

## Day/Stay Trips – Excursions to Suit your Fancy . . . this rally gives you the opportunity to visit many beautiful sights & sounds of western North Carolina!

### Day Trips:

Biltmore House & Grounds – 38 miles – Visit America's largest home, built by George Vanderbilt. Explore the 8000-acre beautiful and grand estate in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Asheville, NC. You haven't seen Biltmore until you've seen it in the spring. The gardens – designed by renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted – come to life with wave after wave of gorgeous blooms. Visit the historic winery; savor complimentary tastings, a wine bar, specialty tastings, and more as part of the distinctive experience at America's most-visited winery, located in the heart of Antler Hill Village of Biltmore estate.

Folk Art Center – 40 miles – Home of the Southern Highland Craft Guild, the Folk Art Center features fine traditional and contemporary art and crafts made by artists living in the southern Appalachian mountains. The Folk Art Center hosts daily craft demonstrations and houses Allandale Craft Shop, three exhibition galleries, and a National Park Service bookstore and information desk. Free admission and free parking.

Linville Caverns – 19 miles – NC's only show caverns. Entertaining & informative guided tours take visitors along a level walk to see "inside" Humpback Mountain. Affordable family fun that features amazing mineral color, unique formations, an underground stream with native trout, the "Bottomless Pool" and a peek into total darkness.

Linville Falls – 23 miles – Linville Falls is the most popular waterfall in the Blue Ridge Mountains because of its accessibility to the Blue Ridge Parkway. It is a spectacular three-tiered waterfall plunging into Linville Gorge, the "Grand Canyon of the Southern Appalachians." Pets are welcome but must be on a leash.

Western NC Farmers Market – 35 miles (nearest) – There are many reasons to buy local, but the best reason is flavor. Food that doesn't travel as far is fresher. Asheville is home to over 17 local tailgate markets, all selling farm-fresh produce and artisan goods. Artists, bakers, cheese makers and more converge each week to provide the best in locally made products.

Spruce Pines: Museum of NC Minerals – 14 miles – The Museum of North Carolina Minerals introduces the treasures found in the state and the local Spruce Pine Mining District through interactive displays on the wide variety of minerals and gems found in the region, providing an introduction to the importance of mining in the region and the mineral and gem wealth found here. Free admission. Open seven days a week.

Mt. Mitchell State Park – 27 miles – At 6,684, Mount Mitchell is the highest peak east of the Mississippi River. At its summit you'll find a 360° panoramic view of the surrounding Appalachian landscape, filled with mountains and valleys. Experience the gradual change in plant life as you ascend this epic mountain.

Black Mountain - 17 miles - Since the Cherokee Indians settled here more than 10,000 years ago, folks have come seeking rejuvenation, contemplation, and introspection. The beautiful mountain scenery, variety of recreational activities, and friendly hometown feel, continues to attract many each year. Take a walk through historic downtown and discover numerous unique gift shops, galleries, and Appalachian-style craft stores, with local craftsmen often demonstrating iron works, dulcimer making, and throwing pottery. Enjoy a wide variety of nightly music at one of our famous venues.

Lake James - 10 miles - Set in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina, Lake James offers striking views of the protected lands of the sprawling Lake James State Park and Blue Ridge Mountains paired with the daily excitement of a lake adventure center, with full-time activities staff who make it the place where the lake and its adventures come alive for residents and visitors. Lake James is surrounded by an amazing collection of state and national parks; a linear National Park and 3.5 miles of new pathways on the Overmountain Victory Trail run through Lake James.

### **Stay Trips:**

Flat Rock Playhouse - 64 miles - Officially designated The State Theatre of North Carolina. It's located in the quaint village of Flat Rock (next door to the Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site), about 30 miles south of Asheville. What began as a few weeks of summer performances in 1940 is now an eight month season of plays including Broadway musicals, comedy, drama, and theatre for young audiences. The Playhouse's dual mission of producing the performing arts and providing education in the performing arts includes a ten-show professional series; a summer and fall college apprentice and intern program; performances and cabaret series by the YouTheatre; year-round classes and workshops for students from kindergarten through adults. Flat Rock Playhouse now hosts over 80,000 patrons annually. April 28-May 21: Inspired by the true story, Million Dollar Quartet dramatizes the impromptu jam session featuring Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins and Johnny Cash and include the hit songs Blue Suede Shoes, Folsom Prison Blues, Great Balls of Fire, Hound Dog, Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On and many more.

Boone/Blowing Rock - 51 miles - Boone had gone from the dismal site of a famous Civil War skirmish to renown for its cool summer climate. From the beginnings of Appalachian State University in 1899, Boone has become an educational center. But Boone is more than a "cool" college town. It has emerged as the hub of commerce in the North Carolina High Country. The main street, King Street, still offers the nostalgic feel of small town America. Its 1930s, recently restored post office is a classic, complete with a Depression-era Works Progress Administration painting of Daniel Boone. A statue of the late, iconic mountain musician Arthel "Doc" Watson picks a guitar on a bench in downtown, as he once did on his way to fame in the early 1960's. Great restaurants and shops line the

streets of Boone. One of those is the Turchin Center for the Performing Arts, a museum space at the heart of the town's first Friday Art Crawls where galleries and local artists and exhibitions take center stage. Nationally significant travel attractions draw visitors from around the country, among them the mile high swinging Bridge at Grandfather Mountain, Tweetsie Railroad, and Mast General store at Valle Crucis. Boone and surrounding communities wrap those offerings in world-class outdoor recreation, on the trails, rocky summits, whitewater streams and rivers that provide some of the most spectacular natural settings in Eastern America. The Blue Ridge Parkway anchors those offerings as the most popular unit of the national park system. Blowing Rock has been a famous travel destination since the late 1800s when lowland Carolinians first started summering in the cool of the North Carolina High Country. With the opening of guest houses and hotels, including the classic, 1892 Green Park Inn that still tempts travelers with its "grande dame" status, the name "Blowing Rock" became synonymous with sophistication and scenic splendor. From "North Carolina's first travel attraction," the rocky crag of The Blowing Rock, views still stretch to Grandfather Mountain and Mount Mitchell.

Smokey Mt. Railway - 100 miles - The scenic rail excursions take you from the historic depot in Bryson City, through the beautiful countryside of Western North Carolina. Dine in the First Class Cars with a private attendant and breathtaking views or take it all in while riding in an Open-Air Gondola! Step on board for your next rail adventure!

Cherokee - Just 50 miles from Asheville is Cherokee, located in Jackson County at the main North Carolina entrance to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Attractions include: Museum of the Cherokee Indian, Oconaluftee Indian Village, Qualla Arts and Crafts Mutual, Inc., "Unto These Hills" Outdoor Drama, and Harrah's Cherokee Casino Resort.

Pigeon Forge - 127 miles - A city located on the Eastern side of Tennessee along the Pigeon River, Pigeon Forge is a breathtaking, popular tourist vacation spot to about 11 million visitors a year. Some of the most popular attractions include four outlet malls, the Dollywood Theme Park, Zorb Smoky Mountains, the Miracle Theatre, the Comedy Barn, the prized Country Tonight Theatre, Southern Gospel Museum and Hall of Fame, and Flyaway Indoor Skydiving. Also, car and truck lovers come to Pigeon Forge to enjoy a variety of different car and truck show events that run from April through September.

Smokey Mountain National Park - 102 miles - To walk in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park is to follow in the footsteps of the Cherokee Indians; living on this land for more than 14,000 years. Because of the great efforts of many, today the 520,000-acre Great Smoky Mountain National Park (GSMNP) is protected forever. And today all of us can stand atop Clingman's Dome and see the same endless blue view, fish for trout in the same clear streams and spot the same spring wildflowers as did the ancient Cherokee people. Fishing, biking, elk viewing, tubing, and hiking are activities that attract visitors throughout the year.

Stay tuned!