



BENEATH THE WATERFALLS

In Georgia, we have limitless opportunities to venture off the beaten path and uncover the hidden gems of the state. Discover breathtaking waterfalls as you explore our beautiful parks and wildlife refuges. Home to scenic twin waterfalls, the highest single-drop waterfall and the tallest cascading waterfall east of the Mississippi River - you'll find adventure opportunities and the magnificent "tumbling waters" of our native American ancestors all around the state.

DAY ONE

Start your watery adventure at [Toccoa Falls](#) on the campus of Toccoa Falls College. Just northwest of Toccoa on Alt 17, you will find a meandering stream flowing through the lower part of the 1,000-acre, wooded campus from the base of the 186-foot high waterfall. This spectacular waterfall, higher than Niagara Falls, is the highest single-drop waterfall east of the Mississippi River. Enter through the gift shop then take a short handicapped accessible 100-yard path to the falls.

Travel north to Clayton and then east on U.S. 76 to the [Chattooga River](#). Follow the trail to Bull Sluice, although technically it is not a waterfall, but a huge rapid where on any given day, you'll find rafters, kayakers and canoeists testing their skill and luck as they try not to end up in the water.

Once you've satisfied your appetite, head south to [Tallulah Gorge State Park](#) in the small town of Tallulah Falls, where you'll find one of the most spectacular canyons in the eastern U.S. Tallulah Gorge is two miles long and nearly 1,000 feet deep. Visitors can hike rim trails to several overlooks, or they can obtain a free permit (limit 100 per day) to hike down to the gorge floor. A suspension bridge sways 80 feet above the rocky bottom, providing spectacular views of the river and waterfalls. Exhibits in the park's Jane Hurt Yarn Interpretive Center highlight the rich history of this Victorian resort town, as well as the rugged terrain and fragile ecosystem of the area. You'll also learn about the five waterfalls that are the jewels of the gorge. Don't miss the award-winning film that takes viewers on a dramatic journey through the gorge.

DAY TWO

If you are ready for an outdoor adventure, get up early and head to [Panther Creek Falls](#). Panther Creek Falls Trail (5.5 miles in length) follows Panther Creek through stands of hemlock and white pine along steep, rocky bluffs of the creek. The trail passes a series of cascades, as well as Panther Creek Falls. It terminates where Davidson Creek joins Panther Creek. The trail is noted for its beautiful variety of wildflowers and ferns. The stream offers excellent opportunities for trout fishermen. Hikers with heavy packs should be cautious of rocky overhangs. From Clarkesville, take U.S. 23/441 north for 10 miles to the Panther Creek Recreation Area. The western end of the trail begins across the highway from the recreation area. The eastern end of the trail can be reached by driving west on Yonah Dam Road.



DAY THREE

Start your day at [Anna Ruby Falls](#), one of the most outstanding recreational sites in the Chattahoochee National Forest boasting scenic twin waterfalls, hiking trails, picnic area, and visitor center all conveniently situated near the picturesque alpine town of Helen, GA. The once Cherokee Indian Territory now consists of 1,600-acres home to a variety of plant and animal species. Access to the falls is by way of a paved 0.4 mile easy to moderate footpath which leads from the parking lot to the base of the falls with benches provided along the way. The Lion's Eye Trail gives people who are blind or have visual impairments the opportunity to experience the environment along Smith Creek by providing a hand rail and signs in Braille. For hikers interested in more of a challenge, the 4.6 mile Smith Creek Trail leads from the base of Anna Ruby Falls to Unicoi State Park.

Next on your tour is [Duke's Creek Falls](#), located along the Russell-Brasstown Scenic Byway. At the parking lot you will find breathtaking views and a fully accessible restroom. The trail to the falls is about 0.8 miles one-way and is fully accessible to the first overlook. The trail then winds its way into Dukes Creek gorge where it dead-ends at the observation deck across from the 300' Dukes Creek Falls.

Wind down at the end of the day in [Dahlonega](#), site of the first American Gold Rush.

DAY FOUR

Before heading out into nature, spend some time exploring the historic town of Dahlonega with its many shops surrounding the town square. Don't miss the [Dahlonega Gold Museum](#).

After lunch at the [Smith House](#), head south toward Dawsonville where your next stop is [Amicalola Falls State Park](#).

It's easy to see why this is one of Georgia's most popular state parks. Amicalola, a Cherokee Indian word meaning "tumbling waters," is an appropriate name for these 729-foot falls - the tallest cascading waterfall east of the Mississippi River. An 8.5 mile approach trail leads from the park to Springer Mountain, the southern end of the 2,141-mile Appalachian Trail. However, numerous other trails are available for shorter journeys. A beautiful lodge at the top of the mountain is popular with guests who prefer hotel-type comforts, while a 5-mile hike leads to more remote accommodations at the [Len Foote Hike Inn](#). Be sure to stop by the visitor center to see nature displays, live exhibits and the gift shop.

Head north and stay in the delightful mountain town of [Blue Ridge](#). Enjoy a day of hiking, horse-back riding or whitewater rafting in unspoiled mountain beauty.



DAY FIVE

Begin the day at the most popular of the waterfalls in Fannin County, [Long Creek Falls](#) which can be seen by hiking down a short side trail from the combined [Appalachian/Benton MacKaye Trail](#). These falls total about 50 feet in two distinct drops. A leisurely 30-minute hike to the falls is uphill on the way in, downhill on the way out.

The upper portion of [Fall Branch Falls](#) is a series of cascades that lead to a single major drop of some 30 feet, with the water plunging into a deep pool at the base of the falls. These falls, along the [Benton MacKaye Trail](#) west of Aska Road are a shorter, although a bit harder walk than Long Creek Falls. To get the most out of your day, pack a picnic lunch.

In the early 1800s, the site was a prosperous industrial town with several stores, a grist mill, cotton gin, blacksmith shop, shoe factory and hotel. [High Falls](#) became a ghost town in the 1880s when a major railroad bypassed it. Today, park visitors can enjoy the scenic waterfall on the Towaliga River and hike to the remaining grist mill foundation. A campground, picnic areas and canoe rental are also available. This pretty park in middle Georgia is conveniently located near I-75 and makes a restful side trip for travelers.

Head over toward [Lookout Mountain](#) to spend the night.

DAY SIX

[Cloudland Canyon State Park](#) is one of the most scenic parks in the state, offering rugged geology and beautiful vistas. The park straddles a deep gorge cut into the mountain by Sitton Gulch Creek, and elevation differs from 800 to 1,980 feet. The most spectacular view into the

canyon is found near the picnic area parking lot; however, additional views can be found along the rim trail. Hardy visitors who hike to the bottom of the gorge (including a 600-step staircase) find two waterfalls cascading over layers of sandstone and shale into pools below. Cottages are located near the canyon edge, while the park's walk-in campsites provide exceptional privacy for tents. Outdoor lovers should not miss this park's spectacular scenery.

Head south and spend the night in [Pine Mountain](#) or at [Callaway Gardens](#).

DAY SEVEN

On Pine Mountain, in west central Georgia is [Cascade Falls](#). Located on the Pine Mountain Trail and adjacent to a rock formation called the Wolf Den, it was one of U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's favorite spots.

Enjoy lunch in downtown Pine Mountain and don't miss visiting [Franklin D Roosevelt's Little White House](#).

Your last stop is [Broxton Rocks](#), located near the town of Douglas. Sculpted over centuries by the waters of Rocky Creek into a myriad of fissures and shallow ravines, Broxton Rocks is a haven of unique habitats for plants rarely found in the southern United States. There are more than 500 species of plants native here. The preserve protects a rugged sandstone outcrop that extends for approximately four miles in southeastern Georgia. The rock system is the largest single extrusion of the Altamaha Grit, a band of subsurface sandstone that underlies about 15,000 square miles of Georgia's Coastal Plain.

