella* and *Sister Act* in 2024 — draw some of the finest area talent.

U.S. Army Airborne and Special Operations Museum

Get a taste of the town's military pride. Stop at the 15-foot *Iron Mike* statue and memorial outside, then head indoors to fly into Normandy inside the Pritzker Motion Simulator. Exhibits detail tactics and tools used by America's elite soldiers.

Go Global

A colorful Parade of Nations headlines Fayetteville's **International Folk Festival** each September, when the city's cultural diversity is on full display. You can also try international flavors year-round. Snack on samosas (savory pastries) at **Tandoori Bites**, banter over bibimbap (a hearty rice dish) from **E Tae Won Express**, or go big with whole tilapia from **PointOne African Cuisine**.

fayetteville

A time-honored military tradition and diverse population helped pave the way for the city's enriching attractions and international influences.



Native Fine Diner



Greenville Mural Project

greenville

Once an important part of the tobacco and cotton trade along the banks of the Tar River, today's Greenville thrums to the beat of artists and artisans.



Greenville

Incorporated

1786

Population

89,233

Nickname

The Emerald City

African American Music Series

At **Emerge Gallery & Art Center**, jam the second Friday of each month to jazz, rhythm and blues, funk, gospel, and rap — all music styles with a connection to the region. Learn more along the African American Music Trails of Eastern North Carolina.

Native Fine Diner

Chef Lucas Owens dishes art on a plate in this reimagined diner with upscale riffs on comfort fare. Regionally sourced masterpieces include broiled flounder with umami butter and mushrooms.

Pitt County Brew & 'Cue Trail

The hub of Eastern-style whole hog barbecue beckons hungry travelers from all over. Hit up some of the 20 locations serving locally brewed beer and legendary 'cue. Collect a stamp from each to fill a PassPork booklet and earn your spot on the Brew & 'Cue Wall of Fame.

GET OUTDOORS

LEROY JAMES FARMERS MARKET

For more than 30 years, locals have flocked to this outdoor market for produce, handmade sundries and other regionally crafted items. Musicians often serenade customers on Saturdays, March through November.

MURAL DISCOVERIES Find splashes of color on city facades, courtesy of the community-driven Greenville Mural Project. Hunt for Lexi Malpass' adorable mini murals along the Secret Squirrel Trail or stroll the area around Dickinson Avenue for larger-scale works.

WILDWOOD PARK Get ready to hike, bike or simply connect with nature along the Tar River. Race through the bicycle skills course and BMX pump track or get blissfully lost among the nearby creeks and covered trails.

SIPS AND BITES



Incorporated

1740

Population

120,324

Nickname

Hollywood East



SEABIRD You can almost feel the salty ocean breeze while diving into tuna tartare and a seasonal seafood tower dreamed up by chef-owners Dean Neff and Lydia Clopton. Don't snooze on the house-made ice cream for dessert.

CATCH A James Beard Award semifinalist, Keith Rhodes brings wild-caught and sustainable seafood to the plate. Cajun-crust oysters and seared scallops in coconut-curry broth have made a splash in the local dining scene.

OLIVERO Family photos hang on the wall at Sunny Gerhart and Lauren Krall Ivey's modern homage to generations of recipes. For ultimate comfort, try the spaghetti with summer squash, basil, romesco sauce and Burrata.



ACCESSIBLE

fun for all

Sensory backpacks featuring noise-canceling headphones and fidget toys are available for checkout at the **North Carolina Aquarium at Fort Fisher**, a certified Sensory Inclusive venue.

ARRIVE Wilmington

Soaking in views of the Cape Fear River and the surrounding historic neighborhood, guests to this boutique hotel also enjoy an eclectic mix of mid-century modern and contemporary design elements.

Battleship North Carolina

The towers, turrets and gun mounts of this World War II stalwart command the Cape Fear River near downtown. Explore nine decks of the restored ship on a self-guided look or reserve space on a docent-guided tour, available most days.

Carolina Cup

Stand-up paddleboarders and kayakers compete during this world-class series of contests in late April. Watch races take place on the calm waters of Wrightsville Beach's Harbor Island and on choppy portions of the Intracoastal Waterway.

Wilmington Riverwalk

Nearly 2 miles of scenic boardwalk follows the shoreline of the Cape Fear River. It's become the city's main connector to public parks, shops, boutiques, galleries, outdoor cafes and sweeping riverfront views.

Connected to pristine beaches, marshlands and barrier islands, Wilmington teems with historic neighborhoods and coastal charm.

wilmington

THE ART OF NC



PHOTOGRAPH: COURTESY OF VISIT CLEVELAND COUNTY



There's a story behind every mural and sculpture you stumble across in North Carolina. Meet a few of the artists who bring innovation and inspiration to building facades, parks and street corners.

writer

JESS HOFFERT

Here's to the Banjo King



Cleveland County native and Grammy Award-winning artist Earl Scruggs would be celebrating his 100th birthday this year. Although he passed away in 2012, his legacy lives on at Shelby's **Earl Scruggs Center** and with this mural by North Carolina artist Scott Nurkin. The 30×40-foot work, inspired by a photo Scruggs' son shared with Nurkin, shows the legend picking with the three-finger method that became known as Scruggs Style. See it on the exterior wall of **Newgrass Brewing Co.**, then head a block south to see a Nurkin mural of another local legend: country songwriter and musician Don Gibson.



Mural by
@jackson



PHOTOGRAPHS: (MURAL) @JEKS_NC/JEKSONE.COM, (SCULPTURE) COURTESY OF VISIT NEW BERN



Smithfield's Star

One of Hollywood's A-list leading ladies in the 1940s and 1950s, Academy Award nominee Ava Gardner was born on a farm near small-town Smithfield in 1922. In what would have been her 100th birthday year, Greensboro artist Jeks One spray-painted this series of portraits on the side of Smithfield's **Ava Gardner Museum**. Jeks is known for using aerosol (and a whole lot of meticulous planning and detail) to create photorealistic masterpieces such as this one, and his work can be admired across North Carolina and beyond.

Better Together

Painted by children of various racial and ethnic backgrounds, **Unity** stands as a symbol of diversity and strength that comes from banding together for a common cause. Located near Broad Street Christian Church in downtown New Bern, the 12-foot-tall papier-mâché sculpture aptly incorporates many triangles, known to be one of the strongest geometric shapes. The **Craven Arts Council and Gallery** spearheaded this community project.





Made to Blow You Away

If you've driven through downtown Raleigh or Durham, chances are you've been delightfully distracted by a multistory mural crafted by Gabriel Eng-Goetz. Born and raised in Durham, the Chinese American artist weaves themes of nature and humanity into his work, including this tempest of fiery color and energy honoring the Carolina Hurricanes hockey team. Find it on the facade of an unassuming parking garage at 306 Gale St. in downtown Raleigh.



Give It a Whirligig



Wilson's premier attraction honors local farm machinery repairman Vollis Simpson, whose hobby in retirement was crafting giant kinetic sculptures — 30 of which are located in **Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park**. On Saturdays from late April through mid-September, the **Wilson Farmers & Artisan Market** brings extra doses of sensory delights to the downtown park.

Neighborhood Beacon

Local airbrush artist Abel Jackson teamed up with the mural-making squad at Big Trouble Studios for this panoramic homage to Biddleville, the oldest surviving Black neighborhood in Charlotte. **West End Perpetual Legacy** transcends time, depicting current and former neighborhood landmarks on a building exterior at 1545 West Trade St. At its center: the clock tower of the Henry J. Biddle Memorial Institute, a historically Black college formed after the Civil War.



STAY COOL

Summer flies by, so maximize your carefree days in North Carolina. Swim along sandy beaches, hike to towering waterfalls and pile on that extra scoop of ice cream. You deserve it!

writer **LEAH HUGHES KING**



Holden Beach, Brunswick Islands

PLAY IN THE SAND

First stop: beach. Along an uncluttered coastline, swaths of sand are the star while you bird-watch, glide or set sail.



Caswell Beach, Brunswick Islands

Go Birding on the Beach

Out of 479 known bird species in the state, bird-watchers have spotted 205 of them at **Hammocks Beach State Park**. Located southeast of Jacksonville, the park contains mainland maritime forest and 4 miles of beach on Bear Island. Mainland hikers seek birds flitting along the trails, while those strolling on the beach can expect herons, pelicans and osprey.



Hop Among the Islands

Tucked under North Carolina's southernmost tip, **Brunswick Islands** encompasses six beaches. These southward-facing islands afford beachgoers the opportunity to catch sunrises and sunsets from the same vantage point. Pick a spot to suit your mood. Crowd-free **Caswell Beach** makes for quiet morning walks or bike rides among oat-covered dunes and peaceful paddling through marsh creeks. Climb 131 steps to see **Bald Head Island** and **Fort Caswell** from the top of **Oak Island Lighthouse**. Families hold tight to **Holden Beach**. To understand those allegiances, go shelling for fossilized sea biscuits, chase ghost crabs and gather around a table of steamed shellfish. On **Ocean Isle's** eastern side, canals connect backyards to the **Intracoastal Waterway**. Sip coffee while watching kayakers paddle out at sunrise, or depart by boat for a sunset cruise.

Soar Above the Dunes

Outer Banks winds are famous. They have carried the sands of **Jockey's Ridge State Park** — the tallest living sand dune system on the East Coast — for centuries. In 1903, Orville and Wilbur Wright used these winds to their advantage, achieving the first successful airplane flight. Fly above the sand in a replica 1902 Wright Glider with **Kitty Hawk Kites**, celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

Sail Away from It All

The protected waters of the Inner Banks create reflective spaces to soak in the serenity. Oriental, North Carolina's sailing capital, is one of those waterside retreats. At **John Bond Town Beach**, you can play in the sand, unpack a picnic and watch boats navigating the Neuse River.



PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY OF NC'S BRUNSWICK ISLANDS, (PELICAN) COURTESY OF ONSLOW COUNTY TOURISM



OUTDOOR NC PRINCIPLE Exploring the Coast

Stick to designated trails and durable surfaces to and from the beach or water. Coastal grasses are fragile and can easily be impacted by visitors traveling across them.

FIND THE FALLS

Let the mist kiss your face as you admire nature's power and beauty.



Crabtree Falls

📍 Little Switzerland

Located at Milepost 340.2 on the Blue Ridge Parkway, the picnic area near the 60-foot-tall falls makes an ideal lunch stop. Admire mountain vistas from your picnic table, then walk off your sandwiches following trails lined with rhododendron and mountain laurel. Around 1.5 miles later, you'll be rewarded with a waterfall view.

Shacktown Falls

📍 Yadkinville

The falls at Shore-Styers Mill Nature Park along US-421 provide a popular pit stop for travelers headed to the Blue Ridge Mountains. Its appeal partially lies in its accessibility, with no hiking required. Standing approximately 10 feet tall with shallow water at its base, the falls make a prime splashing ground for kids.



OUTDOOR NC PRINCIPLE *Trash Your Trash*

Nobody wants debris in their waterfall photo. Pack a trash bag for your hike to carry home all garbage, including food scraps and pet waste.

Stone Mountain Falls

📍 Roaring Gap

The Stone Mountain Loop Trail weaves in surprises along its 4.5-mile shaded pathway. Climb to the top to enjoy the Blue Ridge panorama, then witness the 200-foot-tall waterfall as it rushes down the mountain. On the way back, follow the wooden staircase that hugs the falls.

Sunburst Falls 📍 Canton

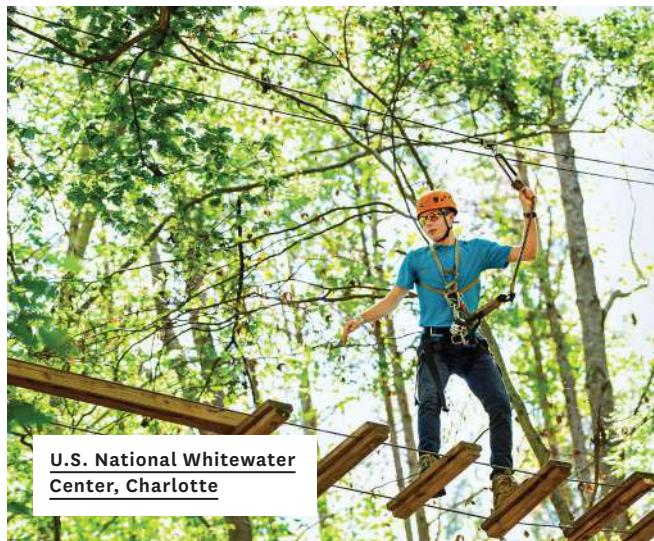
As if captured in a painting, wispy water from the Pigeon River drapes down across big boulders underneath a stone bridge built in 1937. Pull off to the side of State-215 to view the pristine falls from above, or follow one of the short, steep trails to the base of the waterfall to capture the full majesty of the arched stone bridge.

Rainbow Falls 📍 Brevard

This Pisgah National Forest cascade is always lovely, but for prime photo potential, take the 1.5-mile hike from Gorges State Park after a heavy rain when the water plummets 150 feet at full blast. (Just be careful; it's slippery.) The falls' rainbow that emerges from the mist stands out best in the morning sunlight.



The Gorge Zipline, Saluda



U.S. National Whitewater Center, Charlotte

ROAM THE TREETOPS

When your feet leave the ground, you gain a new perspective. Hike or fly above North Carolina's lush landscapes.

Navitat Canopy Adventures 📍 Barnardsville

Get immersed in Moody Cove, comprised of 250 acres of Blue Ridge Mountain wilderness. Choose the more modest Treetop Tour for six zips, plus leaps and rope descents. Or opt for the Mountaintop Tour with side-by-side zipping 350 feet in the air with speeds reaching 65 miles per hour.

U.S. National Whitewater Center 📍 Charlotte

Dart in and out of open spaces and forest at this 1,300-acre playground located 15 miles from Uptown Charlotte. Ziplines fly over the world's largest man-made whitewater river, the centerpiece of the park. With an all-access pass, visitors also get their hearts racing while rafting, climbing, kayaking and cycling.

Carolina Ziplines Canopy Tour 📍 Westfield

Ziplines are the latest chapter for this property once owned by R.J. Reynolds' great-grandfather, who trained patriots for the Revolutionary War. The mission of its current owners is getting families outdoors. After 1.5 miles of zipping, make the most of trails and easy creek access.

ZipQuest Waterfall & Treetop Adventure 📍 Fayetteville

Enjoy a bird's-eye view of the Sandhills as you zip over Carver's Creek and observe Carver's Falls. The Waterfall Expedition includes eight tree-to-tree ziplines, three suspension bridges and three spiral staircases. NightQuest outfits visitors with headlamps for an exhilarating after-dark ride.

The Gorge Zipline 📍 Saluda

The steepest, fastest zipline in the United States dives into, around and through Green River Gorge. Descend a grand total of 1,100 vertical feet into old-growth forest via 11 ziplines spanning 1.25 miles. Three rappels and a sky bridge encourage you to slow down and take in the panoramas, which include 18,000 surrounding acres of protected and serene Green River Game Lands.



HIT THE WATER

River, lake, stream or swamp,
these bodies of water heed the
call of summertime fun.



Ride the Wake

Lake Lure Adventure Company specializes in behind-the-boat experiences with marvelous mountain backdrops. Skilled instructors help water-skiers stay standing, wakeboarders learn new tricks and surfers catch wakes. They also offer pontoon rentals.



Go Tubbing

What appears to be a giant bucket floating down the Yadkin River near Wilkesboro is actually a river tub from **Foothills Outdoor Adventures**. Great for groups of up to six people, the metal tubs include two coolers, shuttle service and room for your pet.

SUP in the Mountains

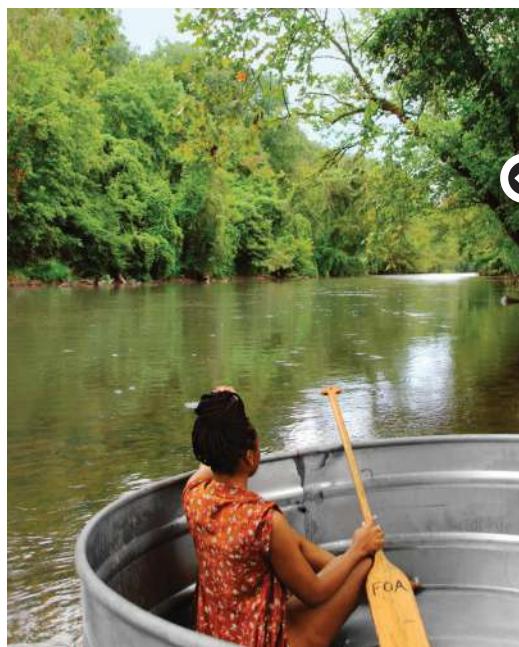
Rent a stand-up paddleboard (or a pontoon, kayak or canoe) at Lake Glenville's **Signal Ridge Marina** and explore the mountain lake's 1,400 acres and 26 miles of shoreline. The marina provides maps to help you seek out the lake's three waterfalls.



ACCESSIBLE

fun for all

Lake Glenville, one of the highest-elevation lakes in the Eastern United States, offers a ramp-accessible pier at **Pines Recreation Area**, so everyone gets in on brag-worthy bass fishing.





OUTDOOR NC PRINCIPLE

Tips for Fishing

Casual anglers and sports enthusiasts can practice these simple fishing tips to help keep our waters pristine, wildlife safe and the future of fishing strong.

Navigate a Majestic Swamp

Rent a kayak or canoe at **Dismal Swamp State Park** and drift through the largest remaining swamp in the eastern U.S. The forested wetland once served as a hiding place along the Underground Railroad. In May, **Paddle for the Border** draws a flotilla to make a 7.5-mile trek beginning in South Mills.

Zoom Across the Lake

See Lake Norman in style. From April through September, **CS Boat and Jet Ski Rentals** in Mooresville outfits visitors with vessels. Reserve a Jet Ski to explore North Carolina's largest man-made lake by cutting, spraying and playing on the water. Or take it slower with a tritoon.

Dine with a View

Self-described as flip-flop elegant, **The Pointe at Lake Gaston** serves a surf-and-turf menu and hosts live music on the waterfront. Across Eaton Ferry Bridge, **WatersView Restaurant** in Littleton specializes in Friday and Saturday prime rib, best enjoyed with a vista of the sun as it sinks below the liquid horizon.

Paddle to Your Campsite

Abandon all frills and delight in minimalism at one of 30 unique paddle-in campsites along the Long Arm Peninsula of **Lake James State Park**. Inside the new Visitor Center, an interactive map introduces visitors to the lake, its history and habitats.

Fish for a Mystery

No one quite knows how Lake Waccamaw formed. Known as a Carolina bay, it's one of numerous mysterious craters with a northwest to southeast orientation. Hike, paddle or fish at **Lake Waccamaw State Park** and ponder your theory. Meteorites? Melting glaciers? Receding waves?

Tame the Rapids

From 7-year-olds paddling for the first time to Olympic athletes training for the games, **Nantahala Outdoor Center** accommodates all visitors for river adventures. Take on the Nantahala River's Class I, II and III rapids. The Bryson City-based business introduced its family-friendly, guided whitewater rafting trips in 1972.



SLIP AND SLIDE

The best sounds at a water park are squeals and belly laughs from all ages soaking in every fun-filled moment.

Carolina Harbor Waterpark

📍 Charlotte

The splashy side of Carowinds amusement park encourages family play. Gather six people and charge down Boogie Board Racer, the Southeast's longest mat-racing waterslide. Kids climb and slide through Seaside Splashworks.

Wet 'n Wild Emerald Pointe

📍 Greensboro

Lose yourself in the multisensory experience of the new Bermuda Triangle slides, which blend surround sound, lighting effects and rushing water. Tamer thrills await on the Scooter Run slide.

Jungle Rapids Family Fun Park

📍 Wilmington

A large wave pool and classic lazy river suit those looking for a laid-back afternoon, while adrenaline seekers flock to slides like The Superbowl and The Sidewinder.

High Point City Lake Park

📍 Jamestown

Reopened in 2023 after several years of upgrades, this aquatic center rivals water parks in larger cities. Adults swim laps in the 50-meter pool, and children chase each other around the splash pad.

H2OBX Waterpark

📍 Powells Point

On an Inner Banks peninsula, this color-splashed park provides a boatload of activities. Reserve a shady cabana as your group comes and goes, floating along Teach's River, bouncing through Deep Six Adventure Lagoon and free-falling down Paradise Plunge.

White Lake Water Park

📍 White Lake

Situated beside its namesake lake, this family draw makes together time easy. The park's approachable size allows parents

to watch smaller kids play on the submarine deck while others ride the Double Turbo Twister Slide.

Lions Water Adventure

📍 Kinston

A jungle theme flows throughout this easily navigable park. Zoom down three slides: One is striped like a zebra, one caters to little tykes, and one ends with riders blasting out of a lion's mouth.




ACCESSIBLE
fun for all

Water wheelchairs at Carowinds' **Carolina Harbor Waterpark** allow guests with limited mobility to enjoy splashing and cooling off in wave pools and at Kiddy Hawk Cove.





Hills of Snow 📍 Smithfield

Occupying a comically large white foam cup topped with a blue snowball, this spot elicits smiles before customers reach the order window. Fans rave about the snow-like softness of their shaved ice, which comes in a whopping 101 flavor options.

Peaches n' Cream

📍 Wadesboro

If you're beach-bound and cruising along US-74, pull over as soon as you spot the sign with a peach-topped ice cream cone. If peach cobbler is on the menu, better make it à la mode.

Sticky Cheeks 📍 Tarboro

This small-town shop greets customers with teal walls trimmed in syrup and sprinkles. The treats are as colorful as the decor. Light and airy bubble waffles come with ice cream on top.

Williams Strawberry Farm

📍 South Mills

Known for U-pick strawberries, this family farm also produces its own ice cream. Their strawberry is, of course, fabulous, but you must experience their apple pie ice cream, made by folding homemade pies into vanilla.

FREEZE YOUR BRAIN

Rainbow-color snowballs and scoops of ice cream

lend a sweet note to sultry summer evenings.

Cool Beans Coffee and Ice Cream 📍 Autryville

Coffee and ice cream served in one location begs for a combo. Add a shot of espresso to a chocolate shake and pour that energy into regularly scheduled events such as karaoke and DJ bingo.

Lakeside Mini Golf and MadFreeze 📍 Henrico

This well-landscaped miniature golf course is a must during Lake Gaston getaways. It's a good day when the hardest decision is choosing a snowball flavor. Pro tip: Order rainbow (cherry, lemon and blue raspberry).

Ice Breakers Snoballs 📍 Laurinburg

Summer snow in the Sandhills? You'll believe it's possible after ordering a New Orleans-style Snoball (shaved ice). Go traditional with banana or cherry, or branch out with Tiger's Blood or dill pickle.

Howling Cow Dairy Education Center and Creamery 📍 Raleigh

North Carolina State University ag students milk cows on the university's dairy farm and churn ice cream on campus. Enjoy a scoop of Wolf Tracks on the porch overlooking the pasture.



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Local Information Sources

MOUNTAINS

Alexander County EDC, 119 NC Hwy. 16 N., Suite A, Taylorsville 28681; (828) 352-7756; alexanderecdc.org

Advertising Partner, p. 111

Alleghany County C of C, 58 S. Main St., Sparta 28675; (336) 372-5473; alleghanycountychamber.com

Ashe County C of C, 01 N. Jefferson Ave., Suite C, West Jefferson 28694; (336) 846-9550; ashechamber.com

Avery County C of C, 4501 Tynecastle Hwy., Unit 14, Banner Elk 28604; (828) 898-5605; averycounty.com

Beech Mountain TDA, 403-A Beech Mountain Pkwy., Beech Mountain 28604; (828) 387-9283; beechmtn.com

Blowing Rock TDA, 132 Park Ave., Blowing Rock 28605; (828) 295-4636; blowingrock.com

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Blue Ridge National Heritage Area, 31 College Pl., Suite 120, Asheville 28801; (828) 298-5330; blueridgeheritage.com

Boone Area VB, 331 Queen St., Suite 101, Boone 28607; (828) 266-1345; exploreboone.com

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Burnsville-Yancey C of C, 106 W. Main St., Burnsville 28714; (828) 682-7413; yanceychamber.com
Advertising Partner, p. 109

Caldwell County C of C, 1909 Hickory Blvd. SE, Lenoir 28645; (828) 726-0616; caldwellchambernc.com

Cherokee C of C, P.O. Box 1838, Cherokee 28719; (828) 788-0034; cherokeesmokies.com

Cherokee County TDA, 20 Tennessee St., Murphy 28906; (828) 557-0602; visitccnc.com

Cherokee Welcome Center, 498 Tsalali Blvd., Cherokee 28719; (828) 497-9195; visitcherokeenc.com

Clay County C of C, 96 Sanderson St., Hayesville 28904; (828) 389-3704; claychambernc.com

Explore Asheville CVB, 27 College Pl., Asheville 28801; (828) 258-6129; exploreasheville.com

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Explore Brevard, 175 E. Main St., Brevard 28712; (828) 884-8900; explorebrevard.com
Advertising Partner, p. 61

Franklin Area C of C, 98 Hyatt Rd., Franklin 28734; (828) 524-3161; franklin-chamber.com
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Graham County T & TA, 474 Rodney Orr Byp., Robbinsville 28771; (828) 479-3790; grahamcountytravel.com
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Haywood County TDA, 91 N. Lakeshore Dr., Suite 2, Lake Junaluska 28745; (828) 944-0761; visitncsmokies.com

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Highlands C of C, 108 Main St., Highlands 28741; (828) 526-2112; highlandschamber.org
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Jackson County TDA, 773 W. Main St., Sylva 28779; (828) 586-2155; discoverjacksonnc.com

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Madison County TDA, 56 S. Main St., Mars Hill 28754; (828) 680-9031; visitmadisoncounty.com

McDowell County TDA, 91 S. Catawba Ave., Old Fort 28762; (828) 668-4282; blueridgetraveler.com

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Mitchell County TDA, 26 Crimson Laurel Cir., Suite 1, Bakersville 28605; (828) 537-1690; discovermitchellnc.com



Morganton/Burke County TDA, 140 N. Sterling St., Morganton 28655; (828) 433-6793; discoverburkecounty.com
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NC High Country Host, 6370 US Hwy. 321 S., Blowing Rock 28605; (828) 264-1299; highcountryhost.com

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Northwest NC VC, 2121 E. US Hwy. 421, North Wilkesboro 28659; (336) 667-1259; wilkeschamber.wixsite.com/nwncvisitorcenter



Polk County T & T, 20 E. Mills St., Columbus 28722; (828) 894-2324; firstpeaknc.com
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Rutherford County TDA, 146 N. Main St., Rutherfordton 28139; (828) 287-6113; visitncsmalltowns.com

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Smoky Mountain Host, 4437 Georgia Rd., Franklin 28734; (828) 369-9606; visitmokies.org

Sugar Mountain Tourism, 251 Dick Trundy Ln., Sugar Mountain 28604; (828) 898-9292; seesugar.com

Swain County TDA, 2 Everett St., Bryson City 28713; (828) 488-7857; explorebrysoncity.com
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Valdeese Dept. of Tourism, 400 Main St., Valdese 28690; (828) 879-2126; visitvaldeese.com

Visit Banner Elk, 100 W. Main St., Banner Elk 28604; (828) 898-5398; bannerelk.com

Visit Hendersonville, 201 S. Main St., Hendersonville 28792; (828) 693-9708; visithendersonvillenc.org

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Wilkes C of C, 717 Main St., North Wilkesboro 28659; (336) 838-8662; wilkeschamber.com/experience-wilkes

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Anson County TDA, 114 W. Wade St., Wadesboro 28170; (704) 694-4181; visitanson.com

Cabarrus County CVB, 10099 Weddington Rd., Suite 102, Concord 28027; (704) 782-4340; explorecabarrus.com
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Caswell County C of C, 106 Court Square, Yanceyville 27379; (336) 694-6106; caswellchamber.org

Chapel Hill/Orange County VB, 308 W. Franklin St., Chapel Hill 27516; (919) 245-4320; visitchapelhill.org

Charlotte Visitor Info Center, 329 S. Tryon St., Charlotte 28202; (800) 231-4636; charlottesgotatlot.com

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Davie County C of C, 135 S. Salisbury St., Mocksville 27028; (336) 751-3304; daviechamber.com

Discover Durham CVB, 212 W. Main St., #101, Durham 27701; (919) 687-0288; discoverdurham.com

Distinctly Fayetteville, 245 Person St., Fayetteville 28301; (910) 483-5311; distinctlyfayettevillenc.com

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Dunn Area TA, 103 E. Cumberland St., Dunn 28335;

(910) 892-3282; dunntourism.org
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Explore Nash County, 1104 Falls Rd., Rocky Mount 27804; (252) 972-5080; explorenashcounty.com
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Franklin County TDA, 112 E. Nash St., Louisburg 27549; (919) 496-3056; franklin-chamber.org

Gaston County TD, 620 N. Main St., Belmont 28012; (704) 825-4044; gogastonnc.org

Granville County TDA, 124 Hillsboro St., Oxford 27565; (919) 693-6125; visitgranvillenc.com

Greensboro Area CVB, 2411 W. Gate City Blvd., Greensboro 27403; (336) 274-2282; visitgreensboronc.com
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Heart of North Carolina VB, 500 Albemarle Rd., Asheboro 27203; (336) 626-0364; heartofnorthcarolina.com
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Hickory Metro CVB, 1960 13th Ave. Dr. SE, Hickory 28602; (828) 322-1335; visithickorymetro.com
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I-73/I-74 VCs, 4393 I-73/74 - Northbound; 4390 I-73/74 - Southbound, Seagrove 27341; (336) 873-7213; ncdot.gov/travel/restareas

Johnston County VB, 234 Venture Dr., Smithfield 27577; (919) 989-8687; johnstoncountync.org
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Lake Norman CVB, 19900 W. Catawba Ave., Suite 102, Cornelius 28031; (704) 987-3300; visitlakenorman.org
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Lexington TA, 2 N. Main St., Lexington 27292; (336) 236-4218; visitlexingtonnc.com
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Lincolnton-Lincoln County C of C, 101 E. Main St., Lincolnton 28092; (704) 735-3096; lincolnchambernc.org

Lumberton VB, 3431 Lackey St., Lumberton 28360; (910) 739-9999; lumberton-nc.com

Monroe Tourism & VB, 100 W. Jefferson St., Monroe 28112; (704) 282-4542; monroenc.org/Departments/Tourism

Montgomery County TDA, 100 W. Main St., Troy 27371; (910) 573-3153; discoveruwharrie.com

Mooreville CVB, 129 Mecklynn Rd., Suite C, Mooreville 28117; (704) 799-2400; visitmooreville.com

Mount Airy Tourism, 200 N. Main St., Mount Airy 27030; (336) 786-6116; visitmayberry.com

Person County TDA, 705 Durham Rd., Roxboro 27573; (336) 597-2689; itsbetterinperson.com

Piedmont Triad VC, 700 NC Hwy. 700, Pelham 27311; (336) 388-9830; piedmonttriadvisitorcenter.org
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Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen Area CVB, 155 W. New York Ave., Suite 300, Southern Pines 28387; (910) 692-3330; homeofgolf.com

Pittsboro-Siler City CVB, 964 East St., Suite 204, Pittsboro 27312; (919) 542-8296; visitpittsboro.com

Raeford-Hoke C of C, 101 N. Main St., Raeford 28376; (910) 875-5929

Richmond County TDA, 101 W. Broad Ave., Rockingham 28379; (910) 895-9057; visitrichmondcounty.com

Rockingham County TDA, 425 NC Hwy. 65, Reidsville 27320; (336) 342-8138; visitroconc.com
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Rowan County CVB, 204 E. Innes St., Suite 280, Salisbury 28144; (704) 638-3100; visitrowancountync.com

Scotland County TDA, 507 W. Covington St., Laurinburg 28352; (910) 277-3149; visitnc-soul.com

Stanly County CVB, 1000 N. First St., Suite 11, Albemarle 28001; (704) 986-2583; visitstanly.com

 **Statesville CVB**, 328 E. Broad St., Statesville 28677; (704) 878-3480; visit.statesvillenc.com
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Stokes County Tourism, 1014 Main St., Danbury 27016; (336) 593-2496; hangingrock.com
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Tarboro Edgecombe C of C, 500 Main St., Tarboro 27886; (252) 823-7241; discoverededgecombe.com

Thomasville VC, 44 W. Main St., Thomasville 27360; (336) 472-4422; visitthomasvillenc.com

Union County C of C, 903 Skyway Dr., Monroe 28110; (704) 289-4567; unioncountycoc.com

 **Vance County TDA**, 946-T W. Andrews Ave., Henderson 27536; (252) 438-2222; kerrlake-nc.com

Visit Cleveland County, 200 S. Lafayette St., Shelby 28150; (704) 484-4804; landofrhythm.com
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Visit High Point, 1634 N. Main St., Suite 102, High Point 27262; (336) 884-5255; visithighpoint.com
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Visit Raleigh, 500 Fayetteville St., Raleigh, 27601; (919) 834-5900; visitraleigh.com

Visit Sanford, 229 Carthage St., Sanford 27330; (919) 718-4659; visitsanfordnc.com
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Visit the Yadkin Valley, 257 Standard St., Elkin 28621; (336) 526-1111; yadkinvalley.org/visitor-information
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Warren County EDC, 602 W. Ridgeway St., Warrenton 27589; (252) 257-3115; warrencounty.com

Wilson County TDA, 228 Goldsboro St. S., Wilson 27893; (252) 243-8440; wilson-nc.com

Yadkin County TDA, 205 S. Jackson St., Yadkinville 27055; (336) 679-2200; visityadkin.com

COAST

Ahoskie C of C, 310 S. Catherine Creek Rd., Ahoskie 27910; (252) 332-2042; ahoskiechamber.net

Camden County TDA, 2356 US Hwy. 17 N., South Mills 27976; (252) 771-8333; visitcamdencountync.com

Columbus C of C & T, 601 S. Madison St., Whiteville 28472; (910) 642-3171; thecolumbuschamber.com

Crystal Coast TDA, 3409 Arendell St., Morehead City 28557; (252) 726-8148; crystalcoastnc.org
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Currituck County Dept. of Tourism, 106 Caratoke Hwy., Moyock 27958; (252) 435-2947; visitcurrituck.com
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Duplin County TDA, 195 Fairgrounds Dr., Kenansville 28349; (910) 296-2181; uncorkduplin.com

Elizabethtown-White Lake C of C, 207 E. Broad St., Suite B, Elizabethtown 28337; (910) 862-4368; elizabethtownwhitelake.com
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Gates County, 200 Court St., Gatesville 27938; gatescounty.govoffice2.com

Greene County C of C, PO Box 364, Snow Hill 28580; (252) 714-2821 (text)

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Hyde County EDC, 30 Oyster Creek Rd., Swan Quarter 27885; (252) 926-4178; hydecountync.gov/departments/planning_and_economic_development.php

Jones County EDC, 134 Industrial Park Dr., Trenton 28585; (252) 448-1315; jonescountync.gov

Kinston-Lenoir County TDA, 101 E. New Bern Rd., Kinston 28504; (252) 522-0004; visitkinston.com
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Martin County TDA, 132 W. Main St., Williamston 27892; (252) 792-6605; visitmartincounty.com

Murfreesboro C of C, 116 E. Main St., Murfreesboro 27855; (252) 398-4886; murfreesborochamber.com

NC Coast Host, coasthost-nc.com

 **NC's Brunswick Islands - Brunswick County TDA, PO Box 1186, Shallotte 28459; (910) 755-5517; ncbrunswick.com**
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Northampton County TDA, 127 W. Jefferson St., Jackson 27845; (252) 534-0331; visitnorthamptonnc.com

Onslow County Tourism, 1099 Gum Branch Rd., Jacksonville 28540; (910) 347-3141; onlyinonslow.com

Outer Banks VB, 1 Visitors Center Cir., Manteo 27954; (252) 473-2138; outerbanks.org
Advertising Partner, p. 5

Pamlico County C of C, 10642 NC Hwy. 55 E., Grantsboro 28529; (252) 745-3008; pamlicochamber.com

Pender County Tourism, 106 E. Wilmington St., Burgaw 28425; (910) 259-1278; visitpender.com
Advertising Partner, p. 109

Perquimans County TDA, 104 Dobbs St., Hertford 27944; (252) 404-2910; visitperquimans.com

Sampson County CVB, 414 Warsaw Rd., Clinton 28328; (910) 592-2557; visitsampsonnc.com

Tyrrell County VC, 203 S. Ludington Dr., Columbia 27925; (252) 796-0723

Visit Edenton, 101 W. Water St., Edenton 27932; (252) 482-0300; visitedenton.com
Advertising Partner, p. 47

Visit Elizabeth City, 400 S. Water St., Suite 100, Elizabeth City, 27909; (252) 335-5330; visitelizabethcity.com
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Visit Goldsboro, 308 N. William St., Goldsboro 27530; (919) 734-7922; visitgoldsboronc.com

Visit New Bern, 316 S. Front St., New Bern 28563; (252) 637-9400; visitnewbern.com
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Visit Ocracoke, 161 Irvin Garrish Hwy., Ocracoke 27960; (252) 928-6711; visitocracokenc.com

Washington County TT&A, 111 W. Water St., Plymouth 27962; (252) 793-6627; gowildnc.com

Washington TDA, 102 W. Stewart Pkwy., Washington 27889; (252) 975-9653; visitwashingtonnc.com

Wilmington and Beaches CVB, 1 Estell Lee Place, Suite 201, Wilmington 28401; (910) 341-4030; wilmingtonandbeaches.com
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Windsor-Bertie County C of C, 121 E. Granville St., Windsor 27983; (252) 794-4277; windsorbertieschamber.com

State Information Sources

STATE AGENCIES

NC Agritourism Office,
1020 MSC, Raleigh 27601; (919) 707-3120;
ncagr.gov/markets/agritourism

NC Dept. of Natural & Cultural Resources, 4601 MSC, Raleigh 27601;
(919) 814-6800; ncdcr.gov

NC Dept. of Transportation - Ferry Division, 2300 Ferry Rd., Havelock 28532;
(252) 463-7020; ncdot.gov/divisions/ferry

NC State Parks, 1615 MSC, Raleigh 27601;
(919) 707-9300; ncparks.gov

NC Wildlife Resources Commission,
1701 MSC, Raleigh 27699-1700;
(919) 707-0040; ncwildlife.org

Visit North Carolina, 150 Fayetteville St.,
Ste. 1200, Raleigh 27601; (800) 847-4862;
VisitNC.com

WELCOME CENTERS

I-26 East NC Welcome Center,
I-26 at Mile Marker 68, Columbus 28722;
(828) 894-2120

I-26 West NC Welcome Center,
I-26 at Mile Marker 6, Mars Hill 28754;
(828) 689-4257

I-40 West NC Welcome Center,
I-40 at Mile Marker 10, Waynesville 28786;
(828) 627-6206

I-77 North NC Welcome Center,
158 I-77, Mount Airy 27030; (336) 320-2181

I-77 South NC Welcome Center,
93001 I-77, Charlotte 28273;
(704) 588-2660

I-85 North NC Welcome Center,
231 I-85, Norlina 27563; (252) 456-3236

I-85 South NC Welcome Center,
I-85 at Mile Marker 2, Kings Mountain
28086; (704) 937-7861

I-95 North NC Welcome Center,
I-95 at Mile Marker 181, Pleasant Hill 27866;
(252) 537-3365

I-95 South NC Welcome Center,
I-95 at Mile Marker 5, Rowland 28383;
(910) 422-8314

NC Welcome Centers & Tourism Call Center, 4324 MSC, Raleigh
27699-4324; (800) 847-4862;
<https://www.VisitNC.com/welcome-centers>

GENERAL INFORMATION

Blue Ridge Parkway Association,
PO Box 2136, Asheville 28802;
(828) 670-1924; blueridgeparkway.org

NC Ski Areas Association,
PO Box 369, Banner Elk 28604;
goskinc.com



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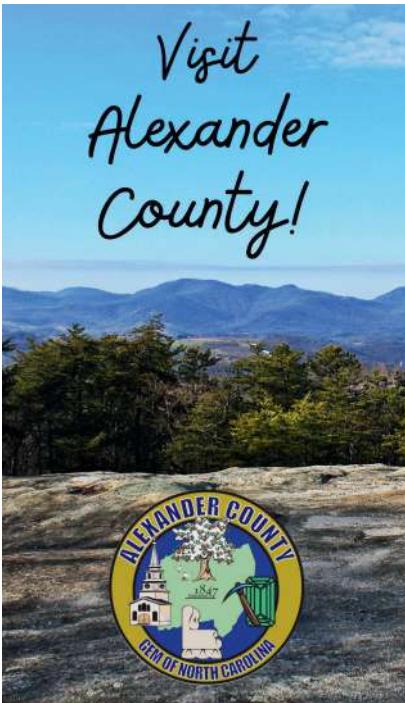
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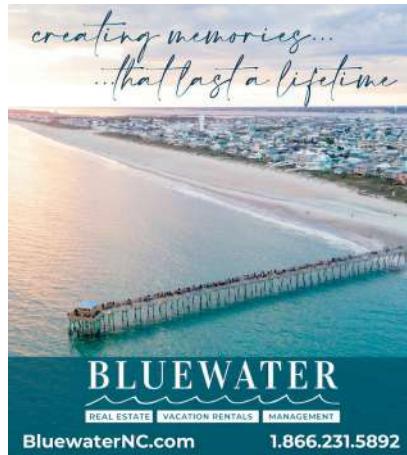
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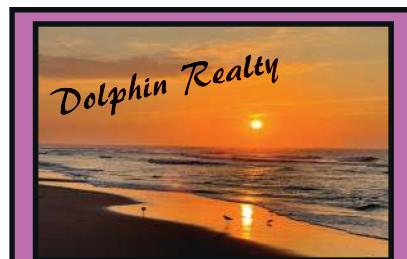
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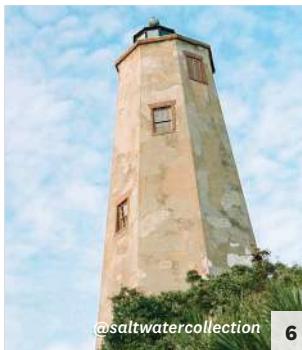
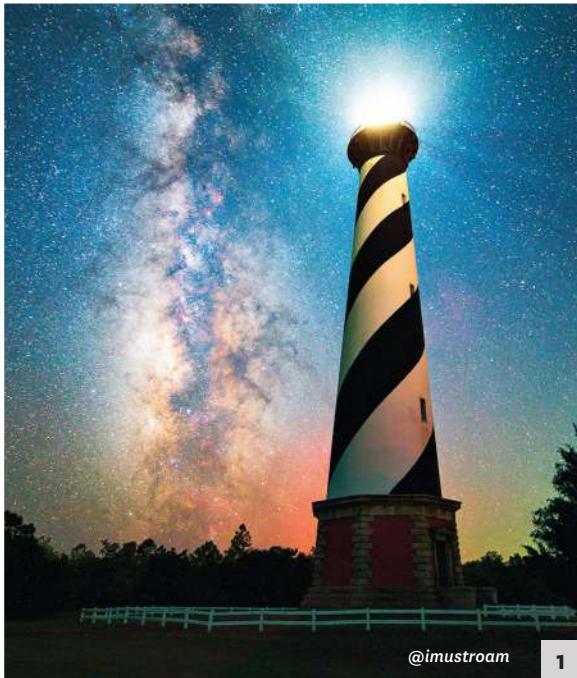
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KEEPING WATCH

Follow the light to North Carolina's seven coastal beacons.



1 Cape Hatteras Lighthouse

📍 Buxton

Standing 198 feet tall, it's the tallest brick lighthouse in the United States. Restoration efforts are underway to bring the striped landmark back to its original 1870s glory.

2 Currituck Beach Lighthouse

📍 Corolla

About 1 million red bricks compose the climbable 1875 tower featuring exhibits about the more than two dozen families who lived here as keepers.

3 Ocracoke Lighthouse

📍 Ocracoke Island

Built in 1823, the state's oldest continuously operating lighthouse glows with an 8,000-candlepower beam visible up to 14 miles offshore.

4 Cape Lookout Lighthouse

📍 Harkers Island

The southernmost Outer Banks beacon is accessible only by ferry. Current renovations prevent climbs, but the exterior views are pretty fantastic.

5 Oak Island Lighthouse

📍 Oak Island

With reservations, visitors who are 9 and older can climb all 131 stairs on ship's ladders (no spiral staircases here) to the lantern gallery.

6 Old Baldy Lighthouse

📍 Bald Head Island

Climb 108 steps to the top of North Carolina's oldest-standing lighthouse for panoramas framed by the Cape Fear River and the Atlantic Ocean.

7 Bodie Island Lighthouse

📍 Nags Head

On Cape Hatteras National Seashore, the striped 1872 beacon still helps ships navigate. Take a 219-step climb to the top from late April through early fall.

Return to you.

It's time to return to your senses—to that little kid inside you whose first glimpse of the ocean sent you running to the surf with unbridled glee.

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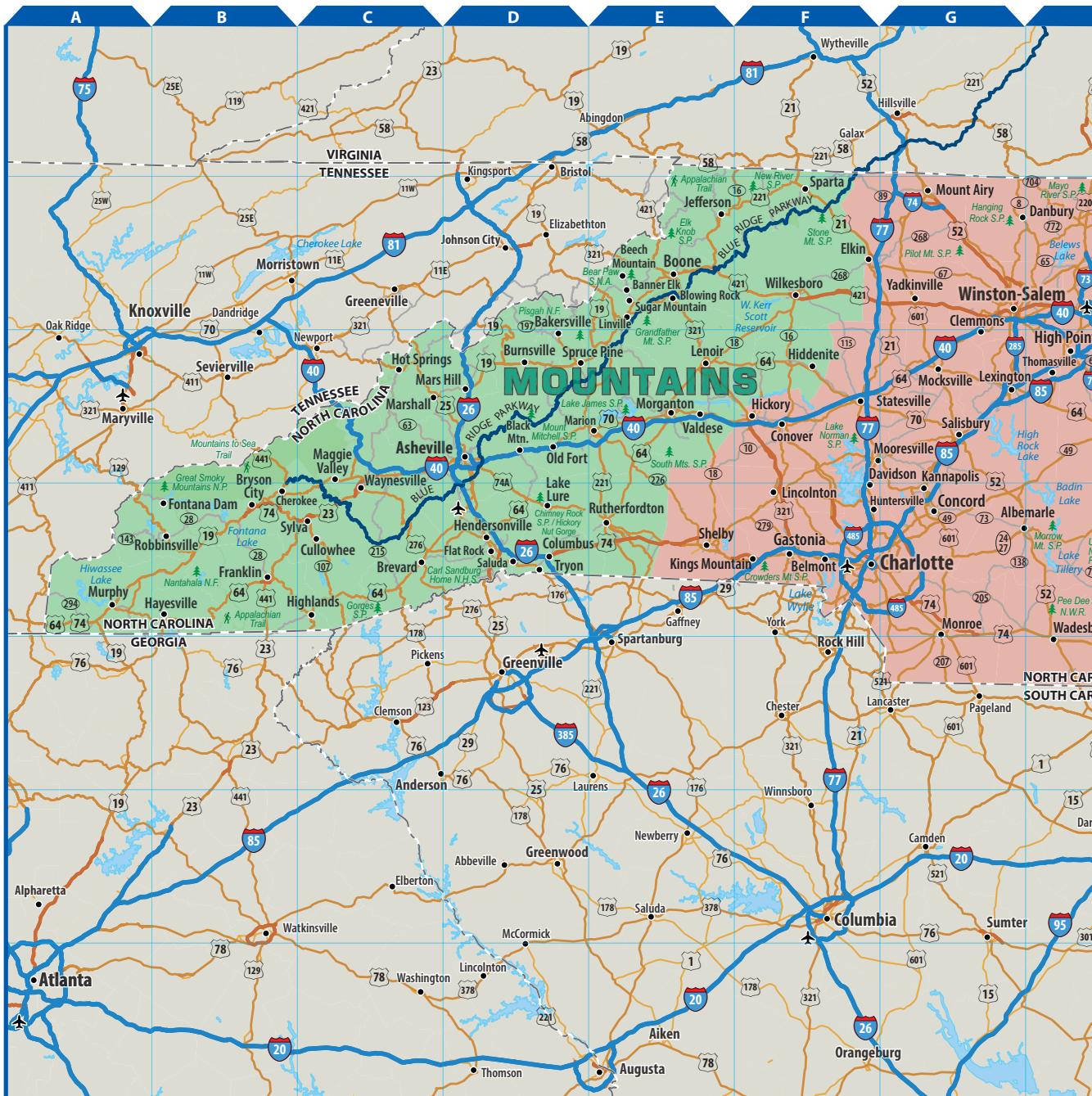


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Abbreviations used on map

- S.P.State Park
- S.N.A.State Natural Area
- N.P.National Park
- N.F.National Forest
- N.H.S. . National Historic Site
- N.W.R.National Wildlife Refuge

Towns and Cities

- Ahoskie M2
- Albemarle..... H4
- Asheboro H3
- Asheville C3
- Atlantic Beach..... M5
- Avon O4
- Bakersville D2

- Bald Head Island K7
- Banner Elk E2
- Bath M4
- Beaufort M5
- Beech Mountain..... E2
- Belmont F4
- Beulaville K5
- Black Mountain D3
- Blowing Rock E2
- Boone E2
- Brevard C4
- Bryson City..... B4
- Burgaw K5
- Burlington I2
- Burnsville..... D3
- Calabash J6
- Camden..... N2
- Carrboro..... I3

- Cary J3
- Carolina Beach..... K6
- Chapel Hill..... I3
- Charlotte..... F4
- Cherokee B4
- Clayton J3
- Clemmons..... G2
- Clinton J4
- Columbia N3
- Columbus..... D4
- Concord G4
- Conover..... F3
- Corolla O2
- Creedmoor..... J2
- Culowhee..... C4
- Currituck N2
- Danbury..... H2
- Davidson..... F3

- Duck O2
- Dunn J4
- Durham J3
- Eden H2
- Edenton M2
- Elizabeth City..... N2
- Elizabethtown..... J5
- Elkin F2
- Emerald Isle M5
- Fayetteville..... I4
- Flat Rock D4
- Fontana Dam B4
- Franklin B4
- Gastonia F4
- Gatesville..... M2
- Goldsboro K4
- Greensboro..... H2
- Greenville L3

- Halifax..... L2
- Hatteras..... O4
- Hayesville A4
- Henderson K2
- Hendersonville D4
- Hertford M2
- Hickory F3
- Hiddenite F3
- High Point H3
- Highlands B4
- Hillsborough I2
- Holden Beach K7
- Hot Springs C3
- Huntersville F4
- Jackson L2
- Jacksonville..... L5
- Jefferson E2
- Kannapolis G3

- Kill Devil L2
- Kings Mo L2
- Kinston L2
- Kitty Haw L2
- Kure Bea L2
- Lake Lure L2
- Laurinbu L2
- Lenoir..... L2
- Lexington L2
- Lillington L2
- Lincolnto L2
- Linville L2
- Louisbur L2
- Lumberto L2
- Maggie V L2
- Manteo..... L2
- Marion L2
- Mars Hill L2

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WHAT HAPPENED HERE CHANGED THE WORLD



The U.S. Civil Rights Trail encompasses churches, courthouses, schools, museums and landmarks mainly in the Southern states where activists fought against segregation in the 1950s and 1960s. The trail offers firsthand historical experiences for families, travelers and educators.



U.S. Civil Rights Trail Podcast

Stories and interviews from pivotal moments in the movement are brought to life in this podcast.

Official U.S. Civil Rights Trail Book

Released in 2021, this book showcases the history of the movement for a new audience.

14 Partner States

Events at sites in each state influenced the Civil Rights Movement.



Augmented Reality Experience

The march in Selma, the Greensboro Four and the Little Rock Nine were brought to life with this award-winning AR experience.

U.S. Civil Rights Trail Website

Fully redesigned in 2023, the website allows visitors to experience the trail and history in a whole new way.

Award-Winning Campaigns

The Ordinary Objects, Extraordinary Stories campaign, which features the familiar in a new light, won a Bronze ADDY.

Visit [CivilRightsTrail.com](https://www.CivilRightsTrail.com)

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