

#1 Explore the River Arts District of Asheville: Walking tour focused on downtown revitalization through the arts economy



The River Arts District (RAD) of Asheville (<https://www.riverartsdistrict.com/>) has played a special role in the revitalization and rebranding of Asheville. What used to be empty and underutilized warehouse spaces in what once was the industrial area of town has been transformed to artist work spaces and studios. Many are open to the public to view and explore. The district tells a special side of the Asheville story and the fortitude of small business owners and artists who came together to redefine an entire district of town.

Join us for a self-guided walking tour of the district and studios that will end at a local brewery in the district for food and drinks.

Tour Guide: Hannah Bundy, Polk County Extension

Tour Length: Lunch at food trucks in the District (on your own)
2 hours of walking and tour stops
Afternoon libations (on your own)
Tour Price: \$10

#2 Asheville Region Farm and Vineyard tour: Bus tour with 2 stops focused on farm stay opportunities and agritourism

Join us on a tour of two of the area's most successful agritourism operations and learn how these families revitalized their family farms through the additional revenue opportunities generated by this business sector.

Franny's Farm (<https://frannysfarm.com/>) was founded in 2012 by Jeff, Frances, Zach & Blue Tacy. Their farm is located in Leicester, North Carolina only 10 miles from downtown Asheville. They are dedicated to family, sustainability, ethical business and offering an organic farm for visitors to celebrate, learn, explore, relax and have a memorable time. Franny's Farm is at the core an organic, sustainable farm that is home to many animals such as chickens, turkeys, sheep, goats and a donkey. There are vegetable, fruit, flower, bee and pollinator gardens as well as a u-pick blueberry hill. Franny's Farm serves as an event venue and hosts farm weddings and festivals such as Hemp X & Asheville BARNAROO. Its facility is available for public and private events, educational opportunities, and getaways in eco cabins.



Addison Farms Vineyard (<http://www.addisonfarms.net/>) is a family-owned vineyard and winery situated on 55 acres in Leicester, NC. Located approximately 17 miles northwest of Asheville, NC, the property has been in

the family for four generations. Addison Farmer and his parents purchased the property in 1937. Addison and Ines were married in 1942, and they raised their family on the farm. In 2009, they started the vineyard and winery as a way to preserve the family farm for future generations.



Tour Guide: Steve Duckett, Buncombe County Extension

Tour Length: 5 hours; box lunch included, Optional Wine Tasting \$10-14

Tour Price: \$10

#3 Hops Hopping (Farm to Brewery tour): Bus Tour with 2 stops focused on agribusiness and tourism development



Hops are the dried, cone-like flowers from a bine (not a vine!) that give our favorite adult beverage its bitter and tangy flavor and aroma. Wanna see how they grow? Join us for a visit to the Mountain Horticultural Research and Extension Center

(<https://newcropsorganics.ces.ncsu.edu/specialty-crops/nc-hops/>) to see how different varieties of hops are being grown and tested for use in the booming craft brewery industry. We'll conclude this 'farm to brewery'

tour at the Sierra Nevada Brewery (<https://sierranevada.com/brewery/north-carolina/brewery-tour>) to see (and taste) how these flavorful flowers are used in the final product. In 1980, Ken Grossman founded Sierra Nevada Brewing Co. in a 3,000 square foot, rented, metal warehouse. He started with a love for American hops and a simple goal: brew the beer we want to drink. Today, Sierra Nevada breweries in Chico, CA and Mills River, NC carry on this ambition.

Tour Guide: Jim Hamilton, Watauga County Cooperative Extension

Tour Length: 5 hours; box lunch and guided tour included

Tour Price: \$35/person

#4 Sustainable, Resilient, and Intentional Living at the Earthaven Ecovillage: Van Tour with 1 stop focused on the alternative (new) economy (some cross-terrain walking and narrow, winding mountain roads involved)

Earthaven (<http://www.earthaven.org/>) is an aspiring ecovillage in a mountain forest setting near Asheville. Its residents are dedicated to caring for people and the Earth by learning, living, and demonstrating a holistic, sustainable culture. While they are in the process of developing their own village-scale economy, many Earthaven members are income independent of the village by earning their living outside of the village.

Nonetheless, members are encouraged to make a living in the village by operating their own small-scale ecologically sound businesses, by hiring each other whenever possible, and by investing in other members' homesite development projects and businesses. Our tour will consist of the community's history, introduction to its Three-Legged Stool of Sustainability (Social, Environmental, Economic), overview of its challenges and opportunities, an introduction to integrated agriculture/permaculture, natural building/ off-grid energy, and a discussion of intergenerational living.



Tour Guide: Becky Bowen, NC State Extension

Tour Length: 5 hours; box lunch included

Tour Cost: \$25/person (Limited to 18 people, first come-first served)

#5 Like a Phoenix, Downtown Asheville Rising: Walking Tour of Downtown Asheville focused on the impact of social-entrepreneurial collaborations on downtown revitalization

Asheville currently enjoys good standing on every "top ten" list – best beer city, best small city, coolest, quirkiest, most hipster friendly – is almost unfathomable when considering that it was previously recognized as "rundown and shabby" in a Tennessee Valley Authority study. This stature is largely due to the success of Asheville's social-entrepreneurial coalition in "integrating a vibrant downtown that complements the natural environment, attractive residential neighborhoods and long-standing tourist destinations."



Excerpt from <https://ced.soq.unc.edu/how-asheville-revitalized-its-downtown-part-i/>

Our tour will consist of several stops at local businesses that have been assisted by a community-driven effort to revitalize downtown Asheville. The tour will be guided by Rick Fornoff who has intimate knowledge of how Asheville residents turned their downtown around.

Tour Guide: Rick Fornoff

Tour Length: Box Lunch Provided, 2 hours of walking and tour stops; afternoon libations (on your own)

Tour Cost: \$20

#6 The Flowering Bridge: Growing Community and the Local Economy: Bus Tour stopping at beautiful Lake Lure focused on rural development and tourism (some cross-terrain walking and narrow, winding mountain roads involved)

Step onto the Flowering Bridge <http://lakelurefloweringbridge.org/> and learn how the community took an old state highway bridge scheduled for demolition and created a destination that is literally “growing” the local economy. Hear how new partnerships have “sprouted” to make the project sustainable. Participants will meet with a panel of local stakeholders to hear the history of the project, how it evolved, how it is managed and how it has become an economic driver.

The Flowering Bridge is located in one of the most beautiful areas in the Blue Ridge captured by Hollywood, including Lake Lure (<http://www.townoflakelure.com/about-lake-lure.php>) and Chimney Rock (<https://www.chimneyrockpark.com/>). Such film classics as *Last of the Mohicans* and *Dirty Dancing*, were filmed here.

Tour Guide: Tres Magner, Yancey County Extension

Tour Length: 5 hours; box lunch included

Tour Cost: \$20/person



#7 Arts and Crafts Penland Style: Van tour of the Penland International School of Crafts in Mitchell, NC focused on the arts economy (some narrow, winding mountain roads involved)

Penland is an international center for craft education located in North Carolina’s Blue Ridge Mountains. Penland’s focus on excellence, its long history, and its inspiring, retreat setting have made it a model of experiential education. The school offers workshops in books and paper, clay, drawing and painting, glass, iron, metals, photography, printmaking and letterpress, textiles, wood, and other media. Penland sponsors artist residencies, a gallery and visitors center, and community education programs. It is an integral part of the local crafts industry so dominant in western North Carolina and attracts investment and attention from around the globe, including a segment on the late Anthony Bourdain’s *Parts Unknown* series. Meet and speak with artists and administrators on how the local communities have tied the arts to the local economy.



Tour Guide: Jeff Vance, Rutherford County Extension

Tour Length: 5 hours, box lunch included

Tour Cost: \$10/person



#8 Raft the French Broad River: Bus to Madison County ecotourism business, focused on ecotourism and community development, then ride the rapids down for 5 miles (some narrow, winding mountain roads involved)

For the thrillseekers, this tour is the #1 requested active mobile learning tour of the 2019 NACDEP conference. But, in addition to having a whole lotta fun, participants will also learn first-hand how Blue Heron Whitewater (<https://www.blueheronwhitewater.com/>) was launched, supported, and how it has impacted the surrounding mountain communities.

Tour Guide: Ross Young, Madison County Extension

Tour Length: 5 hours, box lunch included

Tour Cost: \$50/person

#9 Hike the Blue Ridge (and a piece of the Appalachian Trail): Bus to base of Kitsuma Peak, focused on ecotourism (some rough terrain, narrow winding mountain roads involved)

Kitsuma Peak (<https://www.summitpost.org/kitsuma-peak-north-carolina-blue-ridge/1000554>) stands astride the two eastern approaches to Swannanoa Gap, a key gateway in the Blue Ridge front that has channeled North Carolina's central transportation artery for more than a century. The mountain and its access trails are owned by Pisgah National Forest. Kitsuma Peak is a small summit on the Blue Ridge crest that punches well above its weight for trail quality, beautiful flora, and summit views, including the highest peak in the east, Mount Mitchell. The hike will be 1.75 miles roundtrip, with an elevation gain of 350 feet.

Tour Guide: Rob Hawk, Mitchell County Extension

Tour Length: 5 hours, box lunch included

Tour Cost: \$10/person

