



Chattanooga was voted best outdoor town in the US by Outdoor magazine readers. With an abundance of waterfalls, trails, parks, white water, rivers, lakes, caves, and rock climbing all so close at hand, it's no wonder! Chattanooga is chalk full of tourist attractions, which you will easily find online, but, we have put together this guide for those coming to discover the beauty of the area a little off the beaten path.

Adventures:

Most of the best attractions that Chattanooga has to offer are within 5 miles from your vacation home. That includes all of Lookout Mountain attractions, as well as downtown, the Aquarium area, the lovely arts district as well as the eclectic Northshore – home to two of our cities favorite public parks and well worth the visit. However, Chattanooga is an absolute dream town for outdoor adventure lovers. Chattanooga is the ONLY town to win Outside Magazines nationwide elected [“Outside Best Town Ever”](#) award twice! The last grab for this title was just 2015. To dig deeper, or plan your adventures, this PDF, as well as the following sites will be helpful:

- 1) <http://www.outdoorchattanooga.com/>
- 2) <https://rootsrated.com/chattanooga-tn>

Bikes:

There is a public bike rental program all over the downtown area of Chattanooga with convenient rental locations and deposit locations in all the hot spots. Biking the Riverwalk is a fabulous way to spend an evening. The Riverwalk Greenway currently runs from The Chickamauga dam to the arts district downtown and connects to Walnut Street Bridge to access the North Shore. For mountain bikers, Raccoon Mountain offers great trails close by. Enterprise South Nature Park is another very popular mountain biking destination on the east side of town. Finally, Prentice-Cooper State Forest also offers many off-road trails.

Trails, Waterfalls, Caves:

You are literally surrounded by some amazing hikes on federal parklands in your Wauhatchie vacation home. The Skyuka trailhead is within walking distance, about half a mile from our drive, and this trail connects with the Point Park trail, Craven's trail, Guild trail, Sunset Rock trail, Covenant College trail, as well as the trails to the Nature Center, and a network of horse and bike trails. We know most of the trails in the area as well as waterfalls and we are happy to help you plan your outings.

Within one hour's drive from our home, there are literally dozens of cascades and waterfalls in TN, AL, and GA. Fall Creek Falls, Rock Island state park, and Savage Gulf State Park are great day outings and are absolutely wonderful. Close to us, Fall waterfalls, Julia Falls, Foster Falls, Rainbow Falls, and just a few miles from the house, Glenn Falls are all worthy and great easy outings. We are also lovers of the Ocoee area and Chilhowie State Park with Chilhowie Cascade Falls. However, there are literally dozens of waterfall jewels within 60 miles from the house.

The Chattanooga area is heavily populated with caves. Large and small. Lookout, Raccoon, Aetna Mountains are all by your stay home and have many caves and attractions. There is even a slit canyon and an unmarked cave just 8 miles down Skyuka trail by the house. The most famous is Ruby Falls and Rock City and it's caverns, but the best for natural cave beauty is about 4 miles away – Raccoon Mountain Caverns. You can go and take the guided tour for cheap, however, you may also book a back mountain expedition with this organization that may take an overnight in the heart of the mountain. This is a great way to see the beauty and get a taste of the subterranean world.

Rivers, Creeks, White Water:

Most folks are aware that the Ocoee is close to Chattanooga – which hosted the white water competition in the Atlanta Olympics. However, for those wanting a smoother fare, the Nantahala River is a good match with the Hiwassee even a lighter white water fare. These are easy outings from your vacation home but we suggest booking in advance in season if you want a guided raft excursion.

Most Chattanooga boaters use Chickamauga lake, and there are some great beaches and parks along this massive lake, but, boat traffic can be rather intense and this lake is on the north side of town. We prefer the slower-paced and prettier Bennett Lake, and Nickajack Lake, only 20 minutes drive from the house. Boat rentals are available at Hales Bar Marina at Nickajack lake. They are also available at several marinas in lake Chickamauga.

City Parks:

Chattanooga is famous for some of its great city parks and we recommend setting aside a day or an afternoon to play and explore these great outdoor gathering places. Coolidge Park offers wide-open spaces on the riverside along with dynamic fountains, a carousel locally hand made, and is lined with colorful restaurants, coffee shops, and bars with the Chattanooga Theater Center on the North Side of the park. Right beside this park is Renaissance Park which is loved for its wooded riverside spaces, bogs, and cardboard grass sledding. Whole Foods is just a toss away from this park.

The Riverwalk is a true Gem, running from the Dam to the arts district downtown. The trail is somewhat flat, and wide, and great for running or biking and lined with heaps of piers for fishing or picnic spots with grills for afternoon riverside gatherings. We are big fans of biking and letting the kids play on playgrounds along the way. This greenway also connects to the Chickamauga Creek waterway greenway and allows one to use urban trails to cross to the east side of town on foot or bike. The Riverwalk is presently being extended to the South Side all the way to the end of Broad, just 1 mile from your vacation home.

Around the Aquarium, the watersteps is a favorite play space for kids, along with all the water features surrounding the Aquarium. This is a great place to cool off when walking downtown in the

summer. The trails and parks lining the river on this side are also fabulous and provide stunning walks around the attractions, piers, into the arts district, and even through a great sculpture garden. Chattanooga has many other little gems hidden inside, so don't hesitate to ask about playgrounds, water features, swimming, and public parks.

Lookout Mt. Trails:

(see **Park Service map**):

1. **Skyuka:** this trail head is closest to the house (less than one mile) right where Alford Hill Drive hits 318 (Old Wauhatchie Pike) just west from us down Cummings Highway. This trail head connects to everything – horse trails, bike trails, the Nature Center and Reflection Riding trails, Sunset Rock, Covenant College, Craven's House, Point Park and the Guild trail. About 1 mile into the trail off to the right is a little slit canyon which creates entrance to an unmarked cave about 20 foot high ceilings and curtain rocks around.
2. **Mountain Beautiful:** The quickest and most scenic route from Craven's House (very near us) to beautiful Point Park is the Mountain Beautiful trail. The trail starts at Craven's house and is the trail less traveled to the left facing the mountain from the Craven's parking lot. We love this trail and it has many signs marking the lines of certain confederate and union troops along the way. This trail will split right to go to Point Park or carry on south toward Georgia running directly under the incline and on around the GA side of the mountain.
3. **Craven's Trail:** to the right from the Craven's upper parking lot, this trail, like Skyuka connects to everything but runs and starts about half way up the mountain.
4. **Eagle's Nest:** Cummings to 318 to Scenic, just before Ruby Falls is the head to Eagle's nest trail. At the top of the Ravine is a concrete eagle statue overlooking Chattanooga. This trail will connect to Guild trail and Craven's which will in turn connect to everything.
5. **Point Park:** The best view of the river and downtown Chattanooga, hands down. Much better view of the city, signal, the riverbend and city than Rock City. This is an easy jump up Lookout on Scenic Highway then right on East Brow past the Incline to the corner of the Mountain. Maybe the best way to get here is to take the incline, the base of which is very nearby in St.Elmo up the mountain and walk over the Point Park once up top. If you are into Civil War history or just want a spectacular view, Point Park is the place to go. And, down the metal stairs from the brow, you connect to the trail the circumnavigates the top of the mountain and connects to every lower connector.
6. **Glen Falls:** the closest water fall is a really great short trail and fun natural water play area but in dry months, the water supply is quite low. This trail is roughly half way up the GA side of Lookout on Och's Highway, to the left. There is a descent little swim hole at the bottom of this small falls.
7. **Sunset Rock:** up Scenic Highway to West Brow, Sunset parking is on the left. This western overlook is famed for the best sunsets and a wonderful western vista and incredible rock climbing and formations. If you descend the brow to the trail you can go right or left. Left will take you to Covenant College (which is a great trail) and left will take you to Point Park, which is also a beautiful trail. Most of the climbers are active right at the base toward Point Park.

The above are ALL Lookout Mountain trails, very close to your vacation home. If you push out a bit, the rock climbing routes, trails, falls, swim holes increase expeditiously. But these trails are beautiful, historic and very worth while.

If you want a great swim hole, the Blue Holes at the base of Soddy Mountain just north of Signal Mountain in TVA land are very popular. However, we think the far less traveled and far more spectacular Julia Falls off the Cumberland Trail from Signal Point is about as good as it gets. The falls are always robust and the swim hole at the base is perfect but the falls are NOT easy to access from the Cumberland Trail. You park at Signal Point on Signal Mountain (AMAZING VIEW) and take the trail head there. You will turn past Edward's Point – amazing view of the TN River Gorge and about half a mile on the left is the unmarked turnoff almost straight down to Julia Falls. We think a stop by Signal Point is very worth while.

Waterfalls:

I could fill a book with falls and trails just a short drive from city center. The Ocoee and Chilhowee is superb east of Cleveland as is Fall Creek Falls, Rock Island Falls, and Savage Gulf State park with three gorgeous waterfalls. If you want to explore, don't hesitate to ask. Most visitors come in and hit the paid for sites, which are many in this beautiful and interesting town. However, we think the free stuff is about as good as it gets anywhere in the nation. If you are into outdoor exploration, natural beauty, water, falls, creeks, mountains, trails, bluffs, caves, climbing, and so on, you are in the city voted two times in five years America's Best City by Outside Magazine readers. Oh, and don't hesitate to ask about good eats, good in-town play or parks, and the inside scoop on local attractions. We want you to love it hear so much you will want to come back, or, heck, just move down here and join us year round.

Waterfalls within an Hour:

1. **Fall Creek Falls:** The most famous is Fall Creek Falls falling 256 feet with amazing cascades in another part of the park. The park is very large and worthy of a days adventure
2. **Rock Island State Park:** One of the most amazing places in TN is the little known Rock Island State Park. It's 87 miles from the house, but the variety of the falls and cascades, all in one tight spot, is simply unsurpassed.
3. **Savage Gulf : Savage gulf** is also on the Cumberland Plateau about 60 mile from the house. There are three notable falls in Savage Gulf, and each offer their own distinct beauty. The three trail heads are in different locations so be sure to map out before you go which of the falls you want to find. There is Savage Falls which is more of a rich cascade. Then my favorite, Greeter Falls which I think is the best overall hike. Finally, there are two more falls with Collins river and Ranger Creek.
4. **Foster Falls:** Closer to home is Foster Falls, probably more famous for climbing, but boasting a gorgeous 60' falls and wonderful swim pool at the base. The falls tend to turn to a sprinkle in the dry period however. But the hikes and rocks and climbs are worth the 32 mile run from the house.
5. **Chilhowee and Benton Falls:** A wonderful spot full of many attractions nearby is Chilhowee and Benton Falls. Benton Falls is a good hike from Chilhowee which is up from the Ocoee, but the cascades are magnificent and the entire drive, the lake, the overlooks, the swim area and the Ocoee are worth the jolt.
6. **DeSoto Falls:** Closer to home still is DeSoto Falls, on Lookout Mountain in Alabama. The falls are 104 feet, with a gorgeous pool at the base, but the hikes through the park are great.

7. **Cloudland Canyon:** Closer still is Cloudland Canyon State Park in Georgia. At only 23 miles from the house, this is one of the easiest and worthwhile day jolts, boasting three falls (one off trail), a gorgeous western vista from Lookout Mountain, and, great views of this rich Canyon.
8. **Fall Water Falls and Julia Falls and Rainbow Falls:** Coming into town, on Signal we have Fall Water Falls and Julia Falls and Rainbow Falls. Fall Water Falls is the highest, with little hike to the top from the road in Walden, but the drops are dangerous and unguarded and access to the bottom is very difficult. I do not recommend taking small children to this location. I have lost two cousins here so I don't frequent the spot because of the heartache, but it's very beautiful.
9. **Julie Falls:** Julia falls is one of my favorite in town falls. Go to Signal Point (breathtaking) and grab the Cumberland Trail. Pass Edward's Point looking into the gorge and keep your eyes for an unmarked trail on the left past Edward's overlook and listen for the water. The hike down is tough, but the falls are hearty and the swimming hole is unmolested and cold and calm.
10. **Glenn Falls:** If pressed for time, Glenn Falls is half way up the GA side of Lookout just a few miles from the home. The hike in is shortish and easy but the water features are quaint but great fun for kids with good views if you climb. This is one of our favorites if our time is short.

Climbing:

"The amount of sandstone in this region is not only vast but of stellar quality and often compared to the world class climbing destination of Fontainebleau in France. Climbers from all over the world make Chattanooga a destination solely based on this fact." (<https://rootsrated.com/chattanooga-tn/climbing>). I would recommend a route guide book if you come to climb because the Chattanooga area is famous for the number of routes and diversity of routes and boulder fields nearby. The closest routes are on Lookout, below Sunset Rock, top mount, sport, and trad. The best launch for these routes is off West Brow Rd. on Lookout at the Sunset Rock trail head. Little Rock City near Soddy Daisy is a boulder's paradise. You just head up 27 north and will start up Soddy Mountain past Signal. In Prentice Cooper State Park across the River is the gorgeous TN Wall. Most of these routes, and there are MANY, are trad, but I believe some have been bolted in recent years. Foster Falls, Ocoee, Savage Gulf and so many other areas offer countless great climbs for beginners as well as experts. Chattanooga also has a few great Climbing Gyms, the most famous is downtown near the Aquarium called [High Point](#) (called the nation's coolest gym by climbing magazine). This place sits beautifully on Broad and is really the finest indoor climbing gym I have been to. There is also Urban Rocks off Amnicola near the TN river and very close to the house in St. Elmo is the TN Bouldering Authority at 3804 St. Elmo Avenue. This gym is bouldering only, no roped routes, with some really challenging climbs.

Hang Gliding:

Believe it or not, Chattanooga is a sort of Mecca for hang gliding as well as climbing. We have the largest hang gliding school in the US at Lookout Mountain Flight Park, which is a great place to sore tandem with an instructor or to fly toward your own certification. If you are not into gliding 2,500 feet above the earth, its fascinating to watch the gliders launch and sore around the launch pad on Scenic Highway, just 12 miles from the house. Scenic Highway actually starts one block from our house, so, getting there is a breeze. Sequatchie County also has a bustling slight life with the Tennessee Tree Toppers, a thriving community of amateur and professional pilots. For an extended glide, the adven-

ture hungry can try a trike ride, or, a motorized hang glider. <http://www.hanglide.com/>

Caving:

While Ruby Falls gets most of the attention around here, we are partial to the Raccoon Mountain Caverns to see a huge and gorgeous cave network with wonderful formations and features. While you can take a nice guided tour through the Crystal Palace section, you can also book a wild cave expedition exploring deep into the unlit caves with a guide and headlamps. But you must reserve your wild deep mountain tour ahead of time. <http://www.raccoonmountain.com/#/html/cavehtml-2/>. That said, the greater Chattanooga area is home to over 7,000 caves making this area very popular for spelunkers. To some of the lesser known caves, you really need to connect with the local caving community, but outdoor Chattanooga is a good place to start.

Civil War:

We are literally surrounded on all four sides by federally owned land – part of the Chattanooga and Chickamauga National Military Park (National Forest). Confederates set picket lines upon our property before they were repulsed by the union forces led by Hooker. There were skirmishes and clashes on or around our land as the union moved to encamp at the Craven's house before The Battle Above the Clouds which saw the union charge Lookout Mountain. You can find signs around marking some picket lines and clash points on the federal lands, particularly on hiking trails. See battle map of the Wauhatchie battle advancing to Lookout below.

