



Great Smoky Mountains National Park Trip Assistant

How Much Time?

Great Smoky Mountains National Park is one place you really need to know what you're getting yourself into. The north entrance (Gatlinburg/Pigeon Forge/Sevierville) is one massive tourist trap. Some people love it. Some people don't. If you love that sort of thing you'll want a few days just to spend goofing around there. If you don't, I'd recommend accessing the park from other areas (Townsend, Wears Valley). Spend your nights in/near

the quieter corners of the park too.

While one day isn't nearly enough to really get to know the Smokies, it should be plenty to drive through (especially if you're at Cades Cove when the gates open).

You could spend weeks hiking here. Check out the favorite trails list. Consider hiking up to Mount LeConte via Alum Cave (steep) or Boulevard trails and spending the night at [LeConte Lodge](#) (must reserve extremely early).

Need to Know

- You'll need to get a [Parking Tag](#) to park longer than 15 minutes.
- Great Smoky Mountains is the most visited National Park and the only park to receive more than 10 million annual visitors. Expect it to be crowded from May through October.
- Popular spots like Cades Cove, Roaring Fork, Alum Cave, and Kuwohi (Clingmans Dome) are busy. Visit early, late, or in the offseason, or come prepared with plenty of patience.
- If you'd like to see the synchronous fireflies (June), you must win a [lottery](#).

Maps

Great Smoky Mountains National Park Map: [PDF](#) | [JPG](#)
Region: [PDF](#) | [JPG](#)

[Google Map w/ Trails, Attractions, and Outfitters](#)

All 63 National Parks Map: [PDF](#) | [JPG](#)

Eastern National Park Service Units Map: [PDF](#) | [JPG](#)

Highlights

Cade's Cove
Roaring Fork Motor Nature Trail
Kuwohi (Clingmans Dome)
Newfound Gap
Heintooga Road
Ocanaluftee Visitor Center
Mingus Mill
Tail of the Dragon (US-129)



Favorite Trails

Easy

[Indian Creek](#)

[Laurel Falls](#) (closed for 2025)

[Mingo Falls](#)

Moderate

[Charlie's Bunion](#)

[Spruce Flat Falls](#)

[Andrew's Bald](#)

[Grotto Falls](#)

[Kuwohi \(Clingman's Dome\)](#)

[Mouse Creek Falls](#)

[Little Cataloochee](#)

[Rainbow Falls](#)

[Hen Wallow Falls](#)

Strenuous

[Alum Cave](#)

[Chimney Tops](#)

[Gregory Bald](#)

[Ramsey Cascades](#)

[Rocky Top](#)

[Mount Cammerer](#)

Activities

Hiking

Backpacking

Biking

Paddling

Fishing

Horseback Riding

See this [Google Map](#) for pins to area outfitters offering tours and rentals as well as all favorite trails and attractions.

Road Trip

Here's a [Google Map](#) to help plan road trips from the east (Asheville, NC), north (Lexington, KY), west (Nashville, TN), and south (Congaree). It's a good start, but I'd highly recommend making your own.

There's much more to our country. Here's another [Google Map](#) with points of interest across all types of public land.

For campers, here's a [Google Map](#) with National Forest campgrounds. National Park campgrounds are difficult to reserve (there are about 200!). With nearly 5,000 national forest campgrounds, you can usually pull in and find a spot.

Highlights

[Blue Ridge Parkway](#)

[Tallulah Gorge SP](#) (GA)

[Black Rock Mtn SP](#) (GA)

[Gorges State Park](#) (NC)

[Burgess Falls SP](#) (TN)

[Tail of the Dragon](#) (TN)

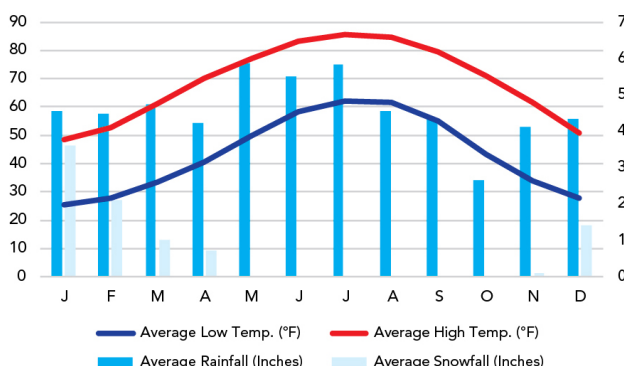
[Red River Gorge](#) (KY)

[Natural Tunnel SP](#) (VA)

When To Go

Weather

Gatlinburg: 1,454 ft Elevation



Visitation

Great Smoky Mountains Visitation

