

WATERFALL WONDER IN SOUTHEAST TENNESSEE



Travel

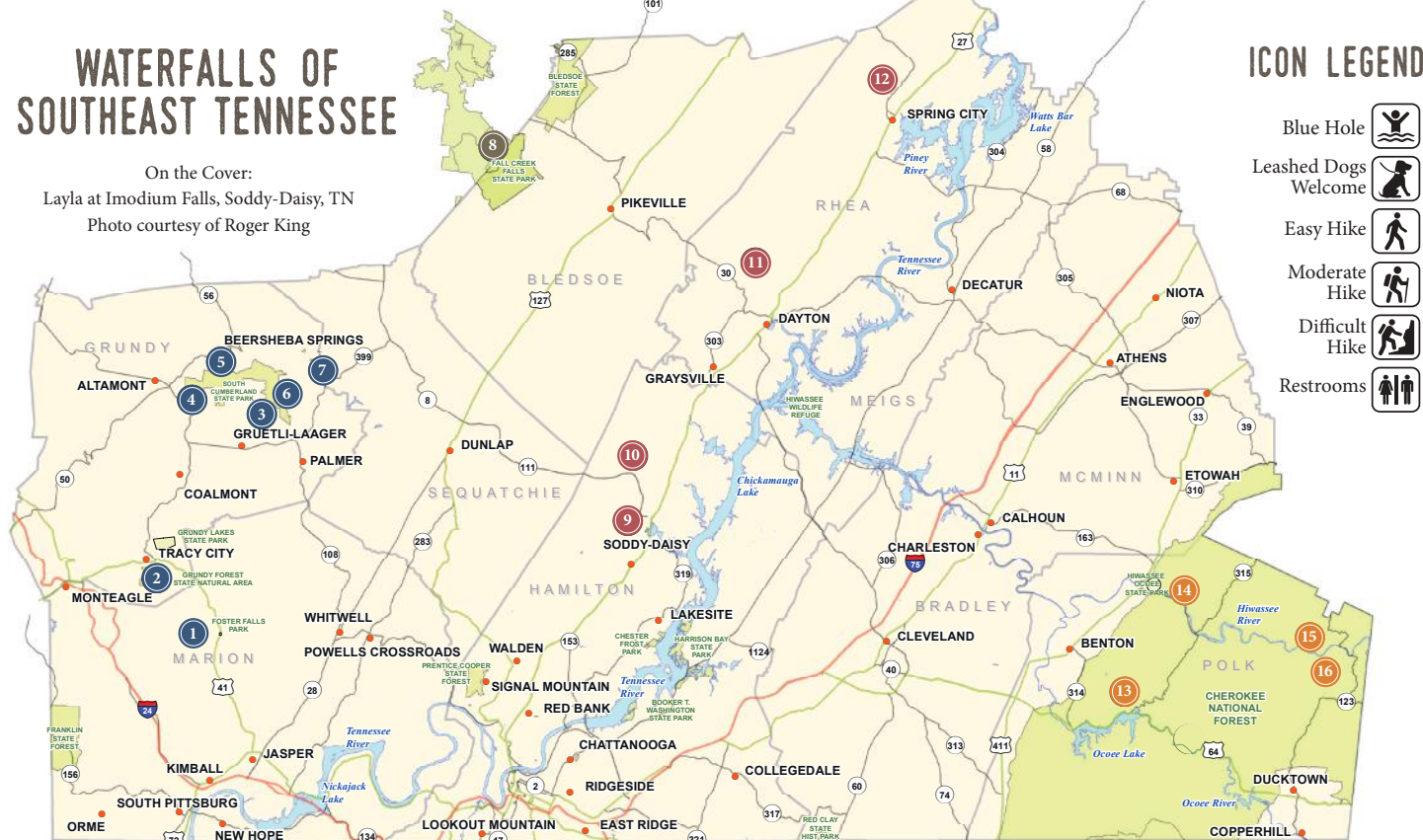
SoutheastTennessee.com

WATERFALLS OF SOUTHEAST TENNESSEE

On the Cover:

Layla at Imodium Falls, Soddy-Daisy, TN

Photo courtesy of Roger King



South Cumberland State Park

1. Foster Falls
2. Sycamore Falls and Bluehole Falls
3. Suter Falls and Horsepound Falls
4. Greeter Falls and Boardtree Falls
5. Laurel Falls

6. Ranger Creek Falls
7. Savage Falls
8. Fall Creek Falls State Park
Fall Creek Falls, Piney Creek,
Cane Creek & Rockhouse Falls

Cumberland Trail

9. Big Soddy Creek Gulf Waterfall
10. Imodium & Richey Ridge Falls
11. Laurel Falls and Snow Falls
12. Upper & Lower Piney Falls

Cherokee National Forest

13. Benton Falls
14. Gee Creek Falls
15. Coker Creek Falls
16. Turtletown Falls

Come explore the falling waters that have sculpted Southeast Tennessee's scenic landscape. There's just no better way to experience the region's lush green scenery than by sitting on a warm boulder in the misty realm of a waterfall or hiking alongside a cascading creek.

Waterfall Wonder features some of the most scenic and accessible waterfalls on public lands in Southeast Tennessee, from impressive veils of water plunging over cliffs to cascades tumbling over rocky outcroppings. This guide spans the 10 counties of Southeast Tennessee, from South Cumberland State Park on the Cumberland Plateau, north to Fall Creek Falls State Park, south along sections of the Cumberland Trail in Dayton and the Greater Chattanooga Area, and east to the Cherokee National Forest.

WATERFALL SAFETY

Please be cautious when visiting area waterfalls:

- Wear stable shoes and avoid slippery rocks or crossing in dangerous places.
- Keep children a safe distance from dangerous ledges and do not lean over ledges to view waterfalls.
- Do not jump off waterfalls or dive into pools of water because of dangerous unseen objects below the surface, including logs and boulders.
- Black bears reside in the wooded areas of Southeast Tennessee, especially the Cherokee National Forest. Before you set out, learn what to do if you unexpectedly encounter a bear. For more information, visit: www.fs.usda.gov/details/cherokee/recreation
- Keep in mind that most waterfalls are located in remote locations without cell phone coverage.

WATERFALLS WITHIN SOUTH CUMBERLAND STATE PARK



South Cumberland State Park is composed of 30,845 acres in nine separate sections of the park. Part of the Cumberland Plateau, the area features spectacular waterfalls, blue holes, hiking trails, rock climbing and backcountry camping.

South Cumberland State Park Visitor Center

11745 US-41

Monteagle, TN

931-924-2980

Open Mon. through Sun. 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. CST

<http://tnstateparks.com/parks/about/south-cumberland>



Photo credit: Bob Butters

1 Foster Falls (60 feet)

Foster Falls Small Wild Area along Fiery Gizzard Trail
Sequatchie, TN (Marion Co.)

Foster Falls is a spectacular 60-foot waterfall plunging into a deep pool of water. It's a quick and easy walk along a handicapped-accessible trail to the overlook at Foster Falls. From there, a more difficult trail leads to a suspension bridge at the base of the falls (1 mile round-trip). Backcountry camping at Father Adamz Campground off the Climber's Loop Trail and vehicle camping at Foster Falls. Reservations:

<http://tnstateparks.com/parks/about/south-cumberland>.

Directions:

From Chattanooga, take I-24 W to TN-28 N in Jasper (exit 155). Follow signs for US-41 N/TN-150 toward Tracy City. Follow TN-150 to the top of the plateau and proceed 3 miles to Foster Falls Road on the left, which leads to the Foster Falls parking lot.



SoutheastTennessee.com

GPS Waypoint:
35.18177, -85.676

② Sycamore Falls (12 feet) *and* Bluehole Falls (9 feet)

Grundy Forest State Natural Area along Fiery Gizzard Trail
Tracy City, TN (Grundy Co.)

This moderate 2.6-mile round-trip hike starts as the Grundy Day Loop and takes you past Bluehole Falls, Black Canyon Cascades and some interesting geologic formations. Take the short 0.6-mile spur trail (Fiery Gizzard Trail) to arrive at Sycamore Falls. Take a dip in swimming holes at both waterfalls.

Directions:

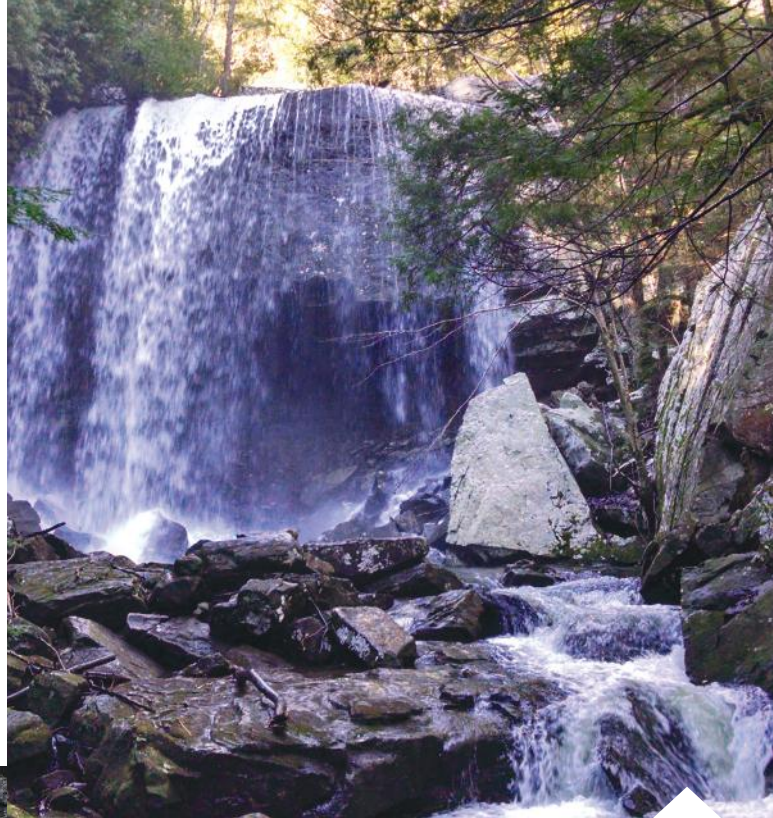
From Chattanooga, take I-24 W to exit 135 in Monteagle and continue right. Turn right to follow US-41 S toward Tracy City. Follow signs to Grundy Forest State Natural Area parking lot on right.



GPS Waypoints:

35.2463, -85.75493

35.2504, -85.7506



③ Suter Falls (50 feet) *and* Horsepound Falls (25 feet)

Savage Gulf State Natural Area at Collins Gulf
Near Gruetli-Laager and Palmer, TN (Grundy Co.)

From the parking area trailhead, take a short access trail and turn left on the Collins Gulf Trail for a challenging 2-mile round-trip hike to Suter Falls. Watch for some interesting rock shelters and high bluffs along the way. From Suter Falls, continue on the Collins Gulf Trail an additional 3.6 miles (round-trip from Suter Falls) into the gorge to arrive at Horsepound Falls, where local residents hid their ammunition and horses from the advancing Union Army during the Civil War.

Directions:

From Chattanooga, take I-24 W to exit 155 (Jasper). Take TN-28 N to Whitwell. Turn left on TN-108 N toward Gruetli-Laager. Turn right on 55th Ave. Look for signs for Collins Gulf parking area on the left.



GPS Waypoints:

35.4109, -85.5974

35.429, -85.6022

4 Greeter Falls (50 feet) and Boardtree Falls (30 feet)

Savage Gulf State Natural Area in Stone Door Area
Altamont, TN (Grundy Co.)

Firescald Creek spills over Greeter Falls, which consists of a 15-foot upper waterfall and 50-foot lower waterfall. It's a 2.25-mile round-trip hike along the Greeter Falls Loop Trail to experience both the upper and lower sections of Greeter Falls, as well as Boardtree Falls. A metal spiral staircase descends the bluff, leading to the lower section of Greeter Falls. Watch for steep ledges along the trail. From the Greeter Falls Loop Trail, a 1-mile (round-trip) spur trail on the right heads down to a blue hole along Firescald Creek.

Directions:

From Chattanooga, take I-24 W to exit 135 in Monteagle and continue right. Turn right to follow US-41 S approx. 5.5 miles toward Tracy City. Turn left on TN-56 N and travel 16 miles. After passing through Altamont, look for the Greeter Falls sign on the right. Follow that road for less than a mile to the Greeter Falls parking lot.



GPS Waypoints:
35.4343, -85.69624
35.436, -85.6936

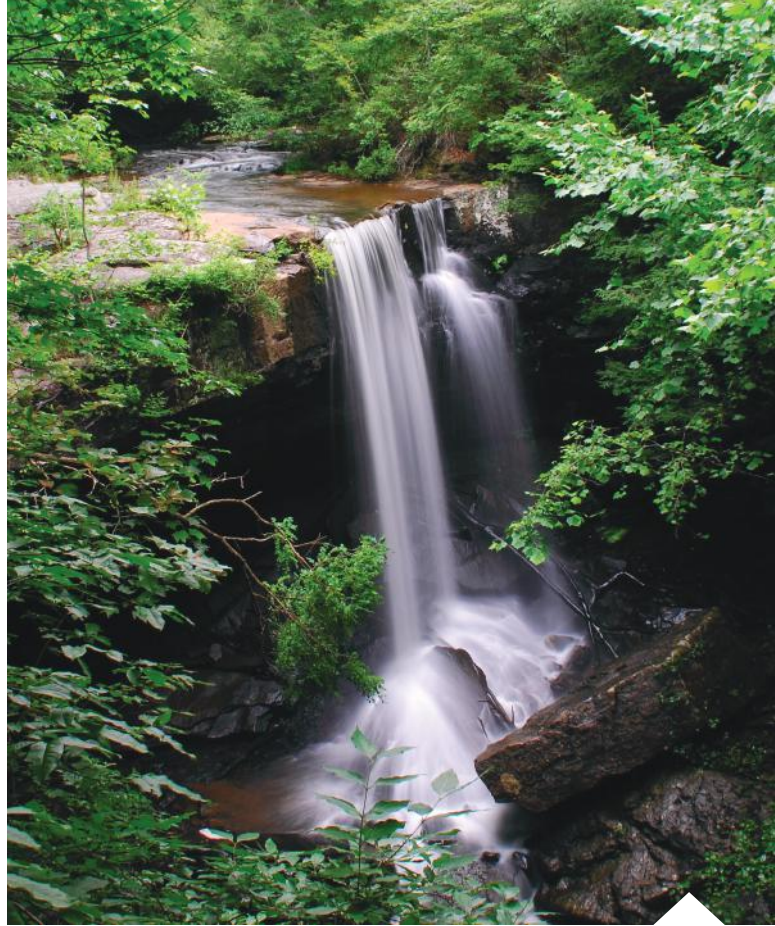


Photo credit: Bob Butters

5 Laurel Falls (25 feet)

Savage Gulf State Natural Area in Stone Door Area
Beersheba Springs, TN (Grundy County)

It's a short 0.3-mile round-trip hike from the Stone Door Ranger Station to view the overlook of Laurel Falls, where Laurel Creek drops 25 feet off a bluff with a hollowed-out amphitheater behind it into a pool of blue water. A long wooden staircase leads to the base of the falls. Look for remaining foundation stones from a mill that once operated along the creek.

Directions:

From Chattanooga, take I-24 W to exit 135 in Monteagle and continue right. Turn right to follow US-41 S approx. 5.5 miles toward Tracy City. Turn left on TN-56 N toward Coalmont. Turn right on Stone Door Rd. in Beersheba Springs and travel 1.5 miles to Stone Door Ranger's Station parking lot on left.



GPS Waypoint:
35.4468, -85.6536



6 Ranger Creek Falls (30 feet)

Savage Gulf State Natural Area in Stone Door Area
Beersheba Springs, TN (Grundy Co.)

From the Stone Door Ranger's Station, it's a rugged 6.6-mile round-trip hike into the Big Creek Gorge to see Ranger Creek Falls, the widest waterfall in South Cumberland State Park. Take the Stone Door Trail to the Big Creek Gulf Trail. At the intersection of Stone Door Trail and Big Creek Gulf Trail, check out Great Stone Door Bluffs and walk down through the Great Stone Door Staircase. At the bottom of the Staircase, follow the trail 2 miles to Ranger Creek Falls Trail, which leads to the waterfall.

Directions:

From Chattanooga, take I-24 W to exit 135 in Monteagle and continue right. Turn right to follow US-41 S approx. 5.5 miles toward Tracy City. Turn left on TN-56 N toward Coalmont. Turn right on Stone Door Rd. in Beersheba Springs and travel 1.5 miles to Stone Door Ranger's Station parking lot on left.



GPS Waypoint:
35.422839, -85.660192

Photo credit: Bob Butters



Photo credit: Bob Butters

7 Savage Falls (30 feet)

Savage Gulf State Natural Area in Savage Gulf Area
Palmer, TN (Grundy Co.)

From the Savage Gulf Ranger Station, it's a 3.4-mile round-trip hike to Savage Falls. Along the way, enjoy two swinging bridges across Boyd Branch and Savage Creek. Take the Savage Day Loop Trail, turn left at the Loop Junction, and turn left on the South Rim Trail, which leads to Savage Falls. Enjoy a blue hole at the base of the falls. Savage Falls Campground offers eight backcountry camping sites within 100 yards from the falls.

Reservations:

<http://tnstateparks.com/parks/about/south-cumberland>

Directions:

From Chattanooga, take US-27 N to TN-111 N. After 47 miles, turn left on TN-399 W to the Savage Gulf Ranger's Station parking lot.



GPS Waypoint:
35.4411, -85.5537

WATERFALLS AT FALL CREEK FALLS STATE PARK



Fall Creek Falls State Park is Tennessee's largest and most-visited state park, encompassing more than 26,000 acres atop the Cumberland Plateau. The park is located 18 miles west of Pikeville and 11 miles east of Spencer. In addition to Fall Creek Falls, the tallest waterfall in the eastern United States, the park features more than 34 miles of trails and multiple waterfalls, an inn, restaurant, cabins and campsites, a golf course, pool, horseback riding and a nature center.

Fall Creek Falls State Park

2009 Village Camp Rd.

Spencer, TN

423-881-5298

<http://tnstateparks.com/parks/about/fall-creek-falls>



8

Fall Creek Falls (256 feet)

Fall Creek Falls State Park
Pikeville, TN (Bledsoe Co.)

At 256 feet, Fall Creek Falls is the tallest waterfall in the eastern United States. It's a quick and easy walk to the overlook at Fall Creek Falls. The Fall Creek Falls Trail is a more challenging 3-mile loop trail that leads to the bottom of the falls. Other trails throughout the park offer views of Fall Creek Falls and other waterfalls, including Piney Falls, Cane Creek Falls, Cane Creek Cascades and Rockhouse Falls.

Directions:

From Chattanooga, take US-27 N to TN-111 N. Travel 50 miles and turn right on TN-284 E to the entrance of Fall Creek Falls State Park.



GPS Waypoint:
35.66583, -85.35583

WATERFALLS OF THE CUMBERLAND TRAIL



The Cumberland Trail traverses 190 miles of the Cumberland Plateau, spanning 11 counties in East Tennessee. This developing trail system, which currently features 15 segments, offers hikers access to remote areas with spectacular overlooks, waterfalls and wilderness experiences that are trademarks of the southeastern United States.

Cumberland Trail State Park

220 Park Rd.

Caryville, TN

423-566-2229

www.cumberlandtrail.org



Big Soddy Creek Gulf Waterfall (30 feet)

Connects to the Cumberland Trail
Soddy-Daisy, TN (Hamilton Co.)

It's an easy 2-mile round-trip hike along an old mining road to this wet-weather waterfall that tumbles over a rock wall into Big Soddy Creek. This family-friendly trail follows alongside the cascading river and includes stops for wading and skipping rocks. The waterfall is not visible during dry periods.

Directions:

From Chattanooga, take US-27 N to Hwy. 111 N. Take Back Valley Rd. exit and turn left on Back Valley Rd. Pass under highway and follow signs to parking area on the right.



GPS Waypoint
35.3066, -85.1795

10 Richey Ridge Falls (18 feet) *and* Imodium Falls (25 feet)

The Cumberland Trail: Possum Gorge Segment
Soddy-Daisy, TN (Hamilton Co.)

It's a short and easy walk from parking to view Richey Ridge Falls, an 18-foot wet-weather cascade along the Cumberland Trail. From Richey Ridge Falls, continue on for a more challenging 9-mile round-trip hike to Imodium Falls (aka Little Possum Creek Falls).

Directions:

From Chattanooga, follow US-27 N through Soddy-Daisy. Follow TN-111 N and proceed 5 miles to the Jones Gap Rd. exit and turn right. Immediately turn right on Heiss Mountain Rd., and travel 0.5 mile. Look for the trailhead with Cumberland Trail signage. Parking is available along the side of the road.



GPS Waypoints: 35.3469, -85.1755
35.3674, -85.1753



11 Laurel Falls (80 feet) *and* Snow Falls (35 feet)

The Cumberland Trail: Laurel-Snow State Natural Area
Dayton, TN (Rhea Co.)

The Laurel-Snow section of the Cumberland Trail is an area of gorges cut into Walden's Ridge, part of the Cumberland Plateau. From the trailhead, it is 1.7 miles to the split where the Laurel Falls spur trail forks to the right and the Snow Falls spur trail forks to the left. Take the steep Laurel Falls spur trail 0.7 miles to the base of the falls and continue on to the top of the falls and to two overlooks for a 6.6-mile round-trip hike from the trailhead. The hike to Snow Falls, which is located at the end of the Snow Falls spur trail, is a moderate 9.6 mile hike (round-trip) from the trailhead.

Directions:

From Chattanooga, take US-27 N toward Dayton. Turn left on Walnut Grove Rd. Continue 0.7 mile and turn left on Back Valley Rd. In 0.7 mile, turn right on gravel road for Laurel-Snow State Natural Area. Proceed 1 mile to the parking lot on Richland Creek Rd.



GPS Waypoints: 35.5472, -85.02396
35.54667, -85.03861

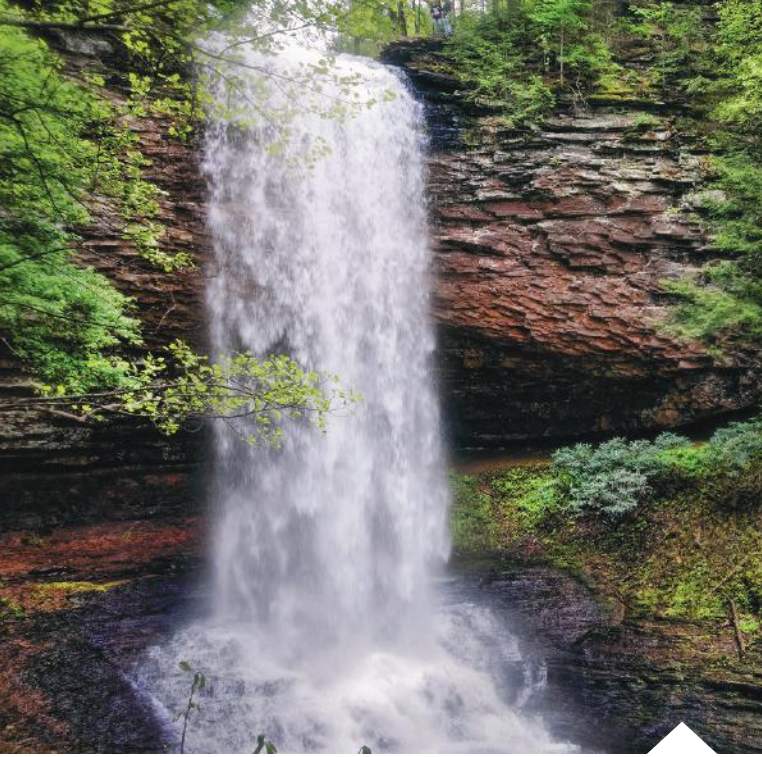


Photo credit: Ronnie Phipps

12 Upper Piney Falls (80 feet) and Lower Piney Falls (40 feet)

The Cumberland Trail:
Piney Falls Designated State Natural Area
Grandview, TN (Rhea Co.)

This 2.2-mile round-trip trail will take you to where Little Piney Creek plunges some 80 feet over Upper Piney Falls into a pool below, and then drops another 40 feet over Lower Piney Falls. From the parking lot, follow the trail along an old dirt road for about a half mile until you come to a fork in trail. The trail to the right leads to the ledge overlook of Upper Piney Falls (use caution on ledges!) and a trail to the left leads to the base of the falls down in the gorge. These two trails eventually connect if you wish to hike the full loop. The Lower Falls is not easily accessible by the main trail for viewing.

Directions:

From Chattanooga, follow US-27 N to TN-68 N in Spring City. Follow TN-68 N into the Grandview Community. Look for a sign for Piney Falls State Natural area and turn left on Firetower Rd. Travel 1.5 miles to the parking area and trailhead on the right.



GPS Waypoint:
35.73111, -84.86361

WATERFALLS WITHIN THE CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST



Home to the Ocoee and Hiwassee rivers, the Cherokee National Forest, the largest tract of public land in Tennessee, is a landscape defined by cascades, rapids and scenic waters. The Forest also offers numerous opportunities for hiking, paddling, biking and camping.

Ocoee Ranger District

3171 US-64

Benton, TN

423-338-3300

fs.usda.gov/main/cherokee/home



SoutheastTennessee.com



Photo credit: Jim Caldwell

13 Benton Falls (65 feet)

Cherokee National Forest: Chilhowee Recreation Area
Benton, TN (Polk Co.)

Located in the Chilhowee Recreation Area near the Ocoee River, the drive to Benton Falls following the Ocoee Scenic Byway is just as scenic as the waterfall, offering overlooks of Sugarloaf Mountain and Parksville Lake. From the McCamy Lake parking lot, take Benton Falls Trail #131 for an easy 3-mile round-trip hike to this stunning 65-foot-high waterfall. Cool off from your hike in the shallow pools at the bottom of the falls.

Directions:

From Chattanooga, take I-75 N to exit 20 (Cleveland) and turn right on US-74 E. Travel US-74 E for approx. 6 miles to US-64 E. From US-64 E, follow the Ocoee Scenic Byway and turn left on FS Road 77. Travel approx. 7.5 miles to the Chilhowee Recreation Area (McCamy Lake). Trail begins to the left of the bathhouse. Day use fee: \$3



GPS Waypoint:
35.14048, -84.5961

14 Gee Creek Falls (25 feet)

Cherokee National Forest: Gee Creek Wilderness
Benton, TN (Polk Co.)

Gee Creek Trail #191, which lies almost entirely within the congressionally designated Gee Creek Wilderness, is an easy 2.6-mile round-trip hike leading to a gorgeous double waterfall that plunges into a deep pool. Look for a concrete water divider within the creek that was used in the late 1800s to wash mined silica during the region's mining era. This is a hiking-only trail. Recreation in congressionally designated Wilderness is intended to be primitive in nature and group size is limited to 12 people. For more information, visit www.wilderness.net.

Directions:

From Chattanooga, take I-75 N to exit 20 (Cleveland) and turn right on US-74 E. Travel US-74 E for 6 miles to US-64 E. Take US-411 N exit and travel approximately 14 miles. In Delano, turn right on Gee Creek Road and continue for 2.2 miles to the signed trailhead, just before a left curve. Paved road becomes dirt road ending at FS Trail #191 trailhead parking lot.



GPS Waypoint:
35.247, -84.5261





Photo credit: Tennessee Overhill Heritage Association

15 Coker Creek Falls (45 feet)

Cherokee National Forest
Coker Creek, TN (Polk Co.)

Take Coker Creek Trail #183 for a 3-mile round-trip hike to Coker Creek Falls, a series of cascades ranging from 5 to 45 feet. The trail follows Coker Creek, a shallow creek perfect for summertime splashing.

Directions:

From Chattanooga, take I-75 N to exit 60 (Sweetwater). Turn right on TN-68 S and drive approx. 35 miles to Coker Creek. Turn right on Ironsburg Road (County Rd. 628) and proceed approx. 3.52 miles. Turn left on FS Road 2138 and follow downhill for approx. 0.92 miles to the Coker Creek Falls trailhead parking lot.



GPS Waypoint
35.19727, -84.37028

16

Turtletown Falls (Upper 30 feet, Lower 40 feet)

Cherokee National Forest
Turtletown, TN (Polk Co.)

Turtletown Creek Trail #185 is a moderate 3.5 mile round-trip loop trail that follows Turtletown Creek and loops back to Shinbone Ridge. The hike features scenic views of the Hiwassee River and overlooks of two major waterfalls: Lower Turtletown Falls (40') and Turtletown Falls (30').

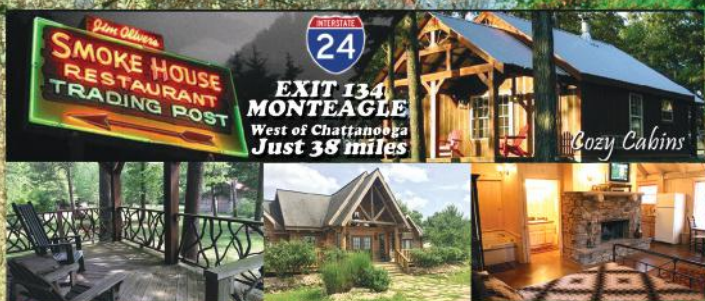
Directions:

From Chattanooga, take I-75 N to exit 20 (Cleveland) and turn right on US-74 E. Travel US-74 E for 6 miles to US-64 E and continue to Ducktown. Take TN-68 N to Turtletown and turn left on Farner Rd. Travel approx. 2.8 miles to the gravel FS Road #1166 on the left (not marked from the road). Once on FS Road #1166, continue approx. 1.5 miles until the road dead-ends at the FS Trail #185 trailhead.



GPS Waypoint
35.1639, -84.35276





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The Southeast Tennessee Tourism Association is a part of
Economic & Community Development within the Southeast
Tennessee Development District (SETDD) based in Chattanooga,
TN. We work with partners within the 10 counties of Southeast
Tennessee and the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development
to promote economic development through tourism, which is the
second-largest industry in Tennessee. To learn more about SETDD,
visit www.sedev.org.

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