

**Blue Ridge Waterfall and Fall Foliage Tour
(October 21-25, 2024)**

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Headquarters (HQ)

Log Cabin Motor Court

330 Weaverville Highway, Asheville NC 28804

<https://www.theashevillescabins.com>

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Proprietor: Susie

PPC – Plano Photography Club

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Special Notes

Milepost (MP) "...on the Blue Ridge Parkway are concrete posts etched with numbers marking the distance from Waynesboro, Virginia, at Milepost 0. The last marker is Milepost 469 at the Oconaluftee Visitor Center in Cherokee, North Carolina.

Hike Distance is one way

Hike Difficulty is based on an adult in good physical condition, so you should factor in your age and fitness. The ratings do not consider trail length.

Elevation is provided for two reasons. First, the higher elevation, the colder it is so be prepared to add layers. Second, while computer programs point to the best week for fall foliage, mother nature may have different plans. You can adjust your plans by knowing the correct elevation for maximum color impact.

Photo Rating: It is subjective and for the most part from the book, North Carolina Waterfalls, Kevin Adams. May I suggest going to Flickr and search each location paying attention to the time of year and other photographic data when you scroll down the page.

Special Gatherings

We have two special gatherings during our event. First, is Monday night after everyone arrives. Second, lunch is Wednesday at Jukebox Junction Restaurant & Soda Shoppe. Other references to places to meet up or eat are provided for your convenience. Hanging around HQ at night with a beer or wine glass is expected.

All Roads Lead to Rome Asheville

(Route A) Using Plano as the starting point, it will take 14h19m using East bound Interstate 30 to Interstate 40 (963 miles). Jan and I are not big fans of Interstate 40 due to heavy truck traffic and little to see.

(Route B) An alternative route is Interstate 20 through Atlanta then Interstate 85 (1,003 miles) to Asheville. A variation of this route is the small cities along the way.

(Route C) An alternate route is Interstate 20 to Birmingham and then Interstate 59 to Chattanooga. You can cross over the mountains via "The Dragon. My past trip I did this route and was well rewarded. On the return, I may actually take Interstate 40 to Arkansas for additional fall images and then drop down to Beavers Bend in OK.

Monday Evening – October 21

7:00 – Dinner and drinks

The Village Porch 51 N Merrimon Ave, Woodfin, NC 28804 (828) 505-8049 [Sports bar Asheville NC | The Village Porch | Woodfin](#)

(4m\1.5miles)..

Tuesday Morning – October 22

HQ to DuPont State Recreational Forest (52m\41.1 miles)

DuPont State Recreational Forest - www.dupontforest.com – Opens 5am

Elevation: 2,200 – 2,600

Note: Triple & High Falls are a 1.8-mile round trip venture. Several movies and television shows including Hunger Games have been filmed here.

Sunrise: 7:42am

Hooker Falls – DuPont State Recreational Forest

Beauty Rating: 7

Hike Distance: 0.3 mile

Hike Difficulty: 1 to upper overlook; 4 to base

Photo Rating: 8

Waterfall GPS: N35.20211 W-82.62373

Triple Falls – DuPont State Recreational Forest

Beauty Rating: 9

Hike Distance: 0.35 mile to upper overlook

Hike Difficulty: 6 (plus lots of steps to the base)

Photo Rating: 8

Waterfall GPS: N35.20028 W-82.61756

High Falls – DuPont State Recreational Forest

Beauty Rating: 6/7

Hike Distance: 0.96 mile

Hike Difficulty: 6

Photo Rating: 4

Waterfall GPS: N35.19371 W-82.61505

You might wish to add Bridal Veil Falls to your shoot:

Bridal Veil Falls - DuPont State Recreational Forest

Beauty Rating: 7

Hike Distance: About 2.4 miles

Hike Difficulty: 4

Photo Rating: 9

Waterfall GPS: N35.17743 W-82.61893

Other falls in the park include Grassy Creek Falls & Wintergreen Falls, but most likely not worth your time investment

Lunch 1:00 – 2:00 – Dutch Cupboard, 6500 Brevard Rd, Etowah, NC 28729
828.891.9050 17m\11.9 miles from DuPont State Recreational Forest

Afternoon

Looking Glass Falls - 16m\11.9 miles from Dutch Cupboard

Beauty Rating: 8

Hike Distance: Roadside view

Photo Rating: 9

Waterfall GPS: N35.29634 W-82.76929

Black Balsam Knob (MP418.8)

Difficulty – Moderate

Length of Hike - 1.4 miles (round trip)

Elevation 6,214

Description – Jan’s favorite – “This section of the Art Loeb Trail heads through a scenic woodland area to the top of the open bald. There are stunning 360-degree views of the surrounding Shining Rock Wilderness, and on a clear day, you may see the Great Smoky Mountains.”

Waterrock Knob (MP451.2)

Golden Hour: 5:47

Sunset: 6:47pm

Elevation: 6,292

Difficulty – Moderate to Difficult*

Length of Hike - 1.0 mile (round trip) *

* Pedestrian Overlook is less than .3 mile from parking area

Waterrock Knob offers breathtaking views of several mountain ranges and is noted for its Milky Way shots.

Note: Other places of interest in this same area include:

East Fork Overlook (MP417)

Graveyard Fields (MP418)

Devil's Courthouse (MP422)

Cowee Overlook (MP430)

Richard Balsam Overlook (MP431)

Waterrock Knob to HQ (1h1m\48.4 miles)

Wednesday Morning – October 23

HQ to Cradle of Forestry Overlook (46m\31.4 miles)

Cradle of Forestry Overlook (MP410)

Elevation: 4,710

Golden Hour: 6:43am

Sunrise: 7:43am

“From this vantage point, you’ll enjoy a stunning east-facing panoramic view of layered mountains in the distance and the Pisgah National Forest below. Notably, you’ll see the iconic Looking Glass Rock, a sheer granite rock face formed around 390 million years ago.”

Cradle of Forestry in America Museum is located 5.1 miles back down mountain and has a café. [Cradle of Forestry - FIND Outdoors \(gofindoutdoors.org\)](http://gofindoutdoors.org)

Fryingpan Mountain Lookout Tower (MP409.6)

Elevation: 5,340

Length of Hike: 1.5 miles (round trip)

Difficulty – Moderate

“South of Asheville, the Blue Ridge Parkway meanders through some exceptionally stunning landscapes. The oddly-named but easily-accessed Fryingpan Mountain is no exception: rising roughly 350 feet from a trailhead on the Parkway, the views from the mountain’s summit are sweeping and broad. And, thanks to the historic, 70-foot-tall steel fire lookout tower at the mountain’s summit, the views are even better: a short climb up the tower reveals incredible panoramas of the nearby peaks of Looking Glass Rock, Mt Pisgah and Cold Mountain.”

Lunch 1:00 – 2:30 – Jukebox Junction Restaurant & Soda Shoppe, 6306 Pigeon Rd, Canton, NC 28716 828.648.4546 33m\17.5 miles from Fryingpan Mountain

Wednesday Afternoon

French Broad Falls (Mill Shoals) And Bird Rock Falls (47m\27.2 miles)

Elevation: 2,780

Length of Hike: 0

Bird Rock Falls (aka Cathedral Falls) is about ¼ of a mile away.

“French Broad Falls (a.k.a. Mill Shoals Falls) and Bird Rock Falls (Cathedral Falls) are three iconic NC waterfalls that you can reach in one short hike. ...The first two of these amazing waterfalls are literally attached to each other and are collectively known as Mill Shoals. If you have a little more time, a short hike will lead you to the third waterfall (Bird Rock Falls, also known as Cathedral Falls).”

Note: Other places of interest in this same area include:

Funnel Top Overlook (MP409.3)

Cold Mountain Overlook (MP411.9)

Lake Logan

Lake Allen

Sunburst Falls (MP423, exit Hwy 215 N 4.2 miles)

French Broad Falls to HQ (1h9m\ 49.1 miles)

Thursday Morning – October 24

HQ to Linville Falls (1h6m\56.2 miles)

Linville Falls

Beauty Rating: 10

Hike Distance: 0.96 mile

Hike Difficulty: 6

Photo Rating: 10

Elevation: 3,120

Waterfall GPS: N35.19371 W-82.61505

Trail: Gorge Trail – “The Gorge Trail is our favorite because it goes to the bottom, face-to-face with this magnificent waterfall. Only from the river’s edge can one fully appreciate the grandeur of any gorge.”

Note: “Linville Falls is probably the most famous waterfall on the Blue Ridge Parkway.” “Linville Falls ranks at or near the top of any list of North Carolina waterfall superlatives. Whether the category is geology, beauty, human history, natural history, photography, or just overall appeal, few waterfalls in the state can compete with Linville.”

Crabtree Falls (MP339) (NC not VA)

Beauty Rating: 9

Hike Distance: 1.1 miles

Hike Difficulty: 5

Photo Rating: 8

Elevation: 3,360

Waterfall GPS: N35.81986 W-82.14933

Crabtree Falls is “a picture-perfect waterfall, the stream falling over hundreds of tiny ledges over the course of its 70-foot drop.”

Special Instructions:

“Directions to Trailhead: The trailhead is no longer at Crabtree Meadows Campground on the Blue Ridge Parkway. The new trailhead is at the old restaurant and gift shop at the campground entrance. It’s located at Milepost 339.5, about 8.6 miles south of NC 226 in Little Switzerland and 4.6 miles north of NC 80 at Buck Gap. Turn at the sign for the campground and park anywhere along the circle around the old gift shop. Follow the signs to the start of the trail.

Hike Description: The easily followed trail leads past the old amphitheater to the campground. When you reach the paved campground road, cross the road to the parking lot behind the check-in station. This is the old trailhead. From the far end of the parking lot, the trail descends 800 feet to a T junction. It’s a loop hike, so it doesn’t matter which way you go. The quickest way to the falls is to the right.”

Lunch I Little Switzerland – Switzerland Café, 9440 NC-226A, Marion, NC 28752
828.765.5289 10m\4.2 miles from Crabtree Falls

Switzerland Café to Mount Mitchell Summit 48m\26.3 miles

Switzerland Café to Craggy Gardens 52m\30.8 miles

Alternative to Lunch I if you are going to Mount Mitchell Summit

Lunch II Mount Mitchell Cafe & Eatery, 2388 North Carolina Highway 128, Burnsville, NC 828.536.9400 53m\29.5 miles from Crabtree Falls

Mount Mitchell Summit (MP349.9)

Elevation: 6,684

You can drive most of the way to the summit from MP355. It is the highest point east of the Mississippi River. Great vista view.

Craggy Gardens – Pinnacle (MP364) – (Not Visitor Center at MP367)

Golden Hour: 5:45pm

Sunset: 6:45pm

Elevation: 5,500

Hike Distance: 1.1 miles – Start from the upper level of the Craggy Dome parking lot

Difficulty – Moderate

One of Jan's favorites.

"The landscape here is what gives this part of the parkway its name – you can follow atmospheric trails through the rocky crags then enjoy an amazing view from the summit. Several hiking trails start from the visitor center"

Craggy Gardens is noted for sunsets.

Note: Other places of interest in this same area include:

Ridge Junction Overlook

Glassmine Falls Overlook

Tanbark Ridge Overlook

Craggy Gardens to HQ (38m\ 21.7 miles)

Friday Morning – October 25

Elk Shoot

Elevation: 2,610

Leave HQ: 5:30am

HQ to Haywood 209 Café parking lot, 3360 Crabtree Rd, Waynesville NC 28785
(32m\31.5 miles)

6:10am caravan to Catalooche Elk Watching spot via I40 / 1395 / Catalooche Entrance Rd. We pullout at 6:10am sharp. No, the restaurant is not open at that hour.

Elk Shoot GPS: N 35.62976 W -83.10787

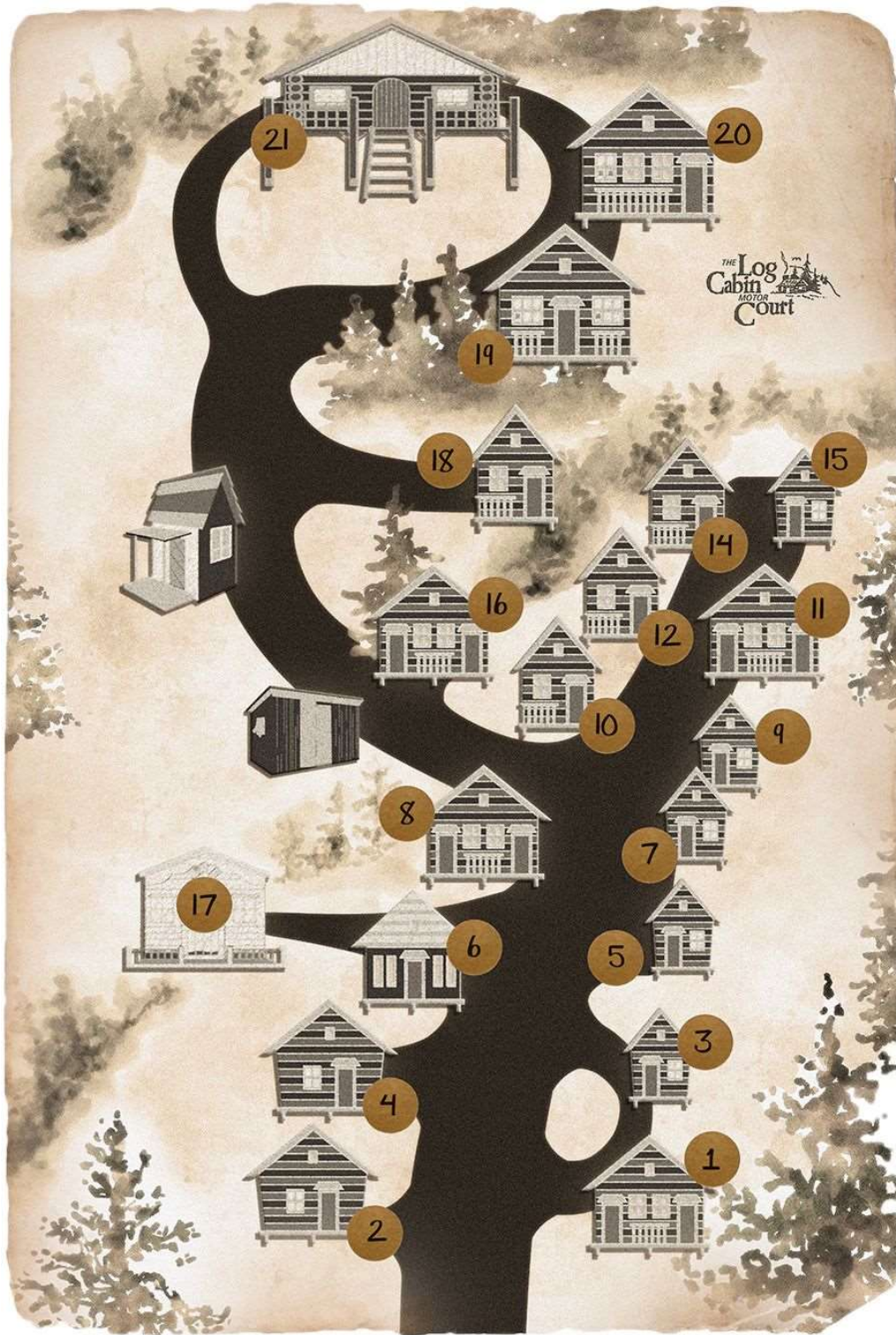
Breakfast – after Elk shoot, return to Haywood 209 Café parking lot, 3360 Crabtree Rd, Waynesville NC 28785

Equipment:

- ✓ Early morning shoots or returning from sunsets, make sure to have portable lighting to get to and from safely.
- ✓ A great tool is a collapsible titanium tipped walking stick with holster.
[Amazon.com : Aventik Fold-able Auto Shrinkable Wading Staff Water Depth Safety Warning Sign Coated Adjustable Stainless Steel Core T7075 Aluminum Body Corrosion Resistance\(WS091\) : Sports & Outdoors \(AKA Wading Staff\)](#)
- ✓ Fold Up Portable Chair
- ✓ Camera Rain Jacket
- ✓ Binoculars
- ✓ Camera Backpack that can carry tripod
- ✓ Above all, a printout of the final copy of this booklet. You cannot always rely on internet, cellular or GPS.

Contact List

(Will be provided on final addition of this publication)



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