ROCK CLIMBING IN SOUTHEAST TENNESSEE

SoutheastTennessee.com
The Chattanooga area, long recognized as an East Coast capital for rock climbing, sits at the center of a sandstone band of cliffs and boulder fields scattered up and down the edge of the Cumberland Plateau. This incredible climbing destination offers something for everyone, whether you are looking for classic crack climbs, steep sport routes or perfect boulder problems. While many climbers may be familiar with areas such as T-Wall and Stone Fort, there is an expanding inventory of crags and boulder fields that are being established and opened to the public. This guide highlights a collection of the most popular climbing areas within an hour’s drive of Chattanooga.

For more information about travel adventures in the region, visit SoutheastTennessee.com
CLIMBING STYLE: Areas are color coded by the predominant style:

SPORT: Climbing on cliffs with ropes & fixed protection (bolts)
TRAD: Climbing on cliffs with ropes & removable protection
BOULDERING: Climbing on boulders over crash pads

DIRECTIONS: Coordinates and address information are provided for driving directions to climbing areas. Additional directions and parking information are provided as needed.

DRIVE TIME: All driving times are calculated from Chattanooga.

APPROACH: Use hiking directions as a supplement to the topos.

ACCESS: Please visit seclimbers.org for the latest access information on climbing areas.

DOGS: All dogs in Tennessee State Parks must be kept on leash.

GUIDES: This brochure is not intended to be an exhaustive list of climbing areas or a substitute for published guide books. Any climber looking to visit these areas is encouraged to purchase one of the guide books referenced throughout this brochure.

ICON LEGEND

DRIVE TIME
HIKE TIME
DOGS PERMITTED
CAMPING
BLUE HOLE
FEE

All topo map base layers ©2017 Google
Booklet design: MccainDesign.com

Published 6/2017
This bright orange cliff line perched above the Tennessee River Gorge is arguably the most popular trad climbing destination in the Southeast. With over 600 established lines, this 2-mile cliff offers all variety and grades of classic trad climbing, as well as an impressive list of hard sport routes. T-Wall is particularly well-known for classic crack climbs, big roofs and plentiful protection on some of the best stone in the region. This south-facing cliff receives all-day sun, making it the ideal winter climbing crag for anyone with a rack.

**SEASON:** Fall to early spring, best in winter

**ACCESS:** T-Wall is part of the Prentice Cooper State Forest, managed by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. Climbing in Prentice Cooper is prohibited during seasonal hunting dates. Call 423-658-5551 for more information.

**APPROACH:** The approach trail is located directly across from the parking area on Mullens Cove Rd. The majority of established lines are located to the right of the waterfall.

**GUIDE:** Tennessee Wall Rock Climbing, Chatt Trad, Dixie Cragger’s Atlas, Chatt Steel

---

**SUCK CREEK**

For experienced trad climbers looking for more adventure and less traffic, Suck Creek has much to offer. This collection of cliffs lining the rim of Suck Creek Canyon is absent of both crowds and chalk, despite the proximity to Chattanooga. Climbers venturing up this less-charted vertical terrain will have their pick of intrepid trad climbs with plenty of type 2 fun.

**SEASON:** Fall to spring

**ACCESS:** The Arena and Concentration Camp climbing areas are part of Prentice Cooper State Forest, where climbing is prohibited during hunt dates. Call 423-658-5551 for more information.

**PARKING:** Climbing areas are approached from several pull-offs on a 2-mile stretch of Suck Creek Rd. after crossing over Suck Creek. Do not leave valuables in the car.

**APPROACH:** Approaches can be long and steep, and some require crossing Suck Creek.

**GUIDE:** Chatt Trad, Dixie Cragger’s Atlas
**SUNSET ROCK**  
TRAD

Sunset Rock, sitting on the northwest brow of Lookout Mountain, was one of the first crags established in the region. The high quality rock, ease of access, and scenic locale has been attracting climbers since the 1960s. The northern orientation of the cliff keeps many of these routes in the shade for much of the day, making Sunset an excellent warm-weather crag for trad climbers. Climbers that reach the top of the cliff are rewarded with great views of the Tennessee River and downtown Chattanooga.

**SEASON:** Spring to fall  
**ACCESS:** Sunset Rock is part of Chickamauga National Battlefield Park on Lookout Mountain (706-866-9241). Sunset closes at sunset.  
**PARKING:** Cravens House is now the designated parking area for climbers. Parking at the small trailhead lot is limited to 30 minutes and not to be used for climbing access.  
**APPROACH:** Hike up Bluff Trail from Cravens House to Sunset Rock.  
**GUIDE:** Chatt Trad, Dixie Cragger’s Atlas

---

**CASTLE ROCK**  
SPORT

This sandstone turret overlooking the town of Jasper is known for its high concentration of classic face climbing on perfect rock with some great exposure. In recent years, a growing number of moderate climbs have been developed, broadening the appeal of this area.

**SEASON:** Fall to spring  
**ACCESS:** Castle Rock is a privately owned climbing area leased by the SCC. Please keep noise to a minimum and be out by dark. See Seclimbers.org for more information.  
**PARKING:** Turn right off of Hwy. 41 at Greystone sign and follow gravel drive to parking area. Text the make and model of your vehicle to the phone number (Castle Rock owner) posted in the lot. If the lot is full, please climb elsewhere.  
**APPROACH:** Hike through the stone yard and up the 4 x 4 trail to the crag.  
**GUIDE:** Chatt Steel

---

Recommended Routes: Windwalker 5.9; Golden Years 5.11-
FOSTER FALLS

Foster Falls, located north of Jasper within South Cumberland State Park, is one of the most popular sport climbing destinations in the Southeast. The concentration of high-quality routes of all grades means that there is something for everyone. The climbing ranges from slightly overhanging to steep, and is often pumpy and technical. The swimming hole at Foster Falls and several shaded cliffs attract climbers throughout much of the summer.

SEASON: Year-round, best in fall

ACCESS: Foster Falls is part of South Cumberland State Park (931-924-2980). The gate to the park is closed after dark.

APPROACH: Hike to the base of Foster Falls and turn left after the bridge to access the climber’s loop.

GUIDE: Chatt Steel, Dixie Cragger’s Atlas

RECOMMENDED ROUTES: Holy War, 5.9; Gas Chamber, 5.12d

DENNY COVE

This brand new sport crag, located just south of Foster Falls, offers more than 100 routes from 5.8 to 5.14, with a few fun trad routes thrown in. Techy vertical faces and a plethora of big, steep lines will keep climbers of all kinds entertained. Denny Cove was purchased by the SCC with the help of the Access Fund, and transferred to South Cumberland State Park in 2017.

SEASON: Fall to spring

ACCESS: Denny Cove is now part of South Cumberland State Park. The access road is gated after dark. See Seclimbers.org for the latest access info.

PARKING: The entrance to Denny Cove is one mile south of Foster Falls. The new parking lot is located on a gated access road on the left side of US Hwy. 41, directly across the street from the Foster Falls Volunteer Fire Station (see topo).

APPROACH: The trail from the parking lot kiosk crosses the road and descends a gully to a fork in the trail. Turn left (toward waterfall) for Denny Right. Head right on the trail for Denny Left.

RECOMMENDED ROUTES: Three Star Salad Bar 5.9 +; One Legged Red 5.11b

Car camping available March - Nov. and billed on a per-site basis.
STONE FORT

Stone Fort is one of the most popular boulder fields in the country and hosts the second leg of the Triple Crown Bouldering Series. This dense maze of sandstone has an unmatched concentration of classic bouldering for all skill levels. Stone Fort offers a wide variety of angles and styles, but is best known for gently overhanging face climbing on iron rails, slopers and perfect edges.

SEASON: Fall to spring, best in winter

ACCESS: Stone Fort is owned by Montlake Golf Course, which sells required day passes at the club house. Bouldering on the fairway is not permitted. Stone Fort is closed after dark. See Seclimbers.org for additional information.

GUIDE: Stone Fort Bouldering

Recommended Boulders: Art of the Vogi V3; Deception V7

LEDA

Leda sits on the edge of Mowbray Mountain above the switchbacks on Montlake Road. This roadside crag is the go-to spot for convenience climbing close to town. The large selection of moderate sport climbs located minutes from the car makes Leda a great place for half-days and for beginning climbers.

SEASON: Fall to spring

ACCESS: Leda is owned by Montlake Golf Course. A day pass must be purchased at the Montlake Golf Course club house (9104 Brow Lake Rd., Soddy-Daisy, TN). Place your receipt on the dash of your car before hiking in to climb. Leda is closed after dark. See Seclimbers.org for more information.

PARKING: Park across from Terrace Falls Drive off Montlake Rd. Do not park in any of the pull-offs on Montlake Road (see topo).

APPROACH: Upper Leda is located downhill from the designated parking area.

GUIDE: Chatt Steel, Dixie Cragger’s Atlas

Recommended Routes: Guardian Angel 5.9; Kent Belew’s Original Route 5.11

35.24906, -85.217919
9104 Brow Lake Rd
Soddy Daisy, TN 37379

35.23705, -85.22154
Montlake Rd
Soddy Daisy, TN 37379
PEP BOYS BOULDERING

If the crowded maze at Stone Fort is not your scene, head just down the road to a small, but concentrated, boulder field located right off the Cumberland Trail. Pep Boys is best known for steep lines such as Salo’s Roof, but also offers a wide range of fun moderates.

SEASON: Fall to spring, best in winter

ACCESS: Pep Boys is part of Cumberland Trail State Park (423-566-2229) and is closed after dark.

PARKING: The trailhead includes parking for up to 8 vehicles.

APPROACH: Hike down the Cumberland Trail and past the clearing to the boulder field that starts along the creek.

Recommended Boulders: Salo’s Roof V9; Riverside, V5

Preserving Climbing Areas for Future Generations

Linden Taber on Puppy Ride, Tennessee Wall
Photo: Alma Baste
DEEP CREEK SPORT

This sport crag, located off the Cumberland Trail at the confluence of Deep Creek and Soddy Creek, has recently emerged as one of the most popular climbing areas in the region. The climbing is characterized by steep overhangs with plenty of slopers and bouldery movement that will test your power endurance. The dense canopy and nearby swimming holes make Deep Creek a great warm-weather crag for climbers in search of steep sport routes.

SEASON: Late spring to fall
ACCESS: Deep Creek and Big Soddy are part of Cumberland Trail State Park (423-566-2229) and can be accessed from a gated parking area owned and managed by the SCC. The gate code can be found at Seclimmers.org. These climbing areas are closed after dark. Parking overnight in the SCC lot is not permitted.

PARKING: Make a sharp left off Old Hotwater Rd. onto a gravel road to reach the SCC parking lot (see topo). Lock the gate when entering and leaving the lot.

APPROACH: Follow the trail downhill and across the Deep Creek bridge to reach the main wall.

GUIDE: Chatt Steel

35.2957, -85.1950
Old Hotwater Rd
Soddy Daisy, TN 37379

25 min.
15-30 min.

BIG SODDY SPORT/TRAD

Just a 15-minute hike past Deep Creek and across the Soddy Creek bridge is Big Soddy. When the steep shady climbing at Deep Creek falls out of season, Big Soddy comes into its prime. These tall south-facing cliffs offer a mix of trad and sport routes with great exposure on vertical faces and big roofs with big air.

SEASON: Fall to spring
ACCESS: See Deep Creek.

PARKING: See Deep Creek.

APPROACH: Follow the trail from the parking lot kiosk and drop down switchbacks to Deep Creek. Cross the Deep Creek bridge and head right along the CT. Cross the Big Soddy Creek Suspension Bridge and hike up hill to the Big Soddy cliff.

GUIDE: Chatt Trad

35.2957, -85.19505
Old Hotwater Rd
Soddy Daisy, TN 37379

25 min.
30-45 min.

0.25 MILES
The Laurel-Snow Pocket Wilderness, just west of Dayton, is perfect for the 5.12+ sport climber looking for king lines with no lines. Climbers that make the 40+ minute trek to Laurel Falls are rewarded with some of the best hard sport climbing in the region. Climbers that continue to Buzzard Point will find an even larger collection of 3-Star sport climbs and panoramic views of the Pocket Wilderness.

**SEASON:** Fall to spring

**ACCESS:** The access road for the Laurel-Snow trail head is gated at sunset. Laurel-Snow Pocket Wilderness is managed by Cumberland Trail State Park (423-566-2229).

**DIRECTIONS:** The Laurel-Snow Pocket Wilderness trail head is located at the end of a gated gravel road (Pocket Wilderness Rd.) on the left side of Back Valley Rd.

**APPROACH:** Follow the trail along Richland Creek for 1.7 miles to a metal bridge over Laurel Creek. Take a right at the fork and continue uphill to Laurel Falls cliff line. To reach Buzzard Point go left at the fork to reach a footbridge over Richland Creek. Hike uphill for about a mile to the base of the cliff and hike left along the cliff line to the base of Buzzard Point.

**GUIDE:** Chatt Steel, Dixie  
Cragger’s Atlas

---

**LAUREL FALLS**  
**BUZZARD POINT**  
**SPORT/TRAD**

---

**DAYTON POCKET**  
**BOULDERING**

Dayton Pocket is home to the highest concentration of double-digit boulders in the Southeast. The classic Honeycomb Roof offers a gym-like selection of roof problems that will stay dry in a downpour. Hiking along Richland Creek exposes a vast quantity of creek blocs that feature some of the highest quality bouldering in the region and lines of all grades awaiting development.

**SEASON:** Fall to spring, best in winter

**ACCESS:** See Laurel Falls/Buzzard Point.

**DIRECTIONS:** See Laurel Falls/Buzzard Point.

**APPROACH:** Boulders are located just off the trail for 2 miles along Richland Creek, on the slopes to the right of the trail, and along the approach to Laurel Falls. The closest bouldering area, the Honeycomb Roof, can be found on the cliff line above the ruins of the old mine.

**GUIDE:**  
Chatt Steel, Dixie  
Cragger’s Atlas

---

**RECOMMENDED ROUTES:**  
Laurel Falls: The Jackal, 5.14a; The Last Boy Scout, 5.12b  
Buzzard Point: Soul Sounds, 5.13a; Crankasaurus, 5.11a

---

**RECOMMENDED BOULDERS:**  
Riverdance V9; Western Gold V10
ROCKTOWN BOULDERING

Every year climbers from across the country flock to Rocktown for some of the best bouldering that the South has to offer. Rocktown is best known for its steep climbing on featured rock with great friction and plenty of slopers. Boulders are scattered in clusters across a half-mile stretch of forest on top of Pigeon Mountain. As a result, Rocktown rarely feels crowded, despite its popularity.

SEASON: Late fall to early spring, best in winter

ACCESS: Rocktown is part of the Crockford-Pigeon Mountain Wildlife Management Area managed by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. A GORP pass must be purchased from Gooutdoorsgeorgia.com to climb at Rocktown.

DIRECTIONS: From Chamberlain Rd., turn right onto Rocky Lane and continue up Pigeon Mountain for 3.5 miles to a right turn on a gravel road. Turn left on Rocktown Rd.

APPROACH: Follow the trail for a half-mile and bouldering areas will appear on the right.

GUIDE: Rocktown

LITTLE RIVER CANYON SPORT/BOULDERING

Little River Canyon is the largest and steepest sport climbing destination within an hour’s drive of Chattanooga. A variety of cliff orientations allow climbers to chase sun or shade, while the overhanging terrain makes it easy to find dry rock in the rain. The canyon is also filled with boulders and swimming holes along the river that attract climbers throughout the summer.

SEASON: Year-round

ACCESS: Little River Canyon National Preserve is managed by the National Park Service (256-845-3548).

APPROACH: Climbing areas are approached from pull-offs along Little River Canyon Parkway.

GUIDE: Little River Canyon Climbing Guide
ROCK CLIMB
with High Point Climbing School
CHATTANOOGA

Custom trips.
Beginner to expert.
Instruction to any level.
AMGA Certified.
Insured.
Permitted.

Call/text Wills Young:
760-920-5348
www.climbchattanooga.com

EAT
DRINK
REST

ROCK/CREEK

The South’s premier climbing outfitter since ‘87.

LOCATED IN TENNESSEE:
CHATTANOOGA  CLEVELAND  FRANKLIN  OCOEE

ROCKCREEK.COM

@rockcreekoutfitters  @rockcreek  @rockcreekgear
Erin Leverence on Super Mario, Stone Fort  •  Photo: Rob Pryor

SoutheastTennessee.com