

Mammoth Cave

NATIONAL PARK • KENTUCKY

What's it like inside the earth? A visit to Mammoth Cave will let you see for yourself.

Man, for more than 2,500 years, has felt his heart beat a little faster as he walked through Mammoth Cave's passageways and chambers. Early Indians, as they searched for crystals of gypsum, lighted their way with blazing torches. During the War of 1812, oil lamps gave light to men who mined the cave's nitrates for use in making gunpowder. Still later, visitors carried lanterns when walking in the cave. Today, electricity will light your way.

As you stroll through the huge rooms, over yawning pits, past the leaching vats of the saltpeter miners, past the preserved body of an ancient Indian, and under cascading decorations of stone, you will sense man's long association with Mammoth Cave.

WHAT'S IT LIKE IN THE CAVE?

The temperature stays at a cool 54°, and the humidity is a high 87 percent. You will need a sweater or jacket. Walking is smooth and usually dry, but there are steps to climb on every trip. Expect a strenuous walk, and be sure to wear comfortable shoes. (Children under 16 years of age must be accompanied by an adult.)

WHAT IS THERE TO DO?

Visitor center. You should stop here first to get information about cave trip schedules and to learn of other things to do and see in the park. You may purchase cave trip tickets here. The visitor center also has a museum, and an illustrated program is presented hourly.

Cave trips are offered throughout the year; they vary in length (1 to 4 hours) and in time of departure. Trip schedules are subject to change. Each cave tour has something different to offer; trained park guides will make your cave experience a pleasant adventure.

Naturalist activities. In summer, park naturalists present slide programs nightly in an outdoor amphitheater and lead daily nature walks over woodland trails.

River cruising. You can get an appreciation of the Green River and its forest wildlife by taking a 1-hour cruise on the boat, *Miss Green River II*. Buy your tickets at the visitor center from the concessioner. Season: May through October.



TO REMIND YOU

Mammoth Cave and its rolling landscape have been a national park since 1941, and the National Park Service asks you to follow some common-sense rules to preserve the park and its features:

Pets must be kept on a leash at all times. They are not permitted in the cave or visitor center. If you leave them in your car in warm weather, be sure to provide ventilation.

Flash pictures may be taken in the cave. Tripods are not permitted; the hazard to others and to cave formations is too great.

Drive with extra care and observe the speed limits. Be alert for deer.

Park employees are here to help you. Report any accident or injury to them.

Walking. To see more of the 52,000 acres in Mammoth Cave National Park, hike the self-guiding Cave Island Nature Trail for a look at the old forest in the Green River bottomlands. Here huge sycamores and beeches grow and underground rivers emerge.

There are poisonous snakes in the park; use caution on trails and at night.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND SERVICES

Lodging. Mammoth Cave Hotel, a motel-type lodge, and electrically heated cottages are open all year. Unheated cabins are available from May to September. If you expect to stay in the park in summer, we suggest you write to National Park Concessions, Inc., Mammoth Cave, KY 42259, for rates, and that you make your reservations well in advance. Accommodations are also available in nearby communities. For information on areas outside the park write to the Department of Public Information, Capital Annex Building, Frankfort, KY 40601.

Dining room and coffee shop operate all year.

Gifts, handicrafts, and photo supplies may be purchased from the concessioner.

Service center, located next to the campground, has a post office, service station, coin-operated laundry, showers, ice, groceries, and campers' supplies.

Camping and picnicking. A 145-site campground and a picnic area are available.

ADMINISTRATION

Mammoth Cave National Park is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is Mammoth Cave, KY 42259, is in immediate charge.

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities for water, fish, wildlife, mineral, land, park, and recreational resources. Indian and Territorial affairs are other major concerns of America's "Department of Natural Resources." The Department works to assure the wisest choice in managing all our resources so each will make its full contribution to a better United States—now and in the future.

