

Music Heritage Trails in America's Southern Highlands

USEFUL CONTACTS

For more information on all the music festivals and regularly scheduled events or more complete listings of other regional events, other weekly, annual and seasonal timings, festival/concert locations, and other attractions, the following regional organisations have calendar listings and web site links:

- ★ Asheville, North Carolina
www.exploreasheville.com
- ★ Birthplace of Country Music Alliance
www.birthplaceofcountrymusic.org
- ★ Blue Ridge Music Center
www.blueridgemusiccenter.net
- ★ Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service
www.nps.gov/blri
- ★ The Crooked Road Heritage Music Trail
www.crookedroad.org
- ★ Great Smoky Mountains Railroad
www.gsmr.com
- ★ Haywood County Tourism
www.smokeymountains.net
- ★ MountainSouth USA
www.mountainsouthusa.com
- ★ North Carolina's High Country
www.highcountryhost.com
- ★ Smoky Mountain Host
www.visitsmokies.org



America's Southern Highlands – the Blue Ridge Mountains and entire Southern Appalachian mountain region of western North Carolina, southwest Virginia and eastern Tennessee

BOOK YOUR ADVENTURE

AmeriCan & Worldwide Travel believes in tailor-making your tours so you get exactly what you want within your budget. That's why we offer three types of accommodation – budget, moderate and luxury. We also offer a number of distinctive properties in the region, including Asheville's Grove Park Inn Resort & Spa, and other historic inns and B&Bs, restored cabins and lodges (many of which are self-catering), and a variety of well-known hotels, and full-service resorts with world-class spa facilities. For these reasons prices vary. Please ring 01892-511894 or email us at info@awwt.co.uk

FLIGHT INFORMATION

AmeriCan & Worldwide Travel has secured special fares with several major U.S. carriers to offer you great prices on flights, from most national and regional U.K. airports.

PEACE OF MIND

You're in safe hands. AmeriCan & Worldwide Travel is protected by ABTA and ATOL for your financial security.



AmeriCan
& Worldwide Travel

1 Lonsdale Gardens
Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 1NU
Tel: 01892 511894 • email: info@awwt.co.uk
www.awwt.co.uk



MOUNTAINSOUTH★USA
AMERICA'S SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

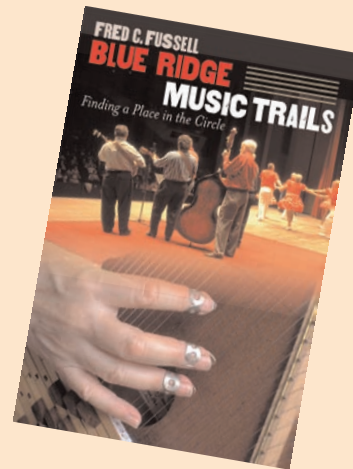
www.mountainsouthusa.com



MountainSouth USA, the destination marketing Partnership for America's Southern Highlands, is home to the federally-designated Blue Ridge National Heritage Area and is a programme of AdvantageWest North Carolina. MountainSouth USA is funded in part by a grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce Market Development Cooperator Program

BLUE RIDGE MUSIC TRAILS

Blue Ridge Music Trails-Finding a Place in the Circle, by Fred C. Fussell ("indispensable", according to *Maverick* magazine, the U.K.'s monthly "new voice in country music" magazine), is an excellent source for the traveller to America's Southern Highlands, with tips, maps, driving directions, history & profiles of musicians, events, contact information and more. Published in association with the North Carolina Arts Council: www.NCarts.org to order or contact info@mountainsouthusa.com for more information.



Fiddling

Gospel Music

Country & Old-Time

Shape-Note Singing

String Band Music

Ballad Singing

Bluegrass



The birthplace of America's bluegrass, country and old-time mountain music

MountainSouth USA has teamed up with leading independent America specialists, AmeriCan & Worldwide Travel to offer tailor-made fly-drive and small group tours to America's Southern Highlands – where you can experience the roots of America's mountain music.

America's Southern Highlands – the Blue Ridge Mountains and entire Southern Appalachian mountain region of western North Carolina, southwest Virginia and eastern Tennessee – are the heart of a traditional music-making legacy that is unique in America. This is a region where traditional music – bluegrass, country & old-time – and dance are performed and celebrated as *nowhere else in America*.

Here you'll discover the birthplace of country, classic country, bluegrass, old-time and gospel music – where the region's early settlers from Britain, Europe and Africa came with their fiddles and banjos, ballads and gospel hymns – and laid the foundation of what we now know as the most traditional American music. *This is where it all began* – and where the mountain roots are kept alive by today's singers, songwriters and musicians – and even in the soundtracks of recent popular films, such as *Songcatcher*, *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* and *Cold Mountain*.

Itineraries & International Gateway Cities: Start your music trails adventure from one of our Gateway Cities, including

Washington, DC, Atlanta, Georgia or Charlotte, North Carolina – featuring non-stop service from U.K. airports. Connecting service can get you closer to the mountains, including Asheville, NC, Tri-Cities, TN, Knoxville, TN or Greenville/Spartanburg, SC. Modules can be tailor-made for you into anywhere from 7-10 days, to 12-14 day itineraries. We've combined several components from the region, including The Crooked Road Heritage Music Trail, all winding through the beautiful Appalachian Mountains and the heart of America's Southern Highlands. See where it all began – and where the mountain music and its rich traditions are still a way of life.

MUSIC HERITAGE OF AMERICA'S SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS – UNPLUGGED!

Begin your tour in Asheville, an exciting and distinctive cultural gateway and capital city in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Here you'll find terrific listening venues for all styles of mountain music, including The Orange Peel, Grey Eagle and Jack of The Wood.

Continue north over the mountain to Johnson City, home of Eastern Tennessee State University, the only university in the U.S. with a degree program in Bluegrass, Old-Time and Country Music. Visit their Center for Appalachian Studies for original recordings and films. Round off your visit here with music downtown at Down Home.

Follow Highway 23, designated the *Country Music Highway*, to Big Stone Gap, VA, and take in some real mountain music nearby at the Country Cabin. Fans of Ralph Stanley & the Clinch Mountain Boys can visit the new Ralph Stanley Museum & Traditional Mountain Music Center in Clintwood. This interactive museum celebrates the career of one of the Fathers of Bluegrass and Grammy award-winning recording artist. Recently, he contributed to the soundtrack of the popular film, *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*

Next, travel to Hiltons, VA, and visit the Carter Fold and A.P. Carter Museum & Birthplace, celebrating the First Family of Country Music. Some of the best live music is played here every Saturday night.

Onward to Bristol – a city full of music, railroads and car racing history – to the Birthplace of Country Music Alliance Museum. Here, exhibits tell the story of the region's music and its diverse origins, transitioning from front porches to recording and radio studios, and the "Bristol Sessions" of 1927, the "Big Bang of Country Music." Option to return to Asheville or onward to points north east on Virginia's portion of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

- DAY 1 Asheville, NC
- DAY 4 Johnson City, TN
- DAY 6 Big Stone Gap/Norton, VA
- DAY 7 Bristol, TN/VA
- DAY 9 Asheville, NC

MOUNTAIN HIGH: BLUE RIDGE MUSIC TRAILS OF NORTH CAROLINA & VIRGINIA



Start your music adventure in the scenic resort town of Highlands, NC (4,118 ft elev.) – highest incorporated town east of the Mississippi. Visit the Mountain Heritage Center at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee to discover more of how the British settlers influenced the music and culture of the mountains.

Travel north to Cherokee and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park; west to Maggie Valley, home to Maggie Valley Opry House and banjo wiz Raymond Fairchild. Traverse the Blue Ridge Parkway or other mountain highways, by the real Cold Mountain (6,030 ft peak), namesake for the international best-seller and film – and award-winning sound-track of traditional mountain music.

Head west to scenic Hickory Nut Gorge and Chimney Rock, and north to Linville and Grandfather Mountain (5,964 ft; a U.N. International Biosphere – host of Singing on the Mountain, and the largest annual Highland Games outside Scotland!). Then visit Boone, home of the Appalachian Cultural Museum at Appalachian State University, and the sweet sounds of MountainHome Music. Also off the Blue Ridge Parkway is Blowing Rock, a mountain refuge since the mid 1800s, where several historic outdoor venues feature traditional mountain music and dancing in summer.

- DAY 1 Highlands, NC
- DAY 3 Cherokee, NC
- DAY 5 Maggie Valley, NC
- DAY 7 Blowing Rock or Valle Crucis, NC

A TALE OF THE CROOKED ROAD

In Abingdon, VA, a town for "Arts of Historic Proportions," visit the world-famous Barter Theatre (State Theatre of Virginia) and annual Highlands Arts Festival. Continue through Damascus, "Trail Town USA" (on the Appalachian Trail). Then east on the *Country Music Highway*, Hwy 58, and *The Crooked Road* to Galax, World Capital of Old-Time Music and home of the historic Rex Theatre and the annual Old-Time Fiddlers Convention.

Visit the Blue Ridge Music Center for wonderful live performances by locals and recording artists. Continue on *The Crooked Road* to Floyd, and hear foot stompin' music at Floyd Country Store every weekend. Visit County Records to browse their vast stock of music catalogues and recordings.



Option to continue north on the Blue Ridge Parkway or travel south, to North Carolina's High Country. Visit Wilkesboro, home of the internationally-acclaimed MerleFest (BBC Radio 2 deemed it the premier Americana music festival), and beyond, for more historic and contemporary music venues, musicians and that good ole' mountain soul!

- DAY 1 Abingdon, VA
- DAY 2 Galax/Hillsville, VA
- DAY 4 **Option:** Wilkesboro or Boone, NC for western portion of the Music Heritage Trails **OR** travel north to Washington, DC, International Gateway City



A SAMPLER OF MOUNTAIN MUSIC FESTIVALS FROM AMERICA'S SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

Annual festivals, weekly concerts, radio shows, jam sessions and scheduled gigs ring out to large audiences and intimate gatherings throughout the Southern Highlands. Some events are free, others have a nominal ticket fee. Here is just a sampling of how you can experience the authentic mountain culture – and you're welcome to join in!

- APRIL**
MerleFest, Wilkes Community College, Wilkesboro, NC
- MAY**
Lake Eden Arts Festival, Black Mountain, NC
Ralph Stanley Memorial Bluegrass Festival, Smith Ridge, VA
- JUNE**
Singing on the Mountain, Grandfather Mountain, Linville, NC
Galax Leaf & String Festival, Galax, VA
Wayne C. Henderson Music Festival and Guitar Competition, Grayson Highlands State Park, VA
Blue Plum Festival, Johnson City, TN

- JULY**
Mountain Dance & Folk Festival, Asheville, NC
Doc Watson Music Fest, Sugar Grove, NC
Floyd Fest, Floyd, VA
Virginia Highlands Festival, Abingdon, VA

- AUGUST**
Mountain Dance & Folk Festival, Asheville, NC
Carter Family Memorial Festival, Hiltons, VA
Old Time Fiddler's Convention, Galax, VA

- SEPTEMBER**
Celtic Festival, Sycamore Shoals State Park, Elizabethton, TN
Rhythm and Roots Reunion, Bristol, VA-TN
Music in the Mountains Festival, Patience Park & Toe River, Yancey County, near Burnsville, NC

- OCTOBER**
Madison County Heritage Festival & Bascom Lamar Lunsford Minstrel of the Appalachians Concert, Mars Hill College, NC
New River Festival, Todd, NC
Blue Ridge Folklife Festival, Ferrum, VA
Home Craft Days, Big Stone Gap, VA
International Storytelling Festival, Jonesborough, TN

A SAMPLER OF REGULARLY SCHEDULED EVENTS IN AMERICA'S SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

- Pickin' in the Plaza, the Blue Ridge Music Center series, off the Blue Ridge Parkway (near Galax, VA)
- Shindig on the Green, Asheville, NC (mid-July to Sept)
- Traditions, Bluegrass and Country Dancing, Tweetsie Railroad, Blowing Rock, NC
- Monday & Tuesday, Country Music, Country Music Mural in Bristol, TN/VA
- Thursday, Pickin' Porch Show, Birthplace of Country Music, Bristol, TN/VA
- Friday, Music at Rex Theatre, Galax, VA
- Friday, Old Fort Mountain Music, Marion, NC
- Saturday, Carter Fold in Hiltons & The Country Cabin, Norton, VA
- Saturday, MountainHome Music, Boone and Blowing Rock, NC and other mountain communities in NC and TN
- Saturday & Sunday, Music & Country Dancing at the Orchard at Altapass, off the Blue Ridge Parkway (near Spruce Pine, NC)



Swannanoa Gathering: Week-long workshops (July & August) in folk arts and music, from old-time, guitar, banjo, dulcimer, as well as a Cherokee Heritage Weekend and Celtic Week (June): Warren Wilson College, near Asheville, NC. www.swannanoa.org

John C. Campbell Folk School in Brasstown, NC, is a unique centre, teaching time-honoured crafts, music and dance, since 1925. The school also features regularly scheduled mountain music concerts. www.folkschool.com

