A scenic view of a lake with a wooden dock, people, and cypress trees with Spanish moss. The scene is set during the day with a clear blue sky and a calm body of water. In the foreground, a man is sitting on a chair on the left, and a group of people, including children and adults, are on the dock. In the background, there are several covered pavilions on the water.

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A group of four people (two women and two men) are walking together in a modern, landscaped area. They are dressed in casual, summery attire. The woman on the left is wearing a yellow floral dress and a blue bag. The woman next to her is wearing a red floral dress. The man behind her is wearing a grey t-shirt and khaki shorts. The man on the right is wearing a blue polo shirt and khaki shorts. They are walking on a paved path with some gravel and plants. In the background, there is a white building with large windows and red architectural accents. The sky is blue with some clouds.

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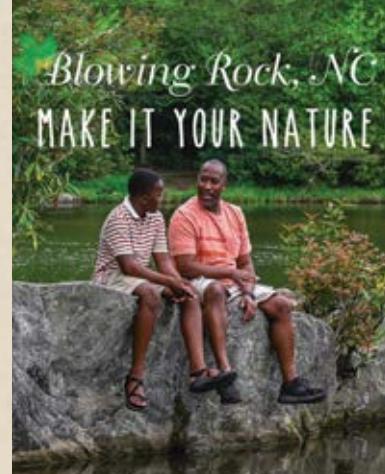

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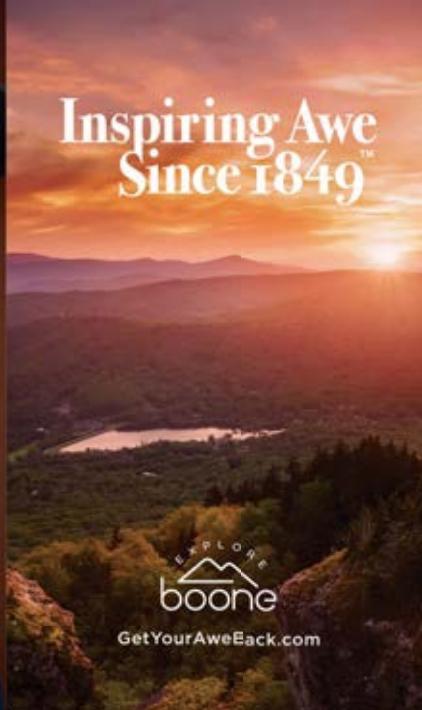
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downtown flow

Take a stroll through the heart of Salisbury and other destination-worthy towns beginning on page 46.

FOR REAL, VISIT NC

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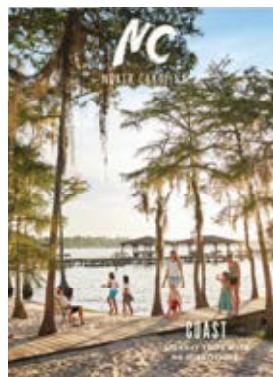
Capture beauty amid soul-warming scenery during the coolest season.



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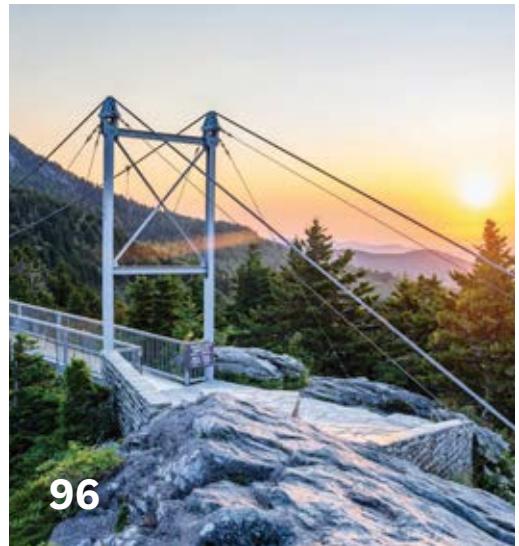
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How will the Outer Banks move you?

On August 15, 1973, Nags Head resident Carolista Fletcher Baum stood in front of a bulldozer to prevent development from encroaching on Jockey's Ridge. Her passion for this special place led to a grassroots group being formed, money being raised, petition drives, numerous trips to the state capital and the eventual creation of Jockey's Ridge State Park.

The Outer Banks
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13 CHARLOTTE

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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 can also book room reservations at no charge for visitors staying overnight in the Tar Heel 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-served 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 2023 North Carolina Travel Guide*. Here you will find authentic experiences in all 100 of our counties. This guide is packed with ideas and inspiration for everyone, from first-time visitors to lifelong residents. I proudly count myself among the latter, a traveler who's always excited to discover something new in North Carolina.

With its mix of timeless treasures and innovative spirit, North Carolina appeals to travelers who want to reconnect with tradition or inject excitement into their journey. Throughout 2023, the state's observance of the Year of the Trail creates an opportunity to do both. The celebration starts with scenic and recreational pathways that extend from our magnificent mountains and coastal landscapes to profoundly peaceful riverside views and glimpses of birds and other wildlife. More trails lead to quilt barns, music and other cultural pursuits for an all-encompassing getaway.

As a proud North Carolinian, I'm excited that you've found your way to the 2023 Travel Guide and its inspiration to explore every corner of the state. I wish you safe travels on your next trip and the memory-making journeys that follow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roy Cooper". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Governor Roy Cooper

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Los Angeles Crusade display at the Billy Graham Library

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TOURISM SPECIALIST
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EDITORIAL CONTENT DIRECTOR Kylee Krizmanic

ART DIRECTOR Erin Keeffer

EXECUTIVE EDITOR Prasana William

PROJECT EDITOR Jess Hoffert

SENIOR STAFF WRITER Gary Thompson

DEPUTY ART DIRECTORS Nick Crow, John Meek

COPY EDITOR Diane Penningroth

CONTRIBUTORS Andrea Caughey, Ginger Crichton,
 Jason Frye, Jodi Helmer, Leah Hughes,
 Deanne O'Connor, Angela Ufheil,
 Becky Ullom Naugle

PUBLISHER Mark Josephson

NATIONAL TRAVEL DIRECTOR Katy Hildman

ADVERTISING SALES Stacey Rosseter
(678) 571-7445

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For additional travel information, contact:

Visit North Carolina
 150 Fayetteville St., Suite 1200
 Raleigh, NC 27601
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Subterranean springs feed the pristine waters of White Lake near Elizabethtown. With no tides or currents, plus cushy white sand, its shore has been dubbed the nation's safest beach.



INSPIRED JOURNEYS

Showcasing a global mix of cultural traditions, North Carolina rocks the music, arts and crafts scenes. Jam at general stores, pop into small-town galleries and score primo local pottery.



Where the Mountains Begin mural, Wilkesboro

BLUE RIDGE MUSIC TRAILS

Tradition-steeped stops blend classic tunes with inspiring scenery across 29 western North Carolina counties.

Find your mountain groove among toe-tapping towns that pulse to the bluegrass sounds of fiddles and banjos. Get in tune with the rhythms of the region at the **Blue Ridge Music Hall of Fame**, housed in the restored 1902 Wilkes County Courthouse in Wilkesboro. Then pay homage to one legendary local inductee, master flat-picker Doc Watson, commemorated in the late Wes Gregory's colorful *Where the Mountains Begin* mural on Main Street. If you've got the rhythm in you, join locals for square dancing, clogging and more every Tuesday and Saturday night at Sparta's **Alleghany Jubilee**. Or head to

Phipps General Store in Lansing for the ultimate bluegrass fix. The small space with counter seating allows for intimate performances. In need of a trim? The 1949 **Drexel Barber Shop** not only cuts hair but hosts free pickin' sessions every Saturday in Drexel. For dinner, chow down at **Sims Country BBQ**, serving up hearty buffets and rich bluegrass in Granite Falls. After filling up on all that musical goodness, you may just be inspired to make your own joyful noise. Scour Marion's legendary **Killough's Music and Loan** for a variety of strings and accessories.

firsts that last FILM SERIES

Scan the QR code to watch Taylor Sharp's short film about a friendly wager on a North Carolina fishing trip that led to a successful career in bluegrass for a mandolin player.



STORY: ANDREA NORDSTROM CAUGHEY. PHOTOGRAPH: CHIP HENDERSON/WILKESBORO TDA

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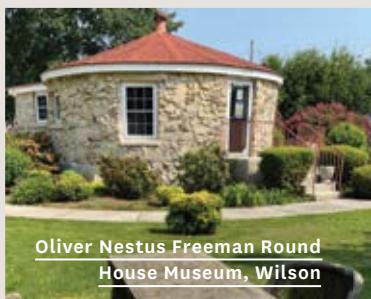
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Oliver Nestus Freeman Round House Museum, Wilson

Historic Stops

Rich stories abound along the African American Music Trails.

Visit Princeville, the first U.S. town incorporated by formerly enslaved people following the Civil War. The innovative steel **Princeville Mobile History Museum** was designed by architectural students at N.C. State University in Raleigh. The **Oliver Nestus Freeman Round House Museum** in Wilson celebrates the region's vast scope of African American culture, from early freedom fighters to contemporary beacons of social justice.

AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC TRAILS

Step into the soul of Eastern North Carolina and its centuries-old Black music scene. Attend big-ticket concerts or more intimate gigs featuring blues, gospel, jazz, hip-hop and R&B.

Swing through the Inner Coastal Plain for favorites like April's **Billy Taylor Jazz Festival**, showcasing free jam sessions and rocking concerts in Greenville. Or join the fun at the **Greenville Grooves Music**



Kinston Music Park, Kinston

Festival, serving up contemporary music, Motown and R&B classics with a side of street food in June. For year-round entertainment, visit the **Paramount Theatre** in downtown Goldsboro. Seasonal outdoor shows take place at **Kinston Music Park**, located in the town where the Parker brothers launched funk music. Maceo and Melvin Parker, along with a few other Kinston locals, toured with James Brown. The **Juneteenth Community Empowerment Festival** at Rocky Mount's historic train station features a block party bursting with tunes. It's one of many Juneteenth events hosted in cities and towns across North Carolina.



Greenville Grooves Music Festival, Greenville

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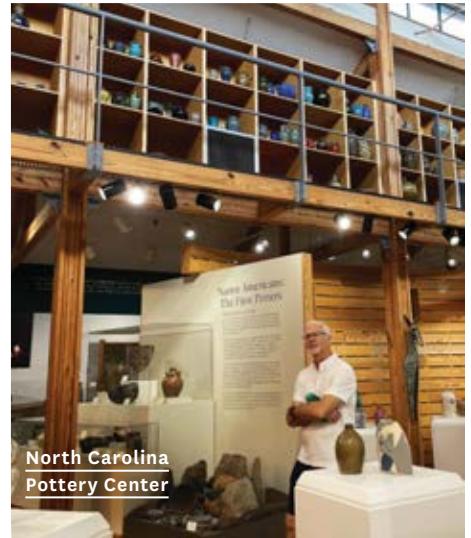
FORMED IN SEAGROVE

Get crafty in Seagrove, a village brimming with 80-plus working potters. A scenic 30-mile drive passes more than 40 pottery shops and studios dotting the Piedmont countryside.

North Carolina Pottery Center offers a perfect orientation to track down world-class ceramic pieces, such as animal figures by **Crystal King Pottery** and stoneware by **Blue Hen Pottery**. You'll also find a stunning showcase of artisans at **Seagrove Pottery**. Down the road from Seagrove's sole stoplight, watch David and Deborah Garner throw pots at **Turn and Burn Pottery** using the ancient technique of horse-hair firing. For another unique twist, potters William and Pamela Kennedy at Seagrove's **Uwharrie Crystalline Pottery** manipulate natural crystals as glazes heat and harden. To catch Seagrove's two pottery festivals, time your visit for the weekend before Thanksgiving. A broad offering of locally made works tempts art collectors. Cap off an eventful day by sipping a Cabernet Sauvignon atop one of the tractor-seat barstools at **The General Wine and Brew**. While you're there, peer into the bar-top display of buttons representing all of Seagrove's potters and every United States president. They were all curated by shop owners Alexa Modderno and husband David Fernandez (also Seagrove's mayor).



Blue Hen Pottery



North Carolina Pottery Center



Seagrove Stoneware Pottery



The General Wine and Brew

firsts that last FILM SERIES

Scan the QR code to watch Josh Sliffe's short film about Seagrove Pottery and learn how this art form provides an inspiring creative outlet for the visually impaired.





W
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Look Forward *Travel Back*

Over 260 years in the making, Winston-Salem has crafted the perfect recipe for an unforgettable getaway full of timeless adventures. Whether experiencing hands on history at Old Salem Museums & Gardens, strolling through heirloom gardens and historic homes- turned-art museums along the Reynolda Mile, treating your taste buds to eclectic dishes at our 100+ downtown eateries, creating your own Craft Draft Crawl at one of our 10 downtown craft breweries, or rejuvenating yourself at our charming boutique hotels, you'll look forward to traveling back to hip, historic Winston-Salem.

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info@visitwinstonsalem.com



GALLERIES GALORE

No matter where you look, you'll find bursts of artistic inspiration across North Carolina. Here's a creative sampler.

Artist Market on Main

● **MOCKSVILLE**

Shop works by more than 100 regional artists at this marketplace in the historic Princess Theater.

Hiddenite Arts and Heritage Center

● **HIDDENITE**

The 1912 Lucas Mansion exhibits vintage toys, antique dolls, rotating displays of local artwork, and collections of gems and minerals.

Stecoah Valley Cultural Arts Center

● **ROBBINSVILLE**

In June and November, take guided Drive-About Studio Tours to Western North Carolina galleries.

Pittsboro Gallery of Arts

● **PITTSBORO**

Owned and operated by artists, the airy gallery showcases beauty in many forms, such as fiber art, pastels, woodwork, mosaics and ceramics.

STARworks

● **STAR**

Observe mind-blowing glassblowing and participate in hands-on classes, demonstrations and workshops.

Yanceyville Museum of Art

● **YANCEYVILLE**

See the works of the late Maud Gatewood, a well-known activist and artistic force in the region.

Cedar Creek Gallery

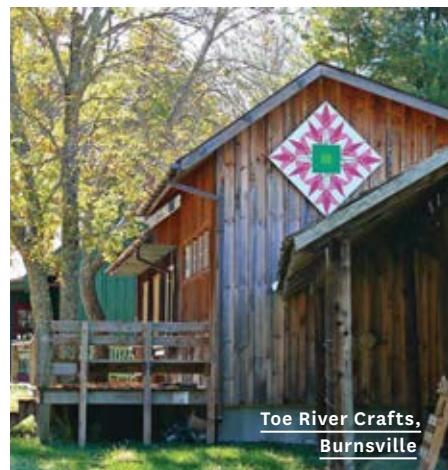
● **CREEDMOOR**

Admire nature-inspired copper sculptures by Haw Creek Forge and other contemporary works by 250-plus craftspeople.

PATCHWORK PATHWAYS

Quilt trails in the western portion of the state connect the fabric of small towns and their artisans. Take a self-guided tour past colorful wooden quilt squares on barns, homes and businesses.

More than 300 quilt squares dot the mountain landscape. You can spot many of them on the **Burnsville Quilt Block Trails**, showcasing approximately 150 squares on nine self-guided routes. Block off a few hours to view 50 quilts along the **Mount Mitchell Scenic Quilt Trail**, beginning at **Mount Mitchell State Park** (home to the highest point on the East Coast). For quick hits, see seven neighboring blocks within five minutes on the **Bakersville/Roan Mountain Trail**. A detour to nearby Roan Mountain offers three more square sightings along the way, plus stunning picnic spots. **Graham County Quilt Trails** stretch from Stecoah to Robbinsville and Yellow Creek to the Snowbird Mountains, featuring mesmerizing patterns such as Spinning Star, Ocean Wave, Inverted Log Cabin and many others.



Toe River Crafts, Burnsville

YOUR STORY STARTS HERE



WHEN YOU LEARN

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why



DIET IS A **FOUR-LETTER**
WORD



ExploreNashCounty.com

Roses are red, Violets are blue. Poems are hard...BEER. You won't find many poets in Rocky Mount. But you will find a whole lot of people who know about beer and food. This Tar River town hosts the state's largest craft beer incubator and is home to award-winning burgers and barbecue. So, come hungry and thirsty. In between meals you can work off some calories playing a little disc golf, kayaking the Tar River, or try your hand at giant connect four. Read on to get your two-day tour packed with barley, hops and a little adventure.

WAYS TO WELLNESS

Lost your zen? Reconnect with nature on a forest walk, say *aah* at a spa, or take a whole weekend to recharge.

INTO THE WOODS

Mindful treks among trees can be good for body, mind and soul.

When you're with Mark Ellison, a walk in the woods is much more than a pleasant stroll. It's a chance to practice the Japanese notion of *shinrin-yoku* (forest bathing) — a concept he helped bring to the United States and now practices at **Pinnacle Park** in Sylva. Ellison guides 2.5-hour forest bathing experiences along the state's first Certified Forest Therapy Trail. The 0.5-mile treks within the park are all about relaxing and focusing on nature with your senses. "Our lives are so busy now," Ellison says. "Having the opportunity to slow down and disconnect from things that cause stress while connecting with the natural environment is key."

Other peaceful paths include Klondike Lake Trail at **Grassy Creek Vineyard & Winery** in State Road,

and Island Creek Trail, an interpretive trail in the **Croatan National Forest** near Pollocksville.

Studies show forest bathing can improve your mood and lower stress levels. "Nature gives us many ways to heal," Ellison says. "We just have to slow down and be open to receiving it."

Outdoor NC Principle



BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHERS AND SHARE THE OUTDOORS

People have a range of skill levels and different ideas about how to enjoy the outdoors. Respect others so that North Carolina's natural spaces will be welcoming and relaxing for all.



Pinnacle Park, Sylva

CHECK IN AND BLISS OUT

European-Style Luxury
with Premium Amenities in the
Heart of Downtown Highlands, NC
with heated pools, multiple farm-fed
restaurants and live music venues

OLD
EDWARDS
INN *and Spa*

RELAIS &
CHATEAUX

Art of Living
Retreat Center,
Boone



SPA DAY

Hit “reset” with a massage, float session or scented wrap.

The Spa at The Omni Grove Park Inn

• ASHEVILLE

This sublime subterranean retreat has a lap pool with 6,500 fiber-optic stars and underwater music.

Ama Spa

• SURF CITY

The Tropical Rejuvenation Massage gives off island vibes: Fiji organic oils and creams, aromatherapy, and warmed basalt stones.

Shanti Wellness

• FAYETTEVILLE

Achieve a deep calm with float therapy, drifting in a completely dark, soundproof saltwater tank.

The Spa at Grandover

• GREENSBORO

Earth-tone decor and art set a serene scene. The Warm Ginger Vanilla Soothing Wrap comes with access to the pools, fitness center, steam room and hot tub.

RESTFUL OVERNIGHTS

Take your health journey to the next level with a multiday stay.

Adawehi Wellness Village

• COLUMBUS

Bed-and-breakfast rooms give guests a sample of life in this health-focused community. Try yoga, Tai Chi or one of the family-friendly offerings; schedule a fulfilling session with a holistic health practitioner; or hike by White Oak Creek in the Stewardship Forest.

Art of Living Retreat Center

• BOONE

The Blue Ridge Mountains form a peaceful backdrop for getaways focused on yoga, nutrition, creativity, meditation and the Ayurvedic lifestyle (holistic healing rooted in India). Choose from themes such as The Happiness Retreat and The Silent Meditation Retreat.

Prama Wellness Center

• MARSHALL

Expect vegan meals, juice cleansing, meditation, yoga and spa treatments during multiday retreats at this five-bedroom spot. You might be sharing your bright, cozy room with new friends — get to know them better in the community dining area.

Waterside Resort

• ROPER

Two- and three-bedroom units give you plenty of space to enjoy all the amenities: views over Albemarle Sound, a private balcony and full kitchen. Create your own wellness itinerary relaxing in the pool, by the firepit and along the waterfront.

HAYWOOD YOU LIKE TO FIND YOUR BLISS?

Breathe air that inspires adventure. Whether it's reaching mountaintop heights on the Blue Ridge Parkway, browsing our local artisan shops, or embarking on a journey to serenity in nature's most charming spaces, Haywood County has activities for everyone. And with a wide variety of accommodations to suit all visitors, tastes, and budgets, you and your family can enjoy mountains of fun, right here in the NC Smokies.

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Plan your NC Smoky Mountain Adventure at [VisitNCSmokies.com](https://www.visitncsmokies.com).



LARGER THAN LIFE

The legacies of these famous (and infamous) icons endure. Learn their stories of fame, fortune and tragedy at museums and events across North Carolina.



A Blackbeard reenactor in Beaufort

BLACKBEARD

Few names elicit fear with only a mention, but Blackbeard certainly did for coastal North Carolinians in the early 18th century. The nefarious pirate, aka Edward Teach, commandeered nearly 60 ships along the Atlantic and Caribbean shores. He temporarily settled in Bath before setting up operations on Ocracoke Island. Today's visitors stroll the serene grounds of the 14-acre **Historic Bath State Historic Site**, meander along **Lawson's Walk** and picnic at **Bonner Point** overlooking Bath Creek, finding it difficult to imagine this peaceful small town as home to one of the state's most notorious criminals.

• SHIPWRECK FINDS

Although Blackbeard was beheaded in 1718 in Ocracoke Inlet, he continues to make headlines. His ship, *Queen Anne's Revenge*, was discovered in 1996 off the coast near Beaufort. See hundreds of artifacts recovered from the wreck — cannons, belt buckles, a bell — at the **North Carolina Maritime Museum** in Beaufort.



shiver me timbers!

Pirate ships return to Ocracoke Island in late October for **Blackbeard's Pirate Jamboree**. Watch the **Battle of Ocracoke** unfold within Silver Lake Harbor, complete with pirate regalia, sword fights and cannon fire.

STORY: LEAH HUGHES. PHOTOGRAPHS: (BLACKBEARD) RYAN DONNELL, (MUSEUM) JARED KAY

SEASCAPE. CITYSCAPE. ISLAND ESCAPE.

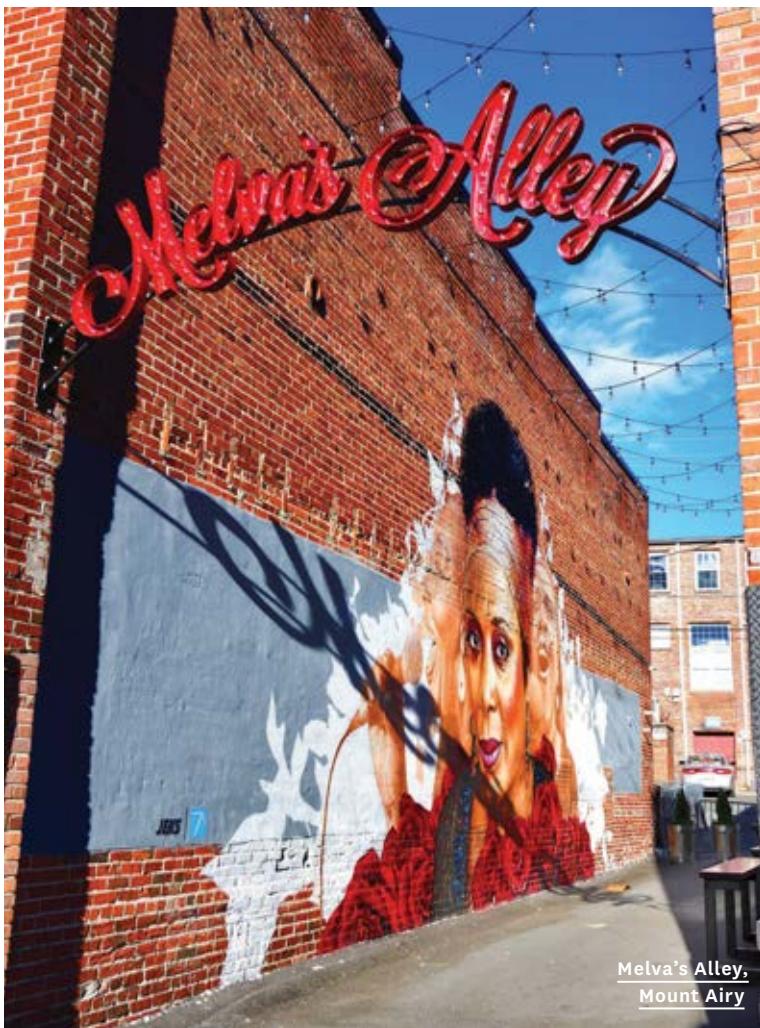
Feeling a little landlocked? Wilmington and Beaches can help you hit refresh with miles of scenic beaches and adventures minutes away from historic Wilmington. Enjoy tours and cruises, historic sites, live music events and fresh-to-table cuisine. Experience the best of the Carolina Coast – all in one place.



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Wilmington.C. River District & Island Beaches

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Melva's Alley,
Mount Airy

*back in the
spotlight*

Smithfield's Ava Gardner Festival in October honors the actress with concerts, tours and film screenings.



Ava Gardner
Museum, Smithfield

SHOWSTOPPERS

A soulful singer, banjo picker and movie star brought their talents to stages and screens around the world.

MELVA HOUSTON

Known worldwide as the birthplace of Andy Griffith, Mount Airy provided inspiration for Mayberry in Griffith's beloved sitcom. It was also the home of internationally known blues, jazz and gospel singer Melva Houston, who lived and performed here for four decades until her death in 2020. The newly formed **Market Street Arts & Entertainment District** features Greensboro street artist Jeks' mural of Houston along a side street known as **Melva's Alley**. On weekends from May to October, Market Street closes to traffic and welcomes pedestrians to enjoy breweries, shops, arts vendors, food trucks and — in the spirit of Houston — lots of live music.

EARL SCRUGGS

Music legend Earl Scruggs was born in the farming community of Flint Hill in 1924. He started playing his dad's banjo at 4 years old and eventually developed his own three-finger picking style, a definitive element of the bluegrass genre. The **Earl Scruggs Center** in Shelby traces his remarkable trail from textile mill worker to the Grand Ole Opry and even the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

AVA GARDNER

One of Hollywood's A-list leading ladies in the 1940s and 1950s, Ava Gardner was born December 24, 1922, on a farm near small-town Smithfield. Gardner won accolades for films such as *Show Boat*, *The Night of the Iguana* and *Mogambo*, which earned her an Academy Award nomination. The **Ava Gardner Museum** in Smithfield chronicles her story with costumes, jewelry, movie posters and family artifacts. The museum will celebrate Gardner's centennial throughout 2023.

*pickin'
paradise*

In September, hear the music Scruggs helped create at the **Earl Scruggs Music Festival** in Mill Spring.

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ASHEVILLE, NC

**Penelope Barker House,
Edenton**



HISTORY MAKERS

These North Carolinians took a stand for liberty, faith and diversity. See how their lives made an impact.

PENELOPE BARKER

The first known political action by women in Colonial America took place in Edenton in 1774. Led by Penelope Barker, the women of North Carolina's first Colonial capital boycotted British goods, such as tea and cloth, at what became the Edenton Tea Party. Hear the full story at the **Penelope Barker House Welcome Center**, set on the banks of the Albemarle Sound. (Don't miss the waterfront view of Edenton Bay from the double porch.) Identify other historic sites — including a cast bronze teapot commemorating the landmark event — aboard a narrated trolley tour.

BILLY GRAHAM

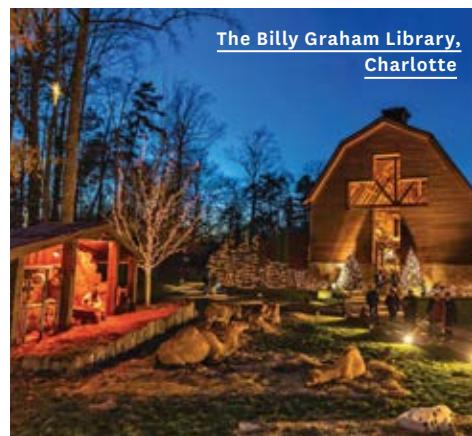
Follow the journey of one of the best-known Christian evangelists at

The Billy Graham Library in Charlotte.

Using videos, photos and memorabilia collected throughout Graham's 99 years, the barn-shape library shares the story of how a North Carolina farm boy came to preach the gospel around the world and pray with every United States president from Truman to Obama.

HARVEY GANTT

The first African American mayor elected in Charlotte (serving from 1983 to 1987) continues to be a changemaker. During his architectural career, Harvey Gantt planned buildings that foster community, so it's fitting that Charlotte's **Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture** bears his name. Fine arts, dance, song, cinema and more highlight groundbreaking Black artists.



**The Billy Graham Library,
Charlotte**



ACCESSIBLE *fun for all*

Visually impaired visitors experience the **Harvey B. Gantt Center** through iBeacons, which use smartphones and Bluetooth technology to audibly describe a person's surroundings.

TRY *New Bern*



Does a city exist where you can trace the steps of North Carolina's first capital, recharge at the Birthplace of Pepsi-Cola, all while exploring modern boutiques, restaurants, and waterfront attractions? You bet it does. Whether you're looking for a fast-paced adventure, or some relaxing time off, point your compass east to New Bern.



NEW BERN

www.VisitNewBern.com

THROWBACK STAYS

Nostalgia meets modern at renovated retro lodgings. Here's where to unwind at captured-in-time overnights.



The Sunset Motel

• BREVARD

Flash back to the 1950s at this renovated 20-unit motor court, where a color palette of blue, pink, green and orange rocks midcentury vibes. Speaking of rocking, old vinyl records dot the walls of the lobby.

Blockade Runner Beach Resort

• WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH

Sea creature motifs on pillows nod to the playful spirit of this 1964 resort, where families kayak, sail and fish, shaping fresh memories that have formed here for generations. Couples soak up beachy bliss with poolside piña coladas.

The Longleaf Hotel

• RALEIGH

In 2019, this property was a rundown chain, stripped of charm from its 1960s motor lodge roots. But a down-to-the-studs renovation uncovered retro surprises, such as the original Starshine breeze-blocks hidden under stucco. Now the 56-room hotel blends midcentury and modern design, with nods to the native longleaf pine. North Carolina artisans and products shine throughout: tie-dyed pillows from Rise & Ramble, headboards from Bull City Designs and snacks from Videri Chocolate Factory. Kick back with a cocktail, glass of wine or local beer in the wood-paneled Longleaf Lounge.



DREAM BIG in SMALL TOWN NC

Scalloped millwork, a wraparound porch and a front parlor with an original fireplace welcome you to **The Brickhouse Inn Bed & Breakfast**, an 1898 Victorian in Columbia. Choose from five guest rooms, each with period antiques and hardwood floors.

Learn more at VisitNC.com/dreambig

The Colonial Inn

• HILLSBOROUGH

Timber from the 1700s, two-story columns and a balcony that runs the length of the building speak to this lodging's early roots. Local artwork, rotated every six months, hangs on the walls of 28 luxe guest rooms of the local landmark.

Skyline Lodge

• HIGHLANDS

Channel your inner Frank Lloyd Wright at this reimagined 1930s motor lodge. Arthur Kelsey, a student of Wright's, designed the original 40-room property; a 2021 renovation added multilevel outdoor dining and firepits. Spoil Rover with chef-made dog treats.

WHERE NAPA
VALLEY LIFESTYLE
MEETS BLUE RIDGE
MOUNTAINS MAGIC



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ARRIVE TO a lakeside inn surrounded by lush fields, gardens and forests, just a five-minute drive from downtown Highlands.

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RELAX IN sumptuous style with spacious guestrooms, cozy fireplaces and terraces that look out into the forest.

DELIGHT IN the embrace of home-grown hospitality, handcrafted cocktails and live music on weekend evenings.

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COMPETITIVE EDGE

Get up to speed on North Carolina's long love affair with auto racing, and root for the home teams at other pro sports venues.



Charlotte Motor Speedway, Concord

It's not just NASCAR stars who get to drive at **Charlotte Motor Speedway** in Concord. The track's Fast Pass Tour lets you steer along the apron of the 1.5-mile superspeedway in your own vehicle and get a photo in the Winner's Circle. **Bowman Gray Stadium** in downtown Winston-Salem has echoed with the roar of engines and crowds since 1949. Started by NASCAR's founders, the 0.25-mile track features Saturday night races, a favorite seasonal tradition for families.

Friday night means racing at Gastonia's **Carolina Speedway**, dubbed The Carolina's Action Track by adrenaline junkies. Opened in 1961, the 0.4-mile clay oval is one of the South's oldest dirt tracks, hosting the Shrine 100 and other events. Junior Johnson, Ned Jarrett, Ralph Earnhardt and other legends raced at **Hickory Motor Speedway** in Newton, which opened in 1951 and showcases NASCAR's late-model series, monster trucks and other races. The 0.363-mile asphalt oval is a trip back to the sport's rowdy roots.

racing legends

AT THE NORTH CAROLINA AUTO RACING HALL OF FAME IN MOORESVILLE, GET A REAR-VIEW PERSPECTIVE ON AUTO RACING, FROM THE ERA OF MOONSHINERS TO STATE-OF-THE-ART NASCAR TECH. SEE MORE THAN 40 CARS ASSOCIATED WITH SOME OF THE SPORT'S GREATEST DRIVERS AND MOMENTS.

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Sahlen's Stadium at WakeMed Soccer Park, Cary

On the Pitch

Pro soccer has a strong foothold in the Tar Heel State. Charlotte FC debuted as a Major League Soccer team in 2022, playing their home matches at **Bank of America Stadium** in Uptown Charlotte. The NC Courage and North Carolina FC both get their kicks in **Sahlen's Stadium at WakeMed Soccer Park** in Cary. The Courage won the 2019 National Women's Soccer League Championship.

On the Mound

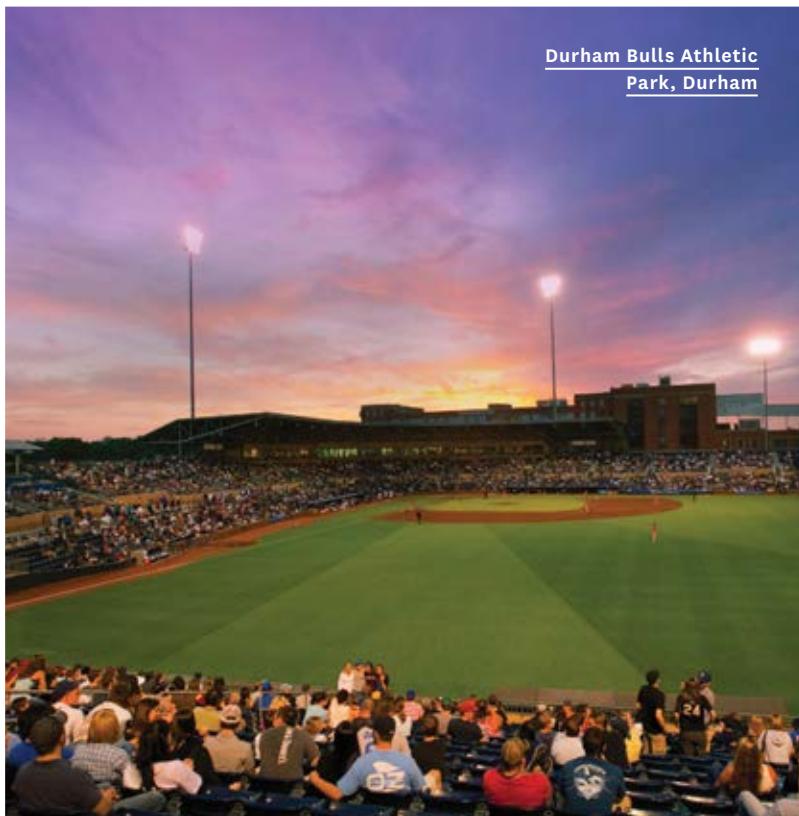
Look for the famous "snorting bull" sign at **Durham Bulls Athletic Park**, home of Minor League Baseball's Durham Bulls. Also in the minors, the Fayetteville Woodpeckers (named for a local endangered species) play at **Segra Stadium**, which opened in Fayetteville in 2019. Meet their mascot, Bunker, a red-cockaded woodpecker with a huge beak.

On the Field

Watch the NFL's Carolina Panthers tackle opponents at **Bank of America Stadium** in Charlotte. Join the "Keep Pounding" chant before the game and celebrate a victory by singing "Sweet Caroline" with the crowd.

On the Court

In pro basketball, the NBA's Charlotte Hornets nest at the **Spectrum Center** in Charlotte, where teal-clad fans turn the place into Buzz City. Hoops legend Michael Jordan, a University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill grad, is the team's majority owner. Charlotte's NBA G League affiliate, the Greensboro Swarm, generate buzz of their own at **The Fieldhouse** in Greensboro.



Durham Bulls Athletic Park, Durham



On the Ice

During hockey season, the puck drops here. The NHL's Carolina Hurricanes take the ice at **PNC Arena** in Raleigh. The Canes won the 2006 Stanley Cup and have been in the playoffs the last four seasons. The Charlotte Checkers, a top minor-league affiliate in the AHL, skate at **Bojangles Coliseum** in Charlotte. They won the 2019 Calder Cup.



ACCESSIBLE *fun for all*

At Raleigh's **PNC Arena**, guests prone to overstimulation can pick up free sensory bags (including noise-canceling headphones) plus weighted lap pads and photosensitivity glasses. There are quiet areas, too.

Ava Gardner

It's a great time to visit the Ava Gardner Museum in Smithfield as we commemorate Ava's 100th birthday throughout 2023!



avagardner.org

325 E Market St., Smithfield, NC 27577 919-934-5830



Discover your favorite outdoor spaces in Hickory.

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TREAD SOFTLY

North Carolina's state parks and trails can thrive only if we all treat them with care.

Stay on the trail, try less-traveled trails, and pack out trash to help us reduce impacts on natural resources.



www.ncparks.gov

Photos: Elik Knob State Park

escape to the lake

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AVERAGE DRIVING DISTANCE

Charlotte: 20 min
Raleigh: 2.5 hrs

Asheville: 2 hrs
Wilmington: 3.5 hrs



VISIT
LAKE NORMAN



@VisitLakeNorman



DRINK IN THE VIEW

Rolling hills, flowing waterways and vibrant downtowns star at these wineries, breweries and other spots to kick back with a beverage.

WINE TIME

Nothing says vacation like popping a cork with good company among peaceful surroundings.

Cultivated History

The lineage at **LAUREL GRAY VINEYARDS** reaches all the way back to the first European families in the U.S. Located in Hamptonville, the winery sits near land granted to the Myers family by Queen Charlotte in 1773. Vintners maintain sustainable agricultural practices to ensure high-quality grapes for Merlot, Pinot Gris and other varietals. Have a glass on the veranda and toast the storied property's current chapter.

Successful Experiment

LU MIL VINEYARD began as a research project to develop farm equipment for the viticulture industry. Then it somewhat-unintentionally evolved into a sprawling winery in Elizabethtown. Raise a glass to happy accidents! The winery specializes in muscadine grapes that thrive in Eastern North Carolina's sandy soil. Participate in a tasting, ride a golf cart, fish in the pond or rent a cabin for the night.



Ancient Hills

Sit on the deck at **STONY MOUNTAIN VINEYARDS** and peer across the Uwharrie Mountains, some of the oldest in North America. The on-site hiking trails meander through hardwood and pine forests outside Albemarle. Post-hike beverages include red and white Old World varietals, such as Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay, plus sweeter muscadine, blackberry, apple and peach wines. Beer drinkers find local crafts on tap.



PAW OF approval

Stony Mountain Vineyards welcomes four-legged family members. The large deck and walking trails guarantee a tail-wagging good time for all.

STORY: LEAH HUGHES, PHOTOGRAPHS: (STONY MOUNTAIN) STARRBOARD AND PORT; (ONES VON DERHELE) VISITNC; (CHILDRESS) JARED RAY

Moment of Calm

Soak in the tranquility as you enjoy chilled muscadine wine on the porch swing at **GRAPEFULL SISTERS VINEYARD** in Tabor City. Complement your picnic with their tailor-made Picnic wine, and time your visit for a spectacular sunset over the vineyard.

Welcome Home

Visiting **DUPLIN WINERY** in tiny Rose Hill feels like stepping into the Fussell family's living room, with wholesome hospitality, hearty food and sweet wine. Set amid vast farm fields, the winery serves North Carolina's native grape in reds, whites and blushes.

Handpicked Harvest

Lose yourself among rows of muscadine grapes at **TWISTED VINES VINEYARD** in Clinton. Starting mid-August and continuing into October, families can pick four varieties of sweet grapes from the vines and picnic by the pond.



Sophisticated Escape

JONES VON DREHLE VINEYARDS AND WINERY in Thurmond exudes finesse. The estate winery overlooks 30 acres of Chardonnay, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot vines. A new amphitheater expands the winery's repertoire with live concerts throughout the summer and into the fall.



Fast Favorite

Former NASCAR driver Richard Childress fell for California reds when traveling to West Coast tracks. He brought those flavors home and dreamed up **CHILDRESS VINEYARDS** in Lexington. Sip classics such as Riesling and Cabernet Franc or toast Childress' local roots with a glass of muscadine wine.



DREAM BIG

— in —

SMALL TOWN NC

A wine toast welcomes overnight guests to **Bellamy Manor & Gardens** in Enfield. Lounge on the back porch of this Southern estate beneath towering loblolly pines and magnolias.

Learn more at VisitNC.com/dreambig

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DiscoverJacksonNC.com



Seven Sounds Brewing Co., Elizabeth City



Jeter Mountain Farm, Hendersonville

More Great Sips

JETER MOUNTAIN FARM

• HENDERSONVILLE

Open July through October, Jeter Mountain Farm marries a U-pick apple orchard with an on-site taproom serving the farm's original-recipe hard cider. Don't miss the warm apple cider doughnuts.

MRS. LACY'S MAGNOLIA HOUSE

• SANFORD

Start with a glass of sweet tea, strawberry lemonade or a mimosa on the porch. Finish with strawberry shortcake and a warm greeting from owner Faye Schulz.

THE BEAN

• ORIENTAL

Tucked into a cove of the Neuse River, The Bean looks onto the harbor of the Sailing Capital of North Carolina. In this fishing town, mornings begin early with strong coffee and espresso-infused chocolate shakes.

Hoot and a Half

A mural depicting a lifelike owl with fluffy brown feathers greets guests to **OWL'S ROOST BREWING** in Franklinton. Outside, the owl embraces a funkier vibe, emblazoned on the wall in myriad bright colors. Toast your favorite painting with a pale ale or hefeweizen.

SUDS 'N' SIGHTS

Imbibe in style at these taprooms that make the most of their surroundings, whether downtown or down a back road.

Denver of the East

Order a Carolina Girl pale ale or Denver's First pilsner at **ROYAL BLISS BREWING CO.** in Denver. An upstairs deck overlooks a beer garden with picnic tables and a turf lawn. The brewery serves gluten-removed beers and gluten-free seltzers and ciders.

The Sweetest Sound

More than 20 taps pour IPAs, lagers, sours and porters at Elizabeth City's **SEVEN SOUNDS BREWING CO.**, but its calling card is the Pasquotank River view. Waterfront sights impress from the rooftop deck and ground-level beer garden where live music and other special events occur regularly.

Conversation's Brewing

A Warrenton gathering place before it even opened, **MILL HILL BREWERY AND TAPROOM** once housed a grocery and a popular hot dog and burger spot. Now it's the neighborhood watering hole with a wraparound porch for sipping and storytelling.

Downtown Buzz

BLACK CREEK BREWERY in Roxboro focuses on good times with friends. Browse 18 styles of craft beer and delight in a rotating selection of Friday-night food trucks in the heart of town. Stick around for board games with your crew or simply snag a seat by the fireplace for a cozy evening.

NATIVE ROOTS

Grow your understanding of the first people to live here. By carefully managing the rich natural resources of the area, these tribal nations set a sustainable example for others.



Museum of the
Cherokee Indian,
Cherokee

SACRED SPACES

Tap into the wisdom of Native peoples by visiting historic sites that shine a light on early community life while keeping stories alive for future generations.

North Carolina's first residents grew societies as varied as the geography of the state. In Laurinburg, **Indian Museum of the Carolinas** displays three common village types: Carolina bays, fishing villages and Indian mounds. A well-preserved dugout canoe, crafted around 1730 from the trunk of a huge longleaf pine, gives visitors a new appreciation for early modes of transportation. To explore the rich origins of the Hatteras and other Native American tribes, head to **Frisco Native American Museum and Natural History Center** on Hatteras Island. Walk one of the museum's nature trails through maritime forest.

Town Creek Indian Mound in Mount Gilead showcases the culture of the Mississippian people, who inhabited this area from 1000 to 1450. See the reconstructed mound and learn about the farming traditions and village life of this sophisticated society. In Cherokee, visit **Museum of the Cherokee Indian** for a 13,000-year trip through history, plus an introduction to the Cherokee language and a collection of 6,000 photos documenting the legacy of current and former residents. **Cherokee County Historical Museum** in Murphy invites visitors into the life of the Cherokee people before and during the era of forced removal known as the Trail of Tears.



PAW OF approval

Canine companions and their humans are welcome to explore the **Cherokee Homestead Exhibit** in Hayesville. See summer and winter houses in a reconstructed village at the free, open-air museum.



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MOUNTAIN-CHIC LODGING
Downtown Highlands, North Carolina

ENRICHING CELEBRATIONS

Join Native heritage festivals where all are welcome to get a taste of cultural traditions.



Lumbee Homecoming Festival and Powwow

● **PEMBROKE | JUNE-JULY**

The Lumbee Tribe holds the honor of being the largest tribe east of the Mississippi River. About half of the state's 60,000 tribal members gather for pageants, a parade, an outdoor market, gospel music performances and fireworks.

American Indian Heritage Celebration

● **RALEIGH | NOVEMBER**

In tandem with Native American Heritage Month, the North Carolina Museum of History hosts presentations and performances that highlight the contributions of the state's eight recognized tribes.

Onslow Veterans Powwow

● **JACKSONVILLE | NOVEMBER**

After serving two-plus decades in the Navy, a retired officer founded this gathering to honor Native American veterans. Held near the largest Marine and Army bases on the East Coast, the powwow highlights at least seven distinct Native American dance styles.

ARTS, CRAFTS AND MORE

These Native-owned businesses feature modern and ancient expressions of beauty in American Indian cultures.

Eagle Feather Arts

● **PEMBROKE**

Whether you're looking for a meaningful keepsake or a pair of moccasins, stop here to admire and purchase the work of Navajo, Lumbee, Acoma, Zuni and Cherokee artists. A member of the Lumbee Tribe, Janice Locklear has proudly highlighted the artistic inspiration of numerous tribal nations since 1999.

Qualla Arts and Crafts Mutual

● **CHEROKEE**

Browse more than 3,000 handmade items at one of the nation's oldest Native American artisan cooperatives. Choose from baskets, beadwork, carvings, jewelry, paintings, pottery, textiles and weaponry in the shadow of Great Smoky Mountains National Park.





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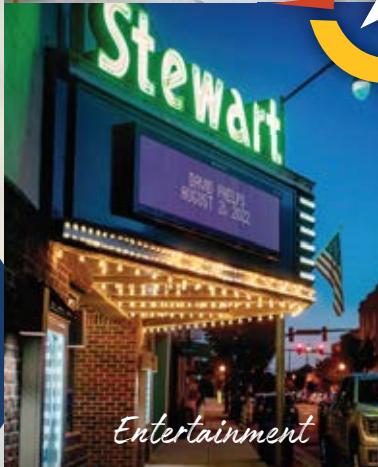
DunnTourism.org



Shopping



History



Entertainment



Dining



LOVE AT FIRST HIKE

Burnsville, NC — the perfect family-friendly destination to make lasting memories in the Blue Ridge Mountains. With more than 100 miles of public trails, there's an adventure for everyone. Stay in a mountain cabin, explore the outdoors, stroll our thriving Main Street, or simply relax. [f](https://www.facebook.com/exploreburnsville) [i](https://www.instagram.com/exploreburnsville) [y](https://www.youtube.com/exploreburnsville) | exploreburnsville.com/nc

DESTINATION: DOWNTOWN

They may be on the smaller side, but these towns deliver when it comes to formative history, cute shops and a world tour of culinary delights — all within walking distance.

Tryon Palace



WHAT'S OLD IS NEW BERN

Past and present collide in North Carolina's second-oldest town, a coastal community with a bustling core that makes it seem a whole lot bigger.

Historical details pervade the state's first capital city: ornate gables characteristic of Victorian manors, looming columns guarding Greek Revival homes, and all those... bears? Locals painted more than 50 sculptures of New Bern's mascot to celebrate the city's 300th anniversary in 2010. Some wink at the area's early days: Colonial Bearman's garb mimics that of a New Bern colonist. You'll find him near **Tryon Palace**, a restored version of the building that housed meetings of the post-Revolutionary War General Assembly. The tour through time continues at the **North Carolina History Center**, revealing how the coastal environment shaped early life. Grab lunch made with local ingredients at **Cypress Hall Kitchen + Bar** before a caffeinated blast to the past — **The Birthplace of Pepsi-Cola** serves the drink where Caleb Bradham concocted it in 1898. Finish your day with peel-and-eat shrimp at **Persimmons Waterfront Restaurant**, home to a spacious, string light-adorned patio along the Neuse River.

ACCESSIBLE
fun for all



A wheelchair-accessible river walk frames **Union Point Park** at the confluence of the Trent and Neuse rivers. It's a peaceful break from downtown (and a lively one during free concerts at the gazebo).





Visit Mother Nature's Playground





ElizabethtownWhiteLake.com



TASTY DAYS ON THE BREW & 'CUE TRAIL
Another hidden gem

Your adventure begins on the Pitt County Brew & 'Cue Trail. Discover the birthplace of Eastern North Carolina BBQ with mandatory "pit stops" at B's, Skylight Inn, Sam Jones BBQ and all the places that put whole hog 'cue on the map. NC's Emerald City is filled with countless hidden gems.

Find yours at VisitGreenvilleNC.com




A NOVEL PLACE



CHAPTER 38

Choices. Choices. Choices.

85 miles of sun-drenched beaches. 12 unique communities. One magical destination with infinite possibilities. This coastal vacation is proof you can't have too much of a good thing.



Discover seasonal offers on vacation rentals & more at CrystalCoast.NC.org

SALISBURY STAKEOUTS

A bevy of boutiques sits along one convenient block in this Piedmont town known for crafting Cheerwine soda — with a cheery disposition to boot.

Start your spree at **Caniche**, a haven for boho jewelry, flirty blouses and luxe home decor. To support local authors, walk around the corner to **South Main Book Co.** Alongside the work of Salisbury writers, the 3,000-square-foot space stocks bestsellers and book-themed puzzles. Just a few doors down, witness the fashionable results of familial good taste at **3 Jems Boutique**, a clothing store run by three sisters. Their love for trendy outfits and elegant jumpsuits guarantees you'll find a fresh look for your next night out. Wrap up the day by getting your hands a little dirty while crafting a terrarium at **Hive**, a sustainable goods and arts store mere steps away.



← **seeing green**
 Take a shopping break among the walkways and gardens of Bell Tower Green at Stanback Square, just a block from South Main Street.



Downtown Salisbury



South Main Book Co.

3 CHEERS FOR CHEERWINE

Get your fill of the fizzy favorite invented by Salisbury resident L.D. Peeler in 1917.

Fullers Market

The specialty store serves up the cherry-flavored soft drink in slushy form at their soda fountain. You can also get Cheerwine apparel here.

Stitchin' Post Gifts

To ensure you always have a taste of Cheerwine in your pocket, purchase a lip balm flavored just like the smackin'-good soda.

Hap's Grill

Wash down a juicy burger or a deliciously messy chili dog with a glass bottle of Cheerwine at this beloved, no-frills lunch counter.



ANY DAY CAN BE AN ADVENTURE IN STATESVILLE, NC

Statesville WHERE IT ALL COMES TOGETHER visitstatesville.com



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THERE'S MORE TO US.

PEAK EATS IN BLACK MOUNTAIN

Blue Ridge beauty and a spirit of innovation draw chefs and artists from around the world to this mountain town.

Your global tour begins at **The Bush Farmhouse**. Owner Mark Henegan weaves flavors from his home country of South Africa into grilled fare served on the back porch. Visit with miniature donkeys and other barnyard residents while you wait. Hop continents to **Thai Basil**, known for ground chicken curry puffs. At family-owned **Cousins Cuban Cafe**, chef Betty Sperry uses recipes passed down from her grandmothers. The yucca fries and empanadas are favorites. The proprietors of **La Guinguette** play with food from multiple cultures — tamales share the menu with French crepes. If you crave German food, book it to **Berliner Kindl** for sausages imported from Deutschland. Too stuffed to move? Rocking chairs painted by local artists are stationed around town.



BIG FINDS IN LITTLETON

About 500 residents call it home, and the people-to-cool-spot ratio makes Littleton well worth a stop.

Chef Ashleigh Fleming's farm-to-table approach at the recently opened **Blue Jay Bistro** drives home the local love: Strawberry Salsa Fresca atop grouper incorporates berries picked in the area. Refuel here after perusing **Frank's Fine Arts**, a gallery featuring talent

from across the state. Other jewels in Littleton's growing lineup of must-stops include **Main Street Wines**, a shop hawking vino treasures from international regions, as well as **Daphne's Coffee Shop**, where baristas sling Tahitian vanilla lattes made from freshly ground beans.

We're elevating the art of winemaking.

Reward yourself – and your palate – with a getaway to Hendersonville in the stunning Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina. Our wine region, known as the Crest of the Blue Ridge, has been named an American Viticultural Area (AVA) – a prestigious federal designation that recognizes the distinctiveness of our wines. So come get a taste of the mountains. Plan your visit today.

visithendersonvillenc.org/wineries



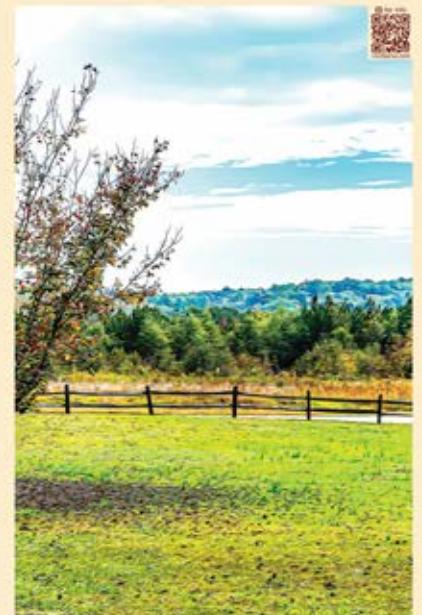
Photo Credit: Ashley Bowen



ROANOKE CANAL TRAIL



**THE MIGHTY
ROANOKE RIVER**



**MEDOC MOUNTAIN
STATE PARK**

Put these amazing trails on your list. The 7.5-mile Roanoke Canal Trail follows the former Roanoke Navigation Canal and offers views of well-preserved early 19th-century canal construction. Start your paddle on the Roanoke River State Trail in Gaston, Weldon, or Scotland Neck and experience the Amazon of NC. Medoc Mountain State Park stands on a once-mighty mountain range and offers 29 miles of trails.

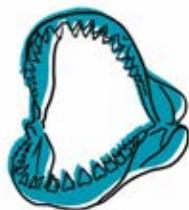
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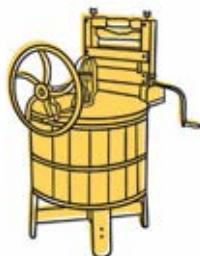
Adopt a strategy of stop, gawk and roll as you drive in pursuit of fascinating attractions you'll find nowhere else on Earth.



Aurora Fossil Museum

• AURORA

Inside you'll see a variety of marine fossil specimens discovered in the neighboring phosphate mine. Check out the shark hall for remnants of *C. megalodon*, menace of the ancient seas. Outside, sift through two large pits for fossils you can take home. Bring digging tools or purchase them on-site.



Brady C. Jefcoat Museum of Americana

• MURFREESBORO

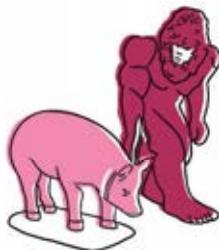
Loads of vintage washing machines stand out among 17,000-plus items amassed by Jefcoat, a local plumber-, carpenter- and contractor-turned-philanthropist. Filling three floors of the former Murfreesboro High School, the multitude of mousetraps, bedpans, phonographs, toasters and more traces the evolution of American know-how.



Perquimans County History Museum

• HERTFORD

Hertford sports fans knew their hometown pitching phenom as Jimmy Hunter, but when he joined the Kansas City (later Oakland) A's, he was given the nickname "Catfish." See mementos from Hunter's Baseball Hall of Fame career, which included a perfect game and five World Series titles.



Creekside Supply

• GERMANTON

The lawn and garden store started with just Harry, a statue of Bigfoot, but owner Amber Stewart thought he looked lonely, so she bought him a porcine companion — a bright pink pig named Wilbur on a rope leash. Join the folks who get their photos taken with the 500-plus pounds of concrete.



Museum of the Alphabet

• WAXHAW

It's not always as easy as ABC. Exhibits in 12 rooms spell out the history of the world's alphabets, including Native syllabaries. Explore the characters of music and Braille, and learn how literacy and Bible translations transform communities in remote parts of the globe.



Rankin Museum of American Heritage

• ELLERBE

Fans of WWE and *The Princess Bride* will get a kick (from a size 26 boot) out of a tribute to André René Roussimoff, aka André the Giant, the French wrestler-actor who owned a ranch in Ellerbe. Pose with a life-size picture of André, who stood above the crowds at 7 feet 4 inches tall.

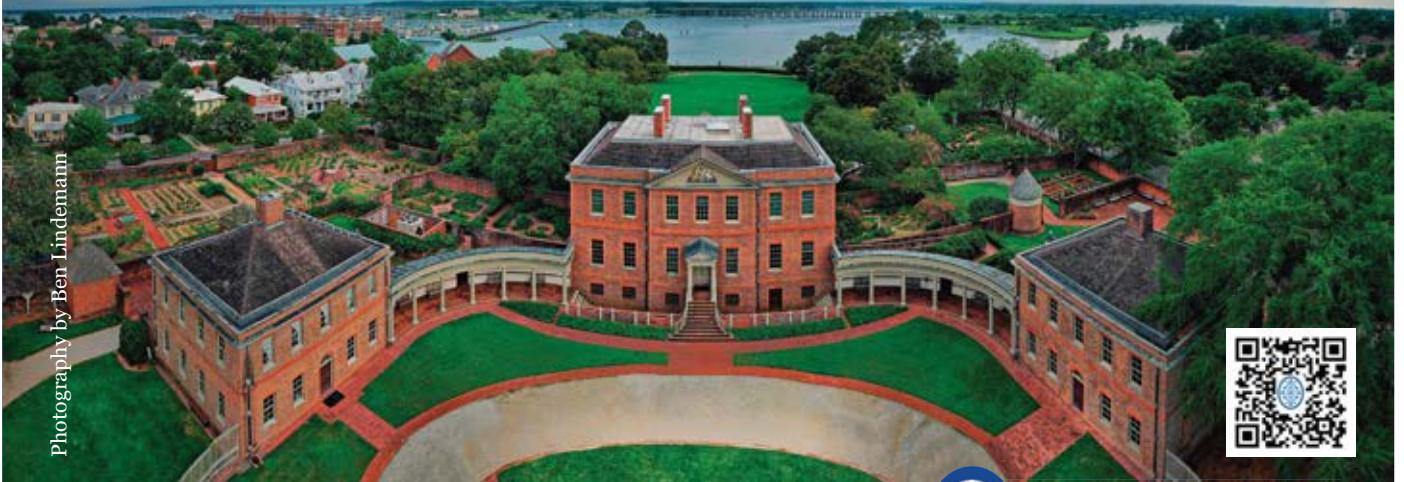
UNIQUE FROM
END TO END

It's 543 miles from Manteo on the coast to Murphy in the mountains, with many wondrous spots in between. Visit project543.com for a fun-filled lineup of must-see destinations across the state.

One History, *Many* Voices.

Palace Tours — NC History Center Exhibits — Vibrant Gardens
Living History Interpreters and Demonstrations

Photography by Ben Lindemann



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GOLF STARS

Every year, the North Carolina Golf Panel names the state's top 50 public-access courses. Tee it up at these layouts that all made the leaderboard.



PINEHURST RESORT



Six of Pinehurst Resort's nine courses are in the panel's top 50, with Pinehurst No. 2 at No. 1.

PINEHURST NO. 2, Donald Ross' masterpiece, remains one of the world's most revered golf spots. It has hosted more championships than any other American course, with the U.S. Open set to return in 2024. **PINEHURST NO. 4** embodies North Carolina Sandhills golf through exposed sand areas, large cross bunkers and native wire grass. Rolling terrain and natural ridgelines create dramatic views. **PINEHURST NO. 8** opened in 1996 to mark the resort's centennial. Designer Tom Fazio carved the layout from land that includes 10 acres of lakes and natural wetlands.

Golf legend Jack Nicklaus designed **PINEHURST NO. 9**, which opened in 1989 and became part of the resort in 2014. It's a lush course with wide fairways and undulating greens that test putting prowess. Rees Jones laid rugged **PINEHURST NO. 7** over Donald Ross' old nine-hole course for resort employees. It's the only Pinehurst course where Tiger Woods has won a title (in 1992, as a junior). Tom Fazio and his uncle George Fazio collaborated on 1979's **PINEHURST NO. 6**, a muscular course that rewards big drives and aggressive approach shots.



Rumbling
Bald on
Lake Lure



PIEDMONT

With stands of picturesque pines, ever-changing terrain and gorgeous yet treacherous putting surfaces, courses in the Piedmont roll out the green carpet for golfers.

Deep Springs Country Club ● **STONEVILLE**

Bring your A game to this course designed by Ellis Maples that opened in 1969. The greens play tricky

fast; 62 bunkers try to trap you; and water awaits on six holes, including the par-5 second, where a large pond guards the green.

Forest Oaks Country Club ● **GREENSBORO**

Host of a popular PGA Tour event for 30 years, the Ellis Maples-designed course emerged from the hardwoods in 1962 to glowing reviews. Davis Love III's design group did a restoration in 2002.

Players appreciate the ultrasmooth greens and well-groomed fairways.

Mill Creek Golf Club ● **MEBANE**

Mother Nature gave designers Rick Robbins, Brian Lussier and Gary Koch a great head start on this course that opened in 1995, providing a creek, wetlands and towering trees to frame holes. At the signature 18th, choose from two fairways to complete your round.

MOUNTAINS

Elevate your golf experience with a round or two in the North Carolina mountains. Exhilarating views and courses by top designers raise the level of play.

Rumbling Bald on Lake Lure ● **LAKE LURE**

The Apple Valley course, designed by Dan Maples (son of Ellis Maples), is one of two 18-hole layouts on the property. Surprisingly, though the course routes through the Blue Ridge foothills and has stunning mountain vistas, most holes play level or downhill.

Linville Golf Club ● **LINVILLE**

At a lofty No. 7 in the golf panel's top 50, Donald Ross' 1924 course — carved out by mule-pulled equipment — is famous for its mountain backdrop, meandering creek, devilishly small greens and par-4 third hole, considered one of golf's greatest.

Bald Head Island Club



Kilmarlic Golf Club,
Powells Point

PHOTOGRAPHS: (BALD HEAD) C2 PHOTOGRAPHY, (KILMARLIC) RYAN DONNELL

COAST

Where there's coast, there's plenty of wind and water for golfers to contend with, but also spectacular sights and sounds to take in on every hole.

Bald Head Island Club

● **BALD HEAD ISLAND**

The only cars allowed on the island are the golf kind, and they get a workout on this demanding course set among salt marshes, lagoons, maritime forest and rolling dunes. Expect breezes — and views that will blow you away.

Cutter Creek Golf Club

● **SNOW HILL**

Be bold or bail out; designer Bob Moore gives you the option with the water hazards on this course that opened in 2008. A decent drive on the 18th leaves you 200-plus yards to the green — over Lake Nina, if you dare.

Kilmarlic Golf Club

● **POWELLS POINT**

Spread over 605 acres of maritime forest and wetlands, the course by Tom Steele lures you through canopies of oak, pine and dogwood that epitomize Outer Banks beauty.

Occano

● **MERRY HILL**

Formerly Scotch Hall Preserve, the Arnold Palmer Signature Course is a beauty — several holes parallel Albemarle Sound and Salmon Creek. Winds complicate club selection, but the scenery stuns, especially on No. 17.

Quaint, southern charm *meets*
quiet, coastal getaway.



Where Traditions *Begin*
and Memories are made...



WINTER WONDERLANDS

Capture rich beauty among the bare boughs and soul-warming scenery only found during North Carolina's coolest season.

When snow settles on the snaking Blue Ridge Parkway, America's Favorite Drive turns into a wondrous treasure of a trail — hikers and snowshoers can often claim the road for themselves. It's one of many perks that come with exploring North Carolina in winter, where cool — but not too cold — air allows brisk hikes in nearly empty state parks,

quiet evenings illuminated by crackling campfires and invigorating wades into waterways. It's a time to watch migrating birds, fish along the inner banks, enjoy calm coastal beaches and maybe even spot a whale. After you've made flurries of outdoor memories, cozy up for warm conversation and tasty beverages at a brewery, winery, coffee shop or cafe.

Outdoor NC Principle

PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE

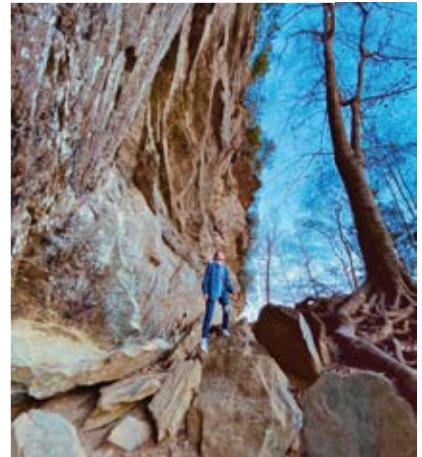
Before you travel, learn about your destination, its regulations and safety matters. Choose lesser-known areas to reduce your impact, and have a backup plan if a location is crowded.



BLACK AND WHITE Powdery boardwalks contrast with the inky waters of Dismal Swamp State Park near South Mills. 📸 @gotheadventureway



CAST A GLOW The inner coastal waters of Roanoke River National Wildlife Refuge teem with striped bass this time of year. 📸 @robert_manning1



ROCK YOUR WORLD At Lillington's Raven Rock State Park, follow rugged creekside trails to the namesake formation. 📸 @syd_the_kid_kimmie



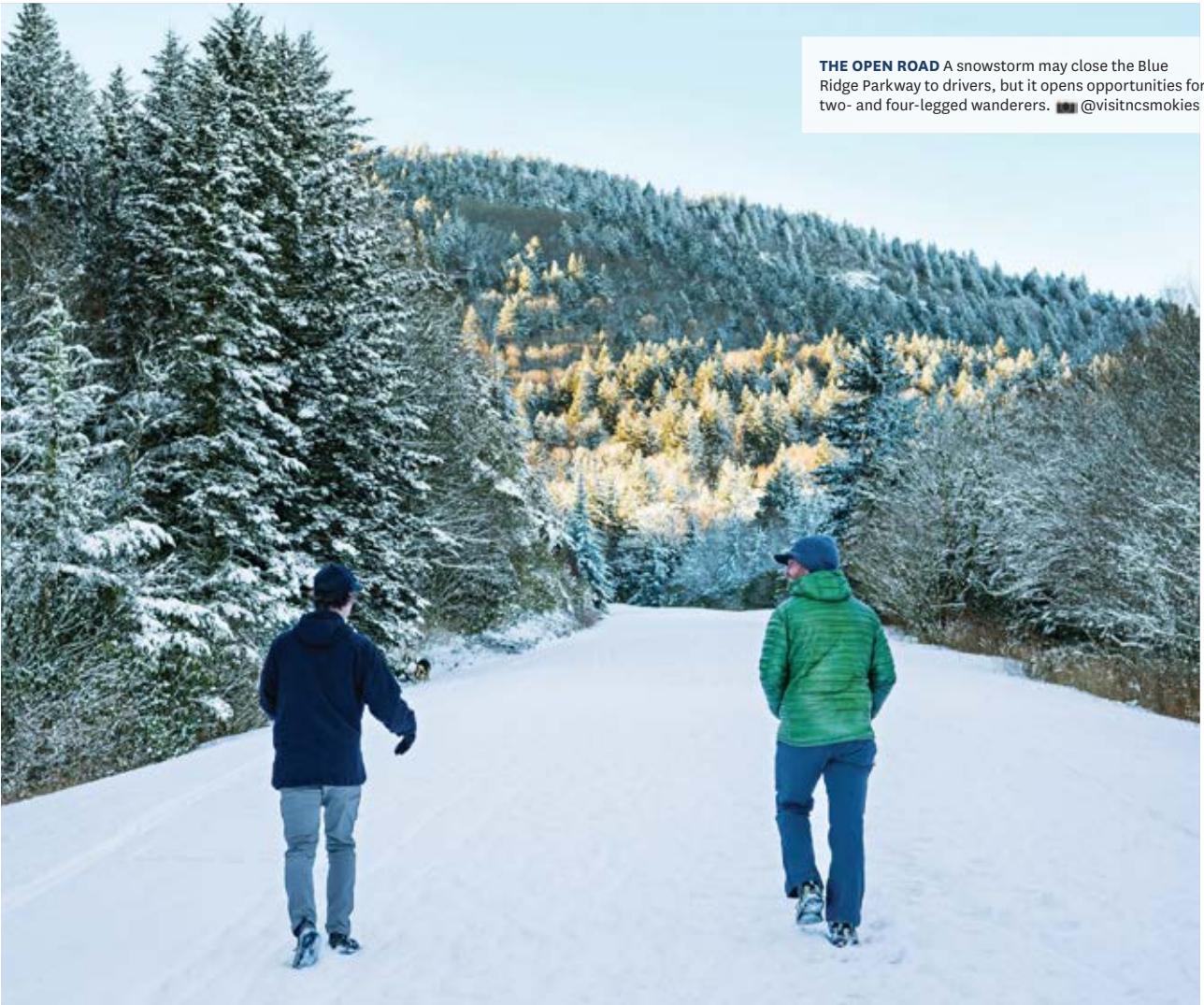
LIGHT THE NIGHT Warm up with a campfire after paddling past Merchants Millpond State Park's cypress trees in Gatesville. 📸 @mistysavestheyday



WINTER BLUES Bluebirds, blue-winged teal and blue herons love to fly around Wadesboro's Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge. 📸 @brandt_jenkins



BETTER TOGETHER The woods of Kerr Lake State Recreation Area near Henderson provide countless ways to relax with your best friend. 📸 @rafi.flafi



THE OPEN ROAD A snowstorm may close the Blue Ridge Parkway to drivers, but it opens opportunities for two- and four-legged wanderers. 📷 @visitncsmokies



BARE NECESSITIES Hidden sights are revealed through leafless pines and hardwoods along the Lumber River near Wagram. 📷 @huntfishride



PAINTED LAKE Take in a spectacular sunset at 20,000-acre Lake Gaston on North Carolina's northern border. 📷 @pamelahale7



STARRY NIGHTS Minimal light pollution around Phelps Lake allows for max spectacle at Pettigrew State Park near Creswell. 📷 @rob.runner

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YEAR OF THE TRAIL

writer **JASON FRYE**



Find beauty around every bend in North Carolina, where the journey itself is a reward. With 2023 declared **YEAR OF THE TRAIL** by the state Legislature, now is the perfect time to paddle, hike or mountain bike your way to outdoor bliss.

Tar-Pamlico River Water Trail, Washington



Scenic blueways invite you to launch your journey on the water, following flowing streams as they wind their way across North Carolina.

FEARLESS RIDE

The **Cape Fear River** snakes across Eastern North Carolina, offering hundreds of miles of paddle trails. In Wilmington, check out Shark's Tooth Island; in Fayetteville, go kayak fishing near downtown; and in Lillington, go tubing for an hour or a day.

PADDLE AND CAMP

Spend your days on the water and your nights under the stars on one of the elevated

camping platforms along the **Tar-Pamlico River Water Trail**. As the river travels south and nears the Pamlico Sound, the water turns brackish, inviting new species of flora and fauna to flourish.

SCENIC SAMPLER

The **Neuse River Paddle Trail Blueway**, one of the longest paddle trails in the state, runs 142 miles from Raleigh to New Bern, transitioning from the city and suburbs to bucolic

coastal plains and woods. Take a day paddle near Raleigh or an overnight trip to the Croatan National Forest.

BIG SPLASH

In the Great Smoky Mountains near Bryson City, the **Nantahala River** dishes up Class II-III whitewater, drawing rafters and kayakers of varying ages and abilities. New to paddling? No sweat. Nantahala Outdoor Center knows this river and its rapids,

and their guides deliver thrills while keeping you (mostly) dry.

EASY ACCESS

With 17 access points along its 163-mile course, the **Yadkin River State Trail** runs across nine counties in the Piedmont and Blue Ridge Foothills. Grab your camping gear and go for a multiday kayak odyssey through Pilot Mountain and Morrow Mountain state parks, or opt for a leisurely canoe trip from Elkin and 10 other towns.

PHOTOGRAPH: KEVIN J. MIYAZAKI/REDDUX



TIPS FOR MOUNTAIN BIKING

Whether you're a pro or a first-time rider, before pedaling through North Carolina, be sure to review these helpful guidelines to keep our trails enjoyable for generations to come.



Beech Mountain Resort,
Beech Mountain



Gear up for mile-high downhill runs, lakeside loops and rugged rides that'll give you the two-wheeled time of your life.

BEECH MOUNTAIN RESORT

Beech Mountain

In winter, the mile-high mountain tests skiers and snowboarders. The rest of the year, the ski runs belong to bikers. Ride the lift to the top and bomb it downhill, flying over berms and jumps — and sneaking a peek at those High Country vistas — as you race to the bottom.

CHESTNUT MOUNTAIN NATURE PARK

Canton

Chain Whip. Click Bait. On the Fly. These trails and others make Chestnut Mountain's Berm Park a choice spot for bikers. Beginner rides perfect for skill-building join expert-level runs that are rich with jumps, speed and adrenaline-pumping drops.

DUPONT STATE RECREATIONAL FOREST

Cedar Mountain

More than 80 miles of trails crisscross this woody paradise, so come ready to pedal. The 7-mile Ridgeline Loop is a favorite. From the Lake Imaging Access Area, make a counterclockwise loop along connecting trails to finish with the fast, flowing Ridgeline Trail.

LAKE NORMAN STATE PARK

Troutman

You'll deserve a dip in Lake Norman after you've done a few spins around the 30-plus miles of singletrack here. Once you've cooled off, try another one of the eight loops. Itusi Trail loops range from 1 to nearly 10 miles, so you can string together a day of riding with ease.

TSALI RECREATION AREA

Robbinsville

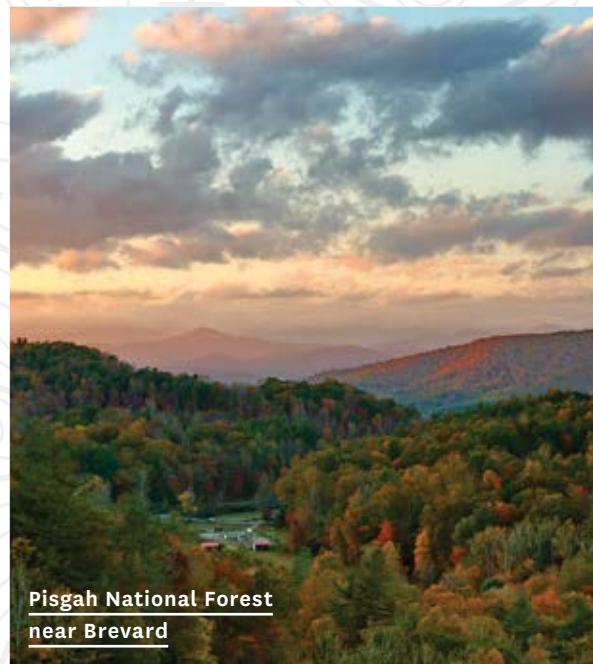
Four huge loops give you 40 exhilarating miles of trail to ride. Between runs on the singletrack and former logging roads, catch your breath and admire the spectacular scenery: Fontana Lake and Great Smoky Mountains National Park dominate the views from the trails.



Lake Norman State
Park, Troutman

*firsts
that last*
FILM SERIES

Scan the QR code
to watch Curren
Sheldon's five-
minute film about
Kaysee Armstrong
and her challenging
pursuit to win the
Queen of Pisgah
pro bike race.



Pisgah National Forest
near Brevard

*firsts
that last*
FILM SERIES

Scan the QR code to watch Bryan Rierson's five-minute film about Jeff and Debra Rezeli, who found more than just stunning scenery along their Mountains-to-Sea Trail journey.



Jockey's Ridge State Park,
Nags Head



Howell Woods,
Four Oaks



Mountains-to-Sea Trail
near Brevard

Bearwallow
Mountain,
Gerton

PHOTOGRAPHS: (JOCKEY'S RIDGE) VISITNC, (CAMP) STEVE YOCOM, (HOWELL) SAM DEAN, (BEARWALLOW) STARBOARD AND PORT





NC OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

HIKING TRAILS

WALK THIS WAY

MOUNTAINS-TO-SEA TRAIL

From atop Clingmans Dome — the highest peak in Great Smoky Mountains National Park — it's impossible to see the towering sand dunes of Jockey's Ridge State Park on the Outer Banks, but that's where this 1,175-mile mega trek ends. Trails and waterways take you from the most visited national park to the first national seashore, crossing tribal lands and small towns; hardwood and maritime forests; and more parks, preserves, greenways and footpaths than you can count as you make your way across the state. Day-hike options abound as well.

BEARWALLOW MOUNTAIN

Gerton

A pair of relatively short, moderate trails leads to the summit, showcasing stunning views of Hickory Nut Gorge, Hendersonville and the Blue Ridge Mountains. Pass through an active cow pasture, then take in the 360-degree vista from the shadow of a historic fire tower and see if you can spot Mount Mitchell among the other peaks.

HOWELL WOODS

Four Oaks

Several trails thread this quiet 2,800-acre patch of woods, where visitors hike, bike and ride horses through the forest and fields. Throughout the year, meteor shower campouts, citizen scientist workshops, interactive talks and other programs provide bonus experiences after a day on the trails.

Soaring peaks. Endless forests. Vast coastal plains. Welcome to one of the world's most diverse playgrounds for memorable treks.

HALIFAX UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TRAIL

Halifax

Enslaved people found refuge via the Underground Railroad, and this network of sites sheds light on their courage. A ¼-mile interpretive trail leading to the Roanoke River reveals secret paths and the stories of sympathetic boatmen who smuggled freedom seekers to safety.

SNAKEROOT ECOTOURS

Burnsville

Fireflies, waterfalls, hidden swimming holes and bioluminescent fungi are just a few secrets unveiled by guides during hikes in the lush Blue Ridge Mountains. Join them for a daytime hike, night walk or a custom-designed camping trip, and you're guaranteed to experience the woods like never before.



Outdoor NC Principle



STICK TO TRAILS AND OVERNIGHT RIGHT

Keep to designated trails and durable surfaces to protect trailside plants. Camp at existing or designated sites and limit the area of disturbance.



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5 CITIES

3 ways

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writer **JESS HOFFERT**

Als Ich Chan: A Tribute to NoDa
by William Puckett, Charlotte



Hi-Wire Brewing,
Wilmington



Biltmore,
Asheville



Dorothea Dix
Park, Raleigh



ARTivity on the Green,
Winston-Salem



Crawford and
Son, Raleigh



PHOTOGRAPHS: (NODA) CHELSEA ZIPPERER,
(BREWING) JOSEPH DIEPENBROCK,
(ARTIVITY) STARBOARD AND PORT,
(BILTMORE) JARED KAY, (CRAWFORD,
PARK) G2 PHOTOGRAPHY

1

Asheville

ELEVATED CREATIVITY

- **Incorporated:** 1797 | **Population:** 92,328
- **Loved for:** Its unmatched beer scene. (It's a leader among U.S. cities in breweries per capita.) Biltmore House, the largest privately owned home in the country. Hub for mountain adventures.
- **Fun fact:** Flowing through the heart of Asheville, the French Broad River is one of the oldest in the world at 260-plus million years.

2

Charlotte

QUEEN FOR A DAY — OR MORE

- **Incorporated:** 1768 | **Population:** 873,570
- **Loved for:** Its cutting-edge culinary scene. Sports legends (NASCAR, Panthers and Hornets, oh my!). Countless German influences, partially thanks to the city's royal namesake, Queen Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz.
- **Fun fact:** There's no downtown here — just Uptown. It sits slightly above the rest of the city.

3

Winston-Salem

BUILT TO INSPIRE

- **Incorporated:** 1913 | **Population:** 245,787
- **Loved for:** Moravian history at Old Salem Museums & Gardens. Reimagined factories and warehouses at Industry Hill. A blend of classical and modern art in museums and parks.
- **Fun fact:** The Kimpton Cardinal Hotel resides in the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company's former HQ, a prototype for the Empire State Building.

4

Raleigh

A CAPITAL FOR ALL

- **Incorporated:** 1792 | **Population:** 469,698
- **Loved for:** World-class culture and museums, such as the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences. An LGBTQ-friendly Warehouse District. Oak trees just about everywhere you look.
- **Fun fact:** Downtown has more than 120 pieces of public art, some inspired by squirrels — the unofficial mascot in the City of Oaks.

5

Wilmington

CITY ON THE WATER

- **Incorporated:** 1740 | **Population:** 122,162
- **Loved for:** Easy access to islands, beaches and the Cape Fear River. The World War II-era Battleship *North Carolina*. Fresh seafood served at postcard-perfect waterfront restaurants.
- **Fun fact:** Nicknamed Hollywood East, Wilmington has hosted more than 400 film-related productions, including *Dawson's Creek*, *Iron Man 3* and the 2022 sequel to *Scream*.

ARTS & Culture

ASHEVILLE

FREE-FLOWING Artists welcome you into their creative worlds in the **River Arts District** (aka the RAD), a collection of more than 200 studios, galleries and co-ops along the French Broad River.



River Arts District

BLACK LEGACIES Join **Hood Tours** for an eye-opening journey through the stories of Black Asheville. One stop: Asheville's **Burton Street Community Peace Garden**, where reclaimed objects become artwork.

AvidXchange Music Factory



CHARLOTTE

PUMP UP THE VOLUME For a night out, head to **AvidXchange Music Factory**, a buzzing complex encompassing **The Underground**, **The Fillmore Charlotte** and **World Nightclub**. Indie rock, DJs, comedy and cocktails abound.

Mint Museum Uptown



WINSTON-SALEM

SHOP AND GAWK The **Downtown Arts District** entices visitors with Southern cuisine and local shops, including **Piedmont Craftmen Gallery**. Enjoy a picnic among the interactive sculptures of adjacent **ARTivity on the Green**.



Old Salem Museums & Gardens

OLD-SCHOOL DELIGHTS Settled by Moravians in 1766, **Old Salem Museums & Gardens** offers a glimpse of early American life. Living-history artisans make pottery and bake sugar cakes in original brick homes and businesses.

BEATS AND BOOZE

Order up vodka with a side of vinyl. IPAs infused with indie rock or prosecco with a splash of punk at **The Pour House Music Hall and Record Shop**.

RALEIGH

BEAUTY IN AND OUT At the **North Carolina Museum of Art**, airy galleries display European masterpieces and Jewish ceremonial art. Outside, stroll or picnic among the 164-acre museum park's 30-plus installations.

North Carolina Museum of Art



Cameron Art Museum

WILMINGTON



SALUTE TO HEROES Outside **Cameron Art Museum**, a bronze sculpture honors United States Colored Troops who won a Civil War battle on the site. North Carolina artist Stephen Hayes cast the faces of 11 men with ties to the soldiers.

WELL-CRAFTED WORLD Regional artwork and crafts from Africa coexist at **Art Factory Galleries**, an open space spotlighting fine decor, jewelry, textiles and sculptures. Sip North Carolina vintages at the wine bar.



Hood Tours

ART OF APPALACHIA At the **Folk Art Center** on the Blue Ridge Parkway, explore two floors of regional glassware, ceramics and basketry. Check out the upper level for a gallery featuring hundreds of objects.

CULTURE HUB **The Block** is experiencing a resurgence of Black-owned businesses. Don't miss the **YMI Cultural Center** and **Noir Collective AVL**, a boutique shop and gallery showcasing Black artists.



ART WALK See global works at the **Mint Museum Uptown**, catch concerts at **Knight Theater** and admire wondrous Warhols at **Bechtler Museum of Modern Art**, all located along the Levine Avenue of the Arts.



HISTORY LESSONS

Delve into stories of enslaved people at the 1774 Alexander Rock House and Homesite, the oldest surviving house in the county. It's part of **The Charlotte Museum of History**.

OUTDOOR GALLERY Home to indie artists, the **NoDa district** is an organic anchor to the city's culture scene. Find murals such as *Als Ich Chan: A Tribute to NoDa* by William Puckett, depicting 274 members of the community.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (RIVER ARTS, MINT MUSEUM, MUSEUM OF ART, DECO) C2 PHOTOGRAPHY, (HOOD TOURS) STARBOARD AND PORT, (AVIDXCHANGE) COURTESY OF AVIDXCHANGE MUSIC FACTORY, (ROCK HOUSE) COURTESY OF CHARLOTTE MUSEUM OF HISTORY, (OLD SALEM, REYNOLDA) SAM DEAN, (CAMERON) COURTESY OF CAMERON ART MUSEUM, (BEACH MURAL) JOSEPH DIEPENBROCK

FROM WORK TO PLAY **Industry Hill** breathes new life into former factories and warehouses, home to chic shops, markets, restaurants and music venues such as **The Ramkat** and **Earl's**, a hopping Southern kitchen and whiskey bar.

REYNOLDS LEGACY The 1917 bungalow of tobacco mogul R.J. Reynolds and his wife, Katharine, is now the **Reynolda House Museum of American Art**. See an impressive collection of permanent and rotating works.



Reynolda House
Museum of
American Art

STAR OF CAPITOL SQUARE Take a self-guided tour of the Greek Revival **North Carolina State Capitol**, one of the best-preserved examples of a public building in the style. It once housed all three government branches; today it's part administrative offices, part historic attraction.



DECO Raleigh

SHOP TALK Browse locally owned shops in the heart of downtown. Find **Curate**, **Nashona**, **Black Friday Market**, **Quercus Studio** and **DECO Raleigh** near the corner of West Hargett and South Salisbury Streets.



Carolina Beach Boardwalk

BOLD BOARDWALK The beachy promenades of nearby Carolina Beach are only getting splashier, thanks to the **Carolina Beach Mural Project**. Pose in front of the pictured *Carolina Dreamin'* mural by Jason Parker, along with about a dozen others.

CULTURAL ROOTS

Cultivate knowledge of the Gullah Geechee people at Poplar Grove Plantation, highlighting the West African peoples along the **Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor**.

SIPS & Bites



ASHEVILLE

French Broad Chocolate Lounge

SWEET SPOTS Bars, brownies, cakes and bonbons tempt at bean-to-bar **French Broad Chocolate Lounge**. Hand-rolled and fried, **Hole Doughnuts'** varieties include Toasted Almond Sesame Cinnamon.

FLIGHTS OF FANCY **Highland Brewing Company**, the city's first legal brewery since Prohibition, is back downtown with a taproom at **The S&W Market**, a two-story Art Deco stunner spotlighting local fare.

CHARLOTTE

THE ROYAL TREATMENT Entrees and cocktails adorned with gold leaf turn heads at **Deluxe Fun Dining**. At **The Royal Tot**, order creative tiki drinks such as Sally Sells Seashells, served in a giant conch-shape mug.



The Royal Tot

PLAY WITH YOUR FOOD **Puttery** allows you to pair apps, pizzas, drinks and dessert jars with a round of indoor miniature golf. Choose between two 9-hole courses: a sophisticated library or a desert-theme conservatory.

WINSTON-SALEM



The Ginger Fox

SOPHISTICATED SIPS **The Ginger Fox** is cunning in the best way when it comes to inventive cocktails. Try straight rye or the Smashing Violet blueberry whiskey at grain-to-glass **Broad Branch Distillery**.

TASTE TRAIL
The **Moravian Culinary Trail** serves up a trifecta of delights: paper-thin cookies (from **Mrs. Hanes' Moravian Cookies**), to-go chicken pie (from **Buie's Market**) and buttery sugar cake (at **Dewey's Bakery**).

RALEIGH

WORTH CLUCKING ABOUT James Beard-winner Ashley Christensen goes fast-casual with **BB's Crispy Chicken**. Order from The Hot List for a dash — or five — of Tabasco on your juicy fried chicken sandwich.



BB's Crispy Chicken

SEAFOOD PEARL Chef Sunny Gerhart got his first James Beard nom in 2022 for **St. Roch Fine Oysters + Bar**, home of raw and flame-roasted oysters, fried shrimp, gumbo, kicky cocktails and a best-in-class brunch.



WILMINGTON

Hi-Wire Brewing

TWO BREWS Refresh with a Pink Lemonade Session Sour Ale in one of **Hi-Wire Brewing's** two beer gardens in the Soda Pop District, or go dark with the Dram Tree Scottish Ale from downtown's **Front Street Brewery**.

PASTRY KING Inspired by generations of successful family cooks and bakers, **Sweet D's Cuisine** founder Brian Dickey carries on the legacy with more than a dozen filled croissant varieties and creamy cakes.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (FRENCH BROAD) COURTESY OF FRENCH BROAD CHOCOLATE LOUNGE, (CÚRATE) EVAN SUNG, (ROYAL TOT) COURTESY OF THE ROYAL TOT, (GILDE) COURTESY OF CHARLOTTE REGIONAL VISITORS AUTHORITY, (GINGER FOX) JESSICA BLACKSTOCK, (SIX HUNDRED) COURTESY OF SIX HUNDRED DEGREES, (BB'S) COURTESY OF BB'S CRISPY CHICKEN, (CRAWFORD) C2 PHOTOGRAPHY, (HI-WIRE) COURTESY OF HI-WIRE BREWING, (SEABIRD) JOSEPH DIEPENBROCK



Cúrate

AWARD WINNERS Two downtown eateries earned coveted James Beard Awards in 2022. Indian street food fave **Chai Pani** won as outstanding restaurant, while Spanish tapas bar **Cúrate** won for outstanding hospitality.

CUE THE APPLAUSE Eastern-style fans love **Buxton Hall Barbecue**. The pork is smoked low and slow, then served with coleslaw and collards. Try a Bourbon & Cheerwine Slushie and save room for pie.

THAT EXTRA TOUCH Alex Verica's **PARA** turns standard menu items into tantalizing revelations: cheesesteaks with Wagyu and onion puree, ravioli with yuzu beurre blanc, and a PB&J with foie gras on milk bread.

GERMAN ARRIVAL Thanks to Charlotte's German ties, the 477-year-old **Gilde** brewery opened this first location outside Deutschland. Enjoy a classic pilsener with a soft brezel (pretzel) or a bratwurst in the biergarten.



Gilde

THE LION'S SHARE Jazz-age decor accents the four floors of **Roar**, a food hall and entertainment hub with a Prohibition-style steakhouse, Gatsby-theme golf simulators and an intimate vintage bowling alley.



Six Hundred Degrees

FLAMING HOT Cooked exclusively over oak and hickory coals, the perfectly charred lineup at **Six Hundred Degrees** includes cast-iron venison, Korean-style pork short ribs and duck gnocchi with coal-roasted squash.



Crawford and Son

SOUTHERN COMFORT Go for classic whole-hog 'cue from **Sam Jones BBQ** and indulge in hyperseasonal specialties from **Crawford and Son**. Regionally sourced charcuterie plates starring San Giuseppe Salami Co. (based in Elon) complement gin- and vodka-based beverages at **Young Hearts Distilling**.

HALL OF FAME

A sprawling patio and vast array of vendors make **Morgan Street Food Hall** a crowd-pleaser. Save room for Grandma's Nanner Puddin' rolled ice cream from **Raleigh Rolls**.

SECRET NIGHTCAP Slink into Smith Alley and pass through an unmarked black door to arrive at **Blind Elephant Speakeasy**, a Roaring '20s-esque bar with mules on tap, beaucoup bourbons, rotating cocktails and live piano music.

FRESH CATCHES You can almost feel the salty ocean breeze while diving into **Seabird's** whole fried flounder, tuna tartare and seasonal seafood tower dreamed up by chef-owners Dean Neff and Lydia Clopton.



Seabird

ACTIVE & *Outdoors*

ASHEVILLE

START THE JOURNEY Asheville **Adventure Company** provides the gear and guides for your fave type of tour, whether that's an e-bike ride through history or whitewater rafting on the French Broad River.



GARDEN PARTY After touring the 250-room **Biltmore House**, North America's largest private residence, soak in the brilliant blooms of gardens landscaped by iconic Central Park architect Frederick Law Olmsted.



CHARLOTTE

PARK IT Take a break from the bustle of Uptown by lounging in the shadow of skyscrapers at **Romare Bearden Park**. **Truist Field**, home of the Charlotte Knights baseball team, sits right across the street.

PEDAL POWER Bike the **Charlotte Rail Trail**, linking the South End with Uptown. Art installations decorate the 3.5-mile route that passes some of the city's trendiest boutique shops and cafes, such as **Not Just Coffee**.

WINSTON-SALEM

TANGLED UP IN BLUE Set along the Yadkin River, **Tanglewood Park** boasts two lakes stocked with fish and an aquatic center with a splash pad for the kiddos. Stay dry on the golf courses and in the arboretum.

ROOTED IN HISTORY

Japanese teahouses and a log cabin playhouse accent the **Reynolda Gardens**, once part of the century-old estate of the Reynolds family. Leashed dogs are welcome on meadow and woodland trails.



RALEIGH

PICNIC IN THE PARK Bring a basket of goodies and claim a spot among the rolling meadows of **Dorothea Dix Park** for dinner with a spectacular skyline view. Pups love getting their zoomies at the off-leash dog park.



AIRLIE GARDENS

WILMINGTON

GRAND SIGHTS Stroll among bursts of blooms and beneath expansive live oaks at **Airlie Gardens**, a coastal respite since 1884. Free trams (by reservation) take visitors around the property.

SURF'S UP As a barrier island surrounded by salt marshes, **Wrightsville Beach** boasts a consistent shore break — ideal for surfers. Learn basic wave-riding at **WB Surf Camp** and get a core workout in the process.



PHOTOGRAPHS: (BILTMORE, AIRLIE) JARED KAY, (HAWKSBILL, ROMARE BEARDEN, DOROTHEA) C2 PHOTOGRAPHY, (WHITewater) PATRICK SCHNEIDER, (REYNOLDA) JB MCCABE, (QUARRY) COURTESY OF VISIT WINSTON-SALEM, (UMSTEAD) COURTESY OF VISIT RALEIGH, (RIVERWALK) STARBOARD AND PORT



Hawksbill Mountain

MOUNTAINTOP EXPERIENCES Just outside the city, views of waterfalls, gorges and the Blue Ridge — especially from the summit of **Hawksbill Mountain** — make strenuous treks worth it. Be sure to pack a map, extra water and sturdy shoes.

PRO-TRAINED
Admire a carefully tended Bonsai Exhibition Garden at **The North Carolina Arboretum**. Bonus: More than 10 miles of hiking and biking trails.

ROLL AND COAST Copperhead Strike, one of 14 roller coasters at **Carowinds**, launches riders twice through a tightly wound course of loops and overbanked turns. Younger kiddos get their kicks with the pint-size thrill rides in Camp Snoopy.

FEEL THE RUSH Paddle through the **U.S. National Whitewater Center**, home to the world's largest human-made whitewater river. Stay dry by zooming across ziplines, scaling a rock wall and conquering a mountain biking trail.



U.S. National Whitewater Center

DIG THE VIEWS From a pier jutting over **Quarry Park**, see the sunset reflected in the pristine waters below as the city and Pilot Mountain stand out along the horizon. A trail system allows for hikes near rocky cliffs.



Quarry Park

CITY ANGLING Fish from a pier (state fishing license required) or rent a kayak on 365-acre **Salem Lake** (just east of downtown). A marina with a fishing station and bait shop hooks you up for a delightfully chill day on the water.

INTO THE WOODS You won't have to hike long through tunnels of **Hemlock Bluffs Nature Preserve's** namesake trees before you feel light-years away from the suburban thrum of nearby Cary — and that's exactly the point.

SCENIC CYCLING Countless photo ops await among the wetlands, woodlands, bridges and boardwalks of the 27.5-mile **Neuse River Trail**. Rent wheels at **The Bike Guy** at the trail's north end in Wake Forest.

EASY TREKS

In the heart of Wake County, urban hikers, bikers and horseback riders soak up serenity among **William B. Umstead State Park's** pine and hardwood forest. There's boating and kayaking, too.



COME FLY(Trap) WITH ME See carnivorous plants on a guided hike along **Carolina Beach State Park's** Flytrap Trail. Look up for other colorful characters, including brown-headed nuthatches and summer tanagers.



Wilmington Riverwalk

WALK THIS WAY Lining the Cape Fear River, the **Wilmington Riverwalk** connects visitors to some of the city's best shopping and dining. Tour the WWII-era Battleship **North Carolina**, moored just across the water.

ISLAND *Time*



No two **BARRIER ISLANDS** off the coast of North Carolina are quite the same. Add a little adventure to your beach excursion (or some peace and quiet) with these bits of paradise.

East Beach,
Bald Head Island

writer PRASANA WILLIAM



PHOTOGRAPHS: KODY SPINADEL, (EAST BEACH) C2 PHOTOGRAPHY, (INN) COURTESY OF THE INN AT BALD HEAD ISLAND



The Inn at Bald Head Island

ACCESSIBLE
fun for all

Book the Morning Glory suite — an accessible king room with a roll-in shower — on the first floor of **The Inn at Bald Head Island's** charming main house.

SOAK UP SERENITY ON *Bald Head Island*

Bald is beautiful, indeed. The sights and sounds of calling seabirds, rustling oak leaves and crashing waves set off this all-natural paradise.

Leave your cares (and car) behind on a journey to Bald Head Island, where autos are forbidden, golf carts abound and nature drives the agenda.

Climb all 108 steps of **Old Baldy**, the oldest standing lighthouse in the state, for a panorama of the pristine island, framed by the Cape Fear River and the Atlantic Ocean. Zoom in on the island's rich subtropical flora and fauna on a tour with the **Bald Head Island Conservancy**. Explore protected space that encompasses beaches, salt marshes

and the 173-acre **Bald Head Woods Maritime Forest Preserve**, where knobby live oaks form a twisty, bendy canopy over a thick carpet of shade-loving plants. As you hike interpretive trails cutting through the unique ecosystem, keep an eye out for foxes, alligators, snakes, deer and 22 species of warbler. Want to venture on your own? **Riverside**



GETTING HERE

The island is accessible only by boat. Take the Bald Head Island ferry from the Deep Point Marina near Southport.

Adventure Co. has everything you need to navigate the island sans guide. Rent a bike or travel the tidal waterways on a kayak or stand-up paddleboard. After a day of island adventures, relax on a classic Southern porch or your private balcony at **The Inn at Bald Head Island**.

BRING THE WHOLE FAM TO *Oak Island*

Elevate the basic beach trip to memory-making status with activities that take your family to great heights and plumb the depths of island culture.

Make like mariners of old and let **Oak Island Lighthouse** guide your journey. 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 where you can scope out your next adventure. Will it be **Oak Island Nature Center**, with a salt-marsh ecosystem of butterflies, shorebirds, reptiles and tree-lined trails? Or maybe puttering around **Oak Island Jungle Golf's** 18 holes of mini greens and safari creatures? There's always the water: Paddle through history with tours guided by **The Adventure Kayak Co.** in Southport and see ancient bald cypress trees. **Caswell Beach** promises plenty of room to roam. This secluded stretch of shoreline, bordered by sea oat-topped dunes, provides a perfect place to build sandcastles, brave the waves or just relax. **The Point**, the beach at the westernmost tip of Oak Island at Lockwood Folly Inlet, is just as quiet and a local favorite for shelling and clam digging. However you spend the day, wrap it up with a meal at **Old Bridge Diner**. Their legendary Loaded Biscuit is an open-face opus piled with sausage, hashbrowns, cheese, gravy and scrambled eggs.



PAW OF *approval*

Four-legged friends are welcome at **Caswell Beach** all year long. They can go off-leash from mid-October to mid-March.



GETTING HERE

Oak Island is accessible from inland via two bridges or by ferry from Fort Fisher to Southport (then by car to the island).



Oak Island Pier

Outdoor NC Principle



TIPS FOR FISHING

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



PHOTOGRAPHS: (LIGHTHOUSE) C2 PHOTOGRAPHY, (PIER) BRENDA TORREY, (TOPSAIL) STEVE YOCOM

LET THE GOOD TIMES ROLL ON

Topsail Island

Nothing stands between you and an epic beach day on Topsail, where you can drive your vehicle right onto the sand and drop a line straight into the water.

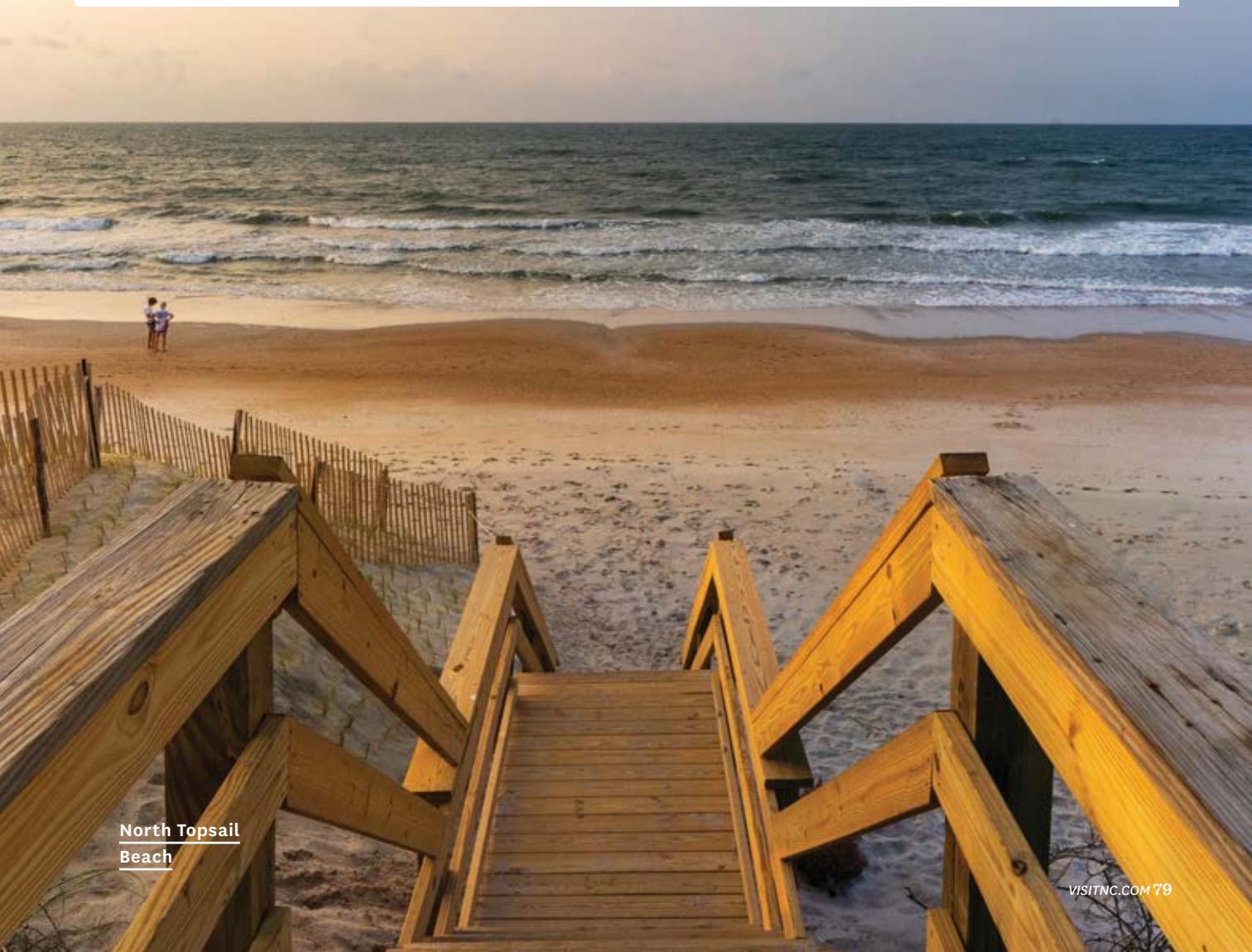
Use the nautically correct pronunciation “Tops’l” to sound like a local on this 26-mile barrier island. Fish with the locals at **Surf City Ocean Pier**, which juts 937 feet into the ocean for prime access to albacore, bluefish, cobia, flounder, pompano, tarpon and more. Meet other residents of the underwater community at **Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Center**, an active animal hospital dedicated to the care of injured and endangered marine turtles. While you’re thinking of shells, take a break for tacos: **Shaka Taco** in the heart of Surf City prides itself on crafting fresh

ingredients into food that’s just plain good. The shrimp they blacken and slather in sweet chili sauce comes straight from the adjacent Atlantic whenever possible. Come out of your shell at **unWINEd Wine Bar and Beer**, where varied varietals pair well with live music and fresh ocean breezes on the patio. At the southern tip of the island, hit the beach where some lucky islanders live — **Serenity Point**. It’s a protected stretch of land at the confluence of the Intracoastal Waterway and the Atlantic. Or head to **North Topsail Beach** for an uncrowded, drive-thru shoreline — 4x4 vehicle users with fishing licenses can drive onto the sand.



GETTING HERE

*Drive to and from
Topsail Island
via either of two
bridges — one
in North Topsail
Beach and one
in Surf City.*



North Topsail
Beach

FLOAT THROUGH TIME ON

Ocracoke Island

Retaining a raw, untamed vibe from its pirate days, Ocracoke beckons with secrets and delights to discover from the sand, water or air.

Ocracoke thrives as a secluded getaway steeped in the spirit of its past. Plan on ditching your vehicle at the ferry port (island parking is limited) and getting around the quaint harborside village on foot, bike, rental golf cart or free tram. Fuel up at **Ocracoke Coffee Co.**, enjoying your morning caffeine boost while strolling to Silver Lake's harbor with its sweet finds such as **The Slushy Stand**. If you're up to it, soar over the Cape Hatteras National Seashore with **Ocracoke Parasail** to see uninhabited Portsmouth Island's ghost town, the aqua vistas of Pamlico Sound and Ocracoke's miles of untamed beaches. Scotch bonnet shells and whole sand dollars await for the finding. Retrieve your vehicle for a jaunt to the lifeguarded **Ocracoke Beach** near town; the drivable shores off NC-12; or the sound-side beach of **Springer's Point Preserve**, where legendary pirate Blackbeard met his fate.

LIGHTING THE CANDLES

For two centuries, **Ocracoke Lighthouse** has watched over the southern end of the island, directing knaves and nobles alike along its shores. The oldest continuously operating lighthouse in North Carolina marks its 200th anniversary this year. Built in 1823, it towers 75 feet over Ocracoke Village, its 8,000-candlepower beam visible up to 14 miles offshore. Though you can't climb this active lighthouse, the picturesque view from the base makes it worth a visit.



GETTING HERE

Ocracoke Island is accessible by ferry or small plane.

Swan Quarter Ferry takes two hours and 45 minutes and is best when coming from the west. Cedar Island Ferry, just over a two-hour ride, is recommended when traveling from the south.

Hatteras Ferry (north of Ocracoke) takes about one hour, is free of charge and departs from the Outer Banks' NC-12. The Ocracoke Express Passenger Ferry also departs seasonally from Hatteras Terminal (reservations required).



Springer's Point Preserve



Silver Lake



ACCESSIBLE *fun for all*

Lifeguarded Ocracoke Beach, named the best beach in America in 2022 by sand savant Dr. Stephen Leatherman (aka Dr. Beach), is also one of the more accessible.

It features a wheelchair- and stroller-friendly beach ramp.



ALL ROADS LEAD TO YUM

BUCKLE UP (AND DON'T BOTHER COUNTING CALORIES) DURING A CULINARY JOURNEY THROUGH THE TAR HEEL STATE, ALLOWING PLENTY OF TIME TO STOP AND SAVOR **10 ICONIC DISHES**, INCLUDING SWEET PEACH COBBLER AND SAVORY BARBECUE.

writer **JODI HELMER** *illustrator* **ALI MACDONALD**

1 BISCUITS AND GRAVY

Stop at **Biscuit Head** in Asheville for handmade biscuits slathered in made-from-scratch gravy. Stick with the classic combo of a biscuit and fried chicken gravy or get adventurous with other gravy options such as Espresso Red Eye or Sweet Potato Coconut. Can't decide? Order a gravy flight and sample them all.

2 PORK CHOP SANDWICH

Pork loin dredged in batter draws crowds to Mount Airy's **Snappy Lunch**, made famous by *The Andy Griffith Show* and celebrating 100 years in 2023. The oversized pork chop is topped with chili, coleslaw, mustard, onions and tomatoes and tucked into a small bun. Request extra napkins for one of the messiest sandwiches you'll ever eat.

3 LEXINGTON-STYLE BARBECUE

When a town boasts its very own 'cue style, you know the chopped or sliced pork is gonna be good. **Lexington Barbecue**, **Smokey Joe's Barbecue** and about a dozen other area joints serve pork shoulder with a Lexington-style "dip" made with vinegar, salt, pepper, and a dollop of ketchup or tomato paste.

4 PIMENTO CHEESE

The Southern picnic staple has grown in popularity over the years, and it's hard to beat the time-tested version made by **Musten and Crutchfield** in Kernersville. Spread it on crackers, fold it into a sandwich or add it to a salad. This classic recipe dates back to 1935.

5 FRIED GREEN TOMATOES

Mama Dip's Kitchen is a Chapel Hill institution, and fried green tomatoes have been a favorite since Mildred "Mama Dip" Council added them to the menu of her popular Southern comfort cafe in 1989. Council died in 2018, and the fried green tomatoes remain as part of her satisfying legacy.



6 PEACH COBBLER

The Phillips family has been growing peaches on their farm near Wadesboro for five generations, transforming their fruit into some of the Piedmont's freshest desserts. Head to the **Peaches n' Cream** produce stand and order their homemade peach cobbler (topped with a scoop of vanilla ice cream, naturally).

7 EASTERN-STYLE WHOLE-HOG BARBECUE

Sam Jones BBQ, **Skylight Inn BBQ**, **Pitt Street Brewing Company** and **Duck-Rabbit Craft Brewery** are just a few of the pit stops and pint stops on the **Pitt County Brew and 'Cue Trail**. At each location, collect stamps for your PassPork and earn a spot on the Brew and 'Cue Wall of Fame.

8 OYSTERS

Follow the **NC Oyster Trail** from Manteo to Southport, visiting places such as **Carolina Beach Oyster Co.** to learn what it takes to get shellfish from water to plate. Stop for a bite — or slurp — at Southport's **Rusty Hooks Dockside Grill**, where fresh oysters dominate the menu.

9 SHRIMP BURGER

Walk-up window lines at **Big Oak Drive-In and BBQ** in Salter Path can be long, but rest assured their shrimp burger is worth the wait. It's made with fried shrimp that's piled high on a steamed bun and topped with tartar sauce, coleslaw and ketchup.

DREAM BIG in SMALL TOWN NC

Located on 200 bucolic acres near Williamston, **Big Mill Bed & Breakfast** makes for a perfect rest stop between the Pitt County Brew and 'Cue and NC Oyster trails. Explore the vintage tobacco barns at the historic farmstead before retiring to one of five well-appointed guest rooms.

Learn more at VisitNC.com/dreambig

10 CALABASH SEAFOOD

In the coastal community of Calabash, fresh ocean catches have been lightly battered and fried in a method known as Calabash-style since 1940. Order a combo plate from waterfront restaurants such as **Captain Nance's Seafood** or **Dockside Seafood House**, feasting on shrimp, flounder, scallops and more.



HIGH ALTITUDE



Mount Mitchell
Eco Retreat,
Burnsville

writer
JASON FRYE

OVERNIGHT IN NATURE AT ELEVATED LODGINGS, DEFY GRAVITY ON AERIAL TOURS AND FEEL THE RUSH OF MOUNTAIN WATERFALLS. THIS IS THE LAND OF FRESH AIR, COOL NIGHTS AND EVEN COOLER DISCOVERIES.



Unique Retreats

Take your stay to the next level with mountain camping and glamping, or live large at an amenity-rich hotel.

Emberglow Outdoor Resort

MILL SPRING

Refurbished Airstreams, chic yurts, family-friendly tree houses and charming tiny houses all provide crowd-pleasing alternatives to traditional tent camping. Take full advantage of the amenities — a pool, dog park, playground, and hiking and biking trails — on this 72-acre property located near *Dirty Dancing*-famous Lake Lure and Chimney Rock State Park.

The Horton Hotel

BOONE

The town's only boutique hotel lets you and your favorite furry companion stay in style while you fall hopelessly in love with the Blue

Ridge Mountains. Spend relaxing evenings enjoying cocktails, beer, wine, a toasty fire and sunsets from the rooftop bar. Another perk: It's just a short walk from your plush room to locally flavored spots for dining and shopping.

Mount Mitchell Eco Retreat

BURNSVILLE

Reconnect with nature in the shadow of the East Coast's highest peak. Sixteen modern lodge rooms anchor the retreat, with porches, a pond, pastures and Ping-Pong set within the Pisgah National Forest. It all makes one sweet home base for hiking to the namesake summit, stargazing and relaxing in the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

The Omni Grove Park Inn

ASHEVILLE

Atop aptly named Sunset Mountain, the storied inn delivers stellar views and hospitality. Pamper yourself in the subterranean spa, raise a glass to "Beer City USA" on the Sunset Terrace and play the Donald Ross-designed golf course.

Turkey Creek Campground

ALMOND

Let songbirds be your alarm in the Great Smoky Mountains. Mountain biking, whitewater rafting, the Appalachian Trail and Great Smoky Mountains National Park can all be savored near this campground with more than 70 tent and RV sites.

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 ashes are cold.





Through the Air

Get your head in the clouds by soaring, zipping and drifting over Blue Ridge and Great Smoky Mountains peaks.

High Gravity Adventures Aerial Adventure Park

BLOWING ROCK

Ziplines, an aerial obstacle course and a four-story swing add more than a dash of thrills to your getaway in the High Country. Rappel, zoom through the trees, take a 70-foot leap of faith, and conquer more than 60 climbing and swinging challenges at the park.

Highlands Aerial Park

SCALY MOUNTAIN

Pretend your fam is a flock of flying squirrels with kid-appropriate ziplines. Aerial challenges give the littles a taste of excitement while mountaintop zips send grown-ups to the canopy for epic views and a dose of adrenaline.

Nantahala Gorge Canopy Tours

BRYSON CITY

Learn why the Cherokee named this area Nantahala (“Land of the Noonday Sun”) as you fly from tree to tree. This half-mile zipline course is one of the region’s longest, and the views of Fontana Lake, waterfalls and Clingmans Dome are as memorable as the ride.

Sky Retreat

PURLEAR

Take to the skies on a tandem paragliding flight that’ll give you a bird’s-eye view of the Blue Ridge Mountains. As the wind fills your paragliding wing, you and your certified pilot will leap into the air to ride the thermals and leave your shadow on the rolling terrain.



Nantahala Gorge
Canopy Tours,
Bryson City

Falls for All

Hundreds of waterfalls thunder through North Carolina, but nothing tops a mountain cascade. Add these easily accessible wonders to your adventure.

Bridal Veil Falls

HIGHLANDS

You don't have to take a jungle cruise to see the backside of a waterfall — simply walk the pathway behind this one. As it drops 120 feet, Bridal Veil earns its name, fanning out to form a misty curtain. Continue along the Waterfall Byway Scenic Drive for more alluring encounters with falls.

Linville Falls

NEWLAND

You'll encounter some rocky dips and climbs along this 0.9-mile out-and-back route, but nothing too treacherous before reaching the panoramic Upper Linville Falls observation area near Blue Ridge Parkway Milepost 316.

Looking Glass Falls

BREVARD

Perhaps the easiest of all waterfalls to access, Looking Glass crashes right beside US-276 north of Brevard. Plunging 60 feet into a swimmable pool, it's a favorite of waterfall chasers and one of the icons of the Pisgah National Forest.

Shunkawauken Falls

COLUMBUS

On the winding drive up White Oak Mountain, you'll pass this 150-foot roadside waterfall. Shunkawauken spills over the rock face in a series of cascades and falls, passing beneath the road for a spectacular encore performance on the other side.

Whitewater Falls

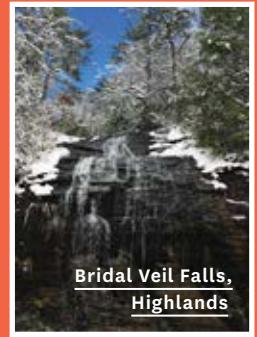
CASHIERS

A pair of viewing platforms leads you to an exceptional sight in any season: the 411-foot falls. Whether engulfed by autumn leaves or bathed in summer green, the highest waterfall east of the Rockies is a must-see.

ACCESSIBLE

fun for all

A quarter-mile, paved walkway leads to the upper observation platform of **Whitewater Falls**, allowing wheelchair users to see them.



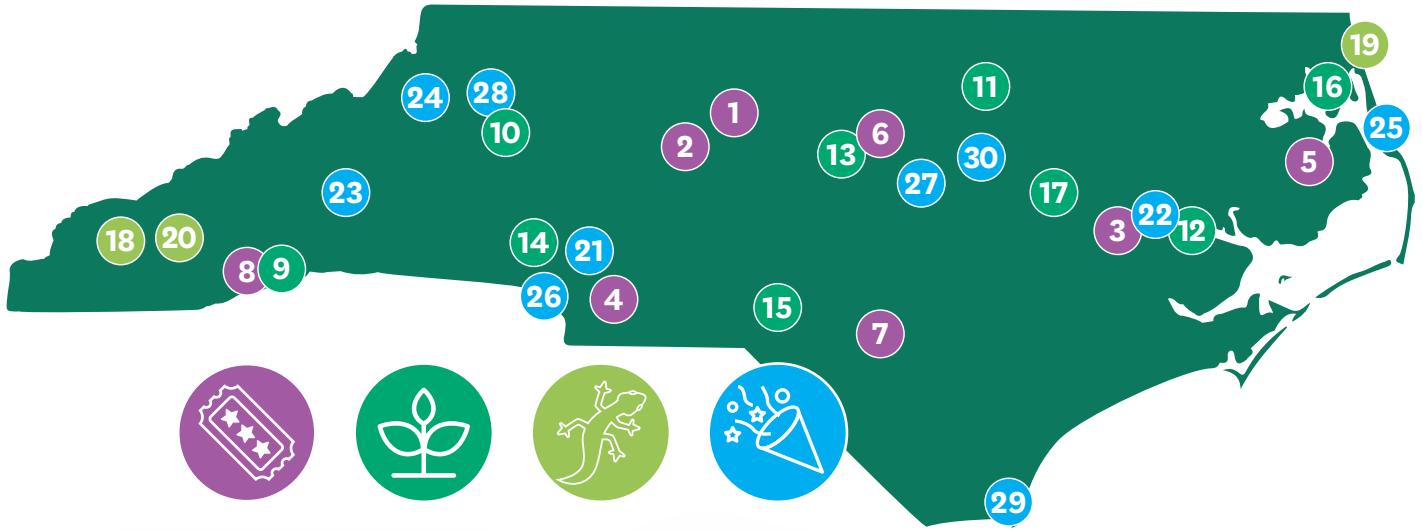
Bridal Veil Falls,
Highlands

BE WATERFALL WISE

Play it safe with these six tips:

- 1 Be sure to stay on developed trails.
- 2 Obey posted signs near waterfalls.
- 3 Watch your footing. (Rocks are often more slippery than they appear!)
- 4 Never swim or wade upstream near a waterfall.
- 5 Refrain from jumping or diving.
- 6 Keep an eye on kids and pets.

Looking Glass
Falls, Brevard



30 FREE WAYS TO HAVE FUN

Feel free to build your vacation around these **no-cost museums, historical sites, parks, gardens, wildlife exhibits** and **festivals**. The memories you'll make are priceless.

writer **HILARY BRAAKSMA**

PHOTOGRAPHS: (HIGH POINT) COURTESY OF HIGH POINT MUSEUM, (DURHAM) C2 PHOTOGRAPHY



MUSEUMS AND HISTORIC SITES

► *Learn the Old North State's story and cultural significance at enlightening exhibits and engaging displays.*

1 Greensboro History Museum GREENSBORO

Travel back in time to early 1900s Greensboro at the interactive *Gate City* exhibit, which allows museum visitors of all ages to mill about town, measure ingredients at a drugstore counter, catch a silent film and field calls as an operator at the local telephone exchange.

2 High Point Museum HIGH POINT

Marvel over *Meredith's Miniatures*, one of which features a detailed vignette of Monet's blue-and-white kitchen. High Point native Meredith Slane Michener crafted these meticulous displays. Also swing by the area showcasing jazz musician John Coltrane, another former High Point resident.

3 N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences GREENVILLE/GRIFFON

Exhibits at two satellite locations of the Raleigh museum include a hands-on augmented reality sandbox and Discovery Forest play center at the Greenville site. Check out a stellar planetarium and scenic hikes at the 380-acre Contentnea Creek location in Grifton.

4 Reed Gold Mine MIDLAND

The first gold discovery in the United States was made right here by Conrad Reed (age 12) in 1799. Heads up: It's worth bringing a few dollars if you'd like to try your hand at panning for gold from April through October.

5 Somerset Place State Historic Site CRESWELL

Walk through original 19th-century buildings at a former plantation to get the site's entire story — including that of the enslaved population. Self-guided tours allow you to see a plantation hospital, a dairy and other historic structures for a taste of 1800s life.

6 21c Museum Hotel DURHAM

This contemporary boutique hotel and art museum grants visitors and sightseers access to rotating galleries and thought-provoking modern art, such as *It Will Warm You Twice*, a landscape crafted entirely from tobacco products.

7 U.S. Army Airborne & Special Operations Museum FAYETTEVILLE

Immerse yourself in the history of the U.S. Army's Airborne & Special Operations units when you walk through lifelike displays depicting World War II France, Cold War-era Korea and 21st-century Afghan military bases.

8 Veterans History Museum of the Carolinas BREVARD

An extensive collection of military artifacts and exhibits features veteran-donated weaponry, uniforms, original newspaper clippings, personal effects and a multitude of other items. It's all presented chronologically to create a powerfully accessible storytelling experience.





Ramsey Creek Park,
Cornelius



PARKS AND GARDENS

► *Unwind in the shadow of whirligigs, wander through an enchanted woodland garden and unleash your imagination in a playground built for all.*

9 Bullington Gardens HENDERSONVILLE

A local resident's not-for-profit garden has become an open-to-the-public wonderland where visitors can explore a variety of gardens and walk the Fairy Trail, a charming wooded pathway dotted with miniature displays of fairy homes and villages.

10 Cub Creek Park WILKESBORO

Find serenity while watching winged beauties in the butterfly garden or hit one of four biking trails of varying intensities and lengths. There's also a fenced-in dog park where Fido can run free, complete with a watering station and fire hydrant.

11 De Hart Botanical Gardens LOUISBURG

Have your camera handy: Beauty reveals itself in myriad ways at this nature preserve, home to botanical gardens, carefully preserved forests and two easygoing hiking trails. One trail circles a peaceful lake filled with turtles and fish, and the other leads to a small waterfall.

12 Havens Gardens Park WASHINGTON

Pack your tackle box for pier fishing along the brackish waters of the Pamlico River, where you can reel in speckled trout, redfish and striped bass (license required). Rent boats, paddleboards, kayaks and more across the street.

13 N.C. Botanical Garden CHAPEL HILL

Roam through rare wildflowers in the Piedmont Habitat, check out the Salamander Pool in the Coastal Plain Habitat or step into the restored cabin of Pulitzer Prize-winning author Paul Green at this blossoming paradise dedicated to conserving native North Carolina plant species.

Outdoor NC Principle

TRASH YOUR TRASH

Pack it in, pack it out. Place all trash in garbage bags and carry it home. If adventuring with pets, plan to pack out their waste as well.



14 Ramsey Creek Park CORNELIUS

Perch at the pier, play a game of volleyball or let your pooch run leash-free at the dog area within this 43-acre waterfront park. There's also a swimming area with lifeguards on duty during beach hours from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

15 Sandhills Horticultural Gardens PINEHURST

Wander through a well-maintained woodland garden dotted with azaleas and rhododendrons, an interactive children's garden where little ones can learn about growing veggies, and other creatively cultivated spaces.

16 Treasure Point Park CAMDEN

Locals love this park for its quiet atmosphere, stunning views and peaceful bass fishing in the coastal waters of the Pasquotank River. Bring your watercraft of choice and a picnic for a full day of waterfront relaxation.

17 Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park WILSON

Thirty wind-powered kinetic sculptures designed by Wilson County native and farm gear repairman Vollis Simpson blow visitors away at this eye-catching park, which spans 2 acres. The site also hosts concerts and farmers markets throughout the year.

ACCESSIBLE

fun for all



The playground at **Havens Gardens Park** was designed with all-access fun in mind. Kids of all ages and abilities will enjoy the Washington park's wheelchair-friendly structures and play areas.



N.C. Botanical Garden, Chapel Hill



Havens Gardens Park, Washington



*firsts
that last*

FILM SERIES

Scan the QR code to watch Rick Bryson's short film about a first trip to the Cataloochee Valley that inspired his work to reintroduce elk to the region.



Cataloochee Valley,
Waynesville



**CREATURE
FEATURES**

► *What do salamanders, wild horses and elk have in common? They all call North Carolina home, and it's easy to spot them if you know where to look.*

18 Appalachian Rivers Aquarium

BRYSON CITY

Spend an afternoon surveying the aquarium's 13 tanks, three terrariums, and an exhibit showcasing the diverse species of frogs, turtles and salamanders (including the protected Eastern hellbender species) that inhabit the Southern Appalachians.

19 Wild Horses

COROLLA AND CAROVA

This northern Outer Banks swath of sand is a designated sanctuary for Colonial Spanish Mustangs that roam freely. Visitors are welcome to walk around the beaches and dunes of Corolla to view the horses, but you must keep a distance of at least 50 feet at all times. It's the law.

20 Cataloochee Valley

WAYNESVILLE

Drive through this valley in Great Smoky Mountains National Park to spot wild elk from Heintooga Spur Road. To increase your chances of seeing these majestic creatures, explore in the early morning, late evening, on cloudy summer days, and before or after a storm.



Charlotte Pride Festival and Parade, Charlotte



CELEBRATIONS

▶ *There's always a reason to celebrate in North Carolina, and this lineup of fabulously free events proves it.*

21 Carolina Alpaca Celebration CONCORD February

It's all about the alpacas at this two-day celebration with an alpaca parade and walking show with hundreds of them competing. You can also find vendors selling a variety of alpaca fiber items to take home.

22 PirateFest GREENVILLE April

Shake your (pirate) booty during concerts and stroll through a marauders encampment without worry of being kidnapped

or walking the plank. More swashbuckling attractions: costumed characters, food vendors, sword fighting, and a beer and wine garden.

23 WNC Bigfoot Festival MARION May

"Come a skeptic, leave a believer" is the motto here. Enter the Bigfoot Calling Contest (and see if the beast actually shows up) or stomp over to vendors for themed grub, such as a chocolate-drizzled doughnut dubbed Bigfoot Droppings.

24 Art on the Greene BANNER ELK May, July, August, September

Local and national artisans sell high-quality handcrafted goods like jewelry, pottery, furniture and one-of-a-kind art pieces at this seasonal market held at the historic Banner Elk School.

25 Outer Banks Watermelon Festival NAGS HEAD August

Take part in cheer-worthy traditions such as watermelon bowling and watermelon-eating competitions, and you may just come home with a prize. Cool off with a scoop of festival-inspired ice cream for that perfect watermelon sugar high.

26 Charlotte Pride Festival and Parade CHARLOTTE August

At Charlotte's biggest celebration of the LGBTQ+ community, wear your rainbow colors proudly during the annual parade and high-energy performances. A designated area for youth and families offers activities for ages 20 and younger.

27 BugFest RALEIGH September

Make a beeline for this tiny-creature extravaganza, where visitors can interact with entomologists, participate in the Arthropod Olympics, enjoy a street carnival, and munch on chef-prepared, bug-based dishes at Cafe Insecta.

28 Brushy Mountain Apple Festival NORTH WILKESBORO October

Sip cider, sample apple-based dishes, and peruse

handcrafted products such as pottery and baskets. Go early if you can — it gets pretty crowded when guests, hundreds of vendors and four live music stages fill downtown streets.

29 Cape Fear Kite Festival KURE BEACH November

Giant seahorses, flying pigs, dragons and other fantastical creations float through the shoreline sky at this colorful aerial spectacular. Live bands and food trucks keep things buzzing at ground level.

30 Wendell Wonderland WENDELL December

Take a trolley ride through historic downtown Wendell, see a synchronized light show, catch one of multiple holiday song-and-dance performances, or kick-start your holiday shopping at the handmade market. Santa sightings are possible, too.



PAW OF approval

The Cape Fear Kite Festival in Kure Beach welcomes well-behaved, leashed dogs to join in on the fun with their humans.

Cape Fear Kite Festival, Kure Beach



LOVE FROM NORTH CAROLINA

ENJOY TAR HEEL STATE TASTES, AROMAS AND ARTISTRY ANYTIME BY TAKING HOME (OR ORDERING IN) SENSORY SOUVENIRS. SHARING WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS IS OPTIONAL.

1



2



3



Famed Wilkes County moonshiner Willie Clay Call earned the nickname The Uncatchable for hauling liquor around in fast cars.

4



5





It's whatever fruits and veggies are in season that drives Boro's kombucha flavors. The Chapel Hill company sources its produce from local farmers.

writer **GARY THOMPSON**
 photographer **MARTY BALDWIN**

1 TOTES ADORBS

Southern charm meets Northern attitude in no-two-alike leather bags from **Home State Made** in Sanford, including the Bicoastal Backpack.

6 YOUR CUP OF TEA

Find a seat at **The Table** in Asheboro for breakfast or lunch, then take home some of their exclusive organic blended tea flavors to sip at your own table.

2 TOFFEE BREAK

Loving hands blend butter, sugar and chocolate into sweet treats at **The Durham Toffee Co.** Get your fix with the cherry-, coconut- and pretzel-studded Mash Up.

7 LET THEM EAT CAKE

Real rum gives the scratch-baked cakes from **Cape Fear Rum Cake** in Wilmington a six-month shelf life, but hey, no one can resist that long. Try a three-pack sampler of 5-ounce cakes.

3 LIQUID GOLD

Run by descendants of moonshiners, **Call Family Distillers** in Wilkesboro produces smooth spirits, including The Uncatchable Apple Pie Moonshine.

8 FERMENTED FAVES

Boro Beverage Co. in Chapel Hill crafts small batches of kombucha (fermented tea) in flavors inspired by the Piedmont's bounty. Growlers come in three different sizes.

4 HAPPY MAIL

Send messages in style with illustrated stickers and greeting cards from **Good Postage** in Charlotte. They use hand-drawn art and recycled paper.

9 RAISE THE BARS

Hit the beach every time you wash up with handmade bars from **Carolina Shores Natural Soap** in Surf City. Scents include Sun Kissed and Lucky Girl.

5 GOING NUTS

Among the locally made goodies at **Sweet Tea & Cornbread NC** in Raleigh: founder Tonya Council's Oprah-blessed Pecan Crisp Cookies. Treat someone (or yourself!) to a gift tin.

10 UNIQUE FINDS

White Trash & Colorful Accessories in Fayetteville has gifts to fit any recipient's passions, personality or perspective, like a perky Drink Local coffee mug.

ONE-STOP shop

At last count, more than 60 North Carolina counties were represented among items for sale at **Mike's Farm** in Beulaville. The farm's Products Barn opened in 2019 to showcase the variety of goods made in the Tar Heel State. The goal is to have something from all 100 counties.

NATIONAL

Treasures

North Carolina is blessed with some of the country's most distinctive and picturesque natural settings, many cared for by the National Park Service. Help yourself to a big slice of Americana by building your next getaway around one of these NPS sites.

writer **GARY THOMPSON**

Cataloochee Valley, Great Smoky
Mountains National Park



MOUNTAIN HIGHS

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

Within this vast natural sanctuary and at attractions in the surrounding area, hike through backcountry wilderness, reflect on stories of the past, and marvel at towering trees and powerful waters.

The largest protected land area east of the Rocky Mountains, Great Smoky Mountains National Park covers 522,000 acres, more than half in North Carolina. As you explore the area, stop by the **Franklin Gem and Mineral Museum** in Franklin to see fossils, artifacts of Indigenous people and fluorescent stones. Board the **Great Smoky Mountains Railroad** from the historic depot in Bryson City. Up for some cross training? The Raft and Rail option adds a guided whitewater rafting trip. On the park's southern border, **Fontana Lake** stretches 17 miles, thanks to Fontana Dam, the tallest dam east of the Rockies. Walk or drive across it and learn about its construction in the visitors center. See all the angles of angling at the **Fly Fishing Museum of the Southern Appalachians** in Bryson City. Exhibits show the evolution of rods and reels, plus the basics of knots, fly-tying, gear and game fish.



Fontana Lake,
Fontana Dam



DREAM BIG in SMALL TOWN NC

Fontana Village Resort, on the site where Fontana Dam work crews lived in the 1940s, now provides a great escape from work, with lodging, dining, a marina and more. It's in the town of Fontana Dam on the Appalachian Trail.

Learn more at VisitNC.com/dreambig



Great Smoky Mountains
Railroad, Bryson City



• MUST-SEE SHOW

Watch the riveting drama ***Unto These Hills*** under the stars at the Mountainside Theatre in Cherokee. The production tells the story of the Cherokee people, including the heartbreak of the "Trail of Tears."

• TRAIL MIX

Experience many of the park's natural and historical wonders via its trails. Three of the best are the **Oconaluftee River Trail** (3.1 miles round trip), which begins at the Oconaluftee Visitor Center; the **Mingus Creek Trail** (a moderately challenging 5.8 miles); and the **Smokemont Nature Trail** (0.75 miles round trip) at the Smokemont Campground.

• POET TREES

Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest, named for the poet who wrote "Trees," contains more than 100 species of the woody muses, many at least 400 years old. Some trees measure more than 20 feet around and 100 feet tall.

SHORE LEAVE

CAPE HATTERAS AND CAPE LOOKOUT NATIONAL SEASHORES

Draw a line in the sand — or cast one out — amid the striking terrain of the Outer Banks and barrier islands. The coast has long attracted people, nurtured wildlife and guided mariners.



Coquina Beach,
Nags Head



Cape Hatteras
Lighthouse, Buxton

CAPE HATTERAS

Cape Hatteras National Seashore lures waves of visitors, especially to **Coquina Beach**, a swim spot with a lifeguarded area and a bathhouse. Nearby **Bodie Island Lighthouse**, an 1872 beacon in black-and-white rugby stripes, still helps ships navigate. Take a 214-step climb to the top from late April through early fall. Farther south, take a snapshot of **Cape Hatteras Lighthouse**, also in black-and-white stripes. At 198 feet tall, it's the tallest brick light in the United States.

Chicamacomico Life-Saving Station in Rodanthe, built in 1874, was the first of several such outposts. In Salvo, a historical replica of that station houses **Pea Island Art Gallery**, a showcase for local and regional artists. Those artists find inspiration in nature, including **Buxton Woods**

Reserve, a
maritime
evergreen
forest atop
sand dunes.



• SEA HISTORY

Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum (named for the coast's alias) in Hatteras proves that lighthouses can't always save ships. The museum displays shipwreck artifacts, plus the original 1854 lens from the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse. The U.S. Life-Saving Service (the Coast Guard's predecessor) rescued many shipwreck victims.

• BIKE THE BEACH

See the shore on two wheels. **Island Cycles & Beach Gear Rentals** in Avon rents beach bikes, kayaks, paddleboards, beach chairs and umbrellas. As you enjoy the sand, keep your eyes (and ears) open for coastal birds. They use the shore to mate, nest and raise their offspring.

Outdoor NC Principle



CANINE ETIQUETTE

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



Bodie Island Lighthouse,
Nags Head

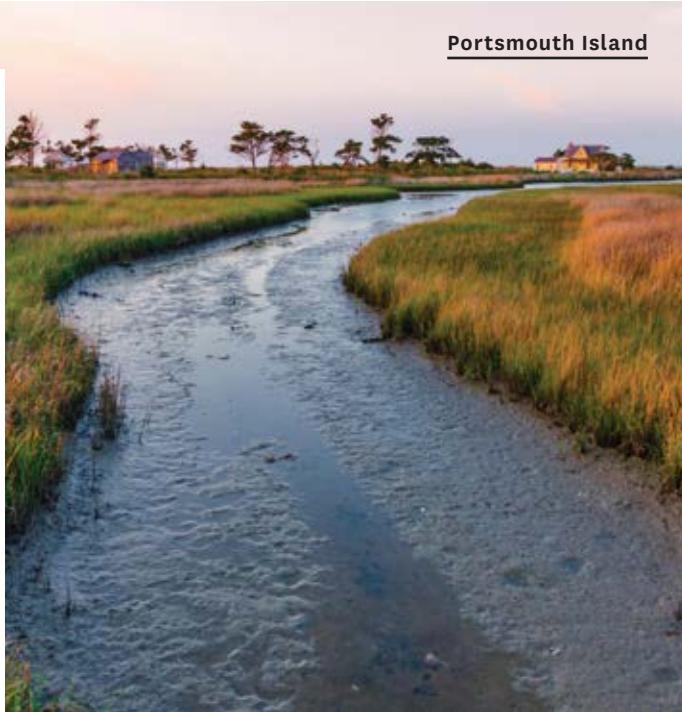




PHOTOGRAPHS: RICK ANDERSON, (HATTERAS) DAN WHITTAKER, (BODIE) STEVE YOCOM, (PORTSMOUTH) BAXTER MILLER, (SHACKLEFORD) KEVIN J. MIYAZAKI/REDUX

CAPE LOOKOUT

When you're not lolling on the beach, find a meal or a keepsake — surf-fishing and shelling are big at Cape Lookout National Seashore. For max beach time and privacy, rent a cabin at **Great Island Cabin Camp**, reachable only by boat. Amenities are few, but the coastal sights and sounds are spectacular. Exhibits on decoy carving, boatbuilding and commercial fishing catch your eye at **Core Sound Waterfowl Museum and Heritage Center** in Harkers Island. A Lookout Tower gives bird's-eye views of Core Sound, Back Sound, Barden's Inlet and Cape Lookout Lighthouse. Tour a sturgeon farm and sample fine caviar (with vodka) at nearby **Marshallberg Farm** in Smyrna. They produce osetra caviar through recirculating aquaculture systems, a sustainable way to source caviar from endangered sturgeon. On Portsmouth Island, see **Portsmouth Village**, a once thriving sea community turned coastal ghost town. Wander through well-preserved buildings, including a school, post office, general store and church. Cape Lookout's remote environs are perfect for stargazing. The seashore was recently certified as an International Dark Sky Park, the first one on the Atlantic coast.



Portsmouth Island



Shackleford Banks

● DIAMOND GEM

Cape Lookout Lighthouse, painted in black-and-white diamonds (to indicate compass directions), is the southernmost Outer Banks beacon and accessible only by ferry. Current renovations prevent climbs, but the exterior views are pretty fantastic, too.



● HORSES IN THE WILD

Head to **Shackleford Banks**, at the south end of Cape Lookout National Seashore, to search for wild horses that live there. If you spot some of the 100-plus members of the herd, admire their beauty from afar.

Outdoor NC Principle



KEEP WILDLIFE WILD

All wildlife should be treated with respect in the natural areas you are visiting. Observe creatures from a distance. Getting too close causes them undue stress and harm.





THE ULTIMATE SCENIC ROUTE

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

America's Favorite Drive winds 252 miles through Western North Carolina. Take the trip at a stress-reducing speed of 45 mph and make frequent stops for scenery and fun.

Begun in 1935 and completed in 1987, the Blue Ridge Parkway delivers eye-opening overlooks and protects biodiverse areas as part of the National Park Service. **Soco Falls**, a rare double cascade, makes a splash near Maggie Valley, a short drive from the parkway. It's a fairly easy downhill walk from a roadside parking area to the viewing platform. Swiss crosses and chalets set apart **Little Switzerland**, an Alpine-inspired enclave. Discover historic mines, shops, restaurants and lodging options. Zoom down Sugar Mountain at speeds up to

27 mph on the **Wilderness Run Alpine Coaster** in Banner Elk. The 2,390 feet of track through the forest includes banked turns and curves around boulders and trees. The great outdoors meets the great indoors at **Chetola Resort** in Blowing Rock, a 78-acre retreat. Go hiking, fly-fishing or canoeing, and enjoy well-appointed rooms, fine dining and a spa. **Western North Carolina Nature Center** in Asheville showcases 60 species of the region's wild and domestic animals, including prowling predators such as red and gray wolves, a bobcat, cougars, and a coyote. High elevations and low light pollution leave the parkway well

positioned for stargazing. A top spot is **Waterrock Knob** near Balsam. Its visitors center is the highest on the route, and a large parking area offers expansive sky views.





● **CROSS THAT BRIDGE**

Walk the Mile High Swinging Bridge for exhilarating 360-degree vistas atop **Grandfather Mountain** near Linville. And meet the resident wildlife — black bears, cougars, river otters, bald eagles and elk — housed in large enclosures.



● **CAVERNOUS BEAUTY**

Step inside a mountain at **Linville Caverns**, a trove of subterranean wonders deep within Humpback Mountain near Marion. See shimmering minerals and an underground stream (with trout) in the really cool venue (52 degrees year-round).

DREAM BIG
in
SMALL TOWN NC

Opened in 2021, the **Blue Ridge Boutique Hotel** in Spruce Pine is staffed by students from local Mayland Community College.

Each of the 16 rooms (soon to be 32) contains a photo of an area attraction, such as Bare Dark Sky Observatory.

Learn more at VisitNC.com/dreambig



Carl Sandburg Home,
Flat Rock

NATIONAL MEMORIALS AND HISTORIC SITES

North Carolina has been the playing field for game-changing people and decisive moments in American history. Relive the action at these storied landmarks.

Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site

● **FLAT ROCK**

The “Poet of the People” moved to North Carolina in 1945, settling on a 262-acre farm called Connemara. Sandburg published more than one-third of his works during 22 years here. Tour the home itself, walk trails around the property and pet descendants of prize-winning goats proudly raised by Sandburg’s wife.

Fort Raleigh National Historic Site

● **MANTEO**

Explore England’s first settlement in the New World, plus the cultural heritage of Native Americans, European Americans and African Americans who have lived on Roanoke Island. Learn the mystery of the island’s Lost Colony at the visitors center and during outdoor performances of *The Lost Colony* at the Waterside Theatre.

Guilford Courthouse National Military Park

● **GREENSBORO**

The 1781 battle here changed the course of the Revolutionary War in the Southern Colonies. Though American forces lost, their fierce resistance caused the British to soon abandon the Carolinas. Tour the battlefield on foot, examine artifacts from the fighting and view moving monuments.

Moore’s Creek National Battlefield

● **CURRIE**

Walk remnants of the road taken by Patriots and Loyalists to their 1776 battle, one of the first in the South during the Revolutionary War — and the first big Patriot victory. A trail with wayside exhibits leads through the battlefield and across Moore’s Creek bridge.



Wright Brothers National Memorial

● **KILL DEVIL HILLS**

Brothers Wilbur and Orville made the first successful powered flights here in 1903; the longest lasted about a minute and reached 120 feet. Trace the paths of those initial attempts, see a life-size replica of the 1903 Wright Flyer in the visitors center and hike to a monument atop Big Kill Devil Hill.

Local Information Sources

MOUNTAINS

Alexander County VC,

316 Hiddenite Church Rd., Hiddenite 28636; (828) 632-6966; hiddenitearts.org

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 2, Banner Elk 28604; (828) 898-5605; averycounty.com

Beech Mountain TDA,

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

Blowing Rock TDA,

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

Advertising Partner, p. 3

Boone Area VB,

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

Advertising Partner, p. 3

Brevard-Transylvania County Tourism,

175 E. Main St., Brevard 28712; (828) 884-8900; explorebrevard.com

Advertising Partner, p. 62

Burnsville-Yancey C of C,

106 W. Main St., Burnsville 28714; (828) 682-7413; yanceychamber.com

Advertising Partner, p. 45

Caldwell County C of C,

1909 Hickory Blvd. SE, Lenoir 28645; (828) 726-0616; caldwelchambernc.com

Cherokee C of C & VC,

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

Cherokee County TDA,

20 Tennessee St., Murphy 28906; (828) 557-0602; visitcherokeecountync.com

Cherokee Welcome Center,

498 Tsali 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

Advertising Partner, p. 1



Franklin Area C of C,

98 Hyatt Rd., Franklin 28734; (828) 524-3161; franklin-chamber.com

Advertising Partner, p. 40



Graham County T & TA,

474 Rodney Orr Byp., Robbinsville 28771; (828) 479-3790;

grahamcountytravel.com

Advertising Partner, p. 107

Haywood County TDA,

1110 Soco Rd., Maggie Valley 28751; (828) 944-0761; visitncsmokies.com

Advertising Partner, p. 25

Highlands C of C,

108 Main St., Highlands 28741; (828) 526-2112; highlandschamber.org

Advertising Partner, p. 15

Jackson County TDA,

773 W. Main St., Sylva 28779; (828) 586-2155; discoverjacksonnc.com

Advertising Partner, p. 40

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

Mitchell County C of C,

79 Parkway Rd., Spruce Pine 28777; (828) 765-9483; craftyouradventure.com



Morganton/Burke County TDA,

110 E. Meeting St., Morganton 28655; (828) 433-6793; discoverburkecounty.com

NC High Country Host,

6370 US Hwy. 321 S., Blowing Rock 28605; (828) 264-1299; highcountryhost.com

Advertising Partner, p. 2-3

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

Advertising Partner, p. 43

Rutherford County TDA,

146 N. Main St., Rutherfordton 28139; (828) 287-6113; visitncsmalltowns.com

Advertising Partner, p. 62

Smoky Mountain Host,

4437 Georgia Rd., Franklin 28734; (828) 369-9606; visitsmokies.org

Sugar Mountain Tourism,

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

Advertising Partner, p. 2

Swain County TDA,

2 Everett St., Bryson City 28713; (828) 488-7857; explorebrysoncity.com

Advertising Partner, inside front cover



Valdese Dept. of Tourism,

400 Main St., Valdese 28690; (828) 879-2126; visitvaldese.com

Visit Banner Elk,

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

Visit Hendersonville,

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

Advertising Partner, p. 51

Wilkes C of C,

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

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Alamance County VB,

200 S. Main St., Burlington 27215; (336) 570-1444; visitalamance.com

Advertising Partner, p. 55

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

Advertising Partner, p. 49

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 Regional VC,

501 S. College St., Charlotte 28202; (704) 331-2700; charlottesgotolot.com

Advertising Partner, p. 8-9

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



Dunn Area TA,

103 E. Cumberland St.,

Dunn 28334;

(910) 892-3282; dunntourism.org

Advertising Partner, p. 45

Explore Nash County,

1104 Falls Rd., Rocky Mount 27804; (252) 972-5080; explorenashcounty.com

Advertising Partner, p. 21

Fayetteville Area CVB,

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

Advertising Partner, p. 5

Franklin County TDA,

113 Market St., Louisburg 27549; (919) 340-4646; franklincountync.gov/community/tourism

Gaston County Dept. of Tourism,

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

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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

Advertising Partner, p. 55

Heart of North Carolina VB,

500 Albemarle Rd., Asheboro 27203; (336) 626-0364; heartofnorthcarolina.com

Advertising Partner, p. 54

Hickory Metro CVB,

1960 13th Ave. Dr. SE, Hickory 28602; (828) 322-1335; visithickorymetro.com

Advertising Partner, p. 37

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

Advertising Partner, p. 37, 107

Lake Norman CVB,

19900 W. Catawba Ave., Suite 102, Cornelius 28031; (704) 987-3300; visitlakenorman.org

Advertising Partner, p. 37

Lexington TA,

2 N. Main St., Lexington 27292; (336) 236-4218; visitlexingtonnc.com

Advertising Partner, p. 54

Lincolnton-Lincoln County C of C,

101 E. Main St., Lincolnton 28092; (704) 735-3096; lincolinchambernc.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; discoveruwaharrie.com

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

Advertising Partner, p. 11

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
Advertising Partner, p. 53

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; visitrockinghamcountync.com
Advertising Partner, p. 54

Rowan County CVB, 204 E. Innes St., Suite 280, Salisbury 28144; (704) 638-3100; visitsalisburync.com

Scotland County TDA, 507 W. Covington St., Laurinburg 28353; (910) 277-3149; visitnc-soul.com

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

 **Statesville CVB**, 300 S. Center St., Statesville 28677; (704) 878-3480; visitstatesville.com
Advertising Partner, p. 49

Stokes County Tourism, 1014 Main St., Danbury 27016; (336) 593-2496; hangingrock.com
Advertising Partner, p. 55

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 28111; (704) 289-4567; unioncountycoc.com

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

Visit Cleveland County, 200 S. Lafayette St., Shelby 28150; (704) 484-4804; landofrhythm.com

Visit High Point, 1634 N. Main St., Suite 102, High Point 27262; (336) 884-5255; visithighpoint.com
Advertising Partner, p. 55

Visit Raleigh, 500 Fayetteville St., Raleigh, 27601; (919) 834-5900; visitraleigh.com



Visit Sanford, 106 Charlotte Ave., Sanford 27330; (919) 718-4659; visitsanfordnc.com
Advertising Partner, p. 62, 107

Visit the Yadkin Valley, 257 Standard St., Elkin 28621; (336) 526-1111; yadkinvalley.org/visitor-information

Visit Winston-Salem, 200 Brookstown Ave., Winston-Salem 27101; (336) 728-4200; visitwinstonsalem.com
Advertising Partner, p. 19

Warren County EDC, 501 US Hwy. 158 Bus. E., Warrenton 27589; (252) 257-3114; warrencounty.com

Wilson VB, 209 Broad St., Wilson 27893; (252) 243-8440; wilson-nc.com

Yadkin County C of C, 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
Advertising Partner, p. 47

Currituck County Dept. of Tourism, 106 Caratoke Hwy., Moyock 27958; (252) 435-2947; visitcurrituck.com
Advertising Partner, p. 12

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
Advertising Partner, p. 47

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)

Greenville-Pitt County CVB, 417 Cotanche St., Suite 100, Greenville 27858; (252) 329-4200; visitgreenvillenc.com
Advertising Partner, p. 47

 **Halifax County CVB**, 260 Premier Blvd., Roanoke Rapids 27870; (252) 535-1687; visithalifax.com

Hyde County EDC, 30 Oyster Creek Rd., Swan Quarter 27885; (252) 926-4178; hydecourtnc.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 28505; (252) 522-0004; visitkinston.com

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
Advertising Partner, p. 17

New Bern-Craven County CVB, 316 S. Front St., New Bern 28563; (252) 637-9400; visitnewbern.com
Advertising Partner, p. 31

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; (877) 629-4386; outerbanks.org
Advertising Partner, p. 7

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

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

Visit Elizabeth City, 501 S. Water St., Elizabeth City, 27909; (252) 335-5330; visitelizabethcity.com
Advertising Partner, p. 59

Visit Goldsboro, 308 N. William St., Goldsboro 27530; (919) 734-7922; visitgoldsboronc.com

Visit Ocracoke, 278 Irvin Garrish Hwy., Ocracoke 27960; (252) 928-6711; visitocracokenc.com

Washington County TDA, 105 E. 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
Advertising Partner, p. 27

Windsor-Bertie County C of C, 121 E. Granville St., Windsor 27983; (252) 794-4277; windsorbertieschamber.com



Downtown Goldsboro

State Information Sources

STATE AGENCIES

NC Agritourism Office,

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

NC Arts Council, 4632 MSC, Raleigh 27601;
(919) 814-6500; ncarts.org

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

NC Dept. of Transportation - Bicycle & Pedestrian Transportation, 1552 MSC, Raleigh 27601; (919) 707-2600;
ncdot.gov/divisions/bike-ped

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

NC Historic Sites, 4620 MSC, Raleigh 27601; (919) 814-7150; historicites.nc.gov

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

NC Wildlife Resources Commission, 1701 MSC, Raleigh 27601; (919) 707-0040;
ncwildlife.org

NC's Amtrak Service, 1553 MSC, Raleigh 27601; (800) 298-7246; ncbytrain.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, I-77 at Mile Marker 105, Dobson 27017;
(336) 320-2181

I-77 South NC Welcome Center, I-77 at Mile Marker 1, Charlotte 28241;
(704) 588-2660

I-85 North NC Welcome Center, I-85 at Mile Marker 231, 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 Exit 48, Fayetteville 28302;
(910) 422-8314

NC Welcome Centers & Tourism Call Center, 4324 MSC, Raleigh 27601;
(800) 847-4862;
<https://www.visitnc.com/welcome-centers>

GENERAL INFORMATION

Blue Ridge National Heritage Area, 195 Hemphill Knob Rd., Asheville 28803;
(828) 298-5330; blueridgeheritage.com

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

NC Restaurant & Lodging Association, 222 N. Person St., Ste. 210, Raleigh 27601;
(919) 844-0098; ncrla.org

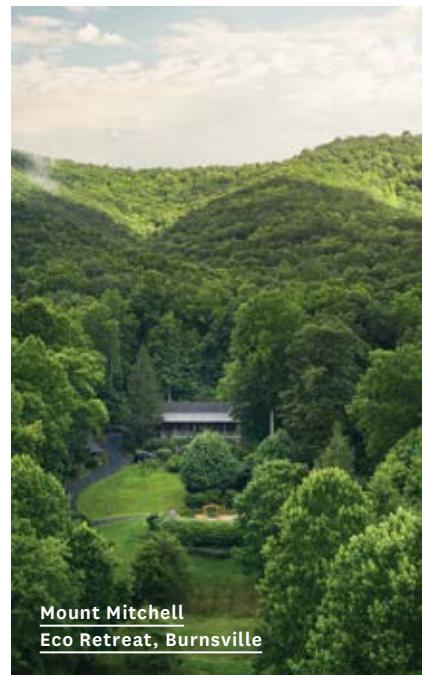
NC Ski Areas Association, PO Box 369, Banner Elk 28604;
goskinc.com

Emerald Isle Realty

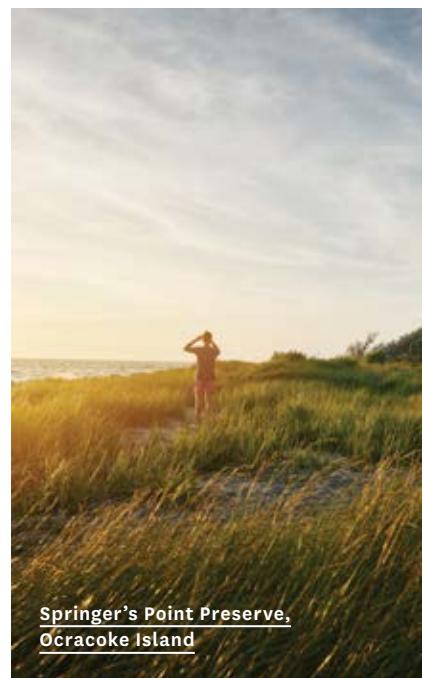
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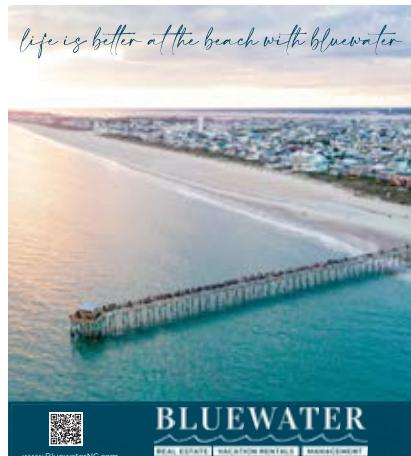
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Visit Carowinds.com for park information, calendar and tickets.

Charlotte, NC | Fort Mill, SC

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Where Business Comes Naturally

Host your conference, trainings or retreats at Haw River State Park. 4 large meeting spaces up to 125 people, minutes from the Triad area.

Haw River State Park
www.ncparks.gov/meetings



GRAHAM COUNTY
NC

Your Natural Destination

GrahamCountyTravel.com

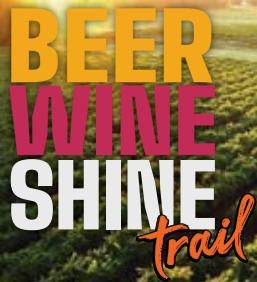


We invite you to come travel our winding roads or trek our trails as you explore beautiful lakes, roaring rivers, quiet streams, amazing waterfalls, pristine night sky and ancient forests.

We are a frontier, one of the last unspoiled places for friends and family to gather in nature's playground. Come discover Graham County. Experience a place where land and water will nourish your soul and natural adventures will renew your spirit.



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Robbinsville, NC 28771
828.479.3790



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Johnston County
SMITHFIELD, NC

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Find inspiration at every turn at Reynolda in Winston-Salem

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—your—
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The beauty of North Carolina is in the eye of the camera holder. Grab some besties, strike a pose and tag your favorite scenes with [#visitnc](https://twitter.com/visitnc) on social media for a chance to be featured online or in a future travel guide!





Goose Creek State Park, Washington

CUTE ENCOUNTERS

Get your fix of “adorable” while learning a wildlife lesson or two at these Insta-perfect animal attractions.



- 1 @BISASSY_1** Walk through continent-themed aviaries at Sylvan Heights Bird Park in Scotland Neck. Self-guided or guided tours provide an up-close experience with more than 2,000 waterfowl, parrots, toucans, flamingos and other exotic birds.
- 2 @LEMURSCIENTIST** Cuddling is off limits (as tempting as it is), but you can hang around more than 200 lemurs across 14 species at Duke Lemur Center in Durham. It’s home to the world’s largest, most diverse lemur population outside of Madagascar.
- 3 @NAOMIRANGELPHOTOGRAPHY** Meet giraffes, African elephants, polar bears, rhinos, gorillas, barking tree frogs (yes, they’re a thing) and hundreds of other creatures at North Carolina Zoo — the world’s largest natural habitat zoo — in Asheboro.
- 4 @A_RACHELLELOVE** Pose with a “family” of chickens, alpacas and other furry friends at Winchester Creek Farm in Waynesville.

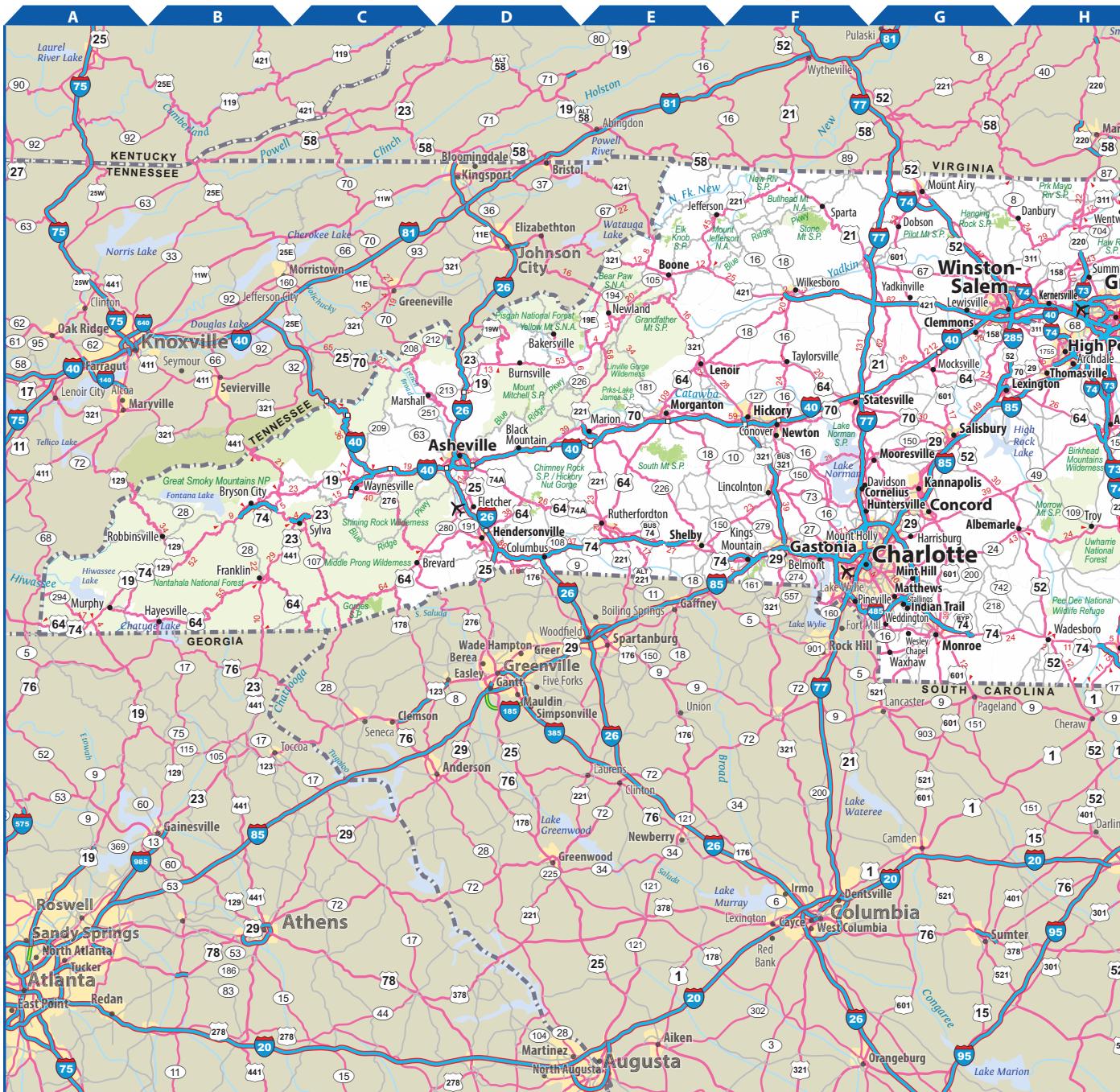


Your Outdoor Playground Awaits



Outdoor adventures can be found here.
HIKE, PADDLE, CLIMB and UNWIND
in Gaston County, North Carolina.
GoGastonNC.org/get-outdoors





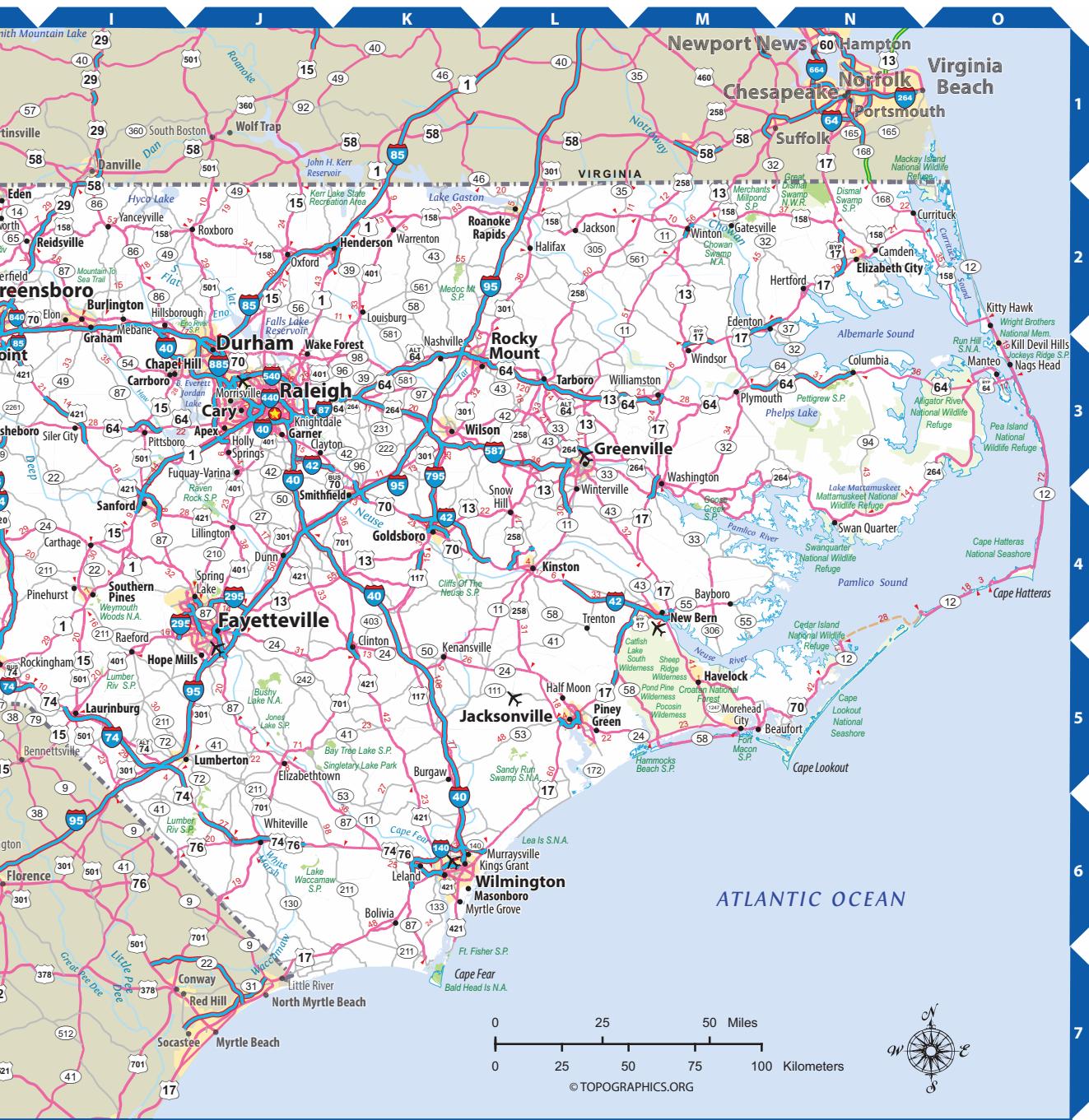
COUNTY SEATS AND 100 LARGEST CITIES AND TOWNS BY POPULATION

Name.....	Map Grid
Albemarle.....	G4
Apex.....	J3
Archdale.....	H3
Asheboro.....	H3
Asheville.....	D3
Bakersville.....	D3
Beaufort.....	M5
Bayboro.....	M4
Belmont.....	F4
Black Mountain.....	D3
Bolivia.....	K6
Boone.....	E2
Brevard.....	C4
Bryson City.....	B4
Burgaw.....	K5
Burlington.....	I2
Burnsville.....	D3
Camden.....	N2
Carboro.....	I3
Carthage.....	I4
Cary.....	J3
Chapel Hill.....	I3
Charlotte.....	G4
Clayton.....	J3
Clemmons.....	G3
Clinton.....	K5
Columbia.....	N3
Columbus.....	D4
Concord.....	G4

Conover.....	F3
Cornelius.....	F4
Currituck.....	N2
Danbury.....	H2
Davidson.....	F4
Dobson.....	G2
Dunn.....	J4
Durham.....	J3
Eden.....	H2
Edenton.....	M2
Elon.....	I2
Elizabeth City.....	N2
Elizabethtown.....	J5
Fayetteville.....	J5
Fletcher.....	D4
Franklin.....	B4
Fuquay-Varina.....	J4
Garner.....	J3
Gastonia.....	F4

Gatesville.....	M2
Goldsboro.....	K4
Graham.....	I3
Greensboro.....	H2
Greenville.....	L3
Halifax.....	L2
Harrisburg.....	G4
Havelock.....	M5
Hayesville.....	B5
Henderson.....	K2
Hendersonville.....	D4
Hertford.....	N2
Hickory.....	F3
High Point.....	H3
Hillsborough.....	I2
Holly Springs.....	J3
Hope Mills.....	I5
Huntersville.....	F4
Indian Trail.....	G4

Jackson.....	
Jacksonville.....	
Jefferson.....	
Kannapolis.....	
Kenansville.....	
Kernersville.....	
Kings Mountain.....	
Kinston.....	
Knightdale.....	
Laurinburg.....	
Leland.....	
Lenoir.....	
Lewisville.....	
Lexington.....	
Lillington.....	
Lincolnton.....	
Louisburg.....	
Lumberton.....	



.....L2	Manteo.....O3	Newton.....F3	Siler City.....I3	Warrenton.....K2
.....L5	Marion.....E3	Oxford.....J2	Smithfield.....J4	Washington.....M4
.....E2	Marshall.....C3	Pinehurst.....I4	Snow Hill.....L4	Waxhaw.....G5
.....G4	Matthews.....G4	Pineville.....G4	Southern Pines.....I4	Waynesville.....C4
.....K5	Mebane.....I3	Pittsboro.....I3	Sparta.....F2	Weddington.....G5
.....H2	Mint Hill.....G4	Plymouth.....M3	Spring Lake.....J4	Wentworth.....H2
.....E4	Mocksville.....G3	Raeford.....I5	Stallings.....G4	Wesley Chapel.....G5
.....L4	Monroe.....G5	Raleigh.....J3	Statesville.....F3	Whiteville.....J6
.....J3	Mooresville.....G3	Reidsville.....H2	Summerfield.....H2	Wilkesboro.....F2
.....I5	Morehead City.....M5	Roanoke Rapids.....L2	Swan Quarter.....N4	Williamston.....M3
.....K6	Morganton.....E3	Robbinsville.....B4	Sylva.....C4	Wilmington.....K6
.....E3	Morrisville.....J3	Rockingham.....H5	Tarboro.....L3	Wilson.....K3
.....G2	Mount Airy.....G2	Rocky Mount.....L3	Taylorsville.....F3	Windsor.....M3
.....G3	Mount Holly.....F4	Roxboro.....J2	Thomasville.....H3	Winston-Salem.....G2
.....I4	Murphy.....A4	Rutherfordton.....E4	Trenton.....L4	Winterville.....L4
.....F4	Nashville.....K3	Salisbury.....G3	Troy.....H4	Winton.....M2
.....K2	New Bern.....M4	Sanford.....I4	Wadesboro.....H5	Yadkinville.....G2
.....I5	Newland.....E3	Shelby.....E4	Wake Forest.....J3	Yanceyville.....I2

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