

# FIND YOUR PARK



# IN THE DARK

## Fall/Winter 2015 Ranger-Led Activities



With more than 400 miles of cave passageways, Mammoth Cave ranks as the longest known cave system in the world. Mammoth Cave National Park was established in 1941. In 1981, the park was designated a World Heritage Site, and became the core area of an International Biosphere Reserve in 1990. The park merits this extra protection and special status for its spectacular features on the surface and in the cave, and the way these features illustrate the connection between humans and their environment.

### Ranger-Led Activity Schedule • Fall/Winter 2015

*Note: For our Labor Day Weekend tour offerings Sept. 5-7, consult our Summer Schedule or go online to [www.nps.gov/macaplanyourvisit/labor-day-weekend.htm](http://www.nps.gov/macaplanyourvisit/labor-day-weekend.htm)*

	Early Fall	Late Fall	Winter
<b>Cave Tours</b>	<b>Departures</b>		
	<i>August 17 – September 4</i>	<i>September 8 – October 31</i>	<i>November 1 - March 18, 2016</i>
Mammoth Passage Tour*	Offered as visitation warrants	Offered as visitation warrants	Offered as visitation warrants
Frozen Niagara Tour	9:00, 3:30	9:00, 2:30, 3:30	9:00, 10:00, 2:30
Mammoth Cave Discovery Tour*	Offered as visitation warrants	Offered as visitation warrants	Offered as visitation warrants
Historic Tour	10:00, 12:15, 2:15, 3:00		
Domes and Dripstones Tour	9:30, 11:30, 12:45, 2:00(Sat-Sun), 3:00	9:30, 10:00, 11:00, 12:00, 12:30, 1:00, 2:00, 3:00	10:30, 11:30, 2:00
Grand Avenue Tour		9:45	
Cleveland Avenue Tour			1:15
Gothic Avenue Tour	9:00(Sat only)		
Violet City Lantern Tour	9:30		
Great Onyx Lantern Tour	10:45(Sat-Sun), 1:30	10:30, 2:15	
Star Chamber Tour	5:00pm		
Introduction to Caving	1:15(Sat only)	10:00(Sat only)	
Wild Cave Tour	9:00 (Sat-Sun)	9:00 (Sat-Sun)	9:00 (Sat-Sun)
<b>Surface Programs - Free of Charge</b>	<b>Departures/Times</b>		
Heritage Walk	9:30	9:30	
Sand Cave Almanac	1:00(Fri-Sat)	1:30(Fri-Sat)	
Evening Program	7:00pm (Fri-Sat)		
Campfire Program		6:30pm (Fri-Sat)	
Visitor Center Hours	8:30am – 5:15pm	8:30am – 5:15pm	8:30am – 4:30pm

\*Not available by reservation. Tickets may be purchased at the Visitor Center on day of tour only.

Note—Certain tours have age limits. Please review the tour descriptions on the reverse side of this brochure before selecting your tour. Youth under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult 18 years or older on all tours.

### Prices

Cave Tour	Adults	Youth <sup>1</sup>	Special Access <sup>2</sup>	Educational <sup>3</sup>
Mammoth Passage Tour*	\$7.00	\$5.00	\$3.50	
Frozen Niagara Tour	\$13.00	\$9.00	\$6.50	
Mammoth Cave Discovery Tour*	\$5.00	\$3.50	\$2.50	
Historic Tour	\$14.00	\$9.00	\$7.00	\$5.00
Domes and Dripstones Tour	\$15.00	\$10.00	\$7.50	
Grand Avenue Tour	\$26.00	\$19.00	\$13.00	
Cleveland Avenue Tour	\$16.00	\$10.00	\$8.00	
Gothic Avenue Tour	\$12.00	\$9.00	\$6.00	\$5.00
Violet City Lantern Tour	\$18.00	\$13.00	\$9.00	
Great Onyx Lantern Tour	\$18.00	\$13.00	\$9.00	
Star Chamber Tour	\$14.00	\$10.00	\$7.00	\$5.00
Introduction to Caving	\$26.00	\$20.00	\$13.00	
Wild Cave Tour	\$55.00	n/a	\$27.50	

<sup>1</sup>Box office only—not available by reservation. <sup>2</sup>Youth is 6-12 years of age. <sup>3</sup>Special access prices are for visitors presenting Golden Age, Golden Access, and America The Beautiful Senior and Access Passes. <sup>4</sup>Educational prices apply to Kindergarten-College groups. Please call the park at 270.758.2180 to schedule your educational group.



▷The following items are not permitted on Cave Tours or in the Visitor Center: Firearms, any type of weapon (clubs, batons, brass knuckles, etc.), pepper spray/mace, or knives. Secure these items in your vehicle, or in one of the lockers provided at the bus loading area.

### White-Nose Syndrome (WNS) in Bats

▷Bats are sick and dying here at Mammoth Cave and across the United States and Canada. The effect on bat populations is a “wildlife disaster” unprecedented in our time. In the ecological process, some species may become extinct. ▶The dying bats have been infected with a disease called white-nose syndrome, which causes them to wake up when they should be hibernating. It leaves them weak, decreases their flying ability, and exhausts the energy they stored for their long winter's sleep long before any food is available in the spring. They die of exhaustion, starvation and exposure. ▶Though WNS is deadly to bats, it is not harmful to humans. Bats can, however, carry other diseases harmful to people, like rabies. While in the park, you may see bats flying at odd times or you may see them on the ground, alive or dead. Although the risk of contracting rabies from a bat is very small, if a bat flies into you, or if you pick up a bat, you may need to be vaccinated. What can you do to protect yourself? ▶Never touch a bat. If a bat comes into contact with you, or if you see a bat in an unusual place, please notify a park ranger. ▶To decrease the likelihood of direct bat contact, wear clothing that covers your skin, such as long sleeves, long pants and a hat. ▶Please be aware that cave tours and other activities may be modified or delayed in response to bat activity.



### Interested in a second cave tour?

A \$3 second-tour discount may apply to Historic, Domes and Dripstones, Frozen Niagara, and Mammoth Passage tours if purchased in person at the park for tours on the same day only. Note: The entire Frozen Niagara Tour route is seen on the Domes and Dripstones Tour. Parts of Mammoth Passage Tour are seen on the Historic Tour.

### Getting Here

Mammoth Cave National Park is located near Interstate 65 in southcentral Kentucky, about 90 miles from both Louisville, KY and Nashville, TN. From the north, take exit 53 (Cave City); from the south, take Exit 48 (Park City). Signs will direct you to the park Visitor Center. Our address is 1 Mammoth Cave Parkway, Mammoth Cave, KY 42259

**We're in the Central Time Zone!**

## Reservations

Please note that Mammoth Cave National Park offers a number of guided tours underground. Demand can be high for these popular activities – cave tours can, and do, sell out. You may reserve tickets in advance for cave tours by calling (877)444-6777. Campground reservations are also available through this service. You may make reservations on the internet at:

[www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov)

### For Reservations...

By Phone: (877)444-6777

TDD (hearing impaired): (877)833-6777

Payment... 

### Cancellation...

Cancellation fees apply. Call (888)448-1474 for more information.

### Call Center Hours...

9:00 am–9:00 pm Central Time, 7 days a week.

Take a little time to ensure that the activity you have chosen is the best one for you. Cave tours and nature walks can be strenuous, so be sure you understand what will be required before the start of your activity. If you are unsure, ask a park ranger to explain what will be required of you. NEVER let someone talk you into doing an activity if you feel uneasy about it. Youth under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult 18 years or older on all tours. ▶Cave and surface trails are uneven and slippery so be sure you have the proper footwear. Always look before you step. ▶All cave tours require shirts and shoes for admittance. ▶Backpacks extending above shoulder height, camera tripods or monopods, child strollers and infant backpack carriers are not allowed in the cave for visitor safety and resource protection. ▶Walking sticks and canes are permitted on cave tours only when needed for personal stability or support. ▶Flash photography is not allowed on cave tours. ▶To protect air quality, smoking is not permitted in the cave or at cave entrances. ▶Year-round cave temperature in interior passageways fluctuates from the mid-50s to the low 60s (in degrees Fahrenheit). However, winter temperatures can be below freezing at entrances. Generally, you will be comfortable wearing long pants and bringing a sweater or jacket.



### Camping & Picnic Shelter Fees

Location	Site Type	Regular	Special Access
Mammoth Cave CG	Regular	\$20.00	\$10
Mammoth Cave CG	Group - MC	\$25.00	
Mammoth Cave CG	VIP	\$50.00	\$25.00
Maple Springs Group CG	Group - MS	\$25.00	
Maple Springs Group CG	Horses - No Hookups	\$25.00	
Maple Springs Group CG	Horses - Hookups	\$35.00	
Houchin Ferry CG	Primitive Frontcountry	\$12.00	\$6.00

Mammoth Cave Campground is open March 1 - November 30.

Maple Springs Group Campground is open March 1 - November 30.

Houchin Ferry Campground is open year-round.

### Picnic Shelters

Open Shelter \$50.00

Limited availability.

Enclosed Shelter \$75.00

Enclosed shelter; available weekends from March 1 to Memorial Day; Daily from Memorial Day to Labor Day, and weekends from Labor Day to November 30.



## ▲ Surface Activities

## Underground Tours ▼

### Mammoth Passage Tour

►Visit the Rotunda, one of the largest rooms in the cave and explore a vast canyon passageway. Learn about prehistoric Native American explorers, saltpeter mining operations, and basic cave geology. This is a short introductory tour to Mammoth Cave. ►1¼ hours, ¾ mile. *Tour limit: 40. Total stairs: 160. Elevation change: 160'.* ►Includes part of the Historic Tour and all of the Discovery Tour routes. Offered as visitation warrants. Call the Park the day of your visit to check availability. Includes a steep outdoor hillside trail to and from the cave's natural entrance. This tour does not see dripstone formation areas. Not available by reservation. ►Meets at the Visitor Center. **Difficulty: Easy.**



### Frozen Niagara Tour

►The Frozen Niagara Entrance provides easy access to this decorative area of the cave. Walk through a fairyland of formations to learn how dripstone is formed. An optional 49 step staircase takes visitors under the Frozen Niagara formation to the Drapery Room. This easy trip is ideal for people who want a short introduction to Mammoth Cave. A ten minute bus ride to and from the entrance is included. ►1¼ hours, ¼ mile. *Tour limit: 36. Total stairs: 12, plus an optional 98. Elevation change: 50'.* ►Includes part of the Domes and Dripstones Tour and Grand Avenue Tour routes. ►Meets at the Visitor Center. **Difficulty: Easy.**

### Mammoth Cave Discovery Tour

►Visit one of the largest rooms in the cave and explore a vast canyon passageway. Learn about prehistoric explorers, saltpeter mining, early owners and basic cave geology on this self-guiding tour. Rangers are on hand along this short introductory tour. ►½ hour, ¾ mile. *Total stairs: 160. Elevation change: 160'.* ►Includes part of the Historic Tour and all of the Mammoth Passage Tour routes. Offered as visitation warrants. Call the Park the day of your visit to check availability. Includes a steep outdoor hillside trail to and from the cave's natural entrance. Not available by reservation. ►Meets at the Historic Entrance. **Difficulty: Easy.**

### Heritage Walk

►Travel with us along the Heritage Trail to learn how early residents interacted with the landscape, and the role the Green River and cave systems played in their communities. This boardwalk trail travels along a forested ridge, with a scenic overlook of the Green River valley from Sunset Point. ►¾ hour, ¾ mile. ►Meets at the Visitor Center Back Porch. **Difficulty: Easy.** ♿

All ranger-led surface activities are free of charge!

### Sand Cave Almanac

►The tragic cave entrapment and death of Kentucky caver Floyd Collins captivated Americans in 1925 and this story remains popular today. This activity begins at the Sand Cave Trailhead. Visitors use personal vehicles to join a ranger-led caravan to various sites associated with the life and death of Floyd Collins. ►1½-2 hours, ¾ mile. *Elevation change: 0'.* ►The caravan will drive 5.2 miles from Sand Cave Trailhead to Mammoth Cave Baptist Church. ►Meets at the Sand Cave Trailhead. **Difficulty: Easy.** ♿ with assistance

### Evening Program

►Join a park ranger for a special program at the wheelchair accessible Outdoor Amphitheater. A different topic is presented each evening with topics such as bats, geology, cave life, and the Civil War. Check at the Visitor Center to learn about currently scheduled topics. ►¾ hour. ►Consider carrying a flashlight for added safety on the walkways following the program. ►Meets at the Park Amphitheatre. ♿

### Campfire Program

►Join a park ranger for a special program at an informal setting. Various topics will be shared with props and stories; ranger's choice. Check at the Visitor Center to learn about currently scheduled topics. The Campfire Circle is located adjacent to site #97, Loop "D". ►¾ hour. ►Consider carrying a flashlight for added safety on the walkways following the program after dark. ►Meets at the Campfire Circle, Mammoth Cave Campground. ♿ with assistance



For full park information, go online to [www.nps.gov/mac](http://www.nps.gov/mac) or call 270.758.2180.

INTRODUCTORY CAVE TOURS

GENERAL CAVE TOURS



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### Historic Tour

►Feel the same excitement that intrigued our earliest explorers and visitors. Leave initial large passages behind to descend into deeper levels. Cross over Bottomless Pit, squeeze through Fat Man's Misery, clamber up Mammoth Dome tower to return to the Historic Entrance. ►2 hours, 2 miles. *Tour limit: 120. Total stairs: 440, including 155 at Mammoth Dome. Elevation change: 300'.* ►Limited areas of the Discovery, Mammoth Passage, Star Chamber, River Styx and Violet City Lantern Tours are visited on this route. This tour does not visit dripstone formation areas. ►Meets at the Visitor Center. **Difficulty: Moderate.**

### Domes and Dripstones Tour

►Wind down through deep pits and high domes via a 280 step staircase. Vertical cave gives way to large canyons and underground hill climbs. Visit the Frozen Niagara formation, then pass through one of the caves most decorative dripstone areas. A ten minute bus ride to and from the entrances is included. ►2 hours, ¾ mile. *Tour limit: 114. Total stairs: 500, including 280 on initial descent. Elevation change: 250'.* ►Includes the complete Frozen Niagara Tour route and a portion of the Grand Avenue Tour route. ►Meets at the Visitor Center. **Difficulty: Moderate.**

### Grand Avenue Tour

►This physically demanding trip gives you an excellent perspective of the size and complexity of the Mammoth Cave system. Learn of the interwoven natural and cultural history of the cave as you journey through some of the cave's most dramatic passages. ►4 hours, 4 miles. *Tour limit: 78. Age limit: 6 and older. Total stairs: 670. Elevation change: 280'.* ►All of the Frozen Niagara Tour, and a portion of the Domes and Dripstones Tour, are seen on this tour. Not recommended for visitors who have heart or respiratory illnesses, diabetes or walking difficulties. Hills may rise more than 60' in places. There will be no lunch stop. ►Meets at the Visitor Center. **Difficulty: Strenuous.**

SPECIALTY CAVE TOURS

### Violet City Lantern Tour

►Walk through miles of large passages by lantern light. Relive the stories and illusions of almost 200 years of tourism as the guides recreate the rugged nature of early tours. The flickering flame and rustic trails in this area make it seem as if time stands still in the cave. ►3 hours, 3 miles. *Tour limit: 38. Age limit: 6 and older. Total stairs: 160, and numerous hills without handrails. Elevation change: 160'.* ►Includes parts of the Historic, Gothic Avenue, Star Chamber, and Mammoth Passage Tour routes. Lanterns may cause some discomfort for visitors with respiratory illnesses. Only adults may carry lanterns. Good walking shoes recommended. ►Meets at the Visitor Center. **Difficulty: Strenuous.**



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### Star Chamber Tour

►Leave waning daylight behind as you enter the Historic Entrance by lantern light. See the cave as it was seen by early tourists. Gaze upward in the Star Chamber as a traditional illusion is recreated. Follow your guide into mystical Gothic Avenue. Retrace your steps and exit the cave to Kentucky's nocturnal landscape. ►2½ hours, 1½ miles. *Tour limit: 40. Age limit: 6 and older. Total stairs: 260. Elevation change: 160'.* ►Includes parts of the Historic Tour, Violet City Lantern Tour, Gothic Avenue Tour, Discovery and Mammoth Passage Tour routes. Lanterns may cause some discomfort for visitors with respiratory illnesses. Only adults may carry lanterns. ►Meets at the Visitor Center. **Difficulty: Moderate.**



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### Gothic Avenue Tour

►Some areas of Mammoth Cave just seem magical, and this tour visits one of them. Entering through the Historic Entrance. Visitors pass through the Rotunda before entering Gothic Avenue. This area showcases hundreds of candle-smoked signatures and monuments of stacked limestone dating back through the cave's early years of tourism. Gothic is considered one of the most historically significant passageways still toured today. ►2 hours, 1½ miles. *Tour limit: 40. Total stairs: 260. Elevation change: 160'.* ►Portions of this tour are also seen on the Historic, Mammoth Passage, Star Chamber and Violet City Lantern Tour routes. ►Meets at the Visitor Center. **Difficulty: Moderate.**

### Great Onyx Lantern Tour

►A great cave activity for returning visitors, this trip includes a bus ride through a forested valley to another historically toured cave within the national park. Coleman lanterns illuminate a series of beautifully sculpted decorative rooms and passageways. ►2¼ hours, 1 mile. *Tour limit: 38. Age limit: 6 and older. Total stairs: 40. Elevation change: 30'.* ►This cave is not known to be connected to the greater Mammoth Cave System. Bus ride included in tour duration. Gas lanterns may cause some discomfort for visitors with respiratory illnesses. Only adults may carry lanterns. Entrance steps are uneven with a low ceiling. ►Meets at the Visitor Center. **Difficulty: Moderate.**

### Cleveland Avenue Tour

►Take a one mile stroll through the beautifully elliptical Cleveland Avenue encrusted with gypsum formations in various crystalline shapes and sizes. Arrive one mile later in the Snowball Room before back tracking to the Carmichael entrance. ►2.5 hours, 2 miles. *Tour limit: 38. Total stairs: 366 (183 in and out). Elevation change: 267'.* ►This entire route is seen on the Grand Avenue Tour. Restroom facilities and water fountains will be available in the Snowball Room. However, no food or beverages, other than water, are permitted or provided. ►Meets at the Visitor Center. **Difficulty: Moderate.**



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SPELUNKING ADVENTURES

### Introduction to Caving

►A wild caving challenge for new cavers or families! Designed for both adults and kids 10 years and up. Learn the rules and techniques of safe caving, and an appreciation of this special environment. Similar to Wild Cave Tour, but shorter and less difficult. ►3½ hours, 1 mile. *Tour limit: 20. Age limit: 10 and older. Total stairs: 280+. Elevation change: 250'.* ►An adult must accompany visitors under age 18. Organized youth groups must have at least two adult representatives accompanying minor children. Chest or hip measurement must not exceed 42 inches; if you are larger, you cannot physically pass through the crawlspaces. Lace-up hiking boots with good tread, and that cover the ankle, are required. No slick-soled footwear or tennis shoes are permitted. You will not be allowed to participate in the tour if you are not wearing proper footwear – no exceptions. Shorts and tee-shirts are recommended for wear under coveralls. Please bring an extra pair of shoes or sandals for use during boot cleaning after the tour. All equipment and outerwear provided; no personal caving equipment allowed. Requires at least 2 participants. ►Meets at the Visitor Center. **Difficulty: Strenuous.**

### Wild Cave Tour

►A wild caving challenge for adults only. Venture into miles of undeveloped passageways no other tour sees. Be prepared for free-climbing, lengthy crawls, wet areas, and tight openings. good physical condition is essential. ►6-6½ hours, 5 miles. *Tour limit: 14. Age Limit: 16+; proof of age may be requested. Elevation change: 300'.* ►An adult must accompany visitors under age 18. Organized youth groups must have at least two adult representatives accompanying minor children. ►Chest or hip measurement must not exceed 42 inches; if you are larger you cannot physically pass through the crawlspaces. ►Lace-up hiking boots with good tread, and that cover the ankle, are required. No slicked-soled footwear or tennis shoes are permitted. You will not be allowed to participate in the tour without proper footwear – no exceptions. ►Shorts and tee-shirts are recommended for wear under coveralls. Please bring an extra pair of shoes or sandals for use during boot cleaning after the tour. All equipment and outerwear provided; no personal caving equipment allowed. ►Visitors will need to bring their own lunch or snacks and water bottle. A small fanny pack will be provided. Requires at least two participants. ►Meets at the Visitor Center. **Difficulty: Very Strenuous.**



Sign language interpreters may be provided on cave tours by calling 270.758.2180 at least two weeks prior to the reserved tour(s).