



Cold Mountain - Oronoco, Virginia

Length	Difficulty	Streams	Views	Solitude	Camping
5.8 mls	★	N/A	★	★	★
Hiking Time: Elev. Gain: Parking:	3.5 hours with a half hour for lunch 1,490 ft From VA634/Coffey Town Rd: Right onto gravel VA755/Wiggins Spring Rd. following the Mount Pleasant Sign, In 1.3 miles VA755 enters the GWNF and becomes FS48, In 1.4 miles from entering the GWNF park on the left where the AT crosses the road and small parking area.				

Can't make it to Scotland or Switzerland anytime soon to hike those spectacular high mountain meadows? Well right here in the Old Dominion we have the next best thing! Every hiker in the mid-Atlantic should hike Cold Mountain at least once. The 360° meadow views from the saddle are some of the best on the east coast.

Cold Mountain is the sister circuit to the Mount Pleasant hike on the next ridge. If you are looking for a slightly longer hike, or a backpack, consider combining this hike with the Mount Pleasant route for a combined 11.3 mile figure eight circuit.

From the parking area continue down FS48 for 0.2 miles. Just before the road splits the Hotel Trail will be on the right marked by two posts with blue blazes. Head up the blue blazed trail for 0.1 miles arriving at a wooden horse gate (the trail on the left leads down to the Mount Pleasant parking area). Stay straight on the Hotel Trail passing through the horse gate. Descend slightly, then in 0.6 miles head back uphill climbing a spur of Cold Mountain.

Reach the spur ridge entering a clearing 0.4 miles from beginning your ascent. At the end of the clearing is one of the prettiest back country campsites in the Blue Ridge. Situated among a stand of mature oak, this site is suitable for multiple tents.

On the southwest side of the campsite, or on its right corner as you approached, the blue blazed trail descends the spur. Continue to follow the blue blazed trail, cross a small stream, then arrive at the crest of a second spur in 1.5 miles (there is an overgrown abandoned trail on the left here).

Continue downhill on the blue blazed trail into Cowcamp Gap, cross Little Cove Creek, then in 200 yards Cowcamp Gap Shelter is on your right. 100 yards to the right/southeast of the shelter in is a large campsite suitable for 4-6 tents, and 75 yards to the left/northwest of the shelter is a spring and the source of Little Cove Creek.

Continue up the blue blazed trail, on the opposite side of the creek than the shelter, and in 75 yards turn left on the Hotel Trail at the sign towards the Appalachian Trail (AT). (turning right and crossing Little Cove Creek at this point leads back to the spring and shelter. note: this side trail is also blue blazed)

Continue up the Hotel Trail for 0.5 miles to the intersection of the AT. Turn right/north on the white blazed AT and make two switchbacks, pass two view points, then arrive at the first open meadow and 4033ft summit of Cold Mountain in 1.2 miles. Continue, passing through a small stand of trees before reaching the the main Cold Mountain saddle, and largest of the high mountain meadows. The saddle provides a 360° panoramas with views of Pompey Mountain and Mount Pleasant.

After re-entering the forest at the end of the meadow, follow the white blazed AT as it winds its way downhill for the remaining 0.6 miles back to FS48 and hike parking area on the right.