



Bold Rock Hard Cider tasting room in River Mills, N.C.

CHEERS! HENDERSONVILLE STYLE

THE THRIVING HARD CIDER INDUSTRY IN N.C.

By Sandra Chambers

While Asheville, N.C., is famous for its craft beers, an area just 30 minutes south is making a name for itself in the hard cider industry. The Hendersonville area, long known for its orchards, is the largest apple-producing county in North Carolina and the seventh largest in the nation, thus making it a natural home for an emerging hard cider business. Hard cider, which is growing in popularity as an adult beverage, is sweeter than beer, less potent than wine and capable of complex flavors. A visit to the Hendersonville area offers Allegiant travelers the opportunity to learn how hard cider is made and sample a variety of locally produced ciders.

BOLD ROCK HARD CIDER

In 2015 Bold Rock opened its second production facility just outside Hendersonville in Mills River, N.C. Their new venue offers complimentary daily tours and features an expansive tasting room with overhead views of the bottling line. Be sure to taste the Carolina Apple and Carolina Draft ciders, which are produced exclusively in Mills River. But with nine award-winning varieties of cider on tap, you'll want to kickback on their patio and relax while sampling several varieties. On weekends guests can also enjoy music and purchase food from a local food truck. boldrock.com

FLAT ROCK CIDERWORKS

Founded in the fall of 2013 by four local businessmen, Flat Rock Ciderworks continues to grow their own apples and blackberries in Henderson County, allowing them to produce new and interesting flavors in addition to their two flagship ciders: Wicked Peel and Blackberry Gold. Want to try a flight of ciders? Visit their new tasting room in the heart of downtown Hendersonville. flatrockciderworks.com

APPALACHIAN RIDGE ARTISAN HARD CIDER

Located inside a renovated 1940s-era barn, the newest area cidery and tasting room opened in the fall of 2016. Appalachian Ridge is part of a family-owned business that also includes St. Paul Mountain Vineyards, which already produces a line of ciders under the name of Wallace (named after owner Alan Ward's lovable dog). "You can taste cider in a grocery store," Ward said, "but when you taste it here, in the middle of the orchard, it gives you more of an experience." 828.699.7507

These three cideries are part of a self-guided Cheers! Trail that also features five breweries and two wineries. Download a Cheers! Trail brochure and map at visithendersonvillenc.org. 🍷



A flight of hard cider at Flat Rock Ciderworks



Wallace hard cider at Appalachian Ridge Artisan Hard Cider

Photo of Bold Rock Hard Cider courtesy of Bold Rock Hard Cider; Flat Rock Ciderworks by Chris Schenck; Appalachian Ridge Artisan Hard Cider by Sandra Chambers