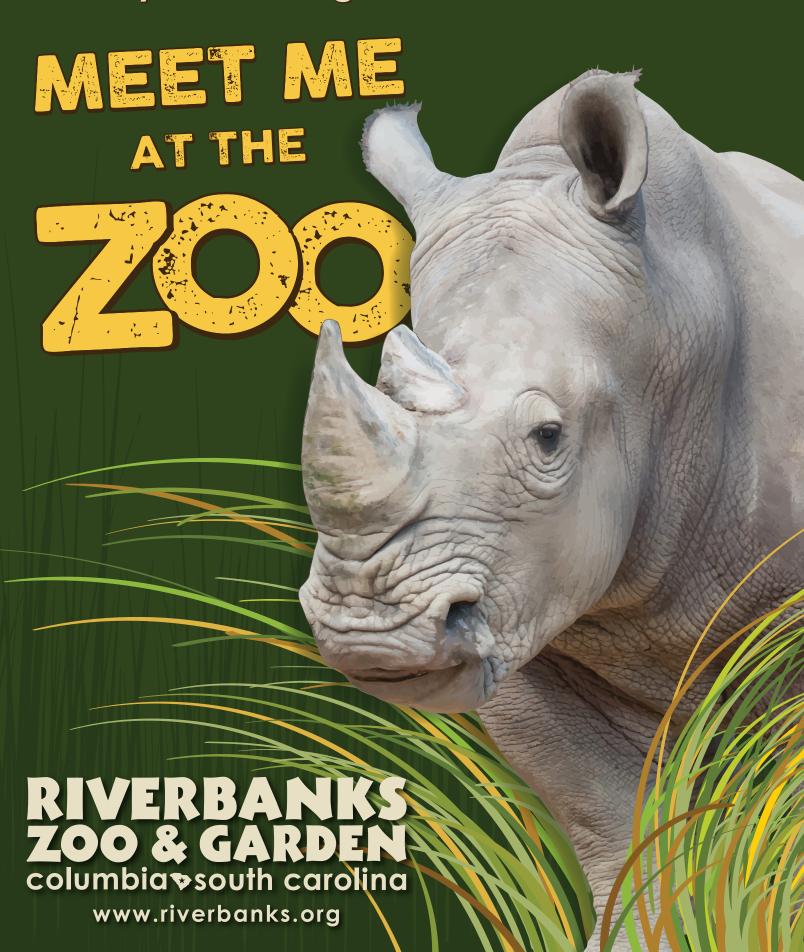


Simply Corolla, NC Far and Away, Only Closer Find yourself here Summer is upon us, and many wise folks are simply planning to hit the road and find their way here. It is nice to know that the legendary Corolla Wild Horses and historical sites like Whalehead, The Currituck Maritime Museum (opening this summer), and the Corolla • Carova • The Mainland lighthouse await you, a short drive away, in Corolla, NC.

Stocky Build. Vegetarian. Good Listener.



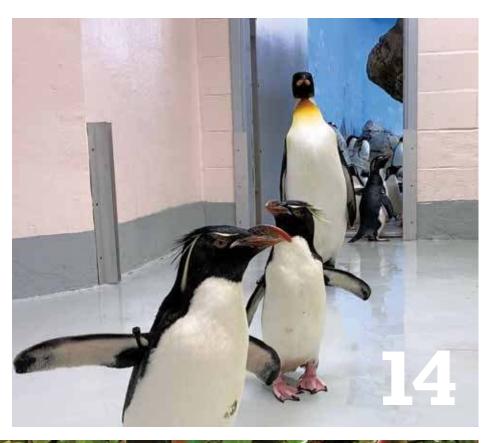


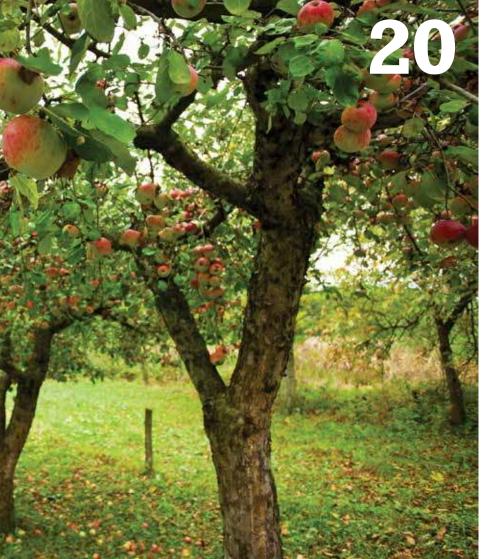
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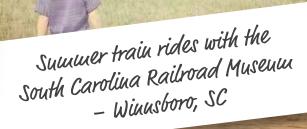
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- Myrtle Beach, SC



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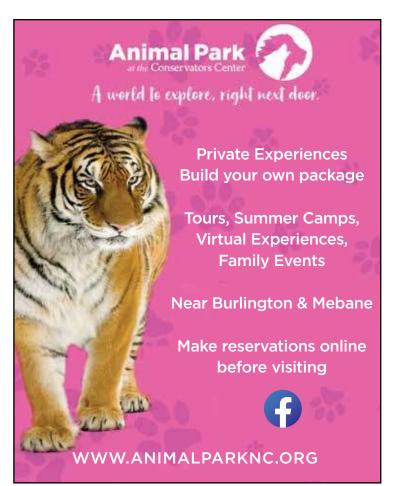






Whitewater tubing in the Deep Creek gorge – Bryson City, NC











Huuting for megalodou shark teeth — Charleston, SC

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Eujoying howewade ice creaw at Berry Patch – Ellerbe, NC



Picking berries in Blueberry Town
– Burgaw, NC



Four days of Independence Day celebrations – Southport, NC



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Weekend in Charleston

History, Baseball, & Ghosts - Three Days in Chucktown



Spend the perfect 3-day weekend with family in Charleston, SC With its incredible food scene, beautiful architecture, rich history, and location right on the water, Charleston has become a top destination in the US for weekend getaways. In fact, you could spend weeks exploring this charming Southern town. But, when you only have a few days to taste, see, and experience all that Charleston has to offer, we've got you covered!

We've organized a family-friendly 3-day weekend itinerary that covers many of the mustsee sites and things to do in Charleston, SC.

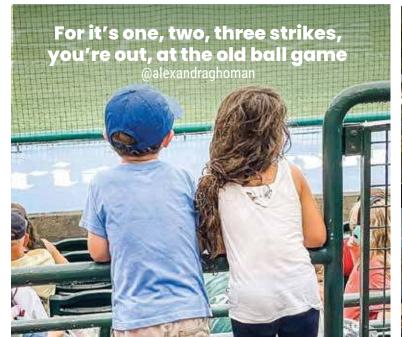


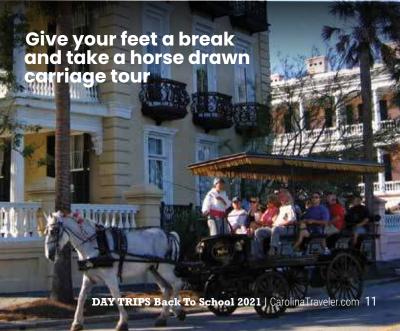
To kick off your stay in The Holy City, it's best to get the lay of the land. Hop aboard one of Charleston's top rated horse-drawn carriages to explore the cobblestone streets of the historic downtown center and get your bearings. These tours will give you a look at some of the stunning pre-civil war homes while learning about the history of the town.

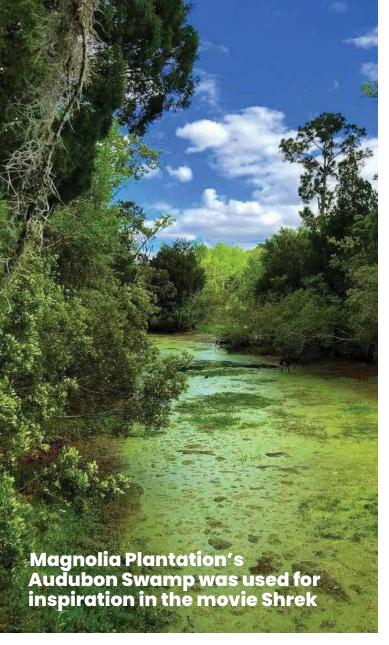
Once you've completed your tour, stroll toward The Battery, a landmark named for its role in the civil-war as a defensive wall. The area borders the beautiful Charleston harbor and houses some of the most exquisite mansions

in the city. Snap some photos with the family and give the kids time to check out the historic cannons and the park. Then, take a quick 8-minute walk to Rainbow Row for another must-hit photo op of colorful homes all lined up along a cobblestone street.

After you've photographed family to your heart's content, grab some lunch at one of the local hot spots. The Charleston food scene is renowned for its delicious Southern flavors. It's hard to go wrong, but we recommend a casual bite at the popular Brown Dog Deli on Broad Street.







Next, it's time to head over the Cooper River to Patriots Point. This Naval and Maritime Museum is a hands-on history lesson that allows you to see what life was like aboard the USS Yorktown, a World War II aircraft carrier. Patriots Point is also home to a fleet of historic ships, the Cold War Memorial, and the Vietnam Experience exhibit. History buffs will love this popular attraction.

If you've timed your visit right, you'll be able to experience a true Charleston tradition to round out your first day: attending a Riverdogs baseball game. The Riverdogs play at Joe Riley Stadium and games are always entertaining for the whole family. The field is located right next to the Ashley River, making for a beautiful setting. And, if you're lucky, you might spot the comedian Bill Murray, co-owner of the team and major fan. Don't forget to try a Riverdog hot dog while you enjoy the game!





DAY 2

By now, you've probably realized that Charleston is full of history. To dive deeper into the archives of The Holy City, start your second day at one of the historic homes in the area.

Middleton Place hosts the oldest landscaped gardens in the US, but the 65 acres of beautiful grounds aren't the only reason to visit. This historic landmark is a plantation located across the Ashley River, about a 30 minute drive from Charleston. A tour of the home reveals the stories of both the Middleton family and the enslaved people of the land.

Another plantation which allows guests to understand more about how slavery contributed to Charleston's agriculture, evolution, and culture is Magnolia Plantation and Gardens. The gardens here are known for their informal, natural beauty. You can also visit the Drayton house with a partly-guided tour that takes a look at life on the plantation. Magnolia Plantation is about a 30-minute drive from downtown Charleston.



DAY

A third option is Drayton Hall, an 18th-century estate across the Ashley River and about 20 minutes from downtown. This is the oldest preserved plantation house still open to the public. A tour of the house will reveal the history of the Drayton family and seven generations of the Bowen family who were brought to Drayton Hall as slaves.

The afternoon of your second day in Chucktown can be spent exploring the culinary scene. With so many incredible restaurants and local flavors, a Charleston food tour is the perfect option for tasting as much as possible in a short time.

Once the sun goes down, it's time to get spooky. Charleston has many secret, frightening stories in its history and a ghost tour will give you the chance to hear these spine-tingling tales. Charleston's Pleasing Terrors Ghost Tour is hosted by Mike Brown, a popular podcaster. On your 90-minute walking tour, you'll hear suspenseful stories and get a glimpse of Charleston from a totally different perspective.



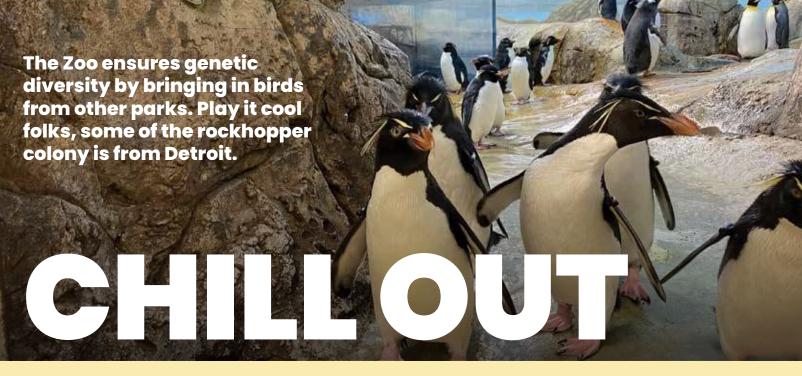
Just in case you didn't get enough of the taste of the south on your food tour on day two, start your day with a delicious brunch or breakfast. In Charleston, brunch is a way of life and something you should

definitely experience. Poogan's Porch is a popular, more casual option serving local favorites such as shrimp & grits or chicken & waffles. Edmund's Oast offers hearty breakfast options or for breakfast on the go, stop by Callie's Hot Little Biscuit.

After all of your adventures the last two days, it's time to relax on the beach. Folly Beach is a 20-30 minute drive from the center of Charleston. With plenty of public parking, it's a very popular beach spot for locals and tourists alike. If you decide you want to do more than soak in the sun and swim, the Morris Island Lighthouse is just north of Folly Beach and a beautiful site to see.

Round out your trip with a harbor boat cruise at sunset to really take in the beauty of this lowcountry gem. The Charleston Harbor History Sunset Boat Cruise is a leisurely, fully-narrated tour providing history and views. It's a picturesque ending to the perfect long weekend.





Beat the Heat at Great Lakes & Cool Spots

When the dog days of summer set in, you just need a cool spot to chill out. Fortunately there are plenty of cool options for day trips and long weekends in the Carolinas. We're sharing some favorite places to beat the heat.

Cool Spot: Backstage Penguin Encounter at the Riverbanks Zoo

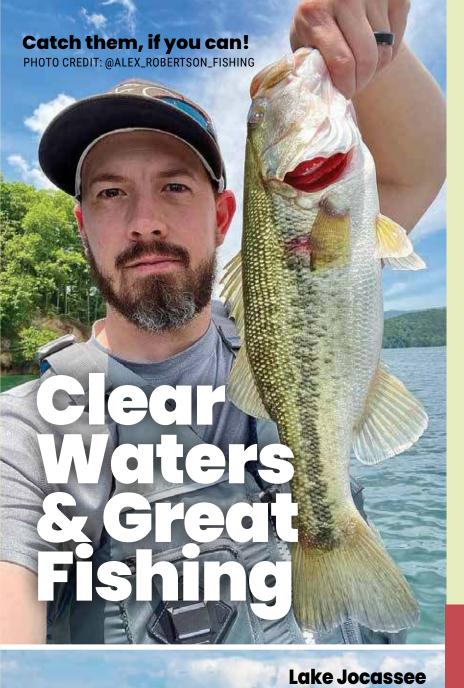
It's a meet-and-greet unlike any other. The zookeeper will ask you to take a seat and hold still, but you won't be able to resist smiling at the impossible cuteness of the colony as they amble through the door. And you'll completely forget it's 40 degrees.

As you greet rockhoppers, gentoos and king penguins, the zookeeper will introduce some of the bigger personalities by name. And they'll talk back. Some of them have quite a bit to say!

The Riverbanks Zoo offers the Backstage Penguin Encounter to families and small groups of 5. This adventure books quickly, so keep an eye on their website for openings www.riverbanks.org/plan-your-visit/backstage (pro tip - complete the e-ticket registration before buying tickets)







One of the most beautiful things about living in the Carolinas is that the states have pristine beaches, beautiful lakes, and stunning mountains all within a short drive of each other. South Carolina is blessed to be home to more than 20 beautiful freshwater lakes. These sizable lakes are perfect for recreational water activities including fishing, swimming, boating, and water sports.

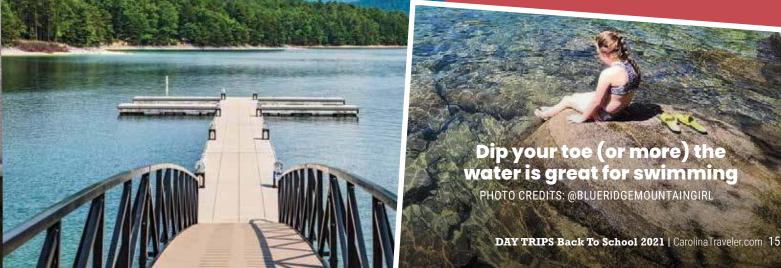
One South Carolina lake you might not have ever considered is Lake Jocassee. This lake is mostly undeveloped with stunning views and small crowds. The picturesque lake has limited access points, making it one of the more exclusive freshwater destinations in South Carolina. Devils Fork State Park offers lake access, but the park has a daily capacity limit, so it's best to arrive early in the morning if visiting for a single day.

The lake is an ideal spot for fishing, holding state records for five different species of fish. Scuba divers also frequent Lake Jocassee. The lake offers an average of 20-30 foot visibility, leading to an incredible underwater experience. Lake Jocassee is fed by rivers from the Appalachian Mountains, making the waters cool year-round and great for swimming in the summer.

For those looking to make a vacation out of their Lake Jocassee visit, Devils Fork offers 20 cabins for rent with two- or three-bedroom options. Pets are not allowed. Reservations can be made through the SC state park website.

Know Before You Go

Locals report that Lake Jocassee is a very moody lake. Storms pop up fast and the waves can be enough to flip a small boat or kayak. Be vigilant and check the weather ahead of time.





White Lake, North Carolina is a small town with a crystalclear lake that hosts the self-proclaimed "Safest Beach in the US". The southern gem offers the perfect road trip getaway for you and your family with plenty of activities and some time for relaxation, too!

This underrated North Carolina oasis is located in Bladen County near Elizabethtown, and is the ideal lake if you want to get off the beaten path. The lake has no currents, tides, or hazardous depressions, making it very safe for families. It's an incredible place to getaway for some skiing, swimming, boating, and wakeboarding. The lake features plenty of exciting things to do off the water, too.

However, if you're looking for even more water thrills, visit the White Lake Waterpark. The park features a lazy river, bumper boats, kiddie splash pad with bucket dumps, a sinking submarine, and children's slides. Plus, there's a 100,000 gallon wave pool, Double Turbo Twister slide, and a 2,000 square foot swimming pool. Back on land you'll find arcades, souvenir shopping, and bingo. You can also take a short 15-minute drive to Elizabethtown for go-karts and mini golf.

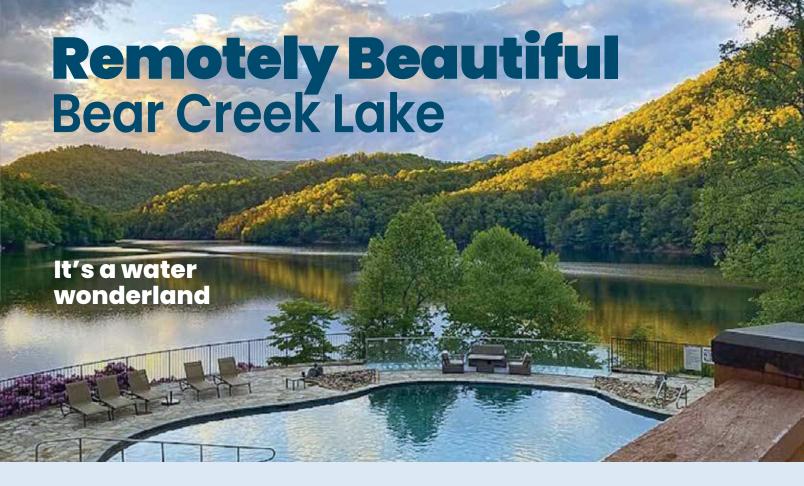
Don't forget to grab a bite to eat at one of the local hot spots! Ski Burger is a small joint that offers southern

bites such as a fried bologna sandwich or country ham and eggs for breakfast. They also offer burgers, chicken, and sandwiches for lunch. Hot Rod's Grill is another local spot that serves diner food such as burgers, shrimp baskets, and BBQ.

White Lake provides several types of lodging including campsites, cabins, house rentals, and hotels. Many visitors choose The Grand Regal at Goldston's Beach. The property offers a modern stay that recently combined several of the lake's most popular lodging options. Get a piece of history with Goldston's Beach but a spark of fresh with the newest addition to the lake's shores. If camping is more your thing, try Camp Clearwater - North Carolina's largest family campground. They have 1,300 feet of private beach and four piers for direct access to the water.

Whether you plan to drive by for the day or spend a week over the summer, White Lake is a perfect small-town getaway with pristine waters so clear you might think you've landed in the Caribbean. When you visit, don't forget to tag @carolinatravelr in your photos and let us know what you think!





North Carolina is abundant in fresh water vacation options. In fact, there are more than 50 natural and man-made lakes scattered across the state. Some of the lakes are friendlier for travelers who do not have a lake house or their own boat to cruise along the water in.

One such example is Bear Creek Lake. If you're looking to get off the beaten path, Bear Creek will be calling your name. This peaceful lake has approximately 22 miles of shoreline with only one public ramp which leaves the waters pristine and provides a feeling of exclusivity. Bear Creek Lake, also known as Tuckasegee Lake or Bear Lake, is located in Jackson County in Western North Carolina.

Making a perfect home-base for your trip, Bear Lake Reserve is a community that offers lakeside homes and vacation rentals ranging from condos to mountain lodges and villas. The community provides amenities which will keep you and your family entertained for days. Amenities include tennis and pickleball courts, a disc golf course, and a 9-hole golf course. Whether you want to get out on the lake, hit the hiking trails, or get sporty there's plenty to do!

For families who want to experience water adventures and a change of pace from the salt-water coast, Bear Creek Lake fits the bill.

PHOTOS: BEAR LAKE RESERVE







South Carolina's Hammock Coast boasts some of the Palmetto State's best beaches that are perfect for a week of relaxation, but taking a Day Trip for the whole family is also easily done! HammockCoastSC.com

Atalaya Castle at Huntington Beach State Park

Tour a real-life castle at Huntington Beach State Park in Murrells Inlet. The castle was the winter residence of Archer and Anna Hyatt Huntington. Open daily, 9-4. 843-237-4440. southcarolinaparks.com/huntington-beach

Brookgreen Gardens

Just across Ocean Highway from the state park is this 9,127-acre botanical and sculpture garden where you can see the largest collection of American figurative sculpture in the US. Open daily, 9:30-5 and later for special events. 843-235-6000. Brookgreen.org





MarshWalk

Just 15 minutes northeast of the park, Marsh Walk is a half-mile, wooden boardwalk along a natural saltwater estuary. Spectacular waterfront dining with 6 restaurants awaits you. Save room for dessert! At Drunken Jack's indulge in the hush puppy sundae, which features crushed hush puppies with vanilla ice cream, whipped cream and strawberry topping. marshwalk.com

Lowcountry Zoo

Return to Brookgreen Gardens for more adventure at the Lowcountry Zoo (it's included in your admission to the gardens!). Be sure to take in a session with an interpreter who brings along friends like snakes and owls! Open daily, 9:30-5 p.m. brookgreen.org/lowcounty-zoo

Pawleys Island

Pawleys Island features four miles of pristine public beach, marshes and creeks. For something a little different, rent a kayak from Surf the Earth on the island (surf-the-earth.com) to see the marsh or to visit the historic Pawleys Island Chapel, a one-room historic church. 843-546-8436. onlypawleys.com





APPLE SEASON in the Carolinas

You know it's apple season when the summer heat begins to let up. And it's not just apple picking that comes to mind - in the Carolinas apple season means doughnuts, cider, slushies, festivals, photo ops, and orchard trips for the whole family. We've put together a list of the top apple excursions in the Carolinas so you can join in the fun.

Justus Orchard

187 Garren Rd. Hendersonville NC

The Justus family has been growing apples in Hendersonville for four generations. A visit to their family orchard includes u-pick options, a cow train for the kids, and a chance to see the farm animals. Justus Orchard grows 19 varieties of apples available for picking including Jonagold, Summerset, and Crimson Crisp.

Stop by the charming apple house to pick up homemade honey, jams, and preserves or visit the bakery for warm and delicious fried apple pies, apple cider donuts, and apple bread.



Sky Top Orchard

1193 Pinnacle Mountain Rd, Flat Rock, NC

The Butler family began the Sky Top apple farm in the late 1960s as a commercial operation in Western North Carolina. Over the decades, the farm changed into a u-pick destination. A visit to Sky Top Orchard brings much more than just apple picking, though that is the main draw of this scenic farm. When you arrive at Sky Top Orchard, you'll be greeted by beautiful panoramic mountain views. Exploring the grounds takes you past ponds with ducks and geese, through a bamboo forest, and gives you a chance to view peacocks, goats, and more. You don't want to miss the apple cider doughnuts and slushies - they're a treat that everyone will enjoy!

Know Before You Go

Dress in layers for the higher elevations, as picking apples at the top of the mountains can still get warm. Remind your children that apples on the ground should not be eaten (we know, it seems like the prettiest apples are always down there, but you never know what animal also did its business in the same spot). Wash your fruit when you get home! Due to a late freeze this year orchards might have more limited u-pick options, check their websites before you go!



Grandad's Apples N Such

2951 Chimney Rock Road Hendersonville, NC

Grandad's Apples N Such in Hendersonville offers more than 30 different apple varieties such as Ginger Gold, Red Rome, Braeburn, and Pink Lady. The farm is typically open for guests from mid-August through fall. The 100-acre family farm has been in operation since 1994, with four generations of apple growers working the orchard.

The bakery offers delicious hot cider donuts, apple pies, and apple slushies that can't be missed. On weekends during the season, Grandad's Apples N Such offers family friendly activities that include a corn maze, apple cannon, and cow train.





Apple Hill Orchard & Cider Mill

2075 Pleasant Hill Ave. Morganton NC

For five generations, the Prewitt family has been growing apples in Morganton, NC. Apple Hill Orchard & Cider Mill grows 22 varieties of apples with 1-2 new varieties being harvested weekly from mid-August to October. However, due to a late frost, the options for picking are more limited and they will require you to call ahead for an apple picking pass. This will allows you to visit knowing there are apples available.

Apple Hill Orchard is known for their flavorsome cider. In fact, during peak season they press several 600 gallon batches per week. The bakery includes a wide array of scratch-made products including apple donuts, crumb-top apple pie, apple pie brittle, apple muffins, fried apple pies, and apple cakes.



MacGregor Orchard

2400 SC-11, Travelers Rest, SC

Visit MacGregor Orchard to indulge not only in fresh, crisp apples but also figs, apricots, persimmons, Asian pears, and more! If you don't feel up to creating your own food from the produce, stop by their store for premade apple butter, fruit preserves, apple sauce, and local honey. If you're planning your South Carolina apple picking trip around Halloween, don't forget to pick up a couple of their pumpkins and gourds for sale.

Blue Haven Orchards

12500 Long Creek Hwy, Long Creek, SC

Blue Haven Orchards is home to over 30 acres of apple trees in Long Creek, offering ample area to spend an afternoon picking apples with friends and family. Like any orchard, the variety available will depend on the time of year. Visit mid-August for galas, mid-September for Granny Smiths, and early October for Fuji varieties.

In addition to apples, Blue Haven Orchards also sells seasonal vegetables grown in the area as well as fresh peaches. For visitors that want a quick on-the-go treat, they even sell slushies made on-site in flavors like muscadine and peach.

Chattooga Belle Farm

454 Damascus Church Rd, Long Creek, SC

For one of the widest selections of apple varieties in South Carolina, schedule a trip to Chattooga Belle Farm. Depending on the season, visitors can choose between apple types like Liberty, Golden Delicious, Arkansas Black, and more. In fact, this farm offers over 20 varieties of apples! Besides this large selection of apples to choose from, the farm creates wine in its distillery and even providesgrass-fed beef for purchase.

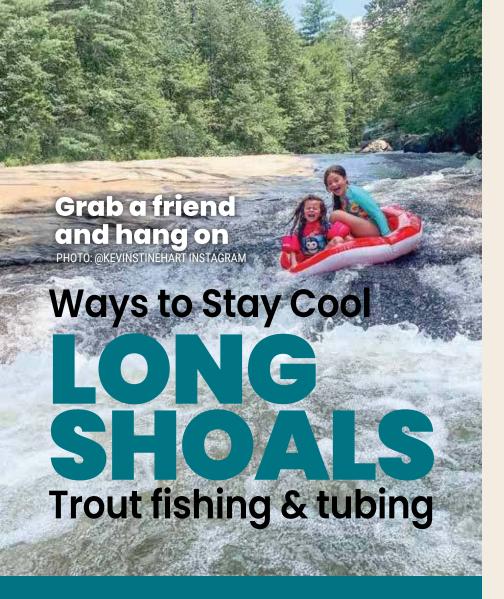
Windy Hill Orchard & Cidery

1860 Black Highway York, SC

Windy Hill Orchard & Cidery markets itself as a "boutique" apple orchard in South Carolina. With a decades-long history, this orchard is known for its hard cider that it's been crafting on-site since 1996.

Not only does their location produce cider for cities throughout South Carolina, but it even sells to locations in North Carolina. With special concoctions like cider slushies and apple cider donuts, this location is a must for apple aficionados.

If you prefer to pick your own apples, you'll need to make a reservation ahead of time. Keep in mind that the orchard only offers Stayman Winesap apples through their "u-pick" options. Watch their event calendar for updates about music events held on the premises. While their orchard is only open to the public during harvest season, their cider bar is open on certain weekends during the spring season.



Know Before You Go

Water shoes are the recommended option for footwear here to help you gain traction on slippery rocks. If you're wearing flip flops be careful on the walk down - the hill is steep. Consider bringing a life vest or floaties for your little ones. The water is shallow, but best to be careful! Be aware that the only bathroom option here is a port-a-potty.

Smiles are guaranteed
PHOTO CREDIT: ALICE BERETTA

Summer might be nearly over, but there's still plenty of warm weekends left to enjoy a day at Long Shoals Wayside Park.

Many people traveling along the Cherokee Foothills National Scenic Highway will drive by the park's sign completely oblivious to all this hidden gem has to offer. Located a few miles east of Keowee-Toxaway State Natural Area, the 10-acre park overlooks Little Eastatoe Creek in the Poe Creek State Forest.

The park features several options for exploring. Once you've gone down the to the river, you can head north along the Little Eastatoe Creek shoals and explore, or head south to the sliding rock and beach area. Visitors and locals of all ages will enjoy the thrill of sliding down the flat rocks or floating in the cool creek waters. If you have a fishing enthusiast in your family, this area is known for being a great spot to try your hand at fly-fishing. The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources regularly stocks Little Eastatoe Creek with 9"-12" brown, rainbow, and brook trout.

When it's time for lunch (or a snack break), head back to the parking lot, you'll find picnic tables located in a shady area nearby. By the time you're ready to leave, everyone will feel refreshed and eager for further sightseeing.





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