

Shenandoah National Park

Backcountry Camping Trip Guide



Trip Name: Swift Run, Pocosin, Dry Run, and Saddleback

Description: Waterfalls (83' high), Lost Cliffs, early spring wildflowers, early fall color

Entry: 65 MP - Swift Run (north)

Exit: 65 MP - Swift Run (north)

Map(s): PATC #10 Central District

Level: Experienced

Total Length: 16.4 to 20 miles

Day One

Campsite: Pocosin Horse Trail - backcountry

6 to 7 miles

Hike up the Swift Run Gap Entrance Station Road to Skyline Drive, up to 0.2 mile.

Hike north on the AT (Appalachian Trail) for 3.0 miles.

Turn right onto South River Falls Trail, hiking 1.2 miles (viewpoint for 83' waterfall at 1.0 mile).

Turn left toward South River Road, hiking 0.4 mile.

Turn right onto South River Road and hike less than one mile.

Turn left onto Pocosin Trail and look for a dry campsite within the next mile (bring water).

Day Two

Campsite: Dry Run Falls Road - backcountry

4.9 to 7.6 miles

Finish hiking Pocosin trail at the ruins of Pocosin Mission (total 1.3 miles)

Turn left onto Pocosin Road and hike uphill 1.1 miles.

Turn left onto the Appalachian Trail (AT) and hike south 2.9 miles.

Turn right onto South River Road and hike 0.3 mile, crossing Skyline Drive.

Hike down Dry Run Falls Road and find a place to camp (0.3 to 2 miles).

Day Three

Campsite: Saddleback Mtn Trail - backcountry

1.5 to 4.2 miles

Hike back up Dry Run Falls Road (0.3 mile to 2 miles).

Cross Skyline Drive and hike down South River Road 0.3 mile.

Turn right onto the AT and hike south 1.0 mile.

Turn left onto Saddleback Trail and hike at least 0.4 mile (passing the maintenance hut).

Note that you may not camp within 100 yards of the maintenance hut. There is a spring 200 yards west of the building.

Day Four

1.7 to 2.7 miles

Continue on Saddleback Trail.

(Total distance on Saddleback Trail is 1.4 miles.)

Turn left onto the AT and hike 1.5 miles to Swift Run Gap.

Hike the road downhill toward the entrance station to your vehicle (up to 0.2 mile).

Notes

Wear blaze orange during hunting season, as you will pass through a small area of Rapidan Wildlife Management Area where hunting is allowed (see topographic map).

