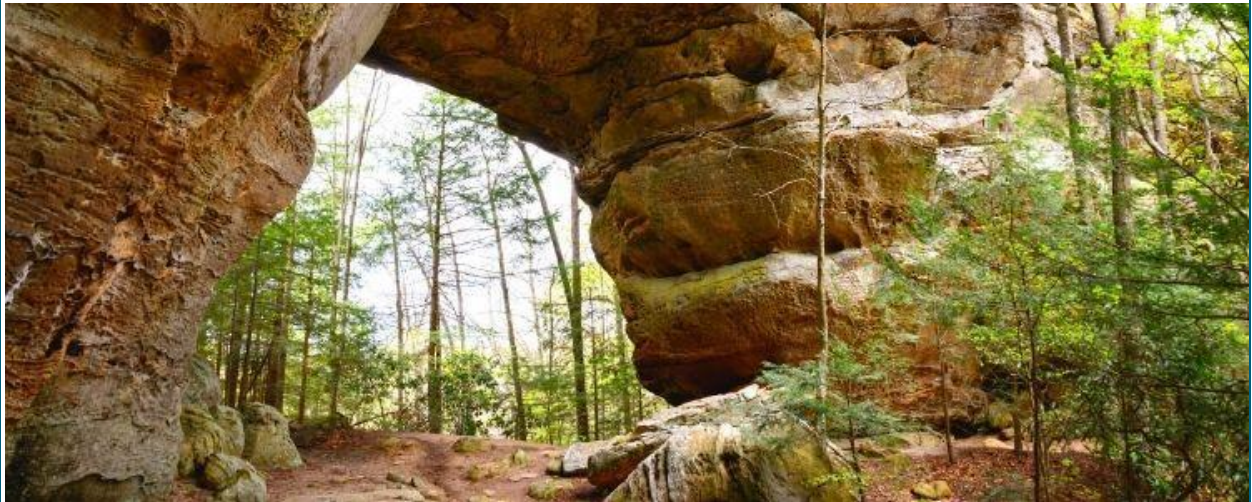




ADVENTURES  
*in good company*



## EXPLORING THE BIG SOUTH FORK

### Trip Summary

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Learning about the natural history & the equally fascinating human history of this area
- Spending time off the beaten path at 2 beautiful parks, Pickett State Park and Big South Fork National River and Recreational area
- Exploring the waterfalls, soaring cliffs, caves, sandstone arches, forests, rivers, and lakes of this amazing Big South Fork National River and Recreational area
- Staying at 3 very different accommodations; Pickett SP cabins with their 60's atmosphere, Charit Creek Lodge where time stands still and dinner is by oil lamp light, and The Garden Inn Bed and Breakfast for a bit of pampering
- Learning navigational skills for hiking
- Spending an afternoon identifying local plants, trees, and wildflowers

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## TRIP AT A GLANCE

- Location:** Big South Fork, TN
- Activities:** Hiking
- Arrive:** Meet at the Knoxville airport (TYS) by 10:00 a.m. If you are driving, meet at the Bandy Creek Visitor Center by 11:30 a.m.
- Depart:** The last day of the trip is Day 7. If you are flying, we'll have you back to the Knoxville Airport (TYS) by 11:00 a.m. for flights after 12:30 p.m.

### Trip Overview

Hidden away in a remote corner of Kentucky and Tennessee is a geologic and natural wonder. The Big South Fork, overseen by the National Park Service as a natural river and recreation area, is full of incredible features. Waterfalls, soaring cliffs, caves, sandstone arches, forests, rivers, and lakes abound in this truly unique and incredible place. Tucked into this park is another gem: Charit Creek Lodge.

At this rustic wilderness retreat, you can take a step back in time and unplug completely in primitive cabins. This relaxed and beautiful place offers comfortable beds, wood burning stoves, a bathroom and shower house, and a dining room where they serve an amazing dinner and breakfast by oil lamp light. If you are craving a true getaway, with amazing hiking and scenery, this is the trip for you!

### Rating

This trip is suitable for any woman who either enjoys hiking or is new to hiking and wants to learn in a safe and fun environment. While the trail ups and downs are not huge (i.e less than 1000 feet at a time), they are continuous and there is little flat. You will be hiking to the Charit Creek Lodge (about 1.1 miles) with your overnight gear for 2 nights. A rating of 3 requires aerobic conditioning, such as walking vigorously up hills, jogging, cross country skiing or stair stepping for 30 - 45 minutes at least 3 - 4 times a week. There are typically 4 to 6 hours of daily activity.

**Rating:** 1 2 **3** 4 5

### What's Included

- 1 - 2 experienced AGC guides based on group size
- Six nights lodging in accommodations listed in the itinerary
- All meals from lunch on Day 1 through breakfast on the Day 7.
- Round-trip transportation from Knoxville, TN airport (TYS), transportation to all parks/accommodations and all activities on the itinerary
- Park entry fees

**Not included:** Travel to and from Knoxville, TN, alcoholic beverages, guide gratuities and travel insurance

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## OUR ITINERARY

Below is the itinerary we have planned for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

### DAY 1

We will meet by 10 AM at the Knoxville airport (TYS) in Eastern Tennessee. From there, we will head north and then west into the Big South Fork. Our first stop will be at the Bandy Creek Visitor Center in the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area.

Our first hike will be the scenic John Litton Farm Loop. We'll hike 4-6 miles depending on timing. Along this trail, we'll see chestnut trees, waterfalls, and the historic Litton Farm site. After a break to enjoy the scenery, we will start back down to the visitor center. As time permits, we may check out the Bandy Creek Visitor's center, headquarters for the park, or the nearby historic Blevins Farm site with the original log house built in 1879, before continuing on to our lodging at Pickett State Park. Pickett Memorial State Park was developed by the Civilian Conservation Corp in the 1930's and has a huge network of trails, lovely cabins and a beautiful lake. It was the first state park in the southeast to be listed as a certified dark sky viewing location.

Overnight: Pickett State Park Cabins (L, D)

### DAY 2

After a delicious breakfast, we will spend the day exploring Pickett State Park. We'll follow a meandering series of trails to Natural Arch, Indian Rockhouse, Hazard Cave, stream-carved gorges, and Pickett Lake. We'll hike 4-6 miles depending on weather and interest and explore the action of water on sandstone, hunt for early spring wildflowers, and keep our eyes open for area wildlife. In the afternoon, we'll return to our cabins for dinner and relaxation.

Overnight: Pickett State Park Cabins (B, L, D)

### DAY 3

After breakfast, we'll work on our map and compass skills while out on the trail. There are many trails nearby for enjoyable hikes in the area, including options like the Hidden Passage trail, Pouge Creek Canyon or Middle Creek Loop. It's also wildflower season, so on this day you can start brushing up on your flower identification skills in preparation for the plentiful beautiful blooms found at Charit Creek. In the late afternoon, we'll return to our cabins for dinner and relaxation and will prepare for our hike into Charit Lodge tomorrow afternoon.

Overnight: Pickett State Park Cabins (B, L, D)

#### DAY 4

After breakfast and final preparations for our Charit stay, we will head west to the Sawmill trailhead where we will hike the 4.3-mile Slave Falls loop through hemlock forests to another sandstone arch, rock house, and waterfall. Upon returning to the vans, we will proceed on to the Charit parking area where we will gather just our most necessary items into our backpacks to start our 1.1-mile hike down switchbacks and a ladder to Charit Creek Lodge. Be sure to review the packing list and plan to only bring the essentials!

Once in Charit's lovely valley, you will feel yourself start to relax as the peaceful stream, front porch with rocking chairs, and fire pits outside the cabins beckon. We'll enjoy the afternoon and listen with anticipation for the dinner bell to ring, summoning us to the table and a delicious family-style dinner with our group.

Overnight: Charit Creek Lodge (B, L, D)

#### DAY 5

After an amazing lodge breakfast, we will lace up our hiking boots to visit one of the most amazing features in the Big South Fork area: The Twin Arches. We'll start along the Charit Creek to the north of the lodge and then climb steeply up steps and switchbacks until we reach the arches. These are some of the largest sandstone arches anywhere in the eastern US and they are astounding! The trail climbs around, through, and over them and we will take our time exploring and trying to capture the scale of these magnificent formations. From the top of the South arch, with a span of 135 ft and clearance of more than 70 ft, we can climb to an overlook and survey the park for miles around. As we continue along the almost 5-mile Twin Arches loop, we will encounter huge cliffs and rock houses all along the base of the ridge. Finally, we will start descending until we reach Jake's Place, the remnants of a settlement and house in a clearing along Middle Creek. From here, we will follow the trail leading east back to our lodging. After showers, supper, and stars, we will spend our last night in the cozy cabins at Charit, dreaming of the day's adventure.

Overnight Charit Creek Lodge (B, L, D)

#### DAY 6

It will be difficult to leave the wonderful, unhurried pace of Charit, and we will take our time packing up after breakfast before heading up the steep but beautiful forest trail to our waiting vans. We'll drive south through Jamestown, TN where we will make a quick stop for any necessary items before turning east toward our last hike of the trip at Colditz Cove State Natural Area. Here, the Big Branch creek drops 60ft over a rock ledge to form Northrup Falls. A beautiful 1.5-mile loop brings us through lovely hemlock and deciduous forest and then over, down to, behind, and back up to the falls as we enjoy it from every angle and stretch out our legs one more time. Finally, we'll make our way to The Garden Inn Bed and Breakfast Inn where we'll check into our lovely marvel again at all the modern amenities we've taken for granted. At the Inn, our host will serve us a delicious dinner and we will reminisce about our trip, compare pictures and stories, and enjoy each other's company one more evening before retiring for the night.

Overnight: The Garden Inn B & B (B, L, D)

## DAY 7

This has been a wonderful week exploring the beautiful South Fork area here in Tennessee. It's also been an amazing week of meals - being topped off this morning by breakfast at The Garden Inn! Unfortunately, we have to say our goodbyes to the Big South Fork and Cumberland plateau region and head back to Knoxville. We will have you back to the airport by 11:30 for flights home any time after 1pm. If you have driven to the trip, you are free to leave after breakfast. (B)

## ADDITIONAL TRIP INFORMATION

### Getting There

If you are flying, we'll meet at the Knoxville, TN airport (TYS) at 10:00 a.m. and drive to our first hike inside the Big South Fork at Leatherwood trailhead. If you are driving, meet the group at the Leatherwood trailhead. Instructions will be sent prior to the trip departure.

If you would like assistance with airfare, we recommend contacting our AirDesk Partner, [Exitto Travel](#). Start by submitting this [form](#). Just fill in your dates and destinations, including any additional notes about preferred carriers, class of service, possible stopovers, etc., and an agent will typically respond via email within a few hours. If you prefer to call, the number is 800-655-4053; be sure to tell them you are traveling with Adventures in Good Company.

Please note: Exitto charges a one-time, non-refundable processing fees of \$35 per passenger.

### Accommodations

We'll spend the first three nights in small cabins at [Pickett CCC Memorial](#) State Park about two hours outside of Knoxville, TN. Cabins are lovely wood frame structures and accommodate 2 - 3 persons per cabin. Some cabins have separate bedrooms and/or bedroom in the living area. All are shared bathrooms. The next two nights will be spent at [Charit Creek Lodge inside the South Fork National River and Recreation Area](#) located in both Tennessee and Kentucky. You will be hiking to the Lodge (about 1.1 miles) with your overnight gear for 2 nights. Accommodations at Charit are in a rustic bunkhouse with bunk beds. We rent enough bunk rooms so that no upper bunks will be in use. There is no electricity and shower and toilet facilities are in a separate building. Meals are provided by Charit in the communal dining room. Our last night will be spent at a wonderful B & B, The Garden Inn, for a bit of pampering before going home. The majority of these rooms are singles but if you want to guarantee that you get a single, please choose the single supplement for \$75.00 when you register.

### Travel Insurance

We recommend that you purchase a travel protection plan to help protect you and your travel investment against the unexpected. For your convenience, we offer travel protection through Travelex Insurance Services. For more information on the available plans or to enroll, visit [www.travelexinsurance.com](http://www.travelexinsurance.com) or call 1-800-228-9792 and reference location number 06-0331.

Travelex Insurance Services, Inc CA Agency License #0D10209. All products listed are underwritten by, Berkshire Hathaway Specialty Insurance Company, NAIC #22276.

## CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellation charges reflect the many expenses Adventures in Good Company cannot recover if you cancel, even if you must do so due to illness, injury, or personal emergencies. These fees are not meant to be punitive. The charges made reflect the expenses Adventures in Good Company has incurred in administering your reservation and planning for your participation. We recognize that the majority of those who cancel their reservations do so out of necessity. Please note that we do not make any refunds for any unused portion of your trip, not arriving, arriving late, or leaving the trip early.

[Click here for our Cancellation & Payment Policies and Booking Terms & Conditions.](#)