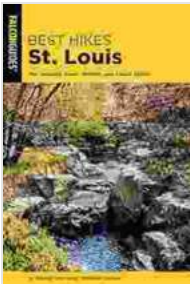


Best Hikes St Louis: Explore the Hidden Trails of the Gateway City



Best Hikes St. Louis: The Greatest Views, Wildlife, and Forest Strolls (Best Hikes Near Series) by Declan Brennan

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

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Nestled amidst the bustling metropolis of St. Louis, Missouri, lies a hidden treasure trove of hiking trails waiting to be explored. From gentle paths winding through lush forests to challenging ascents overlooking the majestic Mississippi River, St. Louis offers a diverse range of hiking experiences tailored to every level of adventure seeker. Whether you're a seasoned hiker or just getting started, this comprehensive guide will showcase the best hiking trails in St Louis, inspiring your next outdoor escape.

Forest Park: A Haven for Outdoor Enthusiasts

Spanning over 1,300 acres, Forest Park is the largest urban park in the United States, providing a sanctuary for hikers and nature lovers alike. Its

vast network of trails offers something for everyone, from leisurely walks along the serene banks of Post-Dispatch Lake to invigorating treks up Art Hill. For a panoramic view of the city skyline, embark on the Tower Grove Trail, which leads to the iconic Jewel Box, a stunning glass greenhouse.

Must-Hike Trails in Forest Park:

- **Art Hill Trail:** A challenging but rewarding climb with breathtaking views of the park and the city.
- **Post-Dispatch Lake Trail:** A flat, paved trail perfect for families and stroller users, offering scenic views of the lake and wildlife.
- **Tower Grove Trail:** A moderately challenging trail leading to the Jewel Box and panoramic city views.

Gateway Arch National Park: A Historical Hike with Stunning Vistas

At the heart of St. Louis stands the iconic Gateway Arch, a symbol of the city's westward expansion and a national landmark. The Gateway Arch National Park encompasses the Arch and its surrounding grounds, offering a unique hiking experience that blends history and breathtaking vistas. Ascend the 120-foot-high Observation Deck for unparalleled views of the city and the Mighty Mississippi. Explore the underground Museum at the Gateway Arch to delve into the park's rich history.

Unforgettable Trails at Gateway Arch National Park:

- **Gateway Arch Trail:** A short but symbolic trail leading to the base of the Arch, offering inspiring views of the monument.
- **Old Chain of Rocks Bridge Trail:** A scenic trail along the Mississippi River, showcasing the remnants of the historic bridge.

- **Riverfront Trail:** A paved trail stretching along the riverfront, providing stunning views of the city skyline and the Arch.

Castlewood State Park: A Getaway to Tranquil Nature

Just a short drive from the city, Castlewood State Park invites hikers to escape into a world of tranquility and natural beauty. Its meandering trails traverse rolling hills, pristine forests, and sparkling creeks. Discover hidden waterfalls, explore ancient caves, and marvel at towering rock formations. Castlewood Lake provides ample opportunities for fishing, kayaking, and wildlife viewing.

Enchanting Trails in Castlewood State Park:

- **Castlewood Cave Trail:** A challenging but rewarding trail leading to a secluded cave, offering a glimpse into the park's geological wonders.
- **Hickory Ridge Trail:** A moderate trail showcasing panoramic views of the park and the surrounding countryside.
- **Lake Trail:** A flat, paved trail around Castlewood Lake, perfect for leisurely walks and wildlife observation.

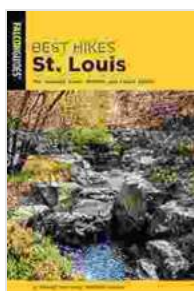
Meramec State Park: A Journey Through Nature's Playground

Nestled in the scenic Meramec River Valley, Meramec State Park offers a vast network of hiking trails catered to all levels of hikers. Embark on an adventure amidst towering bluffs, cascading waterfalls, and lush forests. Explore the park's unique geological formations, including the iconic Elephant Rocks, a natural sandstone formation resembling a herd of elephants. Relax and rejuvenate by the crystal-clear Meramec River.

Unmissable Trails at Meramec State Park:

- **Big River Trail:** A strenuous trail along the Meramec River, offering breathtaking views of the bluffs and forests.
- **Elephant Rocks Trail:** A moderate trail leading to the awe-inspiring Elephant Rocks formation, providing ample photo opportunities.
- **Gorge Trail:** A challenging trail showcasing the park's rugged terrain and cascading waterfalls.

St. Louis is a hiker's paradise, boasting a hidden collection of trails that cater to every level of adventure. From the serene paths of Forest Park to the historical heights of Gateway Arch National Park, from the tranquility of Castlewood State Park to the grandeur of Meramec State Park, the Gateway City offers a diverse range of hiking experiences that will captivate your senses and inspire your soul. Embrace the beauty of the outdoors and embark on a journey through St. Louis's hidden trails, creating memories that will last a lifetime.



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