

On Top of Old Smoky

Wednesday, November 3, 2010

Sample Itinerary

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| 9:00 am | Depart Convention Center |
| 10:00 am – 10:15 am | Arrive Great Smoky Mountains National Park Headquarters, Sugarland Visitors Center |
| 10:15 am – 10:45 am | Drive to Clingmans Dome area |
| 10:45 am – 1:45 pm | Climb Trail with Guide |
| 1:45 pm – 2:15 pm | Enjoy boxed picnic lunch in the park |
| 2:15 pm – 3:30 pm | Another stop at the Visitors Center for a quick break before we return to Convention Center |

At 6,643 feet, Clingmans Dome is the highest point in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. It is the highest point in Tennessee, and the third highest mountain east of the Mississippi. Only Mt. Mitchell (6,684 feet) and Mt. Craig (6,647), both located in Mt. Mitchell State Park in western North Carolina, rise higher.

Temperatures at the dome can be 10 -20 degrees Fahrenheit cooler than in the surrounding lowlands. In fact, the cool, wet conditions on Clingmans Dome's summit make the spruce-fir forest that grows there a coniferous rainforest.



We start our journey with a visit to the Sugarland Visitors Center for an overview of the park history; you can browse the exhibits, purchase refreshments, and take a break before we travel further into the park. It's seven miles to the end of Clingmans Dome Road and there are scenic pullouts with endless views of ridges and valleys along the way. There will be photographic opportunities as well as stories of the natural and human history of the park.

Once we arrive, we start the half mile paved but steep trail that leads to an observation tower on top. The observation tower on the summit of Clingmans Dome offers spectacular 360° views of the Smokies and beyond. On clear days views expand over a 100 miles! The Appalachian Trail (AT) crosses Clingmans Dome, marking the highest point along its journey from Georgia to Maine. The Forney Ridge Trail leads to Andrews Bald, a high-elevation grassy bald.


Services Included

- Onsite staff member to Meet & Greet and coordinate tour departure
- Transportation from the Convention Center to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park
- Experienced, knowledgeable former National Park Ranger will lead the hike
- Box lunch included
- All taxes and gratuities
- 24 Hour Emergency Service

Capacities

A minimum of 15 participants is required for this tour to run. There is no maximum for this tour.

Notes

- Level of Activity: 
- Wear layered, comfortable clothing, as the days can start our cool.
- Sturdy walking shoes are required.
- Don't forget your camera!