



Leisure Pursuits

LEISURE AT FIRE MOUNTAIN

At Fire Mountain, from season to glorious season Mother Nature turns on her charm, works her magic and orchestrates the drama of Earth's eternal rhythm. Serenity and privacy are our gifts to you. Time here belongs to you, so feel free to do with it what you may. Now you have found your own private place ...a private, serene, vibrant, and peaceful mountaintop in the Blue Ridge Mountains ...in the highlands ...of Western North Carolina.

Spring (March – June)

In the spring warm winds breathe new life into Fire Mountain. Pools of trillium appear deep in our forests, the flaming azaleas illuminate the side of the mountains, and wildflowers of every color add their subtle fragrance to our open mountaintop meadows.

Summer (June – September)

Summer's warmth soon fills the trees with green, and sunlight filters playfully through our forest canopy. It's a time of pleasant days, deliciously cool nights, and morning mists that float through the valleys below us like rivers in the air.

Fall (September – November)

When our apples ripen you know autumn has arrived. Lush green leaves change to brilliant shades of red and gold at our very high elevation before autumn makes its way down into the valleys. The scent of crackling hickory rises from our chimney tops. Pumpkins and Indian corn appear in our fields, apple cider is served by the fireside and we celebrate the bounties of our mountaintop harvest.

Winter (November - March)

Fire Mountain Winter pleasures are many ...crystal clear air ...the rime ice glistening in the morning light ...the rush of a downhill ski run ...soft and beautiful snowfalls ...the comfort of friends gathered close around a fire at the end of a perfect day ...

Many guests come to Fire Mountain just to relax and unwind in its elegantly natural and secluded atmosphere. Others come to rejuvenate and nurture relationships. There are also many things to do right here at Fire Mountain:

- You can catch a sunset from in front of a bonfire. Every Saturday evening we light a bonfire on top of Fire Mountain prior to sunset that will lift your heart after your evening meal, weather permitting of course. Bring a blanket and your favorite refreshment.
- Observe the wildlife in our beautiful wildlife sanctuary
- Sunbathe from your deck on top of our mountain
- Sit in your hot tub and watch falling stars
- Observe & absorb God's natural beauty
- Enjoy sunrises / sunsets / beautiful views from the top of the mountain
- You can hike directly from your accommodation on three trails
- Sit in front of a fire
- Read a great book
- Sleep to your heart's content
- Listen to the sounds of nature
- Do some serious bird watching
- Roam around the property and explore the springs, streams, woods, waterfalls
- Visit and enjoy the Art Gallery
- Site Sculpture is located throughout the grounds for your enjoyment
- Massage therapy may be just what the doctor or a romantic evening requires
- Lounge and daydream
- Enjoy Gentle Days filled with peace, quiet and serenity

- Breathe in cool and clean mountain air that feels like velvet on your skin
- Roaming hawks and soaring falcons flying in the heavens above you just out of your reach
- Order a Fire Mountain gourmet lunch or dinner to enjoy on your deck or the trails and grounds
- Your photography may capture a life experience and the beauty of nature

AREA LEISURE

Now you know ...Fire Mountain is either "the place" to experience "it" or you will come to know from the following that Fire Mountain is "the base" from which to experience "it":

During your stay at Fire Mountain you may choose from a vast and wonderful array of leisure activities in the area. The surrounding villages of the highlands offer much in the way of varied and exceptional cuisine, unique antique and art galleries from primitive to contemporary, exciting **events** and many special attractions. Our entire area is one enormous resort area with more to do than you will have time to pursue and enjoy. Therefore it is important for you to think about what you would like to do and experience during your visit. Our staff is always ready to help guide you, direct you and map you into what ever you may desire to do while here in the highlands. Take a few minutes and discover some of the options available to you for many enjoyable and exciting things to experience during your visit. Exploring this section may help you know what you desire to pursue while visiting Fire Mountain and the highlands of Western North Carolina. Fire Mountain is located in the heart of one of America's most beautiful and interesting getaway and vacation lands.

We desire that you have a wonderful visit no matter what you choose to experience while staying at Fire Mountain. Following is a listing of leisure pursuits in the area that we recommend with contact information and, where applicable, we have a link directly to the appropriate web site. All are within an hour and a half of Fire Mountain. Most are within an hour of Fire Mountain with the majority being located within thirty minutes from the top of Fire Mountain. Enjoy!

ACTIVE OUTDOORS

Fly Fishing – world-renowned fisherman Jerry Anselmo and his Great Smokey Mountain Fish Camp & Safari is the preeminent fishing guide service and the premier outfitting service in Western North Carolina. This is the place for guided fishing expeditions. Jerry and his guides are exceptional. In the heart of the Great Smokey Mountains swift-running clear and cold streams drop from the high ridges and create one of the best fisheries in the country here in the rivers of the Highlands. Expeditions from ½ day up to two days may be arranged which may include gourmet lunches and dinners. www.fishcamp.biz 828.369.5295 You may also reserve Fire Mountain's "Fishing Expedition" from the **specials** section of our website.

Hiking – to the top of mountains or along rivers and through forests. The famous Appalachian and Bartram Trails cross nearby. The Fire Mountain staff is very connected to the outdoors and our Guest Services and Reception Office is set up to guide you and map you to your preferred hikes. You have trails in five national forests and one national park to choose from. Western North Carolina is a mountain hiking paradise.

Quiet Water Fishing – once again world-renowned Jerry Anselmo and his guides are the absolute best and Great Smokey Mountain Fish Camp & Safari is located on the Little Tennessee River which is renowned the world over for quiet river fishing. www.fishcamp.biz 828.369.5295

Whitewater Rafting – the headwaters for the Southeast's most spectacular rivers are right here in the Southern Highlands. Take the ride of your life on any of six rivers with the original whitewater outfitter in the Smokies, Nantahala Outdoor Center. Class I – IV rapids. These folks have many Olympians and National Champions on staff and provide the highest quality whitewater experience possible. Professional whitewater slalom kayaking instruction is also available. www.noc.com 800.232.7238

Canopy Tours – a soaring zip lining experience through the trees. Everyone wonders what it's like to fly! Now is your chance. If you have never experienced this thrill you should. Great for adults and children. Canopy Tours last about 3 hours. Chattooga Ridge Canopy Tours www.chattoogaridgecanopytours.com 800.451.9972 and Nantahala Gorge Canopy Tours www.nantahalagorgecanopytours.com 877.398.6222

Water Sports – mountain lakes abound in the high elevations here in the Smokies. Lake Glenville and Nantahala Lake are two of the largest and sit at very high elevations. Both lakes offer house or pontoon boating / water skiing / fishing and swimming. Cliffside Lake has a beautiful beach for sunning and swimming, many picnic pavilions with grills made of stone, great for the family and kids and a leisure day of picnicking, swimming, canoeing, hiking around the lake, sunning and quiet water fishing. Pre-order a Gourmet Box Lunch Picnic for your excursion from the **cuisine** section of our website.

Quiet River Rafting, Canoeing, Kayaking and Tubing – again we highly recommend the Little Tennessee River and Great Smokey Fish Camp & Safari. They can provide the canoe, kayak, duckie or

just the right size tube and have a gourmet lunch waiting in a riverside gazebo at the end of your ride for you to enjoy. This can make for an unbelievable day on a most wonderful river in the Smoky Mountains.

Mountain Biking – the Tasli (pronounced SAH-lee) Trails in the Nantahala National Forest in the high elevations overlooking Lake Fontana, with great views of the spectacular Great Smoky Mountains National Park, has 38 miles of mountain biking trails. North Carolina’s national forests also offer 93 other mountain biking trails. Mountain biking in the Smokies is as good as it gets, and you can enjoy it year-round! You also can bike directly from Fire Mountain. Bring your own or Smoky Mountain Bicycles at 828.369.2881 www.smokymtnbikes.com will be most happy to provide one for you.

Cycling – in the mountains is an unbelievable thrill. Our staff at Guest Services can guide and map you. You also have the ability to leave directly from the top of Fire Mountain if you choose. Bring your bike and make sure you pre-order a Fire Mountain Gourmet Lunch Picnic prior to your arrival from the **cuisine** section of our website to take with you on the day of your excursion.

Golf – the Southern Highlands are a golfing paradise with over 20 public, semi-private and private golf courses. These golf courses are some of the prettiest and most challenging mountain golf courses in the world, all of which have spectacular mountain views. Internationally famous golfer Bobby Jones’ second home was built at Highlands Country Club and he assisted in the design of the clubs renowned golf courses. Green fees for 18 holes run from \$20 to \$75 at these courses with most including a cart in the fee. All of these courses are located within a two to twenty-five mile radius of Fire Mountain. If you are a member of a private club in your area you may find that your private club has a reciprocal arrangement with one or all of the private clubs here in the Southern Highlands.

Public Courses

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|---------------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Apple Mountain Golf Club | Clarkesville, GA | 706.754.2255 |
| Sapphire Mountain Golf Club | Sapphire, NC | 828.743.1174 |
| Franklin Golf Course | Franklin, NC | 828.524.2288 |
| High Hampton Inn & Country Club | Cashiers, NC | 828.743.2450 |
| Kingwood Golf Resort | Clayton, GA | 706.212.4100 |
| Mill Creek Country Club | Franklin, NC | 828.524.4653 |
| Parker Meadows Golf Course | Franklin, NC | 828.369.8008 |
| Rabun County Golf Club | Clayton, GA | 706.782.5500 |
| Red Bird Golf Links | Sapphire, NC | 828.743.1991 |
| Sky Valley Resort | Sky Valley, GA | 706.746.5303 |
| Smoky Mountains Country Club | Whittier, NC | 828.497.4653 |

Semi-Private Golf Courses

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|------------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Mountain Harbour Golf Course | Hayesville, NC | 800.577.4020 |
| Orchard Golf & Country Club | Clarkesville, GA | 706.754.3156 |

Private Golf Courses

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|---------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Chattooga Putting Club | Cashiers, NC | 828.743.3628 |
| Country Club of Sapphire Valley | Sapphire, NC | 828.743.2464 |
| Cullasaja Club | Highlands, NC | 828.526.3531 |
| Headwaters Golf Club | Cashiers, NC | 828.743.6047 |
| Highlands Country Club | Highlands, NC | 828.526.3771 |
| Highlands Falls Country Club | Highlands, NC | 828.526.2189 |
| Old Edwards Club | Highlands, NC | 828-526-4185 |
| Trillium Links & Lake Club | Cashiers, NC | 828.743.4251 |
| Wade Hampton Golf Club | Cashiers, NC | 828.743.5950 |
| Wildcat Cliffs Country Club | Highlands, NC | 828.526.2164 |

Rock Climbing – Whiteside Mountain located between Highlands and Cashiers, NC has an elevation of over 5,000’ with its south side being solid exposed rock with a vertical drop of over 750’ making it one of the premier locations for rock climbing in the southeastern United States. The season is August 16 to January 14 of each year. The area is closed during the rest of the year to protect peregrine falcon nest sites. Peregrine falcons, the world’s fastest bird, were close to extinction a few years ago. Season may reopen before August 15 if the peregrine chicks leave their nest earlier.

Downhill Skiing & Snow Boarding – The most southern ski slope in the United States is located 45 minutes north of the entrance to Fire Mountain. Cataloochee Sking & Snowboarding is the place. www.cataloochee.com

Snow Tubing & Ice Skating – Scaly Mountain Outdoor Center is located within 5 minutes of the entrance to Fire Mountain and offers the absolute best for snow tubing and ice skating. Snow tubing is

maximum fun for "all ages" and is much safer than snow boarding or downhill skiing and requires no experience. www.scalymountain.com

Horseback Riding – Go for an unbelievable wilderness riding adventure on hundreds of acres in the very high elevations of the Southern Highlands. English and Western style riding for young, old, experienced or novice. Trails to majestic mountain tops and picturesque valleys along babbling brooks. Arabians, Appaloosas & Walkers. Also lunch and dinner rides. An acclimation is given up front to make sure that you are compatible with your horse and to be sure that you are informed of all safety measures. This "best of horseback riding in the highlands" is Arrowmont Stables. www.arrowmont.com

Jogging – bring your jogging shoes and leave directly from the top of Fire Mountain on trails that are one to ten miles in length. Challenging courses and spectacular views along the way with interesting terrain make a morning jog from the top of Fire Mountain exhilarating.

Camping – each year we have folks that love to "rough it" a little and camp in our surrounding national forests and then come to the top of Fire Mountain for some pampering and comfort and rest prior to returning to the outside world. Standing Indian and Van Hook Glade Camping areas are located nearby. They both are located in the Nantahala National Forest in beautiful areas next to lakes and rivers.

Tennis – at the Woodruff Civic Center. An hourly fee is charged and courts may be reserved one day in advance but only in person because no phone reservations are accepted. ½ mile from Main Street on 64 East. 828.526.3556

FOR KIDS ONLY

Scaly Mountain Outdoor Center – located minutes from the entrance to Fire Mountain this is the place for snow tubing, ice skating and trout fishing for kids of all ages. Parents that do not desire to participate can enjoy the activities from the Downhill Grill that overlooks all activities at the center. Extremely popular in the winter months! www.scalymountain.com 828.526.3737

Highlands Nature Center Children's Programs – The Nature Center is maintained by the Highlands Biological Station as a public educational facility that emphasizes the natural heritage of the Southern Appalachians. The Nature Center maintains educational exhibits that interpret for the public the rich biodiversity of the Highlands area. Classes for children are taught by qualified staff members throughout the summer. Each class encourages students to learn about nature through hands-on activities and short area hikes. Highlands Nature Center is a member of the University of North Carolina, administered by Western Carolina University. www.wcu.edu/hbs/Naturecenter.htm 828.526.2623

Ultimate Kids Rafting – "The ultimate whitewater rafting trip for younger kids". Blue Ridge Outing Company has provided this great service for kids since 1988 on the Tuckasegee River. They take kids as young as 4 years of age! All trips are guide-assisted. Younger kids should be comfortable with water and a little bit of a go-getter. Access www.raftwithkids.com or call 800.572.3510 for reservations.

Fun Factory – premier destination for family friendly entertainment. Go-carts, laser tag, bowling, arcade, mini-golf, child's play, animal , the Boiler Room Restaurant, Pizza Factory, Dessert Factory and Snack Shack. 1024 Georgia Road, Franklin, NC. www.funfactoryfranklin.com 866.482.2386

ARTS & ENRICHMENT

The Bascom Center for the Visual Arts – The Bascom provides audiences of all ages with stimulating, diverse exhibitions, studio art instruction and cultural experiences. They are located on a six-building, six acre campus in Highlands. This is a community gathering-place amid art and nature, along with many programs offering. Check their schedule to see if there may be an exhibit or program that you might desire to participate in while visiting the area. www.thebascom.org 828.526.4949

Center for Life Enrichment – The Center, which is aligned with three regional institutions of higher education ...Western Carolina University ...Piedmont College ...Southwestern Community College... offers courses, seminars, lectures and special events throughout the summer. 828.526.0381

Highlands Community Players – Since 1995 they have been putting the community back into "community theatre" at the Lipscomb Performing Arts Center. For information on upcoming productions access <http://www.highlandscashiersplayers.org/> or call 828.526.8084.

Highlands Institute – "a community of scholars involved in the empirical tradition in American religious and philosophical thought" holds a public lecture-seminar series in June of each year. 828.526.4038

Highlands Nature Center and Biological Station – Learn about natural history and biodiversity in the southern Appalachians while touring the displays housed in this impressive chestnut structure on Horse Cove Road. The Highlands Biological Station is one of the oldest in the United States. The Highlands Botanical Gardens are located at the Nature Center and encompass Lake Ravenel. The Botanical Gardens contain many of the indigenous plants of the Highlands plateau. June through August the gardens are in bloom and should not be missed. 828.526.2623

Highlands Playhouse – Now in its 67th year of presenting outstanding summer theater. Beginning in 1940, a professional director was hired. In 1973 the playhouse began to employ professional actors and staff. Now the playhouse features members of Actor's Equity Association, the highest level of professional actors in the U.S. Casting is done primarily out of New York City, Atlanta, and the Southeastern Theatre Conference. See our **events** section for the performance schedule. www.highlandisplayhouse.org

Highlands/Cashiers Chamber Music Festival – the Festival brings together some of the world's finest musicians to perform the most beautiful, interesting and exciting music from the chamber repertoire in a setting as intimate and beautiful as any on earth. The 2005 Festival is the 24th anniversary season. Twenty four concerts from June through August. See the **events** section of our website for the current schedule. 828.526.0677 www.h-cmusicfestival.org

Hudson Library – The oldest "private" library in North Carolina. 828.526.3031

The Instant Theatre Company - is a year-round, on-going theatre workshop and performing troupe dedicated to enhancing the Highlands community's cultural environment as well as providing a very good time for its audiences! Founded in 1981 the company has its own theatre called The Studio on Main. Located at 310 Main Street in Highlands. For reservations 828-342-9197 or www.instanttheatre.org.

Brevard Music Festival – Nestled in the foothills of North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains in the village of Brevard NC, this premier summer music festival and comprehensive music training program has provided intensive summer study for gifted high school, college and pre-professional musicians, ages 14 and older for over 60 years. The Brevard Music Festival offers a full range of operas and concerts with renowned guest artists. This festival is a mountain institution with offerings from Jazz and Symphonic Orchestras to Patti Page to Pirates of Penzance to Arlo Guthrie to the Temptations. See our **events** section for the 2003 schedule. www.brevardmusic.org 828.862.2122

Scottish Tartans Museum – The Scottish Tartans Society is the governing body for tartans globally and maintains the official Register of All Publicly Known Tartans. The Society has two museums ...one in Keith, Scotland and one in Franklin, North Carolina. The display of Scottish Tartans is astonishing and the history of the Scottish experience of culture, history, dress, migration and military from Scotland to America is quite remarkable. www.scottishtartans.org 828.524.7472

Smoky Mountain Center for the Performing Arts – Located in Franklin, NC this 1,500 seat state-of-the-art facility presents the finest in performing arts to the surround towns. Check the schedule on their website to see if there is a performance that you may enjoy during your stay. 1024 Georgia Road, Franklin, NC. www.greatmountainmusic.com 828.524.1598

John C. Campbell Folk School – a place both physical and emotional – that stirs imagination and arouses initiative. Established in 1925 and modeled after the Danish Folk school "*folkehojskole*" concept, the Folk School features courses in music, dance, time-honored crafts and contemporary creative skills, hands-on courses ranging from blacksmithing to broom making. A place where you get as much affirmation from the experience itself as you do from the finished product. Most of today's Folk School students come for a week or two to learn a craft, pick up an instrument or learn to dance, but the individual expression and social interaction encouraged through crafts, music and dance are still needed today – perhaps more than ever. Three daily family-style meals included. www.folkschool.com

Hambidge Center & Art Gallery – Let their be music ...let their be art in the piney forest, where brooks tumble playfully down the rocks and the land displays itself in unabashed, creative abandon, where an artist's eye could find more life to imitate than could fill a canvas in a lifetime. In 1934, Mary Hambidge, a noted weaver, established the Hambidge Center for the Creative Arts and Sciences on 600 acres of land just west of Dillard, GA. Artists and crafters from all over the world come here for residency periods that last one week to six months. The esteemed Hambidge Center Gallery carries local contemporary art, crafts and folk art along with work created by artists during their residencies at the Hambidge Center. Quite an amazing place. www.hambidge.org

The Museum of the Cherokee Indian – One of the top Indian museums in the United States. Some artifacts date back 10,000 years. The 56,000 acre Cherokee Indian Reservation known as the *Qualla Boundary* borders the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. A visit to Cherokee, NC is like stepping into the past. You'll find a nation still linked to ancient customs and traditions that enable them to live in

harmony with nature as their ancestors did. Through a visit to the reservation and the museum you will experience a fascinating culture that has endured much tragedy and triumph. www.cherokeemuseum.org

Qualla Arts & Crafts Mutual – Established in 1946 this is the most outstanding Indian-owned and operated arts and crafts co-op in the United States. Crafts of some 300 Cherokee craftspeople are sold through the cooperative including, but not limited to, basket weaving, finger weaving, wood carving, art and beadwork. www.cherokee-nc.com

“Unto these Hills” Outdoor Drama – Recognized as one of the top outdoor dramas in the United States with over 5,000,000 visitors since its opening in July 1950. The Drama tells the history of the Cherokee people from about 1540 through their forced removal from this area in the late 1830’s. The cast and technical staff of 130 people combine their talents to present one of the most memorable evenings in the Great Smokies. www.untothesehills.com

Southern Highland Craft Guild & The Folk Art Center – The Guild is an educational non-profit organization recognized for over 60 years as the leader in promoting crafts of the Southern Highlands region. Its active juried membership of over 700 craftspeople come from the mountain counties in nine southeastern states. Craftspeople are juried for life-time membership and only the work of these members is found in Guild owned shops. The headquarters of the Guild is located at the Folk Art Center on the Blue Ridge Parkway in Asheville, NC where you may enjoy craft-making demonstrations, a gallery of fine crafts, purchase crafts of the Guild and participate in ongoing workshops to promote and preserve the mountain legacy of craft. There are five Guild Shops in the area. www.southernhighlandguild.org

The Craft Fair of the Southern Highlands – the oldest, most significant and most eagerly anticipated event in the mountains since 1948. The Fair showcases only the work by members of the Southern Highland Craft Guild. In addition there are demonstrations in a variety of media along with traditional mountain music and storytelling. There is a Summer Edition and a Fall Edition each year both taking place in Asheville, NC. www.southernhighlandguild.org See our **events** section of our website for the 2003 schedule.

The Highlands Forum – political and economic lectures and discussions of international interest and acclaim. See the **events** section of our website for the 2003 schedule.

Art Galleries – the village of Highlands, NC is known for its abundance of significant privately owned art galleries specializing in the work of local artist, photographers and craftspeople. Our recommended favorites are:

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| Ann Jacobs Gallery | Main Street | 828.526.5550 |
| Bella of Highlands | 4 th Street | 828.526.0100 |
| Bascom Louise Gallery | Main Street | 828.526.4949 |
| John Collette Fine Arts | Main Street | 828.526.0339 |
| Harlee Gallery | 4 th Street | 828.526.2083 |
| Highlands Fine Art | Main Street | 828.526.0656 |
| Robert A. Tino Gallery | Main Street | 828.526.0667 |
| Summer House Gallery | Dillard Road | 828.526.0028 |
| Summit One Gallery | Cashiers Road | 828.526.2673 |

Other recommended favorites in the area are:

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| Appalachian Gallery | Dillard, GA | 706-746-9936 |
| Gallery on the Green | Cashiers, NC | 828.743.3068 |
| Hambidge Center Gallery | Rabun Gap, GA | 706-746-7187 |
| Main Street Gallery | Clayton, GA | 706-782-2440 |
| Timpson Creek Gallery | Clayton, GA | 706-782.5164 |

Buck Dancing & Square Dancing - the traditional dances of the Southern Appalachians are practiced and presented every Saturday during the winter months at the Bascom Center for the Visual Arts in the old tradition of Helen’s Barn Buck & Square Dancing. Guest performances by Helen’s Barn Era musicians and dancers. Participate in a true mountain tradition that has been enjoyed by mountain folks since the mid 1700’s. Located at 323 Franklin Road (Highway 64 W.) www.thebascom.org 828.526.4949

The Foxfire Museum – evolved from the internationally famous Foxfire Books created by students in Rabun County Georgia. This museum gives a rare glimpse of what life was like for the mountaineers who settled this area over 150 years ago. The Foxfire Museum also has a collection of historic log structures and scenic nature trails. Come imagine a time before electricity, hot and cold running water. Imagine a time when most of what you owned was made by you. Time felt different then, its rhythm and urgencies shaped by the most basic needs. Located in Mountain City, Georgia. www.foxfire.org 706.746.5828

Museum of American Cut and Engraved Glass – Antique cut and engraved glass made in America between 1876 and 1916 during an era known as the “American Brilliant Period”. You will find the largest collection of antique American cut and engraved glass made during the American Brilliant Period on public display in America. No admission charge. Selected pieces of cut glass on sale. On Chestnut Street off Highway 64 East in Highlands, NC. Open each year during High Season usually on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 1:00 – 4:00 pm or by special appointment. 828.526.3415

DAY TRIPS & MAJOR ATTRACTIONS

Great Smoky Mountains National Park – the most visited national park in the United States of America. The park spreads across the North Carolina/Tennessee border and draws visitors from all over the world to experience the Smokies’ natural beauty. The park is justifiably proud of its mighty rivers and waterfalls, special recreation areas, scenic highways and byways, protected wilderness, heritage and wealth of outdoor recreation. The North Carolina entrance to the park is just above Cherokee, NC at the Southern beginning of the Blue Ridge Parkway about forty-five minutes away from the top of Fire Mountain. A great day trip takes you up through Newfound Gap and out to Clingmans Dome and its observation tower that sits at more than 6,000 feet elevation in the very middle of the park. www.nps.gov/grsm

Cherokee Indian Reservation – Deep in the heart of North Carolina’s Great Smoky Mountains you will find the Cherokee Indian Reservation. Each year, visitors from across the country and around the world come to discover this enchanted land and to share the natural mountain beauty the Cherokee have treasured for centuries. Their 56,000 acre reservation, known as the Qualla Boundary is home to the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians and is adjacent to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Blue Ridge Parkway. Approximately 8,000 Cherokee Indians live on the reservation. The town of Cherokee, North Carolina, within the reservation, offers many attractions such as The Museum of the Cherokee Indian, “Unto These Hills” Outdoor Drama, the Qualla Arts & Crafts Mutual and the Oconaluftee Indian Village which is a recreated Cherokee Village of the 1750’s. The newest addition to the reservation is the Harrah’s Cherokee Casino which offers 24 hour casino action and top-notch entertainment. A forty-five minute drive from the top of Fire Mountain. www.cherokee-nc.com

Blue Ridge Parkway – “America’s most scenic drive” and “American’s greatest gift to motoring ever” extends 469 miles along the crests of the southern Appalachians and links two eastern national parks – Shenandoah National Park in Virginia and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina. Its Southern End begins at the entrance to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park at the Cherokee Reservation about 45 minutes away from the top of Fire Mountain. The highest point on the parkway at 6047 feet is located between the Southern End and Asheville, NC which is a great route to take on a day trip up to Asheville to visit the Biltmore Estate. www.blueridgeparkway.org

Biltmore Estates – America’s largest private home remains virtually as it was when completed by George Washington Vanderbilt III in 1895 thanks to the careful preservation by his descendants who still own it today. The chateau contains 250 rooms, 65 fireplaces, 43 bathrooms, and three kitchens, all in four acres of floor space that are open for self-guided visits. The spectacular gardens surrounding the estate grew from the vision of Frederick Law Olmsted, designer of New York’s Central Park. Originally sitting on 125,000 acres the present 8,000 acres of landscaped gardens, grounds, and parks are breathtaking. More than 250 manicured acres feature a remarkable array of flowers, shrubs, and trees, providing year-round color. Add a vast Conservatory, a winery, restaurants, estate shopping and special events and you have all of the ingredients for a day trip that you will never forget. The Festival of Flowers in the spring and Christmas at Biltmore Estate are just two of the events that take place each year at the Estate that should not be missed. See our **events** section for a listing of 2003 Special Events. www.biltmore.com

Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest – Considered by many to be the jewel in the crown of the Nantahala National Forest, Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest is one of the few remaining tracts of virgin hardwood forests in the Appalachians. It consists of 3800 acres of primeval forest and was dedicated in 1936 as a living memorial to Joyce Kilmer the poet. He was best known for his poem “Trees”. The most famous line of the poem is “I think that I shall never see, a poem lovely as a tree”. A walk through the forest is a journey back in time through a magnificent forest with towering trees as old as 400 years. Some enormous yellow-poplars are over 20’ in circumference and stand over 120 feet tall. The floor is carpeted with a garden of wildflowers, ferns, and moss-covered logs from fallen giants. www.joycekilmerforest.com

Cherohala Skyway - A few miles from the entrance to Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest is the entrance to the Cherohala Skyway which was completed in the fall of 1996 after being under construction for some thirty-four years. It is North Carolina’s most expensive highway carrying a price tag of \$100,000,000. Winding up and over 6,000 foot mountains for 15 miles in North Carolina and descending another 21 miles

into deeply forested backcountry of Tennessee. The road crosses through the Cherokee and Nantahala National Forests thus the name "Chero...hala". The Skyway is becoming nationally known for its natural beauty and scenic vistas. There is little evidence of civilization from the views that rival or surpass any from the Blue Ridge Parkway. www.cherohalaskyway.com

The North Carolina Arboretum – Located in the inspirational Southern Appalachian Mountains, the Arboretum cultivates connections between people and plants through 426 acres of unique gardens, miles of hiking and biking trails, a state-of-the-art greenhouse and hundreds of educational opportunities. Visiting the Arboretum is a perfect way to experience the natural beauty of Western North Carolina. Located next to the Blue Ridge Parkway between Mount Pisgah and Asheville, NC. www.ncarboretum.org

National Forests of the U.S. Forest Service – the Southern Highlands sit in the middle of the Nantahala National Forest and are surrounded by the other National Forest listed below. The recreational facilities offered in these National Forests are exceptional as are the outdoor activities that are available to you. The staff at our Guest Services Office on top of Fire Mountain will be most happy to map you and guide you into any activity that you would like to pursue in these National Forests during your stay.

Nantahala National Forest
Pisgah National Forest
Sumter National Forest
Chattahoochee National Forest
Cherokee National Forest

Gem Mining – Franklin, North Carolina, located fifteen miles north of Fire Mountain, is known as the "Gem Capital of the World". There are many Gem Mines located in the Cowee Valley north and west of Franklin. Most of the mines have powered water sluices where you may sift through the dirt and rock (called fluming) that you obtain while prospecting in these Gem Mines. These mines contain rubies, gold, amethyst, aquamarine, sapphires, garnets and many other types of stones. The world's largest blue star sapphires were found in one of the mines in the Cowee Valley. This entire area is a rock hound paradise. Guest Services will gladly map you to this area.

Tallulah Gorge State Park – One of the most spectacular canyons in the eastern United States, Tallulah Gorge is two miles long and nearly 1,000 feet deep. Visitors can hike rim trails to several overlooks, or they can obtain a free permit (limit 100 per day) to hike down to the gorge floor. A new suspension bridge sways 80 feet above the rocky bottom, providing spectacular views of the Tallulah River that runs through it and many waterfalls. Exhibits in the Jane Hurt Yarn Interpretive Center highlight the rich history of this Victorian resort town, as well as the rugged terrain and fragile ecosystem of the area. Tallulah Gorge is located 30 minutes south of Fire Mountain in Tallulah Falls, Georgia. www.gastateparks.org/info/tallulah

Asheville, North Carolina – a short and easy 1½ hour drive from the top of Fire Mountain can put you in the heart of North Carolina's most architecturally diverse city that has gone through a phenomenal renaissance in recent years. Asheville has one of the largest collections of Art Deco architecture in the Southeast outside of Miami Beach. Many of these structures have been renovated in recent years and are filled with new loft apartments and condominiums. The streets downtown have become alive with many shops, galleries and restaurants creating a true walking microcosm. Mingle with the diverse lunchtime crowd of professionals, New Age seekers, writers, outdoor enthusiasts, businessmen, artists – and people whose families have called these mountains home for generations. It is this diversity that creates Asheville's dynamic culture and distinctive state of mind. Many literary giants have thrived on the cool energy of the surrounding mountains such as Thomas Wolfe, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Carl Sandburg. As you walk around take in the vistas that open at every rise in elevation and around almost every street corner. The city flows up and around mountains. You may feel as if you are in a very little San Francisco. The Blue Ridge Parkway goes by it and the Biltmore Estate is a few miles south of it. A very special place to experience in the Southern Highlands. www.ashevillechamber.org

PASSIVE OUTDOORS

Great Smoky Mountains Railroad – featuring excursions through the scenic mountains and colorful countryside of Western North Carolina. Truly a spectacular trip with 53 miles of track, 2 tunnels and 15 bridges. Choose from a variety of excursions ranging from half day to full day round trips, steam or diesel locomotives, gourmet dinner trains, mystery theatre dinner trains and a wide array of seating options. Your trip starts 30 minutes north of Fire Mountain in Dillsboro, NC. www.qsmr.com 800.872.4681

Blue Ridge Scenic Railway – starts from Blue Ridge, Georgia on a trip back in time as you travel in vintage railcars along the scenic Toccoa River through the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains on a three and a half-hour round trip to McCaysville, Georgia and back. In McCaysville, on your stop over, explore antique shops and specialty shops, watch craftsmen at their trades or have lunch. Food also provided on the train. www.brscenic.com 800.934.1898

Perry's Water Gardens – Over 20 acres of the most exquisite water gardens that you will ever see. These folks specialize in growing blooming water plants and ship all over the world. Their acres of blooming plants are a photographer's paradise with thousands of new blooms daily. Each year around the 4th of July Perry's Water Gardens sponsors the Lotus Festival which is held on their grounds. Established by Perry D. Slocum, internationally known hybridizer, who received the Water Lily Hall of Fame Award in 1986 and was the President of the International Water Lily Society from 1988 - 1989. Definitely worth a visit and don't forget to bring your camera. May 20th through Labor Day only. Located off Highway 28 north of Franklin, NC at 136 Gibson Aquatic Farm Road. www.perryswatergardens.com 888.673.7797

Christmas Parades in Appalachian Mountain Villages – are still what small town America is truly about ...patriotic, community, schools, celebration, getting together, entertainment, caring, children, fun, seeing each other, truly about the unity of a small community ...absolutely wonderful. Check the **events** section of our website.

Self Guided Driving Tours – A detailed map and a boxed lunch provided by Fire Mountain. Take a self guided driving tour of your choosing to any of the following places or areas. The staff at Guest Services and Reception will assist you in selecting and mapping. Pre-order your lunch through the **cuisine** section of our website to be available for your desired excursion date.

- Waterfalls
- Foliage & Leaf
- Rivers
- Day Trips
- Mountaintop Views
- Skyways & Parkways
- Botanical Gardens

Christmas Tree Farms – more Christmas trees come from tree farms in the high elevations of Western North Carolina than anywhere in the United States. Come up to the Southern Highlands and select your tree. The grower will cut your Christmas tree for you and tie it to the top of your car. Then you take your "very fresh" just cut Christmas tree back home with you. Such great real fun! Folks have been coming to the Highlands for generations to get their Christmas Trees. Makes for a most wonderful weekend.

Photography – photographers from all over the world come here to capture our natural beauty, many motion pictures are made here each year, so why don't you let the photographer in you come to fruition while you are here ...you will be in some of the most beautiful nature beauty on earth ...capture it, include yourself in it ...capture the beauty of your experience. Check out the art photography in the area galleries.

Pick - fresh wildflowers from our forest and fields, strawberries and black berries along our trails, or fresh tomatoes from our organic gardens ...take something real, beautiful and sweet home with you.

Buy Fresh Produce - that comes directly from the harvest of our mountaintop fields to the many roadside produce markets such as Osage Farms on Highway 441 between Rabun Gap and Mountain City, GA. Their fresh produce comes directly from their fields up in the Scaly Mountain area here in NC and from their fields in the valleys of Rabun Gap and Mountain City, GA. In Season Only (July – Sept.)

PASSIVE INDOORS

Live Auctions – Scudder's Gallery out of Palm Beach, Florida in High Season has nightly auctions of high end items from art to porcelain birds. For 28 years this has been incredible nightly entertainment on Main Street in Highlands starting at 7:30 pm. 828.526.4111. Mountain City, GA has the best primitive and junk antique auctions in Western North Carolina. Both are just 10 to 15 minutes from the top of Fire Mountain.

Cuisine & Entertainment & Bars & Coffee Houses – the Southern Highlands area is renowned for its cuisine. You will find in this secure section of our web site our **Guide to Dining in the Southern Highlands** that includes a complete listing and description of all establishments in the Southern Highlands that our guests have given us consistent and favorable feedback about.

ACTIVE INDOORS

Fitness – Mountain Fitness is a total body fitness center in Highlands. Personal training and massage therapy. 460 Carolina Way in the village. 828.526.9083

Shopping – Antiques / Art / Crafts / Gifts / Quilts / Furniture, you name it Highlands has it. The Southern Highlands is as renowned for its upscale shopping as it is for its cuisine. You will find in this secure section of our web site our **Guide to Shopping in the Southern Highlands** that you may

download and print. This guide has our recommendations for the best and most interesting places to shop in the Southern Highlands.

Harrah's Casino – 24 hours of continuous action and top named entertainment. Located on the Cherokee Indian reservation. The only casino in the Southeast outside of Mississippi and Louisiana.