



RUMBLING BALD ON LAKE LURE ATTRACTS GOLF, SPA, & OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS

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Mountain getaways are Mother Nature’s therapy for what ails me.

I find an inverse correlation between the elevation of my surroundings and my blood pressure. This was reason enough for my wife and me to recently head west from our Charlotte home to the Carolina Blue Ridge Foothills. Just two hours west, outdoor splendor and the amenities-rich resort of [Rumbling Bald on Lake Lure](https://rumblingbald.com/) (<https://rumblingbald.com/>) welcomed us.

From damming to Dirty Dancing



The Dirty Dancing festival is an annual celebration of the iconic 1987 film shot here (credit: Bill Russ/VisitNC)

Although only 30 miles west of Asheville, Lake Lure is a world away from urban stressors. Formed by the Rocky Broad River dam in the early 1900s, Lake Lure has been charming all comers since its creation in 1927. Among the other guests we meet here are in-the-know vacationers from Atlanta, Raleigh, Ohio, Michigan, Florida, and as far north as Canada.

The "lure" of Lake Lure is primarily outdoors. Lake life is for the taking, with activities from navigating kayaks, canoes, paddleboards, pontoons, and ski boats to fishing, swimming, and evening wine cruises. Although simply soaking in the Carolina-blue skies on the private North Shore Beach, escapist novel in hand is equally inviting.

Initially established from a singular boathouse in 1956, the resort has grown to encompass more than 3,000 acres of treelined mountain wilderness. And notably, that includes more than 21 miles of shoreline. Rumbling Bald on Lake Lure's low-key, casual-luxe vibe appeals to those who like to spread out yet be close to it all.

Of course, film buffs and local historians recognize the lake as the backdrop for the 1987 kitsch-classic Dirty Dancing (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0092890/>). Lake Lure stars in the oft-recreated scene where bare-chested dance instructor/love interest Johnny (Patrick Swayze) hoists Baby (Jennifer Grey) skyward, while the couple frolics and swoons in the crystalline (and reportedly freezing cold) water.

Rumbling Bald on Lake Lure accommodations



Typical accommodations at Rumbling Bald Resort on Lake Lure. (credit: Rumbling Bald Resort)

The “Bald” (the local’s nickname for the signature mountain that dominates the skyline) is hypnotic. And it casts a slowdown spell upon us as we make our way to our one-bedroom condominium.

The resort’s accommodations range from one and two-bedroom condos to six-bedroom homes accommodating large families or several couples. All have full kitchens, spacious patios, outdoor picnic areas, and grilling set-ups.

But that’s where the similarity stops. Rumbling Bald comprises a mix of older 90’s era rentals and newer, more contemporary properties. A company engaged by the resort’s 1,200 or so property owners, manages the property. Although the resort manages and contracts most rental units, some owners rent their units directly or through other channels. Our experience reflects reserving through the resort.

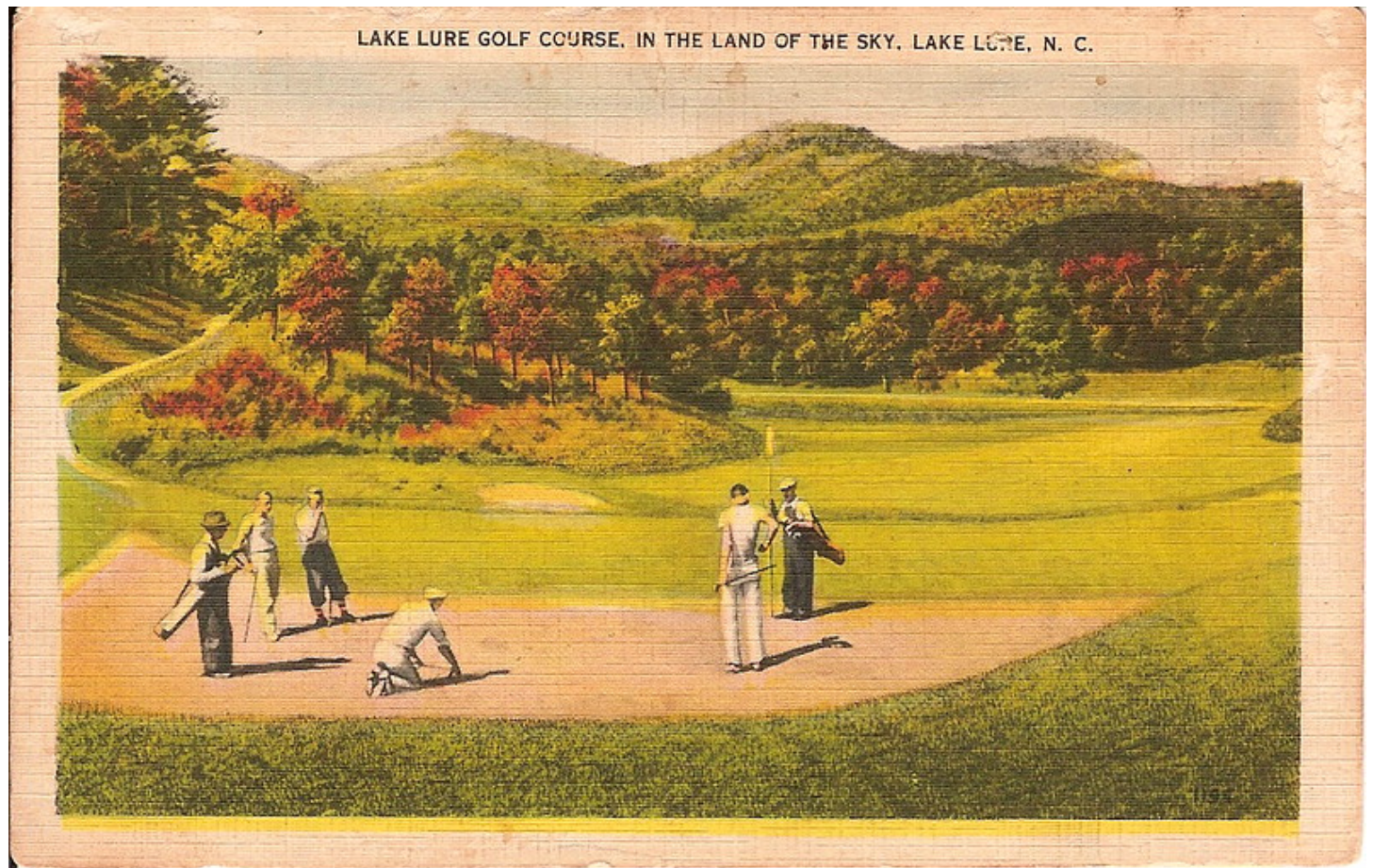
Accommodations cluster in neighborhoods surrounding or near the lake, along the golf courses, or in developments fronting heavily wooded lots. Our rental was in an older development, about a mile from the resort’s central hub, and overlooked a wooded area.

We experienced contemporary furnishings and a full kitchen with a complete complement of kitchenware.

Moreover, the unit was stocked with videos, board games, and a small library of paperbacks.

But, for us, the true luxury here was the time away from the city, the open space, and the comfortable environs. Vacationers looking for 5-star digs won't find them here. That noted, we found a cozy, charming getaway. In addition, we enjoyed an evening sky full of stars, a slight chill in the air in the morning, and a much-appreciated break from the hustle of our busy home routines.

Two 18-hole courses at Rumbling Bald on Lake Lure



Golf has a historical connection to this region (credit: Rumbling Bald Resort on Lake Lure)

Our Apple Valley condo is minutes from the Dan Maples-designed [Apple Valley Golf Course](https://rumblingbald.com/golf-here/apple-valley/) (<https://rumblingbald.com/golf-here/apple-valley/>), ranked by the North Carolina Golf Panel as one of the top 50 in the state. And the resort's [Bald Mountain Golf Course](https://rumblingbald.com/golf-here/bald-mountain/) (<https://rumblingbald.com/golf-here/bald-mountain/>), an equally fine test, will be my foe tomorrow. With five par 5s and five par 3s, Bald Mountain provides fun and challenging mountain golf.

I slip on my new golf shoes and head straight for the course. Upon arriving, I'm struck by the prime conditions, especially the greens, this early in the season. My host, Rumbling Bald resort general manager Jeff Geisler, shares that the resort has beefed up course maintenance for several seasons and increased capital expenditures on both

courses. Clearly, this includes significant enhancement to the green complexes. For example, the Apple Valley course uses Bermuda grass on its greens, while the Bald Mountain course sports traditional Bent grass greens.

It's of marginal significance to me this early in the year as my game, despite the new shoes, is far from mid-season form. Nevertheless, the outing has its desired effect as I soak up the scenery with soaring raptors, the Carolina Blue Ridge, and a sneaky ball-eating barranca that is a magnet for my errant shots.

"We undertook a reinvention of sorts in 2018," Geisler explains. "And one thing we established was a new logo – the simple and elegant (American) Beech tree leaf." Using one of the oldest tree species in America, he adds, speaks to the timelessness and beauty of the area, and how much nature has provided.

"For (the resort), it becomes an issue of how we live up to what nature gave us. How we provide an experience that matches what's already here."

Nature's playground and an intimate spa



Chimney Rock is one of the most visited landmarks in the Tarheel State (credit: Bill Russ/VisitNC)

The resort's mission of getting folks outdoors to enjoy nature at its finest means crafting top-rate amenities. So

hikers find plenty of well-marked trails; equestrians can explore nearby riding centers and dressage facilities; pickleball and tennis players have their reign over the courts; and mini-golf appeals to those testing their short games.

Since the resort is close to Chimney Rock State Park, my wife Harriet and I visit to wander along the 535-million-year-old monolith and soak in the views from one of the most iconic sites in the Tarheel State.

While I hit the course, Harriet indulges in the [Sacred Nature Regenerative Facial](https://rumblingbald.com/relaxation-and-rejuvenation/spa-specials-packages/) (<https://rumblingbald.com/relaxation-and-rejuvenation/spa-specials-packages/>) at the resort's small, full-service spa. "It's a place where you walk in, and the world falls away," she said. "I enjoyed some welcomed quiet time where I could simply relax."

Her treatment, which uses antioxidant organic garden extracts for deep cleansing, exfoliation, conditioning, and purification and includes gentle neck and shoulder massage, energized her. Afterward, she sported a healthy glow. And she appreciated her skin's natural feel and renewed lightness.



Rumbling Bald on Lake Lure has an intimate, full-service spa (credit: Rumbling Bald Resort on Lake Lure)

Dining options at Rumbling Bald on Lake Lure

Casual is the order of the day at Rumbling Bald. Jeans and pullovers prevail at the two restaurants and the coffee shop. [Legends on the Lake](https://rumblingbald.com/restaurant/legends-on-the-lake/) (https://rumblingbald.com/restaurant/legends-on-the-lake/) delivers elevated comfort fare and pub-grub standards like burgers, pizzas, wings, fresh seafood, and pasta. Here, floor-to-ceiling windows provide full-on lake views. And the Blue Ridge frames the lake on three sides.

Several university crew teams take advantage of the lake's flat, glassy surface and train here. During an early evening dinner, we're lucky enough to spy a lone rower in a small shell putting in some extra duty as the sun went down.

[The Gardens](https://rumblingbald.com/restaurant/the-gardens/) (https://rumblingbald.com/restaurant/the-gardens/) overlooks the Bald Mountain course and entertains with Around the World Wine Dinners and upscale fare. And in the morning, wake up at The Bear's Cup Café with a cup of Starbucks, and prep for your round with one of the cafe's grab-and-go specials.

For Geisler, experiencing the resort is all about enjoying the outdoors. His number one recommendation? "You need to get out and see a sunset on Lake Lure to appreciate the beauty," he says. "Things really come into perspective, and I experience so much gratitude for myself. It's all provided by nature."

What's appealing to the over-50 luxury traveler?

- Rumbling Bald Resort offers a casual and comfortable laid-back vibe. It's an amenity-rich resort where guests can be as active as they wish with golf, boating, racket sports, and hiking. Or bring a novel to read and relax at the private beach.
- For shopping enthusiasts, art gallery hoppers, and brewery aficionados, downtown Asheville makes a fun day trip.
- Thirty-six holes of mountain golf are a true treat for enthusiasts.

Take note

- Mountain roads are twisty and curvy. Drivers need to take extra care in navigating here, and GPS signals do not always work in the foothills.
 - Ask for a recently updated unit, as upkeep can vary in individually managed rentals.
 - Accommodations are spread throughout the property. Not all are located at the resort center or on the lake.
 - Be specific about mobility needs, as some units have steps for entry and/or inside.
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IF YOU GO

Here's more information about [Rumbling Bald on Lake Lure](https://rumblingbald.com/). (https://rumblingbald.com/)

READ MORE

About nearby [Ashville](https://gettingontravel.com/biltmore-estate-what-to-see-and-do/) (https://gettingontravel.com/biltmore-estate-what-to-see-and-do/_____) on GettingOnTravel

Disclosure:

Rumbling Bald Resort hosted the writer and his wife but did not influence his review.

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Rumbling Bald on

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Lake Lure



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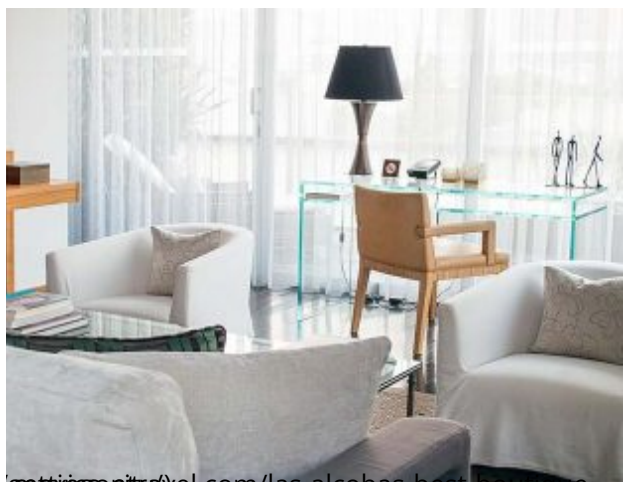
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Michael J. Solender explores personalities and back stories behind destinations to reveal intimate snapshots of life often missed by visitors on heavily scheduled agendas. His favorite destinations include Iran's

Persepolis, the magic kingdom of Bhutan, Irkutsk, aka the "Paris" of Siberia, and his adopted hometown of Charlotte, North Carolina. His work appears at The New York Times, Smithsonian Magazine, Metropolis Magazine, Salvation South, Southern Living, and others. He is an active member of the Society of American Travel Writers.

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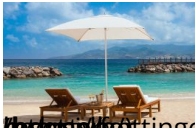
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