

Welcome to Ruby Falls!

We're excited to share this adventure with you.

Keep in mind this is a natural cave, and the cavern trail is narrow with some lower head-clearance areas, so please watch your head.

Please watch your step for slippery spots and use handrails where provided.

We hope you enjoy your journey!



Cactus & Candle

Ruby Falls Cavern opened for tours on June 6, 1930. Building up to that big day, we blasted through the mountain using 15,000 lbs. of dynamite to create the elevator shaft and pulled out 5 million pounds of limestone – the same limestone used to build the Cavern Castle, which some called the World's Most Magnificent Cave Entrance.

The trail through the cavern was carefully planned to avoid disturbing the underground streams and ancient formations. Stalagmites rising up from the ground, stalactites suspended from the ceiling, and columns where the two meet and join together were all created by water and the mineral calcite dripping through cracks in the limestone. Drop by drop, the tiny calcite deposits build up very slowly over time to create formations, each as unique as a fingerprint. Without water, the lifecycle of the formation ends.

We ask that you not touch any formations in the cave. It is against state law to write on, deface, or break cave formations. For your safety, please stay with your guide.



Hall of Dreams

As you might imagine, formations in the cave grow very slowly, but it might surprise you just how slowly it happens. Nature is a patient artist.

With a growth rate of only half an inch every 100 years, the creation of formations in the cave spans across a great many centuries. Their distinctive characteristics are miraculous – fabric-like draperies flowing from limestone, curly helictites defying gravity, delicate straw-shaped capillary tubes hanging from the ceiling, and mounds of flowstone resembling lava.

The shapes are determined by location and rate of water flow with mineral content influencing their color—white from calcium carbonate, brownish-red from iron oxide, and black from manganese. Every formation is a unique work of art.

You are now approximately halfway to the falls. For your safety, please watch your head, use handrails as provided, and stay with your guide.



Bacon

Looking up through crevices along the path reveals hidden wonders.

Overhead formations like cave bacon, with its coloring from iron oxide, is one of the many interesting shapes found in the cavern.

Nature paints a beautiful, and sometimes peculiar, underground landscape.

It has been our pleasure to share Ruby Falls with you. Be sure to enjoy the views from historic Lookout Mountain Tower and Blue Heron Overlook. You can access these areas from the stairs or elevator in the ticket atrium.

RUBY FALLS®

Inspiring *extraordinary* connections to nature through *wonder* and *adventure*.