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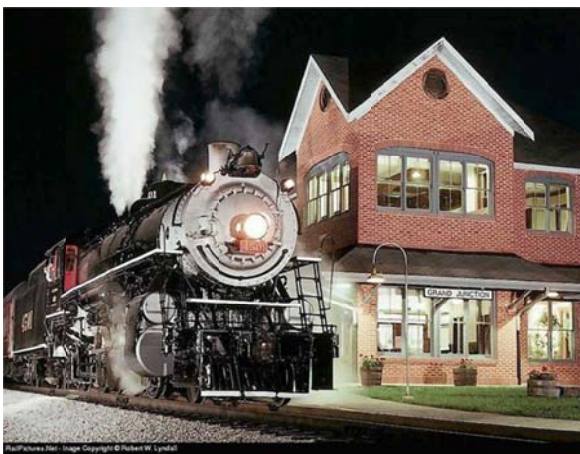
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EXPAND

## Summer's running out

### Here are 4 great spots to try while there's still time

2012|By Jay Jones, Special to Tribune Newspapers



(Chattanooga CVB, Handout)

Time stands still for no one. Before long, we'll be shopping for fall fashions and school supplies. But there's time for a late-summer escape. We've come up with four destinations that, while you might never have heard of them, are engaging and intriguing.

#### **Canterbury Shaker Village, Canterbury, N.H.**

They were members of the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing, but because of their religious fervor, which led to delirious dancing, they became known as "Shakers." In 1792, founder Mother Ann Lee created a community, the sect's seventh, in Canterbury, where an impressive 25 original Shaker buildings have been restored. Self-guided and docent-led tours are available.

Try to visit the village, 12 miles north of Concord, when one of the many workshops is being offered. Guests get a hands-on feel for what life was like 200 years ago as they learn how to make everything from wooden bowls to wool rugs to dry-laid stone walls. The overall aim is to promote self-sufficiency and sustainability. 603-783-9511, shakers.org

## **The Choo Choo, Chattanooga, Tenn.**

"Pardon me, boys, is that the Chattanooga choo choo?" Those lyrics from a tune popularized in 1941 by Glenn Miller helped put this southeast Tennessee city on the map. Seventy-one years later, the town's teeming with railroad-themed attractions that appeal to kids and grown-ups alike.

A good place to get one's bearings, and a sense of history, is from atop Lookout Mountain, actually an Appalachian plateau that towers 1,600 feet over the Tennessee River valley. During the Civil War, its geography made the mountain strategic. Since 1895, the summit's been reachable by the world's steepest incline railway.

Look out across the valley and there's another fought-over mountain: Missionary Ridge. Cutting through it, in a tunnel three football fields long, are the excursion trains of the Tennessee Valley Railroad. Several times a day, the trains chug to the line's East Chattanooga yards, where guests watch in wonderment as the engine changes direction aboard an old-fashioned turntable.

Downtown, the Chattanooga Choo Choo is a hotel with rail-themed offerings. Its lobby showcases what was once the grand entrance to Terminal Station. As in the song lyrics, "Dinner in the Diner" is available in an old dining car. A former streetcar rides the rails on a [journey](#) around the grounds, while nearby there's a massive model railroad display. Former passenger cars have been converted into 48 guest rooms. Most of the property's rooms, however, are of the usual variety.

And don't forget that immediately south of town is the Chickamauga & Chattanooga National [Military](#) Park. Chickamauga was the scene of a stunning Confederate victory in 1863.

Chickamauga & Chattanooga National Military Park, 706-866-9241, [nps.gov/chch](https://nps.gov/chch)

Incline Railroad: 423-821-4224, [ridetheincline.com](http://ridetheincline.com)

Tennessee Valley Railroad: 423-894-8028, [tvrail.com](http://tvrail.com)

Choo Choo hotel: 800-872-2529, [choochoo.com](http://choochoo.com)

Convention & Visitors Bureau: 800-322-3344, [chattanoogaofun.com](http://chattanoogaofun.com)

## **The Gold Coast, Long Island, N.Y.**

If the show "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous" ever makes a comeback, an entire season could be filmed along a narrow strip of Long Island, roughly 30 miles from Manhattan.

The north shore, along a stretch rightfully known as the Gold Coast, is home to some of the nation's most magnificent mansions. Once they were the regal [domain](#) of financiers, industrialists and heiresses. Now many of them are open for public tours. At one, visitors can even spend the night.

That special place is Oheka Castle Hotel & Estate. Otto Herman Kahn, a founder of the Metropolitan Opera Co., built the French chateau-style dwelling in 1919, and it soon took its place as the second-largest private residence in America. There's nothing humble about this abode, which consists of 127 rooms spread over 110,000 square feet of living space. And Oheka, in the town of Huntington, was merely Kahn's summer house.

Four miles away in Centerport, folks are encouraged to take a Living History Tour of the Vanderbilt Mansion. It seems frozen in 1938, as visitors meet actors in period costumes. They're first welcomed by the Duchess of Windsor, who once was a guest here, before moving on to be greeted by various members of the household staff.

Links to the various properties can be found online at [goldcoastmansionsoflongisland.com](http://goldcoastmansionsoflongisland.com). For information on lodging options and other attractions, contact the Visitors Bureau (877-386-6654, [discoverlongisland.com](http://discoverlongisland.com))

### **New River Gorge, Oak Hill, W.Va.**

The Scouts are coming! The Scouts are coming! This wild and rugged region southeast of Charleston is home to The Summit, a new adventure center for the Boy Scouts of America. In 2013, it will host thousands for the National Jamboree. The boys visiting this remote and rugged region will enjoy many of the activities that also lure tourists. Much of the visitor activity takes place along the spectacularly [beautiful](#) New River, 53 miles of which are managed by the National Park Service.

The river is unusual in that it flows north. The stretch between Thurmond and Cunard provides gentle water suitable for rafting for everyone. But from Cunard north, there's whitewater ranging from Class 2 to Class 5 as the river cuts through the New River Gorge.

The bridge that spans that chasm, nearly 900 feet above the water, is an attraction in its own right. For those not paddling beneath it, the New River Gorge Bridge, which appears on the back of the West Virginia quarter, can be driven or walked. Hiking trails and mountain climbing are found near the gorge.

Get oriented at the Convention and Visitors Bureau center in Oak Hill (800-927-0263, [newrivergorgecvb.com](http://newrivergorgecvb.com)) or one of the centers managed by the [National Park Service](#) ([nps.gov/neri](http://nps.gov/neri)).

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