



ADVENTURE WITHOUT THE CROWDS

With nearly 300 miles of trails, Burke County offers plenty of room to roam. Explore two state parks, the rugged Linville Gorge Wilderness, Pisgah National Forest and miles of community-built trail systems—all without the crowds of better-known mountain destinations. The best part? We are just over an hour from Charlotte and 3 hours from the Triangle.



Fonta Flora State Trail



Oak Hill Park

NEW GENERATION OF TRAIL TOWNS

In Burke County, outdoor adventure is a part of everyday life. We have two new parks within minutes of downtowns such as: 712-acre Oak Hill Community Park & Forest and Valdese Lakeside Park, where trails, mountain biking, paddling and accessible outdoor experiences are minutes away.

FARM TO GLASS

Here, the flavors in your glass often begin in the soil. Sip fresh-pressed, cider at Apple Hill Orchard, hard cider crafted from local fruit at Perry's Berry's, or local wine at Silver Fork Winery. Check out Fonta Flora's Whippoorwill Farm, where hops, herbs and other farm-grown ingredients find their way into unique brews, giving visitors a true taste of Burke County.



Silver Fork Winery



Charles McDowell House

AMERICA'S HISTORY RUNS THROUGH BURKE COUNTY

The celebration continues! While 2026 marked America's 250th anniversary, 2027 brings another milestone—Burke County's own 250th birthday. From the site of the first and northernmost Spanish fort in the interior United States to the gathering of the Overmountain Men and legacy of Senator Sam Ervin, for history lovers, 2027 is the year to discover Burke County.

BLUE RIDGE'S BEST UNSOLVED MYSTERY

Visit and see if you can spy the Brown Mountain Lights— with recorded sightings for over 100 years, these mysterious lights are a big draw, especially in the spring and fall. Many have tried to find a reason for the lights or a predictable pattern and not one was found. Sometimes seeing is believing, even if it remains unexplained.



Brown Mountain Overlook

WE ARE OPEN- AND GROWING

Burke County is open, welcoming visitors and moving forward. 2 years following Hurricane Helene, trails and outdoor attractions have almost all reopened, new experiences are taking shape, and visitor spending in Burke County grew 5.6% in 2025—even as the Asheville & Foothills region saw an overall decline. From expanding trail systems and renewed outdoor experiences, to new restaurants and attractions, Burke County's next chapter is already underway—and there's more to discover than ever.



📍 Beanstalk Ziplines



📍 Signs of the Times Mural

THE ART OF COMMUNITY

Public art is an important reflection of the people who call this place home. The Industrial Commons' Mural Project in downtown Morganton celebrates the Deaf, Hmong, Guatemalan and African American communities alongside first responders and skilled tradespeople, with a self-guided tour and audio experience coming in early 2027. Throughout the county, murals, sculptures and interactive installations continue the story, turning everyday spaces into colorful expressions of Burke County's people, heritage and creativity.

COME HUNGRY

Burke County's culinary scene is growing, with chef-driven restaurants, locally inspired menus and exciting new concepts adding flavor to our downtowns. Local favorites range from farm-forward spots like Blueberry Bistro at Perry's Berry's, The Hedge, Blackbox Sandwiches and Valdese's Highlands Butchery to elevated dining at Root & Vine and Treat, now led by owner and Executive Chef Starla Ivey. The momentum continues into 2027 with new restaurants The Allard in Valdese and Cranford Hospitality opening a new concept, The Union, in Morganton.



📍 Berry Bistro at Perry's Berrys



📍 Merrill Mischief General Store

SHOPS WORTH THE STOP

Downtown Morganton is filled with shops worth planning a trip around. In 2026, homegrown favorite Merrill Mischief doubled its footprint and created their General Store, filled with homemade fudge, year-round Christmas cheer and local souvenirs, while neighbor Stitching Chicks has become a destination for a new generation of needlepoint fans. Additionally Patterson's Amish Furniture, Hamilton Williams Gallery & Studio and West Union Art Studios round out a shopping scene rich with craftsmanship, local art and personality unique to here.

BURKE BY NUMBERS

- Nearly 300 Miles of Trails
- 2 State Parks (South Mountains and Lake James)
- 12,000 Acres of Wilderness in the Linville Gorge
- Lake James is a 6,510 Acre Lake with 150 Miles of Shoreline
- Elevations vary from 900 to 4,350ft (Long Fall Period)
- \$162.88M Visitor Spending with a +5.6% tourism growth in 2025



Distance To Burke County:
Asheville- 60 Miles
Charlotte- 75 Miles
Raleigh- 200 Miles



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