

MOUNTAIN *Life*

HIGHLANDS & CASHIERS



May 2022

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& CROSSROADS CHRONICLE



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PUBLISHER'S *note*



There are few small towns anywhere in America that boast the culinary chops and deluxe accommodations that Highlands and Cashiers have to offer.

Whether you are in town for a three-day weekend, or the entire Summer, there are menu items that are sure to satisfy even the pickiest of palettes. In this edition of Mountain Life Magazine, we look at some of the best culinary options available. From craft cocktails at local lounges, to dinner offerings at premiere eateries, there is plenty of exploring to be done in local restaurants around town.

Of course, no trip to the Highlands-Ca-

shiers Plateau is possible without a place to stay. From premiere hotels and inns, to local campgrounds and RV parks, any level of accommodations are available in Highlands and Cashiers. No matter whether it's a day at the spa, or a day spent knee deep in a local creek, entertainment options also abound.

We hope you will take time to read about Highlands and Cashiers dining and lodging offerings and visit as many of our local establishments as possible. It's a great time to try something new, or savor an old favorite, while enjoying life at 4118 feet.

Ryan D. Hanchett

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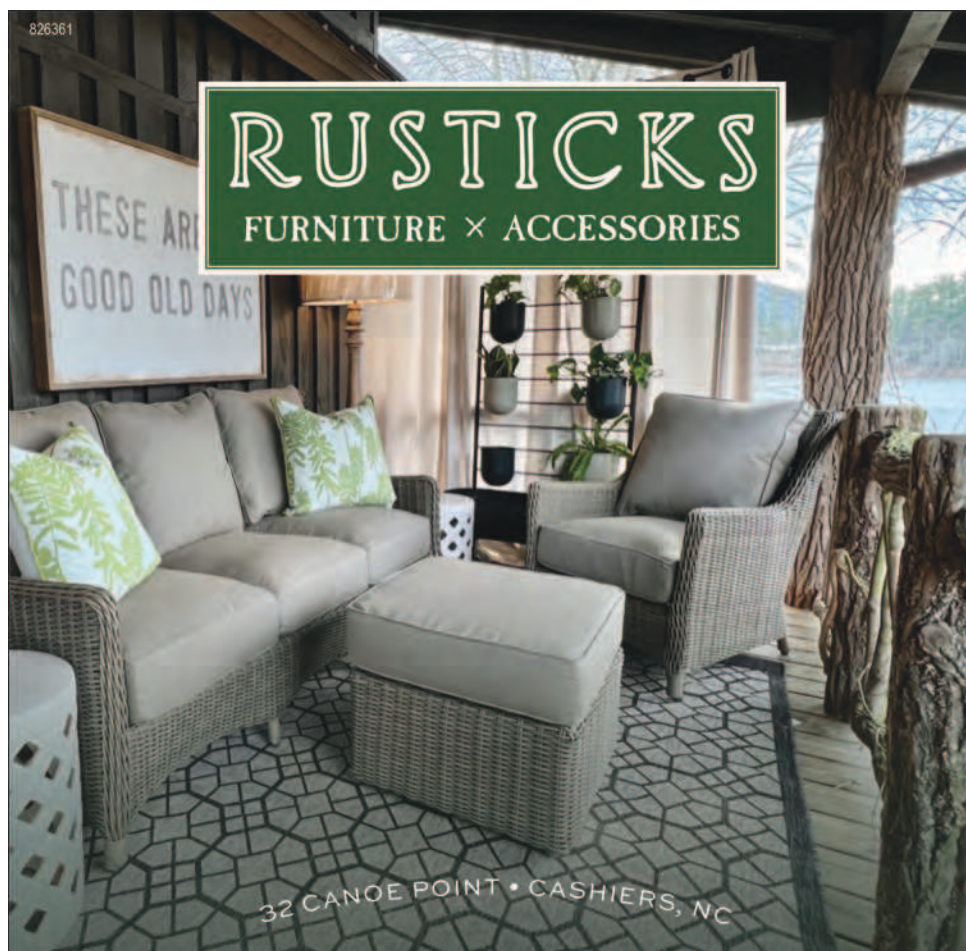
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Take a *Look* Inside

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Easy recipes with maximum deliciousness



THE SUMMER HOUSE

by Reeves

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Ristorante Paoletti

Uncompromising quality, recipes perfected over decades, and ritual are at the heart of the Italian gastronomic tradition. For 69 years the Paoletti family has believed in sharing those traditions. The first Ristorante Paoletti opened in Miami Shores in 1953; and for 38 seasons in Highlands we have prided ourselves on sharing the food that's been at the center of our lives for generations.

Ristorante Paoletti has been the town's premier destination for fine Italian dining since 1984. As an Italian American family who believes in sourcing only the best ingredients, we have long standing relationships with purveyors, many of whom import ingredients directly from Italy for us. Our daily deliveries ensure we offer only the freshest coastal fish, seafood, and prime grass fed beef. We also have a loyal following for our seared elk chop, milk fed veal chop alla marsala, and family recipe cannelloni. The menu offers numerous gluten free options in every category from appetizers, to pasta and main courses. Desserts are made in-house and include a rotating gelato selection, chocolate walnut torte, and Nonna Paoletti's tiramisu recipe dating back to 1923.



Having been a recipient of the Wine Spectator's "Best of Award of Excellence" since 1987, we offer an outstanding selection of aged Barolo, Barbaresco, Super Tuscan, Bordeaux, and Burgundy in addition to our domestic selections from California and Oregon. We offer more than 25 wines by the glass from both European and American producers. We also offer select Reserve wines by the glass preserved by the Corvin System.

Dinner is served every evening in-season. As a highly sought after locale, reservations are suggested and tables are gladly booked- by phone only - up to one month in advance of your desired dining date. We look forward to welcoming you and seeing to it, in the words of Papa Arturo Paoletti, that you leave not only full but fulfilled.



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On The Verandah is known for its outstanding dishes, including fresh seafood such as scallops, Gulf shrimp, fresh fish and our specialty lobster piccata, as well as duck, heritage pork chops, Black Angus beef and small plates served at the bar. Guests rave about the Thai coconut shrimp and purple sticky rice.

A resident pastry chef makes seasonal pies, cheesecakes, crème brûlée and other creative desserts – a fine end to a fine meal!

Chef Andrew Figel has many years of experience, and he and his creative staff guarantee to please the most demanding palates.

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— & —

Cashiers Valley Smokehouse

SLAB TOWN PIZZA

If you're looking for good pizza, stop by Slab Town Pizza, 45 Slab Town Road in Cashiers, where they specialize in hand-tossed New York style pizzas, sandwiches, and salads.

Jonathan Caddell is the chef, and he studied at the Culinary School of the Rockies in Boulder, Colorado where he mastered the art of making pizza. The team at Slab Town makes all their dough in house and you can taste the difference.

This season, the restaurant is expanding to streamline their take-out ordering and adding additional indoor and outdoor seating. The perfect place to bring the whole family, Slab Town offers space for kids to play outside and plenty of TVs to cheer on your team.

CASHIERS VALLEY SMOKEHOUSE

The secret to good barbecue is meats smoked fresh every day, which is what customers can expect at Cashiers Valley Smokehouse, 281 Hwy. 64.

The restaurant also offers the best homemade dishes, from



saucers to sides, and is known for their friendly and helpful staff. A variety of sandwiches are on the menu, ranging from a pulled pork and slaw to the Cuban with ham and brisket.

All the dishes at the Smokehouse are served up by Brien Peterkin, Jr., who received his culinary training at the Culinary School of the Rockies in Boulder, Colorado.

BBQ comes by the pound at the Smokehouse, and people can pick from a variety of meats ranging from pulled pork to a half or full rack of St. Louis style ribs.

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PHOTOS BY MICHAEL O'HEARN

Cashiers comes together

HELPING THE CHILDREN OF UKRAINE

BY KAYLEE COOK

The power of tight-knit communities can be one of the most inspiring aspects of a small town. Whether it be the community rallying together to celebrate its history or working to raise money for a fellow community member who is in need, no one knows how to work together quite like a small town. Cashiers, while technically classified as a village rather than a town, is no exception.

When local restaurants, Slab Town Pizza and Cashiers Valley Smokehouse, decided they wanted to hold a fundraiser to help the children of Ukraine, the Cashiers community was right behind them.

The fundraiser, which was held on Sunday, March 6 at both restaurants, was specifically to raise money for Save the Children, an organization founded in 1919 whose goal is to improve the lives of children and send aid in natural disasters and war. The organization sends money and aid to countries all over the world and is now collecting donations to send directly to Ukraine.

Over the span of both restaurants, 50 to 60 people showed up to support the cause and the event managed to raise a lit-

tle over \$1,000 in total through restaurant sales, tip donations and gift card sales.

While \$1,000 may seem like an inconsequential number to many, this money will go a long way to help the children of Ukraine receive the aid they need and demonstrates the power that a tight-knit community can achieve when working together.

THE CRISIS IN UKRAINE

In early 2021, Russia began moving thousands of troops and military equipment toward their shared border with Ukraine. This amassing of troops caused the global community to worry about a potential invasion of Ukraine by Russia. Many world leaders, including President Joe Biden, warned Russian President Vladimir Putin that military aggression against Ukraine would result in real consequences, mainly in the form of economic sanctions.

While Russia did begin to pull back some of its troops, thousands remained along the border and by November of 2021, Russia began to renew its troop's presence at the border

claiming that they had no intentions of invading Ukraine and were participating in routine military training.

As tensions over Russia's potential invasion began to rise, world leaders from the U.S., Russia and Europe met repeatedly in an attempt to defuse the situation. Russia continues to restate the claim that they have no intentions of invading Ukraine. However, this reassurance came after Vladimir Putin requested that Ukraine be permanently barred from joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and that all troops that had been stationed in countries that joined the alliance after 1997 be removed. He also demanded that NATO and the U.S. provide a written response.

In January of 2022, NATO and the U.S. denied Putin's request to bar Ukraine from joining the alliance, but claimed they would negotiate smaller issues. Meanwhile, the U.S. ordered embassy staff members' families to leave Ukraine as NATO places forces on standby, including 8,500 U.S. troops.

By early February, diplomatic efforts to avoid an invasion began to pick up pace across Europe and President Biden ordered the movement of 1,000 U.S. troops to Romania, which borders Ukraine, and stationed 2,000 more troops in Poland and Germany. On February 21, three days before Russia began its invasion, Putin recognized the independence of the Donetsk people, a city in Ukraine that was under the administration of the Donetsk People's Republic which is a self-proclaimed breakaway state which is mainly made up of Russian



separatists. Putin then ordered Russian troops to move into Donetsk and other separatist-controlled areas as part of a "peacekeeping mission."

President Biden called this move the beginning of a Russian Invasion and moved in tandem with the U.K. and European Union to launch broad sanctions against Russia. On Feb. 24, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in the largest military operation seen in Europe since World War II.

While Ukrainian forces worked and continue to work to



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fight off Russian forces, succeeding in pushing them away from the capital city of Kyiv, the devastation caused by Russia's invasion has forced Ukrainians to flee their homes and the country.

SLABTOWN FUNDRAISER

As millions of Ukrainians have been forced to flee the country in order to seek safety, one Cashiers restaurant owner wanted to do something to help the children and families who have been forced from their homes. Co-owner of Slab Town Pizza and Cashiers Valley Smokehouse, Brien Peterkin, began to search for a way that he and the Cashiers community could do their part to help those in Ukraine, even if it was on a small scale.

"He was just looking at the news and how many children were being displaced and how many refugees were having to leave Ukraine due to the invasion," Head Chef at Slab Town and Part-Owner Jon Caddell said. "And he has four grandchildren, and it just kind of touched his heart. You know, what would happen if it was his family in that situation? And he just thought you know, we could do a little bit just to help out and it would be a good way to get the Cashiers community to support them, even if it's just a little bit."

Peterkin would eventually come up with the idea for a

fundraiser held at Slab Town Pizza and Cashiers Valley Smokehouse.

"We donated 10% of our sales at both restaurants," Caddell said. "It came from just regular food and beverage sales and then also there was a collection of tips and those were added as well. If people couldn't be here to participate, they could purchase a gift card and we would take those funds and just put them towards this. So, if someone wanted to donate \$50, we would give them a \$50 gift card and then take that \$50 and give it to Save the Children instead of the restaurant keeping it."

While the restaurants typically give yearly donations to different local organizations such as the Cashiers Historical Society, Summit Charter School and the Blue Ridge Early College, they have never held a fundraiser for a specific organization such as Save the Children.

While Save the Children sends funds all over the world, the Cashiers community can rest assured that the money raised at Slab Town and Cashiers Valley Smokehouse will be going straight to the children of Ukraine.

"They have sister organizations in different countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, and South America where their donations get spread out, but for this one specifically, they had a section where you could apply your donations just to children of Ukraine," Caddell said.



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Bryson's Food Store

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Cake Bar

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Cashiers Valley Smokehouse

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pizzaplacehighlands.com

Ristorante Paoletti

Ristorante Paoletti

440 Main Street, Highlands
828-526-4906
paolettis.com

Rosewood Market

117 Franklin Road, Highlands
828-526-0383
rosewoodgourmet.com

Ruffed Grouse Tavern

270 Main Street, Highlands
828-526-2590
highlandermountainhouse.com

Sapphire Mountain Brewing Company

50 Slicers Avenue, Sapphire
828-743-0220
sapphremountainbrewingcompany.com

Satulah Mountain Brewing Company

454 Carolina Way, Highlands
828-482-9794
satulahmountainbrewing.weebly.com



Slab Town Pizza

45 Slab Town Road, Cashiers
828-743-0020
slabtownpizza.com

Subway

73 Highlands Plaza, Highlands
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17 Laurel Terrace, Cashiers
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The North Georgia Mountains have always been known as a place to escape for breathtaking views and to enjoy the simple pleasures in life. Our growing number of wineries and vineyards in Mountain Wine Country offer that, and so much more.

With 17 area tasting rooms nestled among the stunning landscape of North Georgia, the area surrounding Ellijay is a wine-lovers dream. Three new tasting rooms opened in the last year (including Hard Cider), and 4 more are scheduled to open this year and into 2023. Ellijay is becoming THE destination for wine travel in the southeastern United States.

The tasting rooms here are unpretentious, welcoming and offer a wide variety of experiences. Our wineries all have something different to offer from private barrel-room tastings, special events, food trucks, music and concerts, lodging options and much more. You can even take part in the crush this fall!

We encourage you to contact our Pick Ellijay team at pickellijay.com or come to one of our Visitor Centers in Ellijay to get maps and suggestions on vineyards that might appeal to you. Book a trip with one of our transportation companies who will collect your group at your rental cabin or hotel and transport you to the vineyards safely, while you sit back and take in the views.

We invite you to come up, rent a cabin, enjoy our many dining choices, tour our wineries, and discover Mountain Wine Country!

For information about our wineries and vineyards, dining choices and accommodations, scan here!



1. Bear Claw Vineyards
2. Buckley Vineyards
3. Cairn View Winery
4. Canoe Vineyard
5. Cartecay Vineyards
6. Chateau Meichtry Family Vineyard and Winery
7. Ellijay River Vineyards
8. Engelheim Vineyards
9. Fainting Goat Vineyards and Winery
10. Grapes & Ladders Vineyards and Winery
11. Mercier Orchards Farm Winery
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14. Roo Mountain Vineyards
15. Serenberry Vineyards
16. Sharp Mountain Vineyards
17. Waldmet Cellars

➤ **Mountain Wine Country continued next 2 pages**

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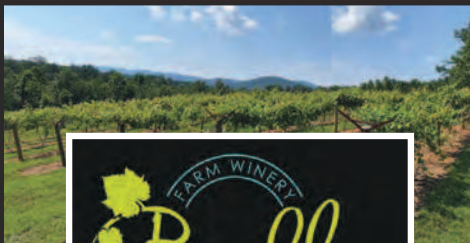
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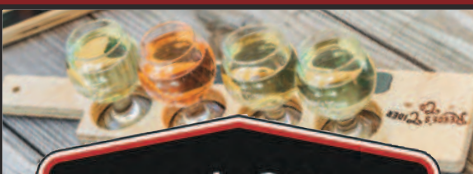
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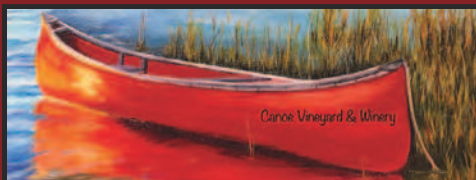
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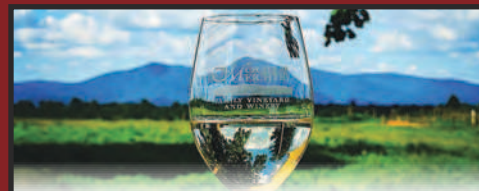
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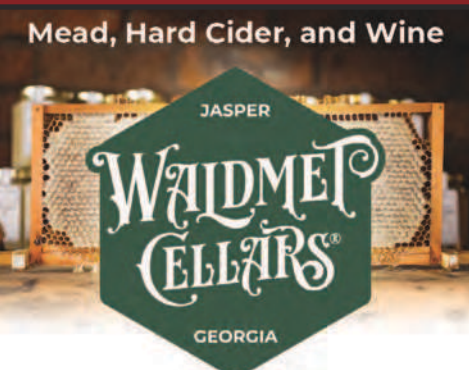
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PHOTOS BY CHRISTOPHER LUGO

Hummingbird Lounge

A Hidden Gem

BY CHRISTOPHER LUGO

A hidden gem in Highlands is nestled in a library in Old Edwards Inn. The Hummingbird Lounge has been open since the beginning of Old Edwards Inn but has recently opened to the public.

Bar manager Ryan Henry has been in the business for more than 30 years.

"I have been here for seven years, but Hummingbird Lounge has been here since Old Edwards opened in the early 2,000s," Henry said. "At that point, it was guests only and they would go almost all day without a customer."

He said they have been waiting for the slow season in Highlands, but they haven't experienced that yet at Hummingbird Lounge.

"People keep telling us how slow January, February and March get, but I haven't seen it while I have been here," Henry said. "During the Winter, we started moving tables into the lounge to give another food option on the property once the Wine Garden closes. It has been super popular. Once the Wine Garden opens again, we turn the area back into a lounge."

With a fireplace, library, couches and a rustic bar, Henry said the ambiance of the Hummingbird Lounge is set up to make the guests feel like they are back at home.

"It is a really comfortable, welcoming vibe," Henry said. "We have the plush chairs and couches. We want to make it feel like you're sitting in your own living room."



Since you don't need reservations to go to the lounge, Henry said it is a perfect spot to spend the evening.

"It is first come first serve," Henry said. "The live music is a huge attraction. We have a guy who has played live music here for the last 30 years. He has a huge following. There are some people in their 40's that come to watch him because they went to his restaurants for their first date. He's just that lounge lizard type of singer. It is a fun feel here, but you can still relax and enjoy yourself."

With the menus changing by the season, Henry said their scotches and bourbons are the main attraction at the lounge.

"We have some high-end scotches and bourbons here that you can't get at any of our other properties," Henry said. "We have our spring menu that has started, which has more of our lighter drinks. We are doing an Island Mojito, a peach flavored Arnold Palmer and our Old Fashioned are to die for. We have people come here just for our Old Fashioned."

Another highlight to the drink menu is that all of the syrups are made in house.

"There is nothing store bought," Henry said. "We make our own ginger beer, Old Fashioned syrup and our mint syrup. All of those syrups we make inhouse. We go through 10 pounds of ginger a week, having to peel the ginger, let it soak overnight and juice it the next morning."

With more people coming up during the busy season, Henry said he is excited for the Summer.

"The traffic never really ends for us," Henry said. "I've



Bartender, Nate Byers, making a signature Old Fashioned

got a brand-new staff this year, and I'm really excited to see them grow during the season and get to know all of the guests and members. I'm excited to see all of the faces we see every year. We have a lot of repeat offenders. They love us and we love them. So, it is just a big family between the bar team, members and guests. It's a lot of good fun and we build a lot of great relationships with these people."

The Hummingbird Lounge is located on the second floor of Old Edwards Inn on Main Street. Its spring hours are from 2 - 10 p.m., during the week and 2 - 11 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. Live music is scheduled for Fridays and Saturdays from 6 - 10 p.m.



For more information on the Hummingbird Lounge, visit oldedwardshospitality.com.



Half-Mile Farm

by Old Edwards

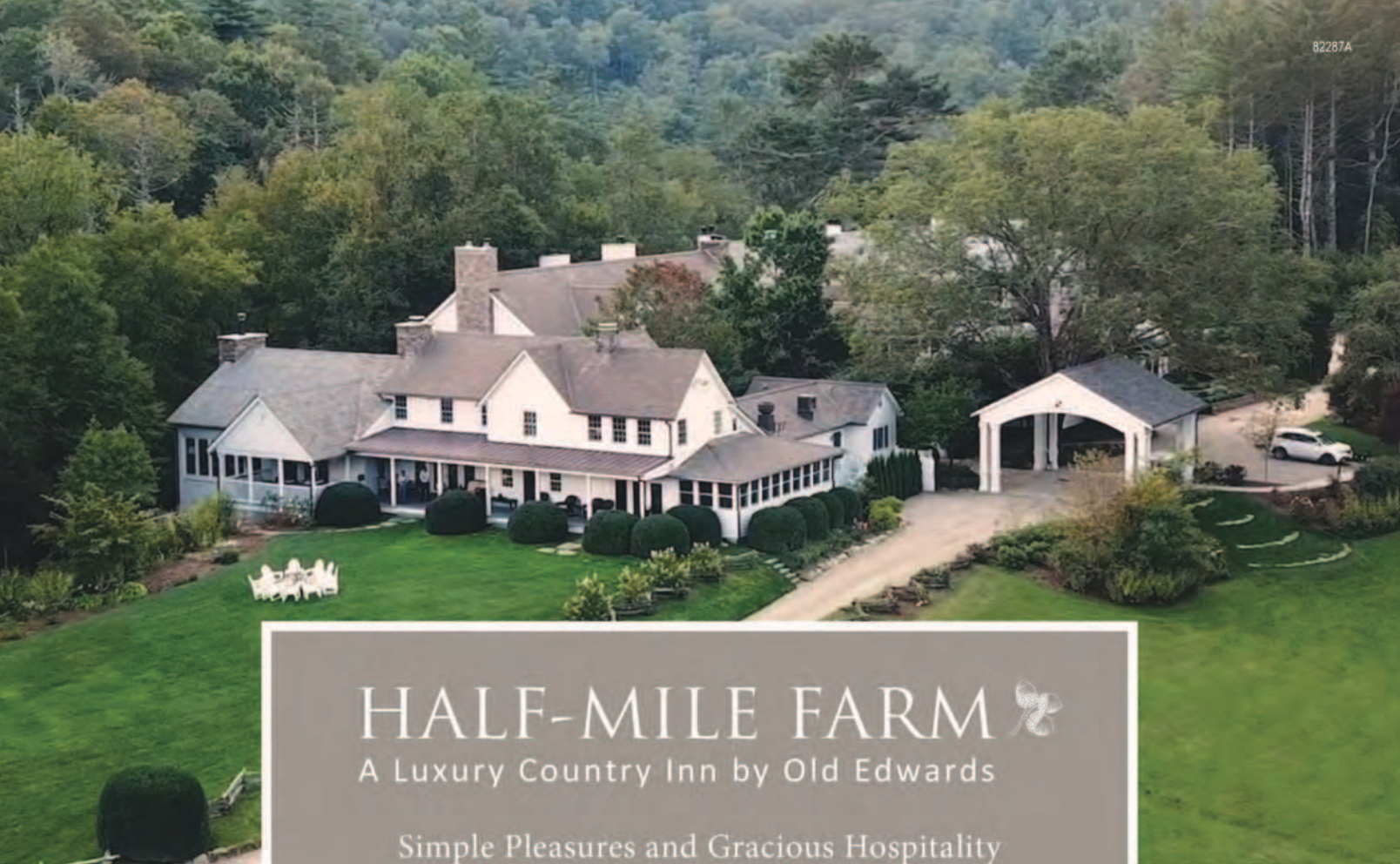
Escape to a Napa-style setting with bucolic landscapes and a private lake on the outskirts of downtown Highlands.

Nestled among 14 acres of lake, fields, gardens and forests, this adults-only retreat five minutes from Main Street lures you into complete surrender amid nature's healing embrace. You are treated to complimentary champagne on arrival and complimentary hors d'oeuvres in the evenings, accompanied by live music on weekends.

J. Henry Farmhouse Tavern provides a gathering place for craft cocktails and a full menu of lunch items and light bites into the evening. Wander out to the fire pit on the front lawn to enjoy a view of the private Apple Lake as dusk settles over the land.

Mornings at the farm are celebrated with a delicious, two-course chef-made breakfast. A hillside heated mineral pool and poolside jacuzzi beckon you to slip into a state of bliss. Book a single or couple massage in the Serenity Suite to melt further into a state of total relaxation.

Your guestroom or cabin at Half-Mile Farm wraps you in spacious privacy. Room options include fireplaces in most, private decks with forest views, heated marble floors and large soaking tubs. All guestrooms include Old Edwards' signature touches of Frette linens, cozy robes and slippers, and Molton Brown bath and body amenities. Log onto HalfMileFarm.com to plan your adults-only retreat at Half-Mile Farm by Old Edwards.



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SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Hotel Cashiers

A boutique experience to visitors

— BY MICHEAL O'HEARN —

Visitors to Cashiers looking to stay in a boutique hotel can check out Hotel Cashiers behind the Slab Town shopping plaza, which opened shortly before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The hotel is owned by Daniel Fletcher and Brett Stewart and is in the heart of town off Highway 107 North headed toward Sylva. Hotel Cashiers is described as a “retro motor-lodge inn,” featuring upscale boutique accommodations and warm hospitality in a quiet and relaxed mountain setting.

Hotel Cashiers relaunched in spring 2020 following a complete renovation to the property, and the new rooms feature modern mountain aesthetics and sophisticated architectural details that visitors are more likely to find in a high-end mountain home than a typical hotel.

Each of the 20 guest rooms features light oak hard floors, custom handmade furniture, local and original artwork as well as mini fridges and indi-

vidual Keurig coffee machines.

“The word has gotten out,” Stewart said. “But we do have a loyal following that has found us either by word of mouth or online and keep coming back.”

Cashiers needs a cool place to
“ stay, somewhere that’s
refreshed and inspiring.

The retail lobby is relatively new and is a space for locals and visitors to check out a curated host of products that range from high-end fragrances and candles to home goods, Cashiers-branded apparel and blankets, Stewart said. The lobby also offers wines and gourmet snacks, and it has served as a meeting spot for groups such as Leadership Cashiers in the past.



“The local community that’s found us really liked it because the lobby retail shop is open seven days a week,” Stewart said. “And it goes until at least eight or nine in the off-season, and then 10 in the high season. So, we’re probably the latest retailer open in town. And, when it comes to wine, we’re the only one besides Ingles open after four or five o’clock. So, a lot of people will pop in here if they’ve got a dinner party or they’re going to a birthday event or have something they need to pick up.”

Stewart grew up on the plateau but said he hadn’t been back in more than 20 years except to visit with family. Fletcher and Stewart were looking for a project, and Stewart’s brother is a general contractor/developer in town.

“We’ve always kicked around the idea, Cashiers needs a cool place to stay, somewhere that’s refreshed and inspiring,” Stewart said. “Convenient, but not outrageously priced. We have Old Edwards and Greystone, and you have some of the really high-end places, but it’s really hard to find a quality, good place to stay that’s fun and has sort of what you need.”

The duo said Cashiers is where they needed to work on their project, and they decided in 2019 that then was the perfect time to get started. The building was available, but Stewart said it was never an option for overnight travelers, and he said a lot of locals were unaware that it was a hotel.

“It just did not have the word of mouth, the branding, or the presence in town, so when we found it, we were re-

ally surprised that it was actually in really good condition,” Stewart said. “So, we essentially had a really good canvas to work with.”

Even though their new investment was in good condition, the duo began refreshing the hotel by changing the exterior, the landscaping, the linens, and then putting together a model room.

“We didn’t have much time because it was in high season, but we let that resonate with guests and we got feedback on it and made sure that guests liked it,” Stewart said. “Thankfully, it was overwhelmingly positive. In the

off season, we operated and kept it open year-round. But during the winter of ’19 and ’20, we redid all the rooms and everything. There’s al-

most nothing, very little, that we didn’t touch in the guest rooms. New carpentry work, mill work, paint, new flooring, new HVAC, we have high efficiency mini splits in there, and we just totally changed the aesthetic and repositioned. Even the branding, we redid the note cards and door hangers because we wanted people to feel like they were somewhere that had a lot of thought put into it.”

After the major renovation was done, the managing duo was ready to go in March 2020. But then the COVID-19 pandemic swept over the world, affecting hotels because people were asked to hunker down in their homes and avoid contact with others.

“So, we sort of sat for a couple of months, hanging out and

“ ...we’re probably the latest retailer open in town.



trying to figure out what was going on with the world,” Stewart said. “You know, it was sort of like the worst nightmare in many ways because we had recently acquired the property, put a lot of money into it, and we were ready to relaunch. We were then facing the worst crisis in the history of the lodging industry.”

Nobody panicked, though, and the hotel reopened in May 2020. The duo was off to the races and Stewart said the Highlands-Cashiers plateau was an area that did not take a severe hit due to the global health crisis.

“Generally speaking, I think it’s been what I call a net beneficiary of the pandemic,” Stewart said. “Unfortunately, a lot of places really suffered but Cashiers and

Highlands were two of the areas that really benefitted. People started discovering it for

the first time and people who knew about it before came back, and if they were already coming here, they came more frequently because they were trying to escape.”

The hotel has not slowed down since, and the lobby space was opened in the summer of 2021. Stewart also said the hotel benefits from having restaurants such as Slab Town Pizza, Crossroads Custard and Cold Brew, El Chile Loco and the Zookeeper Bistro next to the lodge because people can stop to eat there while staying in Cashiers.

“I would say the biggest surprise is just how supportive the community has been,” Stewart said. “I shouldn’t be surprised by that knowing Cashiers. It is a small place, and people look out for each other. That small town spirit that we have is really unique. I don’t think we knew that coming in. But it’s been a really nice surprise that everyone has cared and is just generally supportive and positive and always looking out for you. We try to do our part by giving back to the community in the same sense and support other entrepreneurs and support local community endeavors, whether it’s some of the school related projects or The Village Green and the Historical Society. So, yeah, it’s been a lot of fun.”





HOW TO CORRAL

spring allergies

Spring is synonymous with rebirth. Each spring, flowers begin to bloom again, grass starts to grow and people from all walks of life rekindle their love affair with the great outdoors. Spring also marks the return of a familiar foe: allergies.

Seasonal allergies can put a damper on even the

most welcoming spring day. After all, a day soaking up the sun isn't so relaxing when it's also spent sneezing and confronting allergy symptoms like congestion, runny nose and watery eyes. Thankfully, it's possible for seasonal allergy sufferers to have their spring and enjoy it, too.

Seasonal allergies can spoil an otherwise welcoming spring day...

- **Pay attention to seasonal allergy trackers**

Seasonal allergies are now easier to track than ever. For example, Pollen.com is an easily accessible and free site that allows visitors to type in their ZIP codes and access daily allergy reports for their towns and cities. Visitors also can see five-day forecasts that can help them plan trips and other outdoor excursions. Weather.com also offers free allergy reports and forecasts. Individuals with seasonal allergies can make use of these sites and plan their activities based on the information they provide.

- **Stay indoors when allergen levels are especially high**

The Mayo Clinic notes that there are several

things individuals can do to reduce their exposure to seasonal allergy triggers. That includes staying indoors on dry, windy days. This doesn't mean individuals need to lock themselves indoors all spring. But it's important that seasonal allergy sufferers recognize that some days might be too much to handle. Rain helps clear pollen from the air, so individuals who are avoiding the outdoors on days when pollen counts are high should be able to get outside after a good rain without triggering an attack.

- **Maintain clean air indoors**

The great outdoors is not the only place where allergens percolate. The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America notes that improving air quality in a home can reduce allergy triggers. Air conditioners can prevent outdoor allergens from entering a home, so utilize units on warm spring days when you might otherwise open the windows. Open

windows and screen doors provide easy entry points for allergens like pollen, so turning on the AC when outdoor allergen counts are high can make seasonal allergies more manageable.

- **Consider treatments**

Over-the-counter treatments like antihistamines, nasal sprays and decongestants provide most individuals with sufficient relief from their seasonal allergies. If OTC remedies are ineffective, treatments such as allergen immunotherapy and a consultation with an allergen may be necessary.

...But there are many ways for individuals to corral their seasonal allergies and still enjoy spring sun.

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SHEET PAN Recipes



minimum
drama



maximum
deliciousness

“Have a 9X13 sheet pan, will cook” might be a mantra for those home cooks who like easy recipes with minimal drama and

maximum deliciousness for fam-

ily gatherings. Sheet pan recipes can be tonight's dinner, tomorrow's dessert, or a grand presentation for next week.

Sheet pan recipes use store-bought pie crust, phyllo, puff pastry, or no crust. The choice is yours. I greatly appreciate the sheer functionality of sheet pan cooking.

Making a complete recipe in a 9X13 sheet pan is not a new technique but it should be part of your go-to recipe

file, especially when you need a pot-luck offering for a church social, neighborhood party, or a casual dinner. Sheet pan recipes are budget friendly, easy to transport if needed, and easy to serve to a crowd.

I always line my sheet pans with parchment paper so clean up is relatively easy. Also, if the recipe is served as a casual dinner, then I just place the sheet pan in the center of the table with two large serving spoons or even a tong for easy serving. There are so many ways to be creative using sheet pan recipes. Leftovers make a tasty lunch the next day.

The following sheet pan recipes will give you ideas for your own recipes. Be creative and have fun.

Bon appetit.



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SHEET PAN APPETIZER —

Coconut shrimp with orange dipping sauce

from *Sheet Pan Suppers* by Molly Gilbert

INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup panko breadcrumbs
- 1/2 cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- Olive oil cooking spray
- Grated zest of 1 orange
- 1/4 cup freshly squeezed orange juice
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- Pinch of red pepper flakes
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 large egg whites
- 2 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 pound (21/25 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined, tails on

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees with a rack in the center position. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper or aluminum foil.
2. Spread the mixed breadcrumbs and coconut evenly on the prepared pan, mist them lightly with cooking spray, and toast in the oven, stirring occasionally until lightly golden brown, about 5 minutes. Remove the pan from the oven and let the breadcrumb-coconut mixture cool. Transfer the mixture to a medium-size bowl and set it aside. Leave the parchment or foil liner on the pan.
3. To make the dipping sauce, whisk together the orange zest, orange juice, curry powder, red pepper flakes, garlic powder, vinegar, and honey in a small bowl. Pour the sauce into an ovenproof ramekin and place the ramekin on the prepared pan. Set aside.
4. Gently whisk the egg whites in another small bowl until frothy. Set aside.
5. Add the flour, salt, and pepper to the breadcrumb mixture and whisk gently until evenly combined.
6. Pat the shrimp dry with paper towels. Dip each one first in the egg whites, shaking off any excess, then in the breadcrumb mixture, pressing to coat all over. Place the shrimp on the prepared pan. Repeat with the remaining shrimp, arranging them around the sauce.
7. Mist the shrimp generously with the cooking spray. Bake until the coating on the shrimp is golden and the shrimp are cooked through, about 10 minutes. The shrimp will feel firm when pressed.
8. Serve the shrimp hot, with the warm dipping sauce on the side. (Makes about 25 shrimp.)



SHEET PAN ENTRÉE —

Asparagus, fontina and pancetta sheet pan

INGREDIENTS

For the crust: Use a favorite pie crust recipe. Bake the crust to golden brown. Cool on a wire rack.

FILLING

- 1 pound asparagus, preferably thick spears
- 1 cup diced pancetta
- 5 large eggs
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 8-ounces fontina cheese, grated (about two cups)
- 1/2 cup thinly slivered scallions, white and green parts, about four
- 1/2 cup fresh basil leaves, stacked and slivered
- 1/2 cup snipped fresh chives

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat the oven to 400 degrees.
2. Trim the asparagus stalks to 10-inches.
3. Heat a small skillet over medium heat and cook the pancetta until crisped. Remove from the skillet and drain on paper towels.
4. Whisk the eggs, cream, salt, and pepper until frothy.
5. Scatter the pancetta and half the fontina across the baked crust, then scatter all the scallions, basil, and chives over the cheese.
6. Place the asparagus, head to tail, on top of the herbs, and add the remaining cheese. Gently pour in the egg mixture.
7. Slide the pan into the oven and bake until the custard is set, 25 to 30 minutes. You might want to make a foil collar for the pie crust edge if it is getting too brown.
8. Cool for a moment before slicing and serve warm.

SHEET PAN DESSERT —

Texas sheet pan cake

Longtime favorite from Southern Entertainer's Cookbook

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup water
- 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 2 large eggs, beaten

CHOCOLATE GLAZE INGREDIENTS

- 12 cup butter, 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder,
- 1/3 cup milk, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract,
- 3 1/2 cups powdered sugar, 1 cup pecans (coarsely chopped)

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a jelly roll pan or 13x18-inch pan with non-stick cooking spray or line with parchment paper.
2. In a large saucepan, combine butter, water, and cocoa powder over medium-high heat. Bring to a boil and remove from the heat.
3. Stir in brown sugar and vanilla.
4. In a separate mixing bowl combine flour, sugar, salt, and baking soda. Add flour mixture to saucepan and stir to combine.
5. Add in sour cream and eggs, stirring until well combined and no lumps remain.
6. Pour batter into the prepared pan, spreading evenly to sides and corners.
7. Bake 15 to 20 minutes or until set. Allow to cool.

CHOCOLATE GLAZE

1. Add butter, cocoa powder and milk to a saucepan. Bring mixture to a boil. Remove from heat and stir in vanilla.
2. Next, whisk in powdered sugar until smooth.
3. Working quickly spread glaze over cake using a rubber spatula. Top with pecans.
4. Allow to set and cut into squares.





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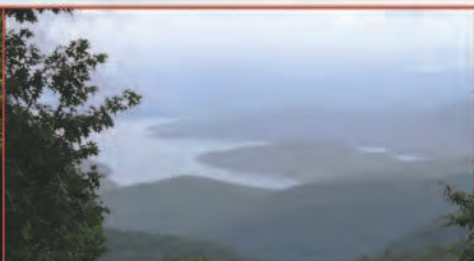
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MLS# 96759 • \$ 200,000



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