



Stairway To Heaven - Shrine Mont/Orkney Springs, VA

Length	Difficulty	Streams	Views	Solitude	Camping
6.2 mls	★	★	★	★	★
Hiking Time: 4.0 hours plus 30 minutes for lunch Elev. Gain: 1,820 ft Parking: Turn left at the parking sign just before the Virginia House and park behind the pavilion in the large parking area. 38.79383, -78.81551					

[Click Here For Detailed Location](#)



The Shrine Mont conference center and retreat is located near Orkney Springs Virginia on the VA/WV border. There are several nice trails on the property that pass the Cathedral Shrine of the Transfiguration, and the Ridge Trail up to The Cross on Spring Mountain. The most scenic section is the North Mountain Trail that climbs up Great North Mountain. Passing a large cliff structure, the trail ends at North Mountain Rocks with a spectacular view back towards Orkney Springs and the Shenandoah Valley.

Several nice hikes can be put together using the many trails. Our 6.2 mile hike uses the North Link Trail past the Shrine, The Ridge Trail past the Cross, and then takes the North Mountain Trail up to North Mountain Rocks.

- ▶ **Mile 0.0** – From the parking area behind the pavilion walk back to the main road and turn left in front of the Virginia House. Follow the road up to the circle and pass through the Shrine Mont entrance. The trailhead for the North Link Trail is located on the right side of the parking area.
- ▶ **Mile 0.21** - Start up the North Link Trail and soon arrive at the Cathedral Shrine of the Transfiguration. Turn right following the signs towards The Cross and North Mountain, then in 0.3 miles arrive at the intersection with the Ridge Trail.
- ▶ **Mile 0.58** - Turn left towards The Cross on the Ridge Trail. The trail becomes increasingly steeper before arriving at an intersection where the Ridge Trail turns sharply to the right following the ridgeline. Stay right towards the Cross on the Ridge Trail.
- ▶ **Mile 1.19** - Arrive at the Cross at the high point on Spring Mountain. There are limited views to the west and east through the trees from the platform. Now continue downhill towards the north for another 0.7 miles where the Ridge Trail ends at the North Link Trail.
- ▶ **Mile 1.89** - Turn left and follow the North Link Trail and soon pass a forestry road on the right that leads to Orkney Springs. Cross a small stream then shortly arrive at the intersection with the Bradford Trail and North Mountain Trail where the North Link Trail ends.
- ▶ **Mile 2.1** - Stay right on the as the North Mountain Trail follows a forestry road for 0.15 miles then turns left off the forestry road towards the ridge. The trail is rocky and gradually increases in grade. In 0.8 miles pass a campsite and large cliff face on the left. After passing the cliff and stream the North Mountain Trail becomes increasingly steeper joining a ridge spur. The trail then turns more southerly and ends before reaching the Great North Mountain ridge at a campsite and North Mountain Rocks.
- ▶ **Mile 3.8** - On the opposite side of the campsite is the back of North Mountain Rocks. There is a 10ft climb to get to the top of the rocks where there is a spectacular view of the Shenandoah Valley. From North Mountain Rocks retrace your route back down the North Mountain Trail, rejoin the North Link Trail crossing the stream and arrive back at the intersection with the Ridge Trail.
- ▶ **Mile 5.7** - Continue straight on the North Link Trail to the next intersection on the left with a sign for Shrine Mont.
- ▶ **Mile 5.9** - Turn left downhill towards Shrine Mont as the trail passes behind cabins, then turns right and ends back at the the Virginia House. Pass back around the Virginia House to the parking area.
- ▶ **Mile 6.2** - Arrive back at the parking area.