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## Girlfriends Getaway to Asheville, North Carolina

Travelled by [Jan Ross](#) on 17 January 2014 | [0 Comments](#)



The Biltmore Estate may be the reason most people are familiar with Asheville, a fascinating little town nestled between the Smoky Mountains and the Blue Ridge Mountains in North Carolina, and it is admittedly a wonderful place to visit, but Asheville has a lot more to offer as well.

We stayed at two equally different and equally wonderful locations on our getaway and I can absolutely recommend both. Our first stay was at the Hilton Asheville Biltmore Park. Located in Biltmore Park, a new area near the Biltmore Estate conveniently full of little shops, restaurants and a movie theater right by the hotel itself, the hotel is in lovely, pristine condition as it is new. We checked in with no problem, settled into our comfy room and then strolled around, checking out the free Internet connection, fitness center, pool and the Sensibilities Spa. One of the most surprising things about this particular Hilton is that pets are allowed and we immediately saw people with their well-behaved dogs on leashes. Asheville is very pet-friendly and we saw dogs all over town, most especially on the terraces of the restaurants downtown. This is the place to go if you like to travel with your pet.

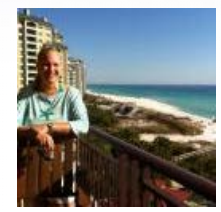
We had a reservation at Roux that evening, the gourmet restaurant located inside the Hilton, and this was one of the best decisions we made the whole time we were in Asheville. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, Roux uses as much local food as possible and has an innovative menu which features southern comfort food presented in a lovely and delicious manner. Try the cheese platter prepared with delicious local cheeses and be sure to sample their wonderful bread pudding!

One of the other smart things we did at the Hilton was visit the spa for an afternoon. Enter the door of the spa, discreetly tucked away beside the lobby of the Hilton and you smell that fabulous and relaxing spa smell. Hushed and quite lovely, this relaxing place is the perfect way to spend an afternoon, a day or possibly an entire week.

The other place we laid our tired heads for the night was the beautiful and historic Reynolds Mansion Bed and Breakfast Inn. Hidden away right

### Travelled By

**Jan Ross**



Jan Ross has been traveling since she was an infant as her father was a career Marine Corps officer and her family traveled the globe. ...[Find out more!](#)



behind Biltmore Park at the base of Reynolds Mountain, this gorgeous brick mansion has incredible, luxurious furnishings and a fascinating history. The innkeepers, Billy Sanders and Michael Griffith, bought the mansion in 2009 after their realtor aunt showed it to them and they fell in love. After extensive and careful renovation and decoration which stayed true to the history of the mansion, they moved in with their two English bulldogs, Scarlett and Rhett, who still welcome visitors. The mansion was built in 1847 on 1500 acres and stayed in the Reynolds family until 1960, then went through two owners until it was transformed into a bed and breakfast in 1970. In 1984 it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places and it is one of the few brick houses in North Carolina which survived the Civil War.

The grand mansion sits in the center of the existing 4 acres, surrounding by beautiful landscaping, an in-ground pool, and an incredible view from the expansive front porch. Each of the bedrooms has been beautifully and luxuriously furnished and has a private bath, many with claw foot bathtubs. We stayed in the Claudette bedroom which had two beds – a Queen and a single, a fireplace, a nice sitting area with a flat screen television, and access to an upstairs porch where you can watch the sun set over the mountains. We were encouraged to help ourselves to ice, drinks, and wine which were available in the dining room all day.

Breakfast the next morning was served in the grand dining room with an impeccable table setting of china, silver, fresh flowers, and an engaging conversation with Billy, who is extremely knowledgeable about the history of the mansion. We were served a beautiful bowl of cut-up fruit, a lovely pastry, and then a plate filled with a yummy slice of sausage, an egg, and some sort of fabulous onion burrito concoction. Everything was hot, fresh, and delicious. It was the perfect place to relax and reflect on the history of this area.



After our breakfast, we spent the whole day at the Biltmore Estate and you absolutely cannot go to Asheville without doing this. You can purchase your tickets there or online and they include not only a tour of the mansion, but also the gardens and a tour at wine tasting at the Winery. This huge estate is absolutely gorgeous and extremely impressive. It's hard to believe this behemoth was, at one time, a completely private residence. We were immediately impressed with the Biltmore Estate as we entered through some gorgeous gates, then wound our way through acres and acres of lush fields and beautiful forests (there are actually an incredible 8,000 acres) before finally arriving at the house which is, in reality, more like a palace than a house.

George Vanderbilt's 250 room mansion is just as impressive today as it was when it was first built back in 1895. Your tour includes an audio portion so be sure to put on the headphones and listen to the fascinating history of this place.



After the tour of the house, walk over to the Stable Cafe for lunch. There is plenty of dining choices on the estate but what could possibly be better than dining in what used to be the stables for the estate? Once you have finished lunch in the stable, you will want to spend some time walking around the incredible gardens. Everywhere you turn, there are beautiful, shaded walks, benches, fountains and incredible flowers.

Plan to devote an entire day at the Biltmore Estate because there is so much to see and do. We didn't even make it to Antler Hill Village and Winery, which would be fabulous if you are into wine tasting and taking some local wines home with you. There's also plenty of place to shop and eat and just enjoy your day. We were so impressed, we would like to go back and spend more time – I'm sure it's absolutely incredible at Christmas.

Don't miss the Asheville Visitor Center where we went for a trolley tour with Grayline Trolley Tours of Asheville. Tickets are available at the visitor center, the trolleys run every half hour, and your ticket is good for two days of hop on/hop off touring – a great way to see a destination! We were amazed to see so many beautiful homes throughout Asheville and learn all about the history of this wonderful mountain location.



Hop off in town in time to have lunch at the famous Tupelo Honey Café.

Sit on the patio and soak in the kitschy, slightly hippie, laid-back vibe that is downtown Asheville. Comprised of students from UNC Asheville, tourists, local residents, and plenty of friendly dogs (which are welcome everywhere), there's plenty to see here from the patio of the café. Everything on the menu is good but the biscuits are so good, they might make you plan another trip to Asheville.

Which is not a bad idea, come to think of it!

Tell the world!

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