

Thanksgiving in the Smokies!

Earlier in the year, we decided we would go to Gatlinburg for Thanksgiving. Matt always puts in for vacation time during that week and we haven't been to Gatlinburg for more than 3 days, or an actual vacation, in a while. The smoky mountains has always been one of mine and Matt's favorite places to vacation. As a child my maw-maw took me, my siblings and our cousins quite often. After meeting Matt I learned that his family use to go often when he was a child too. We went together the first year we started dating and went every year after that up until having babies. We shared our love for Gatlinburg with the babies a few years ago and they fell in love with it too. I love that we all have a place we love so much and enjoy being together. You know we had to take the car selfie before heading north!



Instead of staying in a cabin, like we usually do, we decided to borrow the FIL's camper! It was so much fun, I enjoyed it so much and I know the kids and Matt did too. We stayed at Creekside Campsite in Pigeon Forge and our spot was right beside the creek that ran along side of the campsite. Apparently it's where all the ducks in Pigeon Forge live because there were so many! Lets just say this was one of the



kids favorite parts!

After we got the camper set up and everything unpacked we hopped back in the car to go eat dinner in downtown Gatlinburg. We have always wanted to eat at the Bubba Gumps Shrimp CO. but it is always packed out. We decided to try it anyways and with luck were able to be seated right away! The food was delicious. After dinner we walked downtown for a little bit and let the kids watch candy making!





There was lots of playing, tackling and rolling down the hill at the campsite. Tuesday night we had reservations at [The](#)

[Dixie Stampede](#). They were already showing the christmas show and I was so excited for the kids to experience something I loved as a child. Matt had never been either so that made me even more excited. Y'all, everything was so awesome. The dinner, the show, our kids faces; just everything.





After waiting in line and experiencing the pre-show they sat us at our seats. I thought this was the cool part, you see the moon in the background in the picture below? Well, when it went all the way down is when we knew the show was about to begin! The kids loved that part too. The whole show was just pure magic seeing it through the kids eyes. I highly recommend going to see it if you have kids! Actually, I recommend if you don't have kids, me and Matt thought it was fantastic.



We did Cade's Cove one day, of course. That's always a must when we go to Gatlinburg. I have ALWAYS wanted to see a bear while there but we never ever see one. I think next time we'll try to go late spring or early fall so we have a better chance at seeing one in the wild. We did see a few deer and turkeys. Jocelynn and JP had the most fun because we let them "drive" a little bit while in there.



After Cade's cove we were all starving so we headed downtown to get big as your face corn dogs and cheese steaks! The best ever food BTW and [fannie farkle's](#) if you are planning a trip.

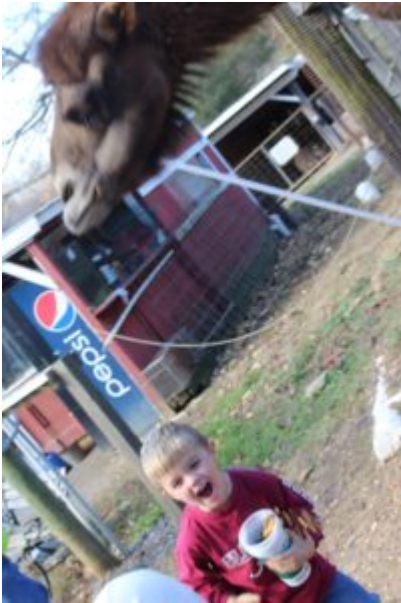


Games. Games is a must when we go. The kids have never forgotten about all the fun rides and awesome arcade games from the last time we went. So we had to make it a priority to do that one night!



We also go to the [exotic petting zoo](#) every time too but its something that never gets old. They have zebras, zonkeys, horses, reindeer, deer farm, goat farm and more. I love seeing the kids faces when they feed the camels. The camels are a bit demanding and clumsy but so funny to watch. There was a he horse there too and it was a bit angry. It tried to bite Matt one time!





That night we got back in the car to explore a little bit. We decided to head to Sevierville to drive through a light show. Guess what? Santa was there too! Which made it even better for Jocelynn, JP and Maddie. There was also a pony ride, petting zoo and yummy carnival food. The light show is amazing and we, the adults, probably enjoyed it a little more than our children did.





We knew we didn't want to spend the money eating out every night or every day even so we brought some food with us and the rest we bought at Kroger when we got there. We cooked steaks and skewered veggies one night on the fire pit before going to an arcade and ride go karts. It was DELICIOUS!



A few weeks before we left I looked around for a restaurant that would serve Thanksgiving dinner. Apparently, Thanksgiving is a very busy time for Gatlinburg/Pigeon Forge area because they were all booked up! So I found that the Apple Barn was doing to-go meals too! I ordered us one for Thanksgiving day. We went and picked it up and just enjoyed a day at the campsite. We had sack races, rolled down the hill, played football, watched the parade and got our bellies very happy. It was so much fun and just a day of relaxation was great. I say a day of relaxation, to be honest we aren't that great at complete relaxation. We got in the car to go grab a pizza and ended up seeing fireworks! Then we just had to get ice cream for our little ice cream lover, Maddie.



It was an amazing 5 days. I knew it would be. And as a mom and wife it was especially nice to be able to get away and really enjoy time spent as a family. Quality time spend together instead of always worrying about the next day, the next load of laundry, cleaning and ect. I have been paying for it since we got back because I did not do one single load of laundry while we were there but I don't regret it. It felt great.