



summer
2021

N AMY Shair's TRIANGLE NEWSLETTER

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North Carolina Summer Road Trips

Ah, the familiar chant of "Are we there yet?" echoing from the back seat of a car. It's a refrain we can't unhear. As Summer 2021 kicks off, I'm sure everyone is itching for an affordable getaway and hotels are booking up incredibly quickly! Here are some of the most popular road trips for NC residents:

Blue Ridge/Asheville—More than half of the Blue Ridge Parkway's 469 miles run through North Carolina. From its southern terminus just outside Great Smoky Mountains National Park through Asheville and the High Country, to Cumberland Knob at the Virginia border, there's so much to explore just on the North Carolina side. You could go on forever about the best stops along this iconic road, which is America's longest National Parks Unit. Some of my must-see spots include Cumberland Knob, Linn Cove Viaduct, Linville Falls, and Craggy Gardens!

The NASCAR Road Trip—If you're a fan of NASCAR, you will no doubt want to head to the Charlotte Motor Speedway. The race may be in May, but the track is open year-round for visitors. Next, head north to Kannapolis, North Carolina, the hometown of racing legend Dale Earnhardt. You can take the Dale Trail through his childhood neighborhood to see where Earnhardt first began racing. Then, head to Mooresville, home to numerous racing teams' garages including Penske and DEI. Most of the garages have huge showrooms where you can see winning cars and possibly watch the techs work.

NC Waterfalls Road Trip—This trip will take you to see the best waterfalls the state has to offer. Start with Linville Falls located off the Blue Ridge Parkway. After an easy, four-mile hike, you can see five lookouts and unique views of Linville Falls. Crabtree Falls isn't too far from Linville and will reward you with well-worth-it views after a three-mile hike. Other great waterfalls to stop at are Looking Glass Falls, perfect for a cool drip, Moore Cove Falls, the perfect "walk-behind waterfall," and Cove Creek Falls, which is perfect for kids and adults. Last, but certainly not least, are the jaw-dropping Whitewater Falls. At 811 feet, this is the highest waterfall east of the Rockies! — Amy



Destination Lighthouse

More than 70 miles long and more than 30,000 acres of land, Cape Hatteras was designated the country's first national seashore in 1937. It boasts historic attractions, picturesque communities and plenty of opportunities to explore the history and landscape. Three lighthouses: Bodie Island Lighthouse, Cape Hatteras Lighthouse and the Ocracoke Lighthouse guard the shores, and visitors are welcome to tour all three and even climb to the top of the Bodie and Hatteras lighthouses. The Cape Hatteras Light, the tallest lighthouse in North America, easily recognizable by its black and white spiral – stands 210 feet high and is open daily from the third Friday in April through Columbus Day. On Ocracoke Island, take a gorgeous picture of the lighthouse, which is one of the oldest still-active lighthouses in the United States. Visit Cape Hatteras this summer to see these beauties for yourself!

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Light Your Landscape Like a Pro

Use Indirect Light—The current trend is for homeowners to highlight their landscaping with indirect lighting, which essentially uses a source to reflect the light emitted by the light fixture. This creates more of an atmospheric tone, allowing the light to spread across a wall off the side of a house more effectively. Indirect light will illuminate flower beds, gardens, bushes or other art. The light will bounce off the ground and create a nicely lit walkway around flowerbeds.

The Shift to LEDs—LED light bulbs are beginning to dominate the landscape lighting industry. For the majority of homeowners, outdoor lights and landscape lighting are typically left on longer than other home lighting, which makes LEDs the more affordable and logical option.

Keep It Simple—Two trends in landscape lighting is simplicity and cleanliness. What this means is that more homeowners are choosing to go with fewer ground fixtures to illuminate their entire home. Residents who simply align their light fixtures along a walkway in a very orderly and organized fashion are providing a lot of unnecessary light and wasting energy.

Going for a more simplistic design can still highlight plants and flower beds while giving just enough light to illuminate a backyard or patio. Also, homeowners are moving toward fewer lumens in light fixtures. This allows the light beam to spread more efficiently and even out the overall light sources.



MARKET WATCH

The current real estate market is like Summer - sunny and hot. There are more buyers than sellers and the market is still active. Apple's announcement for future jobs in Durham/RTP our area continues to get attention from buyers in other parts of the US. If you are waiting to save money for a down payment or thinking that the market is going to settle down, local data says it will continue to be a sellers market for a while and waiting may not benefit you. If you are a seller wondering, 'Where would I go?' or a buyer trying to figure out if now is a good time to buy a home, I can help you figure out what makes sense for you. I have proven strategies that are helping my sellers and buyers make the most of this market.



Unique New Design Trends of 2021

If you're looking to do a design overhaul, you're probably also looking for some inspiration. Here is what real estate design experts anticipate to be big trends this year!

Dedicated Home Offices - One of the single most prevalent design trends so far this year is adding or renovating home workspace. Even if you don't have the space for a traditional office, get creative with closet space! Try searching the "cloffice" on Pinterest.

Houseplants and Indoor Gardens - Experts say that the pandemic trend of bring the outdoors in is here to stay. Take into account your light level and time for care before investing!

Rattan Accents - Natural materials are making a huge comeback this year. You can find almost anything made in rattan right now, so liven up your living space with some natural accent pieces of your choosing.

Next-Level Playgrounds - As the cabin fever soared through the pandemic, parents were desperate to give their kids a place to connect with nature. You don't have to go overboard, but some are; adding elements like climbing walls and zipline courses to their own backyards!

Outdoor Kitchens - An outdoor kitchen can be as elaborate or as modest as you like. Some homeowners may simply add an outdoor refrigerator and dining area to the backyard to create an expanded entertaining space.

Smart Bathroom Innovations - Fun bathroom electronics and updates like bidets, touchless appliances, including motion sensors for lighting, and smart temperature control for bathroom floors are becoming more popular .

Retro Color Palettes - Queue the nostalgia for "simpler times. Expect to see funky color palettes (think mauve, forest green, and burnt orange) and furniture throwbacks like '80s curves and '90s traditionalism.



What was the first public University in the US to open its doors?

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If You're Feeling Stressed, Feed The Birds!

In today's constant contact, cell-phone celebrated, digital world, most people can go days or even weeks without spending any time in natural sunlight. Instead, we eat breakfast inside, or on the go, only to race to an office, filled with artificial light and plastic plants, for 8 to 10 hours a day. It's no wonder why Americans' mental health is suffering. Compare that hectic routine to those memorable moments when you're able to sit quietly, let the sunshine warm your face, hear the birds, and allow nature to envelope you. While everyone longs for less stress, actually relaxing can be dauntingly stressful! However, a new study out of the United Kingdom sheds light on one way people can de-stress: bird watching. The study finds that people who watch birds from their home have lower depression, anxiety, and stress compared to those that live in less leafy areas that have fewer birds. People "felt relaxed and connected to nature when they watched birds in their garden," researchers say. These feelings increased with the level of bird feeding in the yard, they add. Specifically, the number of birds people might see was directly associated with better mental health. Everyone wants less stress and anxiety. Once you start watching birds in action, they'll engage your attention in a way that keeps you in the moment, a state that provides mental relief. Admiring their beauty, listening to their sweet song and enjoying their antics will calm your overactive mind and bring joy and renewal!