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## HIKING LODGE TO LODGE IN SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK

### Trip Summary

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Hiking the trails of Shenandoah National Park without having to carry a overnight backpack
- Enjoying the seasonal offerings in this beautiful mountain forest
- Staying at beautifully situated lodges every night
- Being surprised at just how incredible the Luray Caverns really are
- Having our luggage transported for us

877-439-4042    adventuresingoodcompany.com    info@goodadventure.com  
2601 S. Lemay Ave Ste 7, PMB 455 Fort Collins, CO 80525

## TRIP AT A GLANCE

- Location:** Shenandoah National Park, VA
- Activities:** Hiking
- Arrive:** At 2PM at Washington Dulles airport (IAD) or 4:30pm at Big Meadows reception lobby.
- Depart:** At 1PM at Washington Dulles airport (IAD) or from Skyland Lodge on the last day of the trip (Day 6)

### Trip Overview

Shenandoah National Park straddles the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains as they run north and south for over 100 miles. Embracing rolling hills, quiet hollows, abrupt hillsides, and verdant forests, the Park contains over 450 miles of hiking trails - all absolutely gorgeous in every season. We spend our days hiking this beautiful park and 'come home' to warm beds and hot food at the end of every day. The park's human history is also fascinating, and we'll learn about the people who inhabited this area for years as we hike through Shenandoah. Maximum group size: 12

### Rating

This trip is suitable for any woman who enjoys hiking or is new to hiking and wants to learn in a safe and fun environment. As in any mountainous area, trails will be up and down, but because the Shenandoah National Park is on the ridge, these ups and downs are very manageable. 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. **Rating:** 1 2 (3) 4 5

### What's Included

- 1 - 2 experienced AGC guides based on group size
- Five nights double occupancy accommodation at the National Park Lodges
- All transportation during the trip, starting and ending at Dulles Airport (IAD)
- All meals from dinner on Sunday through breakfast on Friday
- Entrance fees to Shenandoah and Luray Caverns

**Not included:** travel to and from Dulles, alcoholic beverages, guide gratuities, and travel insurance

## 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

Although just 75 miles from the bustle of Washington, D.C., Shenandoah National Park is a land bursting with cascading waterfalls, spectacular vistas, fields of wildflowers, and quiet wooded hollows. With over 200,000 acres of protected lands that are haven to deer, songbirds, and black bear, there's much to explore! The best way to explore this park is on foot and we'll be covering as much of the park as possible during our week in the Shenandoahs! If you are flying in, plan to arrive at Dulles Airport (IAD) by 2PM. We will pick you up at the airport and make the hour and a half drive to the park. If you are driving, you can meet us at our first lodging – the Big Meadows Lodge in Shenandoah at 4:30PM. We will gather to introduce ourselves and start getting to know each other before a trip orientation and dinner. Overnight: Big Meadows Lodge (D)

### DAY 2

After a hearty breakfast we'll pack our day packs and head for the South River Falls Picnic Area. Our hike today begins with walking on the famous Appalachian Trail for a short way to a fire road. We'll take the fire road down to South River Falls where, depending on the time, we'll enjoy a snack or lunch beside the falls. We'll return to the trail using the fire road and head toward Lewis Mountain Campground and cabins. The hike today is a lovely 5.5-mile section with great overhead canopy. It is one of the easier parts of the trail, fairly level with just enough up and down to be interesting, giving us the perfect beginning to stretch our legs. Along the way we may see black bears foraging for berries, peregrine falcons soaring overhead, or notice brightly colored salamanders scurrying underfoot.

We end today's hike at Lewis Mountain Campground and Cabins where we can admire the rustic cabins and visit the camp store for a well-deserved treat! Tonight, we'll enjoy dinner in the Big Meadows Dining Room before retiring to our comfortable rooms. Mileage today: 6.5 miles Overnight: Big Meadows Lodge (B, L, D)

### DAY 3

We start our day with a short shuttle to Bearfence Scramble trailhead. We'll hike up to the 'staircase' leading to the scramble. This is actually the exit, so we'll hike about .2 tenths of a mile north to the entrance before entering the trail. The scramble is non-technical, and an enjoyable hands-over-feet climb up basalt rocks to a 360-degree view.

After descending the scramble and enjoying our success, we'll continue up Hazeltop Mountain (about a 600-foot elevation gain), followed by a bit of "green tunnel" walking to Milam Gap, where our van is waiting. For those ready to relax at the lodge for the rest of the day, we shuttle back to Big Meadows from Milam Gap. For those who prefer to continue hiking, we'll backtrack just a bit after replenishing our water and snacks to the Rapidan trail down to President Herbert Hoover and First Lady Lou Henry Hoover's summer place in Shenandoah. We can explore and read about the history of Rapidan Camp before we return to our van and head to those wonderful showers! Dinner tonight is once again at the Big Meadow's beautiful dining room. Mileage: 6.1 - 8.4 miles Overnight: Big Meadows Lodge (B, L, D)

### DAY 4

Before continuing our hiking today, we will stop at the Big Meadows Visitor's Center where we can tour the exhibits, watch the park movie, and buy some souvenirs. After immersing in the history of the park at the Visitors Center, we'll head north on Skyline Drive to Fisher's Gap where we'll first admire the view and then head to Rose River Trailhead just across the road! Rose River Trail is a 3.8-mile loop considered 'moderately challenging'. Rose River Trail is best known for the Rose River Waterfall but offers views of other cascades all along the route. After hiking, we'll head to our next lodging – Skyland where we'll enjoy lunch and then decide what the rest of our day will be. Options abound! You can choose to explore our new digs, visit the Massanutten Lodge (a historic building on the grounds), curl up with a good book or join your guides for an afternoon loop hike up Hawksbill Mountain (2.7 miles) – the highest point in the Shenandoahs! If your choice is hiking, we'll shuttle to the lower Hawksbill parking area and make our way to Salamander Trail. Salamander Trail leads to the top of Hawksbill Mountain and is widely considered to have the best views. Paying close attention to our wooded surroundings, we can appreciate the people and efforts that have united to make Shenandoah the outstanding park that it is. Over three hundred of Shenandoah National Park's historical structures are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. We may notice a cluster of apple trees that used to be a planted orchard or a rock wall that was hand built by Civilian Conservation Corps members. Truly, there is history everywhere in Shenandoahs for those that take the time to notice it! We then descend to the Hawksbill parking area where we'll return to Skyland Lodge. Tonight's dinner will be in the dining room at Skyland which has a lovely panoramic view overlooking the valley below. Mileage: 3.8 - 6.5 miles Overnight: Skyland Lodge (B, L, D)

## DAY 5

This is our last hiking day, so we will go out in style by hiking to as many beautiful vistas as possible. We greet the morning with a hike on the Stony Man Nature Trail. This gentle trail leads to the top of Stony Man hill with a sweeping view over the valley to the Massanutten Mountains beyond. We'll then hike toward the Stony Man cliffs, where we're treated with a view of the Stony Man profile, knowing that we were just standing on his forehead! We'll continue to the lower Stony Man parking area, where we'll hop in the van and head to the Pinnacles Picnic area to enjoy our last picnic in this beautiful park. After lunch, we will shuttle north to Meadow Spring Trail and ascend to the ridge again to continue to our last amazing spot of the week, Mary's Rock. Though the exact naming origin is unclear with many varied folk tales, one thing is certain, the view is outstanding! One legend maintains that a girl named Mary climbed the mountain alone and then came back with a bear cub in her arms! Backtracking to Meadow Spring Trail again, we will descend to the van for our return to Skyland Lodge. After a chance to clean up, we'll join our guides near their room for appetizers and a chance to talk about our week before heading to the dining room for a final celebratory dinner together! Mileage today: 6.4 miles  
Overnight: Skyland Lodge (B, L, D)

## DAY 6

But wait, there's more! If you grew up on the East Coast, you have undoubtedly heard of the Luray Caverns, which are advertised by countless attention-grabbing billboards. So, you know it is a tourist trap but with good reason! The Caverns are intriguing and definitely merit a visit so we will leave the Shenandoah's and head to the caverns for an hour-long tour of this underground spectacle. After enjoying the cool temperatures and amazing sights we will begin the 2-hour drive to the Dulles Airport. We will have you back to the Washington Dulles (IAD) airport by 1:00PM and you can plan to fly out any time after 2:30PM. If you drove, you can plan to be on the road by 11AM. (B)

## ADDITIONAL TRIP INFORMATION

### Getting There

Flying: Plan to fly into the Dulles Airport in Washington, DC (IAD) not later than 1:30pm in time to meet the group at 2:00 p.m. You'll be meeting at door #4 (the doors are numbered) in the Baggage Claims area, inside the building. There are chairs just opposite the entrance. Your guide will find you there.

Driving: If you're driving, the address for the Big Meadows Lodge is 2, Mile 51, Skyline Dr, Stanley, VA 22851. You will be shuttling your car when we change lodges.

### Getting Home:

On Day 6, the last day of the trip, we'll have you back at the Dulles Airport (IAD) by 1:00 p.m., and you can plan to fly out any time after 2:30 p.m. If you drove, you can plan to be on the road by 11:00 a.m.

If you would like assistance with airfare, we recommend contacting our AirDesk Partner, [Exito 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 choose to call, the number is 800-655-4053; be sure to tell them you are traveling with Adventures in Good Company.

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

## Accommodations

We'll be spending our nights at the [Shenandoah National Park Lodges](#). The two lodges have standard rooms with two beds and a bathroom in each room. There are four single supplements available for this trip.

**Big Meadows:** Built in 1939 with stones hewn from the Massanutten Mountains and native wormy chestnut, Big Meadows Lodge has an easy, natural feeling and is officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Skyland Lodge:** The legacy of Skyland Lodge begins in 1888, when George Freeman Pollock Jr. makes it his mission to find the perfect spot for a summer retreat. He calls the property's breathtaking views of the Shenandoah Valley "beauty beyond description."

## Travel Insurance:

We recommend 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.

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## 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.

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