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Smoky Mountain destination invites today's discerning travelers to "embrace unusual"

Maggie Valley, N.C. – September 16, 2020 – After months of dealing with COVID-19 and its effects on daily life, one of the top things people are looking forward to is travel.

Destinations that are less crowded, off the beaten path and within driving distance are in high demand for today's traveler. In addition to short leisure trips, many are considering longer stays due to the millions of children participating in virtual learning and the significant portion of the US workforce that continues to work remotely. One of those ideal places for both leisure and long-term comfort is the North Carolina Smoky Mountains. That is why the Haywood County Tourism Development Authority this week launched a new regional marketing [campaign](#) to invite visitors to "embrace unusual" in its corner of the Smokies.

Not only does this region offer a variety of scenic hikes and wide-open outdoor adventures, the area's accommodations also suit today's social distancing needs. From remote cabins to nostalgic drive-up motor lodges and more, this is a place that allows visitors to still "do life," but in a beautifully uncrowded and unusual place. Visitors can check in, connect to wi-fi, join conference calls with a view, and teach "science class" on a trail or by a creek.

This particular destination is enriched further by its location on the awe-inspiring Blue Ridge Parkway. The twists and turns transport visitors through refreshing vistas and into unusual mountain towns like nostalgic Maggie Valley and charming Waynesville. Nearby Lake Junaluska provides a lake view that feeds the soul and the small towns of Canton and Clyde are the rising stars of Western North Carolina with unique shops and restaurants.

"Our residents and our visitors respected the shelter in place orders this spring to help slow the spread of the virus," said Lynn Collins, the TDA's executive director. "But it is encouraging for us to see the spirit of travel begin to blossom, as old friends return and new visitors discover us for the first time. We've seen a lot of people coming here who are working and learning remotely like they would at home, but also getting outside and enjoying our wide-open spaces. This is social distancing done right, and with a flair for fun."

That is a spirit the TDA is capturing with the Embrace Unusual message. It's the idea that, yes, many people are dealing with challenging circumstances, but we can still embrace life, embrace something different – embrace unusual.



But the message goes beyond today's circumstances. Haywood County has long celebrated its offbeat identity.

"Yes, this campaign is particularly relevant to today's world," said Collins. "But, pandemic or no pandemic, we embrace unusual here every day. We love to see elk walking through town. We love our legacy of folk music. And we love the personalities that call the NC Smokies home – or home away from home."

To learn more about how to embrace unusual in the North Carolina Smokies, visit <https://visitncsmokies.com/embrace-unusual/>. To see some of the creative ways the destination is launching this campaign, please click [here](#) or view this clip <https://youtu.be/osUo3z5t3Pw>.