

Peaks, Pens and Pictures

From Asheville in the mountains to Salisbury and Concord in the North Carolina Piedmont, this itinerary leads to some of the state's most famous people and places. Visit the homes of literary giants Thomas Wolfe and Carl Sandburg, and see how the Vanderbilts lived in the country's largest privately owned home.

4-Day Itinerary

Day 1

Head to Asheville for gardens, wine and more at Biltmore Estate; Thomas Wolfe and O. Henry historical sites

Day 2

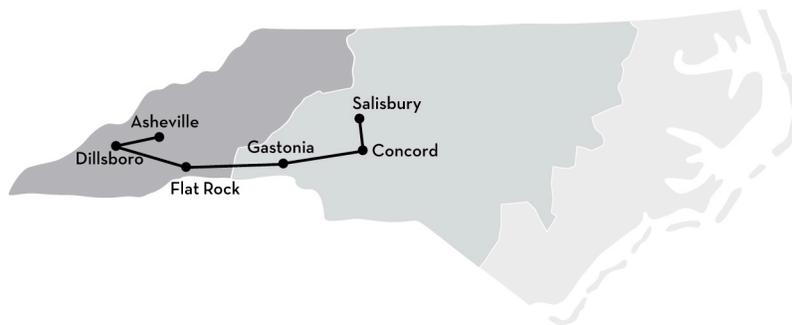
Board the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad in Dillsboro; visit Cold Mountain

Day 3

See Flat Rock and the Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site, Chimney Rock and spectacular Lake Lure

Day 4

Visit Gastonia's Schiele Museum of Natural History, Concord and Lowe's Motor Speedway, Transportation Museum in Salisbury



With so much to see and do in the area, we recommend the following 4-day itinerary. Enjoy your visit by mixing and matching events to your particular interest. Be sure to check days and hours of operation for each venue.

Day One

Asheville:

Start off at the **Biltmore Estate**, the nation's largest privately owned residence. Built by George Washington Vanderbilt, this 250-room French chateau is a filmmaker's dream, with priceless artworks and furnishings in more than 60 rooms. Stroll the spectacular grounds and gardens, which encompass 8,000 acres of formal and natural plantings, forests, pastures and trails. Return to simpler times at the Farm Village where talented craftsmen,

adorable farm animals and a thriving Kitchen Garden reveal a rich agricultural legacy. And no visit is complete without sampling the estate's award-winning wines. Special events are held on the estate throughout the year.

Filmed Here: *Hannibal*, *Patch Adams*, *Forrest Gump*, *Richie Rich*, *Being There*, *The Swan* and *The Last of the Mohicans*

Next, discover Asheville's literary heritage. The **Thomas Wolfe Memorial State Historic Site** is the boyhood home of author Thomas Wolfe and the setting for much of his autobiographical masterpiece, *Look Homeward, Angel*. Considered one of the giants of 20th-century American Literature, Wolfe's colorful portrayal of his family, his hometown of Asheville and the "Old Kentucky Home" boarding house earned the historic Victorian home a place as one of American Literature's most famous landmarks.

The **Riverside Cemetery** dates back to the early 1800s and is the final resting place of Thomas Wolfe and short story writer O. Henry.

Day Two

Dillsboro:

For a unique view of the area, take a scenic train ride on the **Great Smoky Mountains Railroad**. You'll travel past fertile valleys, through tunnels, across river gorges and even see where the great train wreck of *The Fugitive* was filmed.

During your day's travels, incorporate a stop at Milepost 420.2 along the Blue Ridge Parkway for a view of **Cold Mountain**, the inspiration for Charles Frasier's bestselling novel and movie by the same name. The book tells the story of Frasier's ancestors during a time period near the end of the American Civil War.

Day Three

Flat Rock:

Spend the morning admiring another literary icon: Carl Sandburg. The **Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site** preserves "Connemara," a 245-acre farm where the Pulitzer Prize-winning author and his family lived for the last 22 years of his life. The farm consists of a 22-room house, barns, sheds, rolling pastures, mountainside woods, trails, two small lakes, a trout pond, flower and vegetable gardens and an orchard. It's the first National Historic Site dedicated to an American poet. The house displays a collection of some 10,000 books as well as the poet's notes.

Chimney Rock:

The natural fulfillment of your trip to the mountains will be **Chimney Rock Park**, located 25 miles southeast of Asheville. Take the elevator 26 stories inside the mountain or travel a network of trails that lead to breathtaking 75-mile views of the Blue Ridge Mountains. During your visit, you can see some of the sites used to film the epic romantic adventure, *The Last of the Mohicans*.

Filmed Here: *The Last of the Mohicans, My Fellow Americans, Dirty Dancing*

Lake Lure:

Take a break from the road to relax by Lake Lure, the primary film location for the blockbuster hit *Dirty Dancing*. Scenic, narrated boat tours are available. Discover why *National Geographic* magazine named Lake Lure one of the ten most spectacular man-made lakes in the world.

Day Four

Gastonia:

In the **Schiele Museum of Natural History**, examine prototypes of tools used in *Cast Away*, starring Tom Hanks, which were produced by the museum's staff. Also enjoy the planetarium, nature trail, 19th-century backcountry farm and Catawba Indian Village.

Filmed Here: *Cast Away*

Concord:

Next, head up to **Lowe's Motor Speedway**. Located in the heart of stockcar racing country, the speedway hosts NASCAR Nextel Cup events along with various other races and events throughout the year. Guided tours of the speedway are available.

Filmed Here: *Days of Thunder*

Salisbury:

End your day at the **North Carolina Transportation Museum** and the historic Spencer Shops steam locomotive repair facility to learn about the people and machines that have moved North Carolina. Exhibits include "Wagons, Wheels and Wings," tracing the history of transportation in the state; "Bumper to Bumper," covering the evolution of the automobile in North Carolina; and the "Robert Julian Roundhouse," housing more than 25 restored locomotives and rail cars.

Filmed Here: *Having our Say, Lolita*

For more information:

Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau
www.exploreasheville.com

Cabarrus County Convention & Visitors Bureau
www.cabarruscvb.com

Gaston County Department of Tourism
www.gastontourism.com

Rutherford County TDA
<http://www.rutherfordtourism.com/>

Rowan County Convention and Visitors Bureau
www.visitsalisburync.com