

Trail Notes for the Big Schloss Circuit

Description: Strenuous 11.4 mile circuit hike to a rock outcrop with a 360 degree view of the Great North Mountain area. The hardest part of this hike is the initial climb, gaining 1500 feet of elevation over 3.8 miles, up Little Stony Creek Trail to Sugar Knob Cabin. The rest of the outing is literally a pleasant walk in the woods. Mountain Laurel, Fly Poison (a Lily), and Columbine greet the hiker in June. Fall colors make this a MUST in October. I try to do this one as a summer solstice day hike though many add some side trails making it a nice weekend backpack.

Directions from I-81:

1. Take Rt. 42 West to Columbia Furnace (5.8 miles).
2. At Columbia Furnace turn right onto SR 675. Cross Stony Creek and immediately turn left to stay on SR 675.
3. At the junction with SR 717 (3.1 miles from Columbia Furnace) bear right staying on SR 675.
4. At about 2 miles turn right onto FR 92 and follow 3.9 miles to parking area on the right just before crossing Little Stony Creek.

[Google Custom Directions](#)

Trail notes: From the parking area, cross FR 92 and follow the yellow-blazed Little Stony Creek Trail upstream. There are a few good campsites on the right side for late arriving backpackers. Proceed up the mountain for 3.5 miles to Sugar Knob Cabin w/spring.

At 3.7 miles come to the intersection of the blue-blazed Tuscarora/Pond Run Trail (left and right) and the closed Peer trail straight ahead. Turn left onto the Tuscarora/Pond Run Trail passing an excellent campsite on the left.

Travel uphill for 0.54 miles and turn left onto the orange-blazed Mill Mountain Trail. (The hard part is behind you!!!) You'll find good camping on your left in another 0.25 miles (dry site) and at the dismantled beacon tower and on your right in a nice grassy clearing in 0.27 miles more. In 1.02 miles from the beacon tower area you will descend to Sandstone Spring where you can fit several tents. This is the last dependable water source on the circuit. Gradually climb back up to the ridge to a nice overlook over Trout Run Valley in 0.89 miles. Again, you can set up camp for a couple of tents here.

In 0.91 miles from the un-named vista arrive at the Big Schloss Cutoff Trail on the left. Continue south on the Mill Mountain Trail for another 0.87 miles and turn left onto the white blazed Big Schloss Spur Trail. Follow this trail to the top for the best view on the entire mountain.

Return to the Big Schloss Cut-off Trail and follow it down the mountain to FDR 92. At the road turn left and follow it back to your vehicle.