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Small-Town Touring

Quirky attractions abound
in North Carolina

By Stacey Zable

IN THE SMALL TOWNS of North Carolina, visitors can explore a handful of unusual museums and attractions that focus on a range of interests from Americana to the state's favorite native sons and daughters.

Some of the offbeat — and off-the-beaten path — choices include:



SCOTTISH TARTANS MUSEUM Franklin

Fans of the *Outlander* books and STARZ television series know that North Carolina has a strong Scottish heritage. The Scottish Tartans Museum, situated in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains, celebrates that heritage and more, including the Scottish migration to North Carolina and the immigrants' relationship with the Cherokee people.

The museum is home to more than 500 tartans that date to the 1720s and explores the development of the kilt. Look up your own surname to learn if you have a Scottish connection, then stop at the gift shop to purchase kilts and accessories, Scottish foods and more.



HOBART JONES

ANDY GRIFFITH MUSEUM Mount Airy

Standing outside the Andy Griffith Museum is a statue of Andy and Opie — the father-son characters from the famed 1960s television series *The Andy Griffith Show* — holding hands, carrying fishing poles and smiling at one another. The statue immediately elicits the same feel-good nostalgia engendered by reruns of the iconic show — and that's what visitors will continue to feel once inside the museum.

Actually, that's what visitors can expect from the moment they step into Mayberry — er, Mount Airy. The small town is where Griffith was born and raised and served as inspiration for the show's setting. The museum houses the largest collection of artifacts and memorabilia related to the star, including props and wardrobe from *The Andy Griffith Show* and the legal TV drama *Matlock*, in which he played the title character. Want more Mayberry? Take a tour in a replica of deputy Barney Fife's squad car or get a haircut at Floyd's City Barber Shop.

Visit during the annual Mayberry Days (slated for Sept. 19-25 this year) for more show-focused fun. You can even stay overnight at the home where Griffith lived during his teen years. It's walking distance to downtown Mount Airy; just be sure to whistle during your stroll.



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BRADY C. JEFCOAT MUSEUM OF AMERICANA Murfreesboro

More than 17,000 items are on display at this weekends-only museum that focuses on American history.

The collection of the late Raleigh plumber-philanthropist Brady Jefcoat is divided into six categories that include early development, historic farm and agriculture, wildlife, entertainment, Native American artifacts and miscellaneous treasures. The museum houses such oddball items as a dog-powered washing machine and a sofa from the film *Gone With the Wind*.

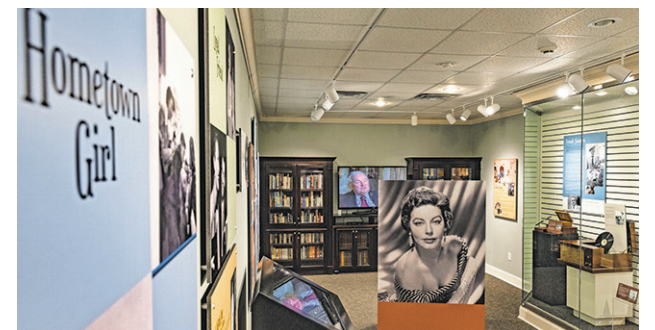


EXPLORE NASH COUNTY

THE COUNTRY DOCTOR MUSEUM Bailey

Take a step back in time to discover more about rural doctors, nursing, pharmaceuticals and home remedies at this museum founded in 1967. It is "dedicated to the history of America's rural health care" focusing on the South in the 19th and early 20th centuries. It features more than 5,000 artifacts, including medical instruments, medical books, apothecary items, diaries and papers.

The museum is located in two restored 19th-century physician's offices that were moved to Bailey and combined into a single building. It's open Tuesday through Friday.



JOHNSTON COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU

AVA GARDNER MUSEUM Smithfield

Christmas Eve will mark what would have been the 100th birthday of actress and humanitarian Ava Gardner. The annual Ava Gardner Festival, taking place Oct. 7-9, kicks off a centennial celebration that will continue through 2023 with special programming and new exhibits at the Ava Gardner Museum.

Gardner grew up near Smithfield, and the museum is dedicated to showcasing the legend's life through personal and professional artifacts, including photos, jewelry and costumes. New this year is the *Ava Gardner Mural* on the side of the museum, which also serves as the backdrop to the museum's new rose garden — yellow roses are said to have been the late star's favorite flowers.