

THE RVER'S GUIDE TO NATIONAL PARK CAMPGROUNDS

The 10 Best National Parks for RVers

Reservations, amenities, hookups, fees, park highlights, and more.



Togo Tip: Each national park website lists alerts for closures and other restrictions. Attractions, visitor centers, trails, campgrounds, and other points of interest may be temporarily closed or have other restrictions. Always research or call ahead first as reservation requirements and closures can change suddenly.

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These national parks have RV-friendly camping options in the park, great campgrounds outside of the park, and/or surrounding public land for boondocking. Other considerations include RV parking at visitor centers and RV-friendly scenic drives.

BADLANDS NATIONAL PARK, SOUTH DAKOTA

NPS.gov/badl



Introduction to Badlands National Park

Pinnacles, buttes, and color-banded hills seem to appear out of nowhere from the expanse of prairie in southwestern South Dakota.

For travelers along Interstate 90, Badlands is a popular destination. Just a few miles from the landmark roadside attraction of Wall Drug, less than 80 miles east of Mount Rushmore and the Black Hills, it's possible to visit Badlands in a couple of hours and get right back on the interstate.

Stay a night or two in the area, and you can experience the true magic of Badlands. View the sheer variety of geological formations and colors that were improbably created out of the surrounding grasslands. Scramble over ladders and on narrow ledges on a hike through this otherworldly landscape. Take a ranger-led nature walk and learn about the geology, flora, fauna, and fossils found in Badlands. Enjoy the thrill of seeing bison and bighorn sheep in the wild.

The small town of Wall, South Dakota, is a gateway to the north entrance, and the equally small town of Interior, South Dakota, is near the south entrance. The nearest major city is Rapid City, South Dakota, 70 miles away. The national park is only a few miles from Interstate 90.

BEN REIFEL VISITOR CENTER
25216 BEN REIFEL ROAD, INTERIOR, SD 57750
605-433-5361
(North Unit)

WHITE RIVER VISITOR CENTER
2734 BIA 2, PORCUPINE, SD 57772
605-455-2878
(South Unit)

BADLANDS NATIONAL PARK, SOUTH DAKOTA



TOP ATTRACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Scenic Drive

Badlands Loop Road, aka state Route 240, is a great way to see the park on a limited schedule. It runs through the park for about 40 miles, and is accessible from Interstate 90 in the town of Wall and at a second point 23 miles east. The loop road, open to vehicles of all sizes, includes a dozen accessible overlooks, trailheads, and the main visitor center. Don't miss the Big Badlands Overlook, the first stop coming from the east, for a spectacular, sweeping view.

Other scenic drives are available around the South Unit and Sage Creek Wilderness Area. Note that these roads are more rugged and not suitable for all vehicles. See the park website for more information.

2. Hiking

While Badlands doesn't have the miles of trails found in many national parks, it has some of the most unique hiking opportunities in its one-of-a-kind landscape. In addition to marked trails, Badlands has an Open Hike Policy, allowing visitors to hike off-trail. Check in with a ranger for tips on safety and current conditions before heading off-trail.

Two of the most popular hikes are the Notch Trail and Door Trail, whose adjacent trailheads are near the visitor center. The Door Trail is short and easy, but after the boardwalk ends at the "door" to the badlands, visitors can continue off-trail. Notch Trail is a challenging 1.5 miles, with a ladder built into a cliffside and narrow ledges to navigate, but rewards dramatic views of the White River Valley.

3. Fossils

Badlands has a history of rich fossil finds, thanks to its location in an ancient inland sea and swampy floodplain that preserved so many animal and plant remains. The Fossil Exhibit Trail is an accessible boardwalk with interactive exhibits, featuring fossil replicas and information about extinct creatures from the area.

Future paleontologists and anyone interested in dinosaurs will get a thrill out of observing the Fossil Preparation Lab, a working paleontology lab in the main Ben Reifel Visitor Center.



BEST TIMES TO VISIT

Badlands National Park is open year-round. A great time to visit is late August through October, after the summer crowds and before the weather turns cold. Spring is a good time too, with smaller crowds and wildflowers in bloom, although heavy rainstorms are common at this time.

July and August are the hottest months of the year, when temperatures reach over 100 degrees. These are also the busiest months. While you may experience crowds at the entrances, campgrounds, and visitor centers, the park is vast enough that you may still have a trail all to yourself. To enjoy a summer visit, plan to get to the park early to avoid the heat and crowds.

Winters are quiet in the park, with cold temperatures and some light snow. The typical RVer won't want to travel through South Dakota during the winter.

The weather in Badlands is variable and unpredictable throughout the year. Check the weather forecast frequently and speak to a ranger about conditions, especially before heading out on a hike.



PET-FRIENDLY TIP

Leashed pets are allowed in Badlands in developed areas like campgrounds and picnic areas. The park allows pets in all areas that are open to motor vehicles, including paved or gravel roads, roadway corridors, and parking lots.

While pets are not allowed on trails or in the backcountry, they are allowed to be walked on some back roads throughout the park. See the park website for details or talk to a ranger for suggestions.

Given the extreme weather possible in Badlands, if you leave your pet behind it's best to have electric hookups or other means to keep the temperature regulated inside your RV.

BADLANDS NATIONAL PARK, SOUTH DAKOTA



INSIDER TIPS

If you're staying overnight inside or close to the park, it's well worth the effort to rise early to experience the sunrise there. Great spots to observe and photograph the sunrise are Badlands Overlook, Panorama Point, and the Door Trail.

Sunset is just as magical, and some of the best places to capture it are Pinnacles Overlook and Conata Basin Overlook. The Norbeck Pass area and Castle Trail are great for both times of day. Note that the park is open 24-7.

For wildlife viewing, bison are best seen from Sage Creek Rim Road, overlooking their habitat in the Badlands Wilderness Area. Bighorn sheep are often spotted on rocky precipices in Pinnacles Overlook and in the Cedar Pass area. Prairie dog towns exist throughout Badlands. The largest one in the accessible area of the park can be viewed at Roberts Prairie Dog Town.

Outside the park, at the eastern end of Route 240 at Interstate 90, the Minuteman Missile National Historic Site is a fascinating and unsettling National Park Service site for adults and older children. The contemporary, interactive visitor center shares the secret history of a vast nuclear missile arsenal that was hidden and on alert throughout the Great Plains during the Cold War.



RV CAMPING IN BADLANDS NATIONAL PARK

Badlands has two frontcountry campgrounds for tents or RVs. Sage Creek is a free first-come, first-served rustic campground with 22 sites, suitable only for RVs 18 feet and under. The main campground, Cedar Pass, has almost 100 sites with electric hookups and shaded picnic tables, in a wide open area near the main visitor center and Cedar Pass Lodge.

Cedar Pass is a kid-friendly, convenient base for RVers, with scenic views of the surrounding badlands. Big rigs can be accommodated, but site sizes vary. Reservations can be made online and are strongly recommended during peak season.

Backcountry camping is allowed anywhere in the park that is at least half a mile from a roadway. See more information, including popular locations and safety tips, on the park website.



BADLANDS NATIONAL PARK, SOUTH DAKOTA



Badlands National Park Campgrounds

CEDAR PASS CAMPGROUND

SEASONALITY: The main campground is open from April through October. Group campsites remain open in the winter.

RESERVATIONS: Visit cedarpasslodge.com/campground or call 605-433-5476.

CAMPSITE SIZE: 96 sites, less than half for standard RVs and the rest for tents or small trailers.

HOOKUPS: Electric hookups are available at RV sites.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Covered picnic tables at sites. Central facilities include restrooms, showers, and a dump station. Additional facilities available at the visitor center and lodge include a general store and restaurant.

COST: \$38 per night.

MAXIMUM STAY: 14 days.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is weak to good. WiFi is available at the visitor center.

PET POLICIES: Leashed pets are allowed.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The campground is operated by a park concessionaire, Cedar Pass Lodge. Note that there is no shade or privacy between sites.

SAGE CREEK CAMPGROUND

SEASONALITY: Open year-round.

RESERVATIONS: First-come, first-served only.

CAMPSITE SIZE: 22 sites, suitable only for RVs 18 feet and under.

HOOKUPS: No hookups available.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: This is a bare-bones, rustic campground. Pit toilets are available, but no potable water or other facilities. Generators are not allowed.

COST: Free

MAXIMUM STAY: 14 days.

CONNECTIVITY: No cell phone service.

PET POLICIES: There is an active prairie dog community at Sage Creek, so pets are not allowed.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Rustic campground in open prairie land, accessible via rough, unpaved road that is sometimes closed after storms. In addition to being a free camping option inside the national park, Sage Creek has wildlife viewing and access to hiking trails.



BADLANDS NATIONAL PARK, SOUTH DAKOTA

Featured Campgrounds Outside Badlands National Park

RVers have their choice of dispersed camping areas around Badlands, since it's surrounded by Buffalo Gap National Grasslands. In fact, the best-known sites come with spectacular views of the badlands themselves. For RVers who prefer hookups and basic amenities, a handful of private campgrounds are available close to each of the park entrances.

With three entrances and a loop road that allows you to see the main sights without backtracking, Badlands is one of the more convenient national parks to visit. Staying overnight in the town of Wall gives you easy access to the park and Interstate 90—not to mention the opportunity to enjoy a five-cent cup of coffee and a meal at the one-of-a-kind Wall Drug.

To make the most of your time, you can even drive an RV of almost any size through the scenic road of the park on your way to or from your overnight spot. Keep in mind that most campgrounds are open only seasonally. If you're traveling in early spring or late fall, be sure to check campground availability in advance.

PUBLIC RV CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR BADLANDS NATIONAL PARK

Badlands Boondocking Area

fs.usda.gov/recarea/nebraska/recreation/camping-cabins/recarea/?recid=30329&actid=34

605-279-2126 • GPS: 43.8898, -102.227

Alternatively known as Wall Dispersed Area or Nomad View Dispersed Camping, this free dry camping spot in the Buffalo Gap National Grassland provides RVs of all sizes with the opportunity to camp on the edge of the badlands. This beloved boondocking spot became known to the general public through the movie *Nomadland*. Located 2.5 miles from the north Pinnacles entrance.

Steer Pasture Overlook Dispersed Camping

fs.usda.gov/recarea/nebraska/recreation/camping-cabins/recarea/?recid=30329&actid=34

605-279-2126 • GPS: 43.9123, -102.226

Steer Pasture Overlook is close to Badlands Boondocking Area and provides a similar experience of dry camping in a spectacular setting next to the badlands. Either camping area is a truly unique experience, suitable for big rigs, and a great opportunity to try boondocking. Located 3.5 miles from the north Pinnacles entrance.

Railroad Butte

fs.usda.gov/recarea/nebraska/recreation/camping-cabins/recarea/?recid=30329&actid=34

605-279-2126 • GPS: 43.9056, -102.8595

Another national grassland dispersed camping spot, Railroad Butte is farther from Badlands but closer to the Black Hills, for a central base to tour the area from a secluded camping spot surrounded by natural beauty. Under 60 miles from both the Pinnacles and Interior entrances.

PRIVATE RV CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR BADLANDS NATIONAL PARK

Badlands Interior Campground

(also known as Badlands Motel & Campground)

badlandsinteriorcampground.com

605-433-5353

Just one mile outside the national park's Interior entrance to the southeast, this RV park provides big rig friendly sites with full hookups and amenities including a restaurant, store, and swimming pool.

Badlands-White River KOA

koa.com/campgrounds/badlands

605-433-5337

Located in a shady oasis setting along the White River, the KOA Holiday provides full hookups, upgraded sites, and a swimming pool, playground, snack bar, large dog park, and mini golf. Located 5 miles from the Interior entrance station.

Sleepy Hollow Campground

sleepyhollowcampgroundsd.com

605-279-2100

Close to the freeway and in walking distance to Wall Drug, Sleepy Hollow provides big rig friendly full-hookup sites, basic amenities, plus a dog park and playground in a spacious, grassy setting. Located 8 miles from the north Pinnacles entrance station.



BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, TEXAS

NPS.gov/bibe



Introduction to Big Bend National Park

The park spans over 800,000 acres in the remote Far West of the state, with an entire mountain range, 118 miles of shared border with Mexico along the Rio Grande, dramatic canyons, deserts, and an incredible diversity of geology, plants, and animals. Big Bend is so massive it has five visitor centers.

For a park this vast and remote, not to mention with real dangers like flash floods and tarantulas, a visit to Big Bend can seem intimidating. However, with advance research and reservations, realistic planning, and physical capabilities, you can have an unforgettable trip.

Whether you're hiking up mountain trails, canoeing down the Rio Grande, backcountry camping, or enjoying a scenic drive from the comfort of your car, Big Bend's majestic landscape is available for everyone to appreciate and enjoy.

The closest cities to the Persimmon Gap Visitor Center are Midland, Texas, 195 miles away and El Paso, Texas, 288 miles away. While there are small stores inside the park and surrounding communities, the closest major shopping areas are over 100 miles away, in Alpine, Texas, along U.S. Route 90 or Fort Stockton on Interstate 10.

PANTHER JUNCTION VISITOR CENTER

310 ALSATE DRIVE,
BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, TX 79834
432-477-2251
(Main visitor center, open year-round)

PERSIMMON GAP VISITOR CENTER

MAIN PARK ROAD,
ALPINE, TX 79830
432-477-2251
(Open November through April)

CHISOS BASIN VISITOR CENTER

142 CHISOS BASIN ROAD,
BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, TX 79834
432-477-2251
(Open year-round)

RIO GRANDE VILLAGE VISITOR CENTER

450 RIO GRANDE ROAD,
BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, TX 79834
432-477-2271
(Open November through April)

CASTOLON VISITOR CENTER

600 ROSS MAXWELL SCENIC DRIVE,
BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, TX 79834
432-477-2666
(Open November through April)

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, TEXAS



TOP ATTRACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Hiking

Hikers not only have over 150 miles of trails to enjoy, but a choice of desert, mountain, or river hikes. Santa Elena Canyon Trail, in the southwest of the park along the Rio Grande, is an easy 1.4-mile round-trip hike in one of the most spectacular areas of the park.

Lost Mine Trail, in the Chisos Mountains, is a 4.8-mile moderate hike among diverse flora and fauna that affords panoramic views of Pine Canyon and the Sierra del Carmen in Mexico. If your time is limited, there's a stunning vista point 1 mile out.

One of the most iconic spots in Big Bend is the Window, a V-shaped canyon overlooking the desert and Mexico, providing gorgeous views, especially at sunset. Hike the full 5.6-mile moderate Window Trail, or follow the paved, wheelchair-accessible 0.3-mile Window View Trail.

Research hikes in advance on the national park website for the time of year you're traveling and where you're staying. When you arrive at the park, speak with a ranger for additional recommendations, safety tips, and current weather conditions.

2. River Trip

Seeing the park's canyons from the middle of the Rio Grande is an unforgettable experience. There are many options available, from a half-day float to a multiday excursion, bringing your own equipment or renting it, or booking a guided tour. Check the park's website for information and links to local outfitters.

Note that while a river trip inevitably entails crossing the water border between the U.S. and Mexico, a passport is not required. Landing on the banks of Mexico, however, is considered illegal.

3. Scenic Drive

A one-day scenic drive with stops at historic sites and overlooks is a great way to explore Big Bend in a limited amount of time. The 30-mile-long Ross Maxwell Scenic Drive leads to the Castolon Historic District and Santa Elena Canyon in the southwest. Highlights along the way include historic ranch sites, one of the best views in the park at Sotol Vista, and the Tuff Canyon overlook.

Note: Plan time for the return trip back along Ross Maxwell Scenic Drive to the north of the park, or driving the 14-mile-long gravel Maverick Road to the park's west entrance.



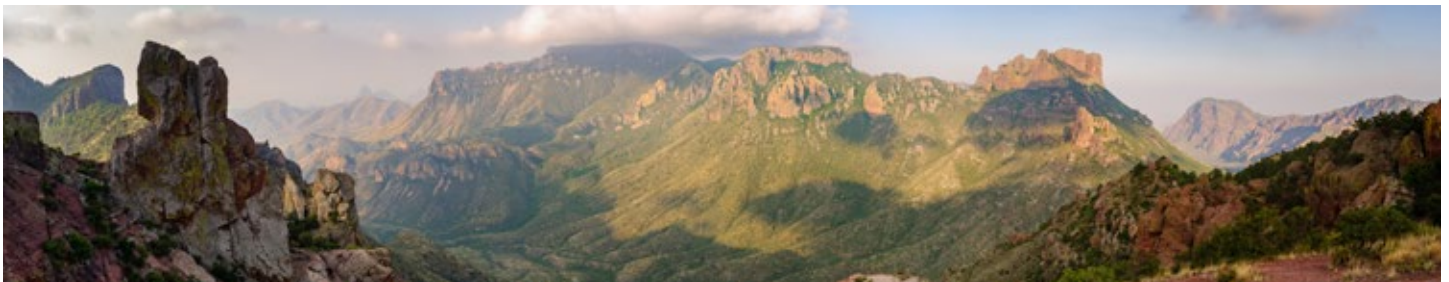
BEST TIMES TO VISIT

Big Bend is open year-round. The weather varies throughout the year and throughout the park with different ecological zones and elevation. Whatever time of year you visit, check the weather forecast frequently and be prepared with clothing layers and sun protection.

Summer brings extreme heat, but can be a good time to enjoy a boat trip (and cooling off) on the Rio Grande, or a hike at a higher elevation. Spring and fall are the best seasons for longer hikes in milder temperatures, although fall can be rainy and spring is the busiest season in the park.

Winters can be a great time to visit, with smaller crowds and seasonal visitor centers open. Temperatures hit below freezing at night—something to be aware of in an RV—but snow is rare and generally light.

Keep in mind that the park is busiest around holidays, especially spring break, and campgrounds can fill up.



BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, TEXAS



PET-FRIENDLY TIP

Pets are not allowed on trails and should be left behind while you hike Big Bend.

RVers with pets should book a site with electric hookups to keep them safe and comfortable inside, as the weather can be unpredictable.

The closest kennel service is in Alpine, about 72 miles from the park's north entrance.



INSIDER TIPS

Bring your passport for an opportunity to visit a Mexican village. Once you pass through a port of entry at Boquillas Canyon in the park, rowboats are available to ferry visitors the short distance across the Rio Grande.

On the Mexican shore, you can walk or ride (either by vehicle, burro, or horse) half a mile to the village of Boquillas. Bring cash (U.S. currency is accepted) for the rowboat, ground transportation, and lunch in town. See the national park website for more information.

Bring your bathing suit for a swim in the river and a soak in the hot springs. The biggest challenge in reaching the Hot Springs Historic District is the steep drive down a 2-mile gravel road. The hot spring itself—remnants of an elaborate bathhouse—is only 0.25 miles from the trailhead.

Families with young children, or anyone interested in dinosaurs and paleontology, won't want to miss the Fossil Discovery Exhibit. A new exhibit center features displays, picnic areas, and play structures highlighting plants, animals, and dramatic changes to the land in Big Bend over 130 million years of geological time.



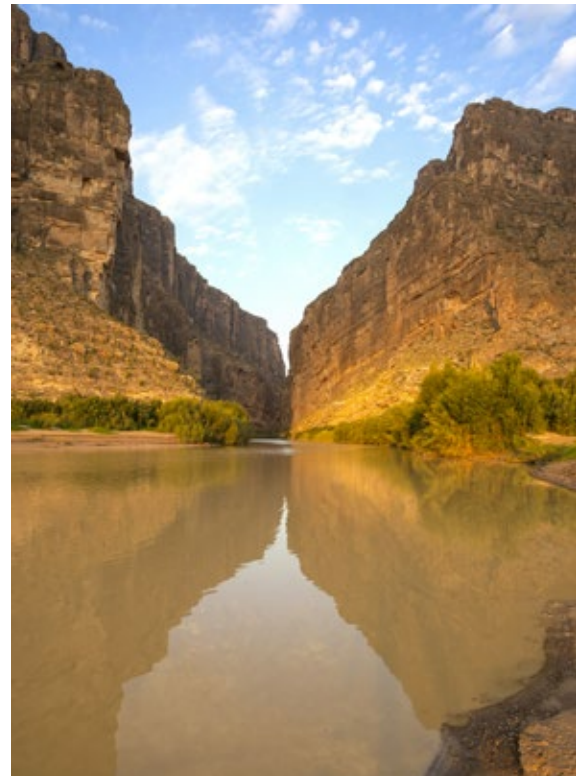
RV CAMPING IN BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK

For such a remote national park, there are a number of options for RVs of all sizes to stay in developed campgrounds, even with full hookups and paved sites available (on a limited basis.) Reservations are strongly recommended, and currently required. See information under each campground for details, and check the park's website for updates.

In addition to the four developed campgrounds that accommodate RVs, designated primitive campsites throughout the park are available for RVs under 30 feet, or trailers under 25.

Backcountry tent camping is also allowed. See the national park website for more information.

Because of the size of Big Bend, each campground is in a distinct area, and should be selected based on the time you have and your preferred activities in the park, as well as RV size. Check the weather for the specific region as well, because this can vary greatly.



BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, TEXAS



Big Bend National Park Campgrounds

RIO GRANDE VILLAGE RV CAMPGROUND / RV PARK

SEASONALITY: Open year-round.

RESERVATIONS: Call 432-477-2293. Reservations are required. This park is operated by a private concessionaire, not the National Park Service. Reservations cannot be made online, but for more information visit chisomountainslodge.com/rv-park-and-campground.

CAMPSITE SIZE: 25 RV sites with paved pads. Sites can fit RVs up to 40 feet, with most sites able to accommodate larger rigs.

HOOKUPS: Full hookups available.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Picnic tables at sites. Central facilities include toilets and showers and a camp store. Adjacent to Chisos Mountains Lodge, which has additional shopping and dining amenities.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is not available.

COST: \$35 per night.

MAXIMUM STAY: 14 nights.

PET POLICIES: Leashed pets are allowed.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The Rio Grande Village RV Campground is a separate facility from the adjacent and much larger Rio Grande Village Campground. It has a basic grid layout without much privacy between sites, and is the only option for full hookups in the park. Located in the park's southeast corner.

RIO GRANDE VILLAGE CAMPGROUND

SEASONALITY: Open year-round. Limited number of reservable sites available during off-peak season, April through October.

RESERVATIONS: Reservations required and can be made online at recreation.gov/camping/campgrounds/234035 or by calling 877-444-6777. There are 60 sites reservable online and 40 sites are normally available on a first-come, first-served basis.

CAMPSITE SIZE: Campground with 100 sites in a range of sizes for tents or RVs. At least 30 of the reservable sites can fit RVs up to 40 feet. Some can accommodate larger rigs, and are searchable on the reservations website.

HOOKUPS: No hookups available. Generators are allowed only at certain sites. See details under "Need to Know" campsite information on the reservation website.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Grills, bear boxes, and picnic tables at sites, some with shade shelters. Central facilities include toilets, showers, potable water, and a dump station. Showers, laundry, and a store are available at the adjacent Rio Grande Village.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is not available.

COST: \$16 per night.

MAXIMUM STAY: 14 nights.

PET POLICIES: Leashed pets are allowed.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Not to be confused with the privately operated Rio Grande Village RV Park next door, the Rio Grande Village Campground is the main national park campground. In a spacious natural setting with some shady trees, adjacent to the Rio Grande with direct access to trails. Located in the park's southeast corner.



BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, TEXAS

CHISOS BASIN CAMPGROUND

SEASONALITY: Open year-round.

RESERVATIONS: Reservations required and can be made online at [recreation.gov/camping/campgrounds/234038](https://www.recreation.gov/camping/campgrounds/234038) or by calling 877-444-6777. There are 40 sites reservable online and 20 sites are normally available on a first-come, first-served basis.

CAMPSITE SIZE: A total of 60 campsites for tents or RVs. Trailers over 19 feet or RVs over 24 feet are not recommended due to the narrow mountain road with hairpin turns that access the campground.

HOOKUPS: No hookups available. Note: Generators are only allowed at certain sites. See details under “Need to Know” campsite information on the reservation website.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Grills, bear boxes, and picnic tables at sites, some with shade shelters. Central facilities include toilets, showers, potable water, and a dump station. Additional amenities available at the nearby Chisos Basin Visitor Center and Chisos Mountains Lodge.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is not available at the campground. Service can be found at the nearby visitor center.

COST: \$16 per night.

MAXIMUM STAY: 14 nights.

PET POLICIES: Leashed pets are allowed.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: This sought-after campground is surrounded on all sides by tall, rocky cliffs and offers excellent views. It is conveniently located near some of the park’s most spectacular and popular trails. At the foot of the Chisos Mountains, near the north end of the park.

COTTONWOOD CAMPGROUND

SEASONALITY: Open November through April.

RESERVATIONS: Reservations required and can be made online at [recreation.gov/camping/campgrounds/234078](https://www.recreation.gov/camping/campgrounds/234078) or by calling 877-444-6777. There are 16 sites reservable online and 8 sites are normally available on a first-come, first-served basis.

CAMPSITE SIZE: A total of 24 campsites for tents or RVs. Most sites can fit RVs up to 30 feet. Search for campsites by RV length on the reservation website.

HOOKUPS: No hookups available. Generators are not allowed at this campground.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Grills, bear boxes, and picnic tables at sites. Central facilities include vault toilets and potable water. A general store and the Castolon Visitor Center are nearby.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is not available.

COST: \$16 per night.

MAXIMUM STAY: 14 nights.

PET POLICIES: Leashed pets are allowed.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: This small, remote, and rustic campground is not well known. It provides an oasis-like setting of shady cottonwood trees next to the Rio Grande, between the Castolon Historic District and scenic Santa Elena Canyon. Located in the southwest corner of the park.



BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, TEXAS

Featured Campgrounds Outside Big Bend National Park

If you're planning on spending a few days, the town of Terlingua, Texas is a good base outside the park's west entrance. Several campgrounds are clustered in the area, with shopping and restaurants available in town, in addition to outfitters for park tours. The equally spectacular Big Bend Ranch State Park is also nearby. Note that Terlingua is 83 miles south of the city of Alpine, Texas, and U.S. Route 90.

With more limited time, a campground closer to the north entrance is a good option. It's a longer drive to get into the park, but close to Route 90, with easy proximity to Interstate 10 and amenities in the larger city of Fort Stockton, Texas.

There's a wide range of campgrounds for this remote area, from public lands, state parks, mom-and-pop private campgrounds, and a ranch resort. It's best to make your reservations in advance, especially during spring break and other busy holiday periods. If connectivity is a priority, speak to the campground directly about cell service and WiFi speed, as they vary greatly throughout the area.



CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK WEST ENTRANCE

Road Runner Travelers RV Park

roadrunnertravelers.com

432-466-1036

A new RV park opened in December 2020, Road Runner offers spacious, big rig friendly full-hookup sites, outdoor games and community areas, high-speed internet, and friendly hosts. Check the website for new amenities as they're added. Located 4 miles from the park's west entrance.

Paisano Village and RV Park

paisanovillagervparkandinn.com

432-371-2057

Small RV park featuring big rig friendly sites with full hookups and patios and basic, well-maintained facilities. It's highly rated for its friendly and attentive staff, panoramic views, and proximity to the national park. Located 3 miles from the west entrance.

Maverick Ranch RV Park

lajitasgolfresort.com/default.aspx?pg=maverickranch

432-424-5181

Maverick Ranch is 20 miles from the national park's west entrance, and provides an unforgettable Far West Texas resort experience. RVers not only have spacious, full-hookup sites, but access to the resort's amenities including a pool, golf course, spa, and high-speed internet. A great option to spend a few nights in comfort in the area.

Upper Madera Campground, Big Bend Ranch State Park

tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/big-bend-ranch

432-358-4444

To truly immerse yourself in the Big Bend area, consider staying in the nearby state park of the same name. The park has a few primitive campgrounds available that can accommodate RVs. Upper Madera is recommended for its stunning setting and views, big rig friendly sites, and relative proximity to the national park. Located 32 miles from the west entrance.

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, TEXAS

CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK NORTH ENTRANCE

Stillwell Ranch Store and RV Park

stillwellstore.com

432-376-2244

Stillwell Ranch offers big rig friendly sites with full or partial hookups, standard facilities, and a general store in an expansive, quiet, and natural setting. Located 8 miles from Persimmon Gap Visitor Center at the park's north entrance.

Marathon Motel & RV Park

marathonmotel.com

432-386-4241

This ranch-style motel provides an RV park in a peaceful setting, with 19 full-hookup sites, restrooms, showers, and cell service. Located in the small, charming town of Marathon, Texas it's a convenient base 42 miles from Persimmon Gap Visitor Center and 60 miles from Fort Stockton and Interstate 10.



CRATER LAKE NATIONAL PARK, OREGON

NPS.gov/crla



Introduction to Crater Lake National Park

The deepest lake in the U.S. and one of the most pristine on earth, Crater Lake was formed more than 7,000 years ago by the eruption and collapse of Mount Mazama in the Cascade Mountain Range.

Simply viewing the lake, from every angle possible, is a big part of the Crater Lake experience. You can drive around the rim, take a trolley tour, stop at overlooks, walk the rim, and take a boat tour on the lake.

Miles of hiking trails will keep the active visitor engaged, with a variety of distances and difficulty levels to choose from. Trails run through forests, along rivers, across meadows of wildflowers, past waterfalls, to peaks with panoramic views.

There are a few small towns in the vicinity of Crater Lake. The nearest city is Medford, Oregon, 75 miles away. Crater Lake is 280 miles from the major city of Portland, Oregon, and 350 miles from Sacramento, California.

STEEL VISITOR CENTER

4 miles north of Oregon Route 62
RIM DRIVE, CRATER LAKE, OR 97604
541-594-3000
(Open year-round)

RIM VISITOR CENTER

7 miles north of Oregon Highway 62
RIM DRIVE, CRATER LAKE, OR 97604
541-594-3000
(Open May to September)

CRATER LAKE NATIONAL PARK, OREGON



TOP ATTRACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Scenic Rim Drive

While active visitors may consider scenic drives to be optional compared to spending time on the hiking trails, the scenic Rim Drive is a highlight of Crater Lake and is not to be missed.

The 33-mile road, built to complement the natural landscape, provides over 30 overlooks with varying vistas of the lake and surrounding forest, meadows, and mountains. Including stops, the drive takes a couple of hours, leaving plenty of time for hiking.

2. Hiking

Several hiking trails are accessible from Rim Drive. Cleetwood Cove, the only legal access to the shore of Crater Lake, is a strenuous and steep hike down and back up, for a total of 2.2 miles. (Visitors are also allowed to swim in the lake at Cleetwood Cove, although the lake temperature remains frigid year-round.)

A range of moderate and easy hikes are available through a variety of scenic landscapes: one leads along Wheeler Creek to view the volcanic spires of the Pinnacles; another treks through an old-growth forest to Plaikni Falls. For panoramic views in all directions, Watchman Peak is a moderate 2-mile hike.

For a taste of long-distance hiking, you can walk along a portion of the 2,650-mile Pacific Crest Trail that skirts around Crater Lake.

3. Boat Tour

There are several boat tours and shuttles to Wizard Island offered on a daily basis during the summer. However, since there is no road down to the lakeshore, participants must be capable of walking down and back up the Cleetwood Cove Trail. See the national park website for more information and details on purchasing tickets.



BEST TIMES TO VISIT

Crater Lake National Park is open year-round, with limited access in the winter, when an average snowfall of 42 feet stays accumulated for months. Though winter is a magical time to visit—for winter sport activities and to see the blue lake blanketed in white—only the most hardy and prepared RVers should visit this time of year.

The ideal months for warm, dry weather are July, August, and September. May, June, and October have smaller crowds but a higher chance of rain or snow.



PET-FRIENDLY TIP

Pets are welcome in Crater Lake National Park, with some restrictions. Pets are allowed on paved roads, parking lots, and the paved Rim Village promenade. In the summer and fall, pets are allowed on specific trails. Note that pets must be kept away from areas with significant snow, which can last well into the spring. See the park website for more details.

The nearest kennel services are in Klamath Falls, one hour away. If you want to camp with your pets, staying at Mazama Campground is a good option. You can easily visit the lake in a few hours while your pets stay behind in the comfort of your RV. Walk them leashed around the campground and on the nearby Pinnacles Trail.



CRATER LAKE NATIONAL PARK, OREGON



INSIDER TIPS

While there are north and south entrances to the park, the north entrance is closed for months out of the year due to snow. When it is open, a convenient way to visit Crater Lake is to drive in one entrance and out the other to continue on a longer north-south road trip.

No strict vehicle size restrictions are in place, but it's a good idea to research the route in advance to ensure you're comfortable driving your RV or trailer on the mountain roads. If your plan is to drive through, check the park's website in advance for information on where you can park and pull over.

The south side is the main area of the park, open year-round, with the big rig friendly Mazama Campground and village and direct access to Rim Village.

During the summer season, the Rim Trolley is a relaxing way to experience the scenic Rim Drive, with engaging driver commentary and the option to hop off and back on at select overlooks. See the park website for information on reservations and prices.

Don't miss out on a peek inside the historic and majestic Crater Lake Lodge. Even if you're not staying at the lodge, you can enjoy a drink in one of the rocking chairs on the expansive deck overlooking Crater Lake.

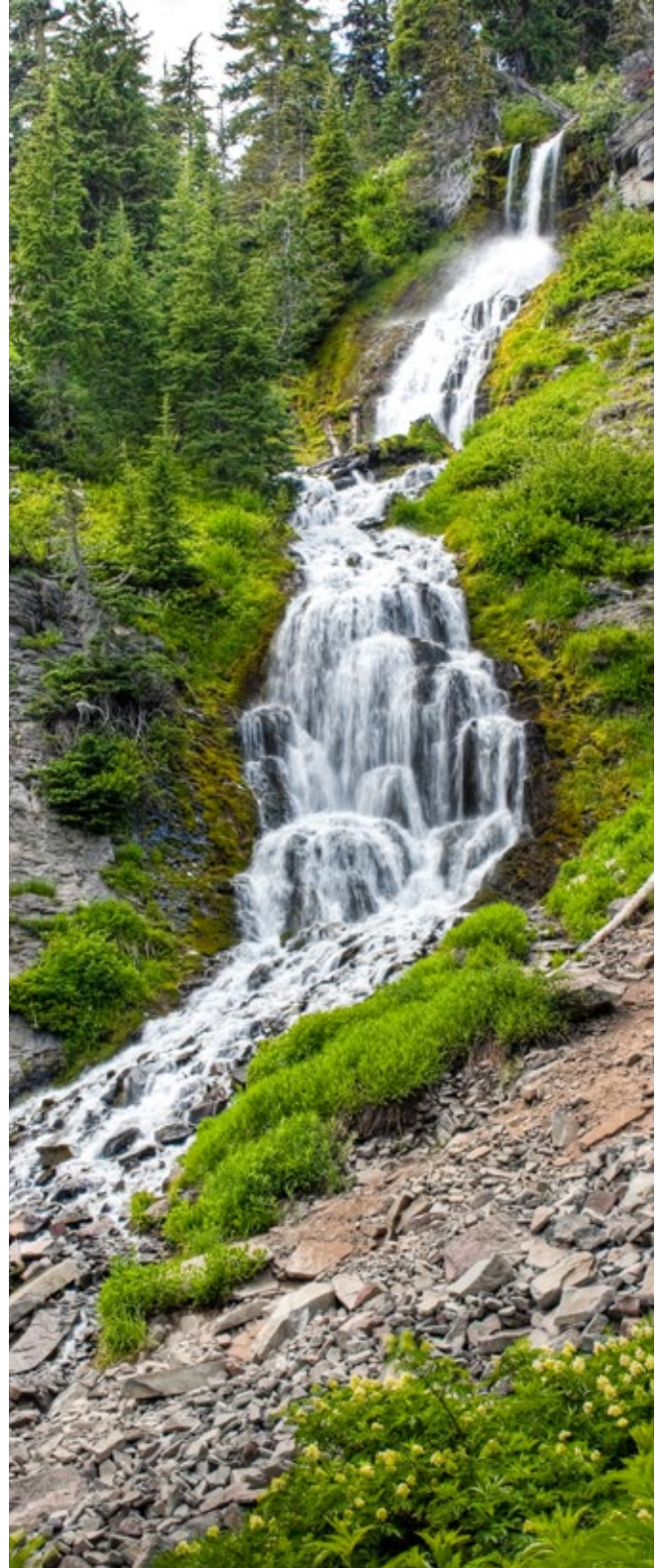


RV CAMPING IN CRATER LAKE NATIONAL PARK

Crater Lake offers two campgrounds. Lost Creek Campground is for tents only. The main campground, Mazama, has over 200 sites for tents or RVs and is located within Mazama Village, which includes a camp store, restaurant, and basic facilities. Mazama Campground is a convenient, big rig friendly base to tour the park, just a few miles from the rim.

With the exception of a few sites, there are no hookups. Cell service is weak to nonexistent, but WiFi is available near the camp store.

Backcountry camping is also available in Crater Lake. See the park website for details.



CRATER LAKE NATIONAL PARK, OREGON



Crater Lake National Park Campground

SEASONALITY: Open June through September.

RESERVATIONS: Visit travelcraterlake.com/lodging-camping/mazama-campground or call 888-774-2728. Reservations can be made for stays in July, August, and September. In June, all sites are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

CAMPSITE SIZE: 214 total sites, with 75 for RVs. Site sizes vary, with some accommodating motorhomes up to 50 feet and trailers up to 35 feet. Search by RV length on the reservation website.

HOOKUPS: A few sites have electric or full hookups, but most have no hookups.

Additional Campground Facilities: Fire rings, picnic tables, and bear boxes at sites, potable water, and a dump station. Additional facilities available in the village include a camp store, gas station, restaurant, showers, and laundry.

COST: \$31 to \$42 per night, depending on hookups.

MAXIMUM STAY: 14 days.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is weak to nonexistent. WiFi is available at the store.

PET POLICIES: Leashed pets are allowed.

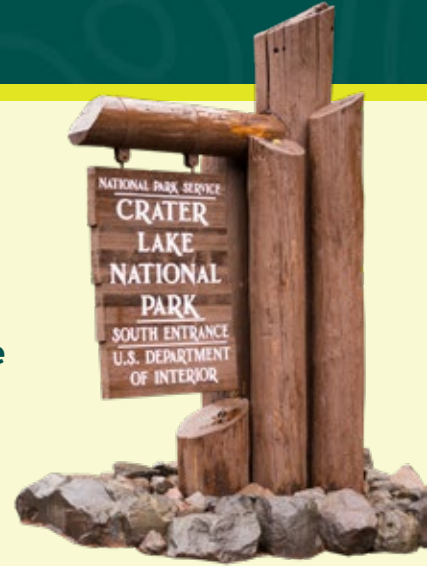
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The campground is operated by a park concessionaire, Crater Lake Hospitality. Mazama is a good base to tour Crater Lake, with easy access to Rim Village and hiking trails. Note that the store and facilities are a popular resting point for Pacific Crest Trail hikers.



CRATER LAKE NATIONAL PARK, OREGON

Featured Campgrounds Outside Crater Lake National Park

This national park is surrounded by national forests, so most of the options closest to Crater Lake are rustic public campgrounds. Private campgrounds with hookups and a range of amenities can be found within 20 to 50 miles of the park, most of which are closer to the main south entrance. The select campgrounds below are based on traveling during the peak season of July through September, when all park roads are accessible.



PUBLIC RV CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR CRATER LAKE NATIONAL PARK

Annie Creek Sno-Park

fs.usda.gov/recarea/fremont-winema/recarea/?recid=59833
541-883-6714

This national forest spot is a base for winter sports, and during the summer RVers can stay overnight for free. Dry camping accessible to rigs of all sizes is available in the main parking area, or in more secluded sites in the woods. Located 10 miles from the south entrance.

Thousand Springs Sno-Park

fs.usda.gov/recarea/rogue-siskiyou/recarea/?recid=69906
541-560-3400

Similar to Annie Creek, this winter sports staging area provides free overnight dry camping for RVers during the summer. An open parking lot surrounded by trees, with vault toilets available, Thousand Springs is easily accessible for RVs of all sizes. Located 10 miles from the south entrance.

Broken Arrow Campground

fs.usda.gov/recarea/umpqua/null/recarea/?recid=63460&actid=29
541-498-2531

Located on the north side of Crater Lake, near the shores of Diamond Lake, this developed national forest campground has over 100 sites. No hookups, but asphalt pads and basic central facilities including a dump station are available. The maximum RV length is 32 feet. Located 6 miles from the north entrance.

PRIVATE RV CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR CRATER LAKE NATIONAL PARK

Crater Lake RV Park

prospectrvpark.com/index.php
541-560-3399

An RV park modeled after national forest campgrounds yet designed with full hookups and space for big rigs, Crater Lake RV Park provides a comfortable base in a natural, woodsy setting next to the Rogue River. Amenities include restrooms, showers, communal fire pits, and walking trails. Located 29 miles from the south entrance.

Crater Lake Resort

craterlakeresort.com
541-381-2349

Crater Lake Resort provides full and partial hookup sites for RVs up to 40 feet, a general store, bathrooms, laundry, and an array of outdoor games and activities including canoes for the creek that runs through the campground. Located 18 miles from the south entrance.

Umpqua's Last Resort

umpquaslastresort.com
541-498-2500

At 40 miles from the north entrance, Umpqua's Last Resort is a bit farther than other campgrounds, but it offers a comfortable stay for RVs of all sizes with full hookups in a stunning remote setting. Great base to tour Crater Lake and other natural sites and recreation in the area.

EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK, FLORIDA

NPS.gov/ever



Introduction to Everglades National Park

Everglades National Park encompasses the southern tip of Florida, bordered by the Gulf Coast to the west and the Miami metro area to the east. As vast as the park is, at 1.5 million acres, it's only half the size of the entire Everglades ecosystem.

This national park preserves one of the planet's largest wetlands. Sometimes called a "river of grass," the Everglades is an intricate system of subtropical lakes, rivers, and wetlands, home to vast mangrove forests and rare and endangered animal species.

While there are hiking and biking trails and land-based tram tours in the park, most of it is accessible only by boat. Visitors can enjoy a wide range of experiences on the water, from guided boat tours to ranger-led canoe trips and kayaking through miles of waterways. Wildlife viewing is a highlight of any tour of the park, which is one of the only places on earth where alligators and crocodiles coexist.

Everglades National Park has three entrances from three different cities, making it convenient to visit on a Florida road trip or as a day trip from the Atlantic or Gulf Coasts (see details under the visitor center list below). Miami is less than 40 miles away. On the Gulf Coast side, Fort Myers, Florida, is 75 miles away; Orlando, Florida, is 250 miles away.

ERNEST F. COE VISITOR CENTER

40001 STATE ROAD 9336
HOMESTEAD, FL 33034
305-242-7700
(Main entrance)

SHARK VALLEY VISITOR CENTER

36000 SOUTHWEST EIGHTH STREET
MIAMI, FLORIDA 33194
305-221-8776

GULF COAST VISITOR CENTER

815 OYSTER BAR LANE
EVERGLADES CITY, FLORIDA 34139
239-695-3311
(Closest entrance to Naples, Florida)

FLAMINGO VISITOR CENTER

1 FLAMINGO LODGE HIGHWAY
HOMESTEAD, FLORIDA 33034
239-695-2945
(Southernmost visitor center in the park, no direct entrance)

EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK, FLORIDA



TOP ATTRACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Boat Tour

One of the most popular and unique activities in the park is the airboat tour, offered by three different concessionaires located along U.S. Route 41 between Miami and the Shark Valley Visitor Center.

From the Gulf Coast Visitor Center, the 90-minute Ten Thousand Island Cruise takes you to mangrove islands in the park. From Long Pine Key, you can enjoy a tour into Florida Bay, where you might see ospreys, sea turtles, dolphins, and much more.

See the park website for details on pricing, schedules, and reservations.

2. Kayaking and Canoeing

Launch your own boat or a park rental from several locations. Nine Mile Pond is easily accessible off the main park road near the Flamingo District and is appropriate for paddlers of all skill levels. In the Gulf Coast area, the Turner River Canoe Trail can take a full day to paddle, and includes the unforgettable experience of paddling through mangrove tunnels. Guided paddling tours are also available; see the park website for information.

3. Shark Valley

The Shark Valley area of the park is one of the most kid-friendly to visit, thanks to its engaging exhibits, bike rentals, trails, nature walks, ranger programs, and the Shark Valley tram tour, which has abundant wildlife viewing opportunities. See the park website for information on purchasing tram tickets in advance. Note that this is a popular day-tripper destination with limited parking. Plan to arrive on a weekday or before 10 a.m., especially during peak-season holidays.



BEST TIMES TO VISIT

Everglades National Park is open year-round and has two seasons: wet and dry. The best time to visit is during the dry season, which runs from December to May. Temperatures, humidity, and mosquitoes are all milder at this time of year; park facilities are operating at full capacity; and visitors have the best chance of seeing wildlife. Of course, this is also the busiest season for the Everglades, and South Florida in general, especially over holidays, so it's best to make plans in advance.

The summer wet season is the park's off-season, when facility operations are limited. While an off-season visit to other national parks can provide a comparable experience to their peak season but with smaller crowds, an off-season visit to Everglades is not recommended. In addition to sweltering heat and humidity, wet-season visitors must contend with swarms of mosquitoes and the threat of hurricanes.

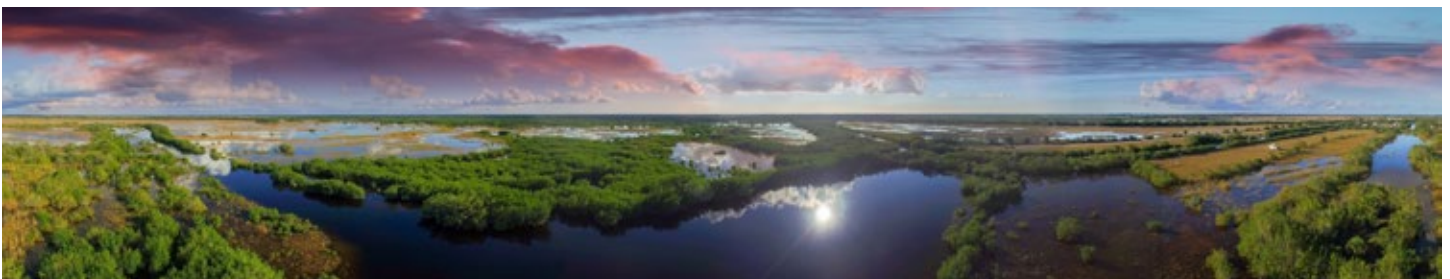


PET-FRIENDLY TIP

Leashed pets are allowed only on roadways open to public vehicles, in roadside campgrounds and picnic areas, on maintained grounds surrounding public facilities and residential areas, and on private boats.

Pets are not allowed on unpaved roads or trails, on boardwalk trails, or on the Shark Valley Tram trail.

Leave your pet behind in the comfort of your RV while you tour the park, or ask your RV park for information on local kennels.



EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK, FLORIDA



INSIDER TIPS

With its unique watery landscape, Everglades is a national park that's best seen by guided tour, especially for first-time visitors. For the park to offer a full schedule of different types of boat tours, from multiple departure points, it relies on authorized concessionaires to provide these services.

The price of a tour is separate from the park entrance fee, and they require a dedicated amount of time. To get the most out of your experience in Everglades, do some research on the park website for the best options to fit your group's interests, abilities, time, and budget, and purchase tickets in advance. If you're not sure what to book, don't hesitate to call a visitor center and speak with a ranger for personal advice.

Free ranger programs on a variety of topics are also offered. One completely unique ranger tour at Everglades is called "slough slogging." Visitors who aren't afraid to get their feet (and lower legs) wet are led off-trail through the water to observe the plants and wildlife up close, including—perhaps—an alligator or two. The tour is limited to 12 participants, age 12 and over. Call in advance or make reservations at the Ernest F. Coe Visitor Center for this free tour. Walking sticks are provided; bring an extra pair of pants and shoes.



RV CAMPING IN BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK

Everglades National Park provides two developed, frontcountry campgrounds, which are accessible to and can accommodate RVs of all sizes. Most sites have no hookups, although electric hookups are available at one campground and more are being added. Roads and sites are paved, and basic facilities are available.

RVers have their choice of two distinct settings and locations. Long Pine Key Campground is located near the Homestead entrance, in a shady setting with convenient access to the main visitor center and amenities in the city of Homestead, Florida. Flamingo Campground is more remote, with a stunning location right on Florida Bay and access to a lodge, marina, and additional amenities.

Both campgrounds are operated by a park concessionaire, not by the National Park Service directly. Reservations can be made online or by phone and are strongly recommended.

Everglades also offers wilderness campsites that are accessible by canoe, kayak, or motorboat; a limited number are available to hikers. See the park's website for more information.



EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK, FLORIDA



Everglades National Park Campgrounds

LONG PINE KEY CAMPGROUND

SEASONALITY: Open November through April.

RESERVATIONS: Visit flamingoeverglades.com/camping or call 855-708-2207.

CAMPSITE SIZE: 50 tent sites and 100 RV sites. Most RV sites can fit RVs up to 35 feet, and about half over 40 feet.

HOOKUPS: No hookups available.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES:

Restrooms, solar-heated showers, potable water, and a dump station.

COST: \$35 per night.

MAXIMUM STAY: 14 days.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is good.

PET POLICIES: Leashed pets are allowed in the campground, but not on trails.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Conveniently located just inside the park with cell phone service and access to amenities in Homestead, Long Pine provides spacious paved sites shaded by long pine trees, with direct access to hiking trails. Located 6 miles from the Ernest F. Coe Visitor Center.

FLAMINGO CAMPGROUND

SEASONALITY: Open year-round.

RESERVATIONS: Visit flamingoeverglades.com/camping or call 855-708-2207.

CAMPSITE SIZE: 120 RV sites, almost all of which can accommodate big rigs. Tent sites are in a separate area of the campground.

HOOKUPS: Sites are a mix of no hookups and electric hookups.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Picnic tables and grills at sites. Central facilities include restrooms, solar-heated showers, potable water, and a dump station. Additional amenities available at the nearby Flamingo lodge, restaurant, marina, and visitor center.

COST: \$35 per night, \$45 for electric hookups.

MAXIMUM STAY: 14 days.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is good.

PET POLICIES: Leashed pets are allowed in the campground, but not on trails.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Located at the southern end of the park, Flamingo Campground offers large, paved sites in a spectacular setting on Florida Bay, with direct access to trails and the water for boating. In walking distance to the Flamingo Visitor Center.

EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK, FLORIDA



Featured Campgrounds Outside Everglades National Park

Everglades has three entrances from three different cities spanning the southern end of Florida, so visiting RVers have a wide range of overnight options to choose from. The main factors to consider are how much time you have and your general route, whether you're coming from Miami, traveling the Atlantic Coast and the Florida Keys, or staying near the Gulf Coast.

Public campgrounds can be found in the adjacent Big Cypress National Preserve on the north side of the park. These are rustic, but economical, highly regarded, and in stunning natural surroundings. The closest private RV parks are located in the city of Homestead, the gateway to the national park and the Florida Keys. They provide a convenient place to stay for full hookups, access to amenities, and proximity to Miami and the Atlantic Coast.

RV CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR THE HOMESTEAD ENTRANCE

Southern Comfort RV Resort

socorv.com

305-248-6909

Big rig friendly, full-hookup sites and amenities including a pool, rec hall, restaurant, and tiki bar. Convenient stopover point between Miami and the Keys, 10 miles from the Ernest F. Coe Visitor Center.

Miami Everglades RV Resort

rvonthego.com/florida/miami-everglades-rv-resort

305-233-5300

A Thousand Trails resort with full hookups and a range of amenities including a pool, clubhouse, laundry, mini golf, and outdoor game courts. An ideal base to tour both the Everglades and Miami, 20 miles from the Ernest F. Coe Visitor Center.

RV CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR THE MIAMI ENTRANCE

Midway Campground

nps.gov/bicy/planyourvisit/midway-campground.htm

877-444-6777

Big Cypress National Preserve campground in a quiet natural setting, with paved, big rig friendly sites and electric hookups, central restrooms, potable water, and a dump station. Conveniently located on state Route 41, 16 miles from the Shark Valley Visitor Center. Reservations can be made at recreation.gov/camping/campgrounds/246892.

Mitchell Landing Campground

nps.gov/bicy/planyourvisit/mitchells-landing-campground.htm

877-444-6777

Primitive Big Cypress National Preserve campground, located in the forest on a gravel road off state Route 41 yet still suitable for all RVs. No hookups or potable water, only vault toilets. There are 11 first-come, first-served sites. Located 11 miles from the Shark Valley Visitor Center.

RV CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR THE EVERGLADES CITY ENTRANCE

Monument Lake Campground

nps.gov/bicy/planyourvisit/monument-lake-campground.htm

877-444-6777

This Big Cypress National Preserve campground is located in an open grassy area on a lake, with big rig friendly sites. No hookups, but restrooms and potable water are available. Conveniently located just off state Route 41, 12 miles from the Gulf Coast Visitor Center. Reservations can be made at recreation.gov/camping/campgrounds/246894.

Chokoloskee Island Park and Marina

chokoloskee.com

239-695-2414

For RVs up to 30 feet, this campground just over the bridge from Everglades City offers a unique Gulf Coast experience right on the water. Full hookups and amenities, plus a full-service marina, 3 miles from Gulf Coast Visitor Center.

LASSEN VOLCANIC NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA

NPS.gov/lavo



Introduction to Lassen Volcanic National Park

Tucked away in the Cascade mountain range in Northern California, Lassen is one of the least-visited national parks in the country and easily overlooked in a state with eight other national parks.

Lassen is a geological wonder. It's one of the few places on earth where all four types of volcanoes can be seen. The greater Lassen area has been volcanically active for about 3 million years, and every rock in the park originates from a volcano. Active features that can be viewed include hot springs, steaming fumaroles, and bubbling mud pots. In addition to volcanoes, the park offers an alpine landscape, with clear lakes and flower-filled meadows ringed by mountains, and a variety of hiking and boating opportunities in a stunning setting.

Lassen is located 240 miles north of San Francisco, California, 158 miles north of Sacramento, California, and 150 miles northwest of Reno, Nevada.

KOHM YAH-MAH-NEE VISITOR CENTER
(SOUTHWEST ENTRANCE)
21820 LASSEN NATIONAL PARK HIGHWAY,
MINERAL, CA 96063
530-595-4480
(Open year-round)

LOOMIS MUSEUM
(NORTHWEST ENTRANCE)
39477 LASSEN NATIONAL PARK HIGHWAY,
SHINGLETOWN, CA 96088
530-595-6140
(Open only in the summer)

LASSEN VOLCANIC NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA



TOP ATTRACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Hiking

Hiking is the best way to experience Lassen Volcanic National Park. With over 150 trails through a variety of landscapes and terrains, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

Bumpass Hell is the most popular trail, not only for its unique name, but for its access to the largest hydrothermal area in the park. The 3-mile round trip is a combination of dirt trail and boardwalks, and considered moderate. Note that this trail is open only in the summer and fall.

King's Creek is a flat loop trail through a pristine alpine meadow, and can be combined with the short but more challenging King's Creek Falls Trail. Manzanita Lake Loop is another accessible trail, great for bird-watching, sunsets, and views of Lassen Peak reflected in the lake.

Challenging day hikes include ascents of Lassen Peak and Cinder Cone Volcano. Speak with a ranger about current weather conditions and safety tips before heading out.

2. Scenic Drive

If time is limited, the best way to see most of the park is a scenic drive along the 30-mile Lassen Volcanic National Park Highway, from one entrance to the other. Stop at Sulphur Works to view bubbling mud pots and steaming vents right next to the road. Enjoy a picnic lunch at picturesque Lake Helen at the base of Lassen Peak. Take a short walk along the Devastated Area Interpretive Trail for a fascinating look at the results of Lassen Peak's eruptions.

3. Boating

Nonmotorized boating is allowed on four of the park's lakes: Manzanita, Butte, Juniper, and Summit. Manzanita is the most accessible and the only one with rentals available. While boating is a popular activity for local day trippers and campers, all visitors have the opportunity to rent a kayak for a paddle on Manzanita Lake with unparalleled views.



BEST TIMES TO VISIT

June through October is the best time to visit, when all facilities are open. Daytime temperatures average in the mid-80s in July and August, and 60 to 70 degrees in September and October. Even in the summer, evening temperatures drop to 40 degrees, so be sure to pack layers. Snow is rare but can still occur in early June or late October.

The park is open through the winter in a limited capacity, with most roads closed to cars but open to skiers and snowshoers.



PET-FRIENDLY TIP

Leashed pets are allowed in the campgrounds, on paved roads, and in parking lots. They are not allowed on any trails.

There are opportunities to hike with your leashed pet nearby in the surrounding Lassen National Forest, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) areas, and wilderness areas. See the national park website for more information.



INSIDER TIPS

The 30-mile-long Lassen Volcanic National Park Highway is the only route through the park. Figure out what you want to see, consult with a ranger, and plan your route accordingly to get the most out of your time and avoid backtracking.

Whether you're camping inside or near the park, fill up on gas before arriving. The only gas in the park is at Manzanita Lake Campground.

Options for food inside the park include the Manzanita Lake Camper Store with ready-to-go meals and sandwiches, or the casual sit-down Lassen Cafe & Gift located inside the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center.

If you're traveling through the park with kids, you can pick up junior ranger books or have them turned in for a junior ranger badge at both the visitor center and museum.

LASSEN VOLCANIC NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA



RV CAMPING IN LASSEN VOLCANIC NATIONAL PARK

Lassen has seven campgrounds throughout the park, of which three can accommodate RVs. Manzanita Lake is the largest and most developed campground, with over 150 sites and facilities including a camp store and kayak rentals. It's also a popular destination with day trippers for swimming and boating. Butte Lake and Summit Lake Campgrounds have more remote locations in the park and minimal facilities.

RVs up to 40 or 45 feet can be accommodated at Manzanita and Butte Lakes, but the number of sites is limited. Do not expect cell service inside the park.

Even though Lassen has smaller crowds than California's better-known national parks, it's still a popular regional camping destination. Campgrounds fill up quickly in the summer, particularly Manzanita Lake. It's best to make a reservation in advance, especially if you have a larger rig.



LASSEN VOLCANIC NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA



Lassen Volcanic National Park Campgrounds

ALL CAMPGROUNDS

SEASONALITY: Open May or June through September or October, depending on the weather.

RESERVATIONS: Visit [recreation.gov/camping/gateways/2803](https://www.recreation.gov/camping/gateways/2803) or call 877-444-6777. Reservations must be made at least 4 days in advance, and are open up to 6 months out. Reservations highly recommended for July through early September. A limited number of campsites are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

HOOKUPS: No hookups available.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Each campsite has a picnic table, fire ring, and bear box. Facilities include vault toilets, some flush toilets, and potable water. Note that water may be shut off due to weather in early summer or late fall.

CONNECTIVITY: There is no cell phone service in the park.

MAXIMUM STAY: 14 days.

PET POLICIES: Leashed pets are allowed, but can only be walked around the campground or on paved roads in the park.

MANZANITA LAKE CAMPGROUND

CAMPSITE SIZE: Manzanita Lake has over 170 sites for tents and RVs. Most sites are suitable for RVs up to 30 feet; about 20 sites can accommodate rigs up to 40 feet.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Manzanita Lake is the only campground with the additional facilities of a dump station, store, showers, and laundry.

COST: \$26 per night, \$15 during shoulder season.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The largest campground in Lassen, Manzanita Lake is a premier regional destination for swimming, fishing, nonmotorized boating, and hiking on the many connected trails.

BUTTE LAKE CAMPGROUND

CAMPSITE SIZE: 100 sites for both tents and RVs. Many can accommodate RVs up to 45 feet.

COST: \$22 per night, \$15 during shoulder season.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: One of the most remote campgrounds in the park, Butte Lake is a 45-minute drive from the Manzanita Lake Area. The last six miles of the drive are on a gravel road. The campground's scenic location on Butte Lake and access to the Cinder Cone and Bathtub Lake hike make it a favorite for returning visitors.

SUMMIT LAKE NORTH CAMPGROUND

CAMPSITE SIZE: Over 40 sites for tents or RVs. Most sites are suitable for RVs up to 25 feet, a few can accommodate larger rigs. Roads are tight and narrow in the campground.

COST: \$24 per night, \$15 during shoulder season.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Summit Lake North Campground is centrally located in Lassen, midway along the 30-mile park highway. With a swimming beach and hiking trails, it's a good base to tour the park. Summit Lake South Campground has more than 40 additional sites for tents only.



LASSEN VOLCANIC NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA

Featured Campgrounds Outside Lassen Volcanic National Park

If you can't get a reservation inside the park, or prefer to stay outside for connectivity and access to amenities, there are several private campgrounds near the park, providing a comfortable base in a natural setting for RVers. Additionally, rustic and dry camping opportunities can be found in the surrounding Lassen National Forest and BLM land.

In general, the area is densely forested and cell service can be spotty. If connectivity is a priority, ask the campground for details about cell service and WiFi access.

There are a few small towns with basic amenities in the surrounding area of the national park. Redding, California, is the nearest city, 50 miles to the west and centrally located along the north-south Interstate 5.

Keep in mind that the only route through the park is the 30-mile-long Lassen Volcanic Park Road, which is full of switchbacks on the southern end. If you're planning on spending time at Manzanita Lake, book a campground near the Northwest Entrance. Campgrounds outside the Southwest Entrance have convenient access to the main visitor center.



CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR THE NORTH- WEST ENTRANCE AND MANZANITA LAKE

Mount Lassen / Shingletown KOA Holiday

koa.com/campgrounds/mt-lassen

530-474-3133

The KOA has sprawling, forested grounds with playgrounds, a clubhouse, a dog park, nature and mountain biking trails, and kid-friendly activities. A variety of site types from basic to ones with amenities, like a patio, are available. Located 14 miles from the Loomis Museum.

Living Springs RV and Cabins Resort Campground

livingspringsresort.com

530-474-1776

Small and quiet family-run campground with private, full-hookup sites spread out among the trees and direct access to a lake, stream, and hiking trails. Located 17 miles from the Loomis Museum.

Hat Creek Campground, Lassen National Forest

fs.usda.gov/recarea/lassen/recarea/?recid=11425

530-335-7517

A National Forest campground with 72 first-come, first served dry camping sites plus basic amenities (vault toilets, potable water, dump station, fire rings) and access to trails. Big rig friendly and close to State Route 89, just 13 miles from the Loomis Museum.

CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR THE SOUTH- WEST ENTRANCE AND KOHM YAH-MAH- NEE VISITOR CENTER

Mill Creek Resort

millcreekresort.net/camping

530-595-4449

Mill Creek Resort offers a small RV park with full hookups, plus dry camping sites suitable for small trailers or vans. Campers can enjoy a rustic setting while taking advantage of the charming resort restaurant and store with locally made products. Located 12 miles from the Southwest Entrance.

LASSEN VOLCANIC NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA

The Village at Childs Meadow

thevillageatchildsmeadow.com/rv-camping

530-595-3383

This campground boasts panoramic vistas of Childs Meadow and Lassen Peak, with 22 big rig friendly full-hookup sites. Campers can enjoy dinner and drinks at the adjacent Village at Highlands Ranch resort. Located 10 miles from the Southwest Entrance Station.

Almanor, Lassen National Forest

fs.usda.gov/recarea/lassen/recarea/?recid=11257

530-258-2141

Dry camp near the shores of beautiful Lake Almanor at this well-maintained national forest campground with basic amenities, plus direct access to trails and the lake. Almanor North Campground is first-come, first-served and open year-round. Almanor South is open in the summer and can be reserved. Located 34 miles from the Southwest Entrance Station.



MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK, KENTUCKY

NPS.gov/macca



Introduction to Mammoth Cave National Park

The world's longest known cave system can be found at this national park in southern central Kentucky. In fact, this area of the state has privately managed caves and caverns to see in addition to Mammoth Cave National Park, earning it the nickname "Cave Country."

While cave tours are certainly the highlight of a visit to Mammoth Cave, the park itself has over 50,000 acres of lush forest with two major rivers running through them. Hiking, biking, canoeing, kayaking, and camping are all popular activities, ranging in level from kid-friendly, wheelchair-accessible trails to multiday backcountry excursions.

Mammoth Cave National Park is under 100 miles from two major cities: Louisville, Kentucky, and Nashville, Tennessee. The park is close to Interstate 65, a major north-south route, and is a popular regional vacation destination.

MAMMOTH CAVE VISITOR CENTER

1 MAMMOTH CAVE PARKWAY, MAMMOTH CAVE, KY 42259
270-758-2180

RESERVATIONS AT [RECREATION.GOV/CAMPING/GATEWAYS/2818](https://www.recreation.gov/camping/gateways/2818) • 877-444-6777

MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK, KENTUCKY



TOP ATTRACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Cave Tours

Purchased tickets are required for entry to Mammoth Cave. While timed reservations are not required, they are highly recommended as tours sell out frequently, especially during peak season. A wide range of tours are offered, from the half-hour Discover Tour to the 4-hour, 4-mile-long Grand Avenue Tour. Check the national park website for tour details and times, as the schedule changes throughout the year.

2. Hiking

Many visitors are so focused on touring the caves they miss out on the incredible recreational activities that are possible aboveground at Mammoth Cave National Park. Even with limited time, the area around the visitor center provides over 7 miles of trails, including accessible boardwalks, that feature views of sinkholes, cave-fed springs, Green River, and the historic cave entrance.

For a more challenging hike, the McCoy Hollow Trail traverses 6 miles of hollows, ridges, rock walls, and streams through the forest.

3. Boating

Mammoth Cave National Park spans more than 30 miles of the Green and Nolin Rivers. Local outfitters offer kayak or canoe rentals, plus guided tours. If you have your own watercraft, you can bring it to one of the three car-accessible river access points. See trip ideas on the national park website, and talk to a ranger for tips and current river conditions before you head out.



BEST TIMES TO VISIT

Mammoth Cave National Park is open year-round, with limited services and tours available from late October through late March. Winter is the best time to visit to avoid crowds in the park. The climate in Kentucky is moderate, although if you're RVing during the winter months you should be prepared for possible snow or ice. Spring and fall are busier, especially during school breaks, but still a good time for smaller crowds and mild temperatures, plus spring foliage or autumn colors.

While summer draws the biggest crowds and temperatures can reach a humid 85 degrees,

you can still have an enjoyable visit by reserving cave tour tickets in advance and visiting the park early or later in the day.

Keep in mind that the temperature underground remains a cool 54 degrees all year long, so bring a jacket for your tour no matter what time of year you visit.



PET-FRIENDLY TIP

Leashed pets are allowed on surface trails in the park. The Lodge at Mammoth Cave offers a self-service day boarding kennel for the convenience of visitors taking cave tours. For more information, see the national park website.



MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK, KENTUCKY



INSIDER TIPS

Cave tour tickets and reservations can be purchased up to six months in advance at recreation.gov/ticket/facility/234640. If you're traveling during the summer season it's best to book as far in advance as possible.

Give yourself time to research the best tour for your group, considering age and physical ability. The national park website has details about each tour, including any physical requirements, like climbing stairs or bending/stooping. Call the visitor center to speak with a ranger if you have any specific questions or concerns before booking your tour.

The Frozen Niagara Tour is a good option for families with small children or limited mobility. It goes through mainly larger caverns, has limited stairs, and shows examples of some of the best formations in the cave system in just over an hour.

The park is bisected by Green River, and can be crossed only by one of two ferries that shuttle cars, hikers, and bikers. During the busy season

there can be a long wait time to cross. Consult the park map in advance, and try to plan crossings earlier or later in the day.

Download the National Park Service app to access the Beneath Your Feet program. As you walk around the visitor center grounds, scan QR codes on the informational signs for additional videos and fun facts about the cave system below you.



RV CAMPING IN MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK

In addition to 13 backcountry campgrounds, the park offers three frontcountry campgrounds. Two of them, Mammoth Cave and Maple Springs, accommodate RVs, although Maple Springs is only for group camping or RVers traveling with horses. For individual RVers wanting to stay in the park, Mammoth Cave Campground is reservable in advance and in walking distance to the visitor center.



MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK, KENTUCKY



Mammoth Cave National Park Campground

SEASONALITY: Open March through November.

RESERVATIONS: Visit [recreation.gov/camping/campgrounds/232467](https://www.recreation.gov/camping/campgrounds/232467) or call 877-444-6777. Reservations can be made up to 6 months in advance.

CAMPSITE SIZE: Over 100 sites for tent camping; RVs allowed at about 70 sites. Maximum RV length is 38 feet, 26 for a trailer, although not all sites can accommodate this size. Search by RV length on the reservation website.

HOOKUPS: No hookups available, with the exception of two “VIP” sites with full hookups.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Picnic tables and fire rings at sites. Central facilities include restrooms, showers, potable water, a camp store, and a dump station.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is weak to nonexistent.

COST: \$25 per night, or \$50 for the two sites with full hookups.

MAXIMUM STAY: 14 days.

PET POLICIES: Leashed pets are allowed at the campground and on surface trails in the park. Day boarding is available at The Lodge at Mammoth Cave.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Mammoth Cave Campground provides a rustic camping experience in a woodsy setting, with direct access to hiking and biking trails, and within walking distance to the visitor center and cave tours.



MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK, KENTUCKY



Featured Campgrounds Outside Mammoth Cave National Park

If the park campground is full, or if you prefer the option of hookups, amenities, and cell service, there are several private campgrounds clustered around the national park. They have easy access to Interstate 65, for a convenient overnight or two to visit Mammoth Cave. Many campgrounds are highly rated and a good value, making this a good base on a longer road trip to stay for a few days and see the area.

CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK

Singing Hills RV Park and Campground

singinghillsvpark.com

270-773-3789

Singing Hills offers large, grassy sites with full hookups, friendly and attentive hosts, and amenities including free WiFi throughout the park, outdoor game courts, a campground store, and fishing poles for the property's catch-and-release pond. Located 7 miles from the Mammoth Cave Visitor Center.

Cave Country RV Campground

cavecountryrv.com

270-773-4678

Well-maintained, family-run campground offering big rig friendly pull-through sites with hookups. Flower beds and manicured lawns enhance the open camping area, and amenities include a store and a pool. Located 13 miles from the visitor center.

Diamond Caverns RV Resort & Golf

thousandtrails.com/kentucky/diamond-caverns-rv-golf-club

270-749-2891

This campground and 18-hole golf course share over 740 acres of forest and open land with hiking, walking, and biking trails. Campground amenities include full hookups, laundry, a pool, a playground, mini golf, and a recreation hall. Adjacent to the private Diamond Caverns attraction, 7 miles from the visitor center.

Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park Mammoth Cave

jellystonemammothcave.com

270-773-3840

If your family hasn't yet experienced a Jellystone Park Camp Resort, a visit to Mammoth Cave is the perfect opportunity. Packed with amenities and activities to keep everyone in the family engaged, this Jellystone includes a sandy beach with an inflatable playground. Located 8 miles from the visitor center.

Horse Cave KOA Holiday

koa.com/campgrounds/horse-cave

270-786-2819

Perched above I-65, Horse Cave KOA offers easy access to the highway without much traffic noise. The large campground has a mix of open and shady sites, with kid-friendly amenities like a pool, playground, and jumping pillow, plus neighboring horses and chickens. Located 15 miles from the visitor center.

Baileys Point Campground

recreation.gov/camping/campgrounds/233420

270-622-6959

An economical alternative to the RV park resorts in the area, Baileys Point is an Army Corps of Engineers campground with a stunning location surrounded by Barren River Lake. Campsites are big rig friendly, most with electric hookups and direct lake views. Located 31 miles from the visitor center.

MESA VERDE NATIONAL PARK, COLORADO

NPS.gov/meve



Introduction to Mesa Verde National Park

Home to thousands of archaeological sites, including 600 cliff dwellings, Mesa Verde National Park draws visitors from all over to the southwest corner of Colorado. Even if you're not familiar with the name Mesa Verde, you've most likely seen the iconic images of stone buildings nestled beneath overhanging cliffs.

Mesa Verde National Park preserves and interprets the archaeological heritage of the Ancestral Puebloans, who built the cliffside structures and lived here from 600 to 1300 BC. As the name indicates, the park centers on a mesa that rises 2,000 feet above the surrounding Montezuma Valley.

There is only one entrance to the park, and it can take an hour to drive up the narrow and winding 21-mile road that leads from the visitor center to the cliff dwellings at the mesa top. Advance planning is essential to getting the most out of your visit.

Mesa Verde is located between the towns of Mancos and Cortez in southwest Colorado, 35 miles west of Durango, Colorado. The nearest major city is Albuquerque, New Mexico, 246 miles away.

MESA VERDE VISITOR AND RESEARCH CENTER

35853 ROAD H.5, MANCOS, CO 81328
970-529-4465

RESERVATIONS AT [VISITMESAVERDE.COM/LODGING-CAMPING/MOREFIELD-CAMPGROUND](https://www.visitmesaverde.com/loping-camping/morefield-campground) • 800-449-2288

MESA VERDE NATIONAL PARK, COLORADO



TOP ATTRACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Cliff Dwellings

The magnificent cliff dwellings are the highlight of a visit to Mesa Verde. A limited number of dwellings can be visited by guided tour only, with advance-purchase tickets (see details below under Insider Tips). Even without a tour, viewing the various dwellings from different vantage points throughout the park is an unforgettable experience.

2. Self-Guided Driving Tour

Once you get to the mesa top, after the 21-mile drive, the main sites are in a relatively compact area. The 6-mile Mesa Top Loop Road features 12 archeological sites reached by short paved trails. Highlights include Square Tower House overlook and views of Cliff Place. Download an audio tour from the park's website.

3. Hiking

The park has three areas with designated hiking trails. Trails from Morefield Campground are easily accessible from the visitor center and provide stunning views of the surrounding area. Chapin Mesa, reached via the main park road before Mesa Top, has trails with views of petroglyphs and Spruce Tree House. Ask a ranger about the best options for your group, considering time, ability, and weather conditions.



BEST TIMES TO VISIT

May through October are the best times to visit, when the cliff dwellings are open for ranger-led tours. Note that in July and August, temperatures can be in the 90s and afternoon thunderstorms are common. Cliff dwelling tours are in high demand during peak summer season. Book your tickets for peak season in advance, and plan to visit in the morning before the summer heat and crowds arrive.

The park is open year-round, and the off-season can be a great time to tour it and view the cliff dwellings without crowds. It does snow in the winter, which can affect access. Be sure to check the weather in advance and then again closer to your visit.



PET-FRIENDLY TIP

Leashed pets are allowed on paved roads, in parking lots, and in the campground. The only trails that allow pets are in Wetherill Mesa and are marked as pet-friendly. Kennel service is available at Morefield Campground.



INSIDER TIPS

Mesa Verde has an engaging visitor center in a beautiful setting. Given the long drive to reach the cliff dwellings, it's ideal to stop by the visitor center after you check into your RV park. Spend time enjoying the exhibits and film presentation, pick up maps and junior ranger books, talk to a ranger, and be fully ready to see the mesa the next day.

Tickets for the cliff dwelling tours are available to purchase only online, at recreation.gov/ticket/facility/233362 up to 14 days in advance. Check the national park website before your visit for the most up-to-date policy. Tickets sell out quickly; purchase early in the 14-day advance window to ensure a spot.

During peak season, daily tours are offered at Cliff Palace and Long House. Seasonal backcountry hiking and tours are also offered at more remote dwellings. Check the national park website for details and updates.

Before purchasing tickets, carefully read the online information about physical requirements for the tours, including hiking and ladder climbing.

A visit to Mesa Verde is still very much worthwhile even without touring a cliff dwelling. Just seeing the dwellings in their remote location, perched under the mesa's edge, is an unforgettable experience. Without a tour you have time to see more of the park, including the often overlooked but fascinating Far View Sites Complex, an excavated village on the mesa top.



RV CAMPING IN MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK

There is one campground in the park, located near the entrance and visitor center. With 267 sites, there are generally always first-come, first-served sites available. Reservations can be made in advance, and are recommended for RVs over 40 feet (which have more limited options), or if you want to book one of the 15 sites with full hookups. All other sites have no hookups.

MESA VERDE NATIONAL PARK, COLORADO



Mesa Verde National Park Campground

MOREFIELD CAMPGROUND

SEASONALITY: Open May through September.

RESERVATIONS: Visit [visitmesaverde.com/lodging-camping/morefield-campground](https://www.visitmesaverde.com/lodging-camping/morefield-campground) or call 800-449-2288.

CAMPSITE SIZE: Sites can accommodate RVs up to 46 feet but are limited in number. Note that the roads in the park are narrow and tight. Be sure to make a reservation if your RV is over 40 feet, or to book a full-hookup site.

HOOKUPS: 15 sites with full hookups; the remainder have no hookups.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Picnic tables and fire rings at sites. Central facilities include bathrooms, showers, potable water, laundry, a dump station, and a camp store.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is not available.

COST: \$36 per night, \$50 for sites with full hookups.

MAXIMUM STAY: 14 days.

PET POLICIES: Leashed pets are allowed, but can only be walked around the campground or on paved roads in the park. Kennel service is available at the campground.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The campground is in a wide-open area, which means exposure to wind and not much privacy between sites. It offers beautiful views at the foot of the mesa and direct access to several hiking trails. Experience in a woody setting, with direct access to hiking and biking trails, and within walking distance to the visitor center and cave tours.



MESA VERDE NATIONAL PARK, COLORADO



Featured Campgrounds Outside Mesa Verde National Park

There are several good camping options outside Mesa Verde. If you only have time for an overnight, a location closest to the park is best since there's still an hour's drive to the mesa top and cliff dwellings. Note that cell service in the area is generally weak to nonexistent.

For a stay for a couple of nights or more, the city of Cortez is under 10 miles away. Cortez offers shopping and dining options, a charming downtown and cultural center, and cell service. If you have a few nights to stay, Cortez is a convenient base to visit additional attractions in the area, including Four Corners Monument and Canyon of the Ancients National Monument. The city offers nature preserves and parks for outdoor activities with kids or pets.

CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR MANCOS, COLORADO

Mesa Verde RV Resort

mesaverdervresort.com

970-533-7421

Ancient Cedars Mesa Verde

ancientcedarsmesaverde.com

970-565-3517

These two RV parks are located right outside the park entrance. Both parks offer full hookups, big rig friendly sites, and standard amenities. Mesa Verde RV Resort has a pool and reportedly better WiFi, but if you're looking for an overnight close to the national park, you can't go wrong with either choice.

Outback-RV

outback-rv.net

970-560-4754

This small new RV park offers spacious sites with full hookups and covered picnic tables in a large, gravel area surrounded by Bureau of Land Management land, hiking, and mountain biking trails. Good value for full hookups in a peaceful environment. Located 10 miles from the visitor center.

Echo Basin Cabins & RV Resort

echobasin.com/rv-park

970-533-7000

Highly regarded RV resort, with spacious sites under large trees, full hookups, lots of room for kids and dogs, a pool and other amenities, plus good cell service and WiFi. 13 miles from the visitor center, Echo Basin is a comfortable base to the east of the park.

CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR CORTEZ, COLORADO

Mesa Verde KOA Journey

koa.com/campgrounds/cortez

970-565-9301

With full- and partial-hookup sites, laundry, a camp store, a pool, a dog park, and proximity to Denny Lake, this well-maintained KOA has a great location just outside downtown Cortez and only 8 miles from the visitor center.

La Mesa RV Park

lamesarvpark.com

505-215-0712

A small, family-run campground in Cortez with friendly hosts, La Mesa offers full hookups, big rig friendly pull-through sites, laundry and showers, shady trees, and high-speed WiFi. Located 9 miles from the visitor center.

West View RV Resort

westviewrvresort.com

970-565-3388

Located outside Cortez yet still only 11 miles from the visitor center, this new RV resort provides spacious full-hookup sites and a range of amenities and activities, including a playground, putting green, dog park, pickleball courts, communal fire pits, and a nightly happy hour at the lodge.

OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK, WASHINGTON

NPS.gov/olym



Introduction to Olympic National Park

Olympic National Park encompasses nearly 1 million acres on the Olympic Peninsula, the northwest tip of Washington state. The park is essentially three parks in one: wild Pacific coast, old-growth temperate rain forest, and alpine meadows surrounded by glacier-capped, craggy mountains.

Olympic is vast, with no roads that cross the park. Advance planning is critical to get the most out of a visit, whether you have only one day or a whole week. While there is a lot of driving involved, it's possible to sample the major ecosystems within this World Heritage Site and International Biosphere Reserve in one day. With more time,

OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK, WASHINGTON

NPS.gov/olym

overnighting in two different areas of the park allows you a deeper appreciation of the beach, rain forest, and mountains.

The outdoor activities available in Olympic are as varied as its ecosystems—kayaking lakes, rivers, and open ocean; backcountry mountain camping; hiking through the rain forest; even skiing and snowshoeing. Wildlife viewing opportunities are equally diverse. Visitors to this one park can see colorful starfish in tide pools and whales along the coast; and black bears, Roosevelt elk, and mountain goats in the temperate forest and mountain peaks.

The national park is west of the greater Puget Sound area, including the cities of Seattle, Tacoma, and Olympia, Washington; and Victoria in British Columbia, Canada. Olympic has five entrances surrounding the park, plus entrances to coastal beaches. U.S. Highway 101 encircles the peninsula. The distance from the Seattle area to the main visitor center in Port Angeles on the north side is about 100 miles; it's 150 to 180 miles to the gateway town of Forks near the ocean and rain forest.



OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK VISITOR CENTER

3002 MOUNT ANGELES ROAD, PORT ANGELES, WA 98362
360-565-3130

HOH RAIN FOREST VISITOR CENTER

18113 UPPER HOH ROAD, FORKS, WA 98331
360-565-3000

HURRICANE RIDGE VISITOR CENTER

HURRICANE RIDGE ROAD (17 MILES SOUTH OF PORT ANGELES), PORT ANGELES, WA 98362
360-565-3130

KALALOCH RANGER STATION

156954 U.S. HIGHWAY 101, FORKS, WA 98331
360-962-2283

OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK, WASHINGTON



TOP ATTRACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Scenic Drives

A visit to Olympic should include at least a sample of the main ecosystems in the park, with a drive between the different areas. In one full day it's possible to experience the mountains, Pacific coast, and rain forest, with time for a short walk in each unique environment.

Start at the Olympic National Park Visitor Center in Port Angeles for an overview and to pick up maps; then you can drive from the forested lowlands up to the subalpine meadows and panoramic views of the Olympic mountain peaks at Hurricane Ridge.

A 3-hour drive back through Port Angeles and along Highway 101 will bring you to the Hoh Rain Forest, a dramatic contrast to Hurricane Ridge. Walk among lush trees, moss, and impossible shades of green, and maybe spot a Roosevelt elk in the forest.

From Hoh, drive to Rialto Beach or Second Beach to walk along the wild and rugged Pacific coast framed by dense, towering forest.

2. Hiking

No matter which part of the park you're in, accessible paths, short nature walks, and longer hiking trails are available for everyone to enjoy.

- Hurricane Hill at Hurricane Ridge is a moderate, 3.4-mile round trip trail that leads up a few switchbacks to the summit of Hurricane Hill, with spectacular views of the mountain peaks, meadows, ocean, and Vancouver Island in Canada.
- In the Hoh Rain Forest area, the Hall of Mosses Trail is just under 1 mile but provides some of the best, accessible views of towering fir, hemlock, and cedar trees draped in moss with a forest floor full of ferns, creating unbelievable shades of green.
- On the coast, Rialto Beach offers particularly dramatic scenery, with a wide rocky beach, tide pools, giant pieces of driftwood, and bleached remains of Sitka spruce trees. A 1.5-mile walk along the beach leads to the Hole in the Wall geological formation, although it's only accessible at low tide.

3. Boating

Whether you travel with your own kayak or choose to rent a canoe from a local outfitter, boating is a wonderful way to experience Olympic National Park from a unique vantage point.

Choose your environment: Lake Crescent, a big and deep blue lake surrounded by forest; Lake Ozette, for a secluded paddle with water lilies near the coast; or Lake Quinault in a rain forest valley, with views of mountains and old-growth forest.

Launching points are also available along the park's five rivers, with varying classes of rapids. See the park website for more details and safety tips.

Kayaking in the open Pacific Ocean should be attempted only by expert paddlers, or by booking a guide-led excursion.



OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK, WASHINGTON



BEST TIMES TO VISIT

June through September is the best time of year to visit, when the weather is mild and the park is operating at full capacity. This is also the busiest time, particularly July and August, so be sure to reserve accommodations and map out plans in advance to get the most out of a visit.

The park is open year-round, but some roads, campgrounds, and facilities are closed October through May, and snow can start to fall at the higher elevations as early as September. Because of the different ecosystems and elevations, weather can vary greatly throughout the park. Keep a close eye on the weather forecast for specific park areas, and see the park website for up-to-date information on operational hours.



PET-FRIENDLY TIP

Leashed pets are allowed in drive-in campgrounds and picnic areas, on paved and dirt roads, and on a select number of trails. Pets are also allowed in the surrounding Olympic National Forest. See the park website for more information.



INSIDER TIPS

While the most popular destinations include the highlights of the park and shouldn't be missed by first-time visitors, below are some hidden gems for additional days or a return visit.

The eastern side of the park is the least visited, even though it's the closest to the Puget Sound cities. The most developed area, yet still rustic, is Staircase in the southeast, with all-ages hikes along the Skokomish River Valley. The short Staircase Loop Trail rewards panoramic views of Cub Peak.

While not unknown, Quinault Rain Forest is a favorite of many returning visitors and locals after experiencing the more popular Hoh Rain Forest. The Rain Forest Trail from Quinault Lodge follows 13 miles of easy, well-maintained trails. More remote and challenging trails are available, like Colonel Bob Peak and the aptly named Enchanted Valley.

Shi Shi Beach is known for spectacular sunsets, but it's also remote and not easy to get to. Ruby Beach is a more accessible coastal spot in the park that can have equally stunning sunsets over the Pacific.



RV CAMPING IN OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK

Olympic National Park offers 15 developed campgrounds, in addition to wilderness campgrounds. Ten can accommodate RVs, however, most sites are for small RVs up to 21 feet. Some campgrounds can accommodate RVs up to 35 feet; see information on the next page.

Park campgrounds are rustic, with no hookups or showers and only basic facilities like toilets.

Sites with partial hookups are available at the concessionaire-operated Sol Duc Hot Springs Resort RV Park and Log Cabin Resort RV & Campground. These two campgrounds have some additional facilities and accept reservations.

All park-operated campgrounds are first-come, first-served, with the exception of Kalaloch and Mora, which accept reservations for the summer. Note that the reservation process is different for the park-operated and concessionaire campgrounds; see information below.

For RVers with smaller rigs, Olympic National Park provides an unforgettable opportunity to camp in the rain forest or on the Pacific coast, surrounded by the natural beauty and wildlife in the park. Keep in mind that despite its remote feeling, Olympic is a popular destination that sees around 3 million visitors a year. First-come, first-served campsites can go fast, especially on summer weekends and holidays. If you're traveling with an RV over 21 feet, it's best to secure a reservation well in advance.



OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK, WASHINGTON



Olympic National Park Campgrounds

Reservable Campgrounds

KALALOCH CAMPGROUND

SEASONALITY: Open year-round.

RESERVATIONS: Visit [recreation.gov/camping/gateways/2881](https://www.recreation.gov/camping/gateways/2881) or call 877-444-6777. All sites reservable during peak season, first-come, first-served the rest of the year.

CAMPSITE SIZE: 170 sites that can accommodate RVs up to 21 feet. A few sites can fit rigs up to 35 feet long.

HOOKUPS: No hookups available.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Picnic tables and fire pits at sites. Central facilities include flush toilets, potable water, and a dump station.

COST: \$24 per night.

MAXIMUM STAY: 14 days.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is weak to good.

PET POLICIES: Leashed pets are allowed in the campground and on the beach.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Popular national park campground with sites that are a mix of oceanfront and forested, all within walking distance to the expansive open beach. Reservations recommended.

MORA CAMPGROUND

SEASONALITY: Open year-round.

RESERVATIONS: Visit [recreation.gov/camping/gateways/2881](https://www.recreation.gov/camping/gateways/2881) or call 877-444-6777. All sites reservable during peak season, first-come, first-served the rest of the year.

CAMPSITE SIZE: 94 sites that can accommodate RVs up to 21 feet. A few sites can fit rigs up to 35 feet long.

HOOKUPS: No hookups available.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Picnic tables and fire pits at sites. Central facilities include flush toilets, potable water, and a dump station.

COST: \$24 per night.

MAXIMUM STAY: 14 days.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is good.

PET POLICIES: Leashed pets are allowed in the campground and on the beach.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: With sites tucked into the surrounding mossy forest, Mora Campground is a magical setting 2 miles from Rialto Beach. Reservations recommended.

SOL DUC CAMPGROUND

SEASONALITY: Open seasonally, generally mid-April through October.

RESERVATIONS: Visit [recreation.gov/camping/gateways/2881](https://www.recreation.gov/camping/gateways/2881) or call 877-444-6777. Sites are reservable year-round.

CAMPSITE SIZE: 82 campground sites that can accommodate tents or RVs up to 21 feet. 17 RV park sites can fit RVs from 26 to 36 feet maximum.

HOOKUPS: No hookups available in the campground, partial hookups in the RV park.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Picnic tables and fire pits at sites. Central facilities include flush toilets, potable water, and a dump station.

COST: \$25 per night in the campground, \$51 per night for the RV park.

MAXIMUM STAY: 14 days.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is weak.

PET POLICIES: Leashed pets are allowed in the campground.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The park entrance to the Sol Duc area is off U.S. Highway 101, less than 30 miles from both Forks and Port Angeles. Sol Duc Campground is operated by a concessionaire, adjacent to the historic Sol Duc Hot Springs Resort. Note that admission to the hot springs pools is not included in the RV overnight rate.

OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK, WASHINGTON

LOG CABIN RESORT RV & CAMPGROUND

SEASONALITY: Open May through September.

RESERVATIONS: Call 888-896-3818.

CAMPSITE SIZE: 38 sites total, with RV sites that can accommodate RVs up to 35 feet.

HOOKUPS: Full hookups available at RV sites.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Picnic tables and fire pits at sites. Central facilities include flush toilets and potable water, laundry, showers, a general store, a restaurant, a deli, and boat rentals.

COST: \$25 to \$44 per night, depending on site type.

MAXIMUM STAY: 14 days.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is weak.

PET POLICIES: Leashed pets are allowed in the campground.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Operated and reserved through a concessionaire, Log Cabin Resort provides full hookups and amenities in a picturesque setting on Lake Crescent. Campsites in the main loop are tight together—request a lakeside back-in if possible.

Non-reservable Campgrounds

ALL CAMPGROUNDS

SEASONALITY: Open year-round.

RESERVATIONS: First-come, first-served only.

HOOKUPS: No hookups available.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Picnic tables and fire pits at sites. Central facilities include flush toilets and potable water.

COST: \$20 to \$24 per night.

MAXIMUM STAY: 14 days.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is unreliable.

PET POLICIES: Leashed pets are allowed in the campground.

HOH CAMPGROUND

CAMPSITE SIZE: 78 sites total that can accommodate RVs up to 21 feet. A few sites can accommodate up to 35 feet.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Located in the heart of the Hoh Rain Forest, near the Hoh Visitor Center and with direct access to trails.

HEART O' THE HILLS CAMPGROUND

CAMPSITE SIZE: 105 sites total that can accommodate RVs up to 21 feet. A few sites can accommodate up to 35 feet.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Located along Hurricane Ridge Road, in an old-growth forest between Port Angeles and Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center. Note that during heavy snowfall, sites are walk-in only.

STAIRCASE CAMPGROUND

CAMPSITE SIZE: 49 sites total that can accommodate RVs up to 21 feet. A few sites can accommodate up to 35 feet.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Located in the less-visited Staircase area in the park's southeast, in an old-growth forest along the Skokomish River. Note that water in the campground is shut off during the winter.

OZETTE CAMPGROUND

CAMPSITE SIZE: 15 sites total that can accommodate RVs up to 21 feet.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Small campground on Lake Ozette, in hiking distance to the Pacific beach. Note the location outside of the main park area, on the northwest coast.

SOUTH BEACH CAMPGROUND

CAMPSITE SIZE: 55 sites total that can accommodate RVs up to 21 feet. A few sites can accommodate up to 35 feet.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Located on a bluff overlooking the Pacific with beach access, in the park's Kalaloch coastal area. Open only during the summer season, no potable water available.

FAIRHOLME CAMPGROUND

CAMPSITE SIZE: 88 sites total that can accommodate RVs up to 21 feet.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Located on Lake Crescent, near the Sol Duc area of the park. Open only during the summer season. Dump station and general store available.

OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK, WASHINGTON



Featured Campgrounds Outside Olympic National Park

Campgrounds literally surround Olympic National Park. While this gives RVers a lot of options, choosing where to stay and for how long can also feel overwhelming. For first-time visitors, the gateway towns of Port Angeles to the north and Forks to the west are the best bases to tour the park's must-see destinations. Ideally, you'll want to spend a night or two in each area: Forks for the rain forest and coast, Port Angeles for the mountains. Keep in mind that it's a 56-mile drive between the two towns along U.S. Highway 101, with no direct access through the park.

Campers will find a mix of public and private campgrounds. Most are on the rustic, no-frills end of the RV park experience, although you'll find hookups, basic amenities, and some spectacular waterfront and forested settings with convenient access to Olympic National Park.

RV CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR FORKS, WASHINGTON

Bogachiel State Park

parks.state.wa.us/478/Bogachiel

360-374-6356

This state park is located in its own rain forest setting, with 26 sites that can accommodate RVs up to 40 feet, restrooms, showers, and a dump station. Sites are dry except for a few with partial hookups. Reservations can be made on the state park website. Located 25 miles from the Hoh Rain Forest Visitor Center, 20 to 30 miles from the national park beaches.

Quileute Oceanside Resort

quileuteoceanside.com

800-487-1267

Over 60 full-hookup, big rig friendly sites are available at this beachside resort owned and operated by the Quileute Tribe. Facilities include restrooms, showers, laundry, and a dump station. Enjoy miles of sandy beach on the rugged Pacific coast, adjacent to the national park's Rialto Beach and 46 miles from the Hoh Rain Forest Visitor Center.

Riverview RV Park

forksriverviewrv.com

360-640-4819

Small, well-maintained RV park with friendly service and full-hookup sites that can accommodate RVs up to 45 feet. Central facilities include restrooms, showers, and laundry. Located between the town of Forks and the coast. Located 5 miles from Rialto Beach, 40 miles from the Hoh Rain Forest Visitor Center.

RV CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR PORT ANGELES, WASHINGTON

Salt Creek Recreation Area

clallam.net/Parks/SaltCreek.html

360-928-3441

Dungeness Recreation Area

clallam.net/Parks/Dungeness.html

360-928-3441

Two large, waterfront, Clallam County park campgrounds in the Port Angeles area, with reservable sites during the summer season. Salt Creek has some sites with partial hookups; all sites at Dungeness are dry camping. Both have restrooms, showers, and a dump station. Both parks are within 15 miles of the Olympic National Park Visitor Center in Port Angeles, under 35 miles from Hurricane Ridge.

Olympic Peninsula / Port Angeles KOA Journey

koa.com/campgrounds/port-angeles

360-457-5916

Enjoy full hookups and amenities, including laundry, a pool, store, playground, dog park, lawn games, and community activities at this KOA just outside downtown Port Angeles. Located 7 miles from the Olympic National Park Visitor Center, 25 miles from Hurricane Ridge.

Gilgal Oasis RV Park

gilgaloasisrvpark.com

360-452-1324

Located in the charming downtown of Sequim, adjacent to Port Angeles, Gilgal Oasis RV Park provides large paved sites with full hookups, amenities including laundry, a lounge, community fire pit, and dog park. Small park, beautifully manicured grounds, and friendly, personal service. Located 20 miles from the Olympic National Park Visitor Center, 35 miles from Hurricane Ridge.

REDWOOD NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA

NPS.gov/redw



Introduction to Redwood National Park

Redwood National Park, located in northernmost coastal California, is famous for being home to the tallest trees on Earth. And while the purpose of a visit to Redwood is certainly to walk among these giants of nature, there is much more to see and do here. In addition to forests of coast redwood, the national park protects oak woodlands, wild riverways, vast prairies, and almost 40 miles of rugged Pacific coastline.

In fact, Redwood consists of four adjacent parks: the national park that was established in 1968, and three older state parks. Since 1994, Redwood has been jointly managed by the National Park Service and California State Parks; together they're known as Redwood National and State Parks.

This can be a little confusing to first-time visitors, however the joint management means that there are multiple visitor centers and access points providing flexible options to visit. It's possible to stop at one of the visitor centers and experience a redwood grove in just an hour. Many visitors choose to drive the length of the park, from north to south or vice versa, as part of a longer California coast road trip. Alternatively, a visit concentrated in the north or south ends of the park allows for more time to hike and enjoy.

The park is about 50 miles long, stretching from Crescent City, California, near the Oregon border, south to the town of Orick, California. Keep in mind that Redwood is Crescent City; McKinleyville, California; or Medford, Oregon.

HIOUCHI VISITOR CENTER

1600 U.S. HIGHWAY 199,
CRESCENT CITY, CA 95531
707-465-7334

CRESCENT CITY INFORMATION CENTER

1111 SECOND STREET,
CRESCENT CITY, CA 95531
707-465-7306

THOMAS H. KUCHEL VISITOR CENTER

U.S. HIGHWAY 101 AND REDWOOD
HIGHWAY, ORICK, CA 95555
707-465-7334

JEDEDIAH SMITH VISITOR CENTER

1460 U.S. HIGHWAY 199,
CRESCENT CITY, CA 95531
707-458-3496

PRAIRIE CREEK VISITOR CENTER

NEWTON B. DRURY SCENIC PARKWAY
(LOCATED OFF U.S. HIGHWAY 101)
ORICK, CA 95555
707-465-7334

REDWOOD NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA



TOP ATTRACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Forest Walks and Hikes

Redwood offers the opportunity for a short walk or longer hike along dozens of trails and hundreds of miles. The good news is, there is no “best” trail that’s a must for all visitors. Any trail that lets you experience old-growth redwood trees in the time available is going to be the best for you.

Popular trails from north to south are Simpson-Reed Trail, Big Tree Wayside, Prairie Creek / Foothills Trail, Trillium Falls, and Lady Bird Johnson Grove. These provide a great mix of lush forest, some of the largest trees, waterfalls, and creeks.

Longer trails that can be traveled for a couple of hours or a full day include the James Irvine Trail to Fern Canyon in the south, and Stout Memorial Grove in the north.

2. Scenic Drives

As the parks generally run along the north-south U.S. Highway 101 and there are no formal entrance stations, it’s possible to drive through the parks without even realizing it. Be sure to take exits for scenic drives and visitor centers to fully experience Redwood.

At the southern end, the 10-mile-long Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway meanders through thousands of acres of old-growth redwood forest. Stop at the Prairie Creek Visitor Center and use the pull-outs to get out of your car and take a longer look. This road is accessible to vehicles of all sizes.

On the north end, the unpaved Howland Hill Road provides motorists an unforgettable, close-up drive through the towering trees. Located in Jedediah Smith State Park, several pull-outs and trailheads are available along the 10-mile road.

The Coastal Loop Drive, a narrow and steep 9-mile round trip, offers breathtaking views of the rugged Pacific Coast.

3. Kayaking

The various rivers, lagoons, coves, and the open ocean beaches of Redwood provide unparalleled opportunities for kayakers at all ability levels. Ranger-led kayak tours are offered along the Smith River, the largest free-flowing river system in California. See the park website for information on ranger tours, and local outfitters providing rentals and private tours.



BEST TIMES TO VISIT

Redwood National Park is open and can be visited year-round. Fall may be the ideal season, for the best chance of a warm, sunny day with smaller crowds. Spring brings the end of winter rains and the start of wildflower blooms. Summer is the busiest time, but visitors can be surprised by the prevalence of cool coastal fog. Winter in Redwood is generally cold and wet, but if you dress appropriately it can be the best time to visit with no crowds.

The climate is mild year-round—you won’t experience extreme heat or cold. However, you should also be prepared for rain at any time of the year.

Redwoods is a popular California destination, and most visitors spend at least a night or more. Book as far in advance as possible, especially for weekends and holidays.



PET-FRIENDLY TIP

Pets are not allowed on any park trails. They are allowed in parking areas, developed campgrounds, gravel roads, scenic viewpoints, and beaches. There are public beaches and forests in the area that allow leashed and controlled unleashed pets. See the park’s website for more details.



REDWOOD NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA



INSIDER TIPS

Ranger-led programs are a great way to learn about any park. At Redwood, take advantage of the five different visitor centers to find a program that's a great fit for your interests, timing, and location. Daily schedules are posted on the park's website, at visitor centers, and in campgrounds.

In addition to nature walks and junior ranger programs, unique opportunities at Redwood include ranger-led kayak tours and tide pool walks.

One of the most scenic and popular destinations in the park is Fern Canyon, a mini-canyon with 30-foot walls covered in ferns and dripping water. The mile-long Fern Canyon Loop Trail leads up from Gold Bluffs Beach following a creek through the canyon. Visit early in the day before the parking area fills up, and wear a pair of sturdy, waterproof shoes.



RV CAMPING IN REDWOOD NATIONAL PARK

Camping among the giant redwoods, along the wild Smith River, and overlooking the rugged Pacific Coast are bucket-list items for many RVers, and they can all be achieved at Redwood National and State Parks. In addition to out-of-state travelers, many locals return year after year to a beloved campground in Redwood. Needless to say, the park campgrounds are highly coveted and require advance planning to get a spot. Reservations are essential during peak season.

The four developed campgrounds in Redwood are managed by and bookable through California State Parks. These are older, rustic campgrounds with no hookups and suitable only for RVs well under 30 feet. While the price may be higher than a typical national park campground, most campers find the unparalleled locations to be well worth it.

For backcountry campers, Redwood has over 200 miles of trails and seven designated backcountry campsites available. See the park website for details.



REDWOOD NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA



Redwood National Park Campgrounds

ALL CAMPGROUNDS

SEASONALITY: Open year-round.

RESERVATIONS: Visit reservecalifornia.com/ CaliforniaWebHome or call 800-444-7275. Reservations are available from 2 days to 6 months in advance for May 1 to October 1. Sites are first-come, first-served the rest of the year.

HOOKUPS: No hookups available.

COST: \$35 per night, plus \$7.99 reservation fee.

MAXIMUM STAY: 7 to 14 nights.

PET POLICIES: Leashed pets are allowed in the campground, but not on trails.

JEDEDIAH SMITH CAMPGROUND

CAMPSITE SIZE: 86 sites for tents or RVs. Maximum length allowed is a 25-foot RV or 21-foot trailer. Not all sites can accommodate this size. Search and book sites based on RV length on the reservation website.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Picnic tables, fire pits, and grills at sites. Central facilities include toilets, hot showers, a dump station, and a visitor center.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is weak.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Jedediah Smith Campground is highly coveted for its ideal setting among old-growth redwoods and along the Smith River, with swimming and boating access.

MILL CREEK CAMPGROUND

CAMPSITE SIZE: 145 sites for tents or RVs. Maximum length allowed is a 28-foot RV or 24-foot trailer. Not all sites can accommodate this size. Search and book sites based on RV length on the reservation website.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Picnic tables, fire pits, and grills at sites. Central facilities include toilets, hot showers, and a dump station.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is not available.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Mill Creek is a secluded campground among young coast redwoods and towering maple trees, with access to Mill Creek and several hiking trails.

ELK PRAIRIE CAMPGROUND

CAMPSITE SIZE: 75 sites for tents or RVs. Maximum length allowed is a 27-foot RV or 24-foot trailer. Not all sites can accommodate this size. Search and book sites based on RV length on the reservations website.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Picnic tables, fire pits, and grills at sites. Central facilities include toilets and a visitor center.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is not available.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Elk Prairie provides a mix of coastal redwood forest and open prairie, with grazing Roosevelt elk and black-tailed deer, plus access to over 70 miles of hiking and biking trails.

GOLD BLUFFS BEACH CAMPGROUND

CAMPSITE SIZE: 26 sites for tents or RVs. Maximum length allowed is a 24-foot RV. Trailers are not allowed.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Picnic tables, fire pits, and grills at sites. Central facilities include toilets and showers.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is not available.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Small campground with a magical setting on the rugged coastal bluffs, with grazing Roosevelt elk and easy access to hiking in Fern Canyon.



REDWOOD NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA

Featured Campgrounds Outside Redwood National Park

Campers who can't get a reservation at park campgrounds, or who have an RV over 28 feet, have a range of options to choose from close to Redwood. Keep in mind that it's not only the size of the campsites that's restrictive—many of the roads within the park are not suitable for big rigs either. It's best to camp outside Redwood and drive your tow car to enjoy full access to the park.

Where you choose to stay can depend on your general route, desired access to amenities, and preference between private RV parks with hookups or rustic public campgrounds. Since the four parks within Redwood have several entry points, you have flexibility to make it part of your California or Pacific Coast road trip itinerary, whether for a quick overnight stop or several days.



CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR CRESCENT CITY, NORTH REDWOOD NATIONAL PARK

Crescent City / Redwoods KOA Holiday

koa.com/campgrounds/crescent-city

707-464-5744

Family-friendly woodsy campground with full hookups and KOA amenities, close to Crescent City, the coast, and Jedediah Smith State Park in Redwood. Six miles from Jedediah Smith Visitor Center.

Orman Guest Ranch and Stables

ormanranch.net

707-464-4434

A unique option for campers, Orman Guest Ranch offers dry camping sites on their extensive grounds for RVs of all sizes, under the trees or in open grassy areas. A convenient and economical option for the area. Located 9 miles from Jedediah Smith Visitor Center.

CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR KLAMATH, CENTRAL REDWOOD NATIONAL PARK

Klamath River RV Park

klamathriverrvpark.com

707-482-2091

Klamath River RV Park offers full-hookup sites in an open grassy area on the Klamath River, providing a comfortable base in an ideal setting to tour the area. Amenities include laundry, a gift shop, and a café. Located just a couple minutes' drive from the beach in Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, 17 miles from Prairie Creek Visitor Center.

Mystic Forest RV Park

mysticforestrv.com

707-482-4901

Family-run campground in a forested setting, with full-hookup sites, laundry, groceries, mini golf, a clubhouse, and access to miles of hiking trails. Located 1 mile from beaches and overlooks on the coast and 17 miles from Prairie Creek Visitor Center.

REDWOOD NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA

CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR TRINIDAD, SOUTH REDWOOD NATIONAL PARK

Patrick's Point State Park

parks.ca.gov/?page_id=417

707-677-3570

This sprawling, forested state park with a dramatic coastal setting offers several campgrounds, miles of hiking trails, and beach access. No hookups are available. Site sizes vary; search by RV length on the state parks website. Reservations are mandatory. Located 13 miles from Thomas H. Kuchel Visitor Center.

Big Lagoon County Park

humboldt.gov/Facilities/Facility/Details/Big-Lagoon-2

707-445-7421

First-come, first-served county park with dry camping sites under a tree canopy, in close walking distance to the wildlife-rich Big Lagoon and miles of ocean beach. Larger RVs can be accommodated in some sites; bathrooms and showers available. Located 12 miles from Thomas H. Kuchel Visitor Center.

Elk Country RV Resort

elkcountryrvresort.com

707-488-2181

True to its name, RVers at Elk Country RV Resort camp in an open meadow along with grazing Roosevelt elk. The campground encompasses 200 acres including forest, creeks, and a private lake. Big rig friendly full-hookup sites. Located 5 miles from Thomas H. Kuchel Visitor Center.



SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK, VIRGINIA

NPS.gov/shen



Introduction to Shenandoah National Park

In Northern Virginia, only 80 miles from the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area and 100 miles from the state capital of Richmond, Shenandoah National Park is a vast natural refuge in the Blue Ridge Mountains, part of the greater Appalachian Mountain Range. Spectacular vistas of rolling forested hills, powerful waterfalls, meadows full of wildflowers, austere granite boulders, secluded wooded hollows, and habitats for a diversity of wildlife are protected in over 200,000 acres.

Hiking, camping, wildlife viewing, and stargazing are popular activities for visitors who come from the surrounding cities and suburbs for day trips and long weekends. For most travelers from outside the immediate area, Shenandoah is best known for Skyline Drive National Scenic Byway, a landmark that runs for 105 miles through the park along the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains. As spectacular as Skyline Drive is, a drive by itself is missing out on over 500 miles of hiking trails available to visitors who stay a night or more.

Considering its proximity to major cities, Shenandoah is not difficult to get to. The main thing to keep in mind is the park's layout, which is long and generally narrow, encompassing Skyline Drive for the entirety of its 105-mile north-south run. The north entrance is closest to D.C. and Interstate 66, the south entrance is nearer to Richmond and Interstate 64. The university town of Charlottesville, Virginia, is close to the south entrance. There are two additional entrances that provide direct access to the middle of the park.

DICKEY RIDGE VISITOR CENTER
17065 SKYLINE DRIVE, FRONT ROYAL, VA 22630
540-999-3500

HARRY F. BYRD, SR. VISITOR CENTER
SKYLINE DRIVE MILEPOST 51, STANLEY, VA 22851
540-999-3500

SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK, VIRGINIA



TOP ATTRACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Driving Skyline Drive

Skyline Drive runs for 105 miles north-south along the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains. It's the only public road in the park, and as a National Scenic Byway it's the big draw for the majority of visitors to Shenandoah. It takes about three hours to drive from one end of the park to the other, at the 35 miles per hour speed limit and with brief stops at overlooks.

There are nearly 70 overlooks, so you can stop for a quick view at each one or just choose a few. Either way, you're guaranteed spectacular views for any length of the drive (weather permitting). For regular visitors to Shenandoah, some favorite overlooks are Hazel Mountain, Jewel Hollow, Sawmill Run, and The Point.

2. Hiking

With over 500 miles of trails and four distinct seasons, Shenandoah is a hiker's paradise. As with Skyline Drive, depending on the length of your visit you may not make it from one end of the park to the other, but you'll find an opportunity for everything from an easy nature walk to a full-day hike wherever you are.

Some popular hikes that are under 2 miles but provide stunning views are Bearfence Mountain Loop, Dark Hollow Falls, and Stony Man. Jones Run Falls is a moderate hike that runs over a stream and through the forest to the 42-foot waterfall in just over 3 miles round-trip.

For a more strenuous experience, Old Rag Mountain on the eastern boundary of the park is a popular and challenging 9-mile loop hike and rock scramble leading to a barren rock summit with panoramic vistas.

Backpackers can also hike some or all of the 105-mile section of the Appalachian Trail that runs the length of the park.

3. Wildlife Viewing

Both scenic driving and hiking provide ample opportunity for wildlife viewing in Shenandoah. Black bear and deer are both commonly seen. Odds of a sighting are more likely at dawn and dusk, when these mammals are most active. See the park website for safety and spotting tips.

Shenandoah is a popular birdwatcher destination, with more than 190 species of resident and transient birds, including red-tailed hawks, Carolina chickadees, and barred owls.



BEST TIMES TO VISIT

Shenandoah is open year-round and is a unique experience each season. Fall is the busiest season in the park, when spectacular fall colors draw visitors from near and far. Summer is also busy, but it's the ideal time for RVers, with mild weather at the higher elevations and campgrounds fully operational.

Spring may be the most underrated season to visit Shenandoah, thanks to abundant wildflowers and smaller crowds, but RVers should pay attention to the weather and seasonal campground opening dates. Given the park's proximity to the D.C. metropolitan area and other cities, weekday visits at any time of year are the best way to avoid crowds. Otherwise, enter the park early to get ahead of day-trippers.



PET-FRIENDLY TIP

Shenandoah is a pet-friendly national park. While pets are restricted from certain trails, the restricted portions represent less than 4 percent of the 500-plus miles of trails in the park. See the park website for restrictions. Leashed pets and their responsible owners are welcome on all other trails.



SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK, VIRGINIA



INSIDER TIPS

Shenandoah's Skyline Drive, the main public road through the park, is organized by mile markers. From number 0 at the north entrance of Front Royal to 105 at the south entrance of Rockfish Gap, visitor centers, overlooks, and trailheads each have an associated mile marker. This is not only a helpful reference once you've arrived, but a good way to plan out your itinerary and understand where sites are located in relation to one another in this long and narrow park.

Big Meadows, the largest developed area in the park, is right near the center at mile 51. If you're short on time, or a 100-mile mountain drive is unappealing, staying outside the park's middle entrances is a good option. Big Meadows, which includes the historic Big Meadows Lodge and campground, several trailheads, and the main Harry F. Bird, Sr. Visitor Center, is 20 miles from Thornton Gap Entrance Station and 15 miles from Swift Run Gap Entrance Station.

For those who can't get enough of scenic mountain drives, the south end of Skyline Drive meets the start of Blue Ridge Parkway, also managed by the National Park Service, which travels 469 miles south through Virginia and North Carolina to Great Smoky Mountains National Park.



RV CAMPING IN SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK

Shenandoah National Park offers four campgrounds, all of which can accommodate RVs of most sizes. The campgrounds are well maintained but rustic, with no hookups, basic facilities, and no cell service. Staying inside the park gives campers direct access to Skyline Drive and hiking trails without having to worry about a traffic delay at the entrances, plus the chance to watch the sunrise and sunset over the endless rolling hills.

All but the smallest campground, Lewis Mountain, can be reserved in advance. Reservations are recommended, especially over holidays and peak-season weekends. The four campgrounds are spaced throughout the park's hundred-mile span, one each by the north and south entrances and two toward the middle. If you have limited time, be sure to reserve a campground that is convenient to your route.

For RVers driving into the park, note that Mary's Rock Tunnel just south of the Thornton Gap Entrance has a maximum clearance of 12 feet, 8 inches.

SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK, VIRGINIA



Shenandoah National Park Campgrounds

ALL CAMPGROUNDS

SEASONALITY: Open spring through fall, dates vary each year.

HOOKUPS: No hookups available.

MAXIMUM STAY: 14 days.

CONNECTIVITY: Cell phone service is not available.

PET POLICIES: Leashed pets are allowed.

MATHEWS ARM CAMPGROUND

RESERVATIONS: Visit [recreation.gov/camping/gateways/2933](https://www.recreation.gov/camping/gateways/2933) or call 877-444-6777. Reservations can be made on a 6-month rolling basis.

CAMPSITE SIZE: 165 sites for tents or RVs that can accommodate most rigs. Search for a site by RV length on the reservation website.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Picnic tables and fire rings at sites. Central facilities include flush toilets, potable water, and a dump station.

COST: \$15 per night.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The most accessible campground for those entering from the north Front Royal entrance at mile 22.1, Mathews Arm provides big rig friendly sites and a convenient location 2 miles from camping supplies and food service at Elkswallow Wayside.

BIG MEADOWS CAMPGROUND

RESERVATIONS: Visit [recreation.gov/camping/gateways/2933](https://www.recreation.gov/camping/gateways/2933) or call 877-444-6777. Reservations can be made on a 6-month rolling basis.

CAMPSITE SIZE: 221 sites for tents or RVs that can accommodate most rigs. Search for a site by RV length on the reservation website.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Picnic tables and fire rings at sites. Central facilities include flush toilets, potable water, a dump station, coin-operated showers, laundry, and a camp store.

COST: \$20 per night.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Centrally located inside the park at mile 51.2, Big Meadows Campground is close to some of the most popular destinations, like Big Meadows, Dark Hollow Falls, and Byrd Visitor Center.

LEWIS MOUNTAIN CAMPGROUND

RESERVATIONS: First-come, first-served only.

CAMPSITE SIZE: 30 sites for tents or RVs that can accommodate most rigs. Bigger rigs should consider a reservation at Big Meadows Campground to ensure a spot.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Picnic tables and fire rings at sites. Central facilities include flush toilets, potable water, coin-operated showers, laundry, and a camp store.

COST: \$15 per night.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The smallest campground in the park provides a more peaceful setting while still being centrally located at mile 57.5, 7 miles from Big Meadow.

LOFT MOUNTAIN CAMPGROUND

RESERVATIONS: A mix of reserved and first-come, first-served sites. Reservations are highly recommended for weekends and holidays and can be made online at [recreation.gov/camping/gateways/2933](https://www.recreation.gov/camping/gateways/2933) or by calling 877-444-6777.

CAMPSITE SIZE: 207 sites for tents or RVs that can accommodate most rigs. Search for a site by RV length on the reservation website.

ADDITIONAL CAMPGROUND FACILITIES: Picnic tables and fire rings at sites. Central facilities include flush toilets, potable water, a dump station, coin-operated showers, laundry, and a camp store.

COST: \$15 per night.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The most spacious campground in the park sits atop Big Flat Mountain, at mile 79.5 in the southern part of the park. Trails into the Big Run Wilderness and two waterfalls are nearby.

SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK, VIRGINIA

Featured Campgrounds Outside Shenandoah National Park

RVers looking for accommodations outside the national park have a variety of well-regarded campgrounds to choose from. Looking for an RV resort packed with kid-friendly activities, or a peaceful state park? How about a small, rustic campground next to a creek, or an RV park that offers local winery and brewery tours? These are just some examples of the options available around Shenandoah.

Of course, location is a factor, depending on where you're coming from, how many nights you have to spend, and any other sites you'd like to visit. Since more than 100 miles separate the north and south entrances of the national park, be sure to select a campground that's convenient for your itinerary.

The north entrance is closest to the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, only 80 miles away. The south entrance is close to the city of Charlottesville and Blue Ridge Parkway. The south entrance is also within 150 miles of both the Virginia state capital of Richmond and New River Gorge National Park in West Virginia.

The town of Luray, Virginia, with a stunning location in the middle of the Shenandoah Valley, is a destination on its own for outdoor adventure seekers, antiquers, wine enthusiasts, and Civil War buffs alike. It's most famous for the Luray Caverns and other underground wonders available to tour.



CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK NORTH ENTRANCE

Shenandoah River State Park

dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/shenandoah-river

540-622-6840

This scenic state park offers big rig friendly sites with partial hookups and standard facilities in a stunning natural setting with its own visitor center, trails, and river access, adjacent to the national park. It has only 31 sites, so it's best to book in advance online. Located 8 miles from the Front Royal Entrance Station.

Gooney Creek Campground

gooneycreek.com

540-635-4066

Small, family-run campground providing creekside, forested sites with partial or full hookups and well-maintained facilities. A comfortable, rustic camping experience and a good economical alternative to campground resorts in the area. Located 5 miles from the Front Royal Entrance Station.

SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK, VIRGINIA

CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK THORNTON GAP ENTRANCE

Luray KOA Holiday

koa.com/campgrounds/luray

540-743-7222

RVers will find the expected KOA amenities like a store, pool, dog park, laundry, and kid-friendly activities, along with big rig friendly sites with full hookups, laid out among trees and open grassy areas for space and privacy. Upgraded sites are available. Located 10 miles from the Thornton Gap Entrance Station.

Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park Camp-Resort

campluray.com

540-300-1697

Jellystone Parks are a destination in themselves, and the Luray location is ideal for families spending a few days in the area with multiple pools, splash pads, a water park, jumping pillows, a zip line, laser tag, and much more. Located 6 miles from the Thornton Gap Entrance Station.

Outlanders River Camp

outlandersrivercamp.com

540-743-5540

For a quieter camping experience in Luray, Outlanders delivers with big rig friendly, full-hookup sites in a scenic 100-acre riverfront setting, with river access, fishing ponds, walking trails, a dog park, and well-maintained facilities. Located 15 miles from the Thornton Gap Entrance Station.

CAMPGROUND OPTIONS NEAR SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK SOUTH ENTRANCE

Misty Mountain Camp Resort

mistymountaincampresort.com

540-456-6409

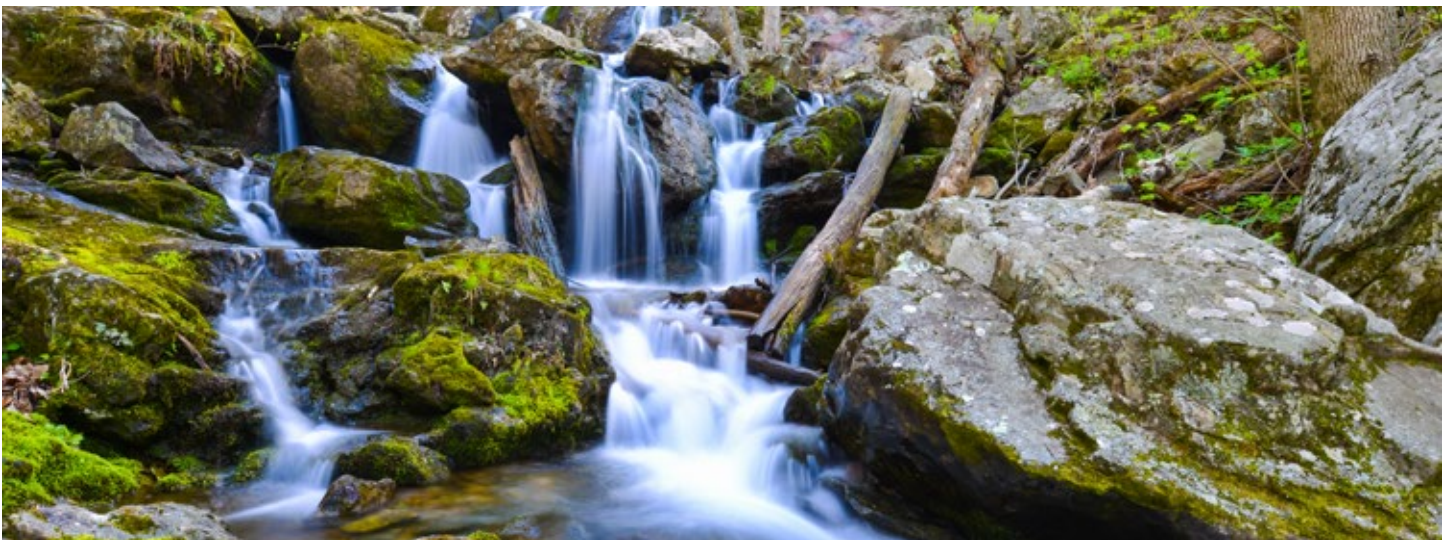
RVers can enjoy big rig friendly, full-hookup sites in a woody setting, nature trails, fishing ponds, a pool and splash pad, multiple playgrounds, and outdoor recreation courts, all within a short drive to local wineries, breweries, and small towns. Located 20 miles to the Rockfish Gap Entrance Station.

Sherando Lake Recreation Area

fs.usda.gov/recarea/gwj/recarea/?recid=73959

540-291-2188

This national forest campground provides spacious RV sites with electric hookups, plus dry camping tent sites that can fit some RVs, and basic facilities. A sprawling recreation area with a large lake and miles of hiking trails, it's an ideal base to see the natural beauty of Shenandoah and the Blue Ridge Mountains. Reservations are required and can be made through Recreation.gov. Located 25 miles from Rockfish Gap Entrance Station.



This guide is for general information only. Enjoy at your own risk. Always read and follow your vehicle owner's manual and comply with all laws in your region. We do our best to keep these guides updated, but they may not apply to all vehicles or travel situations. You are encouraged to do your own research, but always consider your safety and the safety of others first.

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