

wellness | therapeutic escape

Wellness goes back very far in Asheville as the crisp mountain air and cool streams are long believed to make this area one of healing and relaxation. This haven for yogis and yoginis is surrounded by more than 800,000 acres of lush wilderness with scenic vistas around the bend. Asheville has a long history as an oasis for health-conscious, active vacationers in search of bucket-list adventures and inspiring retreats. Wellness and fitness culture are a way of life with more than 630 massage therapists, numerous yoga centers and more vegetarian/vegan/gluten-free restaurants than you can sample in one weekend.



Historic Resort with Subterranean Waterfalls & Aura Imaging

Considered one of the top spas in the world, the **Omni Grove Park Inn Spa** surprises visitors at every turn. Get a massage from a cascading indoor waterfall and listen to music under water

in the mineral pool. ► Ingredients like warm body butter and local sourwood honey are combined in soothing body wrap treatments to relax tired muscles. ► Elevate your massage experience with a **multisensory treatment pod**. Healing infrared heat, vibrational therapy, aromatherapy, mood-enhancing colored lights, a negative ion field and music help you feel rejuvenated and rebalanced. ► Experience a one-of-a-kind color and light treatment that begins and ends with a special **aura-capturing photograph**, interpreted by a specially trained therapist.

Heal Your Sole

► **Wake Foot Sanctuary** opened its original location in downtown Asheville and provides warm, luxurious foot soaks accompanied by massage add-ons and tea service. Every foot soak is handmade using apothecary products, soaps, pure essential oils and salts. ► Put your feet up and relax at **Sole Haven**, a foot reflexology lounge that provides holistic spa therapy treatments. Spa and aromatherapy services help tame your tension and make you feel more grounded. ► **De La Terre** in West Asheville offers "Foot and Leg Therapy," in addition to skin care products and other wellness therapies.



Hot Tubs with a View

► **Shoji Spa & Lodge**, is a refined Japanese spa set in the woods near the Blue Ridge Parkway. Take a soothing outdoor bath in a private **therapeutic salt mineral hot tub**. ► One of the greatest remedies nature has to offer is a natural mineral hot spring. The community of **Hot Springs**, the only town located directly on the Appalachian Trail, offers natural spring-fed tubs to help relieve fatigue and stress, increase circulation, and ease muscle stiffness.

A WELLNESS RETREAT FOR CENTURIES

The Asheville area's reputation as a destination for spa treatments and wellness dates back centuries. ► One of the East Coast's only natural hot spring water sources, **Hot Springs** (just 20 minutes north of Asheville), has been attracting visitors since its discovery in the 1700s. Its mineral waters are still known for treating a variety of ailments.

► Asheville was incorporated in 1797, and visitors began arriving by horseback almost as soon as the roads were built. By 1850, Asheville had attracted the wealthy from throughout the South. A new stagecoach road in 1851, combined with the wonderful climate, became the catalyst that spread the city's reputation as a health resort across the country.

► When the railroad reached Asheville in 1880, it brought a young aristocrat from New York named **George Vanderbilt**, who declared the area the most beautiful place on earth and purchased 125,000 acres to set about building the largest private residence in America - **Biltmore Estate**. Vanderbilt had been looking for a place for his mother to stay as she was often ill with chronic Malaria.

► During the 1800s, Tuberculosis was the leading cause of death in the country, and Asheville was considered an ideal location for healing due to its altitude and climate. The first TB clinic in the country was opened in Asheville in 1871. ► It was for this reason that **Edwin Grove**, founder of **The Grove Park Inn** and creator of Grove's Tasteless Chill Tonic (which provided relief from fever associated with Malaria) moved to the area. ► In the early 20th century, Asheville became known nationally for its advances and hospitals for psychologic care. **Zelda**, the wife of author **F. Scott Fitzgerald**, was treated at Highland Hospital before she tragically lost her life when the hospital burned to the ground.

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Find Your Flow

► The power of the great outdoors to help revitalize the spirit is the inspiration behind **Namaste in Nature's** yoga hikes. Treks include visits to scenic mountain vistas and cascading waterfalls. Also sunset and full moon hikes.

► **Goat Yoga:** Get zen and bend with cute baby goats at Franny's Farm, a working farm with event space, lodging and one of the first

hemp farms in the area. ► **Bending with Beer:** The merging of yoga and beer has grown from a novelty to a weekly occurrence. **New Belgium Brewing Company, Archetype** and **Hi Wire's Big Top** are among some of the breweries with ongoing classes. ► **Asheville Wellness Tours**, known for guided tours to zen-filled businesses downtown, expands to include sound healing sessions, forest bathing, and group tarot readings. ► Many outfitters and wellness centers like **Wai Mauna** offer **stand-up paddle board yoga** on the French Broad River. ► **Sauna House** is a new Nordic-style bathhouse in the South Slope district with sauna, steam room, cold plunge/cold shower, massage and tea cafe. ► **Asheville Yoga Festival** is a new annual festival occurring in July.



Cave Therapy, Hot Tubs with a View + Go Weightless

► The **Asheville Salt Cave** is formed of all natural materials including salt, wood and water with salt crystals ranging in size from 6 ounces up to 300 pounds. The business' **NEW** location offers two caves, and a Hammam (Turkish Bath House) coming soon. Through a collaboration with **Skinny Beats Drum Shop**, they offer **sound healing** using African instruments, drums and crystal singing bowls. ► **The Salt Spa of Asheville** offers the therapeutic power of salt therapy in their Himalayan salt cave sanctuary in South Asheville. ► **Shoji Spa & Lodge** is a refined Japanese spa set in the woods near the Blue Ridge Parkway. Take a soothing outdoor soak in a private **therapeutic salt mineral hot tub**. ► Try the **Salt Water Flotation** experience at **Still Point Wellness**. Occasionally referred to as sensory deprivation, this enriching practice decreases blood pressure, slows breathing and heart rate, calms the mind and body and boosts endorphin levels.



Tea Culture

The other craft brew having a moment in Asheville is tea.

► Sourcing local Appalachian ingredients, **Asheville Tea Company** offers tea blends, flights and tastings. The company uses yaupon, North America's only native tea plant and the only edible caffeinated plant indigenous to the Southeast. ► **Tea-Infused Spa Treatment:** Combine the ultimate spa experience with a tea-steeped face and body mask at Spa Theology. It includes a full body massage, hot stone treatment, reflexology and a warm cup of tea to enjoy after the treatment. ► **Dobra Tea** offers tea classes and tastings at their multiple tearooms across Asheville. ► Embracing the philosophy of Chinese medicine and well-being, **Alchemy** is a tearoom, apothecary and acupuncturist.

Best Hikes to Find Your Moment of Zen

1. Altitude Affects Attitude:

Head to the very top of the Blue Ridge Mountains by hiking the Mt. Mitchell Trail. Towering at 6,683 feet in elevation, it's the tallest peak east of the Mississippi and offers breathtaking views.

2. Connect with Nature: Dedicated to a local trail pioneer, the Art Loeb Trail is a 30-mile adventure and includes Cold Mountain, made famous by Charles Frazier's novel.

3. Inspiring Vistas: Easy day hike options include Black Balsam, a 6,200-foot behemoth, and Craggy Gardens Pinnacle. Both are located along the Blue Ridge Parkway and offer 360-degree views.

Feed Your Soul

Perfect your day of relaxation with a stop at these local juice bars or restaurants.

Elements Juice Bar features an all-organic and vegan menu filled with fresh juices crafted from produce sourced from local farms, house-made nut milks and nut butters.

Also check out **Nourish & Flourish** in the River Arts District, **Mountain Juicery** in South Asheville and **Green Sage Cafe**, with multiple locations around town.

Green Sage's newest location, just north of downtown, features special plant-based menu items as part of a collaboration with Chef Jason Sellers of vegan restaurant **Plant**.

Other great spots to fuel your body include **Laughing Seed**, **Posana** (gluten-free menu), **Rosetta's Kitchen**, **BimBerBon**, **Sunny Point Cafe** and **The Hop** (offering vegan ice cream).

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