



BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAIN HIKE MENU AT WINTERGREEN

Situated high atop the Blue Ridge Mountains, Wintergreen Resort abounds with spectacular views of both mountains and The Rockfish and Shenandoah Valleys below. Hiking the miles of trails and engaging Mother Nature in her ages-old habitat is the best way to explore this beauty.

Wintergreen's more than 30 miles of marked hiking trails are developed and maintained by The Nature Foundation at Wintergreen which offers guided hikes every Saturday, and Wednesday in summer. Check ***This Week at Wintergreen*** for details.

Wintergreen's mountain and valley trail system offers both access trails and perimeter trails that are clearly marked on the hiking map, tree blazes, and trail signs at each intersection with the name, direction and trail blaze color.

Mountain trails wind around Wintergreen's two mountain peaks – Devils Knob and Blackrock. Perimeter trails circumnavigate the resort providing access trails that break off for short hikes.

Both mountain and valley trails explore waterfalls and unbroken wilderness and allow hikers at all levels of ability to discover Wintergreen's wide diversity of terrain, rock formations millions of years old, natural gardens and unique foliage, abundant wildflowers, animal life, and location of the original Appalachian Trail trodden by America's earliest inhabitants.

Printed hiking guides are available for \$3 at the Mountain Inn front desk and The Nature Foundation at Wintergreen. The guide provides detailed descriptions of each trail, distance, difficulty and key features to note while hiking.

- Yellow Blaze: Access Trail
- Red Blaze: Perimeter Trail
- Blue: Valley Trail
- Easy: Generally Level Terrain, all abilities
- Moderate: Varied Terrain, short steep sections
- Difficult: Lengthy steep sections, experienced hikers only.

Winter hiking is exhilarating! Clear skies and open canopy reward with panoramic vistas unseen in warmer months due to Wintergreen's lush foliage. Important aspects to note for winter hiking:

- Pay attention to Trail Blazes
- Dress in layers
- Be aware of icy, leaf covered, and wet areas

Trails closed in winter because of impact of ski trails include Loggers alley and Cedar Cliffs North.

Ravens Roost Park

Distance: 0.1 miles Blaze Color: yellow

Difficulty Level: easy

Gentle walk and small pavilion overlook affords excellent view of the Blue Ridge.

Devils Knob Loop - Blue Ridge Overlook

Distance: 0.6 miles Blaze Color: red

Difficulty Level: difficult

Stunning views and easy-walk portion is handicapped accessible. Narrower trail forms beyond providing window views.

Old Appalachian Trail

Distance: 3.0 miles (total) Blaze Color: Red-Yellow

Difficulty Level: moderate to difficult

Key Feature(s): views of the Shenandoah Valley, hiker's favorite

Trail Notes: This trail has an array of access points and varying hike lengths. Along the trail, there are numerous Greenstone rock ledges that provide hikers with spectacular views of the south and Shenandoah Valley. The trail follows the northwest border of Wintergreen and is located on what used to be the actual Appalachian Trail. Wildflowers are always abundant. South of Laurel Springs Dr. is closed in winter.

The Plunge

Distance: 0.2 miles Blaze Color: Yellow

Difficulty Level: moderate

Key Feature(s): spectacular views, geology

Trail Notes: One of the shortest trails on the mountain. The Plunge is an excellent introduction to the beauty and natural history of the area. The rock formations were created millions of years ago and are called pedlar gneiss. The Plunge is among the most photographed places along the Blue Ridge, provides an incredible overlook and family picture spot. On clear days it is possible to observe Lynchburg, 45 miles to the southwest.

Shamokin Springs Nature Preserve

Distance: 0.3 miles Blaze Color: Yellow

Difficulty Level: easy

Key Feature(s): Unique area, loop, streams, and family favorite Trail

Notes: The Nature Preserve is one of the most unique environments on the mountain. The high elevation and moist soils allow northern tree species like birches and American beech to thrive. The preserve also provides habitat for numerous fern, wildflower, and bird species. The preserve is a favorite with families and can be accompanied by a "Preserve Guide" found at the trail entrance. This is the perfect trail for anyone just wanting to get outside.

Pedlar's Edge

Distance: 2.8 miles

Difficulty Level: moderate to difficult

This is a rather rugged hike with lots of elevation change, yet always rewarding. To mitigate the degree

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of challenge, leave a vehicle on Grassy Ridge Drive below the ski lift at the Hemlock Springs trail head. Start the actual hike at the Pedlar's Edge access trail on Black Rock Circle. Starting here, the trail drops steeply through an open area into a thick tunnel-like heath of mountain laurel until intersecting with the Black Rock trail on the right. The trail continues to lose altitude before swinging north over some rock faces. Bring the oil can for your knees! Once the leaves fall, the trail offers views of the Rockfish Valley, Lake Monacan, and far beyond. For a short time, the trail is an old logging road which reminds us of a time when American chestnut trees were harvested here. Be mindful of the blazes and watch for the arrow that directs the hiker off the road and back onto a regular trail.

The trail will pass under an enormous rock outcrop. In a short distance, you will pass another rock outcrop on your right that makes for a nice lunch spot. Gradually descending, you will pop out on the power line road. Bring your binoculars for some rewarding bird watching in this open area or enjoy the wild flowers that flourish here especially in the spring. The trail turns sharply northeast on the road for a short distance before heading back into the forest. For an added treat, stay on the road until it goes under the power line for a nice view of "Peggy's Pinch" way down below and Crawford's Knob directly across the gorge. Return to the Pedlar's Edge trail junction and continue into some rugged, wet areas. You will pass the Hemlock Springs Loop on the left and continue on, crossing Hemlock Springs and joining the Hemlock Springs trail. Turn left on this trail and follow it 0.7 miles back to Grassy Ridge Road.

Allow 2-3 hours as a lot of it is slow going. Hiking boots, water and trekking poles are recommended. The TWNF Hiking Guide map is a must as the numerous turns and trail intersections may cause some confusion or "hiker's fog". Pedlar's Edge will transport you into memorable wilderness and reaffirm our greatest asset – the nature of Wintergreen.

Humpback Rocks

Distance: Varies in miles Blaze Color: white

Difficulty Level: easy to difficult

Mile Post 6 on Blue Ridge Parkway

Located at the northern end of the Blue Ridge Parkway, Humpback Rocks is an area rich in history, scenic beauty, and abundant hiking trails. The Humpback Rocks Trail, which begins at the south end of the Humpback Gap parking area, provides access to Humpback Rocks (1 mile), Humpback Mountain (2 miles), and the Humpback Rocks picnic area (3.9 miles). About a half-mile up the blue-blazed trail, hikers can reach Humpback Rocks from a spur trail on the left. The strenuous 700-foot climb rewards hikers with spectacular views of the Rockfish and Shenandoah Valleys. Hikers continuing straight at the fork for one mile can reach the summit of Humpback Mountain to view ridges to the north. Beyond the summit, the trail winds a half-mile along the top of a cliff to a trail leading to the Humpback Rocks picnic area. Generally, the Humpback Rocks trail is marked with blue blazes on trees, rocks, and other natural features. At times, however, the trail is also part of the Appalachian Trail and may be marked in white. A single blaze indicates the trail continues straight while a double blaze indicates an upcoming turn. Wear appropriate hiking shoes and carry drinking water. Allow one hour to Humpback Rocks, two hours to Humpback Mountain, and four hours to hike to the picnic area.

Stony Man Trail Shenandoah National Park

Distance: 1.6 miles Blaze Color:

Difficulty Level: easy

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Start at Skyline Drive north of Rt. 33 east-west crossing. Skyline Drive: North of Big Meadows, elevation: 3765 ft.

The trail to the Stony Man cliffs is an easy upward amble that leads the visitor to a magnificent view of the Shenandoah Valley and the Allegheny Mountains to the west. Stony Man is the second highest peak in Shenandoah National Park. This higher elevation introduces visitors to a different plant and animal community, which can be seen as you ascend to the peak. Next to the trail notice the change in conifers. Red spruce and balsam fir have replaced white pine and hemlock of the lower slopes, and mountain laurel rules the undergrowth. Birds to search for along the trail include common raven, red-eyed and blue-headed vireos, black-and-white and hooded warblers, scarlet tanager, eastern towhee and dark-eyed junco. Other wildlife that may appear along the hike includes white-tailed deer, which are incredibly tame within the park- but please don't approach them, and the occasional timber rattlesnake.

Spy Rock Trail

Distance: 3.1 miles Blaze Color:

Difficulty Level: moderate

Start at Montebello Fish Hatchery on Rt. 56 east of Blue Ridge Parkway Crabtree Falls.

This 3.1 mile out-and-back takes you up a steep and rocky road and along the Appalachian Trail. After a short scramble up a nearly sheer rock face, hikers are treated to what is arguably one of the best views in central Virginia. The rock outcrop, at 3,980 feet elevation, provides a 360 degree panoramic view of numerous mountain summits.

Don't miss the great Valley Trails!

Paul's Creek

Distance: 0.6 miles Blaze Color: blue

Difficulty Level: moderate

All time great trail with unique waterfalls and a deep pool to take a little dip in, if weather permits.

Stoney Creek Park

Distance: 0.9 miles Blaze Color: blue

Difficulty Level: easy

The small stream's eroded banks shows the effect of flooding. Notice the magnificent American beech along this trail.

Lower Shamokin Falls Trail

Distance: 1.7 miles Blaze Color: blue

Difficulty Level: moderate

An amazing waterfall truly rewards time spent hiking trail's 3.5 miles roundtrip.

Allen Creek Nature Preserve

Distance: 0.7 miles Blaze Color: blue

Difficulty Level: easy

Start at the corner of Stoney Creek East and Towhee Court and explore this unique wetland boasting plant species found nowhere else in Nelson County. It's a wonderful place for winter birding.

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