

Wine Country

Sipping through Hendersonville



In the 19th century, North Carolina was a leading wine-producing state. That all took a

tumble when Prohibition was passed.

Today, however, the state has rebounded with numerous wineries, and native Ann Young lives to show them off, particularly in her hometown of Hendersonville. Young transports visitors throughout the region south of Asheville in her Mercedes motor coach, sharing viticulture history. Warm days and cool nights makes Hendersonville an ideal location for growing grapes, she insists. In fact, the “Crest of the Blue Ridge” was named an American Viticultural Area (AVA) in 2019, a federal designation.

Then there’s the apples. Henderson County is repeatedly one of the top 20 apple-producing counties in the country and home to three cideries.

But there’s so much more to Hendersonville and its surrounding countryside, truly something for everyone.

EXPLORE

Make the quaint town of Hendersonville your home base and start with an exploration of Main Street. The stretch of boutiques, museums, restaurants and stores has been developed into a pedestrian-friendly boulevard, accented by artful bear statues. History buffs may prefer the Henderson County Heritage Museum inside the historic courthouse, but shoppers don’t want to pass up the Mast General Store, selling everything imaginable since 1888.



Approximately 80 pinball machines and games are on display at the Appalachian Pinball Museum, but here’s the cool kicker. Once visitors pay to step inside this “museum” located in a former movie theater, they’re allowed to play the vintage pinball and arcade machines.

STAY

When visitors check into the Bed & Breakfast on Tiffany Hill, they’re instructed to enter through the front door so as to experience a formal introduction. The staff continue this professionalism in the elegant but cozy accommodations, breakfast and service. Owner Selena Einwechter spent years perfecting the design of this modern home, the South’s first B&B to be part of the Southern Living Hotel Collection. Be sure to wander through the woods where trails sport fun artwork.

EAT/DRINK

Come for the hard cider, then stay for a tasty meal and entertain-

ment at Bold Rock Mills River Cidery. Grab a cider flight — 70 percent of the cider is produced in Hendersonville from its famous apples — and a tasty apple grilled cheese from the food truck and relax on the patio overlooking the North Carolina mountains. The cidery features live music and Cider Cinema movie nights, so it’s easy to make an evening of it.

WINE

Lance Hiatt and Tim Parks met in New Orleans, but when they decided to open a vineyard, they chose 50 acres on the Eastern Continental Divide outside Hendersonville. Visitors to Marked Tree Vineyard may enjoy the mountain views, the flower gardens that grace the acres of grapes or the original artwork inside the tasting room while enjoying several fine wines. Special events include live music, forest bathing and yoga.

Over at Stone Ash, Tina Little serves all natural wines from grapes grown on a stony hillside. The name

originates from the neighboring city of Asheville and the rocky soil, she said. She lets the fruit drive the wine, she explained, and uses few additives. “We wanted our wines to be different, to speak for themselves,” Little said.

AROUND TOWN

Flat Rock, a community just outside Hendersonville that was once the mountain escape for wealthy Charlestonians, still attracts tourists to the Flat Rock Playhouse, the state theater of North Carolina, and the Carl Sandburg Home National Park Service site, once home to the Nobel Prize-winning poet. Be sure to pause for barbecue at Hubba Hubba Smokehouse.

Only five miles from downtown Hendersonville is Jump Off Rock in Laurel Park, located 3,000 feet high at the end of a long winding road. On a clear day, visitors can spot four states: North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Georgia.