
The idea of the day trip is not a new one, but the concept has gained in popularity of late as a corollary to the "staycation" and the movement to patronize local small businesses. North and South Carolina abound with opportunities for day trips, and this book does an excellent job of collecting and categorizing some popular examples. The author has written three other books about traveling in North Carolina, and is himself a Gastonia native. Although the book is heavily weighted towards North Carolina travel, Hoffman states in the introduction that this is due purely to the fact that the Old North State is geographically larger and that it is not a commentary on the age-old debate of which Carolina is the better.

The book is organized into fifty-five different itineraries. Thirty-nine of the trips use one of six major cities as home base: Raleigh, Wilmington, Charlotte, and Asheville from North Carolina and Columbia and Charleston from South Carolina. The remaining sixteen trips focus on various popular themes such as outdoor pursuits, the Civil War, and edible local specialties. Each of the itineraries provides readers with a basic overview of the area and brief directions followed by a description of the area's activities, complete with contact information, hours, and prices if relevant. A small selection of places to shop, local restaurants, and local lodging is also provided for each area and generally focuses on unique options not found anywhere else. Scattered throughout the book are small blue boxes that provide additional "quirky Carolina" facts or interesting local trivia that help readers get a feel for particular areas. For larger day trip destinations, Hoffman also includes a short note on activities and sights that may tempt visitors into lengthening their stay beyond a day trip. Special care is taken to note family friendly options, but those traveling without children will find the information is just as helpful.

A user-friendly guide, this book is fully indexed and includes a helpful section on how to use the information provided. Here Hoffman states that while basic maps are printed for each day trip they are for reference only, and he recommends using a more detailed road map or a GPS to conduct itineraries. Suggestions on planning day trips are also provided, including details such as obtaining local fishing licenses and road maps. Written for travelers of all ages and types, this guide provides excellent access to the highlights of North and South Carolina destinations. It is recommended for all public libraries and college libraries with popular interest sections.

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