

The Ultimate Asheville Family Weekend At Horse Shoe Farm



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I cover what's interesting in wine, spirits, food and travel.

Imagine having 85 acres all to yourself right in the shadow of Asheville, North Carolina. Horse Shoe Farm offers just that—room for five or 50 of your favorite family members paired with unmatched views of Mt. Pisgah, acres of rolling pasture, frontage along the French Broad River, wellness center, spa, and yoga studio.

Located about 25 minutes south of Asheville, this rolling estate is the newest addition to the mountain getaway scene and delivers compelling reasons to just stay put. Comprised of eight beautifully designed and fully-stocked private homes scattered throughout the property, Horse Shoe Farm is an expansive, quiet setting to unfold into mountain life. Guests can rent a single home or book the entire farm, which has accommodation for 50 people. The property also has several additional spaces for gathering—including a spa, yoga studio/wellness center, event space, and family gameroom/playroom. The Silo Cookhouse is central to the farm and where guests can gather for optional meals (yes, they do have a table for 50) as well as for breakfast—which is included in the stay.

We started the first day of our visit with a family yoga class in the farm's yoga studio, followed by a trip to the Silo Cookhouse for breakfast and a fresh concoction from the juice bar. Stuffed and happy, we then headed up the hill to one of our home's rocking chairs for some important navel-gazing. Indeed, we spent most of the first day savoring the pace of Horse Shoe Farm. Some of us went fishing in the farm pond; others walked the perimeter of the property while the rest of us took a dip in the outdoor hot tub. Adjacent to our home (Magnolia Manor) was the farm's labyrinth---another fine place to relax and unfold into the experience.

Then there was the spa visit---located in a fully restored stable. A stable may not seem an obvious choice for a spa, but this exquisite space is trimmed entirely in wood with doors that open into the mountain air for a truly al fresco spa experience. Birdsong and gentle breezes are all the musical accompaniment you need for a massage here.

It's important to note, the interiors of the eight cottages are aesthetically impressive—with stylish furnishings, collectibles, and original artwork. These were not made to be identical, so each stay is very individual. Furnished with full kitchens as well, which invites even more reason to stay on the property and enjoy dinner with a view. Adjacent to the cookhouse is the Silo---which has been converted into a meditation space. Make the precipitous climb to the top and enjoy sweeping views of Mt. Pisgah.

Yet, you came all this way, you should head into Asheville. Below is a quick afternoon itinerary that will give you the best of the city and still get you home in time for a dip in the hot tub.

Sovereign Remedies for the Asheville's best meal. This downtown local favorite gets loads of buzz for its clever cocktails but the food is just as peerless. Our family of five (all ages, so you understand the menu challenges that dynamic presents) devoured everything. Our behavior was shameless, but you have to lick the plate when it is full of bone marrow tater tots and charred little gem lettuces. The herb tagliatelle with green aioli, blood orange and pink lady apple was crazy-good, ditto the bavette steak—a silky perfectly prepared steak that we still think about today. If you are drinking, order the No. 27 with George Dickel Sour Mash Whiskey, ginger, lemon, cardamom and bitters. We also loved the second-story seating overlooking the city streets below, it felt very European.

Burial Beer: A buzzy, happening scene, expect to park and walk a bit. Hit the bar in the back for faster service. We loved their Surf Wax IPA.

French Broad for Chocolates: Take a seat in the chocolate lounge and really indulge or visit the storefront for to-go truffles and chocolate bars.

Tops for Shoes: One of the best shoe stores in the southeast, period. Budget at least thirty minutes to get through this store's inventory.

The Asheville Pinball Museum: Home to every kind of pinball machine imaginable from antique to high tech---play until your hands hurt. (The Wizard of OZ was the best one).

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