

# NORTH CAROLINA

THE OFFICIAL 2016 TRAVEL GUIDE



## INSPIRATION TAKES FLIGHT

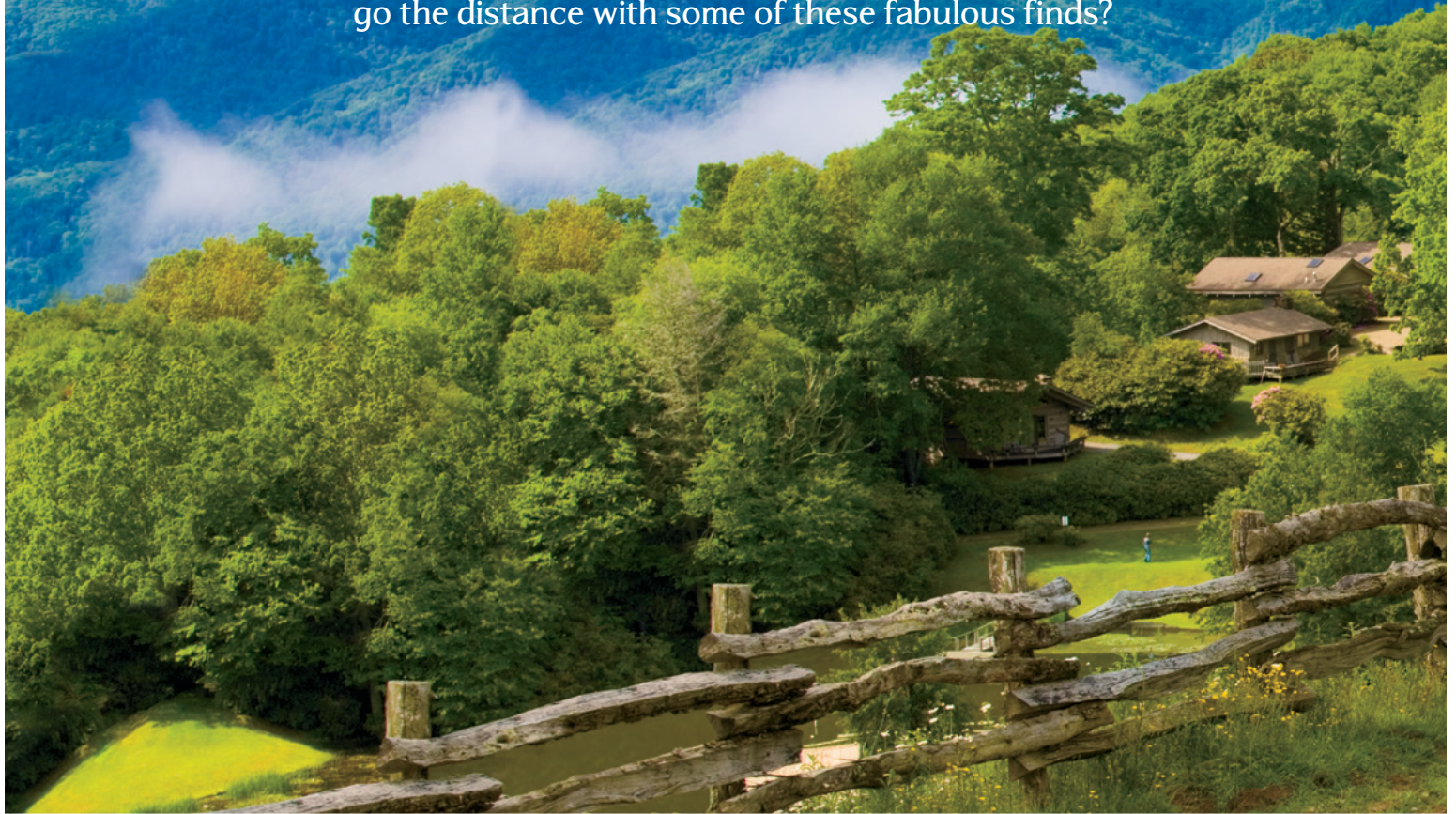
Celebrating 100 Years of NC State Parks



North Carolina

# UNUSUAL OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

You'll find an abundance of outdoor adventures here, but why not go the distance with some of these fabulous finds?



## B. *Gem Mining*

More than 40 gem-mining attractions dot North Carolina, inviting treasure hunters to discover **gold, rubies, sapphires, garnets, quartz, aquamarines** and other colorful semi-precious stones. Learn to operate a mining sluice, grab a shovel and dig, or go creekin' by wading into streams and poking under rocks, looking for shiny finds. Only one – Emerald Hollow Mine in Hiddenite – offers the tantalizing prospect of finding emeralds, as it's the only place in the United States where you can mine for these green gemstones.

Children and grown-ups alike will be thrilled with their gemstone finds!

## C. *Wakeboarding on Lake Gaston*

You don't have to be an International Waterski & Wakeboard Foundation champion to enjoy wakeboarding – a combination of waterskiing, surfing and snowboarding – although you'll find one on Lake Gaston, near Roanoke Rapids and Warrenton. If you **enjoy fast times on the water**, this 20,000-acre lake provides excellent opportunities to stay on the water or go airborne. If you prefer slower life on the lake, enjoy fishing for bass or catfish, or just relax along the shore on an inner tube or swimming.







### A. *Cataloochee Ranch*

Cataloochee Ranch packs busy days and memorable nights with outdoor fun. Horseback rides and hikes explore adjacent Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Hearty home cooking fuels mountain biking, trout fishing, wildflower spotting, bird-watching, horseshoe pitching, swimming, and (in winter) skiing and snowboarding. Add wagon rides, bonfires, marshmallow roasts, storytelling, mountain music and square dancing, and you see why **generations of families have returned for nearly 80 years** to enjoy unusually great vacations at Cataloochee.



B



C





*North Carolina*

# UNUSUAL OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES



H F



G



#### D. *Tryon International Equestrian Center*

This state-of-the-art center features five riding arenas to showcase **top dressage, hunter and other notable equestrian events**. Elevated viewing platforms with climate-controlled shade structures mean you'll see all the competition action in comfort. The Tryon International Equestrian Center is part of a 1,400-acre development with plans for a hotel, full luxury resort and spa, golf, bridle and hiking paths, and more.

#### E. *Singletree Gun & Plough*

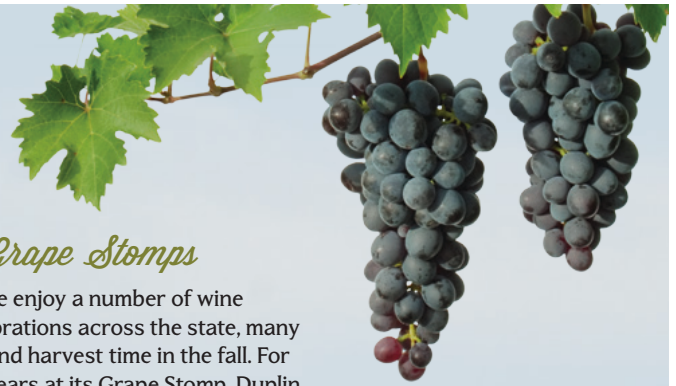
This small rustic hideaway **sets the stage for big outdoor adventures** in the Piedmont. Singletree features a seven-bedroom lodge and four smaller cabins on 1,000 wooded acres, including 5 miles of riverfront. Adjacent to Hanging Rock State Park in Westfield, Singletree encourages guests to rise before dawn for fly-fishing on the Dan River or turkey and deer hunting on largely undisturbed property. Days here bring horseback riding, kayaking, hiking, swimming, ziplining and watching glorious sunsets beyond cliff-rimmed Hanging Rock and the Blue Ridge Mountains.

#### F. *Paddling & Camping*

Whether for a leisurely afternoon or ambitious weekends, kayakers and canoeists dip paddles in a variety of waters across the state, from saltwater marshes and sounds to freshwater lakes to whitewater rapids. Camping platforms, such as those at Holladay's Island near Edenton, involve paddling to raised 16-by-24-foot decks. Some of the campsites at Lake James State Park near Nebo are **accessible only by water**. Once at these sites, all that's left is to pitch your tent, hang a lantern, cook out, stargaze and relax amid the stunning landscape.



For more unusual gems around the state, go to [visitnc.com/gem-mining-quirky-fun](http://visitnc.com/gem-mining-quirky-fun).



#### G. *Grape Stomps*

Come enjoy a number of wine celebrations across the state, many around harvest time in the fall. For 40 years at its Grape Stomp, Duplin Winery in Rose Hill has offered the chance for would-be stompers to be **awarded Best Grape Stompers**. Gregory Vineyards in Angier hosts the N.C. Grape Stomp Festival where, in addition to stomping grapes, there's a Lucille Ball look-alike contest, honoring that classic *I Love Lucy* episode. With nearly 160 wineries, it's easy to visit and celebrate year round.

#### H. *Rock Climbing & Rappelling*

An abundance of **quartzite cliffs and exposed granite provides countless climbing opportunities**. There's bouldering (without ropes) at Hound Ears, friction climbing (using special shoes on steep slopes) at Stone Mountain, free (with ropes, in case of falls) and aid (using attached devices) climbing at Looking Glass Rock, rappelling (descending on a fixed rope) at Chimney Rock, ice climbing on frozen waterfalls around Brevard, and more. Indoor gyms bring the thrill to cities and flatlands, too.

#### I. *Jockey's Ridge State Park*

Steady winds off the ocean pile sand onto Jockey's Ridge, the **tallest dune system in the eastern United States**. Located on the Outer Banks, this state park is a great place to fly kites, scan the Atlantic Ocean and Roanoke Sound on opposite sides, and run down the constantly replenished sand slopes. In the spirit of the Wright Brothers, who famously experimented with manned flight nearby, hang gliding and hiking are popular at Jockey's Ridge, too.





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