

## About Asheville

*There's something about Asheville that makes its blend of remote Appalachian charm and cosmopolitan sophistication seem perfectly natural. The city abounds in cultural attractions and events, many stemming from the literary greats who have lived here. Thomas Wolfe, Carl Sandburg, and O. Henry have all called Asheville home. The area's spectacular beauty led millionaire George W. Vanderbilt to locate Biltmore, his castle-like mansion, in Asheville, and the city has historically been a resort for the wealthy. But there's also a friendly, small-town atmosphere – the city has a way of making visitors feel right at home. Located at the confluence of two rivers and nestled in the mountains, Asheville is a magnet for outdoor enthusiasts who have their pick of hiking, mountain biking, whitewater rafting, hot air ballooning and many other year-round activities. Architecture buffs can study the Art Deco city hall, turn-of-the-century houses and Tudor-style home. Asheville is home to the second largest collection of art deco architecture in the south. So breathe in the fresh mountain air, take a spin along the Blue Ridge Parkway – “America's most scenic drive” and soak up the beauty and spirit of this lovely mountain city.*

## Suggested Activities

This year we are offering some complimentary activity options as well as a list of a la carte suggestions for you.

Activity	Paid by MHI*	Free Activity	A la carte
Hop On/Off Trolley Tour of Asheville	X		
Grove Park Day Spa Access	X		
Navitat Zip Line			X
Nantahala White Water River Rafting			X
Groveswood Gallery Artisans		X	
Chocolate Factory Tour		X	X
Shopping/Walking in downtown Asheville		X	
Grove Park Inn History Tour		X	X
Golf @ Grove Park			X

## Hop on Hop Off Trolley Tour

A great way to get an overview of everything Asheville has to offer. The Grayline trolley tour includes 10 stops with pick ups every 30 minutes so you can pace yourself and spend the time only where you want to. The trolley picks up at the Grove Park Inn (Sammons Wing Entrance).

**Stop by the hotel Concierge Desk to pick up a schedule and get your complimentary\* trolley tour ticket.** (\*MHI will take care of the costs for (1) ticket each board member and spouse.) You can choose to use the ticket any day of your stay.

<http://graylineasheville.com/trolley-tours-asheville.html>

## The Spa at Grove Park

Step out of the worries of the world and in to pure relaxation at The Spa at The Omni Grove Park Inn. Twenty water features, including numerous mineral-based pools, complement the subterranean spa with cavernous rock walls, arches and tunnels. Enjoy 43,000 square feet of peace and quiet, 18,000 of which are amenities for you to enjoy before and after your treatment. Two therapeutic waterfall pools will soothe the soul and a lap pool blanketed with 6,500 fiber-optic stars and underwater music adds to the coolness of the space.

Escape to the private Men's and Women's exhilarating contrast pools, inhalation rooms, saunas and eucalyptus-infused steam rooms. Grab a warm blanket, light snack and hot organic tea at three fireside lounges with comfortable, oversized chairs. Fireplaces, a whirlpool and tiered outdoor terrace complete the experience and helped jettison the spa into Condé Nast Traveler's Top Resort Spas in North America.

The Spa is an 18 or older facility and welcomes non-resort guests on select dates, based on availability (excluding holidays and weekends). Please call (800) 438-5800 for more information.

## SPA HOURS

Daily: 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.

**Schedule your requested day and time with Kay Clark. Your complimentary\* spa access pass is offered Thursday, Friday and Saturday based on availability.** (\*MHI will take care of the costs for (1) day pass each board member and spouse.) Spa treatments are not included.

<http://www.omnihotels.com/hotels/asheville-grove-park/spa>

## Navitat Canopy Adventures

**Tree-based zipline adventures that thrill, educate, and inspire.**

Consistently called one of the best zipline canopy tour providers in the nation, Navitat offers fully guided tree-based zipline tours that showcase the beauty of North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains. Located just 20 minutes north of Asheville, NC in a secluded mountain cove, we invite you to escape the distractions of the outside world and find yourself fully immersed in the beauty of Southern Appalachia. Several tour options available for all levels; go to the website for more information and to reserve your tour. Transportation is own own.

<http://www.navitat.com/asheville-nc/>

## Nantahala Outdoor Center

**Family-Friendly Rafting Near Asheville**

If you're looking for family-friendly white water rafting only minutes from downtown Asheville, check out the scenic French Broad River. On NOC's French Broad rafting trips, you'll explore the third-oldest river in the world, located deep in the rugged Pisgah National Forest. You will learn about the rich history of this river, from its earliest native American settlers to the industrialization of Asheville. You will also see abundant wildlife, including heron and kingfishers, bald eagles, and even an occasional black bear. With its splashy Class II and III rapids, NOC's French Broad rafting trips are ideal for families, children, and young teenagers. NOC is the longest continually-operating outfitter on the French Broad, and our outpost is located approximately 30 minutes from Asheville. Transportation is on own and an office/retail center is located at the Grove Park Inn. Other activities are also offered.

<http://noc.com/plan-your-trip/french-broad-river>

## French Broad Chocolates

Chocolate lovers should not miss a visit to Asheville's French Broad Chocolatier. Creators Dan and Jael Rattigan use fair trade cacao (cocoa) from Peru to create chocolate for their line of chocolate bars as well as special creations offered at their retail store, the Chocolate Lounge. The Lounge is located near South Pack Square (Trolley Stop) and offers unique creations. Or you can visit the Factory & Tasting Room located in the South Slope District. During a factory tour, learn about their craft chocolate-making. Watch them sort the beans fresh from a Peruvian farm, roast them via the sun's energy and then grind, temper and mold them into bars. The owners created and/or customized much of the equipment themselves.

**VISIT:**

**FRENCH BROAD CHOCOLATE LOUNGE**

10 S. Pack Square, Asheville, NC 28801 | 828-252-4181

**Hours: Sun-Thurs 11am-11pm | Fri-Sat 11am-midnight**

**CHOCOLATE + MILK BOUTIQUE**

10 S. Pack Square, Asheville, NC 28801 | 828-252-4181

This is French Broad Chocolate's newest addition—A Coffee, Ice Cream & Chocolate Boutique! Stop in and peruse a huge variety of craft chocolate bars, artisan truffles, homemade ice cream, coffee and much more. Chocolate + Milk is connected to French Broad Chocolate Lounge, with its own entrance.

**Hours: Mon-Fri 7am-8pm | Sat-Sun 9am-8pm**

### **FRENCH BROAD CHOCOLATE FACTORY & TASTING ROOM**

21 Buxton Avenue, Asheville, NC 28801 | 828-505-4996

**Hours: Daily Noon-6pm | Guided Tours held every Saturday at 11am** (call to reserve a spot!)

**Self-guided FREE tours any day, 2-5:30 PM.**

The factory is located approximately 20 minute walk (0.6miles) from the lounge.

Click on the link for information on both the retail shop and factory tour

<https://frenchbroadchocolates.com/>



## **Downtown Asheville**

### **Shops & Galleries**

#### **Asheville features the unique, special, handcrafted, and hard-to-find**

Downtown Asheville shops and galleries feature a unique mix of locally-owned establishments. Downtown art galleries offer specialized items such as custom jewelry, quilts, furniture and one-of-a-kind gifts. The city is pedestrian friendly, with wrought-iron benches throughout downtown, and many eateries have open-air dining sections that allow visitor to enjoy the city's mild weather. In downtown Asheville, it is a pleasure—not a stress—to go shopping.

**Grove Arcade**—One of the most interesting and inviting spots for downtown shopping is the Grove Arcade. This renovated historic building is worth a visit to admire the architecture alone, but it's also a wonderful place to wander, shop or visit galleries. The dining options range from Chicago-style hot dogs to frozen custard, wine bars to coffee shops, upscale restaurants to sidewalk cafes. The area nearby the Grove Arcade is also lined with several shops and restaurants.

**Downtown Asheville Art District**—There's a reason Asheville's arts scene is heralded again and again. In downtown Asheville, there are 30 galleries belonging to this organization alone. The group offers maps and self-guided tours, as well as City Center art walks. You can also find the works of 150 artists at Woolworth Walk in the heart of downtown Asheville.

**Wall Street** - This picturesque side street in downtown Asheville features a mix of unique shops like Beads and Beyond, the paint-your-own-pottery spot Fired Up Creative Lounge, or Art Deco-inspired jewelry at Overström Studio. While you're there, stop off for a bite at Early Girl Eatery for organic Southern cuisine, Laughing Seed Café for vegetarian cuisine or The Market Place for inventive food.

**Broadway to Biltmore** - This corridor, with Broadway to one side of Patton Avenue and Biltmore to the other, is lined with several popular downtown Asheville shops and true local institutions like Mast General Store. Along Broadway, the diverse shopping ranges from L.O.F.T. - Lost Objects Found Treasures for interesting finds, C and Co. for all natural body goods, to Bruisin' Ales, devoted to beer lovers.

**Lexington Avenue** - This funky and eclectic neighborhood is the place to shop for the delightfully unexpected, from political bumper stickers to punk tee-shirts to new age books. While you're there, sample some French comfort food at Bouchon.

**Haywood Street** - Discover the quintessential downtown shopping experience on Haywood Street, one of Asheville's original shopping districts. From Malaprop's Bookstore to Jewels that Dance, you'll be sure to find something stimulating on Haywood Street.

<http://www.exploreasheville.com/things-to-do/discover-downtown/>

## **Groveswood Gallery (across from the Grove Park Inn)**

These artisan shops and small museums are located across the street from the Grove Park Inn. Enter the rustic iron gates of Groveswood and experience art, craft, history and Old-World-charm. Stroll the beautifully landscaped sculpture gardens, visit a working artist's studio, marvel at a fine collection of rare automobiles from yesteryear, discover a bit of Asheville's early history [www.groveswood.com](http://www.groveswood.com)

## **Historic Walking Tour of Grove Park Inn**

The history of the Grove Park Inn is a remarkable story. Stop by the hotel concierge desk to pick up a guide for a self-tour. Or you can sign up for a complimentary guided tour which covers the history of E.W. Grove, the construction and early years of the resort, the Arts & Crafts style furniture, and some of their most notable guests. The tour lasts for approximately 45 minutes and is offered Wednesday through Saturday at 10:00 a.m. each day. Please see a representative at the Concierge Desk to sign up.

## **Scenic Drive Along the Blue Ridge Parkway**

The Blue Ridge Parkway in North Carolina weaves through vibrant and engaging communities. Many visitors to the Parkway include visits to these unique destinations in their journey. In North Carolina, Linville Falls, the Cradle of Forestry, and other natural wonders, feature the natural environment. In addition to the destinations along the Parkway itself, the road weaves through historic towns offering fascinating exploration of the heritage and culture of the region along the way.

The headquarters of the Blue Ridge Parkway is located in Asheville, North Carolina, a city well known to literary figures including Carl Sandburg, Thomas Wolfe and F. Scott Fitzgerald. Exploration of their homes and haunts in the Asheville area presents an interesting side trip and a one or two day break from driving.

<http://www.blueridgeparkway.org/v.php?pg=69>

## **GOLF**

Swing into a round of golf on the legendary 18-hole course at The Omni Grove Park Inn. The 6,400-yard championship course has been played by PGA stars Bobby Jones, Ben Hogan and Jack Nicklaus and even

President Obama. Feel a sense of pride and accomplishment after navigating the tree-lined fairways and bent greens with amazing views of the Blue Ridge Mountains all around. Elevated tee boxes on the par-70 course provide perfect sight lines for each drive. Donald Ross originally designed this historic course in 1926, and it was overhauled in 2001 to keep the same feel and spirit. It has since earned nods from Conde Nast Traveler (Top 20 Southern U.S. Golf Resorts in 2011) and North Carolina Golf Panel (Top 100 Golf Courses in the State). <http://www.omnihotels.com/hotels/asheville-grove-park/golf/course>