

Blue Ridge Traveler

TOWNS AND TRAILS



Orchard At Altapass



Blue Ridge Parkway



Crabtree Falls



Lake James



Little Switzerland



Old Fort Depot



Catawba River



Marion



Blue Ridge Parkway

MARION

LAKE JAMES

LITTLE SWITZERLAND

LINVILLE FALLS

OLD FORT

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Lake James



Sunset in the Blue Ridge mountains

Welcome to the Blue Ridge Traveler's Towns and Trails! Our region of the Blue Ridge Mountains includes some of the most distinctive landscapes and scenic views in western North Carolina.

The terrain is ideal for mountain biking and trail exploration with stunning waterfalls and trout streams, Lake James, and the infamous Blue Ridge Parkway. Nature lovers will appreciate the area's beauty and diversity.

Our small towns are ideal base camps. Within an hour's drive you can visit five N.C. State Parks, follow the Blue Ridge Parkway to Boone or Blowing Rock then reverse course to visit Asheville and Waynesville returning to the charm and pace of a small community.

We are here to help with travel plans and introduce you to the awesome people, places, and happenings in and around our Blue Ridge Parkway communities including Little Switzerland and Linville Falls, our small towns in Marion and Old Fort, and our Lake James community.

www.blueridgetraveler.com

Marion and Lake James

Marion residents will tell you their downtown community is “simply unexpected.” They’re right! This is what downtown southern funk looks like. Scattered in and around period buildings you’ll find an awesome retro arcade, a surprising music hall, meadery, pubs, breweries, restaurants, an old-time general store offering everything from specialty foods to outdoor gear, the arts, and more.



Downtown Marion

Known for iconic annual events and block parties, Marion enjoys celebrations. You may have heard about some of them, but do you know about the legendary New Year’s Eve celebration when a giant gold nugget drops from the sky and lands on top of a ten-foot Mr. Bob’s donut?!



Downtown Marion - Livermush Festival



Check our online event calendar for details and dates.
blueridgetraveler.com

Accommodations

Marion and Lake James area

Absolute Paradise

504-723-5533

America’s Best Value Inn

828-659-2567

Appalachian Dream Cabin

251-363-3142

Backyard Bunkies

828-527-4428

Bear Ridge Cabin

321-377-2452

Between The Falls

386-299-9681

Big League Camp

828-527-0052

Black Bear Cabin

386-299-9681

Budget Inn

828-652-7276

Camp Lake James & Cabins

828-391-6866

Comfort Inn

828-652-4888

Cottages at Spring House Farm

828-738-9798

Eco-Cove Sanctuary

828-724-9757

Fossie’s Cabin

828-724-9612

Grandview Lodge

407-463-2458

Hampton Inn

828-652-5100

Hidden Creek’s Cabins

828-652-7208

Hidden Lake Cabins

828-460-8252



Accommodations

Marion and Lake James area

Holiday Inn Express

828-584-9999

Jason's Get-Away

980-253-3905

Lake Club Vacation Rental

828-584-9999

Lake James Rentals

828-442-5890

Lakefront Retreat

888-640-7927

Morning Star Cabin

225-439-0281

Mountain Majesty

585-402-4398

Mountain Stream Yurts

828-724-9013

Ryan's Rest Cabin

678-850-5944

Sarah's Song Cabin

828-659-2879

South Creek Retreat

828-803-9464

Sportsman Inn

828-659-7525

Super 8 Motel

828-659-7940

Tranquility Cabin

828-738-4893

Whispering Creek Cottage

813-215-8906

Make Marion your vacation base camp. You'll find an assortment of lodging options from campgrounds to luxurious Lake James vacation rentals to your favorite national hoteliers.

A short drive takes you to the Blue Ridge Parkway or to one of five North Carolina State Parks. Explore back-country trails, like the

Woods Mountain Trail meandering through the wilderness of an old-growth forest. No cell service here, plan accordingly!



Woods Mountain Trail



Catawba River at Phillips Landing

Campgrounds Marion and Lake James area

Buck Creek Campground

828-724-4888

Hidden Creek RV Park and Campground

828-652-7208

Mountain Paradise

828-765-4085

Mountain Stream RV Park

828-724-9013

Riverbreeze Campground

828-925-8524

Tom Johnson's RV Park

800-225-7802

Public Campgrounds

Marion and Lake James area

Lake James State Park

828-584-7728



Lake James State Park Beach

If you're new to hiking or mountain biking, try a less strenuous trail like the McDowell Greenway. It's a paved path following the flow of the Catawba River. It features a kayak/canoe put-in, handicap accessible entrances and fishing decks.

Beginning mountain bikers, head out to Lake James State Park.



Joseph McDowell Greenway

The three trails and loops provide the experience you're looking for. The park also features hiking trails and a seasonal swimming beach with kayak and canoe rentals. Many weekends, park rangers host free, guided nature walks, rides, or boat excursions. Check our event calendar for details.



Attractions

Marion and Lake James area

All Things Geeky By 2 Nerds
828-559-0806

Buck Creek Trout Farm
828-724-9612

Catawba River Outdoors
828-442-6048

Flavors on Main & General Store
828-528-8145

Founders' Art Walk
828-668-4282

Historic Carson House
828-724-4948

Keeper's Cut Meadery
828-527-6326

Lucky Strike Gold Mine
828-738-4893

Marion Hot Wheels
828-559-2270

**McDowell Arts Council
Gallery and Gift Shop**
828-652-8610

Mica Town Brewing
828-559-8300

Refinery 13 Tap Room
828-559-0027

South Creek Winery
828-652-5729

Spillway Bridge & Company
828-460-0269

Sweet Betsy Farm
828-724-4444

Taylor's Brewing Co.
828-559-0778

The Feisty Goldfish
828-559-2552

Vintage Market Marion
828-559-2700

Woody's Mountain Music
828-724-4158

Golf & Disc Golf Courses

Marion and Lake James area

Marion Lake Golf Club

828-652-6232

North Cove Social Club & Disc Golf

828-756-8225

Hiking & Waterfalls

Marion and Lake James area

McDowell Greenway

136 US 70 West, Marion

Paved, non-motorized trail, easy walk or bike ride, bordering the Catawba River.

Lake James State Park

6883 Hwy. 126

Nebo, NC

Mountain biking and hiking trails, canoe/kayak/paddle board rental/swimming beach. Fees apply.

828-584-7728

Mt. Ida Wilderness Trail

1536 Rutherford Road

Marion, NC

Gravel road leads to trailhead, covered picnic shelter. Trail is approximately .70 mile.

(Entrance signs beside Ideal Rentals)

Tom's Creek Falls

US 221 North, left at Huskins Branch Rd, 1.3 miles, trailhead on right.

Fitness Trail

Hwy. 221 North

Woodlawn Fitness Trail

U.S. Hwy. 221 North in Marion

Entrance on left, 7 work out stations plus 1-mile loop trail.

Woods Mountain Trail

Hwy. 221 North

Entrance at Woodlawn Fitness Trail

26-mile wilderness trail, no cell phone access.

Call 888-233-6111 to receive a detailed hiking and biking map.

Inspired by McDowell County's 175th Anniversary, The Founders' Art Walk is an outdoor art exhibit displayed in downtown Marion's 310 District. Each piece was created by local artists, including two art teachers and several students.

Continue your art experience by visiting Old Fort. The 7 Wonders Trail depicts locals' favorite places. These pieces were also created through a teacher-student collaboration.

Old Fort's downtown buildings display another series of larger, full-scale murals. Some represent history while others share the love of our outdoor spaces.

All of these public art displays are a part of the larger Appalachian Mural Trail. <http://www.muraltrail.com>



Marion Lake Club Golf Course



Marion Depot



Lake Tahoma



North Cove Social Club



Visitor Center
91 South Catawba
Avenue in Old Fort

Old Fort - Birthplace of The Pisgah National Forest

Surrounded by the Pisgah National Forest, Old Fort is quickly becoming a popular destination for outdoor enthusiasts. It's been called the promised land of mountain biking.



Brook Trout

Why "Birthplace Of The Pisgah National Forest?" In 1911, The Weeks Act made it possible to purchase land for conservation and preservation creating the national forest system, including Pisgah.

The first tract of 8,000 acres was purchased outside downtown Old Fort and is part of the Curtis Creek Area.

This terrain lends itself to off-road racing. Check out the Hellbender 100 (foot race), the mountain bike races Off-Road Assault on Mt. Mitchell, the Jerdon Mountain Challenge, and the Pisgah Enduro Race.

The Curtis Creek Area will soon boast the addition of a new multi-purpose area connecting approximately 70 miles of existing and new trails. The new design is created for people of all physical abilities with a one-mile nature trail, multi-use trails for equestrians, mountain bikers, and some trails are for hikers only. Find project updates online;

www.g5trailcollective.org/oldfort.



Mountain Biking



Accommodations

Old Fort area

Bear Haven Cabin

828-668-4831

Camp Grier

828-668-7793

Indigo Nature Retreat

828-619-0900

Inn on Mill Creek

828-668-1115

Greybeard Vacation Rentals

828-669-1072

Isobel Acres

828-669-1072

Jarrett Creek Cottage

828-669-1072

Log Lodge Hideaway

704-578-3410

Mountain Appalachian Inn

828-460-3438

Newberry Creek Log House

828-652-1234

Railway Rest

828-460-2486

Rivers Ridge Lodge

828-243-5762

Sky Island Cabins

828-668-4928

The Kibbin

828-669-1072

The Lodge at Catawba Falls Preserve

828-284-7893

Rock House at Maple Hill

828-669-1072

Wildcat Lodge

502-245-8816

Outdoor Recreation

Get to know our area of the Blue Ridge by getting outdoors. At the heart of the country's most important conservation movements, sustainable outdoor recreation is important to us. Of the half-million acres of Pisgah National Forest, we're home to approximately 70,000 acres.

Waterfalls are scattered throughout the forest with two outside the Linville Falls region, three along the Blue Ridge Parkway, two outside Old Fort, and one just north of downtown Marion. Consider hiking those less traveled, especially on holiday weekends. Call us for ideas and request a waterfall map.



Kitsuma Trail



River Floats



Birdwatching



Kayaking on the Catawba River

Looking for an undisturbed, remote wilderness trail? Woods Mountain and Betsy Ridge open to awesome views at the peak from approximately 3,600 feet above sea level. To say this 25-mile trail is remote would be an understatement. Bring a paper map with you, and notify friends when to expect a call, cell service doesn't exist on the trail.

Float or kayak the Catawba River and Lake James, or set out on a trail to find some of the state's favorite birding places. Some are included on the N.C. Birding Trail.

Hit the water at Lake James or spend an evening fly-fishing on a pristine trout stream. Old Fort is designated a N.C. Mountain Heritage Trout Water Town.



Tee at the North Cove Social Club

Eat Local First

These locally owned restaurants are committed to purchasing locally and regionally sourced ingredients, foods, and spirits. Eat with the locals.

Artesana Ice Cream

76 S. Main/Marion

Bubblys

84 S. Main/Marion

Bruce's Fabulous Foods

63 S. Main/Marion

Burrito Bros

9 N. Main/Marion

Chance of Sprinkles Bakery

29 Logan/Marion



Countryside BBQ

2070 Rutherford Rd/Marion

Crabby Abby's

105 S. Main/Marion

J Hartman's

390 US 70/Marion

Link's Hot Dogs

124 E. Court/Marion

Marion Hot Wings

29 Logan/Marion

McDowell Local

23 N. Main/Marion

Toonez Chop House

29 Logan/Marion



Spirits and Craft Beverages

Hillman Beer

78 S. Catawba/Old Fort

Keeper's Cut Meadery

828-527-6326

Mica Town Brewing

25 Brown Dr/Marion

Refinery 13 Pub

13 N. Main/Marion

Spillway Bridge & Co.

93 S. Main/Marion

Taylor's Brewing

125 W. Henderson/Marion



Celebration and Wedding Venues

Oak Hill Farm

744 Huntsville Drive

Marion, NC 28752

828-582-0320

The Courtyard At Little Acres

200 Little Acres Drive

Marion, NC 28752

828-442-8416

The Back 40

650 Dairy Road

Nebo, NC 28761

828-808-7971

A Wedding Place

5274 US 226 South

Marion, NC

828-652-1653

The Wilson Farm Event Center

653 Marlowe Road

Marion, NC

828-925-7778

The Catawba River Inn at Linville Falls

1805 US 221 North

Marion, NC

828-756-7001

The Pond at Laurel Cove

1718 Bat Cave Road

Old Fort, NC 28762

828-442-8631

Historic Carson House

1805 US 70 West

Marion, NC 28752

828-724-4948



Attractions/Shops

Old Fort area

Andrews Geysers Park
Mill Creek Road
828-668-4244

Arrowhead Gallery and Studios
Gallery and Classes
828-668-1100

Camp Grier
828-668-7793
Day Passes - Between Sept – May
Horseback Riding, Biking

Dragonfly Studio
828-668-1185

Hillman Beer
78 Catawba Avenue Suite F

Mountain Gateway Museum
828-668-9259

Old Fort Mercantile
25 West Main

Old Fort Outdoors
75 East Main


Old Fort Ride House
59 Commerce Street

Old Fort Train Depot
25 W. Main Street
828-668-4244

The Catawba Angler
828-460-2390

The 7 Wonders Trail
828-668-4282

Turtle Island Pottery
828-337-0092

 *In 1911, The Weeks Act provided funds to preserve national forest lands, and the first tract purchased was here at Curtis Creek Recreation Area.*



Arrowhead Gallery

Fishing & Watersports

All N.C. Wildlife Commission regulations apply, whether you are sports fishing on Lake James and the Catawba River or searching for a great public trout stream. Exceptions include privately owned ponds and farms and the specially designated trout waters on Mill Creek at Mountain Gateway Museum. The Old Fort section is included in the Wildlife Commission's Mountain Heritage Trout Town Program. Licenses are available at Old Fort Outdoors, online, or by calling. www.ncwildlife.org 888-248-6834



Trout Fishing



Horseback Riding at Camp Grier



Youngs Ridge - Kitsuma Trail



Mountain Gateway Museum

Hiking & Waterfalls

Old Fort area

Catawba Falls

End of Catawba River Road

Curtis Creek Recreation Area:

Hiking, mountain biking, trout fishing/delayed harvest
Curtis Creek Road - 8 mile dirt/gravel road between Hwy. 70 and Blue Ridge Parkway. Caution!

Star Gap

Mountain bike trail. Take Mill Creek Road, to Old Fort Picnic Area on left. Park here. Ride 2.5 miles north on Mill Creek Road to Graphite Road. Veer right, past the Brookside Baptist Church. Turn right on the doubletrack, unmarked trail, approximately .2 mile beyond track. Cross RR tracks and begin on Star Gap Trail. Immediate elevation gain. 2.9 mile trail. mtbproject.com/trail/1363959

Kitsuma Peak/Young's Ridge Trail

10 mile, mountain/biking trail with steep terrain. Access from Old Fort Picnic Area.

Newberry Creek Trail

Curtis Creek Road to Newberry Creek Road to end. U.S. Forest Service Gate – Scenic, easy walk. 5 miles

Point Lookout Trail

Paved, 3.75 mile non-motorized trail with magnificent views of the Royal Gorge. Hwy. 70 to Old Hwy. 70 to road ends, U.S. Forest Service gate provides access.

Snooks' Nose

Across from Curtis Creek Recreation Area parking lot, extremely steep trail to the Blue Ridge Parkway and Green Knob.

**Call to receive detailed hiking, mountain biking trail map.
888-233-6111**



Miles of hiking trails

Campgrounds

Old Fort area

Catawba Falls

Family Campground

828-668-4831

Sky Island Campground and Retreat

828-668-4928

Public Campgrounds

Old Fort area

Curtis Creek Campground Tent and RV Camping

828-652-2144



Catawba Falls - lower falls

Accommodations
Blue Ridge Parkway area

Alpine Inn
828-765-5380

Bear Den Cabins
828-765-2888

Between The Falls
386-299-9681

Big Lynn Lodge
828-765-4257

Black Bear Cabin
386-299-9681

**Blue Ridge Pkwy.
Log Cabins**
919-602-6722

Chalet Switz
407-678-9383

Haus Edelweiss Guest Suite
828-527-2564

Linville Falls Lodge
828-765-2658

Linville Falls Cottages
828-765-2658

Little Switzerland Rentals
866-766-0611

Rocky Falls Retreat
704-489-1559

Ryan's Rest
678-850-5944

Skyline Village Inn
828-765-9394

Switzerland Inn & Chalet
800-654-4026

The Catawba River Inn
828-756-7001

Whispering Creek Cottage
813-215-8906

Blue Ridge Parkway Communities

The Blue Ridge Parkway is the number one reason visitors spend time with us. We enjoy one of the largest sections of Parkway between Crabtree Falls and Linville Falls. Between these amazing waterfalls you'll find a variety of things to see and do.



Blue Ridge Parkway

Discover the century-old summer colony of Little Switzerland at MP 334. Cool, a word to describe everything related to Little Switzerland, including the weather! With elevations between 3200 and 4000 feet above sea level, atmospheric conditions put a new twist on each day.

Mountain culture is shared through storytelling and traditional arts and music. Summertime square dances are still popular ways to spend a Saturday night.

These mountains are where you'll find the "curvy roads" like the

infamous DiamondbackNC with 190 curves covering 12 miles of two-lane blacktop. Pick up Diamondback swag, glassworks, jewelry and more when you shop with local vendors across from the Switzerland Inn.



Blue Ridge Parkway



Little Switzerland

Little Switzerland Downtown (LSD) is where you'll find the Switzerland Cafe, a favorite find from the North Carolina Barbecue Society Trail. Shop the neighboring General Store for picnic foods and treats, souvenirs, your favorite craft beverages, Switzerland Cafe pre-packaged items, and more.

Check out the Little Switzerland Books and Beans shop and the second story Artists and Artisans of Little Switzerland gallery. Just down the road, don't miss Emerald Village. Once a commercial mine, this recreational mining property and museum have a lot to offer!



Orchard at Altapass

Attractions/Shops Blue Ridge Parkway area

**Artisan League of
Little Switzerland Gallery**
828-766-2601

DiamondbackNC
Hwy. 226-A
190 Steep, Climbing Curves
over 12 scenic miles!

Dual Sport Motorcycle Rentals
828-765-9394

Emerald Village
828-765-6463

English Farmstead Cheese
828-756-8166

Geneva Hall
Uptown Little Switzerland
Special Event Venue
July/August Square Dances

Historic Orchard at Altapass
Milepost 328.3/Parkway
828-765-9531

Linville Caverns
800-419-0540

**Little Switzerland Books
and Beans**
828-766-2601

N.C. Outdoor Adventures
828-260-4505

Shops at Switzerland Inn
Milepost 334/Parkway

**Switzerland Café
& General Store**
828-765-5289

Restaurants include
Switzerland Inn's Chalet Restaurant
and Fowl Play Pub, Apple Core Grill
at the Orchard at Altapass and
Spears BBQ at Linville Falls Lodge

Campgrounds

Blue Ridge Parkway area

Bear Den Campground

828-765-2888

Hiking & Waterfalls

Blue Ridge Parkway area

Crabtree Falls

Milepost 339

Blue Ridge Parkway

Duggers Creek Falls

Milepost 316.5 Blue Ridge Parkway

Linville Falls

Milepost 316.3/Parkway



Linville Falls



Crabtree Falls



Orchard at Altapass

The 100+ year old Orchard at Altapass opens to views of the famous Clinchfield Loops. Visitors from across the globe travel to view this engineering marvel created by the Carolina Clinchfield and Ohio Railway.



Apple trees in bloom



Blue Ridge Parkway

A short drive on the Parkway, north of Little Switzerland, is the iconic Orchard at Altapass. Their mission includes to “save the good stuff” preserving the mountain culture and traditions. You’ll find heirloom apples, nature programs, historic interpretive areas, general store goodies, and the Apple Core Grill.

www.altapassorchard.org



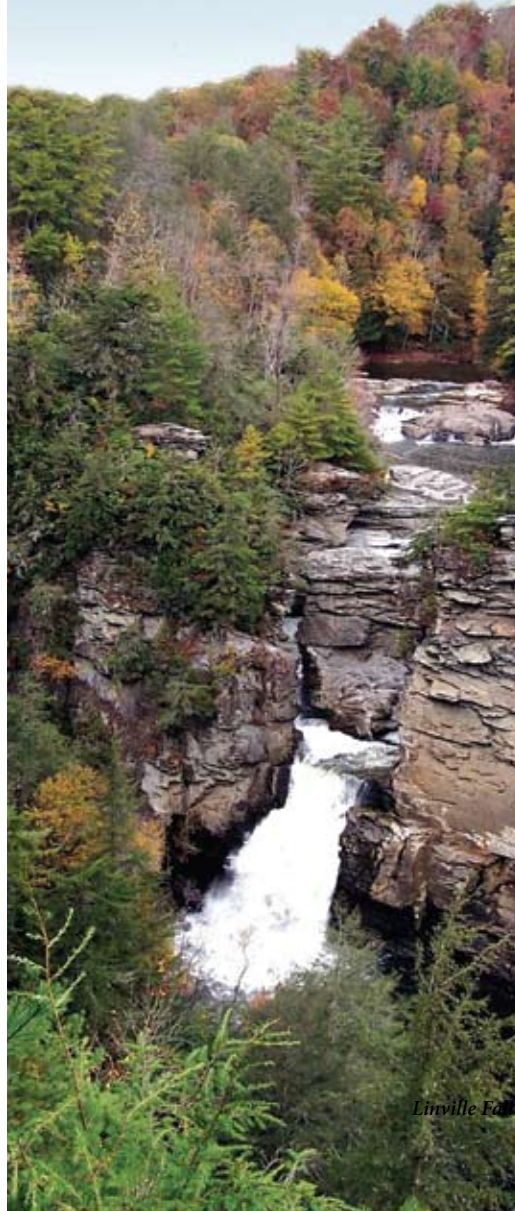
Little Switzerland - Photo courtesy of The Switzerland Inn



Fly fishing in mountain stream



BBQ sandwich



Linville Falls



Annual Events

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we celebrate special occasions and honor our local traditions and cultural events. As you make plans to visit, call our office for updates and details about local events. 828-668-4282

At this time in April of 2021, the following events are scheduled to take place.

July

Jerdon Mountain Challenge
Off Road Assault on
Mt. Mitchell

September

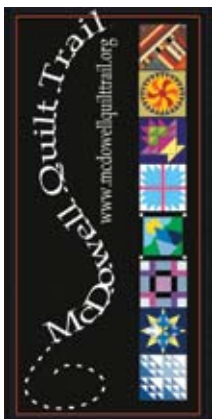
BigFoot 911 Festival

October

Old Fort Fall Festival

December

Marion's Annual Christmas Parade



McDowell Quilt Trail

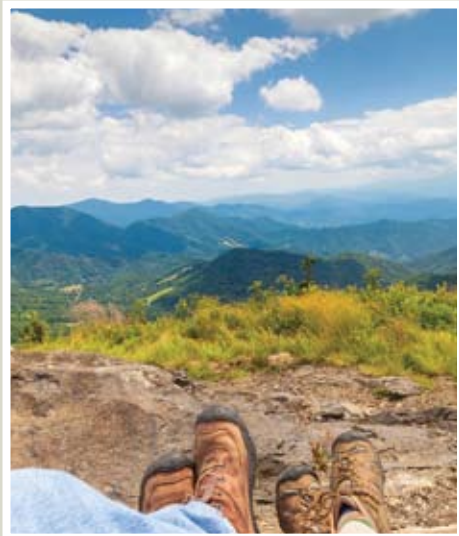
Woven into the fabric of our lives are cherished memories and stories told through family quilts, handed down through generations. Today, we share them through miles of brightly colored quilt blocks scattered throughout the hillsides, mountains and valleys of McDowell County. Stories and maps are online. mcdowellquilttrail.org

Blue Ridge Traveler

TOWNS AND TRAILS

MARION | LAKE JAMES | LITTLE SWITZERLAND
LINVILLE FALLS | OLD FORT

91 South Catawba Avenue | Old Fort, NC 28762
828-668-4282 | 888-233-6111



Proud to be part of the



www.blueridgetravelers.com