



Surrounded by Summer Fun

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MAP KEY DIRECTIONS Surrounded by Summer Fun Map

1. Rafting, Hiking & Biking at the Ocoee Whitewater Center - From Blue Ridge take Hwy 5 north to McCaysville, turn left on Hwy 68 and follow signs to Hwy 64. through Ducktown, Tenn. Built for the 1996 Olympic Whitewater Slalom Races, the center includes the Olympic race course, native gardens, paved walkways, hiking and biking trails, pools of water for wading or feeding fish and more. It's a great place to take a picnic. To make rafting reservations from Ocoee River outfitters, see our web site at www.blueridgemountains.com. Whitewater Center phone number is (423) 496-5197 <http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/ocoee/>

2. Jacks River Falls - Located in the Cohutta Wilderness Area on the Jacks River, this beautiful waterfall is the most visited site in the Cohutta and is reached by a 3.5 mile trail through rugged wilderness. It is highly recommended to get the USFS map of the Cohutta Wilderness and carry the 10 essentials. For the shortest hike in, approach from the northwest access point. Start in Ellijay and drive Hwy 52 west to Chatsworth. From Chatsworth, go north on US 411 for 13 miles to Cisco. Turn right on Old Hwy 2. Continue on this road 10 miles to FS 62 on the right. Turn right on FS 62 and go 4.4 miles to the Beech Bottom Trailhead. Hiking experience recommended.

3. Horseshoe Bend Park - A beautiful park with good trout fishing on the Toccoa River. From Blue Ridge take Highway 5 into McCaysville. Turn right onto Highway 60 then drive a short distance and turn right on River Road. The park has a playground, picnic pavilions and restrooms.

4. Summertime Rail Trips with Blue Ridge Scenic Railway - a 3 1/2 hour ride along the Toccoa River from Blue Ridge to McCaysville makes for great summer fun. Daily trips run during the summer and special excursions can be found on their web site. 241 Depot Street, Blue Ridge, GA, 30513 (800) 934-1898; (706) 632-9833; Fax: (706) 258-2756 <http://www.brscenic.com>

5. Fall Branch Falls - A double waterfall with mountain laurel and rhododendron growing along the trail and creek bank. The hike to the falls is about 30 minutes round trip. In Blue Ridge, follow Aska Road south for eight miles. Turn right on Stanley Creek Rd. (Toccoa Riverside Restaurant is on the left). The trailhead is three miles on the right, just past Forest Warden Garfield Stanley's home. TIPS: never climb on a waterfall. It is very slippery and dangerous. There is a nice platform in front of the falls. Always stay on marked trails. Vegetation in the wilderness is fragile and stepping off the trail crushes small plants & causes impact that lasts for years.

6. Toccoa River Rapids - About 7 miles down Aska Road from its start at the intersection of Hwy 76 is a beautiful spot where the Toccoa tumbles over house sized boulders. Turn left off the road into a parking area to get a good look at the Toccoa River, one of Georgia's most pristine trout streams. This is popular spot to view the rapids, or to put in or take out tubes, canoes and kayaks. The Toccoa is a favorite trout stream for serious fly fishermen.

7. Trout Fishing on the Toccoa River - The entire length of the Toccoa River is great trout habitat. An especially good spot for anglers is the section of the Toccoa River near Shallowford Bridge. It has been designated as one of 3 Delayed Harvest Rivers in GA and produces trophy sized trout. (0.4 mile above the Shallowford Bridge upstream 1.3 mile to a point 450 feet above the Sandy Bottoms Canoe Access). From May 15-October 31 anglers fishing delayed harvest streams can keep fish. From November 1-May14 anglers must release all trout immediately and use and possess only artificial lures with one single hook per lure. More information on the program is available at: http://georgiawildlife.dnr.state.ga.us/Assets/Documents/fisheries/DH_infosheet.pdf And a nice map is available here: www.gofishgeorgia.com/Assets/Documents/fisheries/toccoaDH.pdf

8. Scenic Loop Drive Aska Road to Hwy 60 - A twisty turny drive through beautiful mountain and river scenery. From the tumbling Toccoa River along Aska Road to the authentic Appalachian farm community of Dial to the deep forests along Hwy. 60, this drive has it all. It can take 2-4 hours, depending upon how many stops you make and how well you can handle these challenging mountain roads.

9. Toccoa River & Swinging Bridge - a popular destination for day-hikers, Benton MacKaye Trail through hikers, and paddlers making the journey down the Toccoa River Canoe Trail is the swinging bridge over the Toccoa River. This 260 foot long bridge is the longest swinging bridge east of the Mississippi River. Plan on a weekday visit to avoid crowds. From the Welcome Center, take Hwy 515 4.3 miles to Hwy 60 and turn right toward Morganton. There, turn right toward Dahlonega for 11.3 miles on Hwy 60 south passing Skeenah Mill. Another .7 miles on the right is FS 816, turn right and follow this gravel road 4 miles to the parking area. A short hike down to the Toccoa River brings you to the Swinging Bridge. You can call the Chamber of Commerce Welcome Center for a hiking access brochure at 1-800-899-MTNS.

10. Family Picnic - Morganton Point, Lake Blue Ridge - featuring the crystal clear aquamarine waters of Lake Blue Ridge, with 90 national forest campsites, several boat ramps, a full-service marina and public swimming and picnic areas. 80 percent of the shoreline on Lake Blue Ridge is in the Chattahoochee National Forest, managed by the USDA Forest Service. Morganton Point Campground, in Morganton, features a public swimming area, along with 43 campsites, picnic tables and pavilion and a boat ramp. Take U.S. 515 north from Blue Ridge for 4 miles to GA 60; turn right (southwest) and go 3 miles to Morganton. In Morganton, turn right on County Road 616 for 1 mile. <http://www.fs.fed.us/conf/mgntncmp.htm>

Please do not exceed your level of experience and fitness when undertaking any activity, especially in wilderness areas. A Word to the Wise: The law of the forest is "leave no trace". Please pack in all you will need and pack out all your trash. If you build a fire, never leave it unattended. Use good judgment when hiking, particularly around waterfalls where rocks are often wet, moss covered and slippery. If hiking during hunting season, wear a brightly colored vest. Unexpected encounters with animals can be pleasurable or problematic. A hawk or owl soaring silently above is a pleasure. Watch for woodpeckers, turkeys and mountain grouse near the forest edges. The flash of a white-tail deer is an every day occurrence. More rare is sighting a black bear or bobcat. Most animals will flee the presence of humans, but be on the lookout for copperheads, wasps, yellow jackets and other biting, stinging critters. For more info on proper behavior in the wild, please go to www.LNT.org (Leave No Trace). And as a suggestion, if you are going out for a scenic drive, try to do it in a high mileage/per person vehicle.

Fannin County Chamber & Welcome Center
3990 Appalachian Hwy Blue Ridge, GA 30513
1-800-899-MTNS www.blueridgemountains.com