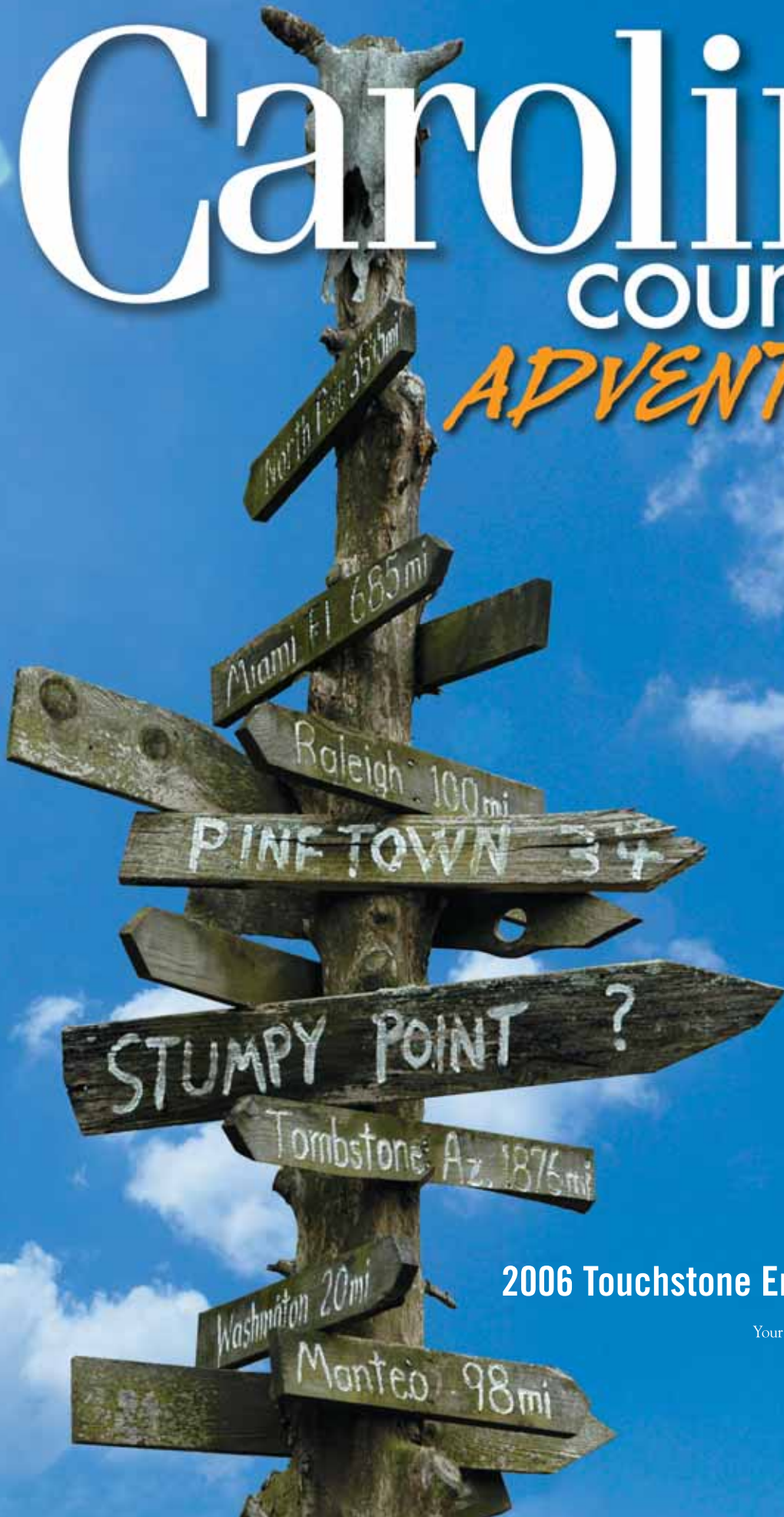


# Carolina country *ADVENTURES*

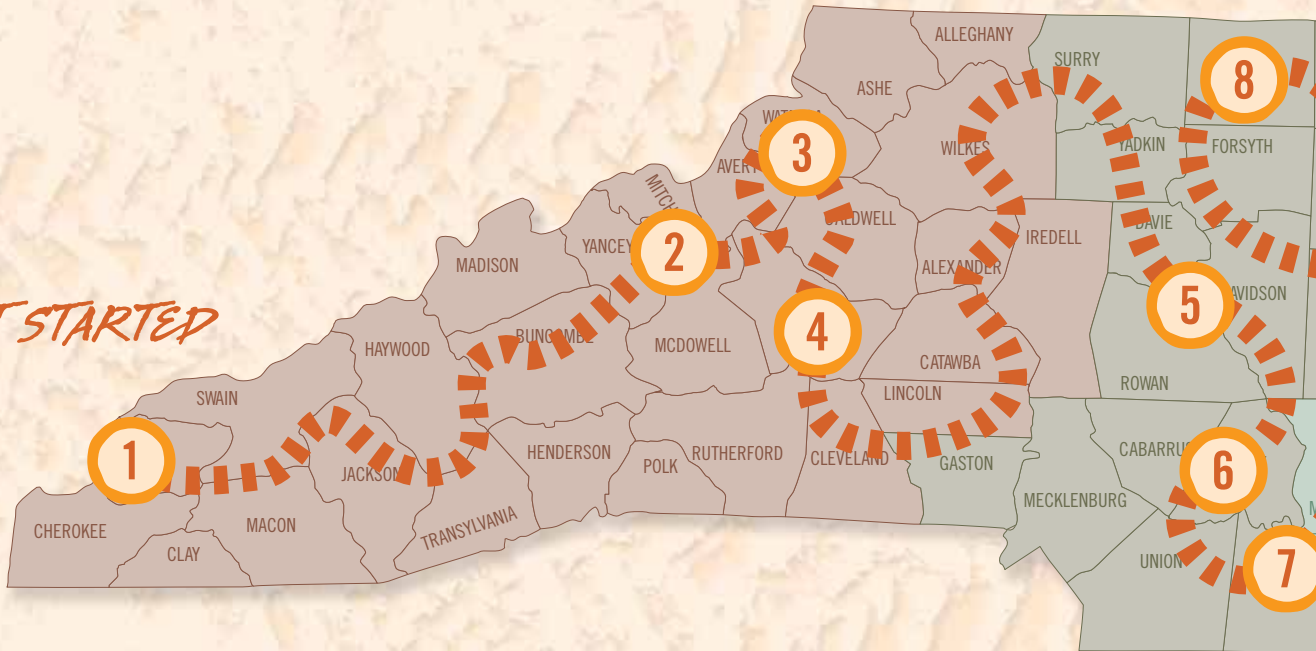


2006 Touchstone Energy Travel Guide

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives   
The power of human connections®

# CAROLINA COUNTRY ADVENTURES

GET STARTED



## 20 ADVENTURES FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO THE SEA

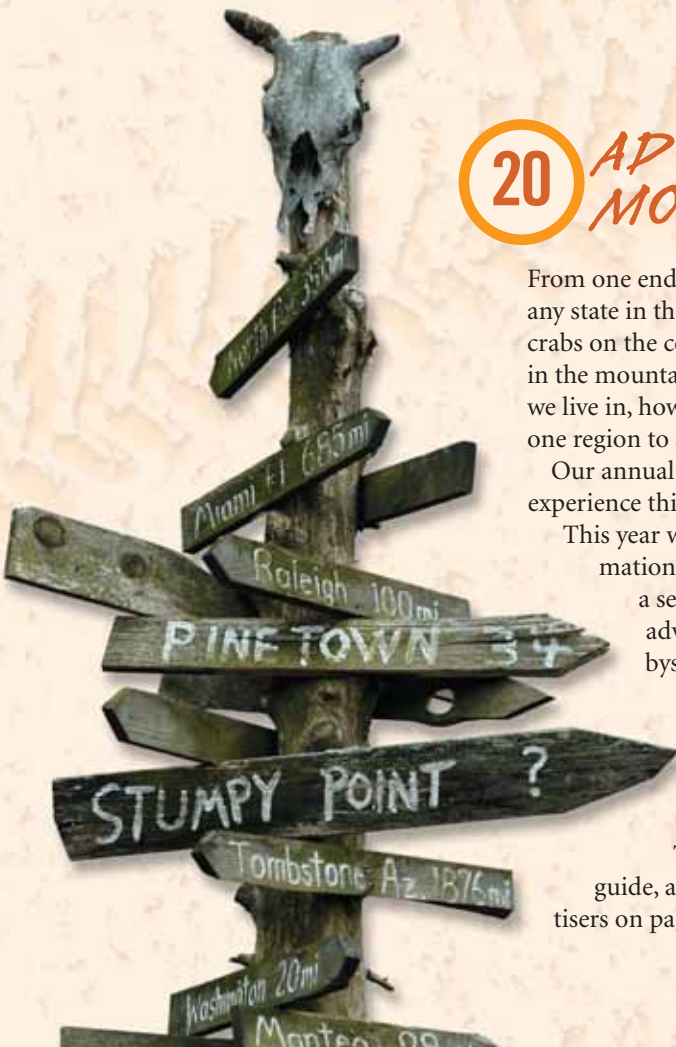
From one end to the other, North Carolina is about as diverse as any state in the nation. We've got hard gemstones in the west, soft crabs on the coast and red clay in the middle. The tobacco we grow in the mountains is different than what we grow in the east. What we live in, how we drive, what we eat and how we talk varies from one region to another.

Our annual Touchstone Energy Travel Guide encourages you to experience this variety firsthand.

This year we've collected the primary sources of general information about each of five regions and accompany them with a set of Carolina Country Adventures. Among the four adventures for each region are some well-known standbys and some not so familiar, some historical, some recreational, some just plain fun.

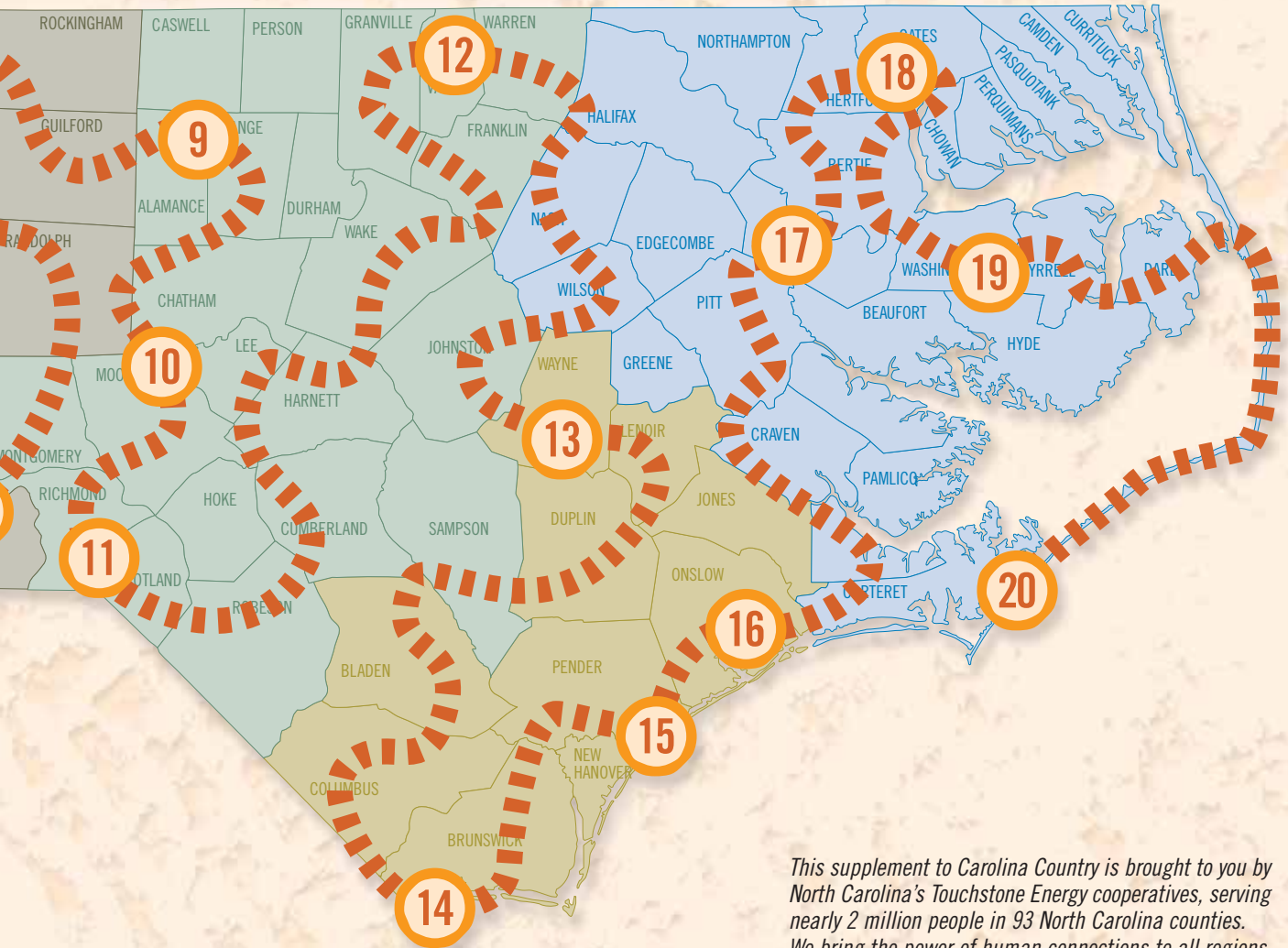
As you make your way through this guide, or through the countryside responsible for these adventures, you can be assured that a Touchstone Energy cooperative is nearby.

Thanks to everyone who helped us compile this guide, and to our sponsors: the cooperatives and the advertisers on pages 48 to 53 and 83.



# 2006 Touchstone Energy Travel Guide

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives  
The power of human connections® 



*This supplement to Carolina Country is brought to you by North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperatives, serving nearly 2 million people in 93 North Carolina counties. We bring the power of human connections to all regions of North Carolina. Touchstone Energy cooperatives nationwide are committed to integrity, accountability, innovation and community involvement.*

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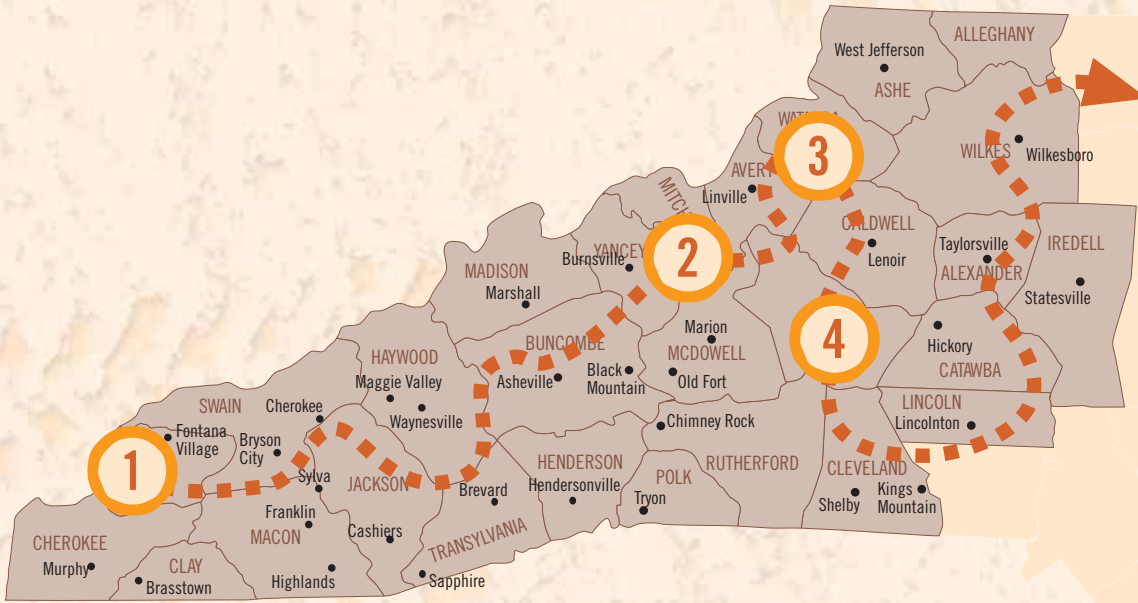
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# MOUNTAIN ADVENTURES



*Towering peaks, lush valleys and postcard views are just around the bend in this culturally rich region. Old-time music, heritage arts and crafts, quaint inns, Appalachian cooking and pristine hiking trails are among its attractions. (For more information see our travel resources on page 79.)*

By Karen Olson House



## JOYCE KILMER MEMORIAL FOREST

Giant trees 100 feet tall and 400 years old, 20 miles of hiking trails, and utter peace and quiet.



## EMERALD VILLAGE

Find a gem every time—guaranteed. See how a mountain mining town lived between the 1920s and 1950s.



## TWEETSIE RAILROAD

The steam engine's whistle that once echoed among the mountains now signals real family fun along the railroad, plus a hankering for corn dogs.



## VALDEESE

To appreciate this unusually proud place and its traditions, you must understand what brought the Waldenses here from northern Italy 100 years ago.

# 1 JOYCE KILMER MEMORIAL FOREST

Graham County

For hikers and nature lovers, a walk through the lush Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest is a primitive journey back in time. This magnificent cove hardwood forest's special offering is its immense, towering trees, some of which are more than 20 feet around in circumference, more than 100 feet high, and as old as 400 years.

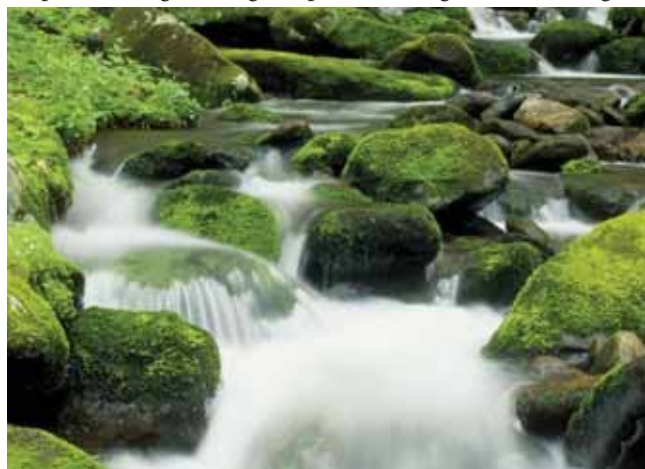
The unusual and impressive remnant of virgin wilderness includes yellow poplar, hemlock, sycamore, basswood, dogwood, beech and oak trees, among others. In addition to the enormous old trees, there is an outstanding variety of shrubs, vines, ferns, lichens, liverworts and herbaceous plants. The forest's floor is carpeted with moss-covered logs from fallen giants.

The memorial forest, located near Robbinsville in Graham County, is maintained in its natural state by the National Forest Service. In spring, blazes of wildflowers show off their blooms before the massive trees' leaves open and shade the forest floor. Summer is wet, with brilliant greens—hikers say that the forest is noticeably cooler than the parking area. Fall signals a gradual color change from greens to red, orange, yellow and maroon. Then the leaves fall, revealing the “bones” of the mountains.

No plants, living or dead, may be cut or removed in this area that was the uncharted hunting ground of the Cherokee Indians. The area is a living, formal memorial to soldiers in general and a nod in particular to poet Joyce Kilmer, who was killed in action during World War I. Kilmer is best remembered for “Trees,” his oft-quoted poem that begins with the lines “I think that I shall never see a poem as lovely as a tree.”

## HIKING THE FOREST AND WILDERNESS AREA

The only way to see this impressive area is on foot. There are roughly 20 miles of hiking trails. Hikers suggest taking the figure-eight Joyce Kilmer National Recreation Trail. It covers 2 miles and has two loops: a 1¼-mile lower loop that passes by the Joyce Kilmer Memorial plaque, and an upper ¾-mile loop that swings through Poplar Cove, a grove of the largest



The memorial forest lies within the larger Joyce Kilmer-Slickrock Wilderness area.



In addition to huge trees, there is a wide range of beautiful shrubs, ferns, vines and lichens.

trees. The trailhead parking area has a flush toilet and picnic tables. No camping or overnight parking is allowed inside the forest. However, two campgrounds, Horse Cove and Rattler Ford Group, are located a half-mile away.

The memorial forest lies within a much larger area to explore, the Joyce Kilmer-Slickrock Wilderness area. Not counting the Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest, there are roughly 60 miles of hiking trails in other parts of the Joyce Kilmer-Slickrock Wilderness. It boasts mountain streams, misty waterfalls, bold, sharp peaks and rugged ridge tops. Like other wildernesses, Joyce Kilmer-Slickrock Wilderness area is managed to protect naturalness and solitude. No motorized or mechanical vehicles or equipment, such as cars, chain saws or bicycles, are allowed. Hikers must meet with nature on its own terms, which is one of the biggest charms of this area.

**Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest**  
Cheoah Ranger District  
Route 1, Box 16-A  
Massey Branch Road  
Robbinsville, NC 28771

(828) 479-6431  
[www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc](http://www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc)

## 2 EMERALD VILLAGE

Mitchell County

North Carolina is a rock-hound's heaven, with vast, shiny treasures stored underground. The Blue Ridge mountain region is particularly rich in unusual rocks and minerals, and bountiful with regard to gem mining attractions. Cities and towns that offer mining opportunities include Franklin, Sapphire, Marion, Chimney Rock, Bryson City and others.

Possibly the richest area for gems is Mitchell County. One of the county's main industries is mining, and it hosts the North Carolina Mineral and Gem Festival each August. About 60 different rocks and minerals have been found in the area, including aquamarine, emerald, garnet, and smoky quartz along with uranium and fluorescent minerals. A popular family mining attraction here is Emerald Village. This cluster of gem, mineral and mining commercial attractions, nestled high in the Blue Ridge Mountains at Little Switzerland, offers underground mine tours, gemstone mining and unusual historic displays.

### A GEM FIND EVERY TIME

The gem mining operation guarantees a gem find every time, and you can keep what you find. You can see artisans working in cutting shops. And you can get your finds identified and cut by experts. Other activities include self-guided tours of the historic Bon Ami Mine. In addition, there is the Company Store, a walk-through display that shows a minia-



*You can keep what you find at this family attraction.*



*Exhibits include an antique music museum, railroad display and minerals gallery.*

ture-mining town as it would have looked from the 1920s to the 1950s—years when mines were in operation. The layout includes a post office and the mine boss' office.

### EMERALD VILLAGE EXHIBITS

Displays in the village's Discovery Mill Building include a Blue Ridge Railroad exhibit. An audio-animatronics conductor tells about the Clinchfield Loops, a local railroad line that you can view in HO Scale.

Also housed in the building is an Antique Music Museum, which features numerous player pianos, crank-type music boxes and other musical instruments. Folks who like vintage farm items can look at the Homestead Display. The village's Gallery of Minerals includes an ultraviolet (black light) display where minerals glow in the dark.

The Miner's Daughter's Attic (named after a ghost, they say) houses collectibles, antiques and "general junk." Children like the North Carolina Wildlife Display. Exhibits also include a collection of mining lamps, dynamite plungers and other mining memorabilia.

Mine tours cost \$5, with discounts for students and seniors. Buckets start at \$6 for children. Adult buckets start at \$10. You also can purchase mining buckets that go up to \$1,000 depending on gemstones. Group rates are available.

**Emerald Village**  
McKinney Mine Road  
Little Switzerland, NC 28749

(828) 765-6463  
[www.emeraldvillage.com](http://www.emeraldvillage.com)

## 3 TWEETSIE RAILROAD

Watauga County

Mention the name “Tweetsie” to North Carolinians and it conjures up different memories. For children, it can mean visiting the Wild West, helping the U.S. Marshal fight off would-be train robbers and devouring funnel cakes. For their more practical parents, it can signal an affordable, all-day attraction in the cool Blue Ridge Mountains. And for old-timers, the name “Tweetsie” stirs up a distant train whistle and a hankering for corn dogs.

Located between Blowing Rock and Boone, Tweetsie Railroad continues to draw crowds interested in old-fashioned entertainment. Some shows may not be performed every day. Inquire ahead. Vintage-style attractions at North Carolina’s oldest theme park include:

**Wild West Train Adventure:** Ride on Tweetsie, a train pulled by an authentic coal-fired steam locomotive, and see costumed skits by enthusiastic actors and actresses during surprise train stops.

**The Tweetsie Palace Saloon Show:** A variety show that includes Tweetsie can-can girls and Diamond Lil. In between live shows, guests can watch classic westerns.

**The Traditions Music Show:** Including live bluegrass music and the Tweetsie Cloggers.

**Professor Peppercorn’s Amazing Medicine Show:** Professor Phineas T. Peppercorn demonstrates his inventions and peddles his miraculous elixirs and snake oil atop Miner’s Mountain.

Tweetsie also holds special events such as its Riders of the Sky concerts, Purina Incredible Dog Team performances and Halloween Ghost Train. One especially popular event is its “Day Out With Thomas,” scheduled this year from June 2 through June 11. Children and grownups take a 25-minute ride with Thomas the Tank Engine, hear engaging stories and sport temporary tattoos.

The park operates two vintage steam locomotives: The #12 “Tweetsie” and the #190 “Yukon Queen.” The train makes a three-mile chugging loop through the mountains, not far from the end of an original rail line station in Boone.

Country fair rides include a carousel, Ferris Wheel and Tilt-A-Whirl. You can discover yesteryear at the Antique Photo Parlor and The General Store, which sells pink cowboy hats, Indian tomahawks and pistol cap guns. In the park’s steam repair shop workers maintain equipment and restore locomotives for other parks.

Tweetsie’s history dates back to 1866, the year the East Tennessee & Western

North Carolina Railroad Company gained permission to construct a railroad. At the outset, the ET&WNC line (which mountain humorists dubbed the “Eat Taters & Wear No Clothes” Railroad) was to operate from Johnson City, Tenn., to the iron mines just over the state line at Cranberry, N.C.

In 1916 rail service was extended to Boone.

The name “Tweetsie” was given by mountain dwellers who became accustomed to the shrill “tweet, tweet” whistles that echoed through the hills. In the summer of 1957, Tweetsie Railroad as an attraction was born.

Opening day is May 5. The park plans to be open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays at first, and then seven days a week from May 26 through August 27 before returning to the weekend schedule from September 1 through October 29. Daily admission is \$27 for adults and \$19 for children ages 3–12. Ages 2 and under are free. Season passes are available now for the 2006 season.



*Tweetsie offers country fair and train rides.*



*The park operates two vintage steam locomotives.*

**Tweetsie Railroad**  
300 Tweetsie Railroad Lane  
Blowing Rock, NC 28605

(800) 526-5740 or  
(828) 264-9061  
[www.Tweetsie.com](http://www.Tweetsie.com)

## 4 VALDESE

Burke County

Blessed with a number of historical and recreational attractions, Valdese stands today as an inspiring symbol of the hard work and religious faith of its settlers. This unusual town of about 4,500, located near the Catawba River between Morganton and Hickory, was settled in 1893 by the Waldenses, immigrants from Northern Italy.

The Waldenses were pre-Reformation Christians persecuted for centuries by Italian and French armies and the official church. The tiny religious sect was forced to take refuge in the rugged Italian valleys. They remained secluded in the Cottian Alps until they received their religious freedom by the Edict of 1848. With their new peace, their population swelled until their Alpine farms could not support them. They began establishing colonies in other parts of Europe, South America and locations in the U.S., including North Carolina, New York City, Chicago, Missouri, Texas and Utah. The North Carolina Valdese colony became the largest Waldensian colony in the world outside of Italy.

### TRAIL OF FAITH

One way to learn about the Waldenses' journey is to take Valdese's "Trail of Faith." This 15-station walking tour chronicles significant events and includes replicas of homes, churches and industries of the Italian Waldenses. The tour begins and ends at the Welcome Center and includes:

**The School of the Barbas.** Ministers called "barbas" studied and transcribed the Bible to their own language, a dialect called "Patois."

**Church of the Cave.** The cave, featuring a low, narrow entrance, served as a safe place for the Waldenses to worship God.

**The Temple at Ciabas.** Like many of the early temples, it was built without a bell tower because the Waldenses were for-



The outdoor drama "From This Day Forward" tells the immigrants' story.

bidden from calling people to gather for worship.

**The Tron House.** This tiny frame house was one of the first homes built in the summer of 1893, when the Waldenses settled Valdese. Pierre and Louise Tron, with their children, were among the 29 brave souls who first settled Valdese. Their job was to prepare for the arrival of nearly 200 other colonists about six months later.

### ARTS AND MORE

An annual outdoor drama, "From This Day Forward," chronicles the Waldenese struggle with humor and insight. It is usually held in July and August. The Waldensian Museum features several rooms and thousands of items that date back to the earliest immigrants. The interior has been arranged for displays, including photographs, clothing, crafts, home and church furnishings, farm implements, carpentry tools, wine-making apparatus and toys. Walden Ian Heritage Wines, a working winery, preserves the winemaking tradition. At the Valdese Heritage Arts Center local artisans display their work, including baskets, woodcrafts, carvings and glassworks.

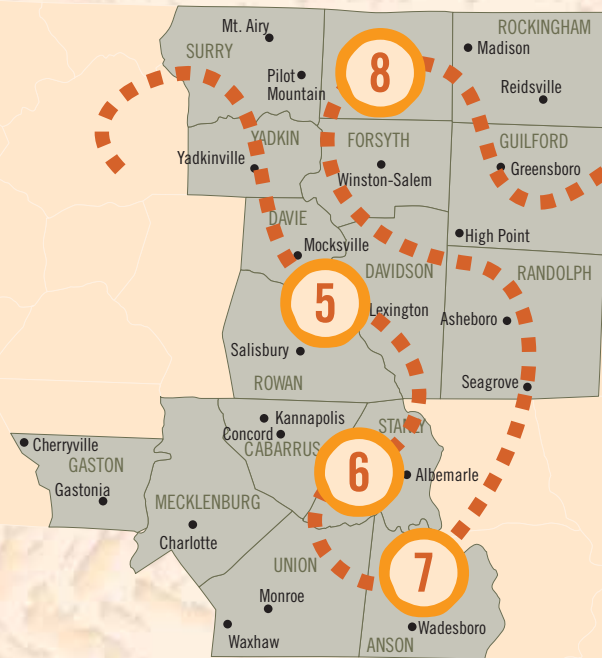
During the summer, Valdese comes alive on Fridays with a Farmer's Market across from Town Hall. When the market closes the music begins, with family-oriented Friday night concerts that showcase bluegrass, gospel and country musicians from the region.



Mural depicts old-style town of Valdese.

Valdese  
(828) 879-2126  
[www.valdese.com](http://www.valdese.com)

# WESTERN PIEDMONT ADVENTURES



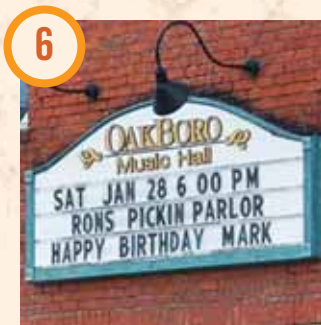
*Like the gold found and minted here in the 1800s, this region is bright and polished. They say the best barbecue comes from here, too, not to mention furniture, granite, ceramic arts and sonkers. Because of the shine, you can't miss it. (For more information see our travel resources on page 79.)*

By Michael E.C. Gery



## BOONE'S CAVE PARK

This is a peaceful place on the Yadkin River, even if Daniel Boone didn't actually live here.



## OAKBORO

The residents have asked to maintain its one-of-a-kind, small-town character, and they are getting their way.



## PEE DEE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Where humans work with nature to make a haven for birds and other animals.



## HISTORIC DANBURY

In the Sauratown Mountains, near Hanging Rock, a community nourished by its healthful mineral water and sense of preservation.

# 5 BOONE'S CAVE PARK

Davidson County



*Daniel Boone was here as a young man in one way or another.*

Kentucky wilderness. After setting up Boonesborough out there, he tried West Virginia for 10 years, then left for the unknown Missouri territory because, he said, West Virginia and Kentucky were “too crowded.”

Daniel Boone was one of the best wilderness scouts ever. “I have never been lost,” he once said, “but I will admit to being confused for several weeks.” He didn’t say exactly when or where the confusion set in. Maybe it was when he was here in Davidson County.

Daniel and his parents lived on some 600 acres in Davie County near Mocksville (his parents are buried in the cemetery there), and he married a local girl and raised a family. It’s likely that Daniel roamed outdoors along the Yadkin River Valley down into Davidson County, but a question remained for many years: Did Daniel Boone actually live here on a bluff over the river? Local citizens claimed he did, and in 1909 they built a memorial log cabin some five miles from the Churchland community in the woods near a cave that crops out of a Yadkin River cliff. They said Daniel hid from Indians in that cave. They called it Boone’s Cave near Boone’s Ford, and almost immediately their claim was disputed. (A Davie County newspaperman, J. Hampton Rich, was busy at the time erecting other markers to Boone’s presence throughout the nation, including 66 in

Daniel Boone in the 1700s traveled more than just about anyone in frontier America. Born in Pennsylvania in 1734, he blazed many trails, including some in the wilds of North Carolina, Florida, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia and Missouri where he finally died at age 85. He lived in North Carolina from age 15 to 35, when he left with his wife and children to see if there was any point in establishing a settlement in the

North Carolina, many of them bogus.) It wasn’t until 1965 that the authenticity of Boone’s being at this cave site was tested in state court. The courts, along with N.C. Archives and History, determined that the wandering frontiersman never actually lived here.

Nevertheless, the state made the site a state park in 1970 (it was the smallest of them all) and a state Natural Heritage Area in 1978, but the state returned it to Davidson County’s ownership in 2003. Since then, things at the park have improved considerably.

The drive out Boone’s Cave Road off Hwy. 150 grows prettier mile by mile. At 3.6 miles you’re at the parking area. Much of what you see here shows the improvements Davidson County has made the past three years. A granite monument erected by Rowan County citizens resembles the ones that J. Hampton Rich placed all over. There’s a very nice picnic pavilion that overlooks the bend in Yadkin River. Below is the 80-foot-long cut in the rock known as Boone’s Cave. It’s quiet, dark, cool and scary in there, and you can poke around the “rooms” deep inside, if you are so moved. Marked trails go by wildflowers, a 154-foot-tall cottonwood tree and the controversial old cabin. Swimming and fishing are excellent. And the county plans to erect more information pieces on Daniel Boone, plus a pier and canoe access.

**Boone’s Cave Park**  
P.O. Box 1711  
Lexington, NC 27293

(336) 242-2285  
[www.davidsoncountync.com](http://www.davidsoncountync.com)



Michael Gery

*The 100-acre park is part of the Yadkin-Pee Dee River Trail.*

# 6 OAKBORO

Stanly County

At first glance, Oakboro looks like any small town with storefronts along Main Street and railroad tracks nearby. But it doesn't take long to figure out that Oakboro likes being unlike any small town.

Immediately striking is Oakboro's love affair with water. Three water companies do business within a three-block area on Main Street alone. RG Water Shoppe carries "healthy" water coolers you'd find in offices. B&G Water Shop carries bottled water, too, and you can choose your own label, like Anchor Steam Power Co. and Big Lick Licker did. Blue Ridge Atlantic Enterprises specializes in rainwater management, whether it's rooftop runoff or underground stormwater. Both beverage dispensing machines on Main Street contain bottled water, including the Coke machine bearing a life-size image of No. 55 NAPA driver Michael Waltrip, and the water machine in front of B&G that sells both water and Yoo Hoo for 50 cents a bottle. With such good water resources, it stands to reason that Oakboro would have a popsicle factory, too. The Pelateria La Potosina Popsicle Factory makes and sells popsicles flavored with tamarind, pineapple, mango, pecan, strawberry, lime, cantaloupe, coconut, watermelon or vanilla.

Wings, Inc. also might strike you as unlike anything else. On the corner of Main and 1st, Wings sells local honey, herbs, gifts and models, including a Blade CX RTF electric coaxial helicopter and other radio-controlled aircraft that they fly at Dwight Hill RC Airfield ("Home of the Rocky River Flying Aces") a mile and a half outside town.

The Penny Restaurant specializes in Chinese and Italian cuisines. Oakboro Tractor & Equipment sells "Toys 4 Big Boys." There's a trophy shop and a custom embroidery shop. The garden shop is housed in what was once a fueling station. Oakboro General Store and Hardware is where BJ Supply Co. used to be (the ad remains on the brick wall of the 1920s building). What was once Punk's Drug Store now houses Fountain Grill, which has become famous along with the Oakboro Music Hall next door. Oakboro Music Hall ([www.oakboromusichall.com](http://www.oakboromusichall.com)) brings "big show" country, blue-



Michael Gery

*Nice, new sidewalks and benches. Fountain Grill is open Wednesday through Saturday evenings and Sunday 11 to 3.*

grass and you-name-it bands to its classic brick-walled hootenanny hall.

This town of maybe 1,200 people has had its own government since 1915. They keep telling their elected officials they want to hold on to the small-town atmosphere, and obviously the officials listen. Things began jumping when the railroad came in 1913. Five Roads junction was called Furr City then, for the family who owned the store where people in the surrounding country would come for supplies. The Oakboro Cotton Mill, built in 1923, operated 50 years before Tuscarora bought it, and it remains the town's largest employer. The Oakboro Regional Museum of History preserves the town's heritage (they had a hats exhibit recently and afternoon tea where they sang Stephen Foster tunes played on a 1927 Estey Reid organ). And pretty soon they'll have the Oakboro Railroad Museum, too.

Depending on who's at the Music Hall, the event that draws the most interest is the Summer Nights Cruise In ([www.oakborocruisein.com](http://www.oakborocruisein.com)) every fourth Friday April through October (and now every fourth Saturday in winter, not to mention the occasional Bike Day). This is when classic cars cruise Main Street and people just hang out and have a good old time.

**Town of Oakboro**  
109 North Main Street  
Oakboro, NC 28129

(704) 485-3351  
[www.oakboro.com](http://www.oakboro.com)



Michael Gery

*Oakboro Music Hall rivals the Cruise In as the biggest draw in town.*

# 7 PEE DEE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Anson and Richmond Counties

Michael Gery



*The refuge employs a variety of management methods to keep the place comfortable for wildlife.*

One reason birds and other wild animals like Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge is that humans keep the place in good shape. In April, for example, you'll see newly planted cornfields here, young wheat swaying in the breeze, and lowlands that have been shallowly flooded on purpose. This human activity creates watery areas and mudflats for moist soil plants such as smartweed (really, that's what it's called) and other conditions that migrating birds appreciate. You might also see people opening up beaver dams.

Farmers, hunters, people starting woodland fires, people trapping and banding birds, people building nesting boxes—they are as important to this refuge as the wildlife. The farmers leave part of their corn, milo and soybean crops just for the birds. In fact, the low-intensity farming methods attract other farmers, agriculture teachers and specialists who are interested in how the fields are managed.

Back in the 1920s, Lockhart Gaddy placed his captive live geese in this area so he could attract and shoot wild ones. In 1934 he stopped shooting them and concentrated simply on attracting migrating waterfowl. By the 1950s, some 10,000 birds came through here, and they themselves



*You can see the American kestrel in this refuge.*

attracted people from all over the United States who came to look at them. As geese and ducks began declining in this region in the 1960s, local people and helpful government officials followed the Gaddy model and established in 1963 the Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge. Hazel Gaddy managed her late husband's refuge until 1975, and it is now part of the Pee Dee NWR.

Today this refuge in Anson and Richmond counties comprises 8,443 acres of pines, hardwoods, fields, ponds and wetlands, including Brown Creek and the local stretch of Pee Dee River. The refuge manager will tell you the place is within "the largest bottomland hardwood tract left in North Carolina's Piedmont." That could be why some 180 bird species come through here (including the extremely rare red-cockaded woodpecker), as well as animals like grey fox, white-tailed deer, green snake and golden mouse.

You can hunt quail, rabbit, dove, squirrel, turkey, opossum, raccoon and deer at certain times between September and February (there's a book of regulations for this). You can fish from March 15 to October 15. You can drive through here in your car any time of year between sunrise and sunset, or paddle a canoe, or run your wheelchair, or just walk for hours without seeing anyone.

Bird migration begins in August and continues into October so that by winter the place is crowded with ducks and geese. You have to see it to believe it.

**Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge**  
Route 1, Box 92  
Wadesboro, NC 28170

(704) 694-4424  
peedee@fws.gov  
www.peedeefriends.org

# 8 HISTORIC DANBURY

Stokes County

They crowned Danbury the Stokes County seat when they split today's Stokes from Forsyth County in 1849. Soon afterwards, the mineral water and springs around here became a major attraction for health seekers from other states. Historic Danbury now draws much of its charm from the heady days of the mineral springs fad.

Between the 1870s and 1920s, three magnificent, elegant hotels in the surrounding area catered to tourists who came for the springs, clean mountain air and natural beauty. They were well-built white-frame wooden hotels—Piedmont Springs, Moore's Springs and Vade Mecum Springs—whose staffs served memorable meals in large dining rooms and entertained guests with international string ensembles and excursions to the mountains and Dan River. Fire destroyed two of the hotels, but today's Sertoma 4-H Center is in the Vade Mecum building and operates a summer camp on the grounds.

Much earlier, before the year 1000, Saura Indians also enjoyed the serenity and abundance of this area. Part of the eastern Siouan-speaking nation, the industrious Saura took advantage of the plain by Dan River (named for a Saura elder) and lived in the ridges surrounding Danbury.

In Danbury now you see a dignified settlement with the stately brick 1904 Stokes County Courthouse presiding over Main Street. Across the street is the alluring Dan River Artsmarket where regional art and crafts are displayed. Up



Michael Gery

*The work of some 75 artisans appears at the Dan River Artmarket across from the courthouse.*

the road from the Courthouse is Moody Tavern, which served as headquarters for the Union Cavalry's Gen. Stoneman's troops in 1865. It is undergoing restoration. And down the road is the Wilson Fulton House, a historic brick place built in the late 1850s by a local merchant and tanner. The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and will be restored by the Stokes County Historical Society to serve as a museum and research center someday.

Iron mining also thrived here for a while in the early half of the 1800s. The Moratuck Iron Furnace, built about 1843, made iron for bars, and it stands on the edge of Danbury. There's an access point to the Dan River in the same area.

Anywhere you go around Danbury you'll see the majestic Sauratown Mountain range. Hanging Rock State Park is the main public attraction here, with its wood-and-stone bathhouse (also listed on the National Register) and visitor center lodge. It's a 7,000-acre park with 18 miles of trails, campgrounds, waterfalls and an amazing view from Moore's Knob.

You can experience the same Danbury hospitality that existed during the days of the grand hotels and their excursions, maybe not as elaborate but certainly as friendly. The Whippoorwill Inn Guest House and Dan River Cottage both have fine accommodations. And provisions, especially for river adventures, are available at the Danbury General Store and the Dan River Company.

Stokes County Historical Society has identified some intelligence they claim originated here. It may be helpful:

The first frost comes three months from the time you hear the first katydid.

It will hail in May if it thunders in February.

If a river gets out of its banks in March, it will do so again in August.

When it is foggy in the morning, it will clear before noon.



Michael Gery

*The Stokes County Courthouse is known for its porticos and mansard cupolas.*

**Stokes County Tourism Council**  
P.O. Box 20  
Danbury, NC 27016

(336) 593-2496  
[www.stokescounty.org](http://www.stokescounty.org)

# EASTERN PIEDMONT ADVENTURES



*Award-winning museums, top-flight golf, renowned gardens, great bicycling—the Piedmont boasts a wide range of educational and recreational attractions. Among its varied offerings explored here are an unusual winery, a fast track for drag racing fans, a tucked-away plantation house and a big, shining lake with lots of critters. (For more information see our travel resources on page 79.)*

By Jennifer Taylor



## 9 THE WINERY AT IRON GATE FARM

Open year-round, this quaint winery and working farm offers wine tastings and a gift shop with local art, homemade baskets and culinary treats. Oh, there's a fishing pond, too.



## 10 HOUSE IN THE HORSESHOE

Named after a bend in the Deep River, this hilltop plantation home was built around 1772 and still bears battle scars from the American Revolution.



## 11 THE ROCKINGHAM DRAGWAY

The fastest track in the Carolinas, the dragway hosts some of the most exciting car and motorcycle drag racing in the country.



## 12 KERR LAKE RECREATION AREA

This 50,000-acre manmade lake stretches from the northeast Piedmont across the border into Virginia. It's a great place to sail, ski, fish or spot wildlife.

# 9 THE WINERY AT IRON GATE FARM

Alamance County

If you are interested in a quiet escape to a relaxed and tasteful atmosphere ideal for wine tasting or just visiting with your friends and family, The Winery at Iron Gate Farm is a good retreat. In September 2000, owners Gene and Debbie Stikeleather bought the farm with hopes of maintaining its agricultural integrity. Interested in a career change, Debbie began attending classes at Surry Community College in wine grape growing and wine production, called viticulture and enology. In April 2001, the owners planted the first grapes on the farm and in 2002, the first harvest of Sauvignon Blanc went to Hanover Park Vineyards. After selling the grapes to wineries in the Yadkin and Surry areas for several years, the owners decided to make their own wine and opened to the public on July 1, 2004.

The Winery at Iron Gate Farm is a quaint, friendly environment surrounded by 60 acres of farmland and eight acres of vineyards. The winery has a patio with tables and chairs, a front porch with rockers for lounging, a cozy tasting room and even a pond with a small pier for fishing. Armed with a picnic basket, cane pole and bottle of wine, you can stroll the beach around the pond. The winery has also hosted weddings, bridal showers and receptions. The



*This relaxed, friendly environment, with eight acres of vineyards, is also a working farm with 60 acres of farmland and horses, goats and chickens.*

vineyards and winery at Iron Gate are a serene stage for a romantic outdoor event.

In 2005, the vineyard and winery received Best in Show and was a double gold winner for their Cabernet Sauvignon at the N.C. State Fair. The most popular wine at Iron Gate is a sweet, white wine, Flue Fire, named after an old tobacco curing process. Other wines produced at the vineyard include Merlot, Sauvignon Blanc and Chambourcin, as well as other red and white wines. Niagara, Viognier, Sangiovese and Merlot are just some of the grapes grown at the vineyards.

### *SPECIAL EVENTS PLUS LOCAL ART*

In addition to grape growing, Iron Gate is also a working farm with horses, goats and chickens. On Saturday, May 6, the property will host its annual "Old Fashioned Farm Day" with arts and crafts vendors from across the state. Admission is free and visitors can enjoy wine tasting, fishing, wagon rides, music and food.

The gift shop inside the winery is a delightful spot to view local art. Hand crafted items for sale in the store include rural farm prints, oil paintings, wine lamps and cork boards made by local high school students, homemade baskets and a variety of culinary products like vinegar and honey.

The Winery at Iron Gate Farm is open year-round for guests and tours. A \$2 tasting fee includes your own wine glass, and if you purchase two bottles or more of wine, the tasting is free.

**The Winery at Iron Gate Farm**  
2540 Lynch Store Road  
Mebane, NC 27302

(919) 304-9463  
<http://irongatevineyards.com>



*The winery has a patio, a front porch with rockers and a tasting room.*

The Winery at Iron Gate Farm

Janifer Taylor

# 10 ROCKINGHAM DRAGWAY

Richmond County



Racers and fans alike enjoy a year-round calendar of events ranging from the International Hot Rod Association World Finals and the IHRA Spring Nationals to a "Smoke at the Rock" barbeque cook-off.

Do you feel the need for speed? Are you ready to experience life in the fast lane? The Rockingham Dragway is the fastest track in the Carolinas and home to some of the most exciting car and motorcycle drag racing in the country. Racers and fans alike will enjoy a calendar of events ranging from the International Hot Rod Association (IHRA) World Finals and the IHRA Spring Nationals to the "Smoke at the Rock" barbeque cook-off. The dragway's performance history includes 29 years as host to at least one national drag championship per year. Starting this year the dragway will offer an all-new drag racing school with professional racer Dale Brinsfield.

In addition to the two main IHRA events, the Rockingham Dragway will be the site of the Torco Race Carolina Coalition series, several motorcycle races including the All-Harley drag racing Screamin' Eagle World Nationals, as well as a combination of other racing events involving

some of the world's fastest street cars. The dragway also produces a Saturday night street-legal series.

## 2006 RACING HIGHLIGHTS

The 2006 schedule, comprising more than 70 races, blasted off on January 22 and will conclude in December. In February, the track had nitromethane-burning funny cars in the Pro Modified and Pro Stock events for the first time since 1994. The IHRA Spring Nationals, featuring the Castrol Nite of Fire, will be held April 21–23 and the IHRA World Finals will be October 20–22. In November, the Southeast Bracket finals are expected to bring approximately 700 race teams to the dragway. In June, the track will host the annual Freedom Fest honoring the men and women of Richmond County who have been involved in operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The year-round racing programs and expanded calendar reflect the increased interest in automobile and motorcycle drag racing. The track's ideal location in the southern Piedmont attracts visitors from all parts of the state, as it is within a two-hour drive from Charlotte, Raleigh-Durham, Fayetteville, Greensboro and Winston-Salem.

This family-friendly environment is a weekend getaway for race fans and speed enthusiasts. Watch funny cars and super bikes zip by so quickly you will feel the heat and hear the engines before you get a good glimpse of the race. To order tickets to a racing event and for information on driving directions, area hotels, the track map and seating chart, as well as the 2006 calendar of events, visit the Web site.



**The Rockingham Dragway**  
2153 US Hwy 1 North  
Rockingham, NC 28379

(910) 582-3400  
[www.rockinghamdragway.com](http://www.rockinghamdragway.com)

# 11 HOUSE IN THE HORSESHOE

Moore County

Jennifer Taylor



One of North Carolina's official State Historic Sites, the traditional house has a gable roof and two large brick chimneys.

"There once was an old woman who lived in a shoe," but have you ever heard of the House in the Horseshoe? Step back in time and visit one of the first "big houses" of upland North Carolina's frontier country. Named after a horseshoe bend in the Deep River of Moore County, this hilltop plantation home still bears battle scars from the American Revolution. Can you imagine seeing a bullet hole from a gun that was fired more than 200 years ago when our country was fighting for its independence? This plantation home is a history lover's haven and a great place to teach your children about America.

Jennifer Taylor



The interior is furnished with late Colonial and early Federal period pieces.

## HISTORY

The House in the Horseshoe was built around 1772 and first owned by Philip Alston, a colonel for the revolutionary soldiers during the war. In 1781, local English loyalists attacked the revolutionists camped at his home and even attempted to burn it down. Alston eventually surrendered during the skirmish, but the house was left charred from fire and pierced with bullets. Alston's 2,500-acre plantation was sold to the state in 1790.

Eight years later, North Carolina governor Benjamin Williams acquired the property and named the plantation "Retreat," an ironic name given the previous owner's luck with war and life. The house was enlarged with wings for a kitchen and master bedroom, and the rich land on the river was converted to cotton fields.

Williams aspired to be a planter, and by

1802 he grew nearly 200 acres of cotton crops. Williams passed away in 1814, but his family continued to live at the property until 1853. Then the plantation changed ownership several times until the Moore County Historical Association purchased and restored it in 1954. The house is now owned by the state and is one of North Carolina's official State Historic Sites.

The house carries a traditional, coastal plantation look with a gable roof, two large brick chimneys and a big ol' front porch. The furnishings inside are late Colonial and early Federal period pieces. Other buildings on the property include a reconstructed loom house with a working loom, a well house, and an old pack house that has been converted into a small museum for visitors.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Speaking of visitors, come out and watch a live battle reenactment of the 1781 Revolutionary scuffle. The reenactment takes place the first full weekend in August. Additionally, there are musket demonstrations and other hands-on activities available. In April, the site has a militia muster with artillery and small arms demonstrations. The property is open year-round and admission is free. Watch for the horseshoe bend in the Deep River and find the House in the Horseshoe up on the hill.

### House in the Horseshoe

324 Alston House Road  
Sanford, NC 27330

(910) 947-2051

[www.ah.dcr.state.nc.us/sections/hs/horsesho/horsesho.htm](http://www.ah.dcr.state.nc.us/sections/hs/horsesho/horsesho.htm)

Bryce Fleming



*The site is a natural habitat for hundreds of species of birds, reptiles and fish.*

Kerr Lake State Recreation Area is a good place for boating, fishing, camping and exploring the great outdoors. The 50,000-acre man-made lake stretches from the northeast corner of North Carolina's Piedmont across the border into Virginia. The lake and landscape are a natural habitat for hundreds of species of birds, reptiles and fish. The wooded shoreline is

perfect for hiking and nature enthusiasts. For those who love the water, Kerr Lake is great for sailing or water skiing.

Construction for the John H. Kerr Reservoir began in 1946, due to the increase in land development and the demand for flood control and electricity. Named after a North Carolina congressman for his role in the lake's development, the reservoir was completed in 1953. Several rivers, including the Roanoke River and Dan River, and other small tributaries feed the lake. In addition to water management, the reservoir provides forest management, recreation and wildlife conservation.

Once home to the Occaneechee Indians, the Kerr Lake State Recreation Area is home to a variety of trees. Along the 800-mile shoreline, willows and river birch can be found. Deeper into the woods, traditional varieties such as maples,

oaks, pines and dogwoods exist and provide homes to many birds. Bird watchers may spot common species that include cardinals, kingbirds, hawks and owls. In addition to bird watching, outdoorsmen and landlubbers may catch a glimpse of white-tailed deer, foxes, rabbits and other mammals. On the wet banks of the lakefront, kids and adults may find turtles, frogs, lizards and other reptiles, while ducks and geese wade at the water's edge.

#### *FAMILY ACTIVITIES*

The lake itself is a great place to spend the day with your family boating or fishing with your friends. Enjoy an afternoon picnic, teach your children how to water ski or take time for yourself and learn how to sail or canoe along the shore. For a break away from the hustle and bustle, camping can be a fun, family-oriented escape. Instead of video games and Internet, build a campfire, roast some marshmallows, tell a few stories and listen to the world around you. Consider water tubing as an alternative to "surfing the Web." Campsites are available for tents or RV's with hookups for electric and water. Camping fees vary based on amenities.

The N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation operates the Kerr Lake Recreation Area. The recreation's headquarters are located north of Henderson at Satterwhite Point in Vance County. Park hours for May–August are 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Closing time varies during other months throughout the year.

#### **Kerr Lake State Recreation Area**

6254 Satterwhite Point Road  
Henderson, NC 27537

(252) 438-7791

[www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/visit/kela/home.html](http://www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/visit/kela/home.html)

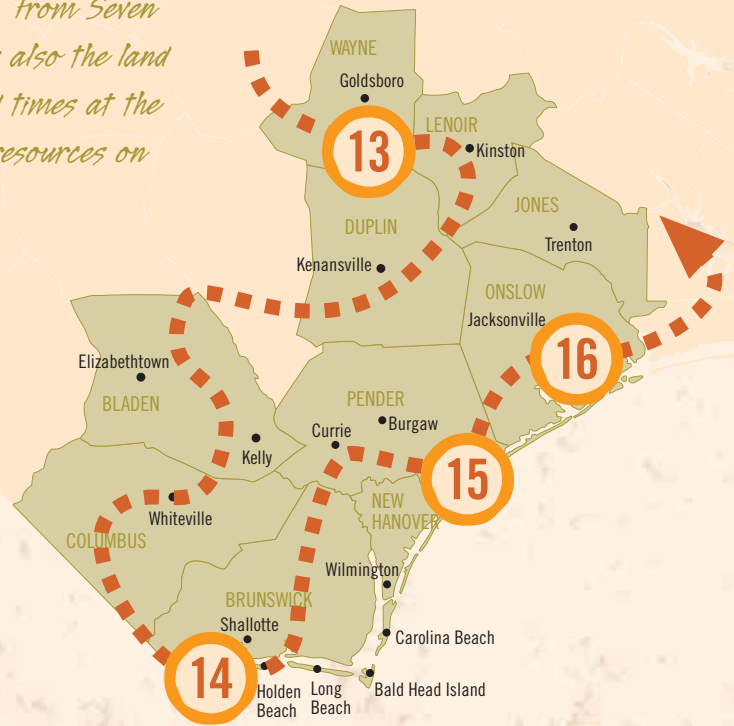


Bryce Fleming

*Willows and river birch trees can be found along the 800-mile shoreline, along with ducks, geese, turtles, frogs and lizards.*

# SOUTHERN COASTLAND ADVENTURES

Water is at the heart of the Southern Coastland. Rivers feed the farmlands and meander to the southern beaches. Lakes and streams provide fishing, hiking and other recreational opportunities. Towns grew up along the water's edge, from Wayne County south to the Brunswick Islands, from Seven Springs to the port city of Wilmington. This is also the land of pork, tobacco, seafood, grapevines and good times at the beach. (For more information see our travel resources on page 79.)

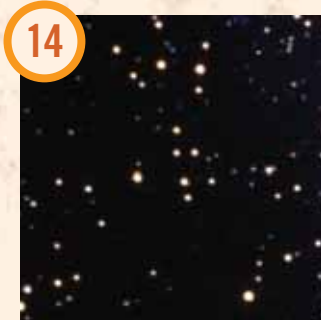


By Renee C. Gannon



## CLIFFS OF THE NEUSE STATE PARK

The Neuse River cut a cliff into this land millions of years ago. Now this diverse environment welcomes hikers, campers and picnickers.



## INGRAM PLANETARIUM

At the coast you notice that stars come out brighter than the black screen over the ocean. Here you can find out more about the nighttime sky and the story behind these heavenly bodies.



## POPLAR GROVE PLANTATION

Agriculture is the lifeblood of the region. But it often took more than just a horse and plow to operate a large homestead in the late 1800s.



## CAMP LEVEUNE MARINE CORPS BASE

A small coastal community grew up to be a leader in U.S. military operations. See the corps' history, today's military and the place where soldiers love to live.

# 13 CLIFFS OF THE NEUSE STATE PARK

Wayne County

The flatlands of eastern North Carolina hold a secret—a 90-foot-tall secret. That's the height of the cliffs overlooking the Neuse River at the Cliffs of the Neuse State Park. The 600-yard swath of multi-colored wall created by sand, clay, seashells, shale and gravel is considered an anomaly in the coastal plain.

According to the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation, the white, tan, yellow and brown layers were formed when a fault in the earth's crust shifted millions of years ago. The river followed the fault line and cut through the sediment layers left behind by ancient oceans that once covered the area. A portion of the river bent against its bank and the erosion became the cliffs. The observation deck at the cliff's edge offers a grand view of the Neuse River.

Established in 1945, the park's 751 acres offer a wide array of recreational activities. With more than 420 plant species and a wide array of animals and birds, hiking on the park's many trails lends itself to an education on nature, as well as geology and prehistoric life. An interpretive museum at the park displays dioramas and audiovisuals about the park's natural history. The park offers boating and swimming access to its 11-acre manmade lake, as well as camping and picnicking facilities.

## EXPLORING THE PARK

Visitors can explore the park on four different trails. All four trails are color coded and trees along the trails' routes are marked with color cards. Three trails are located to the right of the cliff's observation deck. The half-mile Bird Trail, rated easy, loops into the forest and back out along the river. The half-mile Galax Trail, rated easy, shows the woodland interior of the park. Both trails explore creeks once used by local moonshiners. The 350-Yard Trail leads from



The 90-foot cliffs offer a birds-eye view of the Neuse River and surrounding woodlands.



The park's hiking trails range from easy to moderate. The trails offer exploration of the park's diverse ecology. The Spanish Moss Trail (pictured) is rated moderate.

the observation deck to these two trails.

To the left of the observation deck is the Spanish Moss Trail and the amphitheater. The half-mile Spanish Moss Trail, rated moderate, will get your heart pumping with its many up and down climbs. An off-trail hike near the river offers an up-close view of the river and the cliffs. Walk carefully because the river's edge is soft, suck-you-in clay.

All trails involve some inclines and declines, with timber steps to help navigate. And be on the watch for tree roots on the trail that may cause a stumble.

While many state parks provide similar recreational activities and trails, the Cliffs at the Neuse is a unique geological site that offers a view that cannot be missed.

### Cliffs of the Neuse State Park

345-A Park Entrance Road  
Seven Springs, NC 28578

(919) 778-6234

<http://ils.unc.edu/parkproject/visit/clne/home.html>

# 14 INGRAM PLANETARIUM

*Brunswick County*

PhotoSpin



Sun, sand, water and stars. Your checklist is complete at the beaches of Brunswick County. At Sunset Beach's Ingram Planetarium, you can find out more about those bright balls of gas twinkling over the ocean. A planetarium? At the beach? That's right...

Built in 2001, the planetarium offers beachgoers a break from the endless cycle of swimming, sunbathing and beachcombing. You learn a thing or two about space and how it affects our own living planet. The 85-seat, 40-foot domed theater and the Paul Dennis Science Exhibit Hall bring the science of the stars down to levels understood by both adults and kids.

The exhibit hall includes math and science activities, such as "Easy as Pi," which demonstrates how math and physics are used in everyday life, as well as brain teasers and puzzles.

Renee Cannon



*The Ingram Planetarium offers not only a lesson on the stars and planets, but also provides classes, night telescope viewing and a science exhibit hall with activities that test your brain power.*

The planetarium is in the planning stage for the "View Space" exhibit, which will provide links to NASA, Hubble telescope images and daily space photos. The planetarium also provides telescopes for night-time viewing programs.

But the dome is the main attraction. The Spitz 1024 Star Projector with the multi-media presentations offered throughout the day transports viewers to other planets, stars and another time. One presentation offers a "naked eye" type of program: showing the sky as it is seen with the naked eye. Each program runs about 45 minutes with the first 15 minutes devoted to a video discussing current science news to help adjust the viewers' eyes. Many presentations change throughout the year to accommodate the seasonal changes in the night sky.

Presentations are available for all ages and change slightly depending on who presents the program. Senior Technician Mark Jankowski explains that he and the other presenters have different personalities. He admits he tends to be more scientific with a dry sense of humor. "I may throw in an obscure line from a Mel Brooks movie every once in awhile," he says with a smile. "The programs are two parts entertainment and two parts educational."

Jankowski enjoys his job, especially watching the audience reactions. "Kids love watching planets zoom up and spin in their face."

In March, the planetarium began a new program: "The Moon Through Time." Jankowski teamed up with Dr. Saavik Ford from Coastal Carolina University to create a retro look of humankind's vision of the moon, the moon's relationship with Earth and the NASA moon missions.

The planetarium provides stargazing year-round.

## **Ingram Planetarium**

The Village at Sunset Beach  
Sunset Boulevard  
Sunset Beach, NC 28468

(910) 575-0033

[www.ingramplanetarium.org](http://www.ingramplanetarium.org)

# 15 POPLAR GROVE PLANTATION

*Pender County*

Poplar Grove Plantation



*Blacksmith Kevin Lawrie demonstrating for visitors.*

Underneath the shade of century-old trees just off busy U.S. Highway 17 north of Wilmington you will find the 19th century at the 628-acre Poplar Grove Plantation. The site focuses on homestead life in the late 1800s, when the Foy family plantation and other neighboring farms struggled to survive. Salvation came to the area in the form of the peanut.

Joseph Mumford Foy became the first to grow peanuts on a large scale in North Carolina. Like other antebellum plantations, Poplar Grove had as many as 64 slaves working the estate. After the Civil War, 63 of the former slaves remained to work or become tenant farmers on the homestead. They helped save the plantation by showing Foy how to raise peanuts, a crop brought to America from Africa.

Visitors first see the 1850 Greek Revival home. Listed on the National Register for Historic Homes, the restored mansion features period furnishings and personal items. Much of the lumber used to build the house came from the plantation grounds, including the walnut stairs and the heart pine porches.

A walk around offers a historic glimpse of life on the estate, with artisans performing skills such as weaving, basket making and blacksmithing. Visitors also see an outdoor kitchen, a tenant farmer's house and other outbuildings, all restored to the time period.

Agriculture served as the lifeblood at Poplar Grove. Today, the site grows on a very small scale crops such as peanuts, cotton, corn, beans and peas for demonstration. There is also a barnyard of cows, horses, goats, pigs and chickens. Each crop and animal serves a purpose in bringing the late 19th century back to life: from cooking and storage demonstrations, to shearing sheep and using the wool fleece for blankets and clothing.

The pace slows down on a visit to Poplar Grove. Traffic and crowded Wilmington beaches are pushed into recent memory for visitors who want to learn about a 19th century homestead and the hard work involved in daily life, when a child cherished her handmade doll and the scant rest time she had to play.

Poplar Grove Plantation is located just north of Wilmington in the Hampstead community of Scott's Hill.

**Poplar Grove Plantation**  
10200 US Hwy. 17 North  
Wilmington, NC 28411

(910) 686-9518  
[www.poplargrove.com](http://www.poplargrove.com)

Poplar Grove Plantation



*The Poplar Grove mansion, constructed in 1850, sits on a 628-acre plantation. The site offers a look into 19th century life, including agriculture, homemaking and craftsmanship such as blacksmithing and basket weaving.*

# 16 CAMP LEJEUNE

Onslow County

A visit to this 155,000-acre military base reveals many aspects of military life, both past and present. The base offers something for everyone: military buffs, history buffs, nature buffs and those looking for something different.

To follow the base's self-guided tour, you must first obtain a visitor's day pass, a guide booklet and base map at the Camp Lejeune Visitors Center. Once past the gate's check-point, a short drive soon reveals a town like other Onslow County beach communities, with convenience marts, grocery stores, bowling alleys and even a movie house. Brick buildings, soldiers in fatigues, camouflage-painted vehicles and the occasional sighting of artillery remind you that this is a military base.

With the guide book in hand, First Lt. Clark Carpenter of the base's Public Affairs Office recommends a visitor ask: "What's adventurous to me?" This question will whittle down the time spent on the tour, which could take anywhere from three hours to more than a day, and includes stops on and off the base. Each stop offers a chance to vacate your vehicle for a closer look, such as Stop 3, the Base Headquarters building, which features a lobby exhibit showing the Marine Corps history and the life of the base's namesake, Gen. John A. LeJeune.

Buildings are featured prominently on the tour, but there is often more than just brick to these stops. Across from the Julian C. Smith Hall (stop 6), headquarters for the II Marine Expeditionary Forces, is a wonderful view of the New River. This river splits the base and adds natural scenery to many brick-and-mortar sites. Behind stop 7, the 2nd Force Service Support Group Headquarters, sits a lawn amphitheater facing the river. At the river's edge are three memorials honoring Marines who died during service in Grenada, Lebanon and the Dominican Republic.



Camp Lejeune

*The Beirut Memorial wall lists the names of those soldiers and sailors killed in the 1983 bombing of their compound.*

Other stops feature tanks; an observation point that over-views earth moving via machines, weapons and grenade launchers; amphibious training; a rifle range and helicopters. Stop 11 delves into the state's tar production history and also serves as an endangered species habitat for the red-cockaded woodpecker.

The driving tour also takes you through Sneads Ferry, where the Yopps Meeting House can be found at stop 16. Built in the late 1800s, the building has dual access denoting a time in history when a congregation was separated by gender. Surrounding the building is a haphazard array of family cemeteries.

Stop 24, Montford Point-Camp Johnson, recognizes the accomplishments of the first African-American Marines and where they received their training. Visitors learn more about this complex at the Montford Point Museum.

The 25th and final stop on the tour lies across the road from the cemetery complex. The quiet and moving Beirut Memorial pays tribute to the 273 Marines, soldiers and sailors who died in Beirut, Lebanon, when a bomb destroyed their compound. In 2003, a steel beam from the World Trade Center was added to the park. The New York Fire Department presented the beam in recognition of the 343 firefighters lost on 9/11 and the Marines who honored them on the battlefields of Iraq.

**Camp Lejeune Public Affairs**  
P.O. Box 8438  
Camp Lejeune, NC 28542

(910) 451-7440  
[www.lejeune.usmc.mil](http://www.lejeune.usmc.mil)



Camp Lejeune

*The Camp Lejeune military base isn't all brick and mortar. The base offers access to some of the most beautiful views of the New River, the waters of the intercoastal waterway and the sand at Onslow Beach.*

# NORTHERN COASTLAND ADVENTURES



*This is North Carolina's cradle of civilization. Like the birds in the local Atlantic Flyway, here is where we learned to fly faithfully and gracefully. Now we teach others how to keep it that way. (For more information see our travel resources on page 79.)*

By Tara Verna



## DEADWOOD

What is it about this family-owned, western-themed park that draws folks to the outskirts of rural Bear Grass (pop. 53) in Martin County?



## MERCHANTS MILLPOND

More than 3,250 acres of coastal pond and southern swamp forest habitats, one of North Carolina's rarest ecological communities. Camp, fish, canoe, hike and picnic—all around the mysterious millpond itself.



## SOMERSET PLACE

This 37-acre state historic site affords a glimpse into 19th century plantation life. During its active years (1785-1865), more than 850 enslaved people lived and worked here.



## CAPE LOOKOUT SEASHORE

Three undeveloped barrier islands—North Core Banks, South Core Banks and Shackleford Banks—make up this ½-mile wide seashore. Discover lost towns, a lighthouse, endangered species and unusual solitude.

# 17 DEADWOOD

*Martin County*

Whether it began as something to do in the middle of nowhere, as a “get-rich-quick” scheme, or as a way for two ex-construction workers to keep busy, may be less important than the fact that Deadwood is growing in popularity and for good reason. This family-owned, western-themed park/restaurant/music and theater venue caters to seniors, families, music buffs, couples, tour groups—you name it. There are often lines to get in the three evenings per week that the park is open, and it’s not unusual for 500–1,000 people per night to walk through its doors for special events.

So what is it about Deadwood that draws folks to the outskirts of rural Bear Grass (pop. 53) in Martin County?

Part-owner Derrick “Mr. Deadwood” Price shakes his head in bewilderment at the park’s good fortune.

“Sometimes I think that people are originally brought out here as a joke or on a whim. I can see them sweating it and wondering ‘Where the heck are they taking me and why?!’”

## HERE'S WHY:

**Theater** There’s the monthly dinner theater, “The Trial of Jack McCall,” which tells the story of the local miners’ court that found Jack McCall not guilty of the murder of Wild Bill Hickok in 1876.

**Music** Deadwood hosts a variety of musicians every Saturday night and some Fridays. The local bands “The Switch” out of Durham (high-energy, variety) and “Chairman of the Board” out of Charlotte (R&B, southern soul) appear there regularly.

**Special events** The park puts on periodic musical dinner shows in conjunction with the senior center in Williamston. Business seminars, dances, company family days, birthday parties for children—people rent Deadwood out for all sorts of reasons. Halloween lures guests to the park for its haunted train ride and spooky atmosphere—picture creepy, old west buildings, roaring bonfires and ghostly characters.

**Smokehouse Grill** Ninety-percent of Deadwood’s business comes from its restaurant, the “Smokehouse Grill.” As



*A carved wooden bear welcomes patrons to the “Smokehouse Grill” restaurant where ribeye steaks and baby back ribs rule supreme.*

expected from the name and theme, you’ll find entrees heavy on the meat with the ribeye steak and baby back ribs taking center stage. The restaurant and dance hall are both non-smoking after Derrick’s mother Gale, a non-smoker, had a scare due to spots found on her lungs two years ago. Rather than risk losing his best DJ (his mother) to the smoky environment, Derrick decided to go non-smoking, resulting in added appeal to families and an increase in business.

**Miniature golf to train rides** Miniature golf is actually how the park got its start. Back in 1989, Derrick and his father Ira Price put their backgrounds in construction to work by building a few putt-putt holes to entertain themselves. Bored friends began playing as well and eventually paid for the privilege. One thing led to another and the park opened officially in 1992, with additions made to its odd assortment of offerings each year thereafter. The park currently offers an arcade, a playground, a carousel, picnic area, ice cream and coffee shop, and restaurant and dance hall. The “Iron Horse Express” train and its half mile of track through the woods is one of the latest additions. “I don’t want to get in a rut doing one thing,” grins Derrick about the wide variety of offerings at Deadwood.

If you go, Williamston is the closest city to Deadwood, maybe 10 minutes away. The park is open Friday from 5:30–10 p.m., Saturday from 5 p.m.–2 a.m., and Sunday from 12–9 p.m.

**Deadwood**  
2302 Ed’s Grocery Rd.  
Williamston, NC 27892

(252) 792-8938  
mrdeadwood@earthlink.net  
www.deadwoodnc.com



*Deadwood takes its theme from the wild west. Old, dilapidated buildings, rickety wagons with spoked wheels, cow skulls and deteriorating wooden signs add to the atmosphere.*

Dark waters coated with pea-green aquatic plants, tupelo gum and age old cypress thick with Spanish moss, ancient predatory fish swimming alongside water snakes—you almost expect to see dwarves and gnomes inhabiting the forest and swampland at Merchants Millpond State Park.

Located in Gates County not far from Gatesville, the state park encompasses more than 3,250 acres of coastal pond and southern swamp forest habitats, one of North Carolina's rarest ecological communities. Visitors to the park can camp, fish, canoe, hike and picnic—all activities that revolve around the park's four-star attraction, the mysterious millpond itself.

#### THE MILLPOND

The 760-acre millpond feels primeval; it is more than 190 years old. Originally called Norfleets Millpond when it was first built back in 1811, it soon attracted gristmills, a sawmill and other enterprises to become the center of trade in Gates County. As a result, the name changed to Merchants Millpond.

At first glance, the eerie quality of the millpond almost overshadows its beauty. Alien-looking cypress knees rise from its still, dark waters. Tupelo gums draped by Spanish moss and sprouting resurrection ferns shade the continually shifting layers of floating duckweeds and water fern that carpet the pond's surface.

To truly experience the magic of the millpond, consider traveling by canoe. In fact, this is the only way to access the extraordinary virgin tupelo-bald cypress swamp that lies five miles deep within the pond. Here you lose track of time, gazing with awe at the misshapen, gnarled limbs and trunks of tupelo gum, maimed by parasitic mistletoe. This part of Lassiter Swamp has undergone little change since the Algonquin paddled through in fire-hollowed canoes a thousand years ago.

Keep an ear out for any number of frogs—carpenter, leopard, bull or cricket—they all thrive in this wetland world. If the sun is shining, look for pond turtles like cooters or sliders, soaking up its rays. Water snakes, typically harmless, abound, but do watch out for the venomous cottonmouth. The long-nosed gar and the bowfin—two primitive species of fish—call the millpond home. These fish have remained relatively the same for millions of years. Look to the skies for examples of more than 200 species of birds that have been recorded in the park, including swamp warblers, egrets, turkeys, owls and parulas. Four-footed creatures such as mink, river otter, bobcat, deer and raccoons also bed down here.



*A pea soup of floating duckweeds and water fern surround trunks of ancient tupelo gum and cypress in Merchants Millpond.*

#### WAYS TO EXPERIENCE THE PARK

To explore the millpond by canoe, bring your own or take advantage of rental facilities. You can enter the water via the boat ramp and pier in the parking area and follow the marked trail to canoe campsites. Fees start at \$5 for the first hour and \$3 for each additional hour.

In addition to canoeing, visitors may be interested in fishing or hiking. Lower a line into the water from shore or boat (trolling motors only) to net largemouth bass, bluegill, chain pickerel and black crappie. Take to the park's nine miles of trails to see the pond from a different vantage point.

The park offers both large and small groups various places to pitch a tent. There is a 20-site family campground accessible by car that offers restrooms, showers and drinking water. Or you can canoe to one of 10 more primitive sites. Five other sites can be reached via foot. Most are available on a first-come basis and prices range from \$9–\$15 per site, per day.

Early spring may be the best time of year to visit. The water is high and ticks and snakes are more likely to leave you alone.

#### TO LEARN MORE

Rangers deliver educational talks about the park on a regular basis. Here are a few upcoming events in May (find more on the park's Web site, listed below):

Feeling Froggy, hike and slide program, May 13, 8:15 p.m.

Spring Bird Hike, May 14, 8:30 a.m.

Reptiles and Amphibians, May 20, 3 p.m.; May 21, 2 p.m.

#### Merchants Millpond State Park

71 US Hwy 158E  
Gatesville, NC 27938

(252) 357-1191

e-mail: [merchants.millpond@ncmail.net](mailto:merchants.millpond@ncmail.net)

<http://ils.unc.edu/parkproject/visit/memi/home.html>

# 19 SOMERSET PLACE

Washington County

Long before you reach Somerset Place, you'll see evidence of slave labor on this former plantation—a 20-foot wide canal keeping pace alongside the Washington County back roads you're traveling. The slaves dug this 4-to-6-foot-deep transportation route by hand, using picks and shovels. It took them two years to dig six miles worth of canal to create productive farmland and provide a means of transportation.

Follow the canal to this 37-acre state historic site to get a glimpse of 19th century life on what was once one of North Carolina's three largest plantations. Originally, Somerset Place included more than 100,000 swampy acres, hundreds of which were cultivated to produce rice, corn, oats, wheat, beans, peas and flax over an 80-year period (1785–1865). During these active years, three generations of owners, approximately 50 white employees, two free black employees and more than 850 enslaved people lived and worked on the plantation.

In 1786 Josiah Collins brought about 100 enslaved Africans to the site to build the afore-mentioned canal. The waterway made it possible to turn surrounding swampland into productive farmland for growing rice and other crops. It also served as a transportation route to the Scuppernon River in order to sell these crops. As the business expanded, Collins established Somerset Place, named for his county of birth (Somersetshire) in England. Ownership of the former plantation would eventually pass to Josiah Jr. and then onto his son Josiah Collins III whose family actually lived there.

No doubt the enslaved community made up the backbone of Somerset Place. The original group of 167 skilled workers came from West Africa, Edenton and neighboring states. Most stayed on the plantation to avoid the consequences of running away—undergoing whippings, being put in stocks, or being sold. Other acts of defiance included trying to poison the overseer in 1853.

The prosperity of plantation life drew to a close after the Civil War with the departure of the emancipated slaves. Somerset Place fell into disrepair until it was restored in the 1950s and went on to become a state historic site in 1965.



Tara Venna

The 7,000-square-foot mansion at Somerset place.

## THE GROUNDS AND VICINITY

Located within Pettigrew State Park, the main house, out-buildings within the compound (all original), and the slave quarters sit back from the road, a sweeping 12-acre vista of 400-year-old cypress and sycamore trees. On the grounds you'll find a formal garden, plantation hospital, smoke-house, 26 slave cabins and more. The 7,000-square-foot yellow mansion faces Lake Phelps. At five miles wide, it's the second largest natural lake in the state. Believed to be more than 38,000 years old, the origin of Lake Phelps remains a mystery to this day.

## WHEN YOU GO

Admission to Somerset Place is free although donations are accepted. Allow enough time—approximately 90 minutes—for orientation and a guided tour of the buildings and grounds. You can also check out the book, "Somerset Homecoming: Recovering a Lost Heritage," written by the manager of the site, Dorothy Redford, and Michael D'Orso.

**Somerset Place**  
2572 Lake Shore Road  
Creswell, NC 27928

(252) 797-4560

[www.ah.dcr.state.nc.us/sections/hs/somerset/somerset.htm](http://www.ah.dcr.state.nc.us/sections/hs/somerset/somerset.htm)



Tara Venna

One of 14 rooms in the Greek Revival-style mansion at Somerset Place.

No Bojangles. No Wings retail stores. No McDonald's. The lack of development may have you feeling a bit out of place on Cape Lookout National Seashore. But it won't take long to get used to the sand, water, windswept beauty and unusual solitude.

With untouched beaches on one side and marshlands on the other, this 56-mile long section of the Outer Banks runs from Ocracoke Inlet on the northeast to Beaufort Inlet on the southeast. Average width is a mere ½ mile. The three undeveloped barrier islands which make up the seashore—North Core Banks, South Core Banks and Shackleford Banks—may not be the easiest places to access, but once there, you're in for a visit filled with lost towns, a lighthouse, endangered species and the kind of wilderness you only find in books nowadays.

### ATTRACTIONS

**Portsmouth Village, North Core Banks:** Over a century ago, it was a bustling sea village thanks to Ocracoke Inlet, a major trade route through the Outer Banks. However, once shipping routes shifted toward deeper inlets in 1846, the village's prosperity diminished and then disappeared during the Civil War when much of the population fled, never to return. Fishing then became the primary occupation for remaining islanders. But the population continued to decline until the last two residents left in 1971. Today many buildings are still standing in the 250-acre historic district. The visitor center and the church are open to the public.

**Cape Lookout Lighthouse, South Core Banks:** Completed in 1859, this 165-foot-tall lighthouse, one of tallest on the east coast, warns ships away from dangerous Cape Lookout Shoals. The original 1812 tower ran ships aground due to its inadequate height (104 feet tall) and smoking lamps which made it difficult for ships to see its dim lights.

**Natural resources, including endangered species:** The Cape Lookout National Seashore protects one of the few remaining natural coastal barrier island systems in the world. The



*You won't find much beyond sun, sand and waves on the Cape Lookout National Seashore.*

maritime forest on Shackleford Banks represents one of several left on the North Carolina coast. The seashore's native grasslands comprise the only remaining natural grasslands in the eastern United States.

The seashore is home to a number of birds, including the endangered piping plover, roseate tern, peregrine falcon and the bald eagle. On 2,500-acre Shackleford, you will find more than 100 wild ponies, abandoned by the island's last inhabitants who left in the 1890s due to a massive hurricane. The seashore is also the northernmost habitat for the Loggerhead Turtle, an endangered marine turtle that lays its eggs on the shores of the Outer Banks.

**Sea Kayaking and Fishing:** Paddle past dolphins, migrating humpback whales, and the lighthouse while great blue herons, brown pelicans and egrets fill the sky above you. Kayak launch sites include East Harkers Island, West Harkers Island, and Beaufort Waterfront.

Surf fishing on this stretch of coast yields all sorts of fish including Bluefish, Trout, Spot, Pompano, Sheephead and more. Shelling in early spring is another popular activity.

### HOW TO GET THERE AND GET AROUND

There are three visitor's centers for the Cape Lookout National Seashore—one on Harkers Island that is open daily; one in the Lighthouse Keeper's Quarters and one in Portsmouth Village. These last two are open seasonally.

You must rent a public ferry or use your own personal boat to get to the islands. Ferry service is offered mid-March through November. Pricing depends on the season.

Although most prefer to walk, driving, including all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), on North Core Banks and South Core Banks is permitted. Rules exist to protect the park's natural resources and to keep visitors safe.

### WHERE TO STAY

Camping is primitive. Be prepared for very little shade or shelter and no source for supplies. Campers must bring everything they need, including drinking water. Pack out what you pack in, including trash.

Primitive cabin rentals are also available from April to December.



*On 2,500-acre Shackleford Banks, you'll find wild ponies.*

**Cape Lookout National Seashore**  
National Park Service  
131 Charles Street  
Harkers Island, NC 28531

(252) 728-2250  
[www.nps.gov/calo](http://www.nps.gov/calo)  
[www.friendsofportsmouthisland.com](http://www.friendsofportsmouthisland.com)

# CAROLINA COUNTRY TRAVEL RESOURCES

## MOUNTAINS

**Alexander County**  
(828) 632-8141

**Alleghany County Chamber**  
(800) 372-5473  
[www.sparta-nc.com](http://www.sparta-nc.com)

**Andrews Chamber**  
(828) 321-3584  
[www.grove.net/~andrewschamber](http://www.grove.net/~andrewschamber)

**Ashe County Chamber**  
(888) 343-2743  
[www.ashechamber.com](http://www.ashechamber.com)

**Asheville CVB**  
(800) 280-0005  
[www.exploreasheville.com](http://www.exploreasheville.com)

**Avery/Banner Elk**  
(800) 972-2183  
[www.balconyoftheblueridge.com](http://www.balconyoftheblueridge.com)

**Beech Mountain Chamber**  
(800) 468-5506  
[www.beechmtn.com](http://www.beechmtn.com)

**Black Mountain**  
(800) 669-2301  
[www.exploreblackmountain.com](http://www.exploreblackmountain.com)

**Blowing Rock**  
(828) 295-7851  
[www.blowingrock.com](http://www.blowingrock.com)

**Blue Ridge Parkway**  
469-mile scenic highway  
(828) 298-0398  
[www.blueridgeparkway.org](http://www.blueridgeparkway.org)

**Boone CVB**  
(800) 852-9506  
[www.visitboonenc.com](http://www.visitboonenc.com)

**Brevard/Transylvania  
County Tourism**  
(800) 648-4523  
[www.visitwaterfalls.com](http://www.visitwaterfalls.com)

**Brevard-Transylvania Chamber**  
(828) 883-3700

**Burke County Travel & Tourism,  
Morganton**  
(828) 433-6793/(888) 462-2921

**Caldwell County**  
(828) 726-0616

**Canton Papertown Association**  
(828) 646-3412  
[www.cantonpapertown.com](http://www.cantonpapertown.com)

**Cashiers Area**  
(828) 743-5191  
[www.cashiersnorthcarolina.com](http://www.cashiersnorthcarolina.com)

**Catawba County**  
(828) 328-6111

**Cherokee Chamber**  
(800) 438-1601/(828) 497-9195

**Cherokee County**  
(828) 837-2242  
[www.cherokeecountychamber.com](http://www.cherokeecountychamber.com)

**Cherokee Indian Reservation**  
(800) 438-1601  
[www.cherokee-nc.com/main.htm](http://www.cherokee-nc.com/main.htm)

**Clay County Chamber**  
(828) 389-3704  
[www.claycounty-nc-chamber.com](http://www.claycounty-nc-chamber.com)

**Cleveland County Chamber**  
(704) 487-8521  
[www.clevelandcounty.com](http://www.clevelandcounty.com)  
[www.clevelandchamber.org](http://www.clevelandchamber.org)

**Dillsboro Merchants Assn**  
(800) 962-1911

**Franklin Chamber**  
(888) 641-6463/(828)524-3161  
[www.franklin-chamber.com](http://www.franklin-chamber.com)

**Glendale Springs (Ashe County)**  
(800) 342-2743  
[www.glendalesprings.com](http://www.glendalesprings.com)

**Graham County Travel & Tourism**  
(828) 479-3790/(800) 470-3790  
[www.grahamcountytravel.com](http://www.grahamcountytravel.com)

**Greater Hendersonville Chamber**  
(828) 692-1413  
[www.hendersonvillechamber.org](http://www.hendersonvillechamber.org)

**Haywood County Chamber**  
(828) 456-3021/(877) 456-3073  
[www.haywood-nc.com](http://www.haywood-nc.com)

**Haywood County/Maggie Valley/  
Waynesville**  
Gateway to the Smokies  
(800) 334-9036/(828) 452-0152  
[www.smokeymountains.net](http://www.smokeymountains.net)

**Henderson County  
Travel & Tourism**  
(800) 828-4244  
[www.historichendersonville.org](http://www.historichendersonville.org)

**Hickory Metro CVB &  
Regional Visitors Center**  
(800) 509-2444/(828) 322-1335  
[www.hickorymetro.com](http://www.hickorymetro.com)

**Hickory Nut Gorge**  
(828) 625-2725

**High Country Host**  
Travel and accommodations  
information  
(800) 438-7500  
[www.mountainsofnc.com](http://www.mountainsofnc.com)

**Highlands Chamber &  
Visitors Center**  
(828) 526-2112  
[www.highlandschamber.org](http://www.highlandschamber.org)

**Jackson County Travel & Tourism**  
(800) 962-1911/(828) 586-2155  
[www.mountainlovers.com](http://www.mountainlovers.com)

**Kings Mountain-Branch of  
Cleveland County Chamber**  
(704) 739-4755

**Lincolnton-Lincoln County**  
(704) 735-3096  
[www.lincolnchambernc.org](http://www.lincolnchambernc.org)

**Madison County**  
(877) 262-3476/(828) 680-9031  
[www.visitmadisoncounty.com](http://www.visitmadisoncounty.com)

**Maggie Valley Area CVB**  
(800) 624-4431/(828) 926-1686  
[www.maggiervalley.org](http://www.maggiervalley.org)

**McDowell Chamber**  
(828) 652-4240

**McDowell Tourism Development  
Authority, Old Fort**  
(888) 233-6111/(828) 668-4282  
[www.mcdowellnc.org](http://www.mcdowellnc.org)

**Mitchell County Chamber,  
Spruce Pine**  
(828) 765-9483/(800) 227-3912  
[www.mitchell-county.com](http://www.mitchell-county.com)

**Mooresville CVB**  
(704) 799-2400/(877) 661-1234  
[www.racecityusa.org](http://www.racecityusa.org)  
[www.mooresvillenc.org](http://www.mooresvillenc.org)

**Mountain Information Centers,  
Asheville**  
(828) 654-8822

**Mountain Information Centers**  
(828) 258-4662

**NC Welcome Center**  
(1-40 West, Waynesville)  
(828) 627-6206

**North Wilkesboro**  
(336) 667-7129  
[www.north-wilkesboro.com](http://www.north-wilkesboro.com)

**Old Fort Chamber**  
(828) 668-7223/(888) 233-6111  
[www.oldfort.org](http://www.oldfort.org)

**Polk County Chamber**  
(828) 859-6236  
[www.polkchamber.org](http://www.polkchamber.org)

**Polk County Visitors Center, Tryon**  
(800) 440-7848  
[www.nc-mountains.org](http://www.nc-mountains.org)

**Rutherford County Chamber**  
(828) 287-3090

**Rutherford County  
Tourism Development**  
(800) 849-5998/(828) 245-1492  
[www.rutherfordtourism.com](http://www.rutherfordtourism.com)

**Statesville CVB**  
(877) 531-1819/(704) 878-3480  
[www.visitstatesville.org](http://www.visitstatesville.org)

**Smoky Mountain Host**  
Guide to attractions,  
accommodations  
(800) 432-4678  
[www.visitsmokies.org](http://www.visitsmokies.org)

**Swain County**  
(800) 867-9246/(828) 488-3681  
[www.greatsmokies.com](http://www.greatsmokies.com)

**Wilkes County Chamber**  
(336) 838-8662  
[www.wilkesnc.org](http://www.wilkesnc.org)

**Wilkesboro**  
(336) 838-3951  
[www.wilkesboronc.com](http://www.wilkesboronc.com)

**Yancey County-Burnsville  
Chamber**  
(828) 682-7413/(800) 948-1632  
[www.yanceychamber.com](http://www.yanceychamber.com)

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## WESTERN PIEDMONT

**Anson County (Wadesboro)**  
(704) 694-4181  
[www.ansoncounty.org](http://www.ansoncounty.org)

**Archdale-Trinity Chamber**  
(336) 434-2073  
[www.archdaletrinitychamber.com](http://www.archdaletrinitychamber.com)

**Belmont**  
(704) 825-5307

**Bessemer City Area**  
(704) 629-3900  
[www.bessemercycity.com](http://www.bessemercycity.com)

**Cabarrus County CVB**  
(800) 848-3740  
[www.cabarruscvb.com](http://www.cabarruscvb.com)

**Charlotte Chamber**  
(704) 378-1300  
[www.charlottechamber.org](http://www.charlottechamber.org)

**Charlotte CVB**  
(800) 722-1994  
[www.charlottecvb.org](http://www.charlottecvb.org)

**Cherryville Chamber**  
(704) 435-3451  
[www.cherryville.com](http://www.cherryville.com)

**Davidson County**  
[www.davidsoncountync.com](http://www.davidsoncountync.com)

**Davie County Chamber**  
(336) 751-3304  
[www.daviecounty.com](http://www.daviecounty.com)

**Denton Area Chamber**  
(336) 859-5922

**Eden**  
(336) 623-3336

**Elkin-Jonesville Chamber**  
(336) 526-1111  
[www.ejachamber.com](http://www.ejachamber.com)

**Gaston County Chamber**  
(704) 864-2621  
[www.gastonchamber.com](http://www.gastonchamber.com)

**Gaston County Travel & Tourism**  
(800) 849-9994  
[www.gastontourism.com](http://www.gastontourism.com)

**Greater Mount Airy**  
(800) 576-0231  
[www.visitmayberry.com](http://www.visitmayberry.com)

**Greensboro Area Chamber**  
(336) 275-8675  
[www.greensboro.org](http://www.greensboro.org)

**Greensboro Area Convention and Visitors Bureau**  
(800) 344-2282/(336) 274-2282  
[www.visitgreensboro.com](http://www.visitgreensboro.com)

**High Point Chamber**  
(336) 889-8151  
[www.highpointchamber.org](http://www.highpointchamber.org)

**High Point Convention and Visitors Bureau**  
(800) 720-5255/(336) 884-5255  
[www.highpoint.org](http://www.highpoint.org)

**Kernersville Chamber**  
(336) 993-4521  
[www.kernersvillenc.com](http://www.kernersvillenc.com)

**King Chamber**  
(336) 983-9308  
[www.kingnc.com](http://www.kingnc.com)

**Lake Norman Chamber**  
(704) 892-1922  
[www.lakenorman.org](http://www.lakenorman.org)

**Lexington Area Chamber and Visitors Center**  
(866) 604-2389/(336) 236-4218  
[www.visitlexingtonnc.com](http://www.visitlexingtonnc.com)

**Liberty Chamber**  
(336) 622-4937

**Marshville**  
(704) 624-3183

**Matthews Chamber**  
(704) 847-3649  
[www.matthewschamber.com](http://www.matthewschamber.com)

**Mint Hill**  
(704) 545-9726  
[www.minthill.com](http://www.minthill.com)

**Monroe Tourism & Visitors Bureau**  
(704) 225-1085  
[www.visitmonroenc.org](http://www.visitmonroenc.org)

**Piedmont Triad Visitors Center**  
(800) 388-9830/(336) 388-9830  
[www.greensboronc.org](http://www.greensboronc.org)

**Randolph County Tourism, Asheboro**  
(336) 626-0364  
[www.visitrandolphcounty.com](http://www.visitrandolphcounty.com)

**Reidsville**  
(336) 349-8481

**Rowan County Chamber**  
(704) 633-4221

**Rowan County CVB**  
(800) 332-2343/(704) 638-3100  
[www.visitsalisburync.com](http://www.visitsalisburync.com)

**Stanly County Chamber**  
(704) 982-8116  
[www.stanlychamber.org](http://www.stanlychamber.org)

**Stanly County CVB**  
(800) 650-1476/(704) 986-2583  
[www.stanlycvb.com](http://www.stanlycvb.com)

**Stokes County**  
(336) 593-2496  
[www.stokescounty.org](http://www.stokescounty.org)

**Thomasville Visitors Center**  
(336) 472-4422/(800) 611-9907  
[www.thomasvilletourism.com](http://www.thomasvilletourism.com)

**Union County Chamber**  
(704) 289-4567  
[www.unioncountycoc.com](http://www.unioncountycoc.com)

**Western Rockingham Chamber**  
(336) 548-6248  
[www.westernrockinghamchamber.com](http://www.westernrockinghamchamber.com)

**Winston-Salem Visitor Center**  
(800) 331-7018/(336) 728-4200  
[www.visitwinstonsalem.com](http://www.visitwinstonsalem.com)

**Yadkin County Chamber**  
(336) 679-2200  
[www.yadkinchamber.org](http://www.yadkinchamber.org)

**Yadkin-Pee Dee Lakes Project**  
(704) 422-3215  
[www.lakesproject.org](http://www.lakesproject.org)

**Burlington/Alamance CVB**  
(800) 637-3804/(336) 570-1444  
[www.burlington-area-nc.org](http://www.burlington-area-nc.org)

**Capital Area Visitor Center**  
(919) 733-3456

**Cary Chamber**  
(919) 467-1016  
[www.townofcary.org](http://www.townofcary.org)  
[www.carychamber.com](http://www.carychamber.com)

**Caswell County Chamber**  
(336) 694-6106

**Chapel Hill/Orange County**  
(888) 968-2060/(919) 968-2060  
[www.chocvb.org](http://www.chocvb.org)

**Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber**  
(919) 967-7075  
[www.carolinachamber.org](http://www.carolinachamber.org)

**Clayton Chamber**  
(919) 553-6352  
[www.claytonchamber.com](http://www.claytonchamber.com)

**Clinton-Sampson County**  
(910) 592-6177

**Dunn Area Tourism Authority**  
(910) 892-3282  
[www.dunntourism.org](http://www.dunntourism.org)  
[www.visitDunn.com](http://www.visitDunn.com)

**Durham CVB**  
(919) 687-0288/(800) 446-8604  
[www.durham-nc.com](http://www.durham-nc.com)

**Erwin Area**  
(910) 897-7300  
[www.erwinchamber.com](http://www.erwinchamber.com)

**Fayetteville Area CVB**  
(800) 255-8217/(910) 483-5311  
[www.visitfayettevillenc.com](http://www.visitfayettevillenc.com)

**Franklin County**  
(919) 496-3056  
[www.franklin-chamber.org](http://www.franklin-chamber.org)

**Fuquay-Varina Area**  
(919) 552-4947  
[www.fuquay-varina.com](http://www.fuquay-varina.com)

**Garner Chamber**  
(919) 772-6440  
[www.garnerchamber.org](http://www.garnerchamber.org)

**Garner**  
(919) 772-4688  
[www.ci.garner.nc.us](http://www.ci.garner.nc.us)

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## EASTERN PIEDMONT

**Angier**  
(919) 639-2500  
[www.angierchamber.org](http://www.angierchamber.org)

**Apex Chamber**  
(919) 362-6456/(800) 345-4504  
[www.apexchamber.com](http://www.apexchamber.com)

**Benson Chamber**  
(919) 894-3825  
[www.benson-chamber.com](http://www.benson-chamber.com)  
[www.bensonmuledays.com](http://www.bensonmuledays.com)

**Granville County Chamber**  
(919) 693-6125/(919) 528-4994  
[www.granville-chamber.com](http://www.granville-chamber.com)

**Greater Durham Chamber**  
(919) 682-2133  
[www.durhamchamber.org](http://www.durhamchamber.org)

**Greater Raleigh Chamber**  
(919) 664-7000  
[www.raleighchamber.org](http://www.raleighchamber.org)

**Greater Raleigh CVB**  
(800) 849-8499/(919) 834-5900  
[www.visitraleigh.com](http://www.visitraleigh.com)

**Hillsborough/Orange County**  
(919) 732-8156  
[www.hillsboroughchamber.com](http://www.hillsboroughchamber.com)

**Historic Hillsborough**  
(919) 732-7741  
[www.historichillsborough.org](http://www.historichillsborough.org)

**Holly Springs Town Hall**  
(919) 552-6221  
[www.hollyspringsnc.us](http://www.hollyspringsnc.us)

**Hope Mills**  
(910) 423-4314  
[www.hopemillschamber.com](http://www.hopemillschamber.com)

**Johnston County Visitors Bureau**  
(800) 441-7829  
[www.johnstoncountync.org](http://www.johnstoncountync.org)

**Knightdale Chamber**  
(919) 266-4603/(919) 217-2211  
[www.knightdalechamber.org](http://www.knightdalechamber.org)  
[www.ci.knightdale.nc.us](http://www.ci.knightdale.nc.us)

**Laurinburg/Scotland County Area**  
(910) 276-7420  
[www.laurinburgchamber.org](http://www.laurinburgchamber.org)

**Lillington Area**  
(910) 893-3751  
[www.lillington.org](http://www.lillington.org)

**Lumberton Visitors Bureau**  
(800) 359-6971/(910) 739-9999  
[www.lumberton-nc.com](http://www.lumberton-nc.com)

**Montgomery County**  
(910) 572-4300  
[www.montgomery-county.com](http://www.montgomery-county.com)

**Morrisville**  
(919) 380-9026  
[www.morrisvillenc.com](http://www.morrisvillenc.com)

**Pembroke**  
(910) 521-9758

**Person County Tourism**  
(336) 597-2689  
[www.visitroxboronc.com](http://www.visitroxboronc.com)

**Pinehurst, Southern Pines  
and Aberdeen Area CVB**  
(800) 346-5362/(910) 692-3330  
[www.homeofgolf.com](http://www.homeofgolf.com)

**Pittsboro-Siler CVB**  
(800) 316-3829  
[www.visitpittsboro.com](http://www.visitpittsboro.com)

**Raeford-Hoke**  
(910) 875-5929  
[www.hoke-raeford.com](http://www.hoke-raeford.com)

**Red Springs**  
(910) 843-5441

**Richmond County Chamber,  
Rockingham**  
(800) 858-1688/(910) 895-9058  
[www.richmondcountychamber.com](http://www.richmondcountychamber.com)

**Rolesville Town Hall**  
(919) 556-3506  
[www.ci.rolesville.nc.us](http://www.ci.rolesville.nc.us)

**Roxboro Area Chamber**  
(336) 599-8333  
[www.roxboronc.com](http://www.roxboronc.com)

**Saint Pauls.**  
(910) 865-4179

**Sandhills Area Chamber**  
(910) 692-3926  
[www.sandhillsonline.com](http://www.sandhillsonline.com)

**Sanford Area Chamber**  
(919) 775-7341  
[www.sanford-nc.com](http://www.sanford-nc.com)

**Smithfield-Selma Area Chamber**  
(919) 934-9166  
[www.smithfieldselma.com](http://www.smithfieldselma.com)

**Greater Spring Lake Chamber**  
(910) 497-8821  
[www.springlakenc.org](http://www.springlakenc.org)

**Vance County Tourism Department  
(Henderson)**  
(866) 438-4565/(252) 438-2222  
[www.kerrlake-nc.com](http://www.kerrlake-nc.com)

**Wake Forest Area**  
(919) 556-1519  
[www.wakeforestchamber.org](http://www.wakeforestchamber.org)

**Warren County EDC**  
(252) 257-2657  
[www.warren-chamber.org](http://www.warren-chamber.org)

**Wendell**  
(919) 365-6318  
[www.wendellchamber.com](http://www.wendellchamber.com)

**Yadkin-Pee Dee Lakes Project**  
(704) 422-3215  
[www.lakesproject.org](http://www.lakesproject.org)

**Zebulon**  
(919) 269-6320  
[www.zebulonchamber.org](http://www.zebulonchamber.org)

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## *SOUTHERN COAST*

**Bald Head Island Information Center**  
(800) 234-2441  
[www.baldheadisland.com](http://www.baldheadisland.com)

**Beulaville**  
(910) 298-4647

**Brunswick County, Shallotte**  
(800) 426-6644/(910) 754-6644  
[www.brunswickcountychamber.org](http://www.brunswickcountychamber.org)

**Brunswick Islands, Shallotte**  
(800) 795-7263  
[www.ncbrunswick.com](http://www.ncbrunswick.com)

**Cape Fear Coast CVB**  
(Wilmington, Carolina Beach,  
Kure Beach, Wrightsville Beach)  
(866) 266-9690/(910) 341-4030  
[www.gocapefearcoast.com](http://www.gocapefearcoast.com)

**Columbus County Tourism**  
(800) 845-8419/(910) 640-2818  
[www.discovercolumbus.org](http://www.discovercolumbus.org)

**Coast Host**  
Information on attractions and  
accommodations  
[www.coasthost-nc.com](http://www.coasthost-nc.com)

**Duplin County Marketing**  
(800) 755-1755/(910) 296-2181  
[www.duplintourism.org](http://www.duplintourism.org)

**Elizabethtown-White Lake**  
(910) 862-4368  
[www.elizabethtownwhitelake.com](http://www.elizabethtownwhitelake.com)  
[www.bladeninfo.org](http://www.bladeninfo.org)

**Fair Bluff**  
(910) 649-7202

**Faison**  
(910) 267-2721

**Greater Chadbourn**  
(910) 654-3445

**Greater Goldsboro  
Travel & Tourism**  
(919) 734-2245/(866) 440-2245  
[www.greatergoldsboro.com](http://www.greatergoldsboro.com)

**Greater Hampstead Chamber**  
(910) 270-9642/(800) 833-2483  
[www.hampsteadchamber.com](http://www.hampsteadchamber.com)

**Greater Jacksonville-Onslow**  
(910) 347-3141  
[www.jacksonvilleonline.org](http://www.jacksonvilleonline.org)  
[www.onslowcountytourism.com](http://www.onslowcountytourism.com)

**Greater Topsail Area**  
(800) 626-2780  
[www.topsailcoc.com](http://www.topsailcoc.com)

**Greater Whiteville**  
(800) 538-2449/(910) 642-3171

**Kenansville Area**  
(910) 296-2180

**Kenly Chamber**  
(919) 284-5510  
[www.kenlynorthcarolina.com](http://www.kenlynorthcarolina.com)

**Kinston CVB**  
(800) 869-0032  
[www.visitkinston.com](http://www.visitkinston.com)

**Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber**  
(252) 527-1131  
[www.commercekinstonlc.com](http://www.commercekinstonlc.com)

**LaGrange**  
(252) 527-1131

**Mt. Olive Area Chamber**  
(919) 658-3113  
[www.moachamber.com](http://www.moachamber.com)  
[www.ncpicklefest.org](http://www.ncpicklefest.org)

**Nash County Visitors Bureau**  
(800) 849-6825  
[www.RockyMountTravel.com](http://www.RockyMountTravel.com)

**NC Ferries**  
(800) BY-FERRY  
[www.ncferry.org](http://www.ncferry.org)

**Onslow County Tourism**  
(800) 932-2144  
[www.onslowcountytourism.com](http://www.onslowcountytourism.com)

**Pender County**

(Burgaw)  
(910) 259-9817  
[www.visitpender.com](http://www.visitpender.com)

**Pleasure Island (Carolina Beach, Kure Beach, Fort Fisher)**

(800) 222-4757/(910) 341-4030  
[www.gocapefearcoast.com](http://www.gocapefearcoast.com)  
[www.carolinabeachgetaway.com](http://www.carolinabeachgetaway.com)  
[www.explorekurebeach.com](http://www.explorekurebeach.com)

**Rose Hill**

(910) 289-2721

**Southeastern Welcome Center**

(I-95 South, Rowland)  
(910) 754-2505

**Southport Visitor Center, Southport**

(910) 457-7927  
[www.cityofsouthport.com](http://www.cityofsouthport.com)

**Southport-Oak Island**

(800) 457-6964/(910) 457-6964  
[www.southport-oakisland.com](http://www.southport-oakisland.com)

**Tabor City**

(910) 653-2031

**Wallace**

(910) 285-4044

**Warsaw**

(910) 293-7814

**Wayne County Chamber**

(919) 734-2241  
[www.waynecountychamber.com](http://www.waynecountychamber.com)

**Wilson Visitors Bureau**

(252) 243-8440/(800) 497-7398  
[www.wilson-nc.com](http://www.wilson-nc.com)

**Wrightsville Beach Visitors Center**

(866) 266-9690/(910) 341-4030  
[www.visitwrightsville.com](http://www.visitwrightsville.com)

**NORTHERN COAST****Ahoskie Chamber**

(252) 332-2042

**Aycock Brown Welcome Center,**

**Kitty Hawk**  
(252) 261-4644  
[www.outerbanks.org](http://www.outerbanks.org)

**Belhaven Community Chamber**

(252) 943-3770  
[www.belhavenchamber.com](http://www.belhavenchamber.com)

**Chowan County Tourism, Edenton**

(800) 775-0111/(252) 482-3400  
[www.www.visitedenton.com](http://www.www.visitedenton.com)

**Coast Host**

Information on attractions and accommodation.  
[www.coasthost-nc.com](http://www.coasthost-nc.com)

**Corolla/Currituck Chamber**

(252) 453-9497/(877) CURRITUCK  
[www.currituckchamber.org](http://www.currituckchamber.org)

**Crystal Coast Tourism Authority**

(800) 786-6962/(252) 726-8148  
[www.crystalcoastnc.org](http://www.crystalcoastnc.org)

**Dare County**

(252) 475-5000  
[www.darenc.com](http://www.darenc.com)

**Dismal Swamp Canal Welcome Center, Camden County**

(252) 771-8333  
[www.DismalSwamp.com](http://www.DismalSwamp.com)

**Duck**

(252) 255-1234  
[www.townofduck.com](http://www.townofduck.com)

**Eastern NC Chamber**

(919) 237-5151

**Elizabeth City Area CVB**

(252) 335-5330  
[www.discoverec.org](http://www.discoverec.org)

**Farmville Chamber**

(252) 753-4670

**Gates County Manager**

(252) 357-1240

**Greater Tyrrell County Chamber**

(252) 796-1996

**Greenville/Pitt County CVB**

(800) 537-5564  
[www.visitgreenvillenc.com](http://www.visitgreenvillenc.com)

**Havelock**

(252) 447-1101  
[www.havelockchamber.net](http://www.havelockchamber.net)

**Halifax County Tourism**

(800) 522-4282  
[www.visithalifax.com](http://www.visithalifax.com)

**Historic Albemarle Tour**

(800) 734-1117  
[www.historicncenc.com](http://www.historicncenc.com)

**Historic Bath Visitor Center**

(252) 923-3971  
[www.bath.nchistoricsites.org](http://www.bath.nchistoricsites.org)

**Hyde County Chamber**

(252) 926-9171/(888) 493-3826  
[www.hydecounty.org](http://www.hydecounty.org)

**Kill Devil Hills**

(252) 449-5300  
[www.kdhnc.com](http://www.kdhnc.com)

**Kitty Hawk**

(252) 261-3552  
[www.townofkittyhawk.org](http://www.townofkittyhawk.org)

**Lake Gaston Chamber and Visitors Center**

(252) 586-5711/(866) 730-5711  
[www.lakegastonchamber.com](http://www.lakegastonchamber.com)

**Manteo**

(252) 473-2133  
[www.townofmanteo.com](http://www.townofmanteo.com)

**Martin County Chamber**

(252) 792-4131  
[www.martincountync.com](http://www.martincountync.com)

**Martin County Travel & Tourism**

(800) 776-8566  
[www.visitmartincounty.com](http://www.visitmartincounty.com)

**Murfreesboro Historical Association**

(252) 398-5922

**NC Ferries**

(800) BY-FERRY  
[www.ncferry.org](http://www.ncferry.org)

**NC Welcome Center**

(I-95 North).  
(252) 537-9836

**NC Welcome Center**

(I-85 North).  
(252) 456-3236

**Nags Head**

(252) 441-5508  
[www.townofnagshead.net](http://www.townofnagshead.net)

**New Bern/Craven County Convention and Visitor Center**

(800) 437-5767  
[www.visitnewbern.com](http://www.visitnewbern.com)

**Ocracoke NPS Visitor Center**

(252) 928-4531

**Outer Banks Chamber**

(252) 441-8144  
[www.outerbankschamber.com](http://www.outerbankschamber.com)

**Outer Banks Welcome Center on Roanoke Island**

(252) 473-2138/(877) OBX-4FUN  
[www.outerbanks.org](http://www.outerbanks.org)

**Pamlico County Visitor Center**

(252) 745-3008  
[www.pamlicochamber.com](http://www.pamlicochamber.com)  
[www.pamlicodirectory.com](http://www.pamlicodirectory.com)

**Perquimans County Visitors Center**

(252) 426-5657  
[www.perquimans.com](http://www.perquimans.com)

**Roanoke Valley Chamber**

(800) 522-4282  
[www.rvchamber.com](http://www.rvchamber.com)

**Rocky Mount**

(252) 972-1151  
[www.ci.rocky-mount.nc.us](http://www.ci.rocky-mount.nc.us)

**Scotland Neck**

(252) 826-3152  
[www.townofscotlandneck.com](http://www.townofscotlandneck.com)

**Southern Shores**

(252) 261-2394  
[www.southernshores-nc.gov](http://www.southernshores-nc.gov)

**Swansboro**

(910) 326-1174  
[www.tourswansboro.com](http://www.tourswansboro.com)

**Tarboro-Edgecombe Chamber**

(252) 823-7241  
[www.tarboro-nc.com](http://www.tarboro-nc.com)

**Tyrrell County Visitors Center**

(252) 796-0723  
[www.visittyrrellcounty.com](http://www.visittyrrellcounty.com)

**Washington County Tourism**

(252) 793-3248  
[www.washingtoncountync.com](http://www.washingtoncountync.com)

**Washington/Beaufort County Visitor Information**

(800) 999-3857  
[www.originalwashington.com](http://www.originalwashington.com)

**Windsor/Bertie County Chamber**

(252) 794-4277  
[www.windsor-bertie.com](http://www.windsor-bertie.com)