



141 Nelson Gap Road
Circleville, WV 26804
304-567-3169
800-729-9230

Visitor Registration Packet

1. Via Ferrata Tour Overview
2. Via Ferrata Climber Agreement (signatures required)
3. Via Ferrata Frequently Asked Questions

Visitors & parent/guardian of visitor under age 18:

Please carefully read the Via Ferrata Tour Overview and Registration and Release documents. The Release document must be completed and signed by each visitor to the Via Ferrata at Nelson Rocks Preserve. Visitors between the ages of 13 and 17 must also have the Registration and Release signed by the minor's custodial parent or legal guardian. Please use a separate form for each visitor.

If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact our office at 540-896-7600 (M – F 9:00 – 5:00) or (304) 567-3169. For further information, announcements, price list, hours of operation etc. please call or visit our web site at www.visitviaferrata.com.

The Registration and Release may be completed and signed in advance and brought with you to the site. Payment for your pass will be made upon arrival via Visa/MasterCard., or cash

Thank you for your cooperation,

Via Ferrata at Nelson Rocks Preserve



TOUR OVERVIEW

When you arrive at the Nelson Rocks Preserve, you will meet the Via Ferrata staff and guides at the Registration Hut. Prior to beginning your tour, you will complete any remaining paperwork and waivers, be fitted into your personal safety gear and attend to safety instructions that will need to be adhered to during your climb. At the base of the Via Ferrata, your guide will provide you with orientation to the equipment, a demonstration of appropriate climbing techniques and how to manage your personal safety system. Your guide will also address the inherent risks on the Via Ferrata and mountain terrain.

It's difficult to compare the Via Ferrata experience to anything else. It can be very demanding or not so demanding depending on one's level of fitness. It can also be emotionally taxing depending on one's level of comfort with heights. Round trip, you will experience a two-mile hike/climb with an elevation gain of 900 feet and a subsequent elevation loss of 900 feet. At points you will experience over 200 feet of vertical exposure. While on the Via Ferrata you will be hiking/climbing on small ledges and stepping out over airy voids. For those who find the challenge to be more than anticipated, there are two escape routes in the first section of the Via prior to the suspension bridge. After crossing the 150 foot bridge, there is the optional Headwall Section -- a 45-foot vertical climb and an opportunity to stand on top of the rocks. The climb down from the Headwall is the only significant down climb on the tour and can be as equally challenging as the climb up. This optional route then rejoins the main Via route. Remember, the headwall is optional and is a good place to sit and take a break if you that is best for you. The Via ends in the upper-corridor section near the top of the mountain. To conclude your tour, there is an optional hike/scramble to the very summit of the rocks with an amazing 360 degree view. Either way there is a 30-minute hike back to Registration Hut – all downhill from this point.

Tour Duration: 3.5 – 5; hours depending on group size and ability

Difficulty Level: No previous climbing experience required.
The tour will begin with a .5-mile hike to access the Via Ferrata. The Via Ferrata involves climbing and traversing across the fixed route with an elevation gain of 900 feet. Descending from the summit will be a 900 foot loss in elevation, with a 1-mile hike back to the hut.

Bring With You: Small backpack (day pack is best), 2 quarts of water, trail snacks, camera (optional), sunscreen, extra clothing including rain gear, gloves (fingerless are best), and proper footwear (sturdy athletic shoes or lightweight hiking shoes/boots). Failure to wear the proper footwear may forfeit your climb.

Minimum Age: 13

Departures: 9am, 11am, 2pm, 3pm daily

Price: \$65 (weekends/holidays); \$60 (weekdays)
Guide and all necessary equipment included.
*Every 10th person in your group climbs for **FREE!***

Group Size: 4-14 people. If your group is less than 4, we will tentatively schedule your tour anticipating that others will join. It may be necessary for us to cancel climbing tours if the group size does not meet our minimum. If we do need to cancel your trip because of group size, we will let you know at least 72 hours prior to your scheduled tour. We will gladly refund your deposit or make arrangements to reschedule.



Cancellation Policy: A 50% deposit is required to reserve your tour. Changes or cancellations must be made 72 hours prior to your scheduled tour for a full refund less a \$25 administrative fee.

Cancellations made less than 72 hours prior to your scheduled tour and “no shows” result in a forfeiture of your spot and you will not receive a refund.

If we cancel your tour due to weather or other unforeseeable conditions, we will reschedule your tour for another available time, or give you a full refund.

Late Policy: Please arrive 15 minutes before your start time for necessary orientation and setup. Tours leave on a regular schedule and if you are late you will not be able to join your tour and will not receive a refund.

Location: 141 Nelson Gap Road, Circleville, WV 26804 (*physical location actual address*)
Nelson Gap Road, Riverton, WV 26814 (*alternate address for some GPS navigation systems*)
(304) 567-3169 (Registration Hut phone number)

GPS Coordinates: [38°41'46.92"N 79°27'52.41"W](#)

Miscellaneous: The Via Ferrata is located in a very rural area where cell phones do not work. Should you need to contact Via staff on the day of your tour please call the Registration Hut directly at 304 567-3169. Additionally, many of the businesses in the area only accept cash and the nearest ATM is approximately 3 miles away (Grant County Bank, located on Rt.33 in Riverton, WV; ATM is built into the outside wall, opposite the drive-through side).

Lodging: On-site cabins and camping; both are rustic. Check back for new accommodations soon.
Off-site cabins, camping, and motels

Please note: The Via Ferrata property prohibits smoking, alcohol, drugs and pets. Additionally, for safety purposes, glass containers are not permitted.

**Via Ferrata at Nelson Rocks Preserve
Climber Agreement, Including Acknowledgement of Risks
And Agreements of Release and Indemnity**

This document contains important information about the Via Ferrata at Nelson Rocks Preserve (“Via Ferrata”) and the properties on which it is located. It may affect the legal rights of climbers of the Via Ferrata and their families. It must be read, understood and signed by all climbers, who must be 13 years of age or older. If a climber is a minor (under 18 years of age) his or her parent or legal guardian (referred to herein as “Parent”) must also sign. Parent signs for himself or herself and on the behalf of the minor child.

In consideration of being allowed to climb the Via Ferrata and to move about the adjoining properties, the undersigned climber (“Climber”), and Parent if applicable, acknowledge and agree as follows:

The Via Ferrata

The Via Ferrata is a hiking and rock climbing route with permanently fixed rungs, cables, and other climbing aids to assist in movement over the vertical rock faces. The Via Ferrata utilizes steel climbing rungs on steeper sections to decrease the difficulty of the climb. The climb is steep and arduous with approximately 900 feet of elevation gain/loss over the approximately two mile hike/climb. The hiking and climbing surfaces are loose, slippery and unstable and will require Climber to use his or her hands in order to maintain balance. At times, Climber is exposed to a potential fall of over 200 feet. The Via Ferrata includes one suspension bridge that has open spaces between the support boards and is 250 feet long and 150 feet above the ground. Climber is required to attach, un-attach and re-attach himself or herself to an accompanying cable or steel rungs by means of a double, or “Y”, lanyard, allowing Climber to remain attached by one leg of the lanyard while re-attaching, by means of the other leg, to a new location on the cable/rungs. The Via Ferrata requires Climber to be alert and demonstrate careful judgment and strict attention to remaining attached to the cables/rungs at all times.

The Via Ferrata experience is designed for use by persons of at least average mobility, strength, physical ability, emotional stability, and in good health. Climber must carefully consider health issues – physical and emotional, including the use of prescription or non-prescription medications – before choosing to participate, and inform Via Ferrata staff, in writing, prior to the beginning of the experience, of any issue which might affect his or her performance on the route. Climber – not Via Ferrata staff – has the responsibility of determining his or her level of fitness and other qualifications, physical and emotional, to participate in the Via Ferrata experience. Climber agrees that he or she will not use, and will not be under the influence of, any recreational drug or alcohol while climbing the Via Ferrata.

Climber understands that he or she must be attentive to instructions and warnings posted at the Via Ferrata registration area and provided by Via Ferrata staff during the hiking and climbing portions of the experience. Failure of Climber to abide by all rules, guidelines and instructions of Via Ferrata staff may, at the sole discretion of the staff, result in the dismissal of Climber from the Via Ferrata tour without refund of any fee or other expense paid.

Via Ferrata Risks

The risks of the Via Ferrata and hiking to and from the climbing site, include, among others, rockfall (including rocks dislodged by other climbers), slips, falls, and jolts at the end of a lanyard, causing abrupt contact with the rock face, climbing aids or other climbers. Climbing gear may fail, be misfitted or misused. Climbing aids, however permanently affixed they may appear, may fail. Climber is responsible for his or her own safety and if Climber has doubts about his or her ability to manage the risks of the adventure he or she must not climb. Via Ferrata staff cannot, and must not be expected to, be responsible for the actions of Climber. Staff members and other participants may make mistakes of judgment and conduct. Climbing the Via Ferrata and hiking to and from it will expose Climber to the unpredictable forces of nature, including, but not limited to, changing weather conditions, high winds, lightning and hail. Climber may come in contact with plants and insects that create hazards, including allergic reactions, and a variety of wild animals including, but not limited to, deer, snakes, bear, bobcat, and skunks. The Via Ferrata experience occurs in a remote location where radio and telephone communication is unpredictable and medical care and evacuation may be significantly delayed.

These risks are inherent in the Via Ferrata experience; that is, they cannot be eliminated without destroying the unique character of the experience. These and other risks may result in injuries and illnesses, including pinches, scrapes, twists bruises, sprains, lacerations, fractures and other physical and emotional trauma, and in extreme circumstances even death.

Assumption of Risks

I, Climber (adult or minor), and Parent of a minor Climber, have read and understand the information above, and have viewed images and received additional information at the registration counter and/or on the web site of the Via Ferrata (www.visitviaferrata.com).

I understand that the above description of risks of the Via Ferrata is not complete and that other, including unknown or unanticipated, risks, inherent and otherwise, may result in injury or death. If I am a Parent of a minor Climber I have discussed the activities and their risks and possible outcomes with my child, and he or she wishes to participate nevertheless.

I expressly and voluntarily agree to accept and assume all of the risks of enrollment and participation in the Via Ferrata experience and related activities, whether or not described above and inherent or otherwise.

Release

I, Climber (if an adult), or Parent of a minor Climber, for myself and, to the fullest extent allowed by law, on behalf of my minor child, hereby voluntarily release Wild West Virginia Outdoor Adventures LLC and Fun & Dreams West LLC, and their respective owners, members, officers, directors and staff (“Released Parties”) from any and all claims, demands or causes of action, which are in any way related to my, or the minor child’s, enrollment or participation in the Via Ferrata experience, including the tour, and the use of Via Ferrata equipment, vehicles, and surrounding premises. This release includes claims of negligence of a Released Party and to the fullest extent allowed by the laws of West Virginia, claims of gross negligence, recklessness and intentional acts of a Released Party.

Indemnity

I, Climber (if an adult), or Parent of a minor Climber agree further to indemnify (that is defend and protect, and pay or reimburse) the Released Parties and each of them from any claim, by whomever it might be brought, including other climbers and members of my, or the minor child’s, family, arising from my, or the child’s enrollment or participation in the Via Ferrata experience, including the tour, and the use of Via Ferrata equipment, vehicles and surrounding premises and structures. This indemnity includes losses suffered by me, or the child, and losses caused by my, or the child’s, conduct. This indemnity includes claims of negligence of a Released Party and to the fullest extent allowed by the laws of West Virginia, claims of gross negligence, recklessness and intentional acts of a Released Party. Should a Released Party or anyone acting on his or her behalf incur attorney’s fees and costs to enforce this agreement or otherwise defend a claim, I agree to indemnify and hold them harmless for and pay or reimburse all such fees and costs to the extent such a claim is withdrawn or relief is not granted on the claim by a court of competent jurisdiction.

Other

I, Climber (if an adult), or Parent of a minor Climber, further agree:

- a. I have adequate insurance to cover any injury or damage I, or the minor Climber, may cause or suffer while participating in the activities at the Via Ferrata or moving about the premises.
- b. In the event that I or the child files a lawsuit against a Released Party, I agree that the venue of any such suit shall be Pendleton County, West Virginia. I further agree that the substantive laws of West Virginia shall apply in the action without regard to the conflict of law rules of that state.
- c. I have had sufficient opportunity to read this entire document. I have read and understood it and I agree to be bound by its terms. I intend it to be binding on me, members of my family, my heirs and estate.
- d. I hereby authorize Wild West Virginia Outdoor Adventures LLC to utilize any photo/video or any other media containing images/sounds of myself, or of my child, for promotional or other purposes, without compensation.
- e. If any part of this document is deemed unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining provisions will nevertheless remain in full force and effect.

Medical Information

I, Climber (if an adult), or Parent of a minor Climber understand that participating in the Via Ferrata experience is a strenuous activity. Obesity, high blood pressure, cardiac and coronary artery disease, pulmonary problems, diabetes, asthma, allergies, seizure disorders, pregnancy, arthritis, tendonitis and other joint and muscular-skeletal problems, recent surgery and other medical issues – physical and emotional (such as fear of heights) – will increase the inherent risks of the experience and cause Climber to be a danger to himself or herself and to others. It is with this understanding that I have listed below my, or the minor Climber’s, medical conditions pertinent to the Via Ferrata experience.

If Climber is a female, I acknowledge that participating in the Via Ferrata is not recommended for women who are pregnant and that I am not, or the minor Climber is not, pregnant at this time.

Climber, adult or minor, is taking the following medications: (If none, indicate none)

Climber, adult or minor, has the following medical conditions which might affect his or her participation in the Via Ferrata tour: (If none, indicate none)

I have truthfully completed the medical and special needs information called for above. Via Ferrata staff is authorized to provide or obtain emergency medical care for me, or my child, and to exchange pertinent medical information with a third party medical care giver.

Climber’s Signature (including minors): _____

Climber’s Name (printed): _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

In case of emergency contact: _____ Phone: _____

Relation to Participant: _____

If Climber is less than 18 years of age then Parent must also sign:

Climber’s Age: _____ Climber’s Birth date: ____/____/____

Parent’s Signature: _____

Parent’s Name (printed): _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does "Via Ferrata" mean?

It's Italian for "iron road" or "iron way". A Via Ferrata is basically a long climbing route with permanently fixed cables for protection. Steel rungs are used on steeper sections to keep the difficulty of the climbing moderate. Bridges, ladders, and other structures are often used.

Where does the idea come from?

Vias have been used in Europe for a century or more. The first were probably built by alpine guides to allow their clients access to more challenging mountaineering routes. During the world wars, vias were used to move troops easily through high mountain terrain, and played an important part in some mountain battles. By making the excitement, exposure and scenic beauty enjoyed by climbers accessible to many more people (and relatively inexpensive), via climbing has become a very popular sport in Europe, with hundreds of routes in existence and more being built all the time. The Nelson Rocks Via Ferrata is the first and only American-designed and built Via Ferrata in the world. It includes a 200 long, 150' high swinging footbridge, one of the longest such bridges in the country.

Who can climb the Via Ferrata?

Anyone at least 13 years of age and in good health, fit enough to handle a steep, rugged trail hike can climb the Via Ferrata.

What equipment is used?

A standard climbing harness and helmet, and a shock-absorbing lanyard specifically designed for Via Ferrata climbing. These items are provided for climbers at the Via Ferrata.

Can I bring my own gear?

No. We appreciate and understand the desire and preference of using your own gear, but in order to comply with our insurance policy, we require everyone who comes to experience the Via Ferrata at NRP to use the gear that is supplied by staff.

What is a Via Ferrata lanyard and how is it used?

Attached to the harness, it is a double or "Y" lanyard with two cords running to carabiners (snap links), which are used to anchor the climber to the safety cable and occasionally to rungs along the route. As the climber moves past an anchor point on the cable (one of the bolts which attach the cable to the rock), one of the two carabiners is unclipped and clipped on the other side of the anchor, followed by the same sequence for the second carabiner, so that the climber is attached with at least one side of the lanyard at all times. On the bridge crossing, the lanyards are always clipped to an independent safety cable overhead. The lanyard is equipped with a load-limiting (shock absorbing) device to reduce the jolt to the climber in the unlikely event of a fall.

Is the Via Ferrata safe?

While we do our best to manage the risks around the Via Ferrata, it is impossible to entirely remove all risk from the activity. Via Ferrata climbing is not like an amusement park ride, where you're strapped in and your safety is guaranteed. It is potentially dangerous, not unlike skiing, boating, mountain biking, etc. It requires alertness and careful judgment. Dangers include rockfall, lightning, and a variety of other uncontrollable risks. You will receive a safety orientation when you arrive at the Via which will explain how to keep yourself safe while enjoying the Via Ferrata. All trips are guided by our professional staff.

"Real" climbers don't use the Via, do they?

Many experienced rock climbers have enjoyed climbing the Via Ferrata. It is a nice change of pace, which gives climbers a chance to leave their rope and rack in the car, and climb nonstop for a couple of hours without stopping to belay. It is also a great way for climbers to introduce non-climbing friends to the vertical world.



How scary is the via for non-climbers?

The Via Ferrata has several spots that are very high and exposed; these places are intimidating to many visitors. Our guides will work with visitors on difficult sections. If a visitor decides that they would rather not continue, they may leave the Via Ferrata using one of the exits.

How should I dress, and what should I bring on the Via?

You should dress for movement and according to the weather. The temperature tends to be about 10°F cooler in the mountains, and may be even cooler due to wind. You may wear shorts if conditions allow. You must wear **close-toed shoes** that you allow you to move easily (lightweight hiking shoes and running shoes are best, hiking boots are also acceptable). Please do not wear sandals of any kind, crocs or similar shoes. Some people like to wear gloves when climbing (fingerless are preferred). For colder weather, we suggest a jacket, a hat to wear under your helmet, and full-fingered gloves.

When you arrive, if you have not done so already, you will need to sign **the Via Ferrata waiver**. If you have minors in the group who are traveling without their parents, the waiver will have to be signed by the parents in advance, and brought along.

We suggest that you bring a small daypack with you on the Via Ferrata – everyone will need his/her hands free to climb. We recommend the following items:

- Water (at least 2 quarts) NO GLASS containers
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Chapstick
- Personal medications (if needed on the trip)
- Camera (optional)
- Extra clothing (light rain jacket, sweatshirt, long sleeve t-shirt, etc.)
- A snack or lunch to eat throughout the day

How long will the Via Ferrata take?

The average length to do the Via is 4 hours, but it varies from 3.5 – 5 hours. Check-in, gear fitting and orientation take about 30 minutes. For first-time climbers moving at a relaxed pace, allow 3-4 hours for the climb and descent, from the time you leave your car until you return. More time will be needed for larger groups or if there is heavy climber traffic ahead of you. The total trip, from check in to hike down, may last 4.5 hours.

How much does the Via Ferrata cost?

The cost of the Via Ferrata varies depending on what day you visit. The weekday rate is \$60 with the weekend and holiday rate being \$65.

Do you offer an organizer's discount?

Yes. If you are signing up a group of 10 or more, every tenth climber is free.

I have a very large group. Is this ok?

Absolutely. Please note that the maximum number of participants in any tour is 14. If your group is larger than 14 the group will be split into small groups and depart at one hour intervals.

Is the 50% deposit refundable?

Changes or cancellations must be made 72 hours prior to your scheduled tour in order to receive a refund of your deposit less a \$25 administrative fee. Cancellations made less than 72 hours prior to your scheduled tour or "no-shows" result in a forfeit of your spot and you will not receive a refund. If we cancel your tour due to weather or other unforeseen conditions, we will reschedule your tour for another available time of refund all of your deposit.

My 11 year old is _____ (very athletic, very adventurous, big for his/her age, etc.). Can s/he go?

Sorry, but no. 13 years old is the minimum age we can take on the Via Ferrata. We can suggest several other adventures that your child might enjoy.



Do I need a guide? Couldn't I just guide my own group or myself?

Our Via Guides have training specifically tailored to the Via Ferrata, which allows them to safely lead trips. All trips must have a Via Ferrata Guide with them.

What if I start the Via, and decide I don't want to continue. Can I get off?

Yes. There are two escape (exit) points on the Via Ferrata, should you decide you don't want to continue. Guests who cross the bridge are committed for the remainder of the trip as both escapes are before the bridge.

Can you rock climb at Nelson Rocks Preserve?

Yes, as long as you are guided. You should contact Lester Zook of Wild GUYde Adventures (lester@wildguyde.com; www.wildguyde.com) for booking and pricing information. Otherwise, open climbing is not permitted at Nelson.

Can we stay at the cabins?

Yes. The price is \$10 per person, per night, with a minimum payment of \$30 per night. The cabins have bunk beds and a gas lamp. We do not have electricity, heat, running water, or bathrooms. Drinking water will be provided.

Can we tent camp at Nelson?

Yes. We do not have formal campgrounds, but we would be happy to prepare a space for you.

What are some other activities in the area?

There are a lot of hiking and mountain biking trails in the area. We also recommend Seneca Caverns, about 15 minutes away. We can certainly research more specific options for you, and recommend checking out our "Local Links" page on our website for more ideas and options.