

HeartCycle Bicycle Touring Club

Carolinas Blue Ridge Tour – Greenville & Asheville

- Dates:** Orientation meeting evening Friday, September 17, 2027.
Riding Saturday, September 18– Friday, September 24, with departure on Saturday, September 25 (last night lodging included).
- Leaders:** Jeremy Bollington and Scott MacCormack;
SAGs: Martha MacCormack and TBD
- Miles:** Approximately 330 miles with about 25,000 feet of elevation gain. 3,000–4,500 feet of elevation gain per day.
- Rating:** Intermediate-Advanced
<https://www.heartcycle.org/tour-ratings>
- Riders:** 30 (not including leaders)
- Price:** \$2,400 (double occupancy). \$600 due at registration.
Balance due by June 19, 2027. Single occupancy +\$1,200.
- Cancellation:** [Standard cancellation policy](#)

Travel insurance is strongly recommended.

OVERVIEW

Join us for a tour that showcases the best of the southern Appalachian Mountains. We will cycle on sections of the iconic Blue Ridge Parkway, where sweeping mountain vistas and rolling ridgelines create an unforgettable riding experience around every bend. The tour will also feature the awe-inspiring views from Caesars Head, one of South Carolina's most celebrated overlooks. Riders will discover a network of quiet, bike-friendly roads that wind through charming mountain communities, lush forests, and peaceful countryside.





The tour will start and finish in Greenville. We will have two nights in Downtown Greenville at the start and return for our final night. The hotel is located steps from the famous Swamp Rabbit Trail, which we will use to exit the city and within walking distance of all that downtown Greenville has to offer.

We will spend three nights in Asheville, including a rest day, which will allow you to explore one of America's most beloved mountain cities. You will have the opportunity to tour the magnificent

Biltmore Estate, stroll through its beautifully landscaped gardens, sample the city's renowned culinary scene, or check out one of the many local craft breweries. Combining world-class cycling, stunning natural beauty, and Southern hospitality, this tour will leave you with a deep appreciation for the Blue Ridge Mountains.

ITINERARY

Day 0: Friday, September 17

The orientation meeting will be at 5pm, just off the lobby of the [Embassy Suites, Downtown Greenville](#). Everyone will receive two free drinks tickets (per day) at check-in for use at the daily happy hour (5:00–6:30 pm)—grab your drink and bring it to the meeting!

For those arriving early and looking for warm-up rides, an easy option would be to ride the 20 miles (out and back) on the Swamp Rabbit Trail, or if you want some climbing, out and back to Paris Mountain is a fun option.



Day 1: Saturday, September 18

Greenville, SC, Loop

60 miles and 3,800 feet of elevation gain

We start the week with a loop west of the city with lots of rolling hills and nothing too long (biggest climb of the day is just over 200 ft of elevation gain). We will take Swamp Rabbit Trail out of the city, then head west. Lots of quiet tree-lined roads with a lunch stop in Pickens before heading back towards Greenville on the 9-mile Doodle Trail.

Day 2: Sunday, September 19

Greenville, SC to Hendersonville, NC

50 miles and 3,700 feet of elevation gain

We leave Greenville and head north today, riding the full Swamp Rabbit Trail out of town, through Travelers Rest. Our lunch stop will be in the grounds of Hotel Domestique, George Hincappie's cycling-focused hotel and the start/finish of his annual 4,000+ rider Fondo, which takes place in early October. After lunch, we leave South Carolina and head towards the small town of Saluda, with the first big climb of the week (1,200 ft over 6 miles).



Day 3: Monday, September 20

Hendersonville, NC to Asheville, NC

60 miles and 4,500 feet of elevation gain

Today's route takes us above 3,000 ft for the first time, then a sharp descent down to the small town of Black Mountain, with lunch overlooking Tomahawk Lake.



After lunch, we head towards Asheville with some gentle rollers, then pick up a short section of the Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP) for the first time, before leaving the parkway to cruise down towards Asheville, through the picturesque Biltmore Forest neighborhood. The **Embassy Suites in downtown Asheville** will be your home for the next three nights.

Asheville has a host of great restaurants all within a 10–15-minute walk of the hotel, along with many craft breweries. Alternatively, take a 10-minute rideshare (Uber or Lyft) up to the famous **Grove Park Inn** and take in the evening views from their Sunset Terrace.

Day 4: Tuesday, September 21

Asheville, NC, Loop

55 miles and 4,300 feet of elevation gain

Today's loop ride includes a big climb on the BRP. We retrace our path from yesterday, riding up to the BRP through the Biltmore Forest, then head north on the parkway. Our morning rest stop is at the BRP Visitor Center, which is followed by a climb on the parkway (8 miles and 1,500 of elevation gain) to Craven Gap. Leaving the BRP, you will have a wonderful switchback descent down to our lunch stop in Weaverville. After lunch, we head west towards the French Broad River, then follow the river upstream back to Asheville.

Day 5: Wednesday, September 22

Rest Day – Asheville, NC



The day is yours to explore Asheville—high on many lists will be to tour the **Biltmore Estate**. Or check out the River Arts District or some of the over 50 local craft breweries. If you want to ride more, we'll provide an unsupported route for a nice 45-mile loop through rolling farmland out to the small town of Marshall and then back along the French Broad River. Severely impacted by Hurricane Helene, because the river narrows at this point, Marshall is well on

its way to recovery. A wonderful [cycle shop/café](#) in the heart of the town makes for a good lunch stop. We will have our group dinner tonight.

Day 6: Thursday, September 23

Asheville, NC to Brevard, NC

49 miles and 4,500 feet of elevation gain

The Queen Stage of the tour! Today, we leave Asheville and head south on the BRP. After the morning rest stop, we will make the long climb up to the Pisgah Inn—3,100 ft gain over 14 miles—to reach the highest point of the tour at 5,000 feet. This section of the BRP has several tunnels. Lunch will be on the grounds of the inn with wonderful views towards Brevard. After lunch, it's downhill all the way... literally, to Brevard, a charming mountain town.



Day 7: Friday, September 24

Brevard, NC to Greenville, SC

58 miles and 3,600 feet of elevation gain

Our final day takes us to a famous viewpoint—Ceasars Head, where we will have lunch before enjoying a long descent back to Greenville. We will pick up the Swamp Rabbit Trail one last



time and likely celebrate a wonderful week in the Carolinas at one of the trailside hostelrys!

SPECIAL NOTES:

- Front and rear lights are required for the Blue Ridge Parkway.
- For those traveling from the Denver metro area, the Sprinter will be available to transport bicycles (\$300 roundtrip). A lottery may be needed if demand exceeds available space.
- Electric bicycles and tandems, please read the answer to the FAQ: *Are e-bikes and tandems allowed on HeartCycle tours?*
<https://www.heartcycle.org/frequently-asked-questions>



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