Smoky Mountain National Park Ultimate Adventure

A 4-Day Itinerary for Serious Hikers, Explorers & Adventure Seekers

This isn't the typical Smokies vacation. No tourist traps, no crowded attractions. This itinerary is designed for travelers who want to experience the wild side of the Smokies, earn their views, and discover some of the park's most rewarding adventures.

Day 1: The Appalachian Trail Experience

Newfound Gap
Start early and head to Charlie's Bunion via the Appalachian Trail.

Charlie's Bunion
Distance: 8 miles roundtrip
Difficulty: Moderate
Highlights: Appalachian Trail hiking, dramatic cliff views, ridge walking, and fewer crowds.

Bonus Adventure: The Jumpoff
Extend the hike for one of the most dramatic overlooks in the Smokies.

Day 2: Conquer Mount LeConte

Alum Cave to Mount LeConte
Distance: Approximately 11 miles roundtrip
Difficulty: Strenuous
Highlights: Arch Rock, Alum Cave Bluffs, Myrtle Point, Cliff Tops, and panoramic views.

Finish the day with sunset at Morton Overlook.

Day 3: Waterfalls & Wilderness

Ramsey Cascades
Distance: 8 miles roundtrip
Difficulty: Strenuous
Highlights: Largest waterfall in the Smokies, old-growth forest, and fewer visitors.

Spend the afternoon exploring Greenbrier's hidden swimming holes and creekside scenery.

Day 4: The Ultimate Challenge

Rocky Top via Anthony Creek
Distance: 13–14 miles roundtrip
Difficulty: Very Strenuous
Highlights: Long ridge traverses, wilderness scenery, and incredible summit views.

This is the hike most casual visitors never attempt.

Bonus Hidden Gems

• Middle Prong Trail – Waterfalls and historic railroad remnants.
• Gregory Bald – Famous for spectacular flame azaleas.

• Brushy Mountain Trail – One of the least traveled trails in the park.

Ultimate Adventure Scorecard

✓ Appalachian Trail Experience
✓ Charlie's Bunion
✓ The Jumpoff
✓ Mount LeConte
✓ Ramsey Cascades
✓ Rocky Top
✓ Hidden Swimming Holes
✓ Old-Growth Forests
✓ Waterfalls
✓ Sunrise & Sunset Overlooks