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WILD WILD INN · EST. 196 · REBORN 202 ·

VOLUME I — A FIELD GUIDE

# THE WILD WILD INN FIELD GUIDE



TO GATLINBURG & THE SMOKIES

*Stay Wild in Gatlinburg*

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G·S·M·N·P CORRIDOR



POCKET EDITION · FOR THE WILD-EYED TRAVELER

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OPEN ROAD · ONE

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# WELCOME, TRAVELER.

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*Glad you found us.*

This little book is the one we wish someone had pressed into our hands the first time we drove into Gatlinburg with the windows down and a half-baked plan. It is not a complete guide to the Smokies — no book that size would fit in a glove box. It is the short list. The trailheads we go back to. The places where the coffee is hot before sunrise. The drive that earns the long way home. The corner of the bar where the right songs play late.

*read this slow.*

Wild Wild Inn was built in the 1960s as a roadside stop on the Parkway and is being reborn for the people who still believe in slow mornings, long drives, and good company at dusk. We made this guide for you — so when you finally check in, you already know where you're going.

*— the innkeepers*

GATLINBURG, TN · ELEV. 1289 FT · 35.7143° N, 83.5102° W

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# THE PARK.

*500,000 acres of weather and wonder.*

*Great Smoky Mountains National Park is the most-visited national park in the country — and rightly so. Below: the trails, drives, and sunrise spots we send every guest to first.*

## TRAILS

### ALUM CAVE BLUFFS

4.4 MI · MODERATE

Steep but stunning. Sandstone arch, Inspiration Point, the route to Mt. LeConte.

### LAUREL FALLS

2.6 MI · EASY

Paved trail to an 80-ft waterfall. Go at sunrise to skip the crowd.

### ANDREWS BALD

3.6 MI · MODERATE

Open mountaintop meadow with the best long views in the park.

### CHARLIES BUNION

8.0 MI · STRENUOUS

Rocky outcrop on the AT — vertigo, but unbeatable.

### RAINBOW FALLS

5.4 MI · MODERATE

Tallest single-drop waterfall in the Smokies.

## DRIVES

### ROARING FORK MOTOR NATURE TRAIL

5.5 MI · 1 HR LOOP

A slow one-lane road through old-growth forest and historic cabins.

### NEWFOUND GAP RD (US 441)

33 MI · 1.5 HR CROSSING

The classic crossing. Tennessee to North Carolina, ridge to ridge.

### GADES COVE LOOP

11 MI · 2-4 HR

Bring a thermos. Black bears at first light, deer at dusk.

## SUNRISE

### CLINGMANS DOME

HIGHEST POINT IN TN · 6,643 FT

Park at the lot, walk the half-mile paved ramp, watch the sun crack open the Smokies.

\* Pack layers. The Smokies live up to the name — fog rolls in fast, even in July.

# DOWNTOWN.

*What to do, what to skip, where the locals go.*

## GO

### OLE SMOKY MOONSHINE

Free tastings. Get the apple pie. Stay for the live music.

### ANAKEESTA

Chairlift up, treetop walks, sunset views over the Parkway.

### SUGARLANDS DISTILLERY

Bourbon flights and a porch worth sitting on.

### THE VILLAGE SHOPS

Tucked-away cobblestone lane. Coffee, leather, and the candy kitchen.

## SKIP

### WAX MUSEUMS

Pick one if you must. They're all the same.

### PARKWAY ON SAT NIGHT

Bumper-to-bumper. Walk it or wait it out.

### CHAIN STEAKHOUSES

Eat anywhere on page four instead.

### MINI-GOLF TRAPS

Pretty lights, \$\$ for what they are.

## INSIDER

### THE BIRD'S CREEK FARM STAND

Saturday mornings, jam jars and tomatoes the size of fists.

### THE TRAMWAY TO OBER

Cheaper than Anakeesta, half the crowd, same big view.

### FOOTHILLS PARKWAY (WEST)

20 minutes out — the best mountain views with no traffic.

### CATARACT FALLS

Half-mile from the Sugarlands Visitor Center. Almost nobody goes.

*Gatlinburg is small. You can walk most of it in a morning. Save the car for the park.*

# GOOD EATS.

*Mornings, BBQ, and a stool at the bar.*

## BREAKFAST

### CROCKETT'S BREAKFAST CAMP

Pancakes the size of plates. Get there before nine.

### DONUT FRIAR

Iced raised donuts. The Village. Cash habit.

### WILD PLUM TEA ROOM

Quieter, prettier, the muffins are unreal.

## BBQ & SOUTHERN

### BENNETT'S PIT BAR-B-QUE

Hickory-smoked everything. Sit at the counter.

### CALHOUN'S

Riverside, ribs, and craft beer.

### THE LOCAL GOAT

Burgers and bourbon. Late kitchen.

## SIT-DOWN DINNER

### THE PEDDLER STEAKHOUSE

Tablesides trimmed steaks. The classic.

### CHESAPEAKE'S

Surprisingly good seafood for the mountains.

### PEPPERS ITALIAN GRILL

Quiet, dim, and the wine list is real.

## BOURBON & PORCHES

### OLE RED

Blake Shelton's place. Loud, fun, decent food.

### SUGARLANDS SHINE BAR

Lookout porch and a flight of moonshine.

### WILD WILD INN SALOON

Coming soon. Save us a stool.

\* If a place has a wait, walk one block off the Parkway. There's always a better one nobody's lining up for.

# WILD NIGHTS.

*Music, moonshine, the long way home.*

*Gatlinburg quiets down earlier than you'd think. The trick is knowing where the lights stay on. These are the rooms that earn the late hour.*

## OLE SMOKY HOLLER

LIVE BLUEGRASS NIGHTLY. THE FIDDLE PLAYERS SIT IN.

## THE TIN ROOF

HONKY-TONK THREE BLOCKS DEEP ON THE PARKWAY.

## CRYSTELLES UPSTAIRS

QUIET WHISKEY ROOM. VINYL. A REAL CONVERSATION.

## OLE RED

BIG NIGHTS, COUNTRY COVERS, THE ROOM SINGS ALONG.

## WILD WILD INN SALOON

COMING SOON. PULL UP A STOOL.

*tip the band.*

# DAY TRIPS.

*For when you leave the Parkway behind.*

## PIGEON FORGE

10 MIN N

### DOLLYWOOD

Yes really. World-class park, world-class food.

### THE OLD MILL

Working gristmill, southern plates, kitschy-good.

### ALCATRAZ EAST

True crime museum. Stranger than you'd think.

## TOWNSEND

25 MIN W

### "PEACEFUL SIDE"

What Gatlinburg was before Gatlinburg got loud.

### THE PARK ENTRANCE

Quiet way into the Smokies. Cades Cove this way.

### LITTLE RIVER TUBING

Float two hours on cold water. Bring a beer.

## CHEROKEE, NC

1 HR S

### MUSEUM OF THE CHEROKEE

Essential. Go before the rest of the trip.

### OCONALUFTEE OVERLOOK

The other side of the park. Worth the crossing.

### MINGO FALLS

98-ft waterfall, short walk, very few people.

\* Cross the line into North Carolina at least once. The mountains look different on the other side.

# BEFORE YOU GO.

*Boots, weather, and what nobody tells you.*

## WHEN TO GO

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- SPRING — wildflowers, waterfalls full.
- SUMMER — green and humid; mornings.
- AUTUMN — peak crowds, peak color.
- WINTER — quiet, sometimes snow.

## WEATHER

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- Layer. Always layer.
- Park can be 15°F colder than town.
- Fog moves fast. Rain moves faster.
- Check NPS alerts before driving up.

## WHAT TO PACK

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- Real shoes — not sneakers.
- Rain shell, even in July.
- Refillable water + snacks.
- Cash for farm stands + cabins.

## PARKING & PASSES

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- Park-It tag required (\$5/day).
- Sugarlands Visitor Ctr. for maps.
- Cades Cove fills early — go at dawn.
- Free parking at Wild Wild Inn.

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## WHEN IN DOUBT —

Ask at the front desk. We've sent four hundred people to the right trail this year. If we can't help, we'll find someone in town who can.

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WILD WILD INN · FIELD GUIDE · CLOSING



# GOOD NIGHTS, WILD DAYS.



*See you on the Parkway.*

— THE INNKEEPERS, WILD WILD INN

**STAY WILD**

WILDWILDINN.COM · @WILDWILDINN · GATLINBURG TN

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