

Experience Georgia's Blue Ridge yourself! We love to host travel writers. Contact Jode Hanson [jodehanson@tds.net](mailto:jodehanson@tds.net).



[www.blueridgemountains.com](http://www.blueridgemountains.com)



## Top 10 Blue Ridge Experiences - Things our guests love best about Georgia's Blue Ridge



**1. Relaxing in a Mountain Cabin** If you live anywhere in the southeast, you're within driving distance of Blue Ridge, Georgia's favorite mountain town, only 90 miles north of Atlanta via I-575, but a million miles away from the city. Hop in the car, turn on the radio and soon you'll be on Blue Ridge time, enjoying some peace and quiet in the beauty of the Blue Ridge foothills. Book a mountain cabin for the best Blue Ridge Experience.

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**2. Beautiful Mountain Scenery** Georgia's Blue Ridge is located on the Georgia, Tennessee, North Carolina line. The county has an easily traversed corridor between two mountain wilderness areas, and opens onto a great emerald valley of natural beauty. It is composed of the high mountain ridges of the Chattahoochee National Forest and the Cohutta Wilderness Area, largest wilderness area in the United States. The crystal blue waters of Lake Blue Ridge contain the headwaters of the Toccoa River, one of Georgia's most pristine rivers.

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**3. Small Town Charm** Our guests fall in love with the authentic mountain towns of Blue Ridge and McCaysville. Blue Ridge was once considered an elite health resort because of its pure mineral waters. It was established as a railroad town, with the depot at its heart. Visitors would ride the train to town, eat dinner and take a leisurely walk to the mineral springs after dinner. Today, visitors still ride the train and take a walk along Main Street, enjoying the antique and specialty shops, galleries, restaurants, small town atmosphere and friendly people.

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**4. Uptown Dining** Local food is an essential part of the trip when you visit Georgia's Blue Ridge. You'll find a common ingredient shared by local restauranteurs – a passion for the outdoorsy, earthy, upscale, fresh, historical town – a mixing bowl of town and country flavors that meld just right to create amazing eating choices. Add three local breweries to the mix and you've got a pretty eclectic dining experience in a small town setting.

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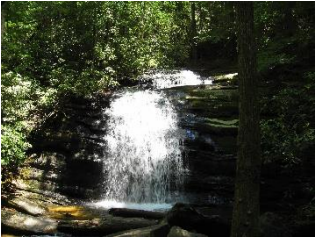


**5. Blue Ridge's Artsy Vibe** Ridge has an artsy vibe, with a vibrant arts community, great local live theater and lively weekend music scene. The Blue Ridge Mountains Arts Center is located in the beautifully renovated Fannin County Courthouse, a historic canvas to showcase the talent of artists drawn to the area for its scenery and quiet lifestyle. The amazing Blue Ridge Community Theater has a full calendar of drama, comedy and musical productions, including an acoustic music series, Live Music is Better.

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**6. Blue Ridge Scenic Railway** Take a ride on the Blue Ridge Scenic Railway, which runs along the Toccoa River from Blue Ridge to McCaysville. Board the train at the historic depot in Blue Ridge. The view changes with the seasons, wildflowers and mountain laurel in the spring, rhododendron in the summer, gorgeous foliage in the fall and a ride with Santa and his elves for Christmas. [www.brscenic.com](http://www.brscenic.com).



**7. Waterfall Hikes** Two of the greatest outdoor adventures in the world begin in Fannin County. Both the Appalachian and Benton MacKaye Trails start at the top of Springer Mountain. There are over 300 miles of hiking trails in the area, including short trails suitable for beginning hikers and families. Get a map to all our local waterfalls online at [www.blueridgemountains.com](http://www.blueridgemountains.com) or at our Welcome Center.



**8. Natural Water Parks** The most popular family pastime in the summer is probably tubing the clear, chilly Toccoa River either above the Lake Blue Ridge dam on Aska Road or below in McCaysville. But there are lots of ways to enjoy our rivers, streams and lakes, including rafting the exciting Ocoee River, renting canoes or kayaks, pontooning or stand-up paddling on Lake Blue Ridge, or simply sitting on the bank and watching the river flow.



**9. Fishing the Trout Capital of Georgia** Fannin County is the Trout Capital of Georgia. There are over 100 miles of great trout fishing rivers, creeks and streams in the area, including Jack's River, Conasauga River, Toccoa River, Rock Creek, Noontootla Creek and Cooper Creek.



**10. Mercier Orchards** Since 1943, four generations of the Mercier family have planted and raised 300 acres of apples, strawberries, peaches, blueberries, and more. Visit Mercier's and taste for yourself how a love of the land and dedication to quality are evident in every basket of fruit. You can pick apples off the tree, buy fresh apple cider and the best fried apple pies – a true farm to table experience. The tasting room features homemade hard cider from the freshest Mercier apples.

## **Did you know?** *A few things you might not know about Georgia's Blue Ridge*

- 1. 106,000 acres of Chattahoochee National Forest (40%) and 300 miles of hiking trails.**
- 2. Trout Capital of Georgia with year-round fisheries in the Toccoa tailwaters and creeks.**
- 3. Four local waterfalls and the Swinging Bridge over the Toccoa River.**
- 4. Beginning of the Appalachian Trail/Benton MacKaye Trail.**
- 5. Mercier Orchards makes apple cider for all GA mountain orchards and the first hard cider in Georgia.**
- 6. 80% of Lake Blue Ridge shoreline is National Forest.**
- 7. The Toccoa River flows northward to form the Ocoee River in Tenn.**
- 8. The Georgia/Tennessee State line divides the towns of McCaysville, Ga. and Copperhill, Tenn.**
- 9. Top Ten TripAdvisor destinations for Vacation Home Rentals (2015).**
- 10. Top Ten Small Mountain Towns for Retirement (2014) Wall Street Journal.**
- 11. Three local breweries; Two farm wineries.**
- 12. The Swan Drive In is one of three remaining in Georgia.**
- 13. Home of Tank Town USA.**
- 14. Joe's Barbeque named #1 in the USA by TripAdvisor.com.**