

TOWNSEND VISITOR CENTER

FOOTHILLS PARKWAY

CADES COVE

TAIL OF THE DRAGON

CHEROHALA SKYWAY

TOWNSEND TO GATLINBURG
TO PIGEON FORGE

GATLINBURG TO CLINGMAN'S DOME
TO CHEROKEE, NC (from Townsend)*

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

DEALS GAP TO CHEROKEE

SMOKY MOUNTAIN
HARLEY-DAVIDSON
FULL SERVICE DEALERSHIP



SMOKY MOUNTAIN
HARLEY-DAVIDSON
OUTPOST



ALL ADVENTURES START IN
TOWNSEND

TOWNSEND
GPS COORDINATES
N35° 40.353
W83° 45.317

ALL ADVENTURES
START HERE!

Townsend to Clingman's Dome to Cherokee, NC
TRAVEL TIME: 4 hours

When you ride this route from the lowest elevations to the highest, it is similar to a trip from Georgia to Maine! Observe the changes in the forest communities from pines and oaks on up to spruce and fir on the topmost peaks. From The Townsend Visitors Center, take a short journey down Highway 321N and continue straight on Highway 73, also known as Little River Road. Turn left and travel through the Great Smoky Mountains National Park following the signs to Sugarlands Visitor Center or Gatlinburg. At Sugarlands, take US 441 South toward Newfound Gap—at the boundary of Tennessee and North Carolina in the Park. The Roosevelt Memorial at Newfound Gap commemorates the establishment of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Rest rooms are available. Leaving the parking lot at Newfound Gap, turn left onto 441 S and then take a quick right onto the Clingman's Dome Road.

Clingman's Dome, with an elevation of 6,643 feet, is the highest point in the Smokies, straddling the state-line ridge. Vistas from The Dome are spectacular. On the clear days of fall and winter, views expand over 100 miles. Return to the intersection and continue across the mountain, staying on 441 South into Cherokee, NC, where the homeland of the Cherokee Indians borders the National Park. Cherokee offers an excellent museum and a crafts cooperative with beautiful pottery, baskets, carving, and jewelry for sale by Native American artists. If you stay for a day or two in season, be sure to see "Unto These Hills" an outdoor drama of Cherokee history. Cherokee has many restaurants and a casino. In ideal driving conditions round trip ride times should be approximately 4 hours.

Blue Ridge Parkway
TRAVEL TIME: 4 hours to all day

Designated "America's Favorite Drive", the Blue Ridge Parkway is the most visited section of road in America's National Park System. A trip down the Parkway provides both stunning long-range vistas and close up encounters with the natural and cultural history of the Southern Appalachian Mountains. The Parkway connects Shenandoah National Park in Virginia (Skyline Drive) with Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina. The road climbs to elevations in excess of 6,000 feet, winding through the Balsam Mountains and ending at the Great Smoky Mountains National Park near Cherokee, NC. The 469 mile journey is designed as a drive-awhile and stop-awhile experience. In the spring and early summer, wildflowers, flame azalea, and rosebay and Catawba rhododendron line the road. In the fall, brilliant leaf colors weave a blanket of beauty.

There is no need to hurry! The Parkway incorporates several recreation areas, some exceeding 6,000 acres. Stop along the way at visitor centers, campgrounds, picnic areas, hiking trails, lodging, eateries and gas stations. The speed limit is on average 45 mph. While navigating the parkway, be on the lookout for deer, bear, raccoons and other wildlife. Be careful in particular at turn-offs, since motorists are often looking at the scenery instead of the traffic. From Townsend to the entrance of the Blue Ridge Parkway allow yourself approximately 1.5 hours in ideal driving conditions.

Townsend to Gatlinburg to Pigeon Forge
TRAVEL TIME: 4 hours

Begin your round trip trek in Townsend, TN, a quiet and scenic community along the Little River, and within a short drive to Cades Cove in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. This area is known as "The Peaceful Side of the Smokies" and showcases Appalachian heritage with outdoor activities, unique riverside or mountain top lodging, craft shops, a heritage museum, and numerous seasonal festivals. Leaving from the Townsend Visitors Center, take a short journey down Highway 321N, but continue straight toward the Park entrance on Highway 73, also known as Little River Road. Turn left at the "Y" and travel through the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Stop at the Sugarlands Visitor Center for exhibits, programs, and more information. Continue to Gatlinburg for restaurants, shops, and other activities, and then travel on 441N to Pigeon Forge, with its array of outlet malls, and other attractions. From Pigeon Forge, complete your round trip by turning left from Highway 441 onto US 321 S (Wears Valley Road) towards Townsend. Travel approximately 15 miles back to Townsend. In ideal driving conditions, round trip ride times should be approximately 4 hours.

WITHOUT A DOUBT, THE
GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS
IN NORTH CAROLINA
AND TENNESSEE, WITH
BEAUTIFUL SCENERY,
SWEEPING ROADS, AND
FRIENDLY PEOPLE, IS ONE
OF THE BEST PLACES ON
EARTH TO EXPERIENCE
A DRIVING ADVENTURE!

SUGGESTED DAY TRIPS



Cherochala Skyway

TRAVEL TIME: 4-6 hours round trip

Cherochala Skyway, referred to as "The Ride Above the Clouds", is a remote 36 mile stretch of beautiful mountain highway that crosses the high country between Robbinsville, NC and Tellico Plains, TN. On this route you will be rewarded twice as you wind your way through the Cherokee National Forest as well as the Nantahala National Forest, hence the name Cherochala. This top of the ridges route climbs to elevations of over 5400 feet, so expect average temperatures to be 20 degrees cooler in the higher elevations. Enjoy a picnic at one of the spectacular overlooks, many with picnic tables, or take a short hike on one of the trails. There are several rest area facilities, but no gas stations, eateries, or overnight lodging on the Skyway. You can reach the Skyway either from the Tennessee side, by traveling from Townsend to Maryville, and then Highway 41 S to Highway 68 to Tellico Plains, or from the North Carolina side, by traveling from Townsend to Robbinsville, NC via Highway 129 S, along "The Dragon".

For the motorcyclist: Be sure to think about safety all along this route. Check your tire pressure, wear protective gear, and watch for a variety of other traffic, including many motorcycles, as well as trucks, campers, and vehicles with trailers. Stay in your lane and practice defensive driving. The Dragon has received accolades from motorcycle publications around the world and is considered by many to be among the most exciting motorcycle roads in America. Once through The Dragon, you can return to Townsend by a variety of routes on the NC side of the Smokies, or by simply backtracking, which will provide you with an approximate 3 hour round trip. Or, you can proceed to Robbinsville, NC and pick up the Cherochala Skyway, making a half day or more trip. Obey speed limits, enjoy the adventure, and ride safely!

Are you ready to ride or drive what has become affectionately known by motorcycle enthusiasts from around the world as "The Dragon"? This twisting road stretches from Chilhowee Lake, on the Tennessee side, along Highway 129 to Deal's Gap, NC. Start at the Townsend Visitor Center, along Highway 321 S, turn left and travel to the scenic Foothills Parkway. You will be on the parkway for approximately 20 miles before the road intersects with US Highway 129. Turn left (south) on 129, where The Dragon awaits you 3 miles ahead. Test your skills with 318 curves in an 11-mile stretch.

The Dragon

TRAVEL TIME: 3 hours

A visit to Cades Cove in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park is a journey back in time. Cades Cove is a beautiful valley surrounded by high peaks. An 11-mile one way loop road circles the Cove. All along the route, and on various pathways, are the log homes, barns, churches, and cemeteries of this 19th century community. Take a camera, as the wildlife is abundant—especially in the early morning and the evening—and the views across the valley are spectacular. Fill up with gas and snacks ahead of time, as this journey in the National Park offers an experience centered on appreciation of nature and history rather than commercial attractions. There are modern restroom facilities located at the campground amphitheater and half way around the loop at the Visitor Center. **The start of the loop is seven miles** from Townsend and the entire 11 miles can take up to 4 hours to complete, depending upon the traffic, which is heavy during the summer and at fall color times. The Cades Cove Loop Drive is open from sunrise to sunset with a lazy speed limit of 20 mph. There are plenty of places to pull off the road or park, allowing faster traffic to proceed. If you are looking to sneak out of the Cove, head on out either Rich Mountain Road (good gravel), which will lead you back to Townsend or Parson Branch Primitive Road (gravel), which connects with US Highway 129 at the southwest end of the park and also leads to The Dragon. These roads are closed from mid-November to mid March. Both of these routes are one-way, going out of the Cove.

Townsend to Cades Cove

TRAVEL TIME: up to 4 hours, depending on traffic

Short but sweet, with views of many high ridges of the northwestern Smokies, the 20 mile Foothills Parkway, part of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, connects the community of Walland to Chilhowee Lake. On this road less traveled, you'll see Thunderhead Mountain extending into the sky 5,527 feet and considered the highest peak in the western half of the National Park. Many of the Parkway's south facing overlooks provide views over Happy Valley, across protected conservation lands, and on to North Carolina peaks in the distance. North facing vistas look out over Maryville, Knoxville, the Valley and Ridge geologic province, and on a clear day, you can park and hike up to Look Rock Tower, a half-mile on to the Cumberland Plateau. Halfway along the trek, you can park and hike up to Look Rock Tower, a half-mile hike. Access to the tower is free and offers a 360-degree panoramic view. Don't forget your camera! From The Townsend Visitors Center take US 321 S (actually going west towards Maryville), and travel 5 miles to the intersection of the Foothills Parkway. The Parkway is open year round, weather permitting. Allow yourself 2 hours in ideal driving conditions to complete this round trip journey leaving and ending in Townsend.

Foothills Parkway

TRAVEL TIME: 2 hours



MOTORCYCLISTS, DRIVING ENTHUSIASTS OR ANYONE LOOKING FOR EXCITING ADVENTURES ON SCENIC HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS WILL ENJOY THE MANY DRIVING ROUTES IN THE GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS.

Circle of the Smokies

TOWNSEND DAY TRIPS

Driving Adventures from Townsend Basecamp

Without a doubt, the Great Smoky Mountains in North Carolina and Tennessee, with beautiful scenery, sweeping roads, and friendly people, is one of the best places on earth to experience a driving adventure!

Smoky Mountain Convention & Visitors Bureau
Blount Partnership

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www.smokymountains.org

Find tourist information including accommodations, attractions, events and information on Cades Cove and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park

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Fax: (865) 984-1386
www.meetingsandmountains.com
Find listings of all airport accommodations.

