

Waterfall Trail

Laurel Fork Falls

(Pickens County)



[Trail Map](#) [Photo](#)



Description: This is the one waterfall in this book you should consider visiting by a means other than hiking. Witnessing 80-foot high Laurel Fork Falls from a boat in the waters of Lake Jocassee is a once-in-a-lifetime shot. Take it. Once you navigate into Laurel Fork Creek cove and catch the initial view of the falls, find a crescent-shaped grotto behind the rocky tower. The waterfall goes into hiding until you round the last of the crescent. Then, suddenly, it flares out into mid-air before plunging into Lake Jocassee. Hiking into the waterfall involves a strenuous five-to-six hour hike of 8.4 miles from US 178 on the Foothills Trail. You will follow Laurel Creek and at times crisscrossing the stream on permanent bridges and at one point a suspension bridge.

Height: 80 feet

Time to hike: 5 to 6 hours (one way)

Length of hike: 8.4 miles

Difficulty: Strenuous

Creek or river: Laurel Fork Creek

USGS Quadrangle: Reid

Directions to falls:

[Foothills Trail Access to Laurel Fork Falls](#)

1. From Pickens, drive north on US 178 for approximately 16.5 miles and turn left onto Laurel Valley Road (Pickens County S-39-237), take the gravel road to the right.
2. Drive 0.5 mile to the Foothills Trail Laurel Valley Access parking lot on left.
3. Walk up the road to access the Foothills Trail and hike 8.4 miles to the falls. (For detailed description of the hike, see "The Foothills Trail: A Comprehensive Guide," 1998. pp. 34-36/ Maps #4 & #5.)

Lake Access (by boat) to Laurel Fork Falls

1. From Walhalla, drive northeast on SC 11 (Cherokee Foothills Scenic Highway) for approximately 15 miles and turn left onto Jocassee Lake Road (Oconee County S-37-25).
2. Drive approximately 4 miles to the Devil's Fork State Park main boat ramp.
3. Once on Lake Jocassee, follow the Toxaway River arm of the lake north, turning right (east) into the Laurel Fork Creek finger of the Toxaway arm.
4. Two views of the 80-foot drop of Laurel Fork Falls are available from the lake: A frontal view from the end of the cove or a superb profile of the waterfall from a grotto that crescents to the right from the end of the cove.

Information: South Carolina Department of Natural Resources - Clemson Office, 153 Hopwell Road, Pendleton, SC, 29670.

Telephone: 864-654-6738