

Mt. Cammerer

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| Trail Features: | Panoramic Views, History |
| Trail Location: | Cosby |
| Roundtrip Length: | 11.1 Miles |
| Total Elevation Gain: | 3045 Feet |
| Avg. Elevation Gain / Mile: | 549 Feet |
| Highest Elevation: | 5,054 Feet |
| Trail Difficulty Rating: | 17.19 (strenuous) |

Trail Description:

This hike to Mt. Cammerer begins from the Low Gap Trailhead near the Cosby Campground. Although it's a roundtrip hike of more than 11 miles, it's still the shortest and most commonly used route to the summit of the 4,928-foot mountain.

From the trailhead, hikers will climb the Low Gap Trail for three long miles before reaching the Appalachian Trail. This is a steep and relentless climb that traverses over several switchbacks, while taking hikers through a beautiful, mature hardwood forest as they proceed up the Cosby Creek valley.

The first section of trail travels between Cosby Creek and the Cosby Campground. Portions of this section share the same route with the Cosby Nature Trail, a short loop hike that begins from the campground. At four-tenths of a mile from the trailhead, you'll reach the Lower Mt. Cammerer Trail junction. To continue on the Low Gap Trail you should turn right here.

At just over eight-tenths of a mile, hikers will reach an alternative path for reaching the Low Gap Trail. Although this would shave some distance off your hike, you would have to stay at the campground in order to use this route.

At roughly 2.9 miles, hikers will finally reach the Appalachian Trail. By this point you will have already climbed more than two thousand feet, thus completing the hardest part of the hike. During our most recent visit, in early May, we were greeted by a carpet of fringed phacelia at this junction. There were literally thousands of these tiny, beautiful wildflowers covering the forest floor here.

Along the early portions of the Appalachian Trail you'll continue climbing, however, the terrain isn't quite as steep as the Low Gap Trail. At roughly 3.7 miles, the trail begins to level off, and travel becomes much easier. Hikers will now traverse along a ridge that offers decent views of the Cosby and Toms Creek valleys through the trees.

At just under five miles, hikers will reach the rugged spur trail that leads to the summit of Mt. Cammerer. The spur is roughly six-tenths of a mile long, is fairly

level, but does involve some rock scrambling as you approach the fire lookout. Although the last tenth-of-a-mile traverses over some fairly rugged terrain, it's nothing that would be considered exceedingly difficult.

Standing at an elevation of 4,928 feet, the summit of Mt. Cammerer sits on the edge of a rocky outcropping overlooking the Pigeon River Gorge.



The mountain itself is named after Arno Cammerer, the well-liked Director of the National Park Service in the 1930s. Cammerer was an instrumental figure in helping to establish a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains.