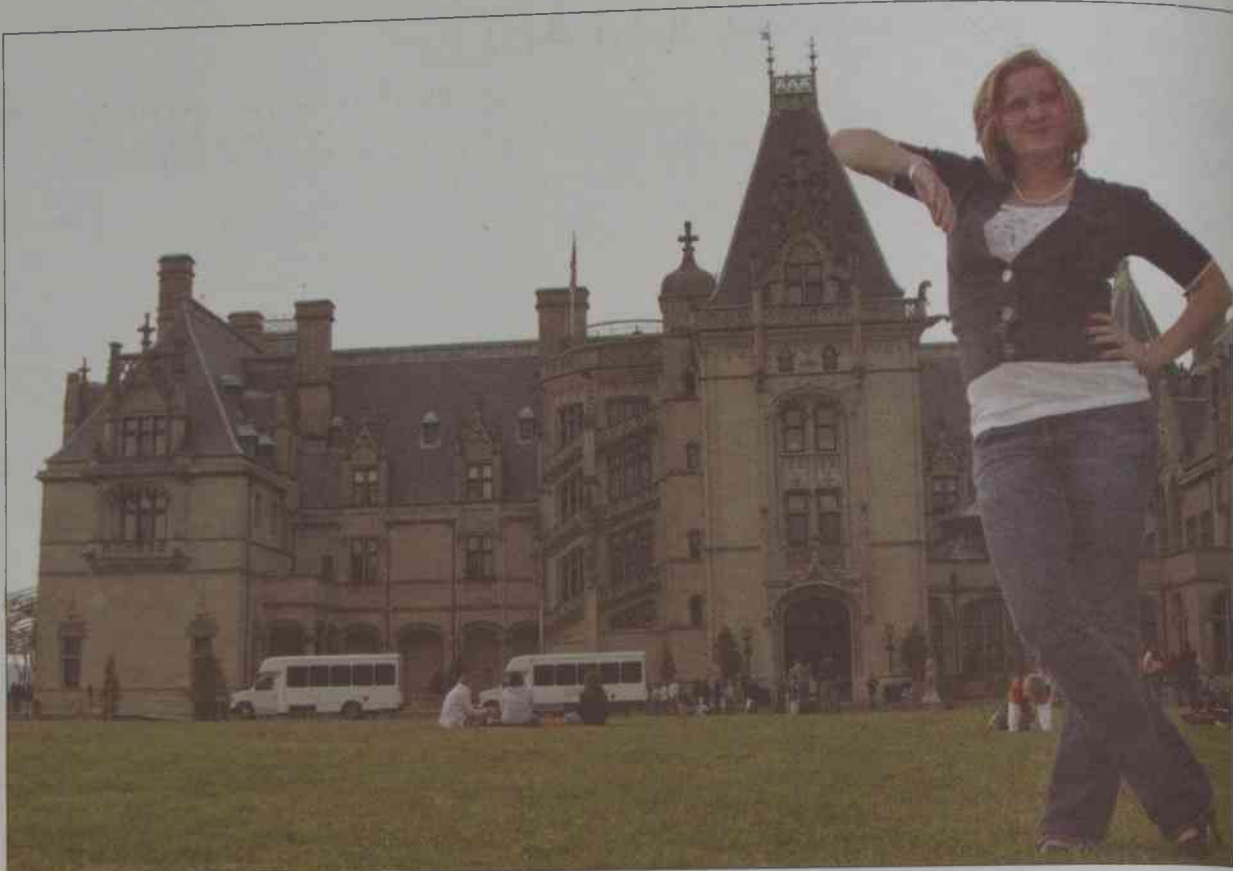


GET OUT!

Explore North Carolina with these nearby day trips

Sarah Costello
Reporter



The Biltmore Estate rests on 8,000 acres in North Carolina. The mansion includes 4 acres of floor space, 250 rooms, 34 bedrooms, 43 bathrooms and 65 fireplaces.

PILOT MOUNTAIN Pinnacle, N.C.



ESTIMATED DRIVING TIME:
1 hour, 20 minutes

Only an hour's distance from campus, Pilot Mountain provides an excellent source of recreation and pleasure from horseback riding to hiking, rock climbing, fishing, rafting and canoeing on the Yadkin River.

There has been a settlement along Tom's Creek, near the Pilot Mountain, for well over 200 years. Records dating back to 1761 document the existence of early settlers. The hamlet was called Hollows, Hog Wallow, Tom's Creek and Pilotville, before the name Pilot Mountain was adopted.

A dramatic remnant of prehistoric North America, the Pilot Mountain has been used for centuries as a landmark for Native Americans, explorers, settlers, and travelers. Native Americans called the mountain Jomeokee, which means "Great Guide" or "Pilot."

Pilot Mountain comprises two pinnacles, rising 1,400 feet from the ground. Big Pinnacle and Little Pinnacle rise 200 feet above the base, entire rock faces. The park is open to visitors through August from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. There are also dozens of rock walls for visitors interested in repelling and rock climbing.

Visitors can also camp at one of the 49 different campsites in the Pilot Mountain area for \$18 per night per campsite. Campers can reserve a campsite at www.nc.reserveworld.com.

"We've got several miles of hiking trails," park ranger Keith Martin said. "We've got opportunities for nature study and photography, a lot of people like to come in spring and summer (for photography)."

BILTMORE ESTATE Asheville, N.C.



ESTIMATED DRIVING TIME:
3 hours, 12 minutes

Located in the Blue Ridge Mountains, the Biltmore Estate is a beautiful location for touring, horseback riding, picnicking and much more.

The Biltmore Estate rests on 8,000 acres of land in Western North Carolina. It began as a self-sustaining ranch in 1895 and is still family-owned today.

At the time of building, Biltmore

was one of the largest projects in America. In a six-year period, an entire community banded together to construct the mansion. The estate even had its own brick factory, woodworking shop and a three-mile railroad for transporting materials.

The mansion features 4 acres of floor space, 250 rooms, 34 bedrooms, 43 bathrooms, and 65 fireplaces. The basement alone houses a swimming pool, gymnasium and changing rooms, bowling alley, servants' quarters, kitchens and more.

The Biltmore Estate boasts an award-winning garden, an equestrian center, and accommodations for those in the romantic mood.

Visitors can attend the Red Wine & Chocolate Seminar at Winery, a daily event at 2 p.m., 3 p.m., 4 p.m. and

6 p.m. The River Bend Farm Guided Tour enables visitors to catch a small glimpse of farm life, including meeting a blacksmith, woodworking and even churning butter.

Ticket prices fluctuate from \$10 to \$150 per person depending on the tour. Visitors can choose from the \$10 Audio Guide to the Biltmore House to the \$17 Biltmore House Rooftop Tour and the \$150 Premium Biltmore house Tour. The tour fees are in addition to the estate admission.

"I think it's really neat how there's so much history preserved there," said junior Julie Brown, who visited the estate last year. "It feels like you're back in time when you walk in the house. You see so much about how they lived back then."



PHOTO SUBMITTED
The Outer Banks of North Carolina, or OBX, offers many recreational options for students hoping to get outside.

OUTER BANKS OF NORTH CAROLINA



ESTIMATED DRIVING TIME:
4 hours, 28 minutes

The Outer Banks provides great variety for visitors for swimming, parasailing, walking and visiting the many museums and lighthouses. Bodie Island Lighthouse, Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, Currituck Beach Lighthouse, Ocracoke Lighthouse and The Roanoke Marshes Lighthouse are all sights to see on the stretch of the Outer Banks.

Visitors to the Outer Banks have a variety of beaches, locations and landmarks to choose from and visit. There are dozens of parks in the area, including Cape Hatteras National Seashore and Jockey's Ridge.

The Outer Banks is also known for The Lost Colony outdoor theatre production at Waterside Theatre on Roanoke Island. The drama reenacts the story of some of the first colonists and the mystery of their disappearance. It runs at 8 p.m. from May 29 through Aug. 20. Adult ticket prices cost \$18.

Historical sites are frequent throughout the banks, including a Civil War Trail, the Wright Brothers National Memorial and the Outer Banks History Center.

Visitors can camp or stay in a number of bed and breakfasts, hotels and rental homes.

THE NORTH CAROLINA ZOO Asheboro, N.C.



ESTIMATED DRIVING TIME:
1 hour

The North Carolina Zoo takes visitors on a whirlwind tour from the dense forests of North America to the cool climate of Antarctica and the grasslands of Africa.

Students can visit the North Carolina Zoo in Asheboro for free with a student identification card or \$10 per adult.

The zoo spans 500 acres, divided into the different continents and exhibits exotic animals from gorillas to polar bears. The North Carolina Zoo has more than 1,100 different animals and 40,000 plants. Visitors can bring a picnic lunch or eat at one of the

restaurants, including Wilderness Cafe, Junction Springs Cafe and Crocodile Cafe.

Hours of operation are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. from April 1 to Oct. 31. Plan on spending four to six hours walking through the vast park. Animal status boards provide feeding time information upon entering.



MICHELLE LONGO | Photographer
A river otter at the North Carolina Zoo in Asheboro plays in his cove at a special exhibit.

THE TOWN OF HILLSBOROUGH Hillsborough, N.C.



ESTIMATED DRIVING TIME:
39 minutes

The Town of Hillsborough is a historic and popular tourist attraction for visitors. The town's historical value has been preserved for centuries and continues to remain a step into the past.

Founded in 1753, the town was a hotspot during the Revolutionary War and the home of several 18th century governors.

Today, there are more than 100 original structures still standing from the 18th and 19th centuries.

In addition to Revolutionary War reenactments and guided tours of the historic district, Hillsborough is home to Occonechee Mountain State Natural Area and several other trails. Work is beginning on a riverwalk.

Eno River flows near the town by Occonechee Mountain. There are dozens of parks for hiking, picnicking and visiting. Depending on the time of year, Hillsborough hosts events and festivals.

Barbecue lovers descend on the town each June for the annual Hog Day. From April through September

between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. on the last Friday of each month, the sidewalks of Hillsborough are lined with musicians, vendors, and local artists selling wares and entertaining the public.

The Automobile Car Show is the last Saturday in September from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the historic Occonechee Speedway Trail.