

# Grotto Falls

<b>Trail Features:</b>	Waterfalls, Old growth forest
<b>Trail Location:</b>	Roaring Fork Motor Nature Trail
<b>Roundtrip Length:</b>	2.6 Miles
<b>Total Elevation Gain:</b>	585 Feet
<b>Avg. Elevation Gain / Mile:</b>	450 Feet
<b>Highest Elevation:</b>	3,777 Feet
<b>Trail Difficulty Rating:</b>	3.77 (easy)

## Trail Description:

The hike to Grotto Falls begins from the Trillium Gap Trailhead. Hikers will be following the Trillium Gap Trail for most of the way as it meanders through a beautiful old-growth forest, which includes many large eastern hemlocks.

The first section of trail is technically an access trail. At 0.15 miles you'll link up with the Trillium Gap Trail. Hikers should proceed straight ahead at this junction.



If you have the opportunity to hike this trail during the spring, you'll likely witness a smorgasbord of wildflowers along the way. Look for white and yellow trillium, white violets, stitchwort, squawcorn and Dutchman's breeches that are common in this area.

For the most part, the trail to Grotto Falls travels a gentle grade along a wide and well-worn path. As you proceed to the falls, you'll cross over four small streams without the benefit of a footbridge.



At 1.2 miles, hikers will reach a tumbling cascade. Just beyond this point, looking upstream, Grotto Falls will come into view for the first time.

The most distinctive feature about Grotto Falls is that it's the only waterfall in Great Smoky Mountains National Park that a person can actually walk behind. The 25-foot high waterfall offers a cool and shady retreat for hikers in the summer. This same environment also provides ideal habitat for salamanders.