



Surrounded by Warm Winter Fun

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MAP KEY DIRECTIONS Surrounded by Warm Winter Fun Map

1. Toccoa River Trout Fishing below the dam - just off Hwy. 515 in Tammen Park. Call in advance for water-release information 800-238-2264. Another good place is Horseshoe Bend Park, a beautiful spot 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. Blue Ridge also has great fishing guides if you want a local expert to show you the best fishing spots. Call Unicoi Outfitters at 706-632-1880; Blue Ridge Fly Fishing & Canoe Guides 706-838-5515; or Upper River Adventures, 800-206-8024.

2. Blanche Manor hayride & bonfire dinner - for a winter adventure that has all the bases covered, call Blanche Manor outside of McCaysville. They can arrange a horseback hayride with a warm bonfire, music and a great dinner from Cider House Cafe waiting afterward. (706) 455-7433 on the web at www.blanchemanor.com.

3. Noontootla Creek Farms - in the beautiful mountains of north Georgia, Noontootla Creek Farms is a privately held farm of over 1500 acres. Originally a large farm operation and then a private hunting club, NCF is now open to the public with over two miles of quality trout water and excellent quail hunting. NCF is open year around with the best hunting and fishing taking place from the Fall through Spring. An on-site farmhouse is available for rental. Fly fishing and quail hunts are by daily reservation. Call for Fly Fishing (706) 632- 1880 QuailHunts/ Sporting Clays (706) 838-0585 or on the web at www.ncfga.com.

4. Mercier Orchards - Southern Living Magazine's favorite roadside apple market and more - best fried pies and hot apple cider anywhere. Recently expanded shopping holds all kinds of goods, from gourmet meats and specialties to birdhouses, to maps and books, to art, to all kinds of delectable take home foods. And apples and fruits galore. (706) 632-3411 or www.mercier-orchards.com.

5. Brasstown Bald - Georgia's highest mountain offers a visitor panoramic views of four states. For the best sunset in the south, the huge parking lot near the top has a picnic table and grassy area in the southwest corner that you can drive right to. Get there early enough before sunset and hike up to the top on a paved path (strenuous). Take warm winter clothes and a thermos of hot drinks. Take Highway 515 east from Blue Ridge to Blairsville. From Blairsville, take U.S. 19/129 south for 8 miles. Turn left onto Georgia 180. Go 9 miles to Georgia 180 Spur and turn left. Go 3 more miles to the Brasstown Bald parking lot. For information, call 706-896-3471.

6. Swan Drive-in - Entertaining patrons since 1955, The Swan Drive-in is one of the last remaining in Georgia. Located at 651 Summit Street, Blue Ridge, it's a great way to spend an evening under the stars seeing one of the latest films. The Swan is equipped with FM Stereo Sound, and has typically has double features on Fridays and Saturdays. Check their website for details www.swan-drive-in.com or call (706) 632-5235.

7. Blue Ridge Community Theater - Blue Ridge Community Theater, a community theater group located in downtown Blue Ridge, Georgia enriches the cultural life of residents and visitors through performances, productions and education of all aspects of contemporary and classic theater. The main stage is in the historic Hampton Square building and right next door is the popular eatery, Blue Jeans Pizza, so it's a great way to have dinner and a show. You can contact them at (706) 632-9223, or on the web at www.blueridgecommunitytheater.com/

8. Benton MacKaye Trail, Fall Branch Falls - Fall Branch Falls is a beautiful 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 on the Benton MacKaye Trail (pron. mack-eye) named for the founder of the Appalachian Trail. In Blue Ridge, follow Aska Road south for eight miles. Turn right on a paved road (Toccoa Riverside Restaurant is on the left). The trailhead is three miles on the right, just past Forest Warden Garfield Stanley's home. Caution: never climb on a waterfall, it is slippery and dangerous especially in winter. A viewing platform is provided for your enjoyment.

9. Horseback Riding in Cashes Valley - A scenic mountain valley near the Cohutta Wilderness is one of Blue Ridge's best kept secrets. Adventure Trail Rides offers a range of horseback riding experiences through Cashes Valley (ages 7 and up). You must make reservations to be able to ride, especially on the weekends! From Blue Ridge, at McDonald's, turn onto Hwy 5 north. Go 3.8 miles to a LARGE red and white sign that says "ADVENTURE TRAIL RIDES". Take a left at this sign. Go another 3.8 miles and take a left at a LARGE wooden sign that says "HORSEBACK RIDING" Go 1 mile down that road and take a left and follow signs to Barn. Call them at (706) 258-BARN. Or on the web at www.adventuretrailrides.com.

10. Highway 60 Scenic Drive Loop - This driving tour, produced by the U.S. Forest Service, is beautiful any time of year. There are many attractions along the way and you'll be tempted to visit many so leave plenty of time for the drive. The drive begins and ends at the intersection of Georgia Highway 5 and 515 in Blue Ridge. Hwy 60 starts 4 miles east. Round trip mileage is 102.4 miles and approximate driving time without stops is three to four hours. The drive offers some great opportunities for stops and side trips and can easily become a day trip. For more information, contact the Toccoa Ranger District at (706) 632-3031. You can get a free map at the Fannin County Chamber of Commerce Visitors Center.

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
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