

2025 Fact Sheet RUBY FALLS



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Park Overview

Ruby Falls is home to the tallest underground waterfall open to the public in the United States. The park, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, offers guided tours of the cave discovered 97 years ago, soaring ziplines, breathtaking views of the Cumberland Plateau, luxury treehouse lodging, and a historic castle featuring a casual and beautiful private event venue. Welcoming over half a million visitors annually, the park's diverse ecosystem fosters deep connections to nature through unique adventures on Lookout Mountain in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Pick a cave adventure and descend 260 feet by glass-front elevator into the cavern hidden deep within Lookout Mountain. Explore the cave on a guided walk along the scenic trail to the breathtaking waterfall. Discover the cave's history, see ancient geological formations, experience the waterfall lightshow, and get inspired by nature.



Photo by Sam Fentress

RUBY FALLS

Our Story: Big Dreams & Accidental Discovery



Ruby and Leo Lambert

Leo Lambert learned about the rich history and folklore of Lookout Mountain Cave shortly after he married his high school sweetheart, Ruby Losey, in 1916. He spent the next decade researching ways to access the long-sealed cave and open it to the public.

Finally in 1928, backed by \$250,000 from investors, Leo hired a crew, and they began excavating a 420-foot elevator shaft through solid limestone. If calculations were correct, the elevator would descend into Lookout Mountain Cave. Park visitors would board the elevator from a stately limestone castle.

At a depth of 260-feet below ground, they unexpectedly uncovered a narrow opening. Leo spent 17 hours exploring the mysterious passage, discovering underground streams, dramatic ancient rock formations, and a plunging waterfall which Leo named Ruby Falls, in honor of his wife.

Excavation continued another 160 feet, reaching Lookout Mountain Cave! Leo's calculations were correct, and Lookout Mountain Cave opened to the public amid great excitement in December 1929, followed by Ruby Falls Cave six months later.

Although the nation was struggling through the Great Depression, Leo's vision for the park endured and the park was a symbol of resilience. Visiting Ruby Falls became a cherished tradition, shared between generations.

Leo Lambert's determination and love for adventure forged a legacy. Ruby Falls continues to inspire guests, blending the timeless wonder of nature and adventure with southern hospitality and priceless memories.

RUBY FALLS®

General Information

HOURS

Open Daily, Closed December 25

LOCATION

Just minutes from downtown Chattanooga, TN, on Lookout Mountain.

TICKETS

Tickets sold online at [RubyFalls.com](https://www.RubyFalls.com). All tickets give entry on a specific date and time.

Cave Walk to the Waterfall:

\$18.95 – \$28.95

Free admission for ages 3 and under

Lantern Tour

\$41.95, appropriate for ages 10 – adults

Gentle Walking Tour

\$39.95, children younger than 12 are not permitted

History Tour

\$39.95, appropriate for ages 12 - adults

Cave Walk: Adults Exclusive

\$28.95, for guests ages 15 and up

Geology Tour

\$39.95, appropriate for guests ages 5 and up

Annual Pass

\$32.95 – \$52.95



New for 2025

There is always something new to discover at Ruby Falls

NEW GEOLOGY CAVE ADVENTURE LAUNCHES IN SEPTEMBER

Discover the incredible geology of the cave and ancient formations while exploring the cavern trail to the thundering waterfall with a senior-level guide. This brand-new specialty tour stops along the trail to learn how the cave was formed, the science behind the largest and most curious geological formations in the cave, and how they have changed over time.

NEW ADULT EXCLUSIVE CAVE WALK LAUNCHES IN JULY

This classic Cave Walk is reserved for ages 15 and up. Enjoy a guided, express walk through the cave to the waterfall in a large, all-adult group format, featuring a basic overview about the cave with recorded audio.

NEW CHATTANOOGA HISTORY EXHIBIT OPENS IN AUGUST

Building the Big Nine: A Legacy of Black Excellence, curated by Dr. Stefanie Haire, explores the profound influence, enduring spirit, and achievements of the historic Big Nine business district in Chattanooga that flourished in the 1890s through the mid-20th century.

RUBY FALLS®

Conservation

Recognized as a leader in tourism sustainability, Ruby Falls is committed to inspiring extraordinary connections to nature by protecting and preserving the natural wonders of the cave and park for generations to come.

Ruby Falls is the first attraction in the United States to earn Green Globe certification, the respected worldwide standard for sustainability; and a recipient of the Governor's Environmental Stewardship Award for Excellence in Building Green. The park's Atrium Hospitality Center, Village Gift Shop and Village Plaza are Bronze LEED certified. The park, including Ruby Falls Cave and historic Ruby Falls Castle, circa 1929, are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Water and energy conservation, electric vehicle charging stations, solar energy, reduction of emissions, LED lighting, recycling, natural habitat protection, organic waste composting, sourcing sustainable business products, using environmentally sensitive building design and materials, plus a 16,000-gallon rainwater collection system for irrigation are just a few of the ways sustainability is at the core our business practices.

Accessibility Overview

Low sensory tours available by request with two weeks advance notice. Due to natural formations throughout the cave, there are narrow passages and small groupings of steps; the cavern is not wheelchair or stroller accessible. Cave adventure guests must be ambulatory. Designated parking for guests with a valid handicap parking permit.

Wheelchair accessible venues include: Blue Heron Overlook, Village Plaza, Skyline Loft Event Venue, Hospitality Atrium, Village Gift Shop, Back Porch Dining (seasonal), Restrooms, Castle Café, Castle Front Porch. Historic Lookout Mountain Tower viewing decks built prior to current accessibility standards are accessed by stairs. Detailed accessibility information is available by contacting the park at info@rubyfalls.com.



Cave Adventures

Adventure awaits!

Discover ancient geological wonders and a thundering waterfall hidden deep within Lookout Mountain on a guided cave adventure. The scenic journey to the waterfall begins in a glass-front elevator descending 260 feet into historic Lookout Mountain followed by a guide-led walk along the cavern trail with up-close views of remarkable formations. The round-trip walk is just under 1-mile and the year-round, 60-degree cave temperature keeps guests comfortable.

CAVE WALK TO THE WATERFALL

Daily

See the hidden beauty of Ruby Falls with an express Cave Walk to the Waterfall led by a Ruby Falls guide. The express walk features a basic overview of the cave with video and audio presentations in a large group format. Learn the story behind the cave's accidental discovery, see stunning ancient geological formations and experience the thundering waterfall. Admission includes a short movie, light show at the waterfall, guided walk, and access to historic Lookout Mountain Tower and Blue Heron Overlook, giving sweeping views of the Cumberland Plateau.

LOW-SENSORY CAVE WALK TO THE WATERFALL

Available by request with advance reservation.

Low sensory tours provide a guided, early-access, reduced-sensory walk through the cavern to the waterfall. The adventure is customized for the comfort level of guests with special sensory needs and their families. This experience is available by advance request at 7:45 AM, Monday-Friday, with a minimum 2-week notice.

[More Cave Adventures on the next page.]



RUBY FALLS®



LANTERN TOUR

Friday After Hours and by Advance Request for Groups of 8 or More

Explore the waterfall and cavern on an after-hours Friday night tour, illuminated only by the light of hand-held lanterns. Ancient formations take on intriguing dimensions in the shadows as guides share stories exclusive to this tour and light the falls using a system of pulleys and lanterns, creating an unforgettable Friday night. This specialty tour features extra time at the waterfall, a smaller group experience and a laid-back pace. See the moonlit view and star filled sky from historic Lookout Mountain Tower. Guests younger than 10 years old are not permitted on Lantern Tours.

GENTLE WALKING TOUR

Select Dates and by Advance Request for Groups of 8 or More

Gentle Walking Tours offer a slower-paced journey through the cavern with early-access to the waterfall and in-depth information with a senior-level guide. This specialty tour, ideal for anyone preferring a very gentle pace and a love of history, is available select dates, year-round. Gentle Walking Tours include extra time at the waterfall, viewing of the mini-movie presentation of The Story of Ruby Falls, waterfall lightshow, and is limited to a small number of participants. This experience is for adults and children ages 12+

HISTORY TOUR

Select Dates and by Advance Request for Groups of 8 or More

Discover the lore and rich history of Ruby Falls from a senior-level guide while exploring the cavern trail to the thundering waterfall. This brand-new adventure features a limited number of participants and stories of legendary events and happenings from our 95-year history. Purchase tickets online to secure a spot. This experience is for adults and children age 12+.

GEOLOGY TOUR – NEW TOUR BEGINNING FALL 2025

Select Dates and by Advance Request for Groups of 8 or More

Discover the incredible geology of the cave and ancient formations while exploring the cavern trail to the thundering waterfall on the new Geology Tour. Led by a senior-level guide, this brand-new special tour stops along the trail to learn how the cave was formed, the science behind the largest and most curious geological formations in the cave, and how they have changed over time. This tour is for adults and children age 5+.

RUBY FALLS®

Scenic Views

Views of the Cumberland Plateau and Tennessee River are exceptional due to the park's ideal vantage point on Lookout Mountain. Upper and lower decks of Historic Lookout Mountain Tower, built in 1929, and wheelchair accessible Blue Heron Overlook offer unmatched views of the peaceful Tennessee River, green valleys, and rolling Appalachian mountain ranges.

COLORBLIND VIEWFINDER

Selected as one of the 13 most scenic overlooks in Tennessee, Ruby Falls received a special viewfinder outfitted with an innovative lens designed to enable people with colorblindness to see a wider range of vibrant, true colors. With the viewer, created by the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development, more folks can fully experience the colorful beauty of the region.

HISTORIC RUBY FALLS CASTLE

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Ruby Falls Castle has welcomed generations of guests eager to explore Lookout Mountain's underground caverns and the park's diverse ecosystem since 1929. Designed by Chattanooga master architect, R.H. Hunt to resemble a 15th-century castle, it is a beloved landmark built with limestone excavated during the construction of the elevator shaft and cavern trail. The historic Castle's original restaurant and tearoom opened with the park in 1929, quickly becoming a favorite gathering place for Chattanooga residents, a tradition lasting decades. Today, the Castle features a casual cafe, private event venue, and cave explorers still board the elevator in the Castle, just like folks in 1929.

HISTORIC LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN TOWER

As part of the castle built in 1929 with limestone excavated during construction of the Ruby Falls elevator shaft, Lookout Mountain Tower offers unmatched views from lower and upper decks. The mesmerizing, 360-degree panoramic view is exceptional.



RUBY FALLS

Climb + Soar

HIGH POINT ZIP ADVENTURE at RUBY FALLS

In partnership with the nation's premier climbing gym, High Point ZIP Adventure at Ruby Falls offers the ultimate zipline and climbing experience with gliding ziplines and 40-foot climbing tower with auto-belays and routes of varying difficulty. High Point ZIP Adventure is a seasonal, separately ticketed park activity.

Dine + Craft Beer

CASTLE CAFE

Castle Café returns the historic castle to its 1929 vintage roots, when memories were made around the table with great food and dear ones. Enjoy a casual seasonal menu and local craft beer with table seating inside the historic castle by the original stone fireplace or outside on the castle's covered front porch and seasonal Back Porch at umbrella shaded tables. Serving breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks, coffee, fountain drinks, local craft beer on tap and dessert. Dine in and take out.

Shop

VILLAGE GIFT SHOP

Find perfect keepsakes and gifts at the park's Village Gift Shop. Discover an extensive collection of quartz, agate, geodes, and gifts designed to encourage curiosity in caves and geology. Tried-and-true favorites, new classics, and a wonderful children's corner, make this shop a delight to explore. The holiday pop-up shop October - December with enchanting, beautifully themed Christmas trees and holiday decor available for purchase is an absolute must-see. Cave tour admission is not required to access this carefully curated shop.

Relax

VILLAGE PLAZA

A scenic gathering place, Ruby Falls Village Plaza is a lovely spot to relax while enjoying the mountain breeze and abundant beauty of Lookout Mountain. The pollinator garden and a perfect view is the backdrop for creating memories that last a lifetime. Seasonal decorations on the Village Plaza delight guests of all ages!

Gather

SKYLINE LOFT EVENT VENUE

Overlooking the Cumberland Plateau and Tennessee River, Skyline Loft at Ruby Falls features unbelievable sweeping views and customizable set-up options for unforgettable events, memorable meetings, and milestone celebrations. Now booking 2025 and 2026 unforgettable events surrounded by the beauty of nature.

Stay

TREETOP HIDEAWAYS at RUBY FALLS

Unwind in luxury treehouse lodging at the park. Nestled into the forest above historic Ruby Falls Castle with views of the Cumberland Plateau, each treehouse is artfully crafted with an impeccable blend of playful design and bespoke amenities. Private fire pits ready with wood and starters, locally made shampoo and body wash, complimentary s'more supplies, artisanal coffee, locally made granola, and a bottle of wine are just a few of the perks awaiting guests.

Special Events at the Park

A year full of discoveries, celebrations, and inspiration



Romance at
RUBY

ROMANCE at RUBY

Select Dates in February

Celebrate Valentine's Day with a romantic evening at Ruby Falls. This one-of-a-kind date night includes a special after-hours Lantern Tour, professional photo, and gift. Hear tales of local legendary romances including the love story of Leo Lambert and his wife, Ruby, that led to the discovery of Ruby Falls. Reservations required for this separately ticketed event.



100 MILLION STEPS IN MARCH

March 1 – 31, 2025

We support the mission of the American Heart Association Go Red for Women in a big way by accepting the challenge to walk 100 million steps at Ruby Falls every March! Get active by walking the cavern trail and sign the event banner to show your participation in the 100 million step goal. Together, we're taking steps towards healthier hearts and creating amazing memories along the way. Since the first 100 Million Steps in March in 2018, 837,996,634 steps have been walked by 294,800 participants during the campaign.



BATTLE BELOW THE CLOUDS

May 3, 2025

Join us annually for Battle Below the Clouds, the friendliest amateur barbecue competition and festival in the South! For the 10th year, amateur grillers and smokers compete for bragging rights as the best backyard cooks in the region. Independent judges select the Best Pork Butt, Best Ribs, Best Chicken Wings and Grand Champion. Delicious BBQ and beer for purchase, live bluegrass music, kid's activities, and giveaways. Free admission for spectators, donations encouraged. Competition entry fees raise funds to provide fun, year-round activities for kids with cancer and their families through the Lana's Love Foundation.



SPECIAL HISTORY EXHIBIT SERIES: CHATTANOOGA'S UNTOLD STORIES

July 30 - November 6, 2025, Building the Big Nine: A Legacy of Black Excellence

Explore the profound influence, enduring spirit, people, and achievements of Chattanooga's historic Big Nine Black business district that flourished in the 1890s through the mid-20th century, defining the tenacious community that shaped the city and empowered generations. The district was the vibrant center of Black commerce, culture, and community established by Black men and women navigating the deep complexities of racism.

RUBY FALLS



NATIONAL DAY OF CAVES AND KARST

June 6, 2025

Along with the National Caves Association, Ruby Falls celebrates National Day of Caves and Karst! Visit Ruby Falls during this annual event and take part in educational activities, meet special guests, and take home a complimentary keepsake. This special day celebrates the important role caves and karst play in our lives and environment.



LANTERN TOUR: GHOST WALK EDITION

Select dates September – October

Get in the Halloween spirit with a special edition Lantern Tour featuring ghost stories from the 94-year history of Ruby Falls and eerie Chattanooga legends. On the way to the waterfall, hear the tales and visit the sites of peculiar encounters, mischievous mayhem, and tragedy while exploring the cavern with a guide by the light of handheld lanterns. This popular experience sells out fast, advance online ticket purchase is required, and not appropriate for children under the age of 12.



HIDDEN PASSAGES SCAVENGER HUNT

January 20 - April 5, 2025

Explore the Castle and park on a self-guided scavenger hunt for tiny, whimsical hidden passages. See how many you can discover and get inspired to never stop exploring. "Sometimes the unknown is the greatest adventure!" - Leo Lambert, discoverer of Ruby Falls.



RUBY FALLS CHRISTMAS

November 28 – December 24

The Season Shines Bright at Ruby Falls! Gather family and return to a simpler time on Lookout Mountain at Ruby Falls. Discover magical views, twinkling holiday lights on Village Plaza, and festive decorations in historic Ruby Falls Castle along with special activities. Add your holiday wish to the Forest of Wishes, visit Santa, enjoy iconic cave adventures, and linger longer with a casual meal, local craft beer, seasonal treats and hot cocoa by the cozy fireplace at Castle Café. Celebrate the most magical time of year surrounded by nature.



RUBY FALLS DISCOVERY DAY

December 30

Celebrate the 97th anniversary of the discovery of Ruby Falls and the beginning of a year-long celebration! On December 30th, 97 guests will experience breathtaking Ruby Falls for the original admission price of \$2 with special rate Cave Walk tickets on select morning tours. Take home a complimentary keepsake postcard while supplies last and discover lesser-known facts and legends about the cavern as we commemorate the incredible journey of Leo Lambert leading to the discovery of Ruby Falls.

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