

A Virginia Mountains Holiday

City Dogs And Country Dogs Love To Stay, Play And Shop In The Pet-Friendly Blue Ridge Mountain Towns In Southwestern Virginia



By Ginger Warder

Above Pictured L to R: Molly, Stella & Salvage Dawgs canine TV star, Sally, are often at the Black Dog Salvage warehouse in Grandin to greet both two-legged and four-legged customers

Photo Courtesy of: Black Dog Salvage/Anna Bowser Photography

Think you can only visit Virginia's mountains in the summer or fall? Well, think again. For the first time in its 50-year history, the Peaks of Otter Lodge is now pet friendly and stays open on weekends throughout the winter, while the Roanoke Valley, offering several pet-friendly hotel options, is a great base for exploring the Blue Ridge. Country dogs will work up an appetite on long mountain walks in the crisp winter air and sophisticated city dogs will love shopping for unique, local gifts at Black Dog Salvage or visiting nearby wineries like Chateau Morrisette.



Play

Roanoke's iconic star on Mill Mountain, originally a Christmas decoration, earned the city the nickname "Star City of the South". The mountain trails are perfect for a little holiday R & R and the live Star Cam lets you share the experience with friends and family around the world. In fact, you may run into the city's mayor, David Bowers, who loves to walk the trails with his dog, Catcher. Pet rescue activist and long-time Roanoke resident, Trixie Averill, says her dogs love Roanoke's River Greenway. "If there's one thing I love to do more than any other, it's walking with my Westies on the Roanoke River Greenway. The "kidz" love it because there are lots of interesting smells, grass to roll in and friendly people who often stop to give them a scratch on the head." For an easy day trip, pack the pooch and head to the hills for a visit and tasting at Chateau Morrisette Winery. Dogs are welcome in the tasting room, and if you're looking for gifts for fellow dog lovers or for your furry family, the gift shop has several unique items featuring the winery's signature Black Labrador Retrievers.

Shop

The Virginia Mountains region also offers exceptional shopping from artisanal food products and local wine to antiques and art. Check out Roanoke's outdoor markets and head to the charming suburb of Grandin, home of several pet-loving businesses including Black Dog Salvage. Known for its DIY Network show, Salvage Dawgs, Black Dog Salvage honors its canine mascot and television co-star, Sally, with a line of pet merchandise including dog collars, leashes and toys—all Sally-approved of course—and the huge architectural warehouse features all manner of salvaged house parts and collectibles. Walk down the street and

treat yourself and your pup to a sweet shopping break at Viva La Cupcake, a bakery that offers special "pupcakes" as well as a variety of custom-flavored cupcakes for humans. Further up the Blue Ridge Parkway, the small towns of Bedford and Buchanan are great off-the-beaten path shopping destinations. You'll love the retro feel of Buchanan, known for its many antique shops, and Bedford's Goose Creek Studio features some stunning local artwork and pottery that you won't find anywhere else.

Pictured Left: The Peaks of Otter Lodge

Courtesy of: Peaks of Otter Lodge/Delaware North

Pictured Right: Viva la Cupcake in Roanoke's Grandin neighborhood

Courtesy of:
VisitRoanokeVA.com

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Stay

One of IHG's many pet-friendly properties, the Holiday Inn Valley View in Roanoke will surprise you with its many amenities, including an indoor swimming pool, and the Sheraton Roanoke Hotel & Conference Center is a great location for large canines—the hotel welcomes dogs of up to 80 pounds with no additional fees—and offers amenities including food and water bowls and "Sweet Sleeper" pet beds. If your pooch loves the outdoors, head up the Blue Ridge Parkway to the Peaks of Otter Lodge, now offering pet-centric rooms in Building #3 that feature laminate floors and easy access to the grounds. 

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