

Experience Alpine Helen and White County, Georgia Sample Itinerary

Day one: Arrive in Helen, grab lunch and explore downtown. Get ready for abundant shopping, art galleries, wineries, traditional German dishes and international fare all set against the natural North Georgia beauty with a Bavarian sensibility, alongside the Chattahoochee River. Tour the stresses and platzes of the Alpine Village in a horse-drawn carriage.

Check into accommodations. Stay at one of the downtown hotels, many with complimentary breakfasts or book at a lodge, cabin or chalet. Mountain cabins and lodges are ideal for multi-generational travelers. Helen-White County has more than 2,000 cabin rooms tucked out and about – in valleys, on top of mountains, by streams and rivers, to accommodate a variety of preferences. Guests can also rest in comfort at Unicoi State Park and Adventure Lodge where there's a choice of a hotel-style lodge, fully equipped cottages and modern campground. Or, try staying in a downtown hotel where visitors can walk to and from attractions in this pedestrian-friendly destination.

The supper bell is ringing! From German-inspired fare to Southern food with a twist, the staff at the Welcome Center is happy to assist you in selecting the perfect dining options to suit everyone in your party. Share a meal and memories as you prepare for an adventurous day.

After dinner, stroll through the downtown and wind down alongside

the Chattahoochee River, beneath the twinkling lights of Mother Nature.

Day Two: Breakfast at your hotel, at a local coffee shop, or on local fare, previously purchased, like homemade biscuits or pastries from Betty's Country Store or Hofer's German Bakery and Café. Select your day's activities from these options; you may not get to all of it in one day but that's part of the fun – anticipating the next day's adventure or making plans for your next trip even before you leave!

Jump into Nature! Depending upon the season and weather, morning is a beautiful time to venture into nature at Unicoi State Park and Adventure Lodge, Anna Ruby Falls in the Chattahoochee National Forest or at Smithgall Woods Conservation area. There are more than 21 waterfalls in the area, including Anna Ruby Falls, plus rafting, tubing and fishing the Chattahoochee River; kayaking and canoeing on Unicoi Lake, fly fishing; slogging down the slides at Helen Water Park; horseback riding or mountain biking; rock climbing at Yonah Mountain; zip lining; exploring the mines and grubbing for gold; playing at two 18-hole golf courses or three miniature golf courses. Helen goes full speed ahead into outdoor fun, offering visitors a variety of adventures in the Appalachian Mountains. Enjoy a lunch of barbecue, specialty sandwiches or German fare served at restaurants that offer outside seating along the Chattahoochee. If it's a true outdoor experience you're after, picnic sites with tables and grills are located

throughout Alpine Helen and in Unicoi State Park and Adventure Lodge and the Chattahoochee National Forest.

Return to your accommodations in the late afternoon for a little R & R. Savor the view, catch some zzz's or gather 'round a board game. Take time to feast with your eyes on some of Mother Nature's finest scenery with a mountain drive along winding roads. If staying in town, refresh before heading back out to enjoy downtown Helen...-candy, or – beer or wine...

Share happy memories of the day over dinner at one of Helen's Bavarian-themed restaurants or taste the bounty of the countryside at one of the local restaurants in Sautee and Nacoochee; the staff at the Helen Welcome Center will be happy to assist with dining options. If staying in a cabin, pick up sweet treats at the authentic German bakery or candy shop or stop at Betty's Country Store where you can load up on anything needed to build a memorable meal, including local, homemade and specialty items, groceries, produce, an amazing selection of beverages, delicious baked goods, cheeses, and a well-stocked deli – plus, locally-famous Betty's Black Bean Salsa.

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Day three (continued):

perfect light for photos. The Indian Mound and the Church in the Nacoochee Valley are some of the most photographed sites in the state of Georgia.

There's plenty to do in Nacoochee Village just outside of Helen. Established in 1876, the Nora Mill Granary is a historic gristmill sitting alongside the Chattahoochee River that stone-grinds corn and wheat, producing grits, corn meal, pancake and waffle mixes, flours, biscuit and bread mixes, pioneer's porridge and more. The gristmill – constructed of 1,500-pound French Burr mill stones and a 100-foot wooden raceway that feeds water, not into a vertical water wheel but to a water turbine – is quite a sight to behold. Visitors can sample the products at the old-fashioned country store and gift shop, Nora Mill Next Door – its roomy kitchen was built just for cooking and serving up samples – and browse among thousands of items, including candy, popcorn, honey, jams, jellies and kitchen gadgets.

After touring the Mill, step back in time at Nacoochee Antiques, sip vino at Habersham Winery, and pick up a one-of-a-kind piece of art at Willows Pottery – all before grabbing lunch Nacoochee Grill or one of the other one-of-a-kind restaurants in the Sautee and Nacoochee Valleys.

In the afternoon continue your journey through history in the Village of Sautee. Stroll the Folk Pottery Museum of Northeast Georgia followed by a visit to nearby Batesville and Mark of The Potter, the oldest craft shop in the same location in the state of Georgia and one that showcases the works of 30 regional artists. On weekends, watch the four resident potters work at their wheels. Take in a gallery show or live theatre performance at The Sautee Nacoochee Center. Find a new artist to collect at InsideOut Sautee with its local artists' gallery and home furnishings, pottery, jewelry and more.

Stop into The Lavender Cottage and Garden and pick up a souvenir to take home while learning about all the ways this aromatic herb can enhance life and home.

Catch a second wind in the late afternoon and re-energize at Higher Ground Coffee & More; its brewed cuppa is the perfect pairing for the homemade fudge and other sweet confections at the Old Sautee Store, a favorite with kids and kids at heart. If relaxing with a glass of vino – the Helen-White County area is home to several wineries. Habersham Winery is one of Georgia's oldest and largest wineries and its gift shop is an oenophile's paradise. Yonah Mountain Vineyards Tasting Room sits at the foothills of Yonah Mountain and offers sips at a beautiful hand-crafted wine bar with sweeping views of the mountains. Sautee Nacoochee Vineyards, North Georgia Wine Country's newest vineyard and winery, now has a tasting room at Nacoochee Crossing at Sautee.

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Day four: Fuel up with breakfast in town at Hot and Sweet Coffee Company, a gourmet shop specializing in certified organic/fair trade coffee and espresso-based drinks with over 17

flavors to choose from. The shop also serves up locally-made, hand-dipped ice cream. Pick up where you left off and start the day with the activities still on your list from yesterday!

Head towards Cleveland, where you can peruse antiques along the way before fueling up with lunch at the iconic Yonah Burger. Post finger-licking burger and fries, make your way to BabyLand General in nearby Cleveland, an amazing experience for children and adults alike. The spectacular home of BabyLand General Hospital is a Southern-style mansion that sits majestically on a 100-acre spread in the foothills of the North Georgia Mountains. The 70,000-square foot complex is home of the beloved Cabbage Patch Kids®, newborn, preemie and Lullaby editions and BabyLand Exclusives, as well as playful museum-like vignettes of Kids dating back to 1977. There is a busy retail shop, a (shhh!) Nursery, and the Cabbage Patch planted charmingly beneath the Magic Crystal Tree – the only place you can find “hand-stitched to birth” soft-sculpture Original Cabbage Patch Kids®. The site was chosen by Cabbage Patch Kid creator, artist Xavier Roberts, after he saw stork-like birds resting on the hill, marking the perfect place to “deliver” babies.

Depart or extend the stay – that is the question! Helen is ideally located as a home base for exploring the many mountain communities in Northeast Georgia. Be sure to check out the Alpine Helen-White County Convention and Visitors Bureau's annual calendar of events at www.HelenGa.org to learn what's happening during your visit. Throughout the year there are nature hikes and workshops, musical entertainment, art festivals and more.