



The Cherokee Path



Ninety Six National Historic Site preserves a portion of the Cherokee Path for visitors to enjoy.

The Cherokee Path was once a direct route for traders and trappers, Native Americans, and settlers too exchanged merchandise between the backcountry and the Carolina coast. The path stretched from the lower Cherokee town of Keowee (near Clemson, SC) to the Congaree River. The path then forked north to the Catawba Nation and south to Charles Towne (Charleston).

The Cherokee Path became increasingly important because of its connection to the developing trade economy in the Carolinas. One merchant, Robert Gouedy, established his trading post at Ninety Six, where he traded goods with the Cherokees.

Through archeological research, the Cherokee Path's sunken remains are observed as a reminder of the past. The path connected people through transportation and business which gave way to a stable trade route from the coast to the interior. The once crucial path fell into decay after the slow decline of Cherokee trade and warfare. As a result, the Cherokee Path faded as a landmark except in a few places. Today, you can hike the existing Cherokee Path at Ninety Six just as Native Americans and explorers did.



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The Cherokee Path Trail is 1.5 miles point-to-point and indicated by blue blazes. This woodland trail leads to remnants of the Old Cherokee Path, which ran from the Carolina coast northwest through Ninety Six, to the Cherokee town of Keowee.