



Trip Summary

Waterfalls and Wineries

TRIP AT-A-GLANCE

Dates: May 19 - 22, 2011
Location: Dahlonega, Georgia
Cost: \$ *735
Rating: 2
Activities: hiking, wine tasting

Meeting

Place: Atlanta Airport (ATL)
Arrive: 1 pm (flights should arrive by 12:30pm) May 19
Depart: Plan to fly out after 5:30pm, May 22

* Deduct 5% if you are one of the first 5 to register (by 02/19/11) and 3% of the entire trip fee when the balance is paid by check.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Roundtrip transportation from the Atlanta Airport
- All meals from dinner on Thursday through brunch on Sunday
- Three nights lodging in rooms shared by four people
- All activities on the itinerary, including a private wine-tasting, hikes, and visits to wineries
- Experienced guides

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Transportation to/from ATL from home
- Guide gratuities
- Alcoholic beverages outside of the wine tastings

Trip Highlights

- Learning about wines during a private wine-tasting
- Visiting the tallest waterfall east of the Mississippi
- Enjoying moderate hikes (5 miles, the day we climb Blood Mountain the elevation gain is 1300 feet; other days are much less) in the north Georgia Mountains
- Visiting several local wineries and the charming town of Dahlonega
- Dining at some excellent local restaurants

Trip Overview

Northern Georgia, the jumping off point of the Appalachian Trail, is known for its gorgeous and rugged mountains, its towering waterfalls, and its ... wineries? Who knew?! Turns out the soil, climate, and elevation are not only great for hiking, but they're also perfect for wine growing. So on this four-day getaway, we'll combine hiking to waterfalls with opportunities to visit wineries, learn about wine, and sampling some of the wonderful cuisine that can be found here.

Our Itinerary

Thursday: We pick you up at the Atlanta (ATL) airport at 1pm and begin our adventure with a visit to Amicalola Falls State Park for a short hike. Amicalola Falls, at 729 feet, are the tallest cascading waterfalls east of the Mississippi River and often the last stop for hikers before they start their Appalachian Trail Thru Hike. After our hike and waterfall gawking, we continue to our hostel for dinner and a private wine tasting. A knowledgeable woman from the Dahlonega Tasting Room will educate us and our palates about wine as we taste several varieties. Well fed and well exercised, we will be ready for bed tonight!

Friday: After a hearty breakfast at the hostel, we don our hiking boots for our 6-mile hike on the Blood Mountain-Freeman Trail Loop. Blood Mountain is the highest peak on the Georgia section of the Appalachian Trail and the sixth-tallest mountain in Georgia,

CANCELLATION POLICY

In the unfortunate event that you must cancel your trip, your refund will be determined by the following formula:

Days Prior to Trip	Refund
90 + days	All but \$50
90 – 61 days	50% of deposit
60 – 30 days	50% of trip fee
29 days or less	No refund

Adventures in Good Company reserves the right to cancel or alter a trip due to unforeseen weather, unsafe conditions, low registrations or other circumstances.

On the rare occasion when Adventures in Good Company must cancel a trip, all payments received to date will be refunded, including the non-refundable portion of your deposit.

Adventures in Good Company is not responsible for expenses incurred in preparation for any canceled trips, including airplane tickets.

Our Itinerary Continued

with an elevation of 4,458 feet. This peak has scenic views from the large rock formations that top the mountain, as well as a two-room stone shelter built in 1934 by the Civilian Conservation Corps. Our hike will probably take about five hours, as we stop often for pictures and to eat lunch. There is some significant up and down on the trail so we particularly appreciate a visit to Helton Creek Falls to cool off afterwards. Dinner that night is at The Oar House, a charming old house overlooking the Chestatee River.

Saturday: Our hike today is the Raven Cliff Falls Hike, a 5-mile out and back hike. This trail follows Dodd Creek through the Raven Cliffs Wilderness Area to a massive dark bluff near the headwaters some 2.5 miles from the parking area. Because of the size of Ravens Cliffs and the lack of human interference, the area has abundant bird life including grosbeaks, vireos, and wild turkeys besides the ravens that give the area its name. From there we visit Blackstock Vineyards to check out their wines. We will also spend a few hours in Dahlonega; every Saturday folks bring their instrument(s) and just start playing and/or singing on the Dahlonega square, a weekly event known as Appalachian Jam. If Appalachian music is not your style, there are also lots of shops to check out. Dinner is at the hostel tonight, followed by a bonfire and s'mores around the fire.

Sunday: Our breakfast at the hostel will be light this morning because we need to save room for the brunch at Frogtown Cellars. The Frogtown brunch is 3 courses paired with wines as well as dessert. After savoring this last meal together we head to the airport where you can plan a flight out after 5:30 pm.

TIPPING GUIDELINES

Tipping at the end of the trip is optional. If you feel your guide(s) did an outstanding job and would like to reward them for their efforts, a suggested rule of thumb is US \$7 to \$12 per person, per day.

Oftentimes, trip members organize a group envelope (this makes it anonymous) and present it at the last shared meal.

Packing List

FOOTWEAR

- 1 pair of lightweight hiking boots: boots need to be well broken in and comfortable
- 1 pair of comfortable athletic shoes, Teva/Chaco/Keen sandals, or crocs for wearing around our accommodations and in town
- 2-3 pairs of hiking socks (some people also like to wear liner socks)

CLOTHING

- 1 pair of comfortable synthetic/nylon long pants for hiking. Zip-offs work well
- 1 pair of shorts (optional, especially if you have zip-off pants)
- 1 lightweight, light-colored, long-sleeved shirt to protect you from the sun
- 1-2 synthetic T-shirts or short-sleeved shirts
- 1 lightweight fleece jacket or wool sweater
- 1 rain parka: coated nylon or a **waterproof**/breathable fabric like Gore-tex.
- Underwear/nightwear
- 1 wide-brimmed hat or baseball cap for protection from the sun
- comfortable clothes to wear at the hostel (could be sweats)
- casual dress, skirt, or pants and shirt for wearing to dinners/brunch

TOILETRIES (small everything)

- Toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss, wet wipes, contact lens paraphernalia, and sanitary supplies
- Sunscreen and lip protection with sunblock of at least SPF 15
- Insect repellent
- small personal "patch kit": Band-Aids, Compeed or Second Skin, moleskin, cloth athletic tape, ibuprofen, personal medications, if any. **Individuals allergic to insect bites must bring an anaphylactic kit.**

ESSENTIALS

- Sunglasses (100% UV protection)
- Croakies or other sunglasses retainer
- 1 daypack large enough to hold your supplies for the day (water, snacks, sunscreen, raingear, fleece jacket, personal patch kit, etc.). Line with a trash bag.
- 1 liter water bottle or hydration system
- hiking poles (strongly recommended)

OPTIONAL

- orienteering style compass (definitely bring one if you want to learn how to use one)
- Camera (extra battery) and film/memory card
- Your favorite snack
- Book, notebook, journal, pencil/pen
- Binoculars
- Ear plugs (for a good night's sleep!)
- wrist watch/travel alarm clock
- Bandanna(s) – multi-useful

Notes on the Packing List

Adventures in Good Company's packing list covers everything you need to assure your safety and comfort. This time of year the weather can be variable. It may be warm and sunny, cool and drizzly, or both. It is essential that you have the rain gear and clothes to stay warm during the day when you are out on the trail. You may not use everything you bring; however, it is best to come prepared for all possible weather conditions.

Daypacks: You will be carrying a daypack that is large enough to hold your water, camera, rain gear, snacks, and extra clothes for the changing weather conditions.

We recommend a daypack with a capacity of between 1800 and 2600 cubic inches. Before you leave home check to be sure that your daypack is comfortable to wear all day and that there is space for all of your items. Please note that a fanny-pack is **not** large enough to hold all of the items you will need for the day. You may want to consider a daypack with a hip belt. Please line your daypack with a durable plastic bag to keep your belongings dry.

Footwear: Well-fitting, sturdy boots are very important to your safety and enjoyment. If you plan to buy new boots, break them in by wearing them around town and taking some short hikes *before* your trip. For general hiking, lightweight cordura or leather boots work well. Leather boots may be waterproofed in various simple ways, and cordura boots will be waterproof if they're lined with Gore-Tex (although many people find that the extra expense of the Gore-Tex is not justified by their performance). If you have weak ankles or are recovering from an ankle injury, get ones that come above your ankle – you'll find that this will give you more support in uneven or slippery terrain.

Clothing: Layering is the most practical and efficient method of insulating the body. Several layers of varied weight materials provide better insulation than one thick layer of clothing. Also, adding or subtracting layers allows you to adjust to the temperature at your particular level of activity. You can use long underwear as your base layer, your mid-weight top or vest as your second layer, and your fleece jacket as a third layer. You use your rain gear as your outer layer, and warm hat and/or gloves as needed.

Fabrics: Synthetic fabrics are often specified on this equipment list: Capilene, Thermastat, Polartec and Gore-Tex. In addition, there are many other patented brand names used by different manufacturers, which can make it all seem even more complicated. Basically, they all have one thing in common: The synthetics do not absorb much water compared to cotton—thus, they continue to provide warmth when wet. The specific fabric name is not as important as having material with these qualities and having a variety of weights available to you as your layering system. They really *are* miracle fabrics. Wool is also a very good choice, especially some of the new clothing made by Ibex or Smartwool. It is 100% merino wool, keeps you warm and dry and is not itchy. It also doesn't absorb the odors the way many synthetic materials do. You can also buy less expensive wool clothes at a second hand or Army/Navy store. Cotton is not a good choice! **Wet cotton (even heavyweight sweats) will rob you of your body heat faster than if you were wearing no clothing at all.**

Rain Gear: You will need a parka or jacket made of a coated nylon or a waterproof/breathable fabric like Gore-tex, HellyTech, Membrane, H2No, or Ultrex. **Be sure it keeps water out.** Before making this important purchase, be sure that it fits you properly. It should be large enough to fit over all your layers. In particular, the hood needs to be effective. It should shield your face from the rain and turn with your head. Movement of your arms must not interfere with the hood. Put on your daypack; can you still raise your arms? Lastly, the wind/rain pants. Rain pants are optional on this trip, though we do recommend them if you plan to hike no matter what the weather. They should be comfortable, allow enough room for your layers, and permit free movement of your legs (for example, can you crouch comfortably?). Partial or full-length leg zippers are useful for easily putting your pants on over your boots.

Items on your packing list can be purchased through a number of outdoor outfitters including:

Recreational Equip. Inc (REI)
800-426-4840
www.rei.com

Eastern Mountain Sports (EMS)
603-924-7231
www.ems.com

Sierra Trading Post
800-713-4534
www.SierraTradingPost.com

Also check out the websites on the Affiliate page of our website (under Resources)

Additional Trip Preparations

HELPFUL WEBSITES

<http://www.bsvw.com>

The Blackstock wineries home site.

<http://www.jackanthonyphotography.com/yahoola/waterfalls>

a photography web site of waterfalls in Georgia. Scroll through the page to see the waterfalls you will visit (Amicalola, Raven Cliff and Helton Creek).

<http://www.hikerhostel.com>

The web site of the hostel where you will be staying during the trip.

WEATHER

The weather at this time of year is typically lovely spring weather, but it can vary based on where we are in the mountains. Typically it is in the 70s during the day and in the 50s at night. But temperatures could be cooler and/or rainy. Bringing the proper equipment will add greatly to your enjoyment and your safety.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

You will be staying at The Hiker Hostel in Dahlonega, GA. The phone number there is: 770/312-7342. You will need a calling card to make outgoing long distance calls. There is also a “community” computer with internet access. Cell phone reception is good at the hostel but variable in the surrounding area.

CONDITIONING

Additional aerobic conditioning is unnecessary for anyone who already exercises regularly. However, we will be quite active during the weekend with hikes that involve some elevation gain/loss. If you don't already exercise regularly, you will probably find that you have more energy during the trip if you start a moderate exercise program a couple of months before your trip. For example, you might start walking 3 or 4 times a week for half an hour, at a pace that is brisk enough to make you breathe deeply. Hills are good for this. Gradually increase your time until you're comfortable walking for 60 minutes without a break. Other options are working out at a health club on a stairmaster or treadmill, aerobics classes, cross country skiing or any activity that makes you breathe deeply. If you would like some general conditioning guidelines, please contact us.

RECOMMENDED PRE-TRIP READING

Bryson, B. *A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail*. This book is both informative about the trail and very entertaining, at least the first part. It tends to peter out towards the end but the first part will have you laughing and groaning..

Adkins, Leonard. *The Appalachian Trail: A Visitor's Companion*. If you're interested in natural history, this is definitely the book to buy. It contains all the essential information about the AT - from the trail's fascinating history to detailed information on the geology, trees, flowers, birds, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals of the Appalachian Mountains.

Jackson, Joshilyn. *Between, Georgia*. Jackson matches effortless Southern storytelling with a keen eye for character and heart-stopping circumstances. This book provides more of a flavor of Georgia and the South, then specifics on the area you will be staying.

Burns, Olive. *Cold Sassy Tree*. A timeless, funny, resplendent novel about romance and adolescence, and how people lived and died in a small Southern town at the turn of the century.

Lewis, John. *Walking With The Wind*. An eloquent, epic firsthand account of the civil rights movement by a man who lived it—an American hero whose courage, vision, and dedication helped change history

McCarthy, Ed and Ewing-Mulligan, Mary *Wine for Dummies*. A friendly, un-intimidating guide to all there is to know about wine.

Getting There

OUR TRAVEL AGENT

If you need assistance with making your travel plans, call Sara Schuitemaker at Scan East West Travel. Her toll-free number is 800-727-2157 and her email is sara@scaneastwest.com.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend travel insurance. We know that women never want to cancel their trips, and the reasons for doing so are always excellent. Occasionally it's a sudden illness; even more frequently it's the illness of someone they care about. Trip insurance at least minimizes the disappointment and expense during what is often a difficult time. In addition insurance covers the cost of lost baggage; medical expenses during your trip, including emergencies, repatriation, and evacuation; and trip delay. If you decide to purchase insurance, you can secure a policy through your own insurance company or enroll with the company we use, Travelex Insurance. Call 1-800-228-9792 or visit www.travelexinsurance.com. The location code is 20-0016.

TRAVEL

We will be meeting at the **Hartsfield-Jackson Airport (ATL)** in Atlanta. The majority of the dominant carriers fly there, as well as several of the low cost competitors; although Atlanta is Delta's hub city. We are meeting at 1pm, so please make sure your flight arrives no later than 12:30pm.

LODGING

You may wish to spend more time in Atlanta than our trip plans for. If so, here are some possible lodging options. Prices were current at the time, but may have changed, and do not include taxes. Let us know if you're interested in finding someone on the trip to share a room with and we'll try to hook you up.

If you have a gambling spirit, the cheapest way to find a hotel room is to go through Priceline (www.priceline.com). When you have a choice of area, choose the airport area. All, or almost all, of the hotels in this area offer an airport shuttle

If you prefer to know what you're getting into, the following are a sample of the possibilities with approximate price ranges :

Drury Inn And Suites Atlanta Airport Hotel (404) 761-4900

1270 Virginia Avenue
Atlanta, GA 30344

Avg: \$95

Located 2 miles from the airport amenities include: fitness room, swimming pool, and complimentary breakfast, free evening beverage and snacks daily, free local phone calls and free long distance for one hour every night.

La Quinta Inn and Suites Atlanta Airport (770) 996-0000

4820 Massachusetts Boulevard
Atlanta, GA 30337

Avg: \$100

Amenities: fitness center and an outdoor, seasonal, Olympic-sized pool. High-speed Internet access, complimentary breakfast and free shuttle within 2 mile radius.

Sheraton Gateway Hotel Airport (770) 997-1100

1900 Sullivan Road
Atlanta, GA 30337

Avg: \$ 89

½ mile from the airport hotel features fitness center, indoor/outdoor pool and jacuzzi, complimentary breakfast, internet access, and airport shuttle.

Getting There Continued

Highland Inn (404) 874-5756

644 North Highland Ave.

Atlanta, GA 30306

Avg: \$85

This European-style inn has a great location in the middle of Virginia Highland. All rooms have private baths, TVs and clean, comfortable furnishings.

University Inn Guesthouse (404) 634-7327

767 N Decatur Rd.

Atlanta, GA 30307

Avg: \$125

a family-owned bed-and-breakfast situated on the doorstep of the Emory University campus. The rooms aren't flashy, but it is a great location.

THINGS TO DO IN ATLANTA:

City Segway Tour : take a tour of the city in a fun and cool manner!

Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site: Visit the home in which the leader of the Civil Rights movement in America was born, the church where he preached and the memorial site where he is buried.

Atlanta History Center: great overview for Atlanta History.

Piedmont Park This 185-acre park, home to the Atlanta Botanical Gardens and to summer festivals, is also popular with joggers.

Centennial Olympic Park Built for the 1996 Summer Olympic Games and now a public park.

Margaret Mitchell House and Museum A museum in the house where the author of "gone with the Wind" was born

Sweet Auburn The heart of African American commerce and culture in Atlanta at the turn of the century.

Atlanta Georgia Aquarium The Georgia Aquarium is the largest in the world with over 8 million gallons of water and more animals than any other Aquarium!