



DAY TRIP TO ROCKY SPRINGS

From Port Gibson · Claiborne County, Mississippi



FARM AND
RANCH



Photo: NatalieMaynor from Jackson, Mississippi, USA,
Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 2.0

NATIONAL PARK SITE

A historic site on the Natchez Trace Parkway, run by the National Park Service. Free, with a town site trail and a free campground.

Rocky Springs is an easy half day from Port Gibson, about 26 minutes up the parkway. Walk the town site trail to the church, eat at the picnic tables, then stretch your legs on the open stretch of the Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail south toward Owens Creek. It costs nothing, and you can stay the night in the free campground.

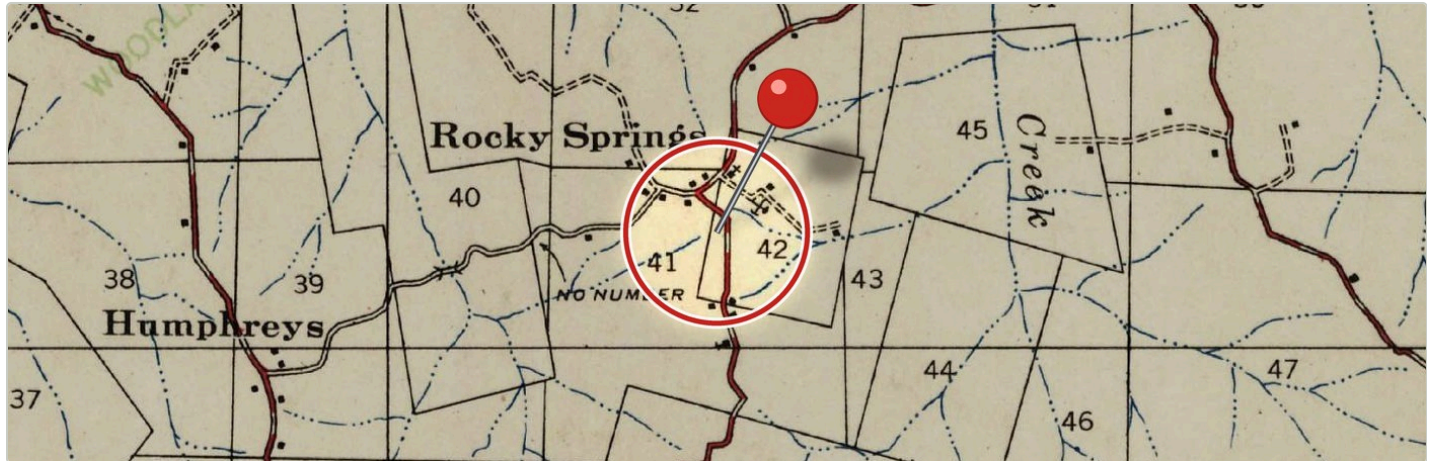
A SAMPLE DAY

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| ☐ Morning | Drive the parkway north from Port Gibson and take the Rocky Springs exit at milepost 54.8. |
| ☐ Late morning | Walk the town site trail past the safes and cisterns to the 1837 church and its cemetery. |
| ☐ Midday | Picnic at the tables by the trailhead. |
| ☐ Afternoon | Hike part of the scenic trail south; the trail north of the campground is closed. The 2.5 miles to Owens Creek cross rocky outcrops and steep ridges; turn back when you've had enough. |

Coming from Jackson? The drive is about 48 miles, most of it on the parkway.

WHAT TO PHOTOGRAPH

- **The church.** The brick front and wooden belfry sit up on a bank above the road. Shoot from below to set the belfry against the sky.
- **The cemetery.** Cedars hung with Spanish moss frame the headstones and two tall obelisks. Soft light on an overcast day suits it.
- **The safes.** A rusting safe stands open on its concrete base beside a capped cistern, a strange sight in the middle of the woods.
- **The Old Trace.** The NPS says a stretch of the old road runs through the campground. Shady woodland trail suits video at a walking pace.
- **Drones.** Leave it at home. Under an NPS policy in force since 2014, launching, landing or flying drones on park land is prohibited, with few exceptions.



USGS topographic map, 1939 (public domain). The ring and pin mark the town.

DAY TRIP ESSENTIALS

DRIVE	16 mi, about 26 min each way from downtown Port Gibson. From Jackson: 48 mi, about 1 h 13 min.
OPEN	The NPS pages for the town site, picnic area and campground list no hours.
ADMISSION	Free. The NPS says there are no entrance fees for the parkway or any of its facilities, and the parkway's campgrounds are free.
TIME ON SITE	The NPS calls the town walk a self-guiding trail and doesn't give its length. Wikipedia calls it a short loop.
RESTROOMS	Near the picnic area, and in the campground, which has flush toilets and an accessible restroom.
FOOD AND WATER	Picnic tables; the NPS pages list nothing to buy. The campground's water is non-potable, so bring drinking water and lunch from Port Gibson.
CAMPING	22 sites for tents, RVs and cyclists, first come, first served, no reservations. Free. No electricity, showers or dump station. Stays are limited to 14 days per campground per calendar year.
HIKING	The Rocky Springs section of the national scenic trail runs about 8 miles north and 2.5 miles south to Owens Creek. Hikers only. The northern part, from the campground to milepost 59, is closed until further notice (NPS alert, September 2024).
WEBSITE	nps.gov/places/rocky-springs-town-site.htm

BEFORE YOU GO

- Check the status with the land manager before you go; conditions change.
- Keep out of unstable buildings and off fenced ruins.
- Leave artifacts where they lie. Removing them can be a crime.
- Carry water, a paper map and a charged phone; signal is often poor.

Coordinates 32.08889, -90.81500 • 32°05'20"N
90°48'54"W

Full guide abandonedtowns.com/mississippi/rocky-springs/

Directions [Google Maps](#)

Details checked October 2026. Hours, prices and access change: confirm before you go.