

1000 HOURS OUTSIDE™



Family Outside Activity Guide

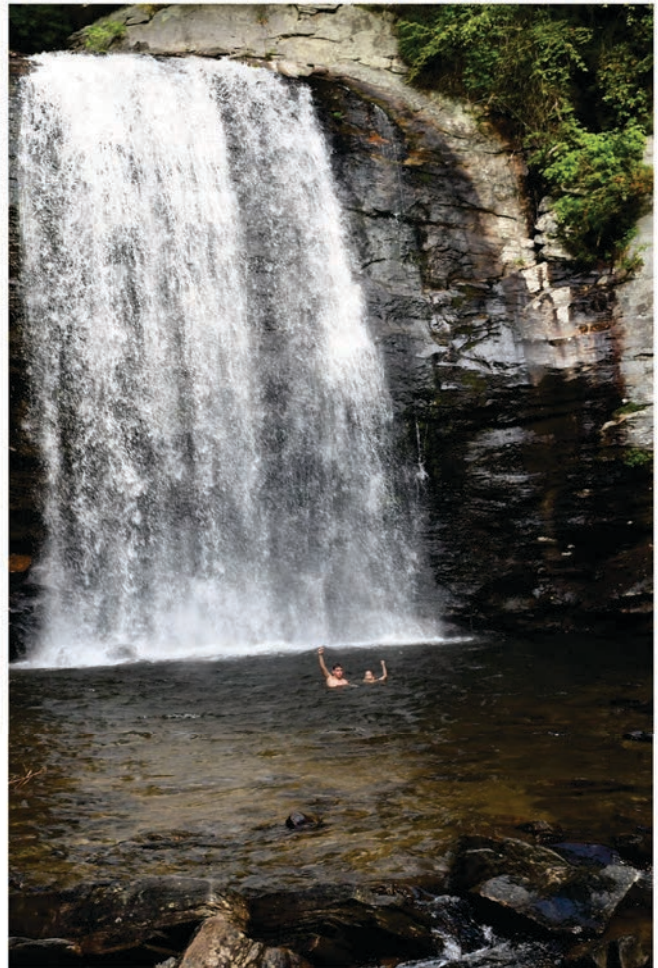
**10 Low-Cost, Family-Friendly Memorable
Outside Activities near Asheville, NC**



Low Cost Asheville Nature Fun!

Some of our top all-time family highlights have been when we have visited Asheville, North Carolina. We've hiked to waterfalls and ridden waterfalls and we've spent gobs of time playing in nature. Our first visit to Asheville was with five children ages nine and under and we found easy access to all sorts of outdoor activities, a great mix of relaxing to challenging. We've already been back once and continue to often talk about returning again to these trails and locations! Be sure to call ahead to verify costs and accessibility.

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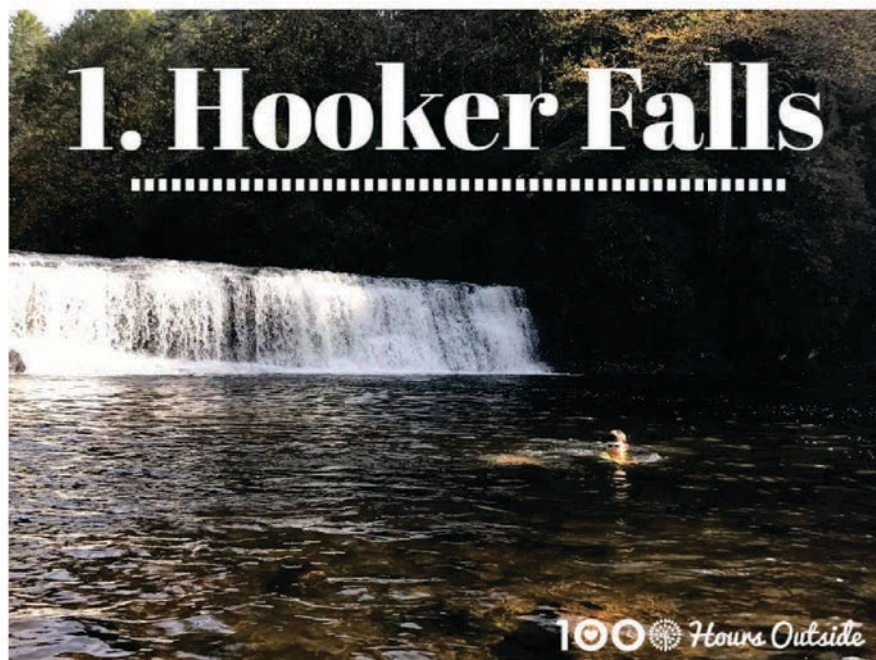
Hooker Falls

HOOKER FALLS IN THE DUPONT STATE FOREST

Staton Rd, Cedar Mountain, NC 28718

(828) 877-6527

Hooker falls is a gem of a place that offers so much for the family! The waterfall and swimming spot is an absolute blast. Kids as young as five or six can scale some rocks and get right up to the base of the falls and even go under the falls if they are brave enough! Bring a raft or tube, a mask, a snorkel, and some water shoes and spend the afternoon in the swimming hole. There is a beautiful trail headed back to the falls that is flat and easy to traverse. It winds along the river and there were lots of spots for the kids to climb out on rocks or wade in the shallow water.



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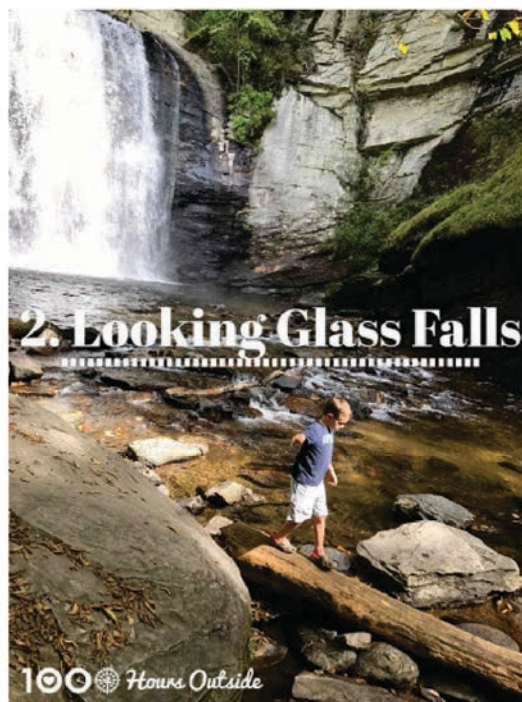
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Looking Glass Falls

LOOKING GLASS FALLS
US-276, Brevard, NC 28712

Most people would do a quick pull-off, snap a few pictures of this breathtaking beauty, and then head out. But our family spent quite a bit of time at Looking Glass Falls and our kids loved it. There is no hiking required to reach this waterfall, just a set of stairs. Once you get to the bottom there are tons of rocks and trees to climb on. We didn't swim here because the current is pretty strong but the kids loved climbing over the rocks and heading downstream a bit. It truly is a serene location with lush greenery, the sound of rushing water, and the smells of nature.



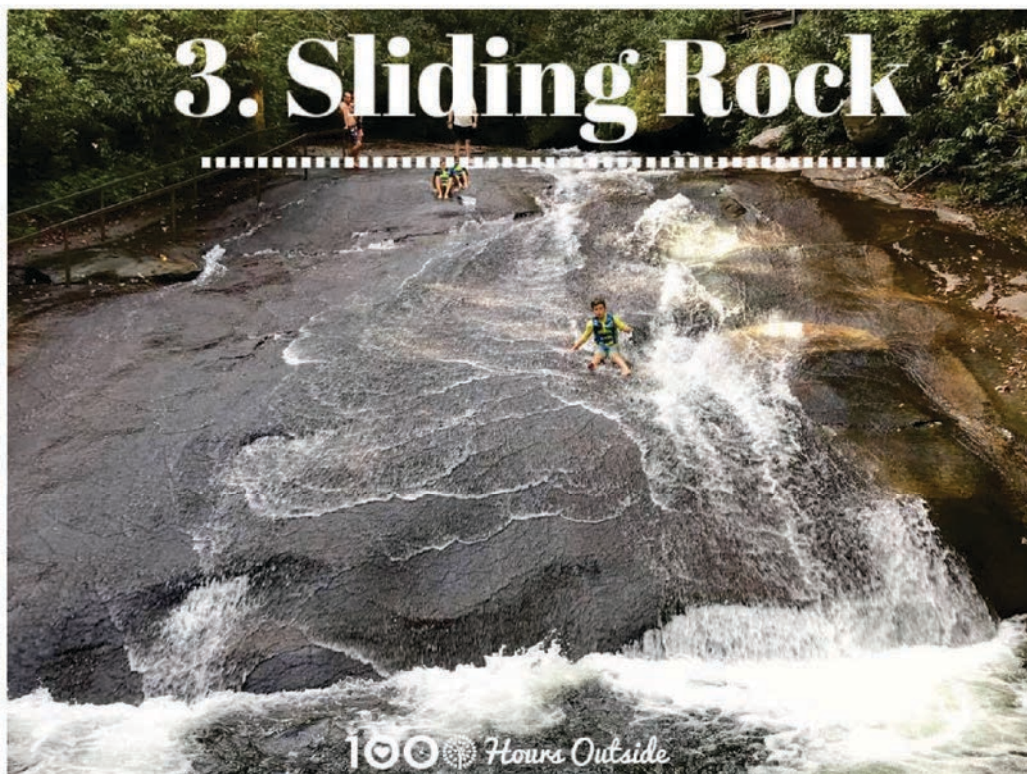
Sliding Rock

SLIDING ROCK

Highway 276, Pisgah Forest, NC 28768

(828) 877-3265

This is a bucket list place. The waterfall here is a 60 foot rock slope that ends in a deep pool of water... that you can ride!!!! This is just about some of the most family fun we've ever had. Bring a towel, some water shoes, and a thick swimsuit or even jean cut off shorts and spend the day riding the waterfall. We went barefoot and in swimsuits and were fine but many recommend the items above. It is chilly but it is oh so memorable! There are bathrooms and lots of places to sit and watch if you aren't up for sliding down.



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Skippy Dip Falls

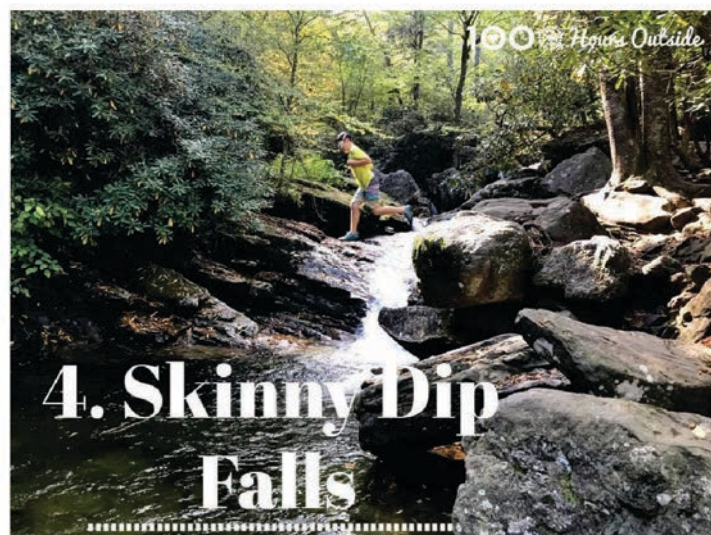
SKIPPY DIP FALLS

Blue Ridge Pkwy, Canton, NC 28716

(828) 348-3400

If you're looking for an incredible hike with a huge payoff then head to Skippy Dip Falls. You need to park near the mile marker 17 at the Looking Glass Overlook. The trailhead is directly opposite the overlook. There is no sign but you will be able to see the trail. This was a hefty mile long hike with little ones with some significant elevation changes. Wear shoes and watch for roots and rocks.

Once you reach the falls you could stay there all day. There were so many places to explore, climb and splash. Our oldest loved jumping off the highest rock into the water below and the younger ones played in the water for hours. Pack a lunch and make a day out of it!!



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Bust Your Butt Falls

BUST YOUR BUTT FALLS
Cullasaja River, Highlands, NC 28741
romanticasheville.com

Similar to Looking Glass Falls you park along the main road (US Highway 64 near Highlands) for this waterfall. There is no path here - just a bunch of huge boulders that you need to be flexible enough to navigate and climb down. It's a great spot to adventure because kids can swim in the swimming hole, ride the falls or climb the rocks but there are also enough large flat spaces to set up a picnic, set up a hammock and listen to the waterfall, or sit in the shade and read a book. Water shoes will help you traverse the rocks.



Dry Falls

DRY FALLS

Dry Falls is located along the Mountain Scenic By-Way (Hwy 64 between Franklin and Highlands) in the Cullasaja Gorge.

These are outstanding falls and extremely family friendly, with a handicapped overlook at the top of trail. Don't pass this one by!! These falls are beautiful and easily accessible by a short paved path and some stairs. The kids loved going underneath/behind the falls. It was a unique experience.



Graveyard Fields Loop Trail

GRAVEYARD FIELDS LOOP TRAIL (LOWER FALLS)

Blue Ridge Pkwy, Canton, NC 28716

(828) 257-4200

nps.gov

This place was a highlight of our trip. The beauty was indescribable. There are many trails here. We chose the easiest trail to the Lower Falls (approx. 10 minute hike). Our one year old was able to walk a portion of the way. It is helpful to take a picture of the map before you head out so you don't get lost. What we loved about this trail was all the places to stop and play along the way - shallow little creek beds with large rocks for the kids to climb all over. They loved it. We could've played all day.

We had read that parking was tough and that is correct. Even off season on a weekday we had to wait for a spot. So take that into consideration when choosing when to visit. There are nice restrooms at the trailhead.



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Cradle of Forestry

CRADLE OF FORESTRY

11250 Pisgah Hwy, Pisgah Forest, NC 28768
(828) 877-3130
cradleofforestry.com

The Cradle of Forestry in the Pisgah National Forest is easily accessible from the Blue Ridge Parkway and has so much to offer. Our kids loved the interactive Nature Center and had a blast doing the scavenger hunt. There are three easily navigated paved hiking loops that wind you through all sorts of historical exhibits and buildings. The stops along the way are interesting to see, touch and walk through and along the way you will learn the history of the area as well as the history of forest management in America.



WNC Nature Center

WNC NATURE CENTER

75 Gashes Creek Rd, Asheville, NC 28805

(828) 259-8080

wncnaturecenter.com

The WNC Nature Center gets you out into nature and has quite a bit to offer. There are beautiful walking paths throughout (handicapped accessible) as you explore more than 60 animal species as well as the flora and fauna of the southern Appalachian region. You can get up close to many of the animals and there is even a farm animals petting area (not open year round). The kids loved the animals, the animal statues, and the little playground.



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