

Our State CHECKLIST

10 WINTER WONDERLANDS

Enjoy a magical snow day, *any* day: Here are a few of *Our State's* favorite spots to ice-skate, ski, snowboard, snow tube, and sled.



Beech Mountain

BEGINNER SKIING AT CATALOOCHEE SKI AREA

Who are we to judge? There's no shame in preferring a mellow ride on a "magic carpet" conveyor belt to the top of the slope. Whether you're learning to "pizza" or easing in the kids, you can't go wrong with this ski area's novice hill.

1080 Ski Lodge Road
Maggie Valley, NC 28751
(828) 926-0285, cataloochee.com

SNOW TUBING AT SAPPHIRE VALLEY RESORT'S FROZEN FALLS TUBE PARK

Even without an ounce of skiing talent, the whole family can get in on a snowy adventure. All it takes is a running leap onto this 500-foot-long tubing hill — and its 60-foot drop — to get your heart racing. Warning: A face full of snow is still possible.

127 Cherokee Trail
Sapphire, NC 28774
(828) 743-7663, skisapphirevalley.com

SNOW TUBING AT HAWKSNEST

If you prefer to have options, head to Hawksnest, where you can zip down more than 30 lanes in four different snowy areas. Yes, that means there are gentler slopes, too, for risk-averse riders.

2058 Skyland Drive
Seven Devils, NC 28604
(828) 963-6561, hawksnesttubing.com

ICE-SKATING AT THE U.S. NATIONAL WHITewater CENTER

While this spot isn't located in the mountains like the other winter wonderlands on our list, its ice-skating experience is so unique that we couldn't resist adding it: A 17,000-square-foot "ice trail" is surrounded by festive lights and encircled a charming, on-ice Airstream serving hot cocoa — and cold craft beer.

5000 Whitewater Center Parkway
Charlotte, NC 28214
(704) 391-3900, usnwc.org

SLEDDING AT BEECH MOUNTAIN'S YOUTH SLEDDING HILL

At this popular sledding spot in town, you can feel the wind in your hair even if you can't feel your toes — no rentals required. You don't even need a snow day: When Mother Nature doesn't cooperate, Parks and Rec breaks out the snow gun.

403 Beech Mountain Parkway
Beech Mountain, NC 28604
(800) 468-5506, beechmntn.com/sledding

ICE-SKATING IN DOWNTOWN HIGHLANDS

Twirling beneath the sparkly lights at this picture-perfect outdoor rink in downtown Highlands might just be the closest you can get to experiencing life in a Hallmark holiday movie.

Oak Street
Highlands, NC 28741
(828) 526-3556
highlandsnrc.org/recreation-ice-rink

SNOWBOARDING AT APPALACHIAN SKI MOUNTAIN

Catch some air at one of the most progressive terrain parks in the South. Appalachian Terrain Park prides itself on design creativity and variety, and is a favorite among thrill-seeking snowboarders from nearby Appalachian State University.

940 Ski Mountain Road
Blowing Rock, NC 28605
(828) 295-7828, appskimtn.com

APRÈS-SKI DRINKS AT BEECH MOUNTAIN BREWING COMPANY

After a long, cold day, there's nothing like an après-ski craft beer — at one of the only breweries owned and operated by a ski area — to bring feeling back to your fingers and toes. Try the 5506 Pale Ale, named for the town's elevation.

1007 Beech Mountain Parkway
Beech Mountain, NC 28604
(828) 387-2011
beechmountainbrewingco.com

ICE-SKATING AT APPALACHIAN SKI MOUNTAIN

Glide over the state's only Zamboni-maintained outdoor ice-skating rink while enjoying a view of the ski slopes on one side and the Blue Ridge Mountains on the other. Take a spin beneath the stars, then warm up by the rinkside bonfire.

940 Ski Mountain Road
Blowing Rock, NC 28605
(828) 295-7828, appskimtn.com

EXPERT SKIING AT SUGAR MOUNTAIN RESORT

Most of North Carolina's black diamonds can't compete with those out West — but Sugar's can. Its double-black is so steep, the crew hooks their snow groomers up to winches to reach the most vertical pitch. Watch out below.

1009 Sugar Mountain Drive
Sugar Mountain, NC 28604
(828) 898-4521, skisugar.com