



The transformation of Helen, Georgia from a little-known town into a tourist destination is nothing short of amazing. This Disney-like village was created from an artist's memory of the Bavarian villages he encountered during his days in the army. His uncanny ability to transform the storefronts of Helen into the Bavarian villages he remembered turned this lovely north Georgia mountain town into a destination stop for travelers from all over the world.

A day exploring Helen is like stepping into another world, where you are surrounded by beautifully crafted architecture, German beer and cuisine, and endless activities. Let's explore the top 10 things to do in Alpine Helen.

10 If you are lucky enough to visit during the heat of summer, you will want to go river tubing, whitewater paddling or floating on the Chattahoochee River. There are two outfitters that offer river tubing, and the fun part is that the river flows right through the center of town. You can choose from 1 to 2½ hour floats, and you can even take your dog with you! Wildwood Outfitters and Cool River Tubing Co. are your choices if you want to try running the rapids, rent a raft or schedule a shuttle service so you can enjoy the river in your own canoe or kayak.

9 The North Georgia wine region is becoming more popular with each passing year. Habersham Winery and its sister winery, Creekstone Winery and Vineyard, are each unique and worth a stop. Habersham is housed in a beautiful vintage-style farmhouse and is one of the oldest wineries in Georgia. Once you have tickled your wine palate there, drive just a short distance to Creekstone, a French-style mansion where the scenic views of Yonah Mountain and the surrounding landscape will take your breath away. Both wineries offer a delicious array of Georgia-grown and produced wines.

8 Within the quaint village shops are tons of great gifts and souvenirs to browse. Some are the typical kitschy tourist T-shirts, mugs and assorted souvenirs, but be sure to stop into the many specialty shops. Find stunning Black Forest cuckoo clocks at Bavarian Clock Works, delicate blown glass at the Glassblowing Shop and a handmade hat at the Helen Hat Company.

7 This tiny mountain hamlet is only a few miles from Helen and is a community rich in Appalachian culture. Start at the Sautee Nacoochee Cultural Center, located within the former Nacoochee School building, where you will find the Folk Pottery Museum of Northeast Georgia. This area has become a hub of activities and education for the local population. Explore the beautiful art galleries, the African American Heritage Site or one of the beautiful gardens on the grounds. If you plan it right, you can also attend a community dance or one of the many festivals held throughout the year. Take in a little more history with a stop at the original Old Sautee Store. Built in 1872, you can view the original front half as a museum and then step through into the modern eclectic store.



HARDMAN FARM STATE HISTORIC SITE



FOLK POTTERY MUSEUM OF NORTHEAST GEORGIA



WATERFALLS



OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES



GERMAN CUISINE AND BEER



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6

You can't miss this stunning farm just on the outskirts of town. It is a short drive, or a 1-mile walk from Helen along the Helen to Hardman Heritage Trail, which follows the Chattahoochee River to the farm. The landmark site was once home to Indigenous people, then became a summer retreat and later served as the home of Georgia Governor Lamartine Hardman. The property was eventually transformed into a large-scale dairy operation with a stunning Italianate mansion as its focal point. Across the highway lies the final remaining Sautee Nacoochee Indian Mound within a farm pasture.

5

In the nearby village of Sautee Nacoochee is a beautiful museum that tells the story of the families who create the stunning folk pottery the region is known for. Learn about the labor-intensive methods used to create the pottery, the changes the families' operations have made over the years and view these incredible works of art. Folk pottery is not only beautiful, but each face and sculpture tells a story.

4

Part of the allure of Helen is the stunning beauty found in the north Georgia mountains that surround the town. Within this lush area there are three jaw-dropping waterfalls you can't miss. Anna Ruby Falls, located just outside of town, is created by the joining of two creeks. This stunning twin waterfall is one of the most popular in the area. The hike to Dukes Creek Falls offers an array of smaller waterfalls leading to the massive 300-foot falls at the end. Finally, a slightly longer hike will take you to the unusual Raven Cliff Falls, a split waterfall that must be seen to be believed.

3

The north Georgia mountains provide an incredible playground for outdoor enthusiasts. If you plan on RVing at nearby Unicoi State Park & Lodge, you can go ziplining, try your hand at archery, learn fly fishing, go kayaking or enjoy pedal boating on the lake. Around Helen there are all kinds of outfitters offering everything from horseback riding to aerial adventures to more ziplining, hiking, mini-golfing and even panning for gold. If you are brave enough, you can also glide down the Georgia Mountain Coaster.

2

There are plenty of options to sample all kinds of German food and beer in Helen, even if you don't attend Oktoberfest. With nearly 10 German restaurants and many other choices, you won't go hungry! From incredible schnitzel, bratwurst and spaetzle at the Heidelberg Restaurant to the indulgent Fried Cheese Kebob appetizer at Muller's Famous Fried Cheese Cafe, you will get a great introduction to German cuisine. Wash it all down with a famous German brew and get ready for your next adventure.

1

This can't-miss festival runs from early September to early November and celebrates everything German. The festival kicks off with a festive parade and continues in the Helen Festhalle with lively German and Bavarian bands playing all kinds of music. Get ready to polka! When you have worn yourself out, sit down and indulge in a brat and an incredible German lager. Continue into downtown, where the family-friendly celebration continues as you explore the many pubs and festival tents.

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