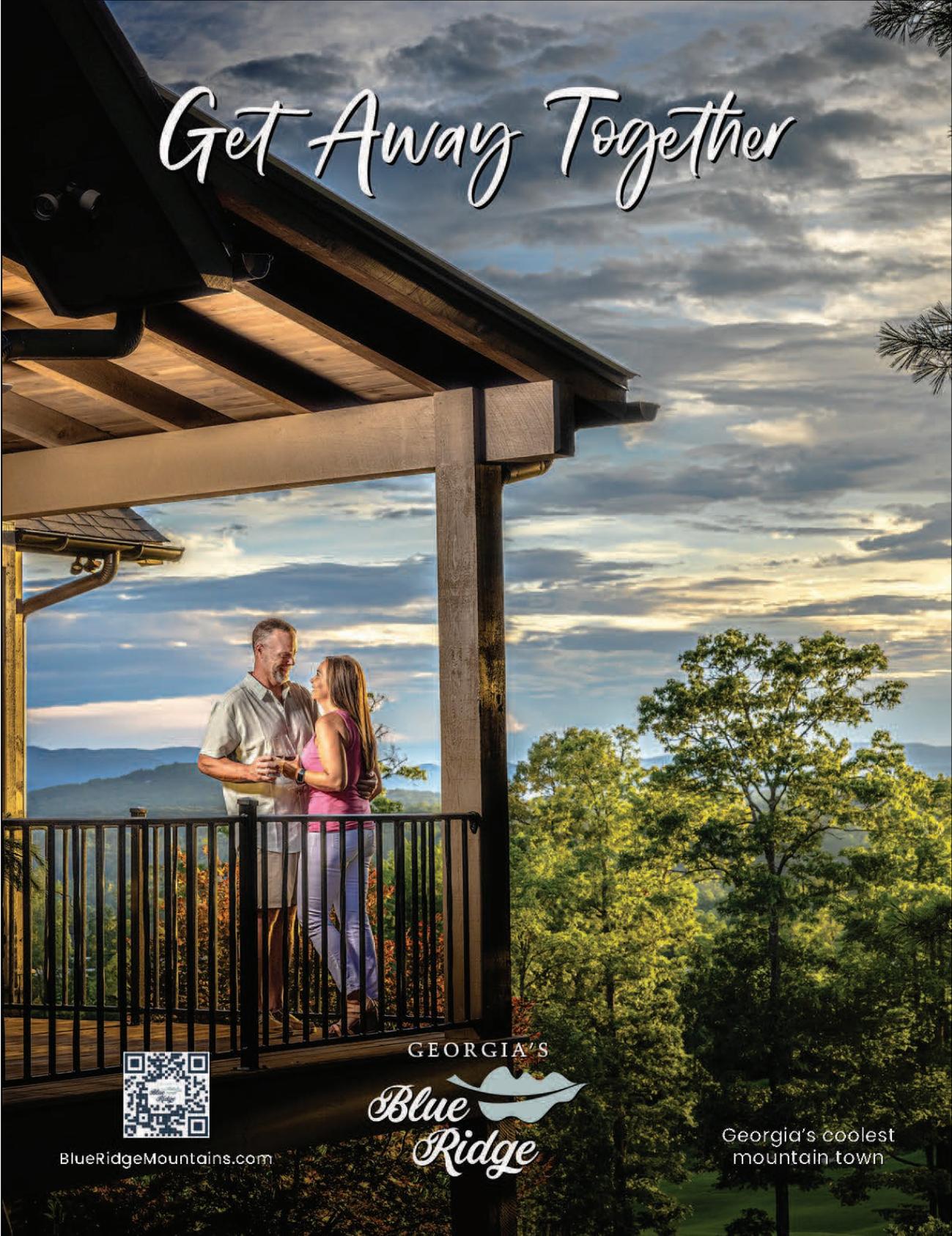


2026 Destination Marketing Plan



Get Away Together



BlueRidgeMountains.com

GEORGIA'S
Blue Ridge

Georgia's coolest
mountain town

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Addendums

1 – GA4 Analytics

2 – Visitor Profiles

3 - Zartico Website Attribution

Important Note: Paradise Advertising was engaged in Summer 2025 to do a brand refresh for the Chamber and Georgia’s Blue Ridge. The refreshed brand will be implemented in 2026. This plan uses 2025 brand elements. In addition, Paradise will take on agency work with the Tourism division of the Chamber, which may impact some of the marketing plan elements for the latter part of 2026.

Positioning Statement

Just 90 miles north of Atlanta, Blue Ridge is Georgia’s coolest mountain town—an inviting blend of natural beauty, outdoor adventure, and elevated small-town charm. With panoramic views, pristine lakes, craft food and drink, boutique shopping, and upscale cabin retreats, it’s the perfect place for couples, families, and friends to reconnect, unwind, and make unforgettable mountain memories.

Introduction

Georgia’s Blue Ridge is one of the Southeast’s leading small-town mountain destinations—and the most visited overnight destination in the Georgia Mountains, according to GDECD’s 2024 Economic Impact Study. Just 90 miles north of Atlanta, Blue Ridge has grown steadily for more than two decades, supported by a thriving second-home market (approximately 5,000 second homes and 3,000 short-term rentals as of 2025) and consistent year-over-year increases in visitation and Hotel-Motel Tax collections.

The destination’s appeal is rooted in its distinctive blend of natural beauty, outdoor recreation, and small-town sophistication. With 106,000 acres of Chattahoochee National Forest, access to the Appalachian and Benton MacKaye Trails, waterfalls, Lake Blue Ridge, the trout-rich Toccoa River, and nearby Ocoee whitewater, Blue Ridge offers some of the most sought-after outdoor experiences in the region. At the same time, visitors enjoy acclaimed restaurants, breweries, wineries, local makers, and boutique shopping that elevate the town’s “Georgia’s Coolest Mountain Town” brand.

Signature attractions reinforce Blue Ridge’s position as a regional draw. The Blue Ridge Scenic Railway welcomed over 150,000 riders in 2025, while Mercier Orchards recorded more than 367,101 in 2024 transactions across its orchard, bakery, market, and tasting room. Combined, these anchor experiences support a tourism economy that exceeds 2.8 million annual out of market visitors, according to Placer.

Blue Ridge’s primary markets include Atlanta—representing one-third of all visitors—as well as the broader Southeast, with significant visitation from Georgia, Florida, Alabama, and Tennessee. With unmatched outdoor assets, strong lodging inventory, a vibrant downtown, and a century-old tradition of welcoming travelers, Georgia’s Blue Ridge is well-positioned for continued sustainable growth and brand leadership in 2026.

2026 Goals

- Refine Blue Ridge's positioning as a premier destination for relaxation, adventure, and authentic mountain experiences for upscale couples and families, young professionals and seasoned travelers.
- Implement new branding to reflect key messaging and target market preferences.
- Increase awareness in target markets identified through data sources and analytics.
- Attract target audiences, boost visitation, and encourage overnight stays.
- Develop ad campaigns that are considerate of local sentiments and sensitive to environmental concerns.
- Encourage longer stays, increased visitor spending and off-peak visitation.
- Through the Hotel/Motel Tax Product Development program and other initiatives, take a leadership role in caring for and upgrading local resources.
- Assist other local non-profit organizations and leverage available local marketing resources by investing in a Cooperative Marketing Grants program that encourages the development of quality events and facilities.

Metrics: The Fannin Chamber and CVB has a research-based marketing strategy utilizing state-of-the-art analytics from the following sources. These sources have been used to provide much of the information in the plan.

Google Analytics G4 – Used for tracking ad effectiveness. Provides information useful for improving the website and determining visitors' interest and activity.

Zartico Destination Management Dashboard – Provides analysis of origin markets, visitor points of interest and spending. Compares website activity and GPS tracking to provide information on ad effectiveness. Also aggregates information from other sources.

Air DNA - Provides statistics on vacation rentals through online travel applications (OTAs) like Air BnB, VRBO, Expedia and others. **Key Data** shows direct bookings through management companies and online booking sources.

Placer AI – Uses GPS tracking to show details of local business activity, visitor demographics and insights.

Georgia Department of Economic Development - Publishes an annual Economic Impact report on Georgia cities and counties.

Chat GPT – Utilized for research, analysis and data synthesis using Visit Blue Ridge data.

QR Code Scan Tracking – Utilized currently on print ads and in-house print collateral.

Fannin County Visitation Trends – Last 12 Months

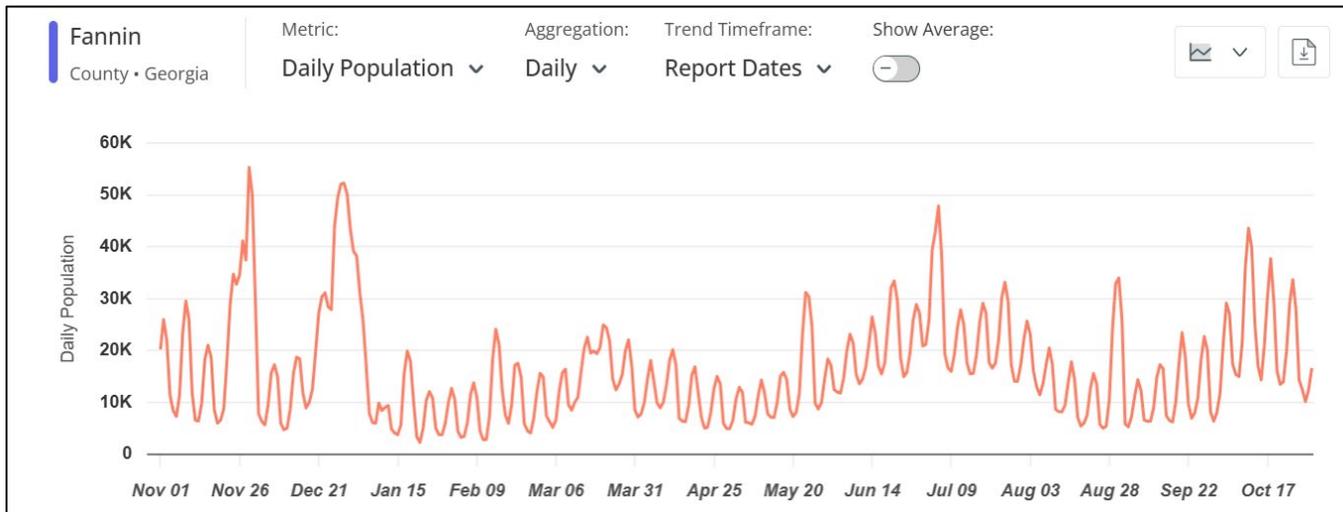
Out of Market Visitors – 1.9 million (-2.2%)

Average Days in Market – 3.1

Visitors Median Household Income - \$86,700

Persons per Household – 2.5

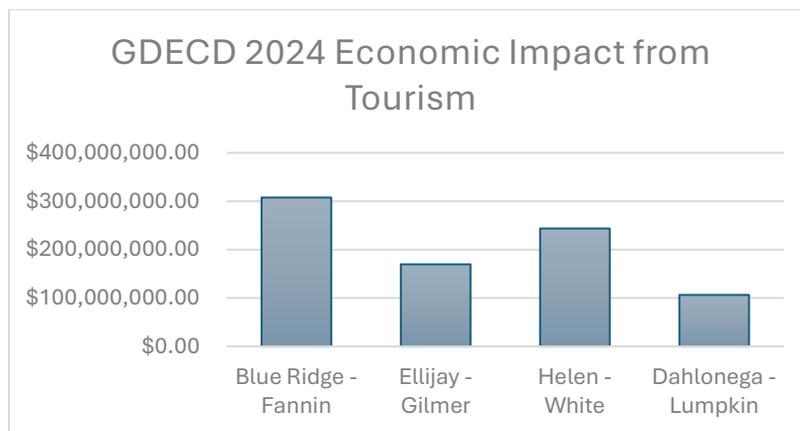
Visitors are defined as those traveling from over 50 miles.



Source: Placer AI

Georgia Department of Economic Development 2024 Impact Study

According to the 2024 Georgia Department of Economic Development Impact Study, Blue Ridge-Fannin County leads the mountain counties with \$307.8 million in economic impact from tourism (including day visits), followed by Helen-White County, with \$243.8 million, Ellijay-Gilmer County with \$169.7 million and Dahlonega-Lumpkin County with \$106.4 million.



Source: Tourism Economics

Fannin County Hotel/Motel Tax Collections for 2025

2025 Chamber Collections from Fannin County Hotel/Motel Tax				
	Chamber full	TCT - Marketing	TPD – Product Dev	Compared to 2024
	3% Check/50%	41.665%	8.335%	
February (for January)	\$251,896.31	\$209,905.20	\$41,991.11	13.23%
March (for February)	\$203,047.96	\$169,199.87	\$33,848.09	-0.19%
April (for March)	\$247,901.71	\$206,576.49	\$41,325.22	-1.78%
May (for April)	\$193,134.24	\$160,938.76	\$32,195.48	3.57%
June (for May)	\$226,324.44	\$188,596.16	\$37,728.28	13.68%
July (for June)	\$307,857.96	\$256,538.04	\$51,319.92	9.77%
August (for July)	\$320,539.75	\$267,105.77	\$53,433.98	8.39%
September (for August)	\$254,491.94	\$212,068.13	\$42,423.81	-19.27%
October (for September)	\$278,758.71	\$232,289.63	\$46,469.08	-12.14%
November (for Oct)	\$410,761.46	\$342,287.52	\$68,473.94	4.41%
December (for Nov)	\$393,737.32	\$328,101.31	\$65,636.01	15.18%
January (for Dec)		\$0.00	\$0.00	
Total for 2025	\$3,088,451.80	\$2,573,606.88	\$514,844.915	2.7% YTD

Fannin County SPLOST Collections for 2025

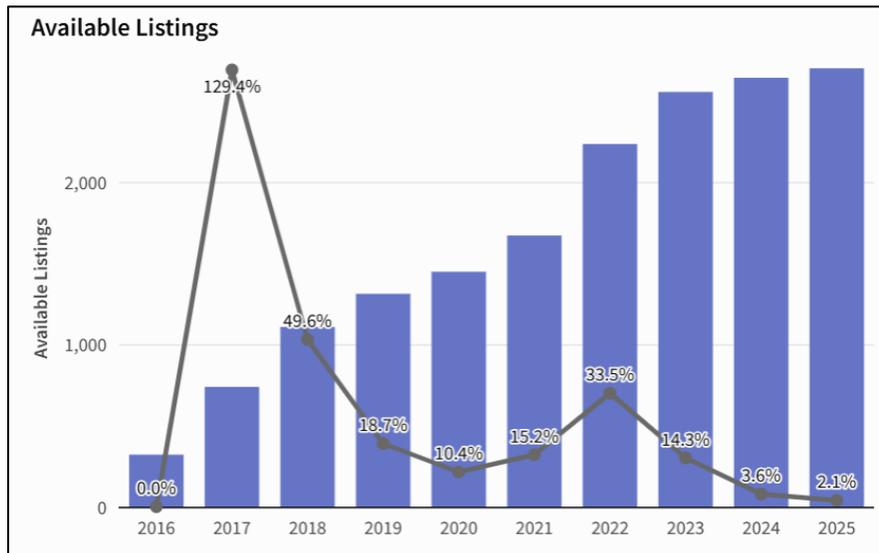
SPLOST			
	2024	2025	%
January	\$ 769,236.29	\$ 781,581.47	1.6%
February	\$ 753,692.06	\$ 772,712.46	2.5%
March	\$ 831,008.44	\$ 895,863.14	7.8%
April	\$ 824,098.77	\$ 836,031.40	1.4%
Catch up	\$ 2,310.48	\$ 1,028.79	-55.5%
May	\$ 852,931.50	\$ 854,197.99	0.1%
June	\$ 941,100.80	\$ 950,832.00	1.0%
July	\$ 987,434.95	\$ 1,004,102.61	1.7%
August	\$ 904,595.59	\$ 915,482.49	1.2%
September	\$ 832,775.39	\$ 897,218.34	7.7%
October	\$ 1,045,972.23	\$ 1,021,664.76	-2.3%
Catch up	\$ 2,331.64	\$ 4,600.72	97.3%
November	\$ 938,087.34	\$ 1,007,519.97	7.4%
December	\$ 989,288.61		
Total	\$ 10,674,864.09	\$ 8,388,542.21	3% YTD

Air DNA Short Term Rental Statistics

Most overnight visitors stay in one of 3,000 short term rental properties in the county. Following are trends for vacation rentals in Blue Ridge and Fannin County according to Air DNA, which tracks short term rentals on Air B&B, VRBO, Expedia and some locally managed companies.

Air DNA STR Listings (Properties) 2017 – 2025

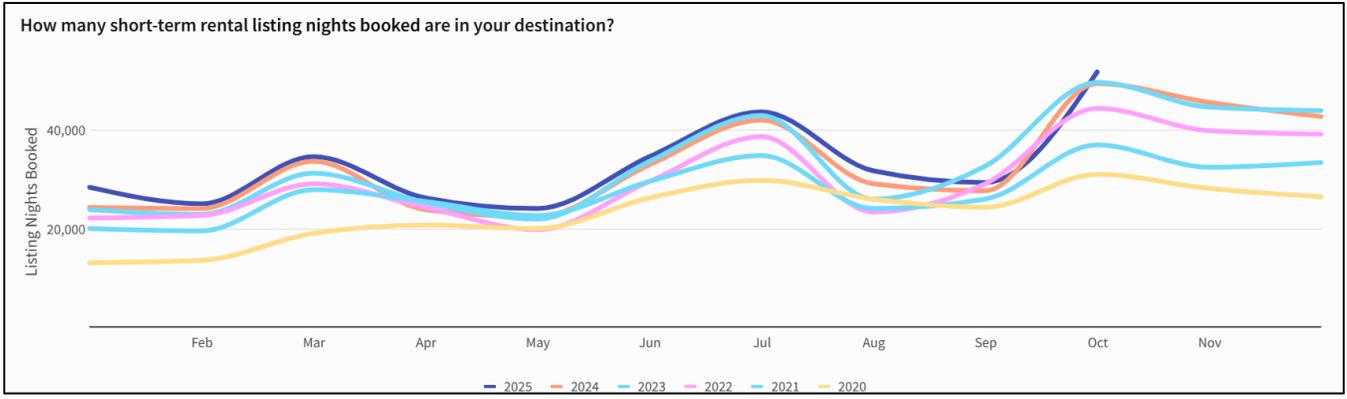
The number of short term rental properties has doubled since 2020, with a big bump in 2022. The last two years have seen the number of available listings grow by only 5.7%. Fannin County currently has almost 3,000 short term rental properties that are STRs.



Air DNA STR Available Listing Nights 2016 – 2025 (Supply)

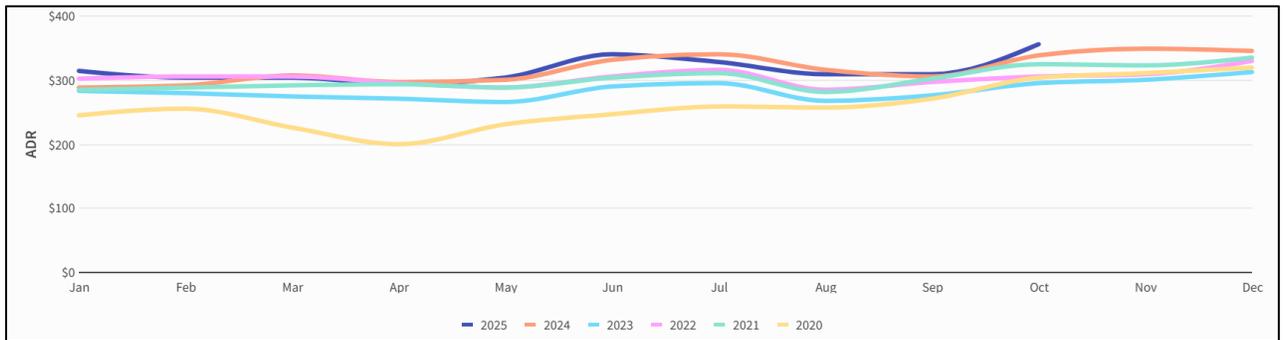
Air DNA STR Booked Listing Nights (Demand)

The number of booked nights is up YTD 328,946 over 308,857 in 2024, and 309,703 in 2023.



Average Daily Rates

Average Daily Rate for the year 2025 is \$337, vs \$322 in 2024 and \$303 in 2023.



Competition

Competition in the southeast includes small mountain destinations in Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee, and larger destinations like Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg, Tenn.

Air DNA STR Revenue Comps 2025



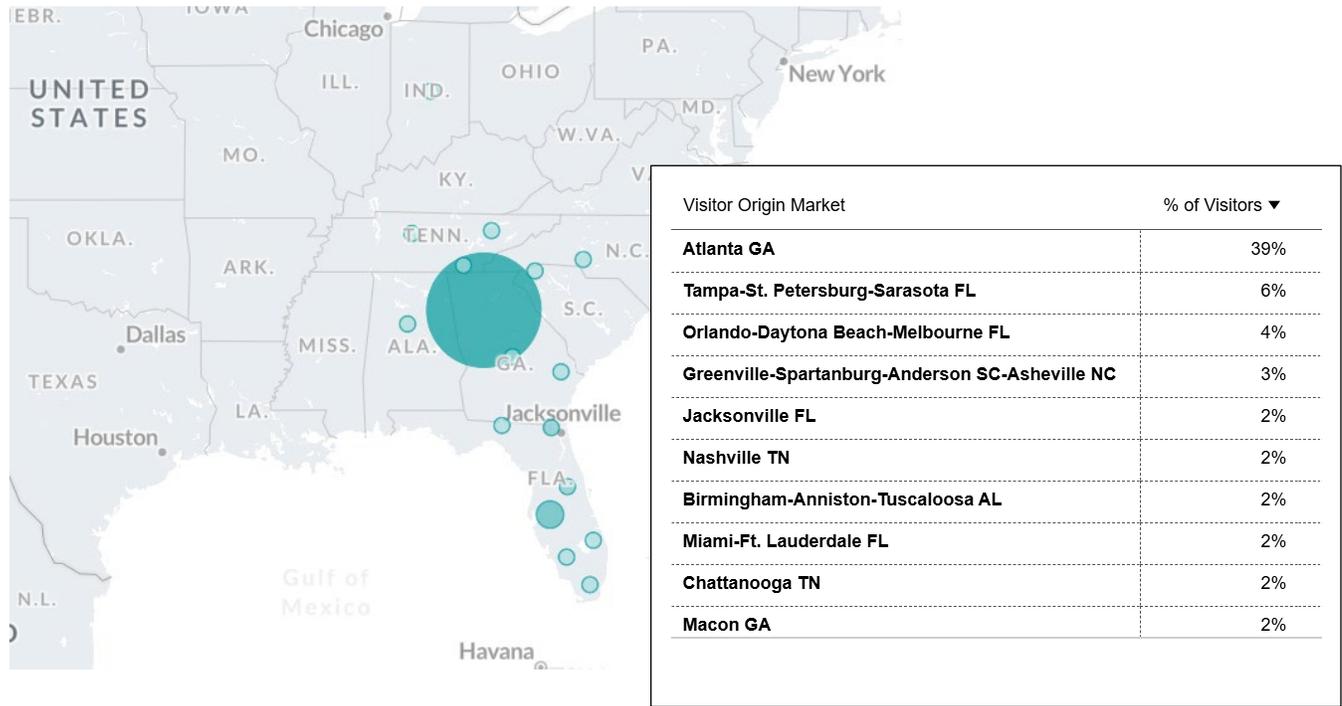
2025 Average Daily Rates

Gatlinburg, TN	\$335
Blue Ridge/Fannin County	\$319
Pigeon Forge, TN	\$314
Ellijay/Gilmer County	\$289
Dahlonega/Lumpkin County	\$276
Helen/White County	\$270
Blairsville/Union County	\$211

Available Listings (Properties)



Visitor Origin Target Markets

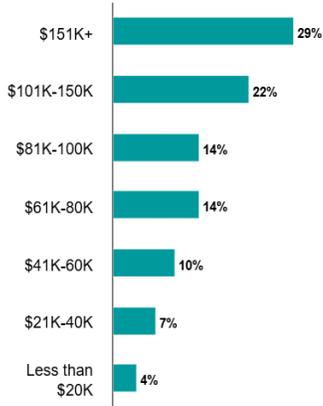


Top 20 Visitor Origin Markets	% of Visitors	Quality Visit Index	Av Daily Spend Local	Web Engagement
Atlanta GA	39%	▲ 100	\$64	67%
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Sarasota FL	6%	▼ 96	\$60	61%
Orlando-Daytona Beach-Melbourne FL	4%	▼ 99	\$62	59%
Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson SC-Asheville NC	3%	▼ 95	\$61	58%
Jacksonville FL	2%	▼ 99	\$74	47%
Nashville TN	2%	▲ 100	\$69	48%
Birmingham-Anniston-Tuscaloosa AL	2%	▲ 104	\$69	67%
Miami-Ft. Lauderdale FL	2%	▼ 94	\$60	56%
Chattanooga TN	2%	▲ 109	\$53	64%
Macon GA	2%	▲ 106	\$71	52%
West Palm Beach-Fort Pierce FL	2%	▼ 92	\$56	43%
Charlotte NC	2%	▲ 102	\$59	62%
Ft. Myers-Naples FL	2%	▼ 91	\$97	46%
Knoxville TN	2%	▼ 98	\$64	49%
Tallahassee FL-Thomasville GA	1%	▲ 101	\$82	55%
Savannah GA	1%	▼ 99	\$75	50%
Indianapolis IN	1%	▲ 103	\$84	58%
Columbus GA	1%	▲ 104	\$76	67%
Huntsville-Decatur-Florence AL	1%	▲ 105	\$82	70%
New York NY	1%	▲ 103	\$94	41%
Mobile AL-Pensacola-Ft. Walton Beach FL	1%	▲ 104	\$69	54%

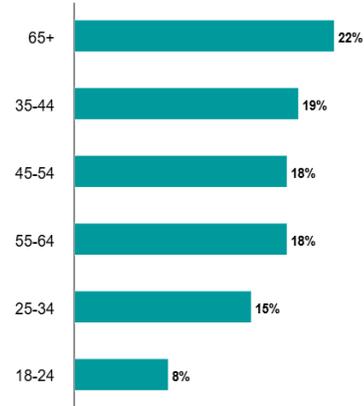
Source: Zartico

Visitor Demographics

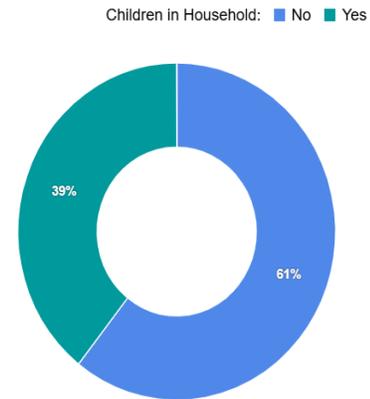
% of Visitors by Household Income



% of Visitors by Age



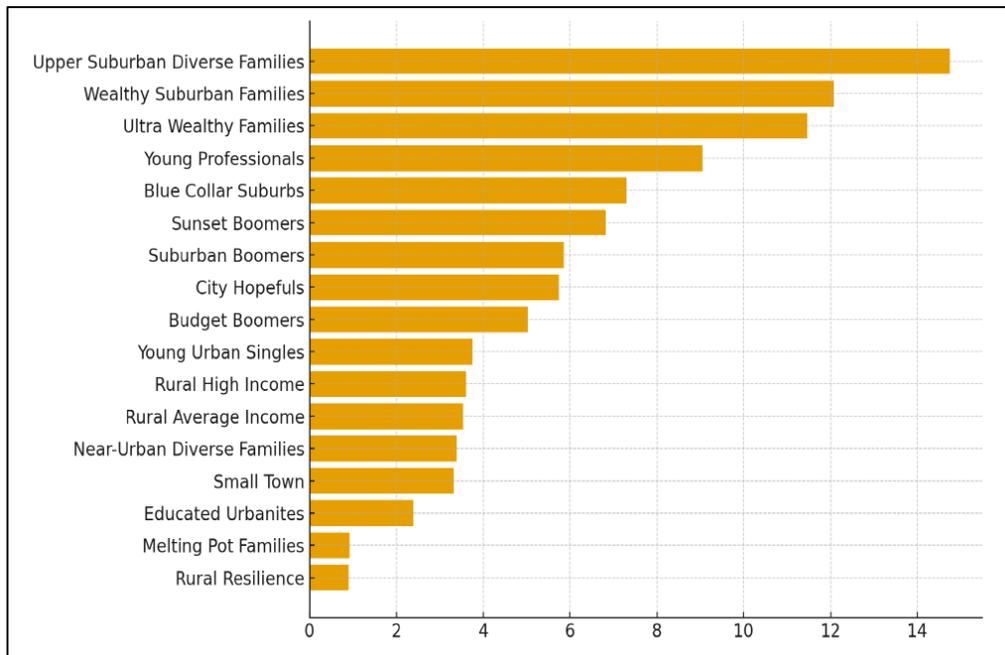
% of Visitors by Children in Household



Source: Zartico

***See Addendum 1 – GA4 Analytics**

Fannin County Visitor Segments, Pacer.AI



Blue Ridge's Core Strength: Affluent Suburban Households

Rank	Segment	%	Insight
#1	C – Upper Suburban Diverse Families	14.75%	Continues to be the biggest base. Family-forward, diverse, solidly upper-middle class. Strong fit for cabins, wineries, outdoor recreation.

Rank	Segment	%	Insight
#2	B – Wealthy Suburban Families	12.08%	Dual-income, well-educated households. Reflect strong alignment with Blue Ridge’s boutique retail, upscale dining, and premium cabin inventory.
#3	A – Ultra Wealthy Families	11.47%	This is a very large share compared to national averages. Confirms Blue Ridge’s positioning as the region’s luxury cabin and high-spend destination.

Rising Younger Lifestyle Travelers

H – Young Professionals (9.05%)	Young professionals without kids; weekenders, foodies, brewery explorers.
I – Young Urban Singles (3.76%)	Social, adventurous, short-stay travelers; respond well to Instagrammable moments & cabin experiences.

Source: Placer AI (Claritas PRISM) and Chat GPT

Middle-Income + Blue-Collar Segments Holding Steady

F – Blue Collar Suburbs (7.31%)	Solid regional base; indicates Blue Ridge still appeals to non-affluent households for outdoor recreation.
Q – City Hopefuls (5.74%)	Upwardly mobile younger households from exurban counties—aligned with seasonal promotions and short-stay itineraries.
K – Budget Boomers (5.03%)	Price-conscious older travelers; respond well to mid-range dining and value lodging.
O – Small Town (3.33%)	Regional, familiar, heritage travelers.

Boomer Segments Are Stable but Slightly Declining

J – Sunset Boomers (6.82%)	Higher spend, longer stays; likely cabin owners or repeat guests.
D – Suburban Boomers (5.86%)	Traditional travelers drawn to scenic drives, lake time, trails.

Diverse + Urbanized Segments

E – Near-Urban Diverse Families (3.40%)	Diversity in metro Atlanta is influencing visitation; inclusive family marketing has impact.
G – Educated Urbanites (2.39%)	High-spend intown Atlanta creatives; small segment but valuable.

Smallest Share Segments

P – Melting Pot Families (0.93%)	Culturally diverse, value-driven families—lowest share; could grow with specific outreach.
N – Rural Resilience (0.91%)	Lower-income rural families; typically lower spend, short-stay, day trip patterns.

Three-County Segmentation Comparables

Segment	Fannin %	Gilmer %	White %
Upper Suburban Diverse Families	14.75%	14.50%	13.97%
Wealthy Suburban Families	12.08%	11.74%	11.64%
Ultra Wealthy Families	11.47%	6.97%	8.02%
Young Professionals	9.05%	7.13%	6.47%
Blue Collar Suburbs	7.31%	8.39%	8.66%
Sunset Boomers	6.82%	5.31%	3.84%
Suburban Boomers	5.86%	6.17%	5.58%
City Hopefuls	5.74%	7.35%	8.44%
Budget Boomers	5.03%	5.59%	4.95%
Young Urban Singles	3.76%	4.18%	4.13%
Rural High Income	3.61%	4.50%	3.64%
Rural Average Income	3.54%	5.24%	6.87%
Near-Urban Diverse Families	3.40%	4.28%	3.57%
Small Town	3.33%	4.30%	4.64%
Educated Urbanites	2.39%	1.87%	2.04%
Melting Pot Families	0.93%	1.08%	1.55%
Rural Resilience	0.91%	1.33%	2.00%

Top Strategic Insights Across All Three Counties

1. Blue Ridge is the region's most upscale destination.

Highest share of:

- Ultra Wealthy Families
- Young Professionals
- Sunset Boomers

2. Ellijay/Gilmer is the most balanced and broadly appealing.

Strong in:

- Blue Collar
- City Hopefuls
- Near-Urban Diverse Families

3. Helen/White County is the most value-driven and youth-oriented.

Highest in:

- Blue Collar Suburbs

- City Hopefuls
- Rural Average Income
- Young Urban Singles

5. Opportunity for regional marketing collaboration.

Position them as:

- **Blue Ridge:** Luxury and lifestyle
- **Gilmer:** Outdoor and authentic
- **White:** Family fun and entertainment

Sources: Placer.AI, Claritas PRISM, Chat GPT based on Fannin County Chamber data.

*See Addendum 2: Visitor Profiles

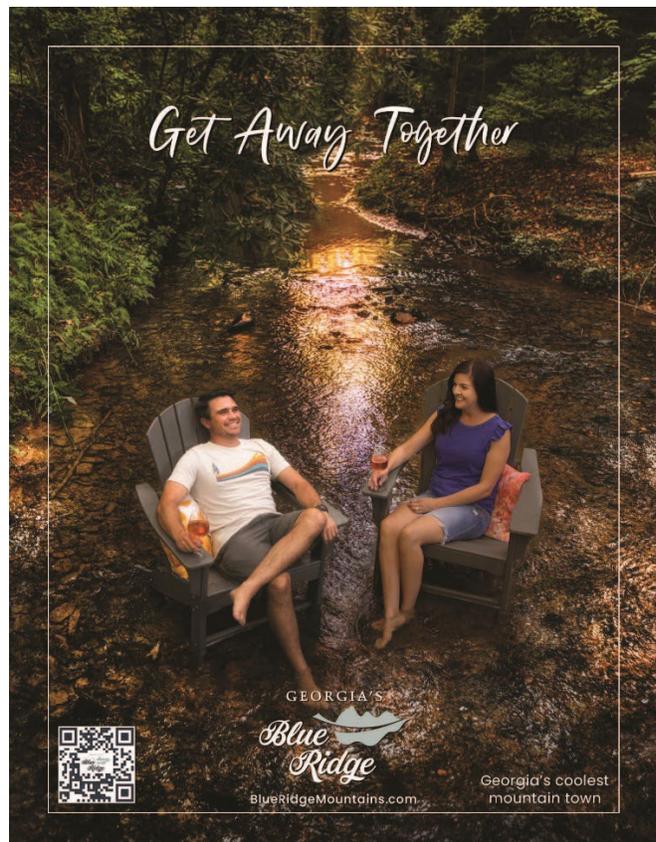
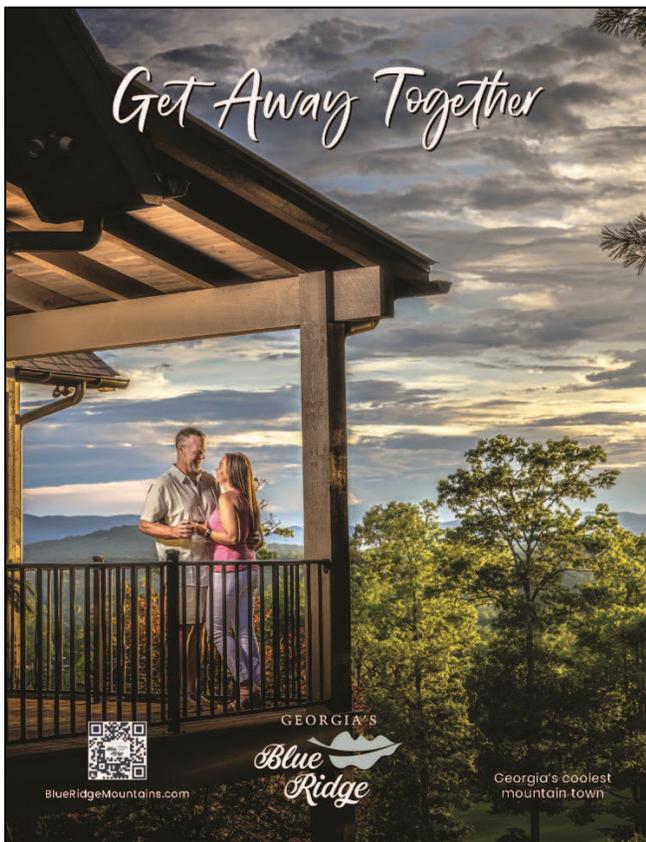
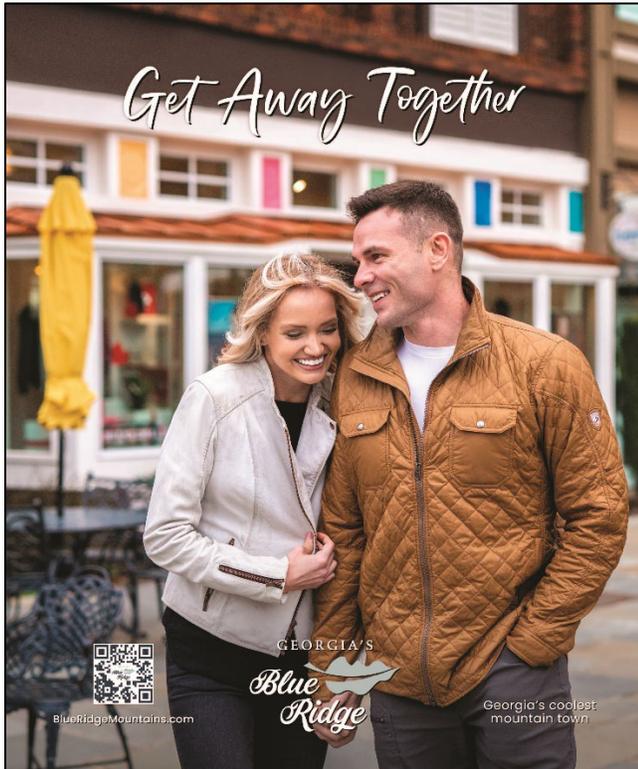
Out of Market Visitor Points of Interest

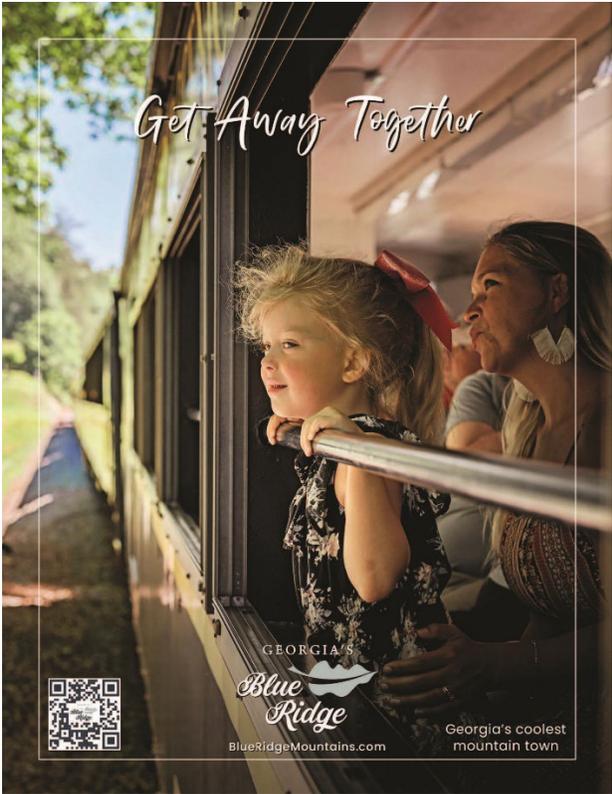
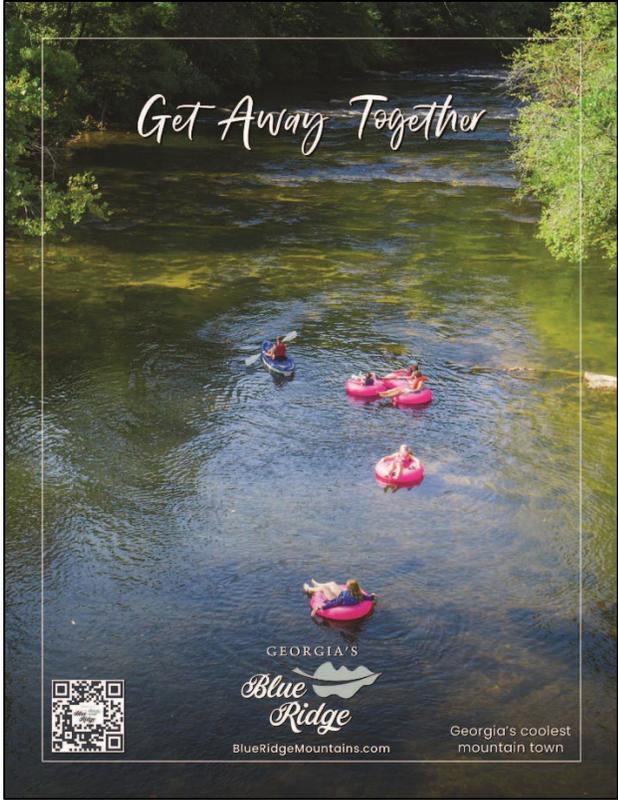
Mercier Orchards	Leisure	495,754
Blue Ridge Scenic Railway	Attraction	133,200
Riverwalk Shops (McCaysville)	Shops & Services	111,000
Southern Charm	Dining	104,393
Hampton Inn	Hotel	86,800
Black Sheep Restaurant	Dining	78,694
Love Dogs and Cats Too	Shops & Services	75,214
Three Sisters Fudge	Groceries	65,796
Black Bear Antiques	Home Improvements & Furnishings	57,783
Toccoa Riverside Restaurant	Dining	52,579
Bear Claw Vineyards & Winery, Inc.	Leisure	51,111
Blue Ridge Jerky	Groceries	50,217
Grumpy Old Men Brewing	Leisure	45,812
Circle J Family Steakhouse	Dining	42,906
Iron Bridge Cafe & General Store	Dining	38,820
Blue Ridge Creamery	Dining	38,788
Comfort Inn	Hotel	36,700
Rum Cake Lady Cuban Food Downtown Blue Ridge	Dining	36,649
Horseshoe Bend Park	Rec Area	34,900
Rum Cake Lady Cuban Cafe	Dining	34,893
Blue Ridge Adventure Wear	Apparel	34,287
Juliana's Boutique	Apparel	33,584
Blue Ridge Antique Mall & Consignment, Inc.	Home Improvements & Furnishings	31,190
Owl's Nest	Apparel	30,584
Natures Collectibles	Home Improvements & Furnishings	30,424
Mystic Mountain Pizza	Dining	29,339

Royal Waffle King	Dining	28,093
Grace Prime Steakhouse	Dining	27,551
Carroll's Barbeque	Dining	27,391
Whiskey & Water - Seafood and Bourbon Bar	Dining	26,497
Taste of Amish	Groceries	26,082
McCaysville Drug and Gun	Drugs	24,300
Wrapsody In Blue	Home Improvements & Furnishings	22,890
Swan Drive In	Theater	22,300
Misty Mountain Hops Llc	Dining	22,187
Southern Comfort Quilts	Home Improvements & Furnishings	21,581
Deaf Man Vinyl	Shops & Services	21,581
Oyster Fine Bamboo Fly Rods	Apparel	21,485
Serenity Garden Cafe	Dining	20,495
Tin Loong	Dining	20,464
Mesquite Grill	Dining	20,336
BumbleBee's Cafe	Dining	20,240
Better Homes And Gardens Real Estate Metro Brokers	Workplace	19,697
Cohutta Country Store	Shops & Services	19,218
Neighborly	Apparel	18,708
Dunworkin	Apparel	18,165
Live Edge Exotic Wood	Home Improvements & Furnishings	17,463
Blue Jeans Pizza & Pasta	Dining	17,111
Zipline Canopy Tours of Blue Ridge	Shops & Services	16,984
Rolling Thunder River Company	Shops & Services	16,728
Copperhill Brewery	Leisure	16,633
Blue Ridge Booksellers	Shops & Services	16,601
Mexico Loco, LLC	Dining	15,739
Tupelo Tea	Dining	15,004
Mexican Restaurant El Manzanillo	Dining	12,834
Cohutta Fishing Company	Apparel	12,004
Angry Hops Brewing	Leisure	11,780
The Copper Grill	Dining	11,748
Moonbeams and Mudpies	Apparel	10,822
Smokey Bear Cigars & Cafe	Shops & Services	10,599
Yellowbird coffee shop	Dining	10,535
Fannin Lanes	Leisure	10,471
Appalachian Trail Rides	Rec	10,216

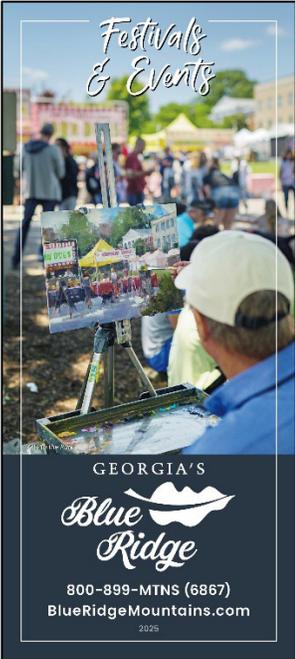
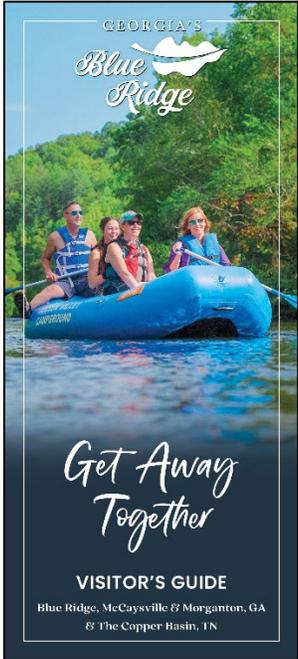
Source: Placer AI

Samples of Ads & Collateral – Print Ads





Visitor Collateral



2026 Marketing Plan Elements & Strategies

DIGITAL ADVERTISING: Digital advertising, excluding our owned website and related contracted professional services, is 33% of the total marketing budget and components are shown in this section.

Digital Newsletters:

- Garden & Gun: Talk of the South – April 15 (due 2/10) & Due South – August 20 (due 6/26)
- Explore Georgia:
 - Custom emails (2)
 - March 2 for 4/16 pub
 - October 31 for 12/15 pub
 - Seasonal emails ads (4)
 - Featured Partner Ad – Spring Newsletter (done)
 - Featured Partner Ad – Summer Newsletter pub 4/16 (due 3/3)
 - Featured Partner Ad – Holiday Newsletter pub 10/22 (due 9/1)
 - Featured Partner Ad – Winter Newsletter pub 1/1/27 (due 12/4)

Search Engine Marketing (SEM):

LocalIQ campaigns vary on market and include but are not limited to Cabins, Weekends in Atlanta, Birmingham, Orlando, Tampa, Miami, West Palm Beach, Jacksonville, Ft. Myers, Naples.

- Spring - January
- Summer - March
- Fall - June
- Holiday & Winter - September

YouTube:

- LocalIQ – Atlanta, Birmingham, Orlando, Tampa, Miami
- Advance Local – Nashville, Savannah, Tallahassee, Macon, Chattanooga, Mobile
 - Spring - January
 - Summer - March
 - Fall - June
 - Holiday & Winter - September

Paid Social:

- Local IQ (Smart Ads) – Birmingham, Orlando, Tampa, Miami
- Local IQ – Atlanta Custom Facebook (long running ad)
- Advanced Local- Nashville, Savannah, Tallahassee, Macon, Chattanooga, Mobile
 - Spring - January
 - Summer - March
 - Fall - June
 - Holiday & Winter - September

TELEVISION AND STREAMING

- Local IQ/REACH: YouTube True View streaming videos (same markets as above).
- Advanced Travel: YouTube streaming videos (same markets as above).
 - Spring - **January**
 - Summer - **March**
 - Fall - **June**
 - Holiday & Winter - **September**

Website/App (third party):

- Explore Georgia – Paid Content - 12/18
- Explore Georgia - Web banners – 10/5 – 11/6 (for January)
- Trip Advisor – Winter, Spring, Summer run of site and retargeting Native Boost, Native Video - **January**
- Trip Advisor – Rove Ads (**update late March and late September**)

OUTDOOR DISPLAYS and BILLBOARDS

- Georgia’s Blue Ridge:
 - Cobb County, Birmingham, and August (March/April only)
 - School system trailers traveling across Georgia and the Southeast
 - **Vinyl need updated when new brand rolls out.**
- Keep Blue Ridge Beautiful: 515 south of town and north of town
 - **These are digital. Send updated design when ready.**
- Discover McCaysville and the Copper Basin: Cleveland, TN and 515 north
- Touch screens & video displays in Visitor Centers.

PR CONTENT AND CONTRACTED SERVICES

- Agency services with Paradise
- Laurie Rowe Public Relations & PR services with Paradise
- Travel Writer and Influencer fam tours and assistance
- Visit Blue Ridge social media contract services
- Graphic design contract services
- Marketing Management contract services

PRINT (Owned Collateral)

Publications printed annually include Georgia’s Blue Ridge visitor guides, dining, shopping and festivals guides, self-guided tour maps, Fannin County map, McCaysville walking map brochures, kids coloring books and trout trail adventure game, Georgia Mountain Parkway pad maps, Information Please (mailed to prospective residents and businesses) and postcards. **All of these publications can be updated and printed at any point.** The Ridge Magazine is published every two years and was last published in late 2025. **Projected again for 2027.**

PRINT (Paid Media)

Ads and advertorial content in state and regional publications considering geographic markets, income levels and ages of our target markets. Ads are mostly full pages.

Publications include but are not limited to:

- Atlanta Magazine – Due 1/20 for March; 6/16 for August
 - Georgia Design – Due Jan 1 for Spring
 - Savor (state restaurant guide) – Due 1/2
 - Southbound (Atlanta Magazine quarterly travel guide) – Due Nov 11, Feb 10, May 5, Aug 11
- Blue Ridge Country Magazine
- Garden and Gun Magazine (Charleston) – remnants - varies
- Good Grit Magazine (Birmingham) – Spring (done)
- Local Palate Magazine (Greenville)
 - Spring - done
 - Summer – 3/20
 - Winter – 9/4
- Southern Living Magazine (GA, FL, TN, AL/MS) – Half Page
 - April - done
 - October – July 17

Other:

- Georgia State Travel Guide (due late 2026)
- Encore Broadway Play programs at the Fox Theater in Atlanta (covers this season)
 - Winter – (done)
 - Spring - March
 - Summer - May
- Parade of Homes (August 20th)

RESEARCH and BRANDING

- 2025 Re-brand project complete. Implementation in 2026.
- Research Sources: AirDNA, Key Data, Placer AI, Zartico,

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Visit Blue Ridge Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, You Tube, TikTok
- Discover McCaysville and the Copper Basin Facebook, Instagram

VIDEO AND PHOTOGRAPHY

- Photography and videography services.
- Crowdriff photo sharing app.
- Dropbox for storage.

VISITOR CENTERS

The Chamber operates three visitor centers, including the main center at Orvin Lance Drive in Blue Ridge, Downtown Blue Ridge and McCaysville. In addition to helping visitors on site, the centers provide quality access to the internet for visitors and local community members, as well as office and meeting space. The centers combined saw over 17,000 guests in 2025.

WEBSITE AND APP (Owned)

- Tempest SEO Growth Marketing services, inclusive of monthly content creation.
- Tempest Destination Signals partner advertising programs.
- Visit Widget App – Visit Blue Ridge, inclusive of push notifications.
- Kiosks are located at three locations (Main Visitor Center, Mercier Orchards, Train Depot) that mirror the app.

***See Addendum 3: Zartico Website Attribution**

Special Programs

DISCOVER MCCAYSVILLE AND THE COPPER BASIN



Brand: Integrated with Georgia's Blue Ridge and as "Visit Copper Basin," developed by the Carl Vinson Institute (UGA).

- Copper Basin map brochures for Blue Ridge Scenic Railway and visitors.
- Facebook & Instagram pages for Discover McCaysville and Copper Basin.
- Local publication ads (Welcome & Directions).
- Video content showcasing Copper Basin attractions (on web and youtube).
- Planned billboards in key locations.
- Directional information as Highway 5 construction progresses.

DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP AND #LOVINGLOCAL



During 2020 and 2021, during the Covid pandemic, visitation to Blue Ridge/Fannin County doubled. This trend set the pace for the years to follow, and the increase in the number of visitors has put a strain on the infrastructure (and sometimes the patience) of the community. Traffic has increased. Forest service trails and waterfalls are becoming eroded by foot traffic and sometimes trash. Downtown Blue Ridge is crowded more often and many parking lots are now all paid. Locals are becoming worried about overdevelopment, especially in downtown Blue Ridge. Visitation has also increased the burden on local services and infrastructure.

For that reason, the Chamber's destination marketing program will have four driving principles in 2026:

1. Quality of the Economy
2. Quality of Visitor Experience
3. Stewardship of the Natural Environment
4. Quality of Life

The Chamber's stewardship program includes Leave No Trace, #LovingLocal, and firefly campaigns.

- Paid advertising in local publications to reach visitors within the destination.
- Billboards in strategic locations within Fannin County encouraging care of local resources.
- Website, blog and social media content.
- Informational videos promoting safety and care of natural resources (last updated 2022).
- #LovingLocal campaign including A Visitor's Guide to Loving Local, a partnership with our local Welcome Magazine that is published six times/year.
- Firefly campaigns and activities in the summer season.
- **Promotional backpacks that include information about Leave No Trace principles (discontinued 2026).**

The Chamber's stewardship programs also address issues to help keep visitors safe and reduce the load on our local emergency and law enforcement departments.

In 2026, stewardship programs will be continued and strengthened. We will develop strategies to protect what we have and form more strategic alliances outside the chamber and tourism industry. The goal will be to attract visitors who respect the natural and cultural attractions in our area.

Commitment to Conservation: We will continue to promote our Commitment to Conservation for local businesses, organizations, or individuals. The goal is to gain awareness of preserving our natural resources, for example, by making small efforts such as planting milkweed.

School System Partnership

In 2023 we embarked on a special partnership with our school system and local organizations that support youth sports, clubs, etc. We have been able to place ads on school trailers, collectively travelling more than 8,000 miles annually, along with providing signage across many of our parks and fields that host visitors throughout the year.



COOPERATIVE MARKETING GRANTS PROGRAM

To provide support for local events and organizations, approximately \$312,000 was awarded from the Cooperative Marketing Grants fund for organizations to leverage ad dollars to increase the amount available for the promotion of local events that draw visitors to Fannin County. Some examples of non-profits who were awarded grant funds to support events are Blue Ridge Businesses Association's Fire and Ice and Light Up Blue Ridge programs, Blue Ridge Mountains Arts Association's Arts in the Park Program, Blue Ridge Mountains Parade of Homes, and the Lodging Association's Blues & BBQ Festival, to name a few.

COLLABORATION

In Summer of 2024, Mercier Orchards and Georgia's Blue Ridge embarked on a collaboration. Mercier's rebranded cider cans, going to its roots. Because the Blue Ridge brand is so important to the community and the amount of exposure the Orchard gets from visitors (approx.. 1,000,000), it was decided to put the Blue Ridge logo on each of the cans, along with a QR code that scans to a custom designed landing page on the website, sharing with visitors' information about the collaboration, along with enticing them to visit again. Aside from can exposure in store, the cans are distributed to 350 locations across the state. To date, January 2026, there have been over 1,400 QR scans.

FESTIVAL PRESENCE

We have a presence at most major festivals, including tent set up with branding materials for distribution. Festivals and events typically include Fire & Ice, Trout Fest, Kiwanis Rodeo, various 5Ks, and Blues & BBQ.

WORLD CUP

One of our primary target markets for advertising is Atlanta, so Blue Ridge already has a presence with digital, print, billboard, etc. Our banners show up on Explore Georgia's designated FIFA World Cup 26 page. Other efforts are listed below.

- Print: Half page in the official World Cup Publication through Atlanta Magazine (**due March 5**)
- Digital: We have a focused digital plan with Advanced Travel for this spring outside of our typical digital strategy with Advanced Travel (**Spring**).
- Website: There will be a page on our website dedicated to those visiting the Atlanta area for the World Cup.
- Community: We are engaging the local community for activations and/or watch parties.

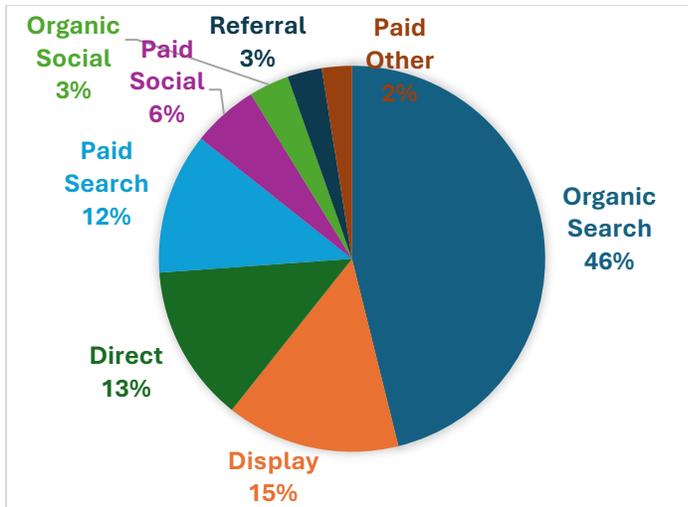
Addendum 1: 2025 Google Analytics

Sessions	2,076,122	-1.65%
Users	1.5 million	1%
Pageviews	3.6 million	-2%
Organic Search	931,892	-11%



Acquisition - Session Primary Channel Group

	Sessions	Engagement rate	
Organic Search	931,892	71%	-11%
Display	294,032	13%	101%
Direct	265,965	52%	-26%
Paid Search	239,208	45%	21%
Paid Social	111,905	35%	-14%
Organic Social	67,790	68%	-13%
Referral	58,346	62%	-15%
Paid Other	50,852	76%	



Acquisition/ Session Source/Medium

Session Source/Medium	Sessions	Engagement rate
google / organic	931,892	71%
advance / display	294,032	15%
(direct) / (none)	265,965	52%
Local IQ/ cpc	239,208	44%
facebook / paid	105,053	35%
m.facebook.com / referral	41,176	63%
bing / organic	33,864	79%
localiq / facebook	53,208	33%
yahoo / organic	18,867	74%
exploregeorgia.org / referral	14,760	74%
duckduckgo / organic	14,705	70%
localiq / brandamp	8,158	18%
l.facebook.com / referral	7,283	72%
facebook.com / referral	6,783	71%
lm.facebook.com / referral	6,663	79%
fb / paid	6,186	23%
gastateparks.org / referral	4,269	64%
bing / cpc	3,668	73%
chatgpt.com / (not set)	3,168	74%

Explore Georgia / email	2,837	67%
youtube / paid	2,737	30%
advance / referral	2,587	33%
l.instagram.com / referral	2,336	62%
tripadvisor.com / referral	1,841	64%
hatleypointe.com / referral	1,573	43%
chatgpt.com / referral	1,545	68%
pinterest.com / referral	1,343	79%
rentandrepeat.com / referral	1,304	64%
lnk.bio / referral	1,028	85%
myemail.constantcontact.com / referral	1,019	75%
escapetoblueridge.com / referral	954	71%
guide.touchstay.com / referral	923	73%
airbnb.com / referral	874	61%
Promotion / 970ad	859	68%
advance / (not set)	829	30%
fan.codes / referral	812	39%
localiq / youtube	707	20%
festivalguidesandreviews.com / referral	666	75%
expeditionbigfoot.com / referral	630	68%

Event name	Event count	Total users
page_view	3,643,104	1,520,284
scroll_depth	3,430,474	764,812
session_start	2,058,336	1,519,344
pageview	1,962,520	341,244
user_engagement	1,732,367	713,525
first_visit	1,520,550	1,503,956
partner_referral	566,608	124,655
click	409,202	203,043
scroll	319,562	235,695
outbound_things_to_do	165,099	60,754
outbound_places_to_stay	153,865	52,748
self_guided_tours	125,331	35,535
file_download	73,021	41,650
outbound_food_and_drink	47,322	15,562
form_start	32,944	19,051
event_click	28,448	20,401
quick_search	18,863	7,232
visitor_guide_request	5,801	4,868
form_submit	5,103	4,876
ridge_magazine	4,792	4,431
email_newsletter_page_view	3,764	2,987
digital-visitor-guide	2,715	2,385
view_search_results	1,463	918
email_newsletter_signup	1,227	1,166
chamber_application	123	107

Top Blogs	Views
/blog/top-20-things-to-do-in-blue-ridge/	64,629
/blog/30-fun-things-to-do-with-kids/	38,885
/blog/fall-in-blue-ridge-ga/	32,545
/blog/small-town-holidays-in-blue-ridge/	30,266
/blog/fall-colors-with-a-twist/	20,353
/blog/15-free-things-to-do-in-blue-ridge/	19,146
/blog/fall-festivals-in-the-mountains/	17,387
/blog/downtown-restaurants/	16,928
/blog/10-most-beautiful-spots-in-georgias-blue-ridge/	11,379
/blog/7-blue-ridge-water-adventures-to-try-this-summer/	11,307
/blog/22-things-to-do-in-blue-ridge-during-spring-break-22/	11,294
/blog/fourth-of-july/	9,472
/blog/3-hours-in-downtown-blue-ridge/	8,665
/blog/wonderful-winter-weekends-in-blue-ridge-ga/	8,613
/blog/top-12-scenic-drives-near-blue-ridge/	8,324
/blog/5-hikes-under-5-miles-in-georgias-blue-ridge/	8,094
/blog/16-waterfalls-within-an-hour-of-br/	6,973
/blog/12-unique-shops-in-georgias-blue-ridge/	6,784
/blog/mccaysville-and-copperhill/	6,566
/blog/exploring-blue-ridge/	6,373
/blog/where-to-find-the-best-breakfast-in-blue-ridge-ga/	6,186
/blog/blue-ridge-spring-break-bucket-list/	6,148
/blog/10-memorable-family-adventures-in-blue-ridge/	6,144
/blog/the-most-scenic-drive-in-blue-ridge/	5,908
/blog/fido-friendly-blue-ridge/	5,614
/blog/couples-romantic-cabin-getaway/	5,324
/blog/hikes-under-two-miles/	4,501
/blog/quiet_pleasures_of_spring_in_blue_ridge/	4,309
/blog/12-cool-blue-ridge-summer-experiences/	4,247
/blog/escape-to-blue-ridge-for-the-ultimate-romantic-getaway/	4,207
/blog/thanksgiving-experiences/	4,168
/blog/where-to-find-thanksgiving-dinner-in-blue-ridge/	3,989
/blog/3-day-itinerary-to-georgias-coolest-mountain-town/	3,918
/blog/lakefront-cabins/	3,709
/blog/new-years-eve-in-blue-ridge-ga/	3,687
/blog/4-unique-downtown-blue-ridge-escapes-perfect-for-couples/	3,640
/blog/blue-ridge-georgia-dining-alfresco-with-an-altitude/	3,617
/blog/ten-amazing-facts-about-mccaysville-copperhill/	3,589
/blog/spa-yoga-wellness-spots-in-blue-ridge/	3,216
/blog/4-inspiring-blue-ridge-date-night-ideas/	3,209
/blog/whitewater-rafting/	3,070

Pages and Screens (2,000+)	
Home Page	613,771
/where-to-stay/	236,498
/things-to-do/	206,526
/where-to-stay/cabins-rentals/	138,170
/events/	132,131
/things-to-do/outdoors/	97,415
/plan-your-trip/	81,448
/things-to-do/family-fun/	75,804
/blog/top-20-things-to-do-in-blue-ridge/	64,629
/food-drink/	55,728
/things-to-do/outdoors/hiking/waterfalls/	39,013
/blog/30-fun-things-to-do-with-kids/	38,885
/things-to-do/shopping/	32,860
/blog/fall-in-blue-ridge-ga/	32,545
/things-to-do/outdoors/hiking/swinging-bridge/	30,534
/blog/small-town-holidays-in-blue-ridge/	30,266
/events/annual-events/	29,567
/things-to-do/scenic-drives-tours/	28,483
/plan-your-trip/visitors-guide/	27,251
/food-drink/breweries-wineries/	26,967
/things-to-do/mountain-towns/blue-ridge/	25,809
/things-to-do/blue-ridge-scenic-railway/	25,658
/things-to-do/outdoors/hiking/	24,038
/where-to-stay/treehouses/	22,872
/blog/fall-colors-with-a-twist/	20,353
/community/community-calendar/	19,275
/community/business-directory/	19,228
/blog/15-free-things-to-do-in-blue-ridge/	19,146
/blog/fall-festivals-in-the-mountains/	17,387
/blog/downtown-restaurants/	16,928
/where-to-stay/cabins-by-owner/	16,858
/directory/blue-ridge-scenic-rail-bikes/	16,208
/things-to-do/outdoors/hiking/appalachian-trail/	16,120
/where-to-stay/hotels/	15,604
/directory/fall-branch-falls/	14,380
/search/	14,025
/chamber/	13,183
/where-to-stay/campgrounds/	11,764
/where-to-stay/intown-lodging/	11,744
/things-to-do/mountain-towns/	11,637
/blog/10-most-beautiful-spots-in-georgias-blue-ridge/	11,379
/blog/7-blue-ridge-water-adventures-to-try-this-summer/	11,307
/blog/22-things-to-do-in-blue-ridge-during-spring-break-22/	11,294
/directory/blue-ridge-scenic-railway/	11,046
/things-to-do/outdoors/water-sports/lake-blue-ridge/	10,754
/directory/mercier-orchards/	10,100
/things-to-do/farms-orchards/	10,057
/community/	10,000

Partner Referrals (all)	
Blue Ridge Scenic Rail Bikes	13,987
Blue Ridge Scenic Railway Train	10,405
Mercier Orchards	9,265
Blue Ridge Treehouse at Bear Claw Vineyards	9,038
Hampton Inn Blue Ridge	8,723
Treehouse Mountain	8,394
Mountain Top Cabin Rentals	7,727
Black Sheep Restaurant Bar and Patio	6,991
The Dogwood	6,498
The Perch Suites on Main	6,258
Southern Comfort Cabin Downtown Blue Ridge Rentals	5,909
Blue Ridge Mountain Trail Rides at Hells Hollow	5,707
River Forest Lookout	5,679
The General Ledger	5,484
6 Ponds Farm	5,041
Southern Charm Restaurant	4,986
Serenity in the Mountains Spa & Lodge	4,920
North Georgia Escapes	4,741
Morganton Point Campground and Recreation Area at Lake Blue Ridge	4,635
Willow Creek Falls	4,455
Escape to Blue Ridge	4,332
Morning Breeze Cabin Rentals	4,162
Cabin Rentals of Georgia	4,069
Blue Sky Cabin Rentals	3,979
Blue Ridge Medical Center	3,955
Blue Ridge Mountain Cabins	3,932
Dogwood Inn	3,916
Clements Family Vacation Rentals	3,866
5 Star Lodge	3,713
Swan Drive-In Theatre	3,684
Ferraro's Kitchen	3,652
The Lilly Pad Village	3,619
grace A Prime Steakhouse	3,419
Toccoa Riverside Restaurant	3,378
My Mountain Cabin Rentals	3,324
The Penthouses on Main	3,220
Blue Ridge Inn Bed and Breakfast	3,198
Celebrate Blue Ridge	3,168
Cowgirl Up Stables	3,138
Appalachian Trail Rides	3,051
Mountain Retreat Cabin Rentals	3,013
The Folk Collaborative	2,988

The Tavern at Old Toccoa Farm	2,954
Cuddle Up Cabin Rentals, Inc.	2,844
Cherokee Rose Homes	2,721
Trey Griffith, Chef	2,713
Blue Ridge Off Road Adventures	2,681
Blue Ridge Inn Bed & Breakfast	2,619
Nevaeh Cabin Rentals	2,598
Allure Nests	2,567
Blue Ridge Pool and Splash Pad	2,552
Long Creek Falls	2,516
Brasstown Valley Resort & Spa	2,484
Hooves and Feathers Petting Farm	2,446
Cress Creeks Farm	2,438
Chester Brunnemeyer's Bar & Grill	2,404
The Sweet Shoppe of the South	2,299
Above the Rest Luxury Cabins	2,254
Blue Ridge Adventure Dog	2,254
Huck's General Store	2,228
2nd Story Entertainment	2,222
Chester Brunnemeyer's Bar & Grill	2,216
Mountain Oasis Cabin Rentals	2,172
Legacy Bed & Breakfast Spa Facility	2,154
Comfort Inn & Suites	2,141
At The End of the Road	2,123
Blanche Manor Horseback Riding @ Blissful Owl Ranch	2,118
Best Western Mountain View Inn	2,114
Southern Comfort Cabin Rentals	2,096
Comfort Inn & Suites	2,056
Around the Bend Rentals	2,029
Legacy Bed & Breakfast Spa Facility	1,990
Enchanted Mountain Retreats	1,970
Bear Claw Vineyards	1,942
Blue Ridge Mountain Food Tours	1,938
Boat Dock Bar and Grill at Lake Blue Ridge Marina	1,934
The Kristy Collection	1,924
North Georgia Equestrian Tours - Licensed National Forest Outfitter	1,922
Firefly Cabin Stays	1,915
Horseshoe Bend Park	1,892
A River Runs Through It	1,888
The Pasta Market - Blue Ridge	1,876
Blue Ridge Adventure Park	1,854
Toccoa Valley Campground-Tubing	1,834
Amicalola Falls	1,818
Blue Ridge Mineral Springs RV Park	1,814
Blue Ridge Boat Rentals	1,782
Teatree Spa	1,768
Hook & Eye at Hampton Inn Blue Ridge	1,762
Blue Ridge Helicopter Tours	1,728
Blue Ridge / Toccoa River KOA	1,708
Haight House - A Collection of Waterfront Properties	1,690
Blue Ridge Mountains Arts Association / The Art Center	1,658
Mad Hatter Cottage GA	1,650
RiverRock on Toccoa (Tree House)	1,632
Twisted Tomato - Blue Ridge	1,630
Bites by Ferraro	1,624
Georgia Cabins For You	1,612

Addendum 2: Visitor Profiles

1. Affluent Suburban Families (C, B, A Segments)

Demographics:

- Parents 35–55 with children under 18
- High household income (upper-middle to ultra-wealthy)
- College-educated, suburban homeownership, late-model SUVs
- Frequently from Atlanta’s northern suburbs + major metros across GA/FL/AL/TN

Motivations:

- Escaping suburban busyness for nature, space, and together time
- Mixing luxury + authenticity: nice cabins, quality dining, outdoor experiences
- Providing meaningful outdoor education for kids (waterfalls, trails, orchards)
- Seasonal traditions (Scenic Railway, Christmas in Blue Ridge, fall leaf season)

Key Attractions:

- Cabin rentals with upscale, kid-friendly amenities
 - Blue Ridge Scenic Railway family rides
 - Lake Blue Ridge boating + Toccoa River tubing
 - Pick-your-own orchards, trails, waterfalls
 - Family-friendly dining and boutique shopping
-

2. Young Professionals & Couples (H + A/B Segments)

Demographics:

- Ages 25–45, dual-income couples (DINKs) or early empty nesters
- Strong representation from ATL, Nashville, Chattanooga, Birmingham
- Tech, healthcare, corporate, entrepreneurial careers

Motivations:

- Romantic weekend getaways, birthdays, proposals, “just us” escapes
- Seeking modern cabins, craft food/bev, spa/self-care experiences
- Quiet, scenic escapes from dense urban environments

Key Attractions:

- Hot-tub cabins with big views
 - Fine dining, wine tasting, breweries
 - Serenity in the Mountains spa + self-care experiences
 - Scenic overlooks for photography + sunsets
 - Waterfall hikes, short trails, stargazing
-

3. Multigenerational Vacationers (C, D, J Segments)

Demographics:

- Grandparents 55–75, parents 30–50, kids under 18

- Middle- to higher-income; drive market from GA, FL, AL, TN
- Often renting large, upscale cabins

Motivations:

- Reunions, milestone celebrations, memory-making trips
- Easy outdoor activities suitable for all ages
- Shared experiences that feel meaningful and unplugged

Key Attractions:

- Large cabins with game rooms, multiple decks, firepits
 - Group-friendly activities: Scenic Railway, tubing, fishing, pontoon rentals
 - Mercier Orchards, local tours, easy trails
 - Festivals + seasonal events
-

4. Girlfriend Getaways & Women's Small Groups (C, B, H Segments)

Demographics:

- Women 30–60, suburban professionals, moms, teachers, healthcare workers
- Often higher-income neighborhoods (segments B & C)

Motivations:

- Stress relief, self-care, reconnecting with friends
- Celebrating birthdays, milestones, empty-nester transitions
- Casual adventure + upscale experiences

Key Attractions:

- Boutiques + artisan galleries
 - Vineyards, breweries, cocktail lounges
 - Spa days, forest bathing, yoga
 - Photo spots, brunch, scenic picnics
-

5. Outdoor Adventurers & Active Travelers (H, Q, M, O Segments)

Demographics:

- Ages 25–45; active singles, couples, friend groups
- Mixture of young professionals + rural/average-income adventurers
- Often budget-conscious but experience-driven

Motivations:

- Hiking, fishing, paddling, biking—seeking authentic outdoor immersion
- Bucket-list experiences like the Swinging Bridge, AT access, Ocoee whitewater
- Simple cabins or camping + gear-heavy trips

Key Attractions:

- Appalachian Trail + Benton MacKaye Trail
- Waterfalls, overlooks, Swinging Bridge

6. Boomers, Empty Nesters & Retirees (D, J, K, L Segments)

Demographics:

- Ages 55–75
- Mixed income levels: budget-conscious to high-income
- Represent a significant year-round market

Motivations:

- Relaxation, scenic beauty, cultural enjoyment
- Wine and food experiences, boating, easy hikes
- Mild seasons and peaceful surroundings

Key Attractions:

- Lakeside walks, easy waterfall trails
 - Wineries, farm-to-table dining
 - History/heritage sites, Scenic Railway
 - Cabin porches, firepits, leaf season
-

7. Day Trippers from Urban & Suburban Markets (H, C, F, Q Segments)

Demographics:

- Adults 25–55 from ATL, Chattanooga, North GA suburbs
- Mix of young professionals, suburban families, blue-collar households
- Budget-aware but seeking quality experiences

Motivations:

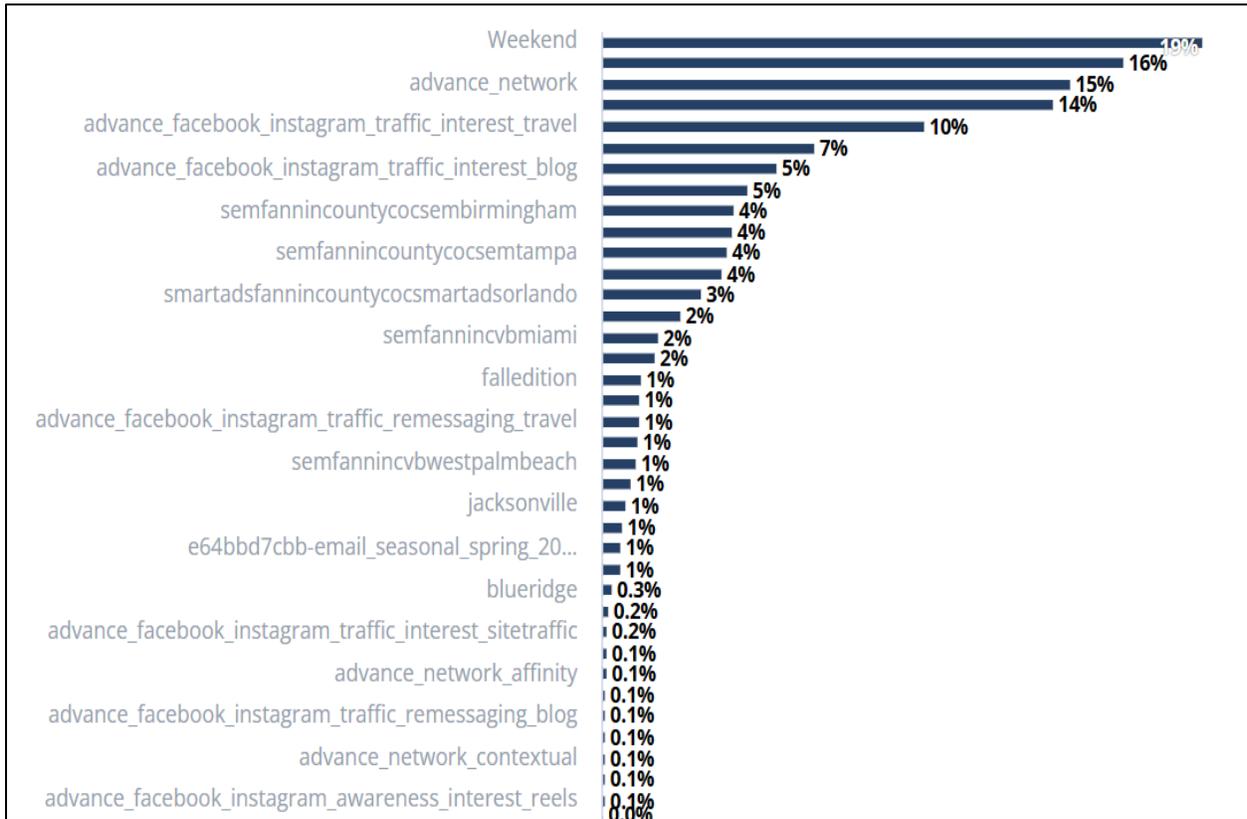
- Quick escapes for hiking, shopping, orchards, festivals
- “Micro-getaways” for stress relief and scenery
- Day-date or friends’ day trips

Key Attractions:

- Downtown dining + boutiques
- Scenic Railway (shorter rides)
- Festivals, markets, orchards
- Waterfalls + iconic overlooks

Sources: Placer.AI, Claritas PRISM, Chat GPT based on Fannin County Chamber data.

Addendum 3: Zartico Website/Advertising Attribution



Note: Zartico tracks website attribution and pairs with GPS data on shared devices.