

Illustrated Guide to Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Reviewed by Danny Bernstein

What can you say that's new about the most visited park in the country, Great Smoky Mountains National Park? Maybe not much, but you can surely present it in a different, novel way.

Illustrated Guide to Great Smoky Mountains National Park by Daniel S. Pierce, Joel Anderson and Nathan Anderson is a beautiful coffee table book which tells of the wonder and beauty of the park without forsaking its history. In less than 130 pages, the book depicts each section of the park along with a full-page poster-like painting.



The introduction shows a timeline of human activity in the Smokies area. In 1000 CE, the first settlement of Kituah became the Mother Town of the Cherokee. European settlers moved into the Oconaluftee section of the park in 1802. The book covers events as recent as the devastating fires during the fall of 2016.

CMC hikers will recognize many historic names, including Horace Kephart, George Masa, and Chase Ambler, who built Rattlesnake Lodge. Ambler also organized the Appalachian National Park Committee to protect the land of the Smoky Mountains.

After reading the introduction, I turned to the pages on LeConte Lodge, the highest guest lodge in the eastern United States, to read about its origins. In my experience, it's the most deluxe high-mountain lodge – ever. You can stay at 6,360 feet and not have to carry a sleeping bag. That's luxury!

Dan Pierce is now Professor of History and National Endowment of the Humanities Distinguished Professor at UNCA and former chair of the history department.

When I came to Asheville in 2001, I enrolled in the course *Intro to the Southern Appalachians* at the College for Seniors. Dan was the instructor. His first book, *The Great Smokies: From Natural Habitat to National Park* had recently been published. I read it eagerly and recommended it to others as THE book on the park. So, he is the certainly the right person to write the copy for this illustrated guide to the Smokies.

You can't discuss this book without mentioning the Anderson Design Group. They created the drawings of waterfalls, cabins, views and picnic areas in the classic poster art style from the 1920s to 1940s. The back page of the book shows posters of the 59 national parks, which they gathered into a book. I counted all the national parks that I've been to – 40 over the years.

The details

You can buy the paperback book on the [Great Smoky Mountains Association website](https://www.smokiesinformation.org/shop/illustrated-guide-to-gsmnp-3419) <https://www.smokiesinformation.org/shop/illustrated-guide-to-gsmnp-3419> for \$24.95.

A hardback copy is available at the [Anderson Design Group website](https://www.andersondesigngroupstore.com/products/illustrated-guide-to-great-smoky-mountains-national-park-hard-cover-coffee-table-book), <https://www.andersondesigngroupstore.com/products/illustrated-guide-to-great-smoky-mountains-national-park-hard-cover-coffee-table-book> for \$39.99.

Think Christmas – Your shopping all done.