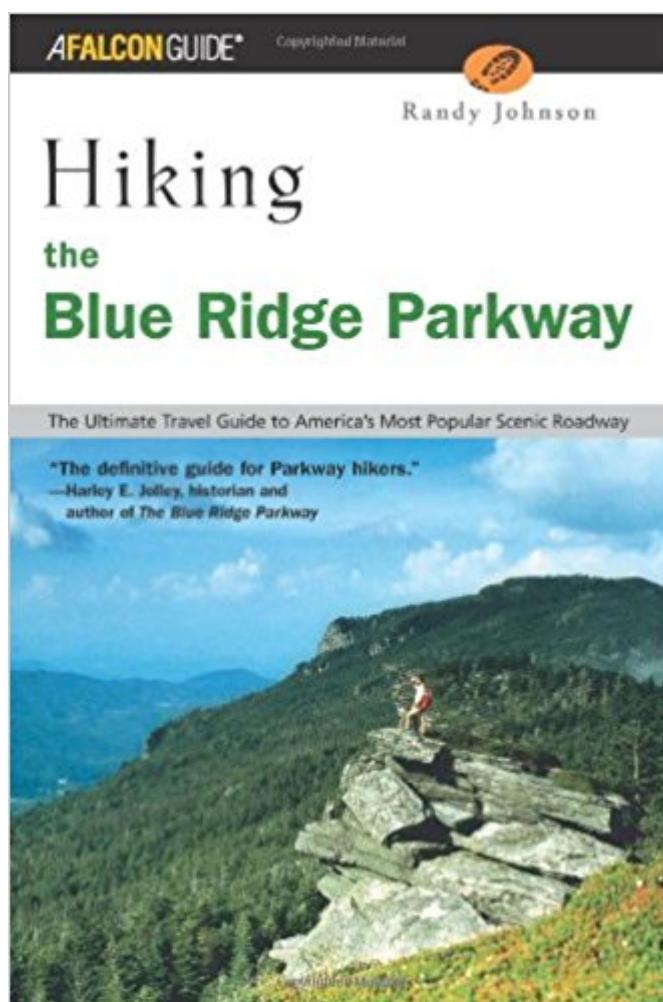


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# Hiking The Blue Ridge Parkway: The Ultimate Travel Guide To America's Most Popular Scenic Roadway (Regional Hiking Series)



## **Synopsis**

Hiking the Blue Ridge Parkway is designed to be an indispensable resource for anyone who uses the Parkway -- America's most heavily visited unit of the National Park system -- as a portal to the Southern Appalachian experience. Hikers and motorists alike can continually refer to the book's mile-by-mile mileage log to overlooks and waysides, entrances and exits, interpretive sites, museums, visitor centers, craft shops, and all the easy "leg-stretcher" trails that are such an accessible part of a Parkway trip. But this is more than just a guide to Parkway facilities and paths. By including the best trails in the national forests, state parks, and private preserves that line the 469-mile scenic road, Hiking the Blue Ridge Parkway is a single-volume solution for the serious explorer, whether on foot or in a car. To aid the reader in experiencing the Parkway's best trails, this book contains more than 70 detailed topographic route maps, dozens of descriptive photographs, and in-depth trail descriptions with difficulty ratings and detailed directions. Author Randy Johnson has helped design Parkway trails and, as a noted Southern Appalachian author, has explored the unique richness of Appalachian culture. This book meshes the best of the Parkway's outdoor experiences with a keen sense of the cultural heritage that makes the Parkway a national treasure -- a motor trail to the heart of the United States' least homogenized region.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"The Blue Ridge Parkway is the most popular gateway to our cherished mountains. Randy Johnson has given us the fullest account and most helpful guide to that lofty open road." --Robert Morgan,

author of *The New York Times* best-seller, *Gap Creek*"The definitive guide for Parkway hikers."

--Harley E. Jolley, historian and author of *The Blue Ridge Parkway*

Stop your car, lace up your boots, and experience the best trails in the national forests, state parks, and private preserves that line the Blue Ridge Parkway. From the southern end of Shenandoah National Park in Virginia to Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina, this single-volume solution for the serious explorer points the way to the best of the 469-mile Parkway's outdoor experiences. Author and trail designer Randy Johnson leads you past historic homesteads and landmark sites, through multiday explorations of isolated wilderness enclaves, and up to some of the East's highest peaks, offering insights into Southern Appalachia's unique cultural heritage and showcasing the natural beauty that makes this scenic roadway a historical and national treasure. Inside you'll find: in-depth descriptions with difficulty ratings and detailed directions; more than 70 detailed topographic trail maps; a complete Parkway mileage log to all overlooks and waysides, entrances and exits, interpretive sites, visitor centers, craft shops, dozens of descriptive photographs, and easy "leg-stretcher" trails. No matter what your skill level or abilities, Hiking the Blue Ridge Parkway is an indispensable resource to the most heavily visited unit of the National Park system and a portal to the Southern Appalachian experience.

This is a great book for finding hikes on the Parkway. I would recommend it.

As someone who lives near and regularly hikes trails along the Blue Ridge Parkway, I commend Randy Johnson's excellent "Hiking The Blue Ridge Parkway." First, I love the author's dedication . . . To past and present Appalachian families - the people who know how much you have to love the mountains to make a living there. And to the men and women of the Blue Ridge Parkway - who help the rest of us appreciate why it's worth the effort. It shows the author's love, and indeed respect, for the region he so ably writes about. As a guide, the book features 72 maps, the great majority of them, 68 by my count, being detailed topographic maps that will satisfy even the most serious hikers. The author has included a topo map for virtually every hike, something that is fairly unprecedented in this book genre. I've never understood how you can have a trail guide that expects people to read a trail description without a map to look at. The book also includes lots of good photos. I appreciate the fact that the author provides broad cultural, geographic and historical overviews aimed not only at educating the reader about the region but also at explaining how to craft a hike to match the hiker's interests. The mileage log in the rear of the book also provides travel

information and observations that make this back-of-book section almost worthy of a separate guidebook itself. Moreover, the author not only covers trails along the Parkway but also trails near the Parkway. The summit of Mt. Mitchell, the highest peak in the Eastern United States, for example, is five miles off the Parkway, but thankfully the author covers the beautiful trails there. The book also includes the region's only truly urban hike, Asheville's Urban Trail. Between the book's overall introduction, its maps and photos, and the travel-oriented introductions to the different sections of the Parkway, this book truly lives up to the claim in the book's subtitle, "The Ultimate Guide to America's Most Popular Scenic Roadway." No wonder best-selling author Robert Morgan, who hails from this region, and Blue Ridge Parkway author Harley Jolley, both quoted on the cover, say this is the guide book to buy. If I had been able, I would have given this book six stars.

As a child, I first hiked trails along the Blue Ridge Parkway with my father more than 40 years ago, and over the decades I've continued to return with a sense of awe at the area's spectacular beauty and rich seasonal variety. But what has been lacking for all of that time is a trail guide that mixes knowledgeable commentary and accurate descriptions with good topographical maps and photos. "Hiking the Blue Ridge Parkway," which I picked up just last week on the way to the mountains, now fills that void in exemplary fashion. I've hiked a good many of the trails, but I was surprised and pleased to see that there are many that I've not yet tried and now plan to experience. I can attest that my favorite hikes are described very accurately, with historical and geographical commentary that gives me a new appreciation for some of the places I thought I knew quite well. Details such as the topo maps, elevation gains, difficulty levels, and key-points lists really open up the trails for both beginners and experienced hikers. A 38-page Parkway mileage log at the back of the book is a handy reference for trails, facilities, and resources. I'm sure that this book will accompany thousands of hikers who want to get the most out of their Blue Ridge Parkway hiking experiences.

As an avid hiker, I struggle to find detailed maps and descriptions of hikes. My time is limited, so I love to find out exactly what to expect on a hike before I begin. "Hiking the Blue Ridge Parkway" has become my primary reference to discovering new hikes that are easy to find. It is very evident that Mr. Johnson has hiked all of the trails because of the great details such as "don't get sucked down the old trail... bear right to reach the junction with two signs." I know how easy it is to take a wrong turn on a hike, so such details are very helpful. However, my favorite part of the book are the detailed topo maps. When I set out on a hike from the book, I make a copy of the description and map to take with me. I refer to the map a lot (to avoid those wrong turns!). The mileage log in the back of the book

gives a great mile-by-mile account of the Parkway. There are many amazing hikes along the Parkway. Don't miss them!

A must have book for driving the parkway. In the back of the book is an invaluable list of mileposts. For each milepost, the author identifies the elevation, walks / hikes (some are even 5 minutes get-out-and-stretch-your-legs-walk). The main part of the book includes details on numerous hikes which the author identifies essential information including difficulty (strenuous/easy/etc.), time, terrain, views, etc. This book is now our keepsake which we refer to often to remember the trip. What a perfect book to capture everything you need to know about the BRP!

This is an excellent book and very thorough. I have read it several times and compared it to information from other books as well as the internet and national park service materials. It is very helpful to those who are serious about pre-planning a vacation. The maps are especially helpful. The only criticism I have is that the estimated amount of time it would take to do each hike is not included. I most definitely recommend this book.

This guide leads hikers on some of the best trails along the Parkway. As a summer resident of the area I have been hiking the area for several years and I still learned from this guide. As a biologist, I particularly liked the coverage of plants and animals of the area.

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