Native North Carolina is organized into four main sections. The first three sections contain alphabetized entries covering geographical elements, communities, and counties, respectively. Most entries are short: a paragraph or two outlining the place, its physical location, and the origins of its name. However, some descriptions stretch to several pages and include more in-depth histories or extensive quotes. The fourth section of the book is a travel guide, outlining ten driving trips. Many are scenic treks through the mountains, but the longest is a journey on the Pamlico Scenic Byway and through the Outer Banks.

The book is illustrated with a series of black and white photographs that are meant to "entice" readers to visit the pictured locations. However, none of the photos have captions and it may be difficult for readers to locate the vistas that are shown. Also conspicuously absent are any illustrative maps, a serious shortcoming in any book about places and travel.

The book’s end materials include an appendix, a bibliography, and an index. The appendix listing other American places with indigenous origins is interesting, but an overview of North Carolina’s indigenous groups and their history would have provided welcome context for the place entries. The bibliography includes classic sources like William Powell's North Carolina Gazetteer and James Mooney's Myths of the Cherokee, but it also lists several less authoritative books and Web sites. Readers will find the index particularly helpful in finding information about sites with shared names or about places that are described within the entries for other locations.

At first glance, the format of Native North Carolina makes it seem like a reference book. However, it is much more successful as a casual travel book than it is as a researcher’s resource. It navigates using road intersections, highway mile-markers, and land marks and it has a conversational tone. Information of particular interest to tourists—like the difficulty of hiking at Tusquitee Bald and the location of picnicking at Stecoah Gap—is present throughout the book. In addition, some entries meander away from their main subject. While tangential remarks about Blackbeard and trivia about the University of South Carolina mascot make for interesting travel reading, they also distract from the main focus.

Native North Carolina is not recommended for school libraries or as an authoritative reference resource, but is recommended for the travel or North Carolina sections of public or academic libraries.

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