

Blue Ridge Mountain Shopping

Hunting for bargains is a big part of traveling . A survey by the Travel Industry Association found that almost 63 percent of trekkers said that a vacation just isn't complete without some shopping.

Many tourists visiting the Carolina Blue Ridge on vacation enjoy shopping for souvenirs . The Smoky mountains are a region of small towns that are not much more than a few stores and a post office. You won't find large crowds, traffic jams, mammoth malls, or theme parks.

The most wanted items for shoppers are mountain crafts, antiques, North Carolina furniture, specialty foods, local wines, books and apparel. Successful bargain hunters know where to shop and how to take advantage of the competitive sales.

Outlets

Carolina Blue Ridge outlet malls offer great bargains. Like elsewhere in the world Smoky mountain outlet stores or factory outlets sell high quality merchandise with a well-known brand at discounted prices. The items usually contain slight manufacturing defects and are leftovers from last season or the previous year. As a result, they are always discounted 20%-40% below department store prices.

Antiques

Antique hunting is just a fancy term for driving in circles through the countryside and stopping in towns that you might not stop in otherwise just to poke around among things you might not notice , a little worn, a little beaten up, but designed simply and built to last. The inventories of antique shops in the Carolina Blue Ridge spill out onto the sidewalks and consist of just the right ratio of trash to treasure.

Gifts and Crafts

In the North Carolina mountains shopping for traditional arts and crafts is always a pleasure. Gift shops abound in the small mountain towns of the Smokies . At distinctive shops located throughout the region you'll find handmade crafts, local and regional art, unique clothing, sportswear, souvenirs, and memorabilia.

You're sure to find something special in the mountains. Numerous galleries and folk art centers showcase pottery, textiles, paintings, musical instruments, metal work, jewelry, and wood carvings. The Folk Art Center on the Blue Ridge Parkway and The Southern Highland Craft Guild shop in Asheville offer one-of-a-kind arts, crafts, pottery and keepsakes unique to the Carolina Blue Ridge . Enjoy the mountain air and scenery as you search for that perfect gift

Food and Wine

The central question when you're traveling in the mountains is, "Where do the locals go for the most authentic and delicious mountain food around?" Smoky mountain folk have a healthy respect for the tender flavors and rich tastes of beef, pork, poultry, fish and, of course, home grown vegetables . The harvest of the season is one of the main reasons for a party in the Smokies .

Smoky mountain cooks pride themselves on preparing gourmet dishes from locally grown fruits and vegetables. Visit local Farmers Markets, usually open on Saturdays and one or two days during the week, you'll get a delicious insight into how much the locals appreciate the home grown goodness of mountain fruits and vegetables.

Visit a century old grist mill or savor home baked goods in bakeries and restaurants wherever your travels take you. Mountain style desserts piping hot fresh fruit pies, hand made candies, oven baked sweet rolls are the perfect delicacy to complete every meal of the day.

Wine Country tasting tours in western North Carolina take on a special mountain hospitality an inspired glow. From native grapes to imported varieties, Carolina vineyards are producing exceptional, award-winning wines. Tours of mountain vineyards, local wine events and exclusive tastings offer all our guests, including the most discriminate of wine connoisseurs, opportunities to enjoy the award-winning wines of the Carolinas

Books

Everywhere you turn in the Smoky mountains there are amazing stories and storytellers. Majestic mountain views, peaceful pastoral country scenery and small town charm seem to be torn from the pages of such authors as Thomas Wolfe and Carl Sandburg, who had homes in the region, as well as frequent visitors: Ernest Hemingway, F Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald, and O. Henry.

The Carolina Blue Ridge literary trail is a winding path that passes through Charles Frazier's Cold Mountain to Jan Karon's "Mitford" novels. The Smoky mountains are filled with quaint book shops that offer the works of these and several other local authors, each with a special story to tell .

Home Furnishings

North Carolina manufactures 35 percent of all home furniture in the world. More important, leading furniture manufacturers, such as Broyhill, Thomasville, and Henridon, sell their top-quality furniture at deep discounts straight from their factories in the region.

The Carolina Blue Ridge mountains also offer a large selection of accessories and decor for mountain homes. From rustic figurines to kitchen accessories to living and bedroom log cabin furniture the region is filled with quaint shops with mountain crafts and country furnishings.

For most visitors to the North Carolina mountains street markets, country stores, and unique specialty shops that are off the tourist grid are typically the best bets for good finds when it comes to mountain mementos .

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