





The Priest - Nelson County, Virginia

Length	Difficulty	Streams	Views	Solitude	Camping
4.8 mls		N/A			
Hiking Time: 2.0 hours plus a 1/2 hour for lunch Elev. Gain: 1,210 ft Parking: Park at the Crabtree Falls upper parking area on Crabtree Meadows Road SR826					

The Priest is just one mountain in this area that makes up the well named Cardinal Range; with Spy Rock, The Little Priest, The Friar, The Little Friar, and The Cardinal. Although a shorter out/back hike this can be combined with the Crabtree Falls hike to make a longer 9.2 mile hike from the lower Crabtree Falls parking area.

From the upper Crabtree Falls parking area on Crabtree Meadows Road SR826 hike up the now steeper rutted portion of SR826 for 0.5 miles to the ridge, where the Appalachian Trail crosses SR826.

Turn left on the white blazed Appalachian Trail for the 0.9 mile climb to The Priest shelter intersection, gaining 630â€™. The Spur Trail down to the shelter is about 0.1 miles where there are plenty of campsites. There is a natural spring about 10 yards behind the shelter.

In the event the area near the shelter is crowded, there is a great flat spot with a fire pit on the right as you are coming down the spur trail just before a slight drop off towards the shelter. Take a right and walk in about 40 yards from the trail.

From the shelter spur trail continue following the A.T. for 0.3 miles north to The Priest Overlook spur trail on your left. Look for a rock cairn to lead you to the overlook.

To return, retrace the route back to the parking area on Crabtree Meadows Road SR826.

If you are looking to make this hike a backpack you can also combine The Priest, Spy Rock and Crabtree Falls as a shuttle hike.