Backpacking the Smokey Mountains, Tennessee

May 9-15, 2015

One night in Roanoke hotel, all ground transportation, group equipment, trail meals, travel dinners, permits and fees. $345.00

Trip Overview

There's a lull after final exams—whether you're graduating or waiting for your summer job to start, there's at least a week where nothing happens. To fix that, GRAB will be running a backpacking trip to the Smokey Mountains. Come join us from the Sunday following exam week to the Friday before graduation to escape, recharge, and have some fun. End your year on a high note by working as a team to cover miles, take in the sights, and pile on a few accomplishments in this six day experience. The group will be completely self-sufficient, transporting all necessary equipment, food, and supplies for their five days of backpacking, and once the trip is done you should have all of the skills you need to plan a backpacking trip for yourself.

Each year more than nine million visitors find their way to Great Smokey National Park, and for good reason. We’ll beat the rush this May and take in the iconic fog-engulfed forests that made these mountains famous while hiking over mountains, streams, and through the lush vegetation of Tennessee.

General Schedule of Trip

Sunday, May 9th: Depart campus and drive halfway to TN, camp for the night

May 10: Reach the mountains and begin your backpacking trip

May 11-13: Backpacking in the Smokey Mountains

May 14: Emerge from the wilderness and drive to Roanoke for a night’s stay and a group dinner

Friday, May: Finish the drive back to Gettysburg to arrive in the early afternoon

Facilitators

This program will be facilitated by Annie Lewis and Stacey Heaver. A biochemistry and molecular biology major, Stacey has led three Ascent programs during her time at Gettysburg College, most recently to Shenandoah National Park. Annie, an environmental studies major, led our backpacking trip in British Columbia last May. Both Annie and Stacey carry Wilderness First Responder certifications, and the two have led for GRAB for a combined six years.

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Registration and Payment: Register online at www.gettysburg.edu/grab. A $150 non-refundable deposit is due at time of registration to secure a place on the trip of your choice. We accept Visa, Mastercard, Discover, e-checks or cash. The final payment will be required 60 days prior the trip departure date. To register, please fill out the online form or call John Regentin at 717.337.6319 to register over the phone/or to receive a fax.

Not Included in the Price: Hospitalization, individual evacuation costs, insurance, souvenirs, alcohol, or other personal expenses incurred outside the scope of the trip will not be included.

The Trek: The group will hike between 8-10 miles a day for an average of 4-5 hours, which includes stops for lunch & breaks, appreciating the sites, general conversation, and choosing a route.

Group Size: The trip consists of two facilitators from the Office of Experiential Education and up to eight participants from the Gettysburg College community; students, employees and families, and alumni of the college are all welcome.

Transportation: All transportation to and from the trail is included in the price of this program. If you plan on traveling further following the trip or would like to leave from somewhere other than campus you will need to speak to your facilitators in advance.

Accommodations: Accommodations for this trip will include a combination of developed and undeveloped camp sites, and the group will spend each of these nights in tents provided by GRAB. The final night the group will stay in a hotel in Roanoke. Camp ground fees and the cost of the hotel are included in the price of this program.

Meals: On the trail, breakfast, lunch and dinner will be provided each day, and you will learn how to cook delicious meals on a backpacking stove Participants will be responsible for travel meals and any additional snacks off the trail and while traveling to and from Tennessee.

Weather: Weather in this region varies greatly at this time of year, but expect lows in the mid 40s, and daily highs in the 70s. Expect to encounter at least a few days or rain as well. As the group climbs to higher altitude the temperature will drop as well, so be prepared for a variety of conditions.

Physical Preparation: You do not need to be a top notch athlete to participate on this program, but preparation will make the trip much more enjoyable. Exercising 3-5 days a week and walking with a 30 pound pack to get used to the weight are great ways to prepare. No prior experience hiking is required, and all backcountry skills and expectations will be covered during the trip and pre-trip meetings.

Health and Medical & Release of Liability: We require each participant to fill out medical/liability forms for Gettysburg College and for any contracted services who request similar documentation. We can provide information on short term insurance that covers baggage, accident/life, and trip cancellation which is required for our international programs. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Cancellation of Trips: We reserve the right to cancel trips due to lack of participants, State Department warnings, or natural occurrences that may be potentially hazardous. If you cancel the trip 60 days or more from the departure date, you will receive a full refund minus the $150 deposit. If cancellation occurs 45 -60 days prior to the departure date a 50% refund is available. If cancellation occurs 21 - 45 days prior to the trip a 25% refund will be available. There will be no refunds for cancellations made within 21 days of the expedition.