

## NEWS RELEASE



*Where the Sun Rises  
on the Smokies*

### HAYWOOD COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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#### **FIVE FUN REASONS TO VISIT MAGGIE VALLEY & WAYNESVILLE, NC, THIS WINTER** *Escape the Rush, Stress of Holiday Season in Haywood County's Winter Wonderland*

**HAYWOOD COUNTY, N.C.**— Though most of the colorful leaves have fallen here in the mountains of Western North Carolina, there are still plenty of reasons to visit Maggie Valley and Waynesville. While perhaps not as well known as a “winter wonderland,” the variety of affordable things to do and places to stay in Haywood County, N.C., during the holiday season make this mountain destination the perfect place for that much-needed escape.

- **Come play in the snow:** Founded in 1961, Cataloochee Ski Area ([www.cataloochee.com](http://www.cataloochee.com)) is the oldest ski resort in North Carolina and remains one of the most popular in the Southeast. It's one of the most advanced, with state-of-the-art snowmaking capabilities extending the ski season each year. In fact, the 2008-2009 season spanned a record six months with 126 days (the second most in history) of great skiing. With 14 slopes and trails, Cataloochee Ski Area offers mountains of fun for everyone, from skiers to snowboarders, from novices to veterans. Beginners can get a feel for things on a couple of smooth, gentle slopes (classes and private lessons are also available), while the more adventurous can head to the ramps, rails and boxes at the Cat Cage Terrain Park. For those with a need for speed, there's plenty of steepness on this mountain. Nestled in the Great Smoky Mountains, the surrounding views are as magical as the slopes are thrilling.
- **Ride the crest of the latest wave in outdoor winter fun:** Perhaps sledding, not skiing or snowboarding, is more your speed. Then you'll definitely want to stop at Tube World ([www.tubemaggievalley.com](http://www.tubemaggievalley.com)), located just down the mountain from the ski area in Maggie Valley. The snow tube park offers fun for the entire family in the form a five-run slope and the slide of your life.
- **Take home the perfect Christmas tree:** There is no better way to get into the spirit of the season than searching for and finding the perfect Christmas tree with family. And we're not talking about strolling the aisles of Wal-Mart.

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Boyd Mountain Tree Farm ([www.boydmountainchristmastreefarm.com](http://www.boydmountainchristmastreefarm.com)), ideally situated between Maggie Valley and Waynesville, offers an authentic-yet-accessible mountain experience. Walk through the rows and rows of trees that line the mountain farm to choose the one that's right for you and your family. Want to cut it down yourself? Friendly staff will provide a handsaw. They'll take care of the cutting, however, if you'd like, along with transporting the tree down the hill and tying it to your vehicle. Don't hit the road before visiting the heated tent for some free treats: a variety of cookies, candy canes and pretzels, washed down of course with some hot apple cider or hot chocolate.

- **Holiday shopping? Check:** The holiday season is, as we all unfortunately know from firsthand experience, the busiest shopping season of the year: crowded malls, long lines, frustrated fellow shoppers, and testy store employees. Leave all those usual woes—and big-box retailers—behind this year, and find something unique for everyone on your list in an enjoyable atmosphere and a beautiful setting. Stroll the brick sidewalks of quaint downtown Waynesville (adorned with holiday decorations), where you'll discover everything from art galleries, bookstores and home furnishings to clothing, antiques and toys. Several cafés provide the perfect respite—a place to set down the bags and enjoy a cup of coffee. Only a few minutes away in the equally enticing Maggie Valley, unique gifts—from locally thrown pottery to homemade jams and jellies—abound in this picturesque setting far from the blandness of malls and chain stores.
- **A journey into history is only minutes away:** When you stay in Haywood County, you're in the heart of the mountains, and only minutes from all that Western North Carolina has to offer. You won't want to miss the opportunity to check out the Biltmore Estate, also known as “America's Largest Home.” The short drive east to Asheville is worth every minute, especially during the holiday season when the Biltmore's grandness is matched by its magical charm.

With 200-plus accommodations (choose an economical motel or luxurious cabin, a quaint downtown inn or a romantic bed and breakfast, a lakeside cottage or a rustic vacation rental) and an ideal location (only a few-hours drive from many locales throughout the Southeast), Haywood County, N.C., welcomes those looking for a great winter getaway without busting the budget.

Haywood County ([www.VisitNCsmokies.com](http://www.VisitNCsmokies.com)) encompasses 554 scenic square miles of spectacular country, with beautiful mountains and valleys dotting the landscape. More than a dozen of its mountain peaks soar to elevations of at least 6,000 feet (more than any east of the Mississippi River), and the county is one of the highest, with a mean elevation of 3,600 feet, east of the Rockies. One of its most notable mountain peaks is Cold Mountain—the basis for the award-winning, best-selling novel by Charles Frazier and the ensuing 2003 major motion picture—at 6,030 feet. The county sits at the western edge of North Carolina, with 46 miles of the Blue Ridge Parkway running along its southwestern border. The Great Smoky Mountains National Park and Pisgah National Forest are located in the northern section of the county. For those driving from points west via Interstate 40, several alternate routes are offered at [VisitNCsmokies.com](http://VisitNCsmokies.com).

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