

Tales spin from all directions in Asheville

Biltmore Estate center of attention in ‘Paris of the South’

To no one's surprise, the city known as the “Paris of the South” long has been a refuge for the artists and writers.

This is Asheville, a North Carolina town encircled by the loftiest hills in the Appalachians and blessed with incredible scenery. Some of the U.S.’s most unforgettable architecture resides in this nook of nature.

Author Thomas Wolfe’s home is a state historic site. He used Asheville as the setting for his novels, including “You Can’t Go Home Again”. The boarding house that Wolfe called home during his early years – known as “Dixieland” in “Look Homeward Angel” – is the centerpiece of the *Thomas Wolfe Memorial State Historic Site*.

Art Deco, Beaux Arts and Neoclassical styles highlight the city-rich architectural legacy. Exclusive boutiques, arts and craft shops and galleries are housed in charming, restored Italianate storefronts. The shops represent the city’s gilded era.

The 8,000-acre Biltmore Estate is Asheville’s foremost attraction. The 250-room Biltmore House is a 16th-century-style French chateaux. Constructed by George Washington Vanderbilt in the 1880s, it has



BILT STRONG – The Biltmore Estate is one of the leading attractions in Asheville, North Carolina. *Image: Konstantin L. Adobe Stock.*

250 rooms.

It’s the largest single-family home in the U.S. It’s lavishly appointed with priceless art and antiques – including an ivory chess set once owned by Napoleon. Finely kept formal gardens surround this national historic landmark. Biltmore Village is located adjacent to the estate’s main entrance and

is a re-creation of an English country village.

Guests experience festive times of the holidays at the estate from early November through New Year’s Day. Forty Christmas trees illuminate the mansion. Thousands of ornaments and miles of wreaths and garlands spark the holiday spirit. The largest

tree is a live, 38-foot Fraser fir and it’s the centerpiece of the 72-foot-high Banquet Hall. The tree is adorned with lights and surrounded by gifts.

F. Scott Fitzgerald frequently visited Asheville’s Grove Park Inn during the 1930s, while his wife, Zelda, spent time as a patient at Asheville’s Highland Hospital. A tragic fire took his life.

Constructed from hand-hewn boulders in 1913, Grove Park Inn has hosted notables like Henry Ford, Thomas Edison and Franklin D. Roosevelt. The lobby is known as The Great Hall, and for good reason. Measuring 120 feet across, the hall features 24-foot ceilings and two 14-foot stone fireplaces that can burn 12-foot logs. The hotel’s elevators are cleverly hidden inside the stone chimneys.

The Inn also is famous for its holiday celebrations – think eggnog, roaring fires and carols – with more than two dozen uniquely decorated trees and more than 200 gingerbread houses vying for top honors in the National Gingerbread House Competition.

Asheville spins classic yarns while sewing together the past with the present. It’s a town built on creativity. Beauty comes in all shapes and sizes and no one leaves without a tale to tell of their own.

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99.43%

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