

## Ranger-Guided Tours

Ranger-guided tours vary in duration, length, and difficulty. These tours are offered throughout the year and require a tour fee. Entrance fees are also required except for the Slaughter Canyon Cave Tour. The Senior and Access pass will provide a half-price ticket for the cardholder only. Ranger-guided tours are not accessible to wheelchairs or walkers. Reservations are recommended for all ranger-guided tours.

To make reservations, call 877-444-6777 or visit [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov).



### King's Palace Tour



**Distance:** 1 mile (1.6 km)  
**Elevation Change:** 82 feet (25 m)  
**Difficulty:** Moderate  
**Tour Time:** 1.5 hours  
**Age Limit:** 4 years  
**Cost:** \$8/adult, \$4/child (4–15)

On the King's Palace Tour, descend into ornately decorated chambers known as the Scenic Rooms, and find yourself up close and personal with impressive cave formations. This is the only ranger-guided tour that travels a lit, paved trail. Handrails are only on the steep sections of the trail.

### Left Hand Tunnel Tour



**Distance:** 1 mile (1.6 km)  
**Elevation Change:** 15 feet (4.6 m)  
**Difficulty:** Moderate  
**Tour Time:** 2 hours  
**Age Limit:** 6 years  
**Cost:** \$7/adult, \$3.50/child (6–15)

Travel back in time on this tour lit by candle lanterns carried by each member of the tour. Participants must walk on the natural cave surface that can be slick, uneven, and includes large steps. This tour is not recommended for those with difficulty seeing in low light or those with balance issues.

### Lower Cave Tour



**Distance:** 0.5 mile (0.8 km)  
**Elevation Change:** 79 ft (24.1 m)  
**Difficulty:** Strenuous  
**Tour Time:** 3 hours  
**Age Limit:** 12 years  
**Cost:** \$20/adult, \$10/child (12–15)

Explore the scenic beauty beneath the Big Room as you experience Lower Cave. Participants must descend a handline on a slick flowstone slope, followed by three ladders, descending a total of 79 feet (24.1 m). Travel in Lower Cave is by headlamp on slippery and uneven terrain.

### Slaughter Canyon Cave Tour



**Distance:** 2 miles (3.2 km)  
**Elevation Change:** 611 feet (0.6 m)  
**Difficulty:** Strenuous  
**Tour Time:** 5.5 hours  
**Age Limit:** 8 years  
**Cost:** \$15/adult, \$7.50/child (8–15)

Spend the day in desert and cave on the Slaughter Canyon Cave Tour. Participants caravan to the trailhead and hike up 450 feet (137 m) for over 0.5 miles (0.8 km) to the cave entrance. About 2.5 hours are spent walking through this undeveloped cave by the light of headlamps on slippery and uneven terrain.

### Hall of the White Giant Tour



**Distance:** 1.7 miles (2.7 km)  
**Elevation Change:** 944 feet (287.7 m)  
**Difficulty:** Strenuous  
**Tour Time:** 4 hours  
**Age Limit:** 12 years  
**Cost:** \$20/adult, \$10/child (12–15)

Challenging and adventurous, the Hall of the White Giant Tour leads participants into a fissure that travels slowly upwards within Carlsbad Cavern. This is the most technical of the guided tours, requiring participants to crawl, belly-crawl, use a handline in a vertical crevice, and climb a narrow ladder.





Big Room Trail  
NPS / DAN PAWLAK

**VISITORS TO CARLSBAD CAVERNS NATIONAL PARK** have a variety of options to explore the cavern. The Big Room and Natural Entrance trails, as well as several ranger-guided tours, are available year round. All tours begin at the visitor center, except the King's Palace and Slaughter Canyon Cave tours.

Big Room Trail



NPS / MICHAEL LARSON

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

## Enjoy the Cavern on Your Own

### Natural Entrance Trail

**Distance:** 1.25 miles (2.0 km)  
**Elevation Change:** 800 feet (243.8 m)  
**Difficulty:** Strenuous  
**Hike Time:** 1 hour  
**Accessibility:** Wheelchairs and walkers prohibited for safety  
**Entrance Fee:** \$15/adult  
 Free 15 and under

This trail begins at the cavern entrance and leads visitors below the surface to the start of the Big Room Trail. Visitors who choose to hike into the cavern will experience the immense size of the descending passageways and get glimpses of beautiful formations.

The steep descent makes the hike difficult on knees, ankles, and the lower back.

Visitors can hike up the Natural Entrance Trail from the Big Room. Hiking up the steep trail is easier on the joints, but more exercise for the heart and lungs. Check with rangers at the information desk for trail closure times.

Natural Entrance Trail



NPS / DAN PAWLAK

### Big Room Trail

**Distance:** 1.25 miles (2.0 km)  
**Elevation Change:** 24 feet (7.3 m)  
**Difficulty:** Easy to moderate  
**Hike Time:** 1.5 hours  
**Accessibility:** Wheelchairs and walkers allowed on a portion of the trail  
**Entrance Fee:** \$15/adult  
 Free 15 and under

Stroll along this trail around the outer edge of the largest cave chamber in the United States. The Big Room has a large footprint, covering the surface area of six football fields, and is densely decorated with cave formations. At its highest, the ceiling is 230 feet (70.1 m) tall near the Top of the Cross.

This trail is mostly wheelchair and walker accessible. Maps of the accessible route are available at the visitor center.

The Big Room Trail is accessed via the hike down the Natural Entrance Trail and by elevator from the visitor center.

Big Room Trail



NPS / DANIEL LEIFHEIT

### For More Information



**Carlsbad Caverns National Park**  
 3225 National Parks Hwy  
 Carlsbad NM 88220  
 575-785-2232  
 cave\_park\_information@nps.gov  
 www.nps.gov/cave