

Backcountry Camping Trip Guide

Four Nights

National Park Service
U. S. Department of the Interior
Shenandoah National Park
Emergency: 1-800-732-0911



Jones, Furnace, Lewis Peak, and Big Run

Standard - Circuit

Level: Advanced

Total Length: 32 to 42 miles

Trip Description: Spectacular mountains, three waterfalls, wilderness valley, and geology

Entry: 81 MP - Big Run OL/Doyles River Pkg

Exit: 81 MP - Big Run OL/Doyles River Pkg

Map(s): PATC #11 South District

Day One

Campsite: Doyles River Trail - backcountry

2.3 miles

Hike down Doyles River Trail for 2.2 miles.

Find a place to camp downstream from the confluence of Doyles River and Jones Run.

Day Two

Campsite: Furnace Mtn Trail - backcountry

8 to 9 miles

Hike upstream on Jones Run Trail, hiking 2.5 miles.

Turn left onto the Appalachian Trail (AT), hiking 1.3 miles.

Turn right onto Blackrock Spur Trail and hike 0.1 mile.

Turn right onto Trayfoot Mountain Trail and hike 0.5 mile.

Turn right onto Furnace Mountain Trail, hiking 3.4 miles.

Camping option one – There are good places to camp off to your left (west) 1/3 mile before you reach Madison Run.

Or, turn right onto Madison Run Fire Road and hike one mile for camping option two:

Camping option two -- Across from the Austin Mountain Trail intersection, look for camping options on the far bank of Madison Run.

Day Three

Campsite: Lewis Peak - backcountry

8.4 miles

Turn right onto Madison Run Fire Road (if you camped on Furnace Mountain Trail) and hike 0.6 mile.

Turn left onto Austin Mountain Trail, hiking 3.2 miles.

Turn left onto Rockytop Trail and hike 2.2 miles.

Turn left onto Lewis Peak Trail and hike 2.4 miles.

Find a place to camp in this remote, seldom-visited portion of Shenandoah's designated wilderness.

Day Four

Campsite: Big Run Portal/Loop Trails - backcountry

6 to 8 miles

Hike back up Lewis Peak Trail, 2.4 miles.

Turn left onto Rockytop Trail and hike 3.5 miles.

Turn right onto Big Run Portal Trail, hiking to stream before looking for a campsite.

Be sure to use a pre-existing campsite if you want to hike the optional dayhike. Look for options downstream on the eastern bank.

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Day Five

4.2 to 6.2 miles

Hike upstream on Big Run Portal Trail (2 to 4 miles depending on campsite).

Turn left onto Big Run Loop Trail, hiking 2.2 miles.

Cross Skyline Drive to return to your vehicle.

Notes

Lewis Peak is a seldom-explored area and the trail may be difficult to follow in places, therefore this trip is only recommended for advanced backcountry campers skilled in navigation and finding pristine campsites.

The multiple stream crossings on Big Run Portal can be knee to waist high when the water is up. Beware in the spring and after heavy rains!

Options

Optional extra day camping on Big Run – circuit dayhike of 8.7 miles

Leave your camp set up with permit on tent. Properly store your food items and take valuables with you.

Hike upstream to Rocky Mountain Trail on Big Run Portal Trail.

Turn onto Rocky Mountain Run Trail and hike 2.7 miles.

Turn left onto Brown Mountain Trail, hiking 4.6 miles.

Return to your campsite on Big Run Portal Trail.