

Deb and Diane's Suggestions for Most Excellent Adventures in the North Georgia Mountains



These are just a smattering of things you might enjoy. The North Georgia mountains are jam-packed full of natural wonders, tasty food, and good times. Please call ahead to confirm opening and closing hours.



GOOD VITTLES

Murder Mystery Dinner – Brasstown Valley, Friday night, September 20, 2024, everyone registered for the conference dines & participates for free at this western styled “Who Done It?” Wear your Stetson hat and best boots. Guests pay \$50. Open bar for two hours. Limited seating.

Jim's Smokin' Que, jimssmokinque.com, 4971 Gainesville Highway, Blairsville, 706-835-7427. Our most favorite barbeque place in North Georgia! Walk on up to the inside window and place your order. Three different types of sauce. Smoked turkey is delicious. Everything else is, too! Thursday – Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and Sunday 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Hole in the Wall Restaurant, holeinthewallga.com, 12 B Town Square, Blairsville, 706-745-5888. Union County's oldest diner, located in the heart of the beautiful downtown Blairsville square. Established in 1931, it has been a

restaurant consistently ever since its birth. It is currently owned and operated by Chef Mark Cox who brought this legendary place back to life in 2006. Tasty, “home cooked” breakfast and lunch. Thursday- Sunday, opens at 7:00 a.m., closes at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday; opens at 7:00 a.m. and closes at 3:00 p.m. on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

Rib Ranch, ribcountrybbq.com, 21 Kousins Drive, Blairsville, 706-781-3530. Consistently good BBQ at reasonable prices. Thurs 11:00 a.m.- 8:00 p.m., Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m.- 9:00 p.m.

The Sawmill Place, thesawmillplace.com, 1150 Pat Haralson Drive, Blairsville, 706-745-1250. Local farmers, growers and purveyors serve as the source for the breakfast and lunch menus. The Farm to Table concept is carried over into the restaurant’s market, where local produce, Georgia grown products and Tri-State area artisans provide unique gifts for locals and travelers alike. Rockers are on the front porch, for your comfort, while you wait to be called to the table. Monday – Friday, 6:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. (breakfast) and 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. (lunch). Saturday 6:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. (breakfast, no lunch).

The Copper Door, thecopperdoor.com, 2 Sullivan Street, Hayesville, North Carolina, 828-389-8460. Located in the quaint town of Hayesville, North Carolina, The Copper Door holds a spot among the Top 100 Restaurants in America, as voted by Open Table Diners. The Appalachian Mountains form the backdrop of this historic town, and the area is rich with lake views, waterfalls, Native American culture, and talented artisans of every kind. The cuisine at The Copper Door is influenced by classic French techniques with a good dose of south Louisiana flavors blended in. Reservations are a must! Hours: Thursday - Saturday, 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

The Crown Restaurant, thecrownbrasstown.com, 35 Emily Lane, Brasstown, North Carolina, 828-516-1672. Situated on a scenic bluff, the Crown is a community-centric restaurant in the heart of Brasstown, North Carolina, offering an eclectic and gluten-free take on regional and international cuisine. With quality ingredients sourced from local farms and forests, the

dishes are inspired, sustainable, and delicious. Behind the bar, bartenders craft memorable cocktails and source the finest local brew for guests to enjoy in the inviting dining room and the spectacular deck. The outdoor space is vast and private, making for a family-friendly environment. Enjoy the view, meander through the garden, and greet the goats and chickens. Relax, indulge, converse, belong. Hours: Thursday - Saturday, 4:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Grace Prime Steakhouse, graceprime.com, 55 Main Street, Blue Ridge, 706-946-2555. This newly opened restaurant in downtown BR is where Brown's Feed and Seed once stood. Sophisticated architecture, meat centric, with excellent sides, this is the place to be if you want to impress a date and just won a million dollars at Murphy, N.C.'s casino! Hours are Thursday 3:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m., Friday 3:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m., Saturday. 5:00 p.m. -10:00 p.m. Reservations recommended.

Harvest on Main, harvestonmain.com, 576 E. Main Street, Blue Ridge, 706-946-6164. One of the first restaurants opened after Blue Ridge went from a sleepy small town to THE place to escape to on the weekends. A farm to table success, featuring produce from neighboring farms, including the chef/owner's farm. Opens 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. seven days a week. Reservations highly recommended.

Toccoa Riverside Restaurant, toccoariversiderestaurant.com, 8055 Aska Road, Blue Ridge, 706-632-7891. Situated on the banks of the Toccoa River, this laid-back place is about a ten-mile drive from the city of Blue Ridge. Although the food facilitates in quality between average and good, it is the drive from Blue Ridge and views of the river that makes the trip worthwhile. Dining is available outside in good weather. Thursday 11:30 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.- 8:00 p.m.; Friday and Saturday 11:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.- 9:00 p.m. (If you take the route from Brasstown Valley Resort via the Old Blairsville Highway and Skeenah Gap Road, the views and farms will not disappoint.)

Hook & Eye, hookandeyebueridge.com, 50 West Main Street, Blue Ridge, 706-642-9001. Although neither of us have been there, this trendy restaurant/bar is located on the roof of the Hampton Inn in downtown Blue Ridge. It sure looks

like a pleasant place to get a bird's eye view of the city. Open Thursday and Friday from 4:00 p.m.–10:00 p.m. and on Saturday from 12:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.



FUN BREW HOUSES

Grumpy Old Men Brewing, grumpyoldmenbrewing.com, 1315 E. Main Street, Blue Ridge, 706-946-2739. Opened on July 4, 2013, by two grumpy old men, this is one of the most popular places in Blue Ridge to hang out with friends, sample quality craft beer, and people watch. Open from 1:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m. on Thursday through Saturday. **Scrappy's Doghouse** is open on the patio, Thursday to Saturday from 1:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m., and sells hot dogs, sausages, and whatever else the chef wants to serve that day.

Hiawasseebrew, hiawasseebrew24.com, 616 S. Main Street, Hiawasse, 706-2739. Neither of us have been to this relatively new establishment, but we hear good things, and the on-line menu looks tasty. Try it and let us know! Not open on Thursday, but open Friday and Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

CIDER HOUSE

Reece's Cider Company, reecescidercompany.com, 9110 GA-52, Ellijay, 706-635-2775. If you like hard cider, this is a wonderful place. Nearby is Reece's Apple Orchard. Reece's is family and dog friendly. It does not serve food during weekdays...but you can bring your own. There is a food truck on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Nice open-air space. Thursday 11 a.m.- 6:00 p.m., Friday and Saturday 11:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.

DISTILLERY

Granddaddy Mimm's Distilling Company, granddaddymimms.com, 112 Wellborn Street, Blairsville, 706-781-1829. The mountains of North Georgia have been called home by several industries, including logging, agriculture, chicken houses, dairies, cattle, Levi Strauss (closed its doors in Blue Ridge in 2002 after 43 years) and moonshine. Moonshine, a/k/a White Lightning, has endured since being settled by the Irish and the Scots in the 1730's. In fact, after the Civil War, the making of moonshine (illegal, untaxed whiskey) sustained otherwise poverty-stricken families. Plentiful springs and streams provided the clear, pure water necessary for the process. Corn crops provided the mash. Today, Granddaddy Mimms manufactures legal, licensed moonshine for the public, with one goal being to preserve the moonshine culture. Granddaddy Mimms is open on Thursday from 11:00 a.m.- 6:00 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. his fall there will be tours of the distillery on Friday, Sept 20, and Saturday, September 21. There is a fee for taking the hour-long tour and reservations must be made in advance. Consult the website for more information.

WINERIES

When we were kids, no one ever imagined Georgia would be winning worldwide honors for its fine wine. Our grandparents and parents were busy making wine in their garages and basements using wild muscadines, dandelions, elderberries, blackberries, and even corn cobs! In 2022, Georgia's wineries had 300,000 tourist visits. 40,000 jobs related to wine production and produced \$410,000,000 in total tax revenue. In 2024 the Georgia legislature designated March as Georgia Wine Month.

Varietals grown in Georgia today include the well-known Chardonnay, Cabernet Franc, Malbec, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, Vidal Blanc, and Merlot. Even the lesser-known Viognier and Sangiovese thrive here. Who would have ever imagined that Georgia's red clay would be good for growing so many types of grapes?!?

For more information about Georgia wineries and the Georgia Wine Highway, go to opengeorgiawine.com. There are more fine wineries in North Georgia than

we have had time to visit, but here are some of our favorites, all within an afternoon's drive of Brasstown Valley Resort:

Crane Creek Vineyard (Young Harris)

3 Sisters Winery (Dahlongega)

Frog Town Cellars (Dahlongega)

Kaya Vineyard and Winery (Dahlongega)

Chateau Meichtry (Talking Rock)

Engelheim Winery and Vineyard (Ellijay)

Ott Winery and Vineyard (Ellijay)

Cartecay Vineyards (Ellijay; Crush Festival, 9/21/24, 10:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.)

Hightower Creek Winery (Hiawassee)

Bear Claw Winery (Blue Ridge)

Yonah Mountain Vineyards (Cleveland)

These places feature outdoor seating, beautiful views and are wonderful places to just relax and unwind!



THINGS TO DO AND EXPERIENCE

You can feel the tension draining from your neck and shoulders as you drive through the mountains but, if you want to get out and stretch your legs, here is an eclectic collection of places to stop and enjoy.

Sunrise Grocery, sunrisegrocery.com, 7568 Gainesville Highway, Blairsville. After having lunch at Jim's Smokin' Que, check out this little store on your way to Vogel State Park. Pick up some gifts for the folks back home and, if they are boiling peanuts, grab a bag!

Vogel State Park, 405 Vogel State Park Road, Blairsville. This is Georgia's second oldest state park. It encompasses 242 acres and has a 22-acre lake. This is a beautiful place for a picnic, and you can walk around the lake. A popular place for campers, especially in the fall.

Richard B. Russell Scenic Highway. Break out your driving and hiking maps to visit one of the most scenic highways in Georgia. Hike to Duke Creek Falls and Raven Cliff Falls. Near Blairsville and worth the drive.

Brasstown Bald - Highest Peak in Georgia, 2941 Hwy. Spur 180, Hiawassee, 706-896-2556. The Brasstown Bald Visitor Center sits atop Georgia's highest mountain at 4,784 feet above sea level. Surrounded by the Chattahoochee - Oconee National Forest, its cloud-level observation deck offers stunning 360-degree views of the Southern Appalachian Mountains and valleys. On a clear day, one can see four states. You can park at the visitor's center and either hike the rest of the way to the top (shortest trail is .6 miles but is steep) or catch the shuttle. There is an admission fee to the park, but it is small in comparison to the breathtaking views and fresh air. The museum on top of the bald is very interesting.

Dahlonega, Georgia has a historic square and you can visit the Dahlonega Gold Mine State Historic Site. Also, check out the Consolidated Gold Mining Company, which charges a fee, but includes a forty-minute underground tour and explanation of Georgia's Gold Rush.

Alexander's Store, alexandersstore.com, 4482 Town Creek School Road, Blairsville, Thursday - Saturday, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. A shoppers' paradise where you can buy "everything under the sun." Quality men and women's clothing, furniture, shotguns, and about everything else!

Blue Ridge, Georgia is a shopper's paradise! Plenty of shops, homemade crafts, and restaurants. Expect a crowd on the weekend!

Blue Ridge Scenic Railway, brscenic.com, 241 Depot Street, Blue Ridge. September 19 marks the beginning of the Fall Foliage Ride. Check out the Rail Bike rides, too, which is something new and different. The railway is one of the top tourist attractions in North Georgia.

Mercier Orchards, mercier-orchards.com, 8660 Blue Ridge Drive, is listed as Tripadvisor's #1 attraction in this busy mountain town. Pick your own fruit (or buy it off the shelves), shop 'til you drop, and enjoy sitting on the patio drinking hard cider made on the premises. There is a huge bakery that cranks out fried pies and apple cider donuts to die for!

Expedition Bigfoot, expeditionbigfoot.com, 1934 GA-515, Blue Ridge. This is the world's largest Bigfoot Museum. Open seven days a week. \$9 for adults and teens, \$6 for kids ages 5-12, and free for children younger than five. There have been plenty of Bigfoot sightings in the mountains...you may even be one of the lucky ones to see him during your stay.

2024 Blue Ridge Blues & BBQ Festival (September 21, 2024, 11:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.). Downtown Blue Ridge Play Park, East Main Street, Blue Ridge, Georgia

LIVE blues music, cold brews, and lip-smackin' BBQ this September 21st, 2024, in Downtown Blue Ridge, GA!

Harrah's Cherokee Valley River Casino, 777 Casino Parkway, Murphy, North Carolina, www.caesars.com/harrahs-chokeee-valley-river 828-422-7777.

Harrah's Cherokee Valley River is your ticket to excitement. Play to win on our expansive casino floor filled with thousands of slots, your favorite live table

games, video poker, and exciting promotions from Caesars Rewards®. Will you hit the next jackpot?

Horseback Riding at Brasstown Valley Resort Stables, 6321 Hwy 76, Young Harris, Georgia, brasstownvalley.com/stables. 706-379-9900.

Meander through five miles of trails in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. There is no better way to experience the beauty of the surrounding area than on horseback. The stables at Brasstown Valley Resort & Spa offer programs catered to adults, children, and groups. And regardless of skill level, the staff will keep you safe and make you feel at home in the saddle. The resort accommodates those individuals wishing to take private lessons, groups hitting the trail in an old western style, and even group team building exercises.

John C. Campbell Folk School in Brasstown, North Carolina, www.folkschool.org, One Folk School Road, Brasstown, North Carolina. Folkschool.org, 1-800-FOLK SCH. Crafts, Arts, Music & Dance...Oh My! Experience a unique atmosphere of learning and growing together. Located in Brasstown, NC, the Folk School offers year-round weeklong and weekend classes for adults in craft, art, music, dance, and more. Check out the website.

The Equani Spa at Brasstown Valley Resort, 6321 Hwy 76, Young Harris, Georgia. brasstownvalley.com, 706-379-9900.

Among the majestic beauty of Brasstown Valley Resort in the Blue Ridge mountains, the Equani Spa is a true sanctuary focused on self-care and featuring healing and soothing spa treatments.

Ellijay, Georgia has its own unique charm. Consider heading back to Ellijay for the Apple Festival, Oct. 12-13, and Oct. 19-20.

Helen, Georgia will be in full swing celebrating Oktober Fest during our stay at Brasstown Valley. If you do not mind sitting in traffic for a long time, it might be an interesting adventure for you!

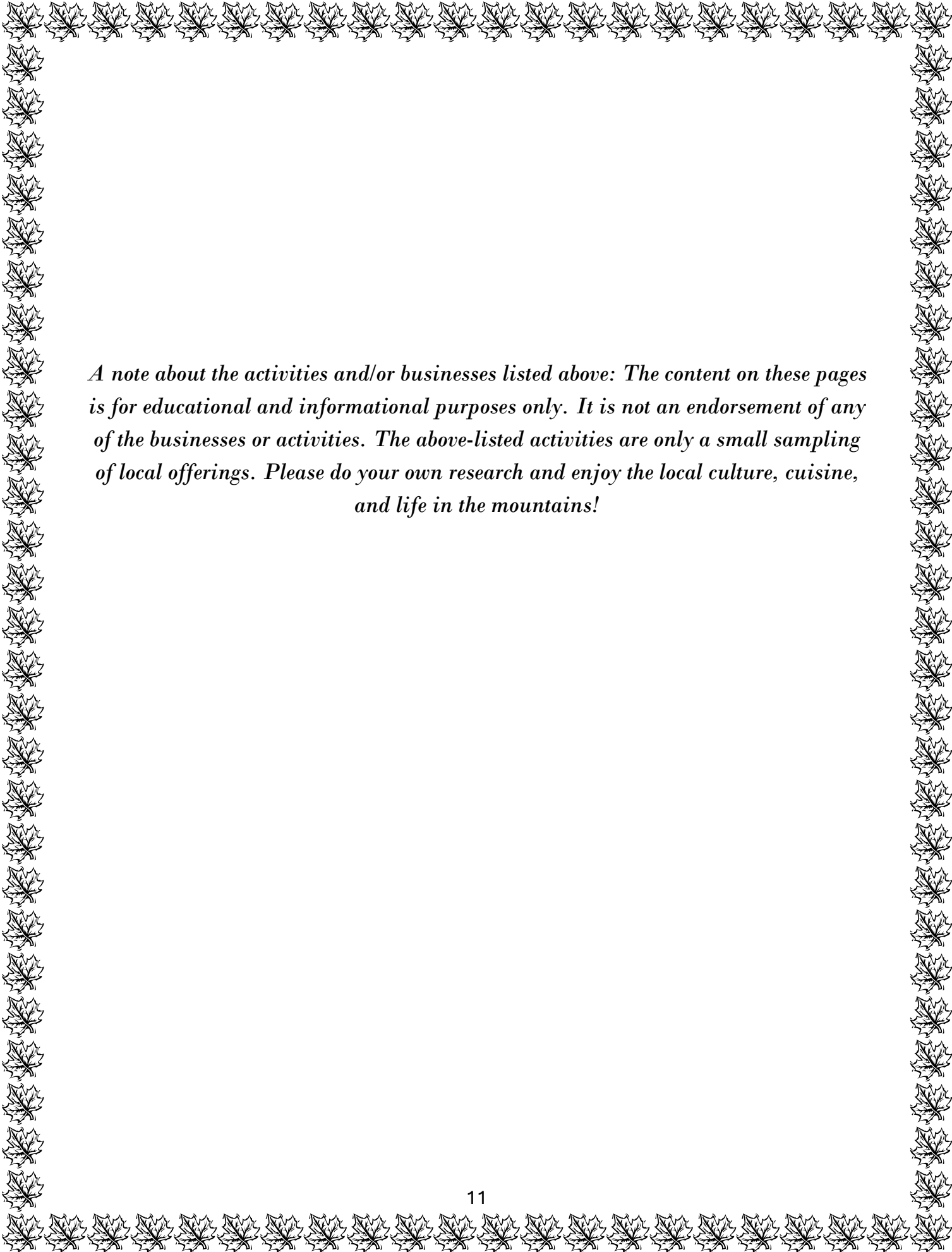
Cherokee Heritage Festival (September 21, 2024), 21 Davis Loop, Hayesville, North Carolina, 828-389-3045.

The Cherokee Heritage Festival takes place on the third Saturday every September on the grounds of the Cherokee Homestead Exhibit in Hayesville. The festival includes a variety of Cherokee crafts and their makers who demonstrate traditional native crafts. Watch as members of the Eastern Band show off their skills in basket and finger weaving, pottery sculpting, bead working, woodcarving, flint knapping, blowgun crafting, and arrow making. Their work is on view and for sale with artists there to discuss their work. The afternoon is a celebration of dancing, storytelling, and music, as well as activities for children. Tribal members cook up authentic Cherokee cuisine, such as the ever-popular fried bread with all the fixings. The festival is held at the site of the outdoor Cherokee Homestead Exhibit, which features traditional Cherokee homes as they would have appeared in the 17th century. The recreated village site includes a summer house, winter house, food storage crib, and shelter. Adjacent to the exhibit is the Cherokee Botanical Sanctuary with waysides describing plants used traditionally as medicine, food, and supplies to make household items and weaponry. The festival has featured a plant walk-and-talk as well as a native plant scavenger hunt. Passing through the Sanctuary is the Quanassee Path, a two-mile Cherokee history trail. Follow the path to Spikebuck Mound and Quanassee village, an important stop along a historic trading route from Charleston, South Carolina to eastern Tennessee. The path winds back to Hayesville and the Cherokee Cultural Center, located in Moss Memorial Library.



GROCERY STORES

Heading north from Atlanta, you will find grocery stores along the way, on 575/515 in Jasper (Kroger, Ingles, Walmart), Ellijay (Ingles, Walmart), Blue Ridge (Ingles, Food Lion, Walmart), and Blairsville (Ingles, Walmart). In Hiawassee (Ingles, on Main Street). If you do venture into Helen, make sure to visit Betty's Country Store, a wonderful place to buy picnic items.

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A note about the activities and/or businesses listed above: The content on these pages is for educational and informational purposes only. It is not an endorsement of any of the businesses or activities. The above-listed activities are only a small sampling of local offerings. Please do your own research and enjoy the local culture, cuisine, and life in the mountains!