

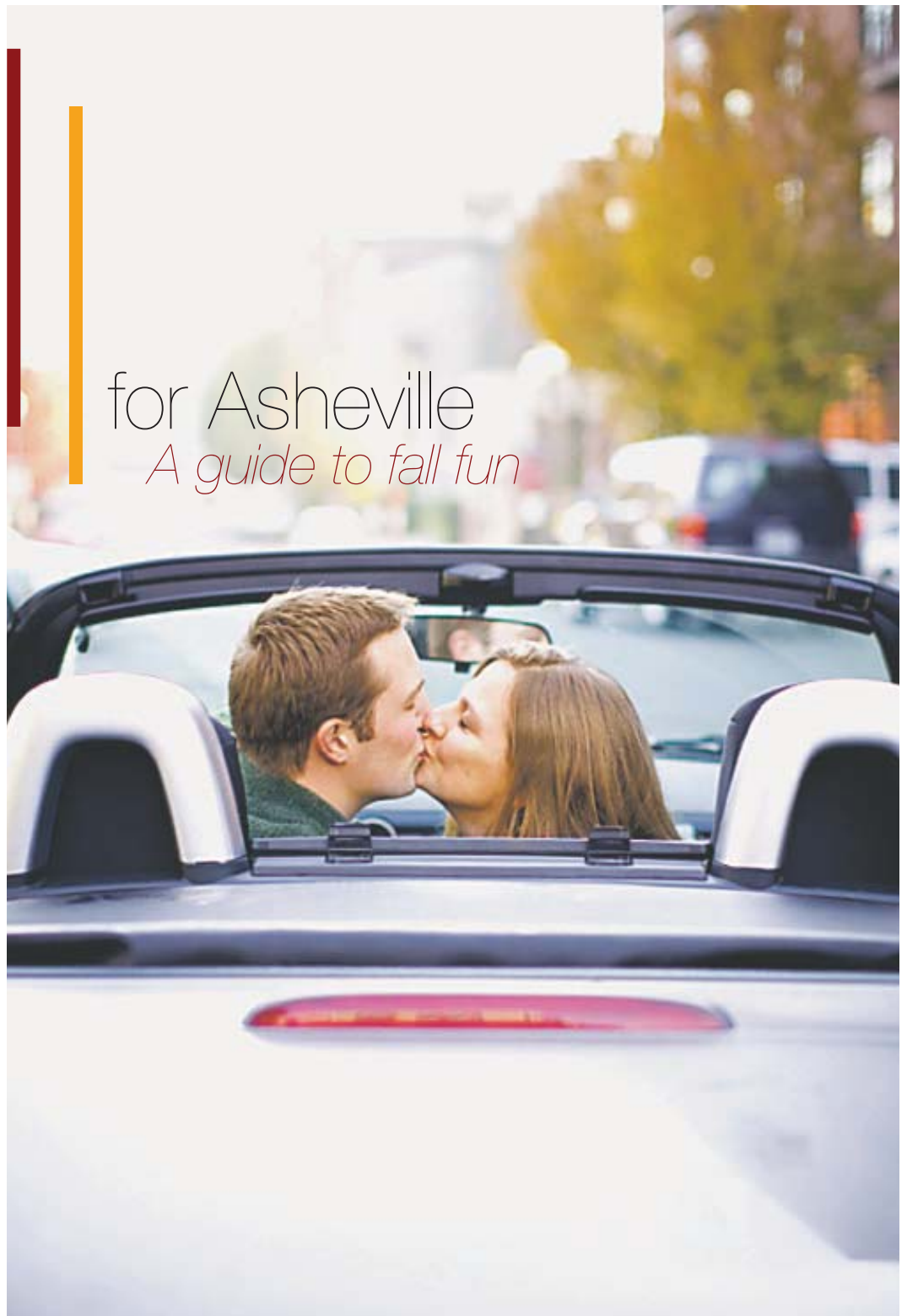
15 ways to fall

for Asheville *A guide to fall fun*

By Pam J. Hecht, correspondent

GAZE, GAWK AND GAPE as you ogle the views and savor the fall feeling, Asheville-style. It's autumn, the leaves are falling and here you are, in one of the best and most beautiful places to enjoy the season.

Here are a few ideas to get you in the fall spirit. From food to brews, arts to outdoors, festivals and family fun, find something to "fall" for with this handy guide to fall fun.



1 PEACEFUL PANORAMAS

Weave your way up by car more than a thousand feet through the Laurel Park neighborhood in Hendersonville, to Jump Off Rock Park, on the Laurel Park Highway, for a peaceful, panoramic view of Western NC, spanning from the Blue Ridge to the Smoky Mountains, with hiking trails open daily sunrise to sunset, www.laurelpark.org.



2 EAT, DRINK & BE MERRY

Enjoy fun eats and seasonal treats while you dig in to a variety of delicious fall harvest menus and wines at the endless array of local haunts in the area. Pick a place with seating outdoors, like the Laughing Seed Café or Sante Wine Bar, in downtown Asheville. To catch a view from indoors, have some snacks and sips at The Sky Bar (atop World Coffee Café, overlooking the Grove Arcade) or Grove Park Inn with its big picture windows and westward views. To find more farm-to-table restaurants that feature local fall bounty in their menus, go to www.asapconnections.org or www.airasheville.org.



3 LISTEN TO MATING CALLS

It's prime mating time for elks and October is the time to listen to them "bugle" while enjoying great views at the Cataloochee Valley, on the North Carolina side of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. It's best to go early morning or late afternoon, www.nps.gov/grsm/planyourvisit/cataloochee.htm.

4 TAKE AN ANCIENT JOURNEY

Walk through a forest that looks like Jurassic Park at the Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest, about an hour and a half from Asheville, near Robinson, NC. This virgin forest is filled with 400-year-old trees more than 100 feet tall and 20 feet wide. An easy hike makes it great for families, www.main.nc.us/graham/hiking/joycekil.html.



5 COMMUNE WITH CARL AT CONNEMARA

Don't forget the Carl Sandburg Home, in Flat Rock, with its surreal fall scenes on rolling hills sunny pastures and forest trails. Take in the colorful leaves reflected in a mirrored lake, visit the Connemara Farms goat dairy, guided tours of the home daily, www.nps.gov/carl/planyourvisit/index.htm.

THE TROLLEY COMPANY

LEAF LOOKERS TOUR

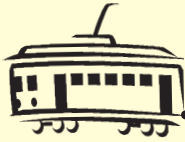
Come and join our Leaf Lookers Tour for a peek at nature's beautiful cloak of fall colors! On Thursday, October 15th we will leisurely roll along the Blue Ridge Parkway to Mt. Mitchell. The tour will leave at 10:30 and we will arrive in time to have lunch at the Mt. Mitchell Restaurant. A happy day and beautiful vistas at an affordable price!

**Call about our Harvest Tours
October 8th & 22nd**

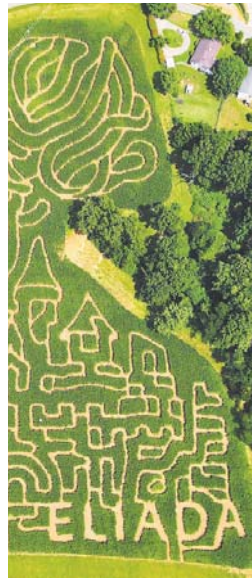
Come take our newest trolley, The Duchess, on a nostalgic trip back to the farm. Our tour will stop at an old timey apple orchard where you can pick apples, sample real old fashioned press apple juice and have a delicious lunch in Chimney Rock.

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A-MAZE-ING FAMILY FUN

Rake a pile of colorful leaves and throw the kids on top. Then, venture out to the new, 10-acre Castles in the Corn Maze at Eliada Homes in Asheville, through Oct. 31, Fri. 4 – 9 p.m., Sat., 10 a.m. – 9 p.m., Sun. noon – 6 p.m., three mazes of varying difficulty, hay bale maze for toddlers, pumpkin patch, hayrides, face paintings, \$8 adults, \$5 ages 11 and under, www.castleinthecorn.com. (To find more mazes: www.cornfieldmaze.com.) Or, relax with the fam at the 13th Annual "Fall! By The Tracks" Festival, October 17, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., The Old Depot, Sutton Avenue, Black Mountain, caboose museum, crafters demonstrations, face and pumpkin painting, cake-walks, local honey, food, fresh made, while you watch, apple cider from their own antique apple press, www.olddepot.org.



JUST FALLING

Board a shuttle bus to some breathtaking waterfalls: High Falls, Triple Falls and Bridal Veil Falls, with refreshments at the last stop, Lake Julia, in the DuPont State Forest on the Tour de Falls, October 17, 18, DuPont State Forest, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., Hendersonville, \$10, 692-2929, www.dupontforest.com.



FALL BREWS

Enjoy an autumn brew - Oktoberfest beers take center stage, for now, but the heavier, spicier, warmer beers of fall are swiftly on their way. Highland Brewing Company, Thirsty Monk and French Broad Brewing Company in Asheville, among others, offer a good selection of seasonal beers, and there are new brew destinations popping up in the area all the time. Go to www.ashevillebeer.blogspot.com for the scoop on everything beer in Western North Carolina. Join the party at the Asheville Oktoberfest, German beer festival, food, live music, games, brewing/tasting seminars, Oct. 10, 1 – 5 p.m., Wall St, downtown Asheville, \$25, www.ashevilledowntown.org.



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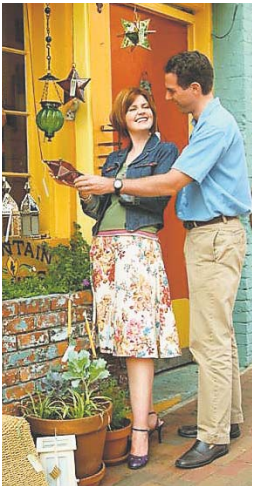
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SCARY, HOLIDAY, FUNNY AND TURKEY TOURS

Have some holiday fun in downtown Asheville at the 63rd Annual Holiday Parade on Nov. 21, 11 a.m. (after the parade, take the kids to the Orange Peel for the Scooby Doo show at 1:30 p.m.) and enjoy the festive storefront windows of the more than 40 businesses who have entered in the Holiday Windows Contest (from November 13), www.ashevilledowntown.org. Or, board a LaZoom Comedy Tour bus at the French Broad Co-Op on 90 Biltmore Avenue, for some laughs on its Haunted Bus Ride (October 29-31) or Thanksgiving Turkey Tour (Nov. 24, 25 & 27), 225-3962, www.lazoomtours.com.



GALLERY GAWKING AND WALKING

Head to West Asheville and catch some artsy vibes, flowing like the leaves. Visit the galleries of more than 110 artists at the River Arts District Studio Stroll on November 14-15, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., free with free parking. Free eats are available at some galleries, as are several good restaurants. Pay \$5 for the day and hop on an Asheville Historic Trolley Tours trolley, traveling between the galleries, for a narrated history of the area. Can't make it to the Stroll? Go to www.riverdistrictartists.com for a calendar of open galleries. While in the neighborhood, stop by Christopher Mello's quirky and quite stunning Gnomon garden, at the corner of Westwood Place and Waynesville Avenue, off Haywood Road, where dark and moody meet striking and playful, with a variety of interesting plants and an eclectic mix of metal and ceramic works, among other things. The garden, open to the public and adjacent to Mello's art studio, also features a relaxing waterfall. Or, enjoy a p.m. jaunt as the art galleries and other merchants of downtown Waynesville stay open until 9 p.m. on Nov. 6, www.waynesvillegalleryassociation.com. Do the same in downtown Sylva on first Fridays through Dec., at Sylva After Dark, www.downtownsylva.org.



HARVEST TIME

Go directly to the source and find out where all that fall food comes from, these local farms are just a few of several who welcome visitors and host tours:

- Skytop Orchard – acres of apple trees, little carts to pull around the kids and your baskets, picnic area, kids play area, petting zoo, observation beehive, bamboo forest trail, apple sorting area, tastings, hot and cold cider, apple fritters, donuts and fudge, open through Dec. 7, 1193 Pinnacle Mountain Road, Zirconia, 828-692-7930, www.skytoporchard.com.

Continued on page 10



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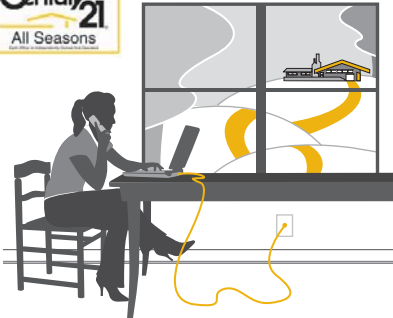



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- Hickory Nut Gap Farms – activities through Oct. 31, corn mazes, u-pick pumpkins, apples for sale, petting zoo, pony rides, picnic area, tours, special events, \$5/\$3 kids' activity fee, 57 Sugar Hollow Road, Fairview, 628-1027, www.hickorynutgapfarm.com.
- Peaceful Valley Farm – a five-generation family farm, features sorghum molasses mill, corn mill, antique tractors, hit-n-miss engines, pottery, farm animals, heirloom vegetables, honey, jams, local crafts and a blacksmith shop. The family hosts an annual Farm Day on October 10 with molasses, corn milling, apple butter and other demonstrations, 1200 Pine Cove Road in Old Fort, open other Saturdays by appointment, call 828-442-8600. Also worth a stop: Orchard at Altapass, off the Blue Ridge Parkway, at milepost 328.3 near Spruce Pine, 828-765-9531.
- Maple Creek Farm – Fall Farm Day is October 17 and 18, noon to 5 p.m. Spend the afternoon with farm animals, watch cider pressing and sorghum syrup cooking and sample fresh cane and syrup. The farm store will be open with pastured pork, apple cider, pumpkins and fall produce for sale. Tours on the hour. \$5 per adult, children under 12 free. Located in Burnsville, NC. For directions, call 828-682-0297 or visit www.maplecreekfarm.net.

If you can't make it to a farm, have the farm come to you at one of the area's numerous farmers' markets – get the facts on both farms and farmer's markets at www.buyappalachian.org.



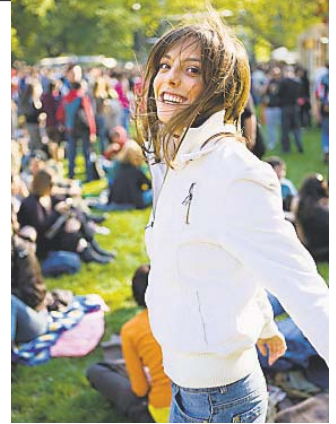
14 FAMILY-FRIENDLY FESTIVALS

Head to a hometown Fall fair like the Apple Harvest Festival in downtown Waynesville on Oct. 17, 10 a.m.– 5 p.m., arts and crafts, apples and other food, music, children's area, www.downtownwaynesville.com, or to Biltmore Park Town Square's Fall Fest, also Oct. 17, at 11 a.m., with face painting, music, pumpkin painters, magic, storytelling, Sesame Street characters, www.biltmorepark.com.



12 BUNDLE UP AND BOOGIE

Bundle up and enjoy the brisk fall night air before the winter cold sets in. Listen to the tunes of local and regional bands at Biltmore Park's first free outdoor concert series on October 10, 17 & 24, 7 – 9 p.m., in its brand spanning new amphitheater in South Asheville, 30 Town Square Blvd, www.biltmorepark.com.



10 SEE FALL BY HORSE, SEGWAY, BALLOON AND PADDLE

To enjoy the splendor of fall on the go, hop onto a horse at the Preserve at Wolf Laurel and savor some beautiful fall views, just under 40 minutes from Asheville, in Burnsville. Take in the awe-inspiring 360-degree views of the mountains from your trail, 678-9370. Or, paddle down the French Broad River from the Asheville Outdoor Center (232-1970), steer a Segway at the North Carolina Arboretum, Asheville (665-2492) or catch some aerial views on an Asheville Hot Air Balloon, in Candler (667-9943).



15 LEAFing

It's not fall without LEAF. Live amongst the leaves and commune with people, patchouli, and nature at the legendary and groovy Lake Eden Arts Festival (LEAF), October 15 – 18. Tap into your inner hippie and let it all hang out with art and craft shows, camping, live music, healing arts, kids village, dancing, poetry slam, water recreation, hiking, and food. Camp Rockmont, Black Mountain, 686-8742, www.theleaf.org.