

## BEST HIKING ADVENTURES

presented by



**Trail Tip:** Before heading out we HIGHLY recommend getting a detailed trail map from a local outdoor store. See Related Resources for more information.

**Sam Knob Summit Trail** (Parkway South MP 420): This 2.2-mile out and back hike starts at 5,800 feet in elevation and ascends through a “Canadian” ecosystem of evergreen forests and expansive meadows until it reaches the double peak of Sam Knob at 6,050 feet. Many say the 360-degree view from this 6,000-foot bald mountain is the best in Western North Carolina. You can do an out and back hike on the Sam Knob trail or you can do a loop by adding the Flat Laurel Creek Trail. The loop will add another 3.5 miles to the total hike.

**Directions from Asheville:** Head south on the Blue Ridge Parkway to milepost 420. Turn right on Forest Service Rd. 816 for 1.2 miles to the parking area.

**Looking Glass Rock Trail** (Pisgah NF, Brevard): Looking Glass Rock's stone face is one of the more recognizable landmarks from the Blue Ridge Parkway. The sheer face is a popular climbing spot while the trail to the summit rewards hikers with stunning views. This moderately difficult hike climbs 1700 feet in 3 miles and is well marked with yellow blazes. As with all summit hikes, be careful when you reach the top.

**Directions from Asheville:** Take I-26 E to Exit 40/Airport Rd. Turn right on NC 280 towards Brevard. Follow NC 280 for about 16 miles to the intersection of Hwy 276 (look for the Bi Lo and Wal-Mart). Turn right on Hwy 276 for 5.3 miles and turn left at the Pisgah Center for Wildlife Education sign. Head a half mile to parking.

**Deep Gap Trail** (Mount Mitchell, Parkway North MP 388): In just 4.5 miles, Deep Gap Trail crosses four 6,000-foot peaks while taking hikers across rocky outcroppings and through spruce-fir forests. This trail takes you down Mt. Mitchell and up to the peak of Mt. Craig. Also, don't forget your binoculars because this is a great spot to catch a glimpse of the Winter Wren and Blackburnian Warbler.

**Directions from Asheville:** Head north on the Blue Ridge Parkway to milepost 388 to the entrance of Mt. Mitchell State Park. The trail starts near the picnic area at the beginning of the parking area.

**Max Patch** (Hot Springs): This short, one mile hike on the Appalachian Trail takes you across the 4,600-foot grassy knob of Max Patch, which offers 360-degree views of the surrounding peaks. This is a great hike with kids due to the easy access from the parking area. Likewise, kick back with a picnic and bring your kite.

**Directions from Asheville:** Take I-40 W to Exit 7, right on Cold Springs Rd. for 6 miles, left on Max Patch Rd. for 2 miles. Total trip is about 45 minutes from Asheville.

**Experience the Appalachian Trail** (Bakersville): The Appalachian Trail, the nation's longest marked footpath at 2,178 miles, has numerous access points near Asheville. We like the rugged Roan Mountain section near Bakersville. From the Carver's Gap (5,500 feet) parking area we recommend heading northeast towards the Grassy Ridge section which includes the longest stretch of grassy bald in the Appalachian Mountains. This section is great for an overnighter because it includes the AT's highest shelter, Roan High Knob Shelter at 6,275 feet, which is approx. 1.5 miles from the parking area.

**Directions from Asheville:** Take I-26 W to exit 9/US-19 N. Stay on US-19, which becomes US-19 E in Yancey County, to Spruce Pine. Take left on NC 226 N. Head 11 miles through downtown Bakersville then becomes NC 261 N. Head 12 miles to NC/TN state line to Carver's Gap parking area.

### Related Resources

Local Outdoor Store: Mast Outfitters / 828-232-1883 / [www.mastgeneralstore.com](http://www.mastgeneralstore.com) / Detailed maps and related gear can be found at Mast.

Blue Ridge Parkway: 828-271-4779 / [www.nps.gov/blri](http://www.nps.gov/blri)

Pisgah National Forest: 828-257-4200 / [www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc](http://www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc)

Roan Mountain Information: Mitchell County Chamber of Commerce / 800-227-3912 / [www.mitchell-county.com](http://www.mitchell-county.com) \* Local Roan Mtn Expert (Bob) / 828-385-9278

Appalachian Trail Info: [www.appalachiantrail.org](http://www.appalachiantrail.org) / 304-535-6331

Local Hiking Club: Carolina Mountain Club / [www.carolinamtnclub.com](http://www.carolinamtnclub.com)

## TRAIL TESTED



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