

Your CVB AAA Contacts



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- General AAA Questions about Asheville FAMs / Road shows
- Webinars



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Bulk Asheville Travel Guide Orders



So, let's start by talking about location. As you can see on this map, Asheville is centrally located in the Eastern United States. It is also located within the <u>Blue Ridge Mountains</u> and boasts 4 entrance/exit points along the Blue Ridge Parkway, which has been coined 'America's Favorite Drive'.

Asheville is very easily accessible, and, in fact, is <u>within 600 miles of 50% of the population</u>. Here are drive times from some popular Southeastern cities.

And, for those of you who have members that choose to fly, Asheville Regional Airport is surprisingly well-connected for an airport of its size, and is only a short 20 minute drive from downtown Asheville.

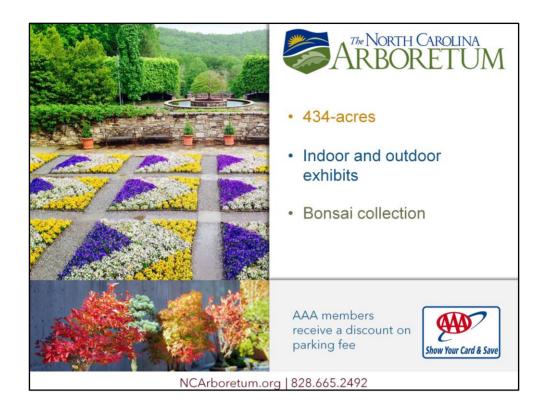
Asheville Visitors Center 36 Montford Avenue, Asheville, NC Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30-5:30, Sat & Sun 9-5 Discovery, inside and out

Next I want to introduce you to our Visitors Center. This is an incredible resource for AAA Agents, especially when members have specific Asheville area questions. Your clients can find the answers to all of their Asheville questions at the Asheville Visitors Center. We have highly knowledgeable staff and volunteers with, literally, all the answers!

Our hours are Mon-Fri from 8:30am – 5:30pm, and Sat and Sun from 9am-5pm.



Spring is creeping up on us and, after the bought of winter weather we've had recently, we are ready for it! Spring in Asheville is one of the most magical times of year. Gentle breezes, clear skies and gorgeous flowers are the hallmarks of this season in the mountains. Rich in biodiversity, our region is home to hundreds, if not thousands, of species not found anywhere else on the planet. Having so many great outdoor attractions, plus being nestled within the Great Smoky Mountains offers visitors an endless list of ways to experience spring.



Just outside of city limits lies a 434-acre natural treasure with 65 acres of <u>cultivated</u> <u>gardens</u> and 10 miles of hiking and biking trails, engaging indoor and outdoor <u>exhibits</u> that cultivate connections between people and plants. The NC Arboretum also boasts one of the finest, most unique bonsai collections in the United States at the <u>Bonsai Exhibition Garden</u>. They offer activities such as Discovery Day Packs and special events that delight the senses for all ages as well as regional offerings and unique items at the <u>gift shop</u>. And it's not just for kids – they also offer enriching <u>adult</u> education programs as well.

Parking is \$12 per personal vehicle and AAA member receive a discount on the parking fee, which is the only cost to experience the NC Arboretum.





- More than 600 native species, 50 of which are considered rare or endangered
- Free admission and open year round (sunrise-sunset
- April through May is peak for spring blooms

AshevilleBotanicalGardens.org | 828.252.5190

For a more native experience have your members check out the Asheville Botanical Gardens. This garden is an independent non-profit organization housing a collection of plants native to the Southern Appalachian Mountains. They have free admission, but donations are appreciated and memberships are encouraged. The grounds are open year round from sunrise to sunset and no admission is charged for entrance.

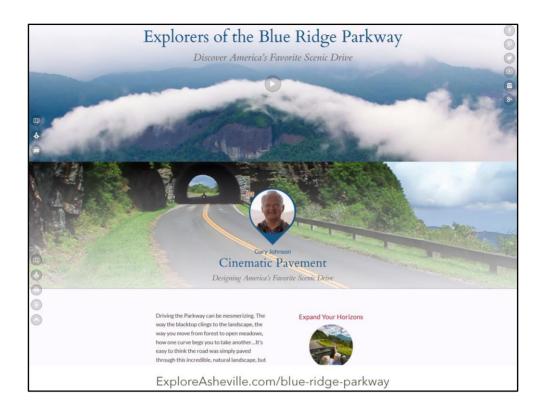
The plant collection of the Botanical Gardens at Asheville is represented by over 600 species that are native to the Southern Appalachians.

These include many species of trees, shrubs, wildflowers, vines, grasses and sedges. Habitats vary from the sunny and dry to the shaded and wet, allowing many suitable niches for a wide variety of plants. The Gardens is refuge to over 50 species that are considered uncommon, rare or endangered on a regional, state or federal level.

The gardens are located in Asheville, on the campus on the University of North Carolina as Asheville. Asheville is home to the Southern Appalachian Mountains, one of the most diverse temperate ecosystems in the world. Their mission is the preservation and promotion of the native plant species and habitats of these mountains.



The National Park Service turns 100 this year, which means that it's the centennial birthday of the Blue Ridge Parkway! This year is the perfect time to start exploring and what better place to start than Asheville, NC which boasts 4 entrances onto the picturesque parkway. With protected peaks, wetlands, and trailheads around every sinuous curve, the Parkway is an avenue for exploration—a <u>wildflower</u> hunter's dream, a <u>hiker's delight</u>, a <u>birder's paradise</u>... you'll find it all on the Blue Ridge Parkway.



And a great way to explore before you get here is to check out ExploreAsheville.com's "Explorers of the Blue Ridge Parkway" website. Even if you or your members have been on the parkway before this is a chance to learn something new. We've found seven individuals who have made it their purpose to truly explore the Parkway. Forget driving the road, these professionals dig in, whether they're looking for elusive birds or uncovering long-forgotten historical anecdotes. Some have spent years driving the road from end to end, others spend hours looking for the perfect wildflower. Click through the stories of the explorers and use these experts as your guide to experience the Parkway in an entirely new manner.



In addition to all of that the Blue Ridge Parkway Visitor Center resides in Asheville, a mere 10 minutes outside of Downtown. It features an award-winning film and exhibits which highlight the natural and cultural heritage, economic traditions, and recreational opportunities found in Western North Carolina and along the <u>Blue Ridge Parkway</u>. The visitor center houses a 70-seat theater, information and orientation services, and a retail shop offering books, apparel, CDs, DVDs, collectibles, souvenirs, and children's items. It's a perfect place to start your adventures on the Blue Ridge Parkway.





No orchid exhibit inside the house this year due to Fashionable Romance.

We will be featuring "period" bridal bouquets and arrangements based on the eraportrayed in the movies throughout the spring.

Roses, some orchids and lilies will be featured heavily as they were favorites of both Edith and Cornelia.

Edith had white roses at her wedding, and Mimi Cecil's wedding bouquet was made with of white rose buds and stephanotis. Cornelia carried orchids and stephanotis. We will have sheer fabric draping the front door, entry hall and Winter Garden. The Winter Garden will feature tropicals, ferns, Italian Cedar trees, orange trees in blossom and rose topiaries ...sort of an Italian Garden wedding fantasy.

The Biltmore Blooms theme is "A Garden Party" so I think that this fantasy garden fits right in. We will be overlapping the exhibit and the event. The rooms with costumes will have decorations centered around them and the rooms without a direct connection with the wedding gowns will be decorated with fresh flowers with a party flourish.

Biltmore Blooms with more than just an old House...



NEW at Biltmore:

Fashionable Romance Exhibition Wedding Veil at Legacy Village Hotel Village Social

Outfitters Outdoor Adventure Center Cedric's Garden Winery Tasting Room Expansion Aromic Wine Tastings Sparkling Romance Barn Door Renovations at the Inn



WEDDING GOWNS IN FILM

February 12th - July 4th, 2016



From grand gowns to delicate dresses, explore centuries of wedding fashion with this new exhibition of movie costumes and family heirlooms. Showcased in Biltmore House, award-winning costumes from iconic movies including Sense and Sensibility, Pride and Prejudice, and Out of Africa are paired with exquisite floral designs complementing each film's era.



More than 40 costumes from 19 classic films will be displayed throughout the grand rooms of Biltmore House. Costumes illustrate changing styles in wedding fashion from 1700s through 1940s. The exhibition continues in Antler Hill Village with stories of Vanderbilt and Cecil weddings, along with the first-ever display of the wedding veil worn by Biltmore owner Mary Ryan Cecil and her cousin Jacqueline Kennedy.



Biltmore is open daily and as spring arrives, regular hours will resume. Just because the house closes doesn't mean the estate closes, through. Guests are welcome to enjoy the gardens from 9:00am- dusk, and the fun continues in the evenings at Antler Hill Village. The Winery is open until 9:00 p.m. Also, remind guests that as spring arrives guests visitation increases. Several dates this spring will require a Biltmore House Reservation for guests to visit the house. AAA members purchasing tickets with you are encouraged to call in advance and reserve a time to enter the house.

Biltmore Blooms... with more than tulips! Early April Darwin Hybrid Tulip varieties begin blooming in the Walled Garden and Estate Entry. Other estate blooms include early flowering shrubs and trees, forsythia, spirea, magnolia, and flowering cherries. Mid-April Darwin Hybrid Tulips are usually at peak in the Walled Garden and Estate Entry. Other estate blooms include spring bulbs, dogwoods, and redbuds. Late April Single late tulips fill the Walled Garden, Estate Entry, and Winery beds, until the last week when poppies, snapdragons, and pansies are planted. Other estate blooms include hybrid azaleas and various flowering shrubs. May In bloom are poppies, snapdragons, and pansies in Walled Garden, Estate Entry, and Winery beds. Other estate blooms include native azaleas (first week is usually the peak), and various flowering shrubs.

Every year, many guests anxiously want to know when the tulips will be in bloom. That is always a great question, and very tricky, as we never know what Mother Nature has in store. This tentative schedule gives you an idea of what is typically in bloom throughout the spring. The 15-acre Azalea Garden contains one of the country's largest selections of native azaleas. It represents 60 years of work by Chauncey Beadle, an avid collector and horticulturist hired at Biltmore in 1890. The Shrub Garden consists of more than 500 different varieties of plants, shrubs, and trees, many of which were popular in the early 1900s. As guests look forward to the summer, they can visit the Rose Garden on May 23rd to watch international judges determine the top roses in Biltmore's Rose Trial plantings. Tune in to the summer webinar to learn more about that.

Biltmore Blooms with... Annual Easter Egg Hunt

- Sunday, March 27th on the front lawn!
- Egg Hunts at 11:00am, 1:00pm, and 3:00pm
- · Bring your own basket!
- Ages 2-9
- Easter Rabbit with photo opportunities!
- · Children entertainment:
 - Magic shows, music, storytelling, crafts

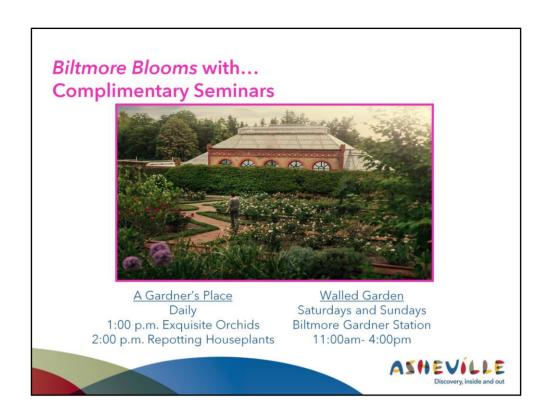
Plus! Easter Brunch featured at Deerpark Restaurant.







Biltmore is hosting the Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday, March 27th, for guests to bring their kids to enjoy. There will be three Egg Hunts: 11:00a.m., 1:00p.m., and 3:00p.m. on the Front Lawn. The Easter Rabbit will make his appearance for special photo opportunities with the kids. Special children's entertainment, including magic shows, music, storytelling, mural painting, and crafts, will be featured on the Front Lawn. Children, ages 2 to 9, may participate in the Easter Egg Hunt and collect brightly colored eggs which can be exchanged following the hunt for treat bags. Parents should bring their own baskets for their children to collect eggs. The Easter Egg hunt makes for gorgeous family photos with Biltmore House as the back drop!



Biltmore Blooms with a Gardener's Place Seminars and Gardner Stations. Guests are invited to join us at the Conservatory for daily, free demonstrations on maintaining beautiful orchids and healthy houseplants. At 1pm: Exquisite Orchids and at 2pm: Repotting Houseplants. Designed by architect Richard Morris Hunt, this glass-roofed building, the Conservatory, nurtures exotic orchids, ferns, and palms and provides flowers and plants for the house just as it did in the Vanderbilts' time. Also, Biltmore staff is available in the walled garden on weekends to answer gardening questions.



No visit to Biltmore is complete without a tour of the winery! Take a relaxing stroll through the historic Winery building, originally the Biltmore Dairy Barn. Gracious wine hosts will treat you to a complimentary tasting of award-winning Biltmore wines. A visit to the winery is included in the admission ticket. Want a deeper knowledge of Biltmore wines or the wine making process? Several specialty tours are offered such as the NEW Sparkling Romance, Red Wine & Chocolate, or the Vine to Wine Tour!

Biltmore Blooms... in an 8,000 Acre Backyard!

Outdoor Activities include:

- Hiking
- Biking
- Trail Ride
- Carriage Ride
- Segway Tours











Stop by the Outdoor Adventure Center in Antler Hill Village to pick up detailed maps and explore the many different trails. Take a serious hike or gentle stroll along their many trails. Rent a bike or schedule a horseback or carriage ride. Everyone in the family can have fun doing off-road driving, fishing, or biking, and our equipment accommodates everyone from young children to grandparents. Estate outdoor activities are available by reservation to daytime guests. Bring your bike or rent one from them. Choose from challenging trails for experienced mountain bikers, an easy paved trail that follows the French Broad River, or well-marked woodland trails that wind through forests and wildflower meadows.



Book a River Float Trip to follow the gentle French Broad River as it winds through the estate. Travel by raft with a well-trained guide or kayak on your own (depending on water level and water temperature). Novice and experienced shooters will enjoy our Sporting Clays, or Navigate incredible off-road obstacles, regardless of your skill level, with the Land Rover Experience Driving School. Your experienced instructor and the tremendously capable family of Land Rover ended when the vertical results in the control of the contro



George Vanderbilt spent years traveling the world to find the wonders that fill his magnificent house. Discover your own Biltmore treasures in one of Biltmore's charming estate shops.

Biltmore Blooms with... Field to Table Dining Options! Estate Dining: Bistro Cedric's Tavern Deerpark Restaurant (Sat. & Sun. Brunch only) Stable Café The Dining Room at Inn on Biltmore Estate New! Village Social at Village Hotel

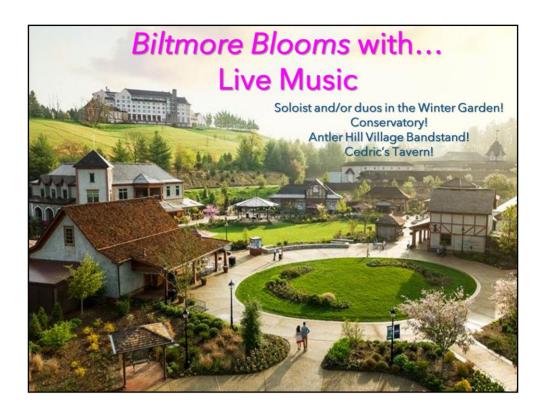




Snacks and Light Bites:

- Bake Shop
- Ice Cream Parlor
- Courtyard Market
- Conservatory Café
- Creamery in Antler Hill Village
- Smokehouse in Antler Hill Village

Culinary offerings are a unique and delicious part of the Biltmore experience. Menus feature fresh produce and meats from the estate itself, as well as Biltmore's award-winning wines and seasonal items. Or, get a quick bite at one of their mini-markets!



Biltmore Blooms with Live music throughout the estate! Musicians perform daily in the area between the Morning Salon and the Winter Garden inside Biltmore House. Plus, live music daily at the Conservatory and at the Antler Hill Village Bandstand. Don't forget, Cedric's Tavern has live music every night!

Biltmore Blooms with an overnight stay!





- AAA Four Diamond
- AAA Official Appointment Partner
 - Forbes Travel Guide Four Star Award
- Condé Nast Traveler Gold List for 10 years
 - Spa Services
 - Concierge and 24-hour room service
 - Afternoon Tea (\$)





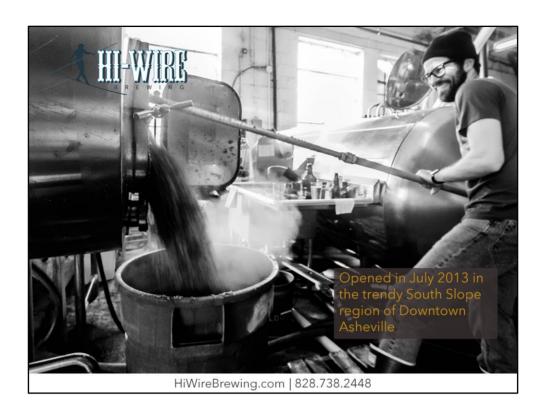
- Opened November 2015
 - Village Social
- Comfortable Setting near French Broad River
 - Convenient to shopping, live entertainment



Hi-Wire Brewing opened its doors July, 2013 in the South Slope region of downtown Asheville.

The brewery has since expanded to a second location in the Biltmore Village region of Asheville, a half mile from the Biltmore Estate.

The original location is the "South Slope Specialty Brewery" and the experimental hub of the brewery. In summer of 2106, this 30 barrel facility will transition from one-time-release ales and lagers to only producing wild and sour beers. A smaller and more niche part of the craft beer industry, this process has deep historical roots in Belgian brewing.





This summer, Hi-Wire Brewing launched a rotating lager seasonal program and is looking to become a leader in the craft lager movement that is spreading across America.

Just recently, Hi-Wire announced the beginning of a sour and wild barrel-aging program. This state of the art program will explore in-depth, traditional styles of beer that are also finding a resurgence in America.

With the combination of these two programs, Hi-Wire Brewing will become one of the only breweries in the country to specializing in sour beers and lagers. Both programs take true passion and commitment to the craft.





The second location, opened summer of 2015, is a 27,000 square foot industrial facility with a taproom. All of the breweries' flagship and rotating seasonal beers are produced in this location. The flagship beers include Bed of Nails Brown Ale, Hi-Pitch IPA, Hi-Wire Lager and Prime Time Session Pale Ale.

Hi-Wire Brewing offers tours of the production facility on Fridays.





Even though there are WAY more than 5 different tours, or even categories of tours, we thought we would give you a little sampling of all that Asheville has to offer. When you just can't decide what to do with a free afternoon let someone else do the hard work of planning and take a tour!

Although LaZoom isn't featured on this webinar, I couldn't resist the opportunity to use a picture of the owner, Jim Lazoun, who's been a guest before, on one of their hilarious tours through the city.



I wanted to start with the Gray Line trolley tour – it really is the BEST way to familiarize yourself with all of the hotspots in Asheville. You can take a whole city tour in 90 minutes on this fully narrated tour. You can even hop on and off as you please at the different stops. The tour includes Downtown Asheville, Biltmore Village, Grove Park Inn, and the River Arts District. The open air trolleys are a fun way to see the city and breath in the fresh spring air. Tours depart from the Asheville Visitors Center at 36 Montford Ave.

They are also a national AAA partner and provide discounts to AAA members.



Art Connections Tours are designed to connect art lovers and collectors with the makers in the most authentic way: one on one, in the places where they do their work in scenic Western North Carolina. After 25 years of helping guide artists' careers as a gallery manager and buyer, Sherry Masters shares her many connections and invites participants inside the studios of leading and emerging artists in a range of media from clay, fiber, metals, wood, glass and more. Tours to visit artist studios are planned to suit your schedule. The tour could include a 1.5 hour River Arts District overview; a half-day tour to studios in and around Asheville; or a full day tour that goes beyond Asheville into the surrounding region. Sherry will curate and plan the tour based on your interests and input. With her vast network of area artists Sherry strives to match your interests with the studio visits to make the trip memorable and educational.



For all of the beer lovers out there, join BREW-ed for the only brewery tour in Western North Carolina led by a Certified Cicerone®. Cicerones® are the beer industry's equivalent to sommeliers of the wine world and are considered experts on the topic. Let an expert lead your walking tour of some of the best breweries Asheville has to offer. Learn how beer is made, how to taste beer, and the stories behind the pints. In between breweries, your guide will share stories of the early days of Asheville while pointing out some of the beautiful architecture that made downtown Asheville the "Paris of the South." Combine your interests in one tour and enjoy some of the best Asheville has to offer!

TOURS INCLUDING ASHEVILLE BREWING COMPANY, BURIAL BEER, GREEN MAN BREWING, HI-WIRE BREWING AND WICKED WEED BREWING RUN ON FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AFTERNOONS FROM 2PM-5PM, or by request.



Enjoy the glide of Asheville's only guided downtown Segway Tour. Starting at the Asheville Visitor Center, you will receive training followed by a 2 to 2.5 hour tour of downtown including the Grove Arcade, the Asheville Urban Trail and parts of the Montford Historic District.

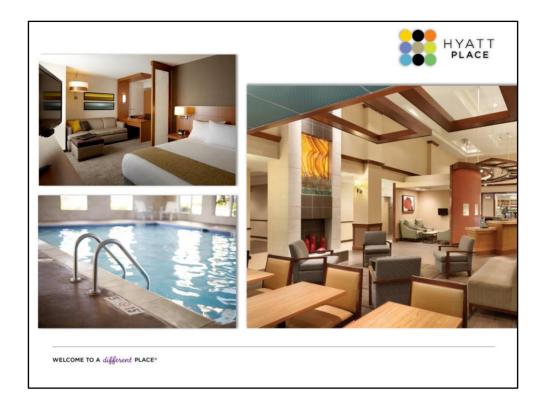


Ready to go wild? For over twenty years, Wild Food Adventures has been taking people out to eat — *outside*, that is. Join them "off the eaten path" as you uncover the Garden of Eden all around you. Tours are <u>available daily</u>, year-round, by arrangement. On this woodland shopping spree, their expert guides will show you how to safely identify, appreciate, and savor wild plants, mushrooms, and other extreme cuisine. You'll learn about wild foods cooking, home remedies, home brews, and more.

No Taste Like Home was founded in 1995 by internationally-known forager <u>Alan Muskat</u>. They founded the first "forage-to-table" program in the United States and the <u>first wild foods public education program in the world.</u>



Coming in March of 2016!! Hyatt Place Asheville is ideally located in downtown Asheville, and is within walking distance to over 200 locally owned restaurants, shops and entertainment. The hotel offers a variety of scenic views of the Blue Ridge Mountain and Downtown Asheville. Hyatt Place has 140 well-appointed guestrooms with separate areas for work, play and rest.



A few more reasons Hyatt Place Asheville stands out in downtown:

- Outdoor patio with open air fire pit
- Over 2000 sq ft of flexible meeting and event space, featuring expansive floor to ceiling windows
- Complimentary Wi-Fi and remote printing throughout the hotel; Complimentary 24 hour StayFit Gym
- · Indoor pool, heated to enjoy year round
- 24 hour valet parking
- Complimentary hot skillet breakfast offers a variety of freshly prepared hot and lighter breakfast options, such as our Signature Breakfast Sandwiches, as well as Low-Carb options. Plus waffles, pancakes and Cinnamon French Toast.
- 24/7 Gallery Market offers perfectly packaged grab n go items from healthy snacks and sandwiches to pastries and sweets.
- Coffee to Cocktails Bar, located in the hotels main lobby, offers a selection of specialty beverages fro sun up til sun down. Proudly serving Starbucks, imported or domestic beer, wine and cocktails.



Located on the 8th floor of the Hyatt Place, The Montford Rooftop Bar and Lounge is a contemporary rustic speak easy offering elegance with comfort. Their modern rustic look is a small backdrop to stunning panoramic mountain views of the very best of all things Appalachian.

The Montford Rooftop Bar and Lounge offers a cocktail driven social and sensory experience. They'll feature a variety of specialty cocktails, craft beers and large selection of wine. Guests will enjoy a small plate menu with many delicious options. Their hope is that the menu offers so many delectable options that it's impossible to pick just one entrée!



Please, also, take note of the next upcoming webinar on February 23 & 24. I and a few partners will be covering how amazing summer in Asheville can be! Expect an invite in your inbox about 2 weeks prior.