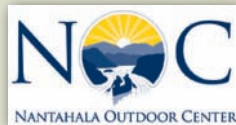


# 16 BEST RIVER ADVENTURES



presented by



**Raft the Nantahala (Nantahala Gorge):** To get a sample of the area's world class whitewater we suggest heading out to the Nantahala River in the Bryson City area. Paddle eight miles of class II whitewater through a steep, narrow mountain gorge. This classic rafting trip ends with the unnerving class III Nantahala Falls.

**Directions from Asheville to NOC Outpost:** Take I-40 W to Exit 27 onto US 74 W for about 50 miles. Eight miles west of Bryson City, the highway will split into two 2-lane roads. Stay on 74, which is the left lane. Go another 5 miles and you will see the Nantahala River, and NOC's Nantahala Outpost.

**Canoe the French Broad (Asheville/Rosman):** While the French Broad River can include nasty whitewater, it also has some mellow sections that are ideal for canoeing. Two access options include the Headwaters Outfitters outpost in Rosman near Brevard and the Bent Creek River Park just outside of Asheville. Depending on which section you tackle, you'll paddle through the Biltmore Estate, navigate mild rapids, and have plenty of opportunities for cool dips in the French Broad's deep waters.

**Directions from Asheville:** We suggest hooking up with the Asheville Outdoor Center for the Bent Creek River Park option and Headwaters Outfitters for the Rosman/Brevard option. See their contact info in the Related Resources section below.

**Raft the Nolichucky (Nolichucky Gorge):** The Nolichucky River sits in the steepest river gorge east of the Mississippi River. The gorge is flanked by the Unaka Mountains which makes for an impressive wilderness setting. For more adventurous folks we suggest running the Nolichucky Gorge section and for the younger or more cautious tackle the Lower Nolichucky.

**Directions from Asheville to NOC Outpost:** Take I-240 W to Exit 4A/I-26 W/US 19/23 N. Follow this for about 50 miles into Tennessee to Exit 40 (Old Exit 15), Jackson-Love Hwy. Go to the stop sign, turn right and then right again in front of Riverview Baptist Church. Go 0.7 miles to turn left onto River Road. At the next stop sign, turn left onto Chestoa Road. Immediately after crossing the river, turn right onto Jones Branch Road and follow it for 1.2 miles. Make a sharp right to reach the NOC Nolichucky meeting place.

**Jump Skinny Dip Falls (Parkway South, MP 417):** This three-tiered waterfall along the Yellowstone Prong drops a total of 30 feet through a rocky bend in an ice-cold mountain stream. Perched on the edge of the tallest falls is a rock that juts over a deep plunge pool. Jump at your own risk and clothing is optional.

**Directions from Asheville:** Take I-240 W to I-26 E to Exit 33. Take a left on to NC 191 towards the Blue Ridge Parkway for 2 miles. Follow the signs to get on the Parkway and head south (a right turn). From here it is 30+ miles to the Looking Glass Rock Overlook, milepost 417. The trail begins on the other side of the road. Follow the trail about 400 feet to the Mountains to Sea trail and turn left to falls.

**Raft the Whitewater of the French Broad (Hot Springs):** The French Broad is calm as it cuts around downtown Asheville, but it's a torrent of whitewater further west near Hot Springs. Run the half-day trip for an experience chocked full of class II-III rapids, or extend your trip to a full day and tackle the class IV Frank Bell's rapid.

**Directions from Asheville to NOC Outpost:** From I-240 W take Exit 4A onto I-26 W/US 19/23 N. Drive nine miles, to Exit 19A onto Hwy 25/70 toward Marshall. After 8.5 miles, the road changes from four lanes to two. Continue another 6.5 miles and you will see the NOC buildings on the left. The parking lot entrance is at the top of the hill.

## Related Resources

Rafting: Nantahala Outdoor Center / 888-871-7238 / [www.noc.com](http://www.noc.com)

Canoe the French Broad: Asheville Outdoor Center / 828-232-1970 / [www.paddlewithus.com](http://www.paddlewithus.com) / Headwaters Outfitters / 828-877-3106 / [www.headwatersoutfitters.com](http://www.headwatersoutfitters.com)

River Access Points: [www.riverlink.org/riverguide.pdf](http://www.riverlink.org/riverguide.pdf)

Blue Ridge Parkway Map: [www.nps.gov/blri/](http://www.nps.gov/blri/)

Give Back: RiverLink / [www.riverlink.org](http://www.riverlink.org)

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