ROAD TRIP · UNITED STATES

The Smokies and the Carolinas

Great Smoky Mountains, the Blue Ridge Parkway and the old South of Charleston and Savannah.

Length	13 days, 12 nights
Distance	1,490 km, 7 driving days
Behind the wheel	19 h 20 min
Travellers	2, 1 room, 1 car
Hotels	Comfort: a good hotel (3 stars)
Flights	Amsterdam – Atlanta (ATL), Atlanta (ATL) – Amsterdam

CONTENTS

Atlanta	Day 1	**8**
Gatlinburg	Days 2–4	**10**
Asheville	Days 5–6	**12**
Charleston	Days 7–9	**14**
Savannah	Days 10–11	**16**
Atlanta	Day 12	**18**

Day by day

DAY	DATE	NIGHT	KM	DRIVE	°C
1		Atlanta	20	20 min	
2		Gatlinburg	320	4 h 40 min	
3		Gatlinburg			
4		Gatlinburg			
5		Asheville	140	2 h	
6		Asheville			
7		Charleston	430	5 h	
8		Charleston			
9		Charleston			
10		Savannah	170	2 h 20 min	
11		Savannah			
12		Atlanta	400	4 h 30 min	
13		Flight home from ATL	20	20 min	

1,490 km · 19 h 20 min behind the wheel · on average 210 km a driving day

Kilometres and drive times by road (OSRM, OpenStreetMap), without stops: plan generously.

The route



Map: US Census Bureau (public domain) · roads © OpenStreetMap contributors

ON THE ROAD

Day 1	Land at Atlanta (ATL), drive to Atlanta · About 20 km (10 mi), 20 min
Day 2	Atlanta, drive to Gatlinburg · About 320 km (200 mi), 4 h 40 min
Day 5	Gatlinburg, drive to Asheville · About 140 km (90 mi), 2 h
Day 7	Asheville, drive to Charleston · About 430 km (270 mi), 5 h
Day 10	Charleston, drive to Savannah · About 170 km (110 mi), 2 h 20 min
Day 12	Savannah, drive to Atlanta · About 400 km (250 mi), 4 h 30 min

Well prepared

ESTA

Dutch and Belgian travellers need no visa for a holiday of up to 90 days, but do need an approved ESTA before boarding. It costs about $40, is valid for two years (or until your passport expires) and is applied for online. Apply at least 72 hours before you fly, and only on the official site.

esta.cbp.dhs.gov

Passport

An electronic passport (with the chip symbol), valid for the whole stay. Children need their own passport and ESTA.

nl.usembassy.gov

Driving licence

Your Dutch driving licence is accepted for renting and driving a car as a visitor. An international driving permit next to it helps with police and some rental desks.

anwb.nl

Renting a car

The renter is the main driver and pays with a credit card in their own name (no debit or prepaid card); the deposit is held on it. Usually from 21, and from 21 to 24 you pay a young-driver fee of about $25 a day. Book from home with insurance included (CDW/LDW and extra liability, SLI) and an extra driver if you want to take turns. Returning the car elsewhere (a one-way trip) costs extra. Fuel is sold by the gallon (3.8 litres); fill it up yourself before you bring it back.

Driving in the USA

Keep right; speeds are in miles an hour (65 mph is 105 km/h). Turning right on red is allowed after stopping, unless a sign says no. At a 4-way stop, whoever stopped first goes first. For a stopped yellow school bus with flashing lights you stop in both directions. Toll roads are often electronic only: ask your rental company about its toll pass. On remote stretches (parks, desert) there's little signal and a long way to the next pump: fill up at half and download the map.

Renting an RV

You can rent an RV from about 21 with an ordinary car licence. On top of the rent, count on mileage (often per mile), a kit with bedding and kitchen things, cleaning and the campsite: in the popular parks you book those months ahead on recreation.gov. Big RVs aren't allowed on every park road. Take photos of the RV when you pick it up: damage and missing items are the most heard complaint.

recreation.gov

National parks

Most big parks charge per car. Visitors from abroad pay $100 a person extra at 11 popular parks; the annual pass for non-residents is $250. Some parks need a timed-entry reservation in high season.

nps.gov

Money and tipping

Prices are without sales tax, which is added at the till. In restaurants a tip of 15 to 20% is usual. Cards are accepted almost everywhere; at the pump you may be asked for a ZIP code, so pay inside.

Travel insurance and health

Care in the USA is very expensive: take travel insurance with worldwide medical cover, and check whether your health insurance covers the USA. Cancellation insurance covers the trip if you can't go; insure the rental car with the rental company (see Renting a car). Take medicines in their original packaging, with a prescription in English. Emergency number: 911.

Power, phone and time

110 volt with flat two-pin plugs (type A/B): bring an adapter. A US eSIM is cheaper than roaming. The mainland has four time zones, Arizona mostly without daylight saving time.

Customs

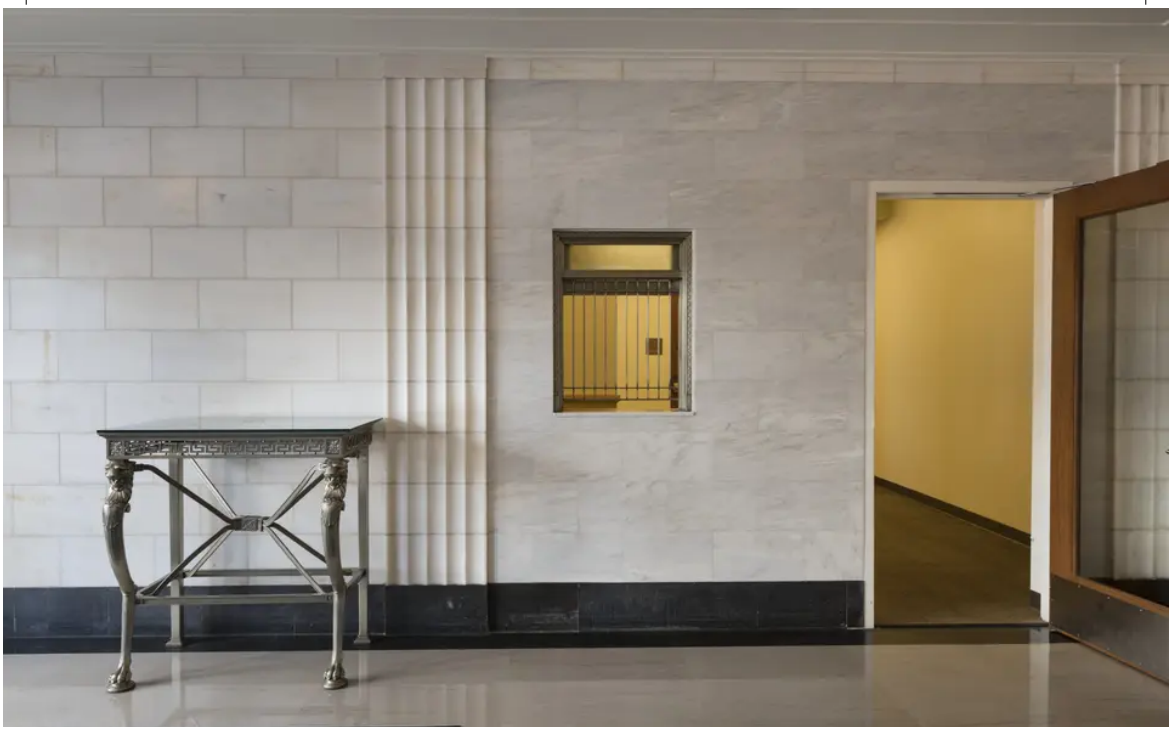
Fresh food, meat and fruit may not be brought in. Declare food you carry.

Packing list

- [ ] Passport (valid for the whole trip)
- [ ] ESTA, printed
- [ ] Driving licence (and an international one)
- [ ] Credit card in the driver's name
- [ ] Travel and cancellation insurance
- [ ] Confirmations: flights, car, hotels
- [ ] America the Beautiful pass for the parks
- [ ] Plug adapter for type A/B (110 volt)
- [ ] Car charger and phone holder
- [ ] eSIM or offline maps
- [ ] Sunscreen, sunglasses and a cap
- [ ] Water bottles for the desert
- [ ] Hiking shoes
- [ ] Layers: the coast and the nights get cold
- [ ] Medicines, in your hand luggage
- [ ] A pen, for this booklet

DON'T FORGET

Notes



DAY 1

Atlanta GA

After the flight

Land at Atlanta (ATL), drive to Atlanta: about 20 km (10 mi), 20 min

1 night

ATLANTA · DAY 1

HOTEL

- [ ] Hampton Inn & Suites Atlanta-Galleria · 3★ — roughly €120
  2733 Circle 75 Pkwy Se
- [ ] Hyatt House Atlanta Perimeter Center · 3★ — roughly €100
  5785 PEACHTREE DUNWOODY RD
- [ ] Hilton Garden Inn Atlanta Downtown · 3★ — roughly €150
  275 Baker Street NW
- [ ] Hampton Inn & Suites by Hilton Atlanta Perimeter Dunwoody · 3★ — roughly €80
  4565 Ashford Dunwoody Road
- [ ] Sonesta ES Suites Atlanta Perimeter Center · 3★ — roughly €90
  4601 Ridgeview Rd

NOTES



DAYS 2–4

Gatlinburg TN

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Atlanta, drive to Gatlinburg: about 320 km (200 mi), 4 h 40 min

3 nights

GATLINBURG · DAYS 2–4

HOTEL

- [ ] Cabin In The Smokeys · 3★
  392 Wild Orchid Way
- [ ] Bearskin Lodge on the River · 3★
  840 River Road
- [ ] Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott Gatlinburg Downtown · 3★ — roughly €210
  611 Historic Nature Trail
- [ ] Holiday Inn Express Gatlinburg Downtown by IHG · 3★ — roughly €280
  322 Historic Nature Trail
- [ ] Hilton Garden Inn Gatlinburg · 3★
  635 River Road

NOTES



DAYS 5–6

Asheville NC

The Blue Ridge Parkway and Biltmore

Gatlinburg, drive to Asheville: about 140 km (90 mi), 2 h

2 nights

ASHEVILLE · DAYS 5–6

HOTEL

- [ ] Courtyard Asheville Biltmore Village · 3★ — roughly €130
  26 Meadow Road
- [ ] Hampton Inn & Suites Asheville Biltmore Area · 3★ — roughly €150
  835 Brevard Road
- [ ] Hampton Inn & Suites-Asheville Biltmore Village, NC · 3★ — roughly €250
  117 Hendersonville Road
- [ ] Homewood Suites by Hilton Asheville · 3★ — roughly €170
  88 Tunnel Rd
- [ ] Holiday Inn Asheville East-Blue Ridge Pkwy by IHG · 3★ — roughly €90
  1450 Tunnel Rd

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DAYS 7–9

Charleston SC

Plantations and Rainbow Row

Asheville, drive to Charleston: about 430 km (270 mi), 5 h

3 nights

CHARLESTON · DAYS 7–9

HOTEL

- [ ] Courtyard by Marriott North Charleston Airport Coliseum · 3★ — roughly €100
  2415 Mall Drive
- [ ] The Inn at Middleton Place · 3★ — roughly €180
  4290 Ashley River Rd
- [ ] Hilton Club Liberty Place Charleston · 3★
  475 EAST BAY STREET
- [ ] Tru By Hilton Charleston Ashley Phosphate, Sc · 3★ — roughly €70
  2475 Prospect Drive
- [ ] The Ryder Hotel · 3★ — roughly €200
  237 Meeting Street

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DAYS 10–11

Savannah GA

Forsyth Park

Charleston, drive to Savannah: about 170 km (110 mi), 2 h 20 min

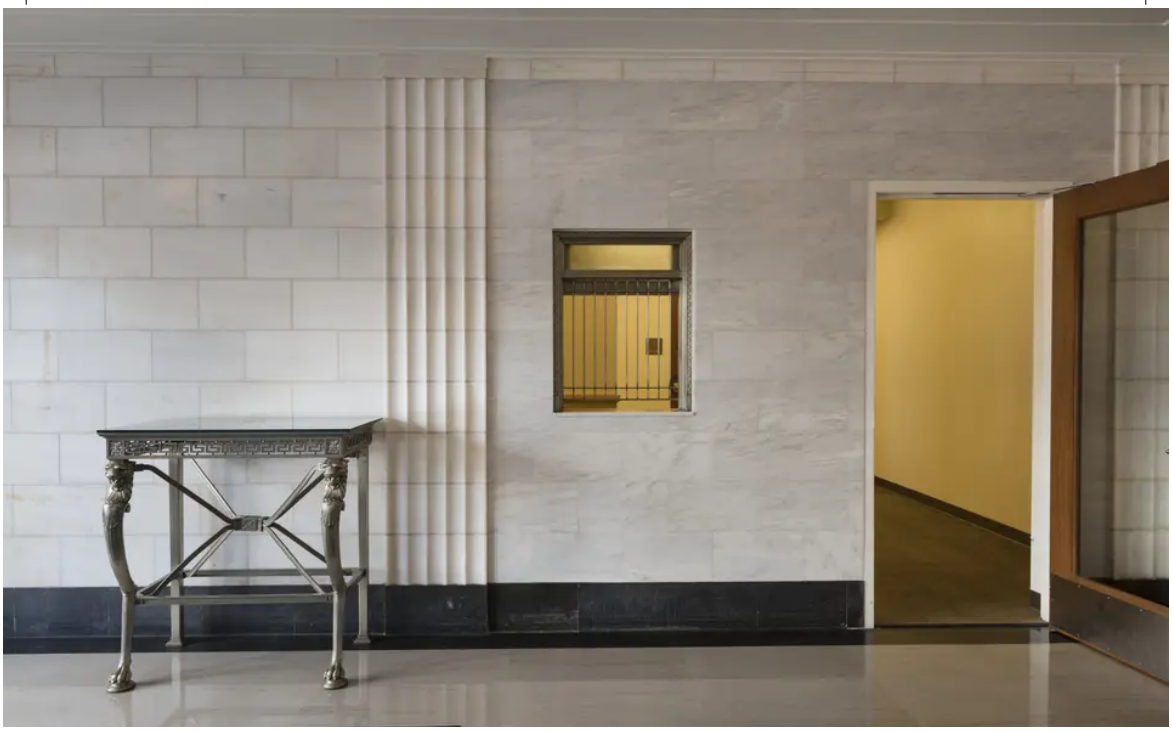
2 nights

SAVANNAH · DAYS 10–11

HOTEL

- [ ] Homewood Suites Savannah Historic District/Riverfront · 3★ — roughly €240
  611 East River Street
- [ ] 17Hundred90 Inn and Restaurant · 3★
  307 E President St
- [ ] East Bay Inn, Historic Inns of Savannah Collection · 3★
  225 East Bay Street
- [ ] Residence Inn by Marriott Savannah Downtown/Historic Distric · 3★ — roughly €110
  500 W Charlton Street
- [ ] Hampton Inn Savannah Historic District · 3★ — roughly €200
  201 East Bay Street

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DAY 12

Atlanta GA

Before the flight home

Savannah, drive to Atlanta: about 400 km (250 mi), 4 h 30 min

1 night

ATLANTA · DAY 12

HOTEL

- [ ] Hampton Inn & Suites Atlanta-Galleria · 3★ — roughly €120
  2733 Circle 75 Pkwy Se
- [ ] Hyatt House Atlanta Perimeter Center · 3★ — roughly €100
  5785 PEACHTREE DUNWOODY RD
- [ ] Hilton Garden Inn Atlanta Downtown · 3★ — roughly €150
  275 Baker Street NW
- [ ] Hampton Inn & Suites by Hilton Atlanta Perimeter Dunwoody · 3★ — roughly €80
  4565 Ashford Dunwoody Road
- [ ] Sonesta ES Suites Atlanta Perimeter Center · 3★ — roughly €90
  4601 Ridgeview Rd

NOTES

What it costs

DAY	PLACE	HOTEL	TOURS	CAR	TOTAL
1	Atlanta	€160	–	€60	**€220**
2	Gatlinburg	€160	–	€60	**€220**
3	Gatlinburg	€160	–	€60	**€220**
4	Gatlinburg	€160	–	€60	**€220**
5	Asheville	€160	–	€60	**€220**
6	Asheville	€160	–	€60	**€220**
7	Charleston	€160	–	€60	**€220**
8	Charleston	€160	–	€60	**€220**
9	Charleston	€160	–	€60	**€220**
10	Savannah	€160	–	€60	**€220**
11	Savannah	€160	–	€60	**€220**
12	Atlanta	€160	–	€60	**€220**
13	Flight home from ATL	–	–	€60	**€60**

Flights	€1,700
Hotels	€1,920
Excursions	€0
Car hire	€780
Total	**€4,400**
	€2,200 a person

An estimate to plan with (prices of 2026-10): hotels, the ticked excursions, car hire and flights. No fuel or meals.

Notes

About this booklet

Made on rondreis.expert. Your trip is still there, to change and print again: usa.rondreis.expert/en/tours/smokies-carolinas/

PHOTOS

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MAP AND TYPE

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