



Grand Hotels of the Blue Ridge and Shenandoah Valley

Featuring the Inn on Biltmore Estate, The Homestead Resort and The Greenbrier Resort

Join TRIPS as we enjoy spring in the Blue Ridge Mountains, staying in historic Inns and visiting some of America's most iconic homes. Tour Biltmore, George Vanderbilt's 250-room chateau which is as impressive today as it was more than a century ago. Enjoy a self-guided tour that spans three floors and see displays of vintage clothing, art, furniture and more. From the library with 10,000 volumes to the 65 fireplaces, this is truly a unique opportunity to peek into the lives of American Industrialists. Enjoy a three night stay at the Inn on Biltmore Estate and experience the same gracious hospitality enjoyed by George and Edith Vanderbilt's guests.

Your two night stay at the Omni Homestead Resort, set in the midst of the Allegheny Mountains provides world-class service combined with top-notch amenities. You'll enjoy dinner in The Main Dining Room both nights as a pianist plays softly in the background. Enjoy the beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains as you travel the Parkway, just beginning to burst with colorful flowers. Browse for unique gifts at the Folk Art Center and tour the home of Carl Sandburg. Visit Thomas Jefferson's beloved Monticello, the only private home in the US to be designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Day 1

Today you board your flight for the **Blue Ridge Mountains** and **Asheville, North Carolina**. On arrival at the airport, you'll be assisted with your transfer via private motor coach to the **Inn on Biltmore Estate**, a luxurious 4-Diamond Hotel. After time to freshen up, enjoy a delightful welcome dinner.

Overnight: Inn on Biltmore Estate

(D)

Day 2

After enjoying breakfast this morning, travel along the beautiful **Blue Ridge Parkway**. Along the way, you'll stop at the **Folk Art Center** featuring the finest in traditional and contemporary craft of the Southern Appalachians. Then, stop at the **Blue Ridge Parkway Visitor Center** featuring an award winning film and exhibits highlighting the area's culture and heritage. **The Blue Ridge Parkway - America's Favorite Journey** uses breathtaking aerial photography and the story of a father-daughter motorcycle trip to introduce you to this beautiful area. Continue, stopping in **Hendersonville** for lunch on your own and some free time. Be sure to take in the **Mast General Store**, a landmark mercantile. The first of many rooms opened in 1882 and they advertise they have "everything you'll need from cradle to casket". Next, visit the **Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site**, located on 264 beautiful acres in western North Carolina. Carl Sandburg lived here the last 20 years of his life and the many artifacts on display tell the story of his family and their struggles. He was virtually unknown until the age of 38, have spent the previous years as a hobo where he saw first-hand the sharp contrast between the rich and poor before volunteering to serve during the Spanish-American war. This is a fascinating look into the two time Pulitzer Prize winner. Later this afternoon, depart for **Lake Lure for a cruise** (weather permitting) past locations used for the blockbuster film, "Dirty Dancing". After your time on the water, enjoy dinner at **Lake Lure Inn** where you mustn't miss the collection of **rare, antique music boxes**. Don't expect the dainty music box you might have on your dresser at home. You'll be delighted to discover massive, enchantingly beautiful music boxes upwards of nine-feet tall that once charmed patrons of steamship lines, grand hotel and fine restaurants.

Overnight: Inn on Biltmore Estate

(B/D)

Day 3

After enjoying a delicious breakfast at the Inn, you'll set off for a **tour of Biltmore Estate**. The house, built by George Vanderbilt in the Blue Ridge Mountains, has over 250 rooms! You'll marvel at the grandeur of America's largest home, filled with its collection of fine art and antiques. Outside, stroll through acres of beautiful gardens and grounds designed by renowned landscape architect **Frederick Law Olmsted**. Lunch today will be at **Deer Park on Biltmore Estate** followed by a visit to the **Winery at Biltmore**. Created by a French winemaker, Biltmore label wines have won numerous awards so be sure to take a bottle home with you! You'll then have time to at Antler Village. Visit the exhibition "The Vanderbilts at Home and Abroad" highlighting the families life and travels. Don't miss Edith Vanderbilt's rare 1913 Stevens-Duryea Model C-Six touring car! Return to the hotel to relax and freshen up for the evening before departing for the historic **Monte Vista Hotel** in Black Mountain, NC for dinner.

Overnight: Inn on Biltmore Estate

(B/L/D)

Day 4

After breakfast, you'll check out and travel to Abingdon, Virginia the oldest town west of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Lunch today is at the **Martha Washington Inn** built in 1832 as a private residence by a Virginia General. The Martha Washington

Inn evolved into a young ladies finishing school and during the Civil War it served as a hospital with legends from that era persisting today. After lunch, continue on to **Hot Springs, Virginia** where you'll check in to your hotel, **The Homestead**. Experience the Southern hospitality and elegant charm that has made the Homestead Resort a premier destination for 22 U.S. Presidents dating back to the 18th century! Dinner tonight is in **The Main Dining Room** where guests enjoy the southern American cuisine that is always prepared to perfection. Deserts are always much anticipated, prepared by the resort's Pastry Shop! Service is formal and traditional and your evening concludes with live music and dancing! In keeping with tradition, dress for dinner. Jackets are required for gentlemen, tie optional.

Overnight: The Homestead

(B/L/D)

Day 5

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel this morning before departing for **The Greenbrier** where you'll enjoy a **Bunker Tour**. Surrounded by the Allegheny Mountains, the secret Eisenhower-era underground bunker here was designed to house members of Congress and their staffs during and after a nuclear attack. When decommissioned, all furnishings and equipment were removed. The Greenbrier has replicated the original contents as closely as possible. You'll see the cafeteria, dormitories, decontamination chambers and a clinic complete with an operating room. After your tour, you'll enjoy **lunch at The Greenbrier** which has welcomed distinguished guests since 1778! Return to The Homestead with the remainder of the afternoon to enjoy this luxurious inn. You might choose to enjoy **complimentary Afternoon Tea** service in the Main Foyer or enjoy a **complimentary tour of the Homestead**. It's doors opened 10 years before the Declaration of Independence was signed, and they'd love to share their proud history with you! You might opt to indulge in a spa treatment or enjoy a carriage ride along the wooded trails, additional charges apply for these and other activities. Enjoy dinner at your leisure at one of the property's several restaurants or in the quaint village of Hot Springs offering a number of dining options.

Overnight: The Homestead

(B/L)

Day 6

After breakfast, depart for **Monticello**, stopping along the way to enjoy a buffet lunch at historic **Michie Tavern** where costumed waitstaff serve hearty the taverns famous fried chicken in a 200 year old converted log house! On arrival begin with a tour of the **Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center** before traveling via shuttle to the house for your tour of the mountaintop home that Jefferson designed. Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States was the **author of the Declaration of Independence** and was the founder of the University of Virginia. More than any politician of his time, or perhaps any other, Jefferson voiced the aspirations of a new country when he penned the words **"We hold these truths to be self-evident"**. During his presidency, Jefferson supported the Lewis and Clark expedition as well as the purchase of the Louisiana Territory and sold his vast collection of books to form the nucleus of the Library of Congress. You'll learn much about this public official, historian and philosopher who served his country for over five decades. Later this afternoon, depart, stopping for a special **farewell dinner** this evening at the **Red Fox Inn** in Middleburg, Virginia. Established in 1728, it was meeting spot for Confederate soldiers and was used by President Kennedy's press secretary, Pierre Salinger to hold press conferences. After a delightful meal, continue to your hotel.

Overnight: Westfields Marriott (or similar)

(B/L/D)

Day 7

This morning after breakfast, you'll be assisted with your check out and transfer to Washington Dulles airport and your flight home.

Your days enjoying Grand Hotels of the Blue Ridge Mountains will be with you for years to come.

(B)



Inclusions

- Roundtrip airfare (checked baggage fees are not included)
- 6 nights lodging in the finest resorts
- Breakfast daily
- 5 dinners including The Homestead Main Dining Room, the Historic Red Fox Inn, Inn on Biltmore Estate, Lake Lure Inn, and Historic Monte Vista Hotel
- 4 lunches including Deer Park on Biltmore Estate, Martha Washington Inn, The Greenbrier Resort and the Historic Michie Tavern
- Blue Ridge Visitor Center, Carl Sandburg Home, Lake Lure cruise (weather permitting), Winery at Biltmore, Bunker tour at the Greenbrier, Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center and Monticello and more
- Tour Guide/Director throughout your tour
- Private, deluxe motor coach included throughout your tour
- All sightseeing and admissions as listed in the detailed itinerary
- TRIPS ticket wallet and luggage tags
- Portage of 1 suitcase per person
- All government taxes and fees

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