



**Free Spirit | Cultural Cool | Beautiful Blue Ridge**

Layers of lush mountains that abound with adventure; profound cultural roots from literary giants to American royalty; and inspired locals whose passion projects jump from pop-up kitchens to performance art. Asheville, N.C. has been a point of pilgrimage since the 1800s as a destination for inspiration, rejuvenation and self-expression. It doesn't take long to see why George W. Vanderbilt chose this Blue Ridge city for his greatest legacy, Biltmore.

**New Downtown Hotels Bring Rooftop Bars and Restaurants**

Current hotel development and future plans will more than double the number of downtown hotel rooms within the next several years. ► **JUST OPENED:** **Hyatt Place Asheville Downtown** (March 2016) and **Hilton Garden Inn City Center** (August 2016). Both properties feature rooftop bars with The Montford at Hyatt Place offering some of the best sunset views in the city! ► **COMING SOON:** **AC Hotel**, one of the first in the U.S. from the Marriott boutique brand, is set to open mid-2017 with a rooftop restaurant and bar Capella on 9. Also under construction, the city's tallest building is being transformed into **Arras**, a boutique hotel and condo project, with an 2018 opening date. The complex will also house retail space and two independent restaurants to be designed and operated by the owners of Posana, a downtown restaurant with a strong local food mission. ► **ALSO COMING DOWNTOWN:** **Cambria Downtown Asheville** (mid-2017) and **The Asheville Foundry Inn, Curio Collection by Hilton** (2018).

**Asheville Beer Boom**

Beer is big in Asheville and only continues to grow. With 25 breweries in the city and 30 in Buncombe County, Asheville has the most breweries per capit in the country. ► **JUST OPENED:** **Habitat Brewing Co.**, next to Moog Music Factory, starts serving their own beers in February. ► **COMING SOON:** **Burial Beer Co.** will open its second location in a 1920s New Deal building that once housed the young men of the Civilian Conservation Corps, builders of the the Blue Ridge Parkway. The rest of the buildings and 1.4-acre property will be transformed into a two-story taproom and lounge, restaurant, urban gardens and an outdoor event venue perserving elements of the site's legacy. ► **ALSO COMING SOON:** Ginger beer brewery **Ginger's Revenge** at the new River Arts Makers Place (RAMP) Studios and **Turgua Farmstead Brewing**, set on a five-acre farm in Fairview and utilizing fruits and root vegetables.



**Designed for Drama - New Biltmore Exhibition**

Set for February 10 - July 4, Biltmore's newest exhibition is inspired by favorite stories in George Vanderbilt's 22,000-volume library. More than 40 elaborate costumes from recent films will be displayed in Biltmore House, including a costume worn by Robert Downey Jr. in "Sherlock Holmes," and Nicole Kidman's Isabel Archer costume from "The Portrait of a Lady." The films fashions will be displayed along with the original books from Vanderbilt's library that served as cinematic inspiration. **COMING IN 2018:** "Glamour on Board: Fashion from Titanic the movie" and "Chihuly at Biltmore"

**Music Notes: Asheville Radio Station + Hip Symphony + A Band on Wheels + New Venues**

► **Stream the Sounds of Asheville:** Check out ExploreAsheville.com's new streaming radio station featuring indie legends and Appalachian songbirds - all with Asheville ties. ► **Soundtrack for the City:** The Asheville Symphony Orchestra and a who's-who of hot Asheville musicians have joined forces for a new album. NEXT: National kid-hop and Grammy winning artist 23 Skidoo joins forces with the Symphony. ► **Band & Beer:** LaZoom Tours, known for BYOB irreverant comedy tours of Asheville, now offer a weekend bus tour that plays host to a live band and stops at breweries. ► **NEW VENUES:** New riverside concert venue and restaurant The Salvage Station + The Guitar Bar in the River Arts District with memorabilia from local, famous artists like David Holt.







### River District Renaissance

Asheville's creative arts community by the French Broad River, known for its visitor-friendly art studios and galleries set in old industrial buildings, has an influx of new experiences for travelers. In addition to **New Belgium** moving in, other new neighbors include **The Salvage Station** (large riverside music venue), **Asheville Guitar Bar** (cozy bar and music-themed art installations), **RAMP Studios** (home to artists and a ginger beer brewery) and **The Foundation** (new public art-filled home for 12 Bones and a second Wedge Brewing location). The area has a transformative multi-year plan that includes connected greenway spaces, bike trails and new adventures on the French Broad River. **NEW TOUR: Asheville Art Studio Tours** offers behind-the-scenes walking tours of the River Arts District. The tours, led by glass artist John Almaguer, can be upgraded to include hands-on art creation and custom assistance in purchasing art.

### Groveswood Village: Hidden Historical Gem to Cultural Destination

The Groveswood property, six English cottages with ties to the region's craft legacy, will soon become Groveswood Village, a new cultural destination for Asheville. Biltmore Industries, started by George and Edith Vanderbilt as a craft school to better the lives of the economically deprived youth of area, focused on trades such as hand-weaving and woodworking. In 1917, the school and business moved to an area next to the Grove Park Inn and outfitted famous guests like Calvin Coolidge, Herbert Hoover and Franklin Roosevelt. Today this reimagined space includes Groveswood Gallery, an antique car museum, and nine artist studios with 2017 marking the centennial of Biltmore Industries' home at Groveswood, plus the 25th anniversary of the gallery. History tours of the property begin in April.



### Adventure Gateway: A Rare Cosmic Event, New Watersports and a Hollywood Trail

► A **total solar eclipse** will be within an easy day trip distance of Asheville on August 21. Asheville itself will experience a 99% eclipse. ► Wai Mauna adds a **six-person paddleboard and whitewater SUP lessons and tours** in 2017. ► **Bellyak tours** begin on the French Broad River this spring. Invented in Asheville, this watersport takes place on a face-first kayak that you ride on your belly. ► The **popular skyline trail that leads to the top of 404-foot Hickory Nut Falls** at Chimney Rock is slated to reopen this year after being closed almost 10 years. The final fight seen in the 1992 film *Last of the Mohicans* was filmed here.

### ► **Food Scene. FAST:**

**250+** independent restaurants; **6** James Beard nominated chefs; **28** breweries; **14** farmers markets; **1** vegan butcher; **1,000+** family farms; **1** wild foods market, the first in the nation; **3** craft hard cideries using local apples; the **fifth** micro sake brewery in the nation; **1** rum distillery (the only one in Western N.C.); **1** kombucha bar, all local; **1** honey bar/boutique; **1** underground supper club with wild themes and secret locations; **2** insanely creative donut shops; **2** locations to get bean-to-bar local chocolate; **1** mushroom man tour guide; and the first woman to legally distill moonshine.



**NEW BITES/SIPS:** ► The Rhu (bakery, cafe & local goods shop by JB finalist John Fleeer) Try their croixette - the love child of a croissant and baguette! ► Buxton Hall (whole-hog bbq brings two JB chefs together) ► Ben's Tune-Up (and sake brewery) now makes beer. ► Keeper Bourbon from Asheville Distilling Co. ► Local beer in hand-blown glass at Lexington Glassworks ► **NEW:** Bone & Broth, a traditional English pub-style eatery with a whole animal-focused menu, including bone broth. ► **NEW COOKBOOKS:** Katie Button, a *Food & Wine* Best New Chef in 2015 and a four-time James Beard nominee, released her first cookbook "Curate" - bringing the cuisine of the famous restaurant to home kitchens. Buxton Hall Barbecue and Chef Elliott Moss debuted their "Book of Smoke" on wood-smoked meat, sides and more. ► **NEW:** Sunshine Sammies, an ice cream sandwich foodtruck opens a storefront downtown.

More at [ExploreAsheville.com/Foodtopia](http://ExploreAsheville.com/Foodtopia).