



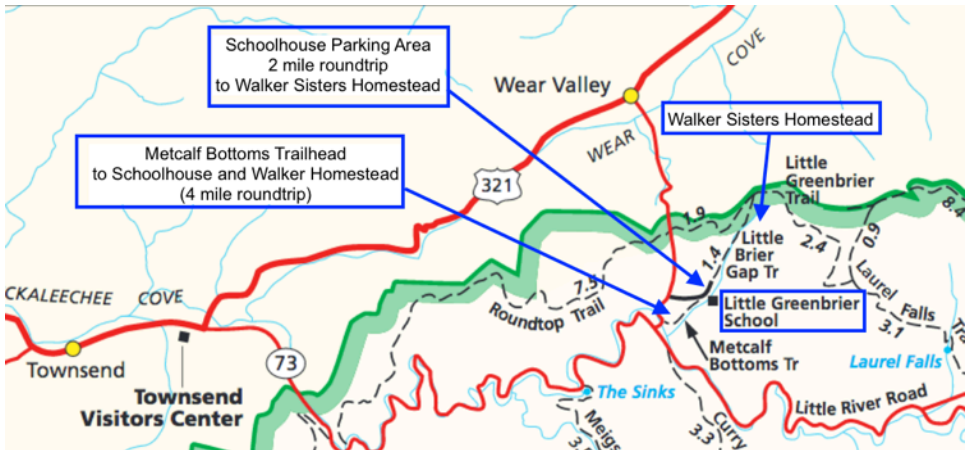
Great Smoky Mountains National Park With Kids

Get the full itinerary on [Simply Awesome Trip's website](#) or find it on [Amazon](#).

Day 3

Overview

Today you'll take a hike to an old schoolhouse and a historic homestead before enjoying a picnic and swim at Metcalf Bottoms Picnic Area. The picnic area and trailhead is about a 20 minute drive from Townsend.



Day 3 Overview Map- Map courtesy of the NPS

Breakfast- Elvira's Cafe

It's worth a repeat for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. 4.5 miles from the 321 stoplight in Townsend. 4143 Wears Valley Road.



Historic Greenbrier Schoolhouse and Walker Sisters Cabin

This easy 4 mile roundtrip hike brings you to a schoolhouse built in 1882 and then continues on to the Walker Sisters cabin built after the Civil War. You can enter the log structures and imagine mountain life from days of yore.

Trailhead

Start the 4 mile roundtrip trail from the Metcalf Bottoms Picnic Area. The trail begins behind a gated gravel road near a bridge crossing the river. Follow the trail for roughly one mile to reach the schoolhouse.

Tip: To shorten the hike to 2.0 miles total, you can park at the Greenbrier Schoolhouse on Little Greenbrier Road (closed in the winter). The parking area is less than a half-mile up the narrow gravel road and is next to the historic Little Greenbrier School.



The Walker Sisters Cabin



Little Greenbrier Schoolhouse

Spend some time at the **Little Greenbrier Schoolhouse**. Built in 1882 with the help of John Walker, the last classes in the small schoolhouse were held in 1935.

If you are here on a Tuesday, you may find a volunteer dressed as a teacher from the time period to lead classes. Otherwise, the kids will have a good time standing up front and instructing their siblings (and you).



Little Greenbrier Schoolhouse



Walker Sisters Homestead

After visiting the school and taking turns being the teacher, you're now ready to continue to the Walker Sisters Cabin. The **Little Brier Gap trail** is located at the end of the gravel road that runs behind the cemetery in front of the schoolhouse. You'll see a gate crossing the gravel road and the trail begins from there.



The trail to the Walker Sisters Homestead starts behind the gate going right

The trail is nice and wide and slightly uphill, but overall, an easy 1 mile stroll along a babbling brook to the Walker homestead. This is one of the busier hikes in the park, but my kids have always loved it because they get to explore inside the cabin. Arrive early if visiting in the summer season to avoid the crowds.



Walker Sisters Homestead

Tip: Pack a picnic to enjoy on the grounds of the cabin or return to Metcalf Bottoms Picnic Area where you can dine riverside and try to catch tadpoles and crawdads. Restrooms are available at the picnic area.

Directions to Metcalf Bottoms Picnic Area

From Wears Valley Road, turn right on Line Springs Rd. The road becomes very narrow and curvy as it climbs into the park. You will pass the trailhead for Greenbrier Schoolhouse and then continue on to the Metcalf Bottoms Picnic Area.

Dinner-Black Bear Cafe

Get your southern food fix at the Black Bear Cafe. The fried trout is a favorite. Kids menu as well. 7621 E. Lamar Alexander Parkway.



AND MORE!

Get the full itinerary on [Simply Awesome Trip's website](#) or find it on [Amazon](#).

Where To Stay

The lodging choices for each destination have been carefully selected for their ideal location, price point, safety, and proximity to the day's activities. We tell you the best area to stay so you can minimize driving or walking distances and maximize your moments having fun. Knowing what part of town to stay in is a huge part of making a trip a success, and that's hard to do when you are not familiar with a destination. We save you time and energy by doing all the research for you.

Where To Eat

Local dining establishments are highlighted. The kind where children are welcome but isn't necessarily a restaurant geared primarily towards kids. You won't find many restaurant chains in our itineraries, just good local food mirroring the destination's culture. This could mean a food truck, a pizza place, or a nice sit-down restaurant, but always delicious. If there are any local brews, specialty foods, wines, or coffee houses around, we'll mention those too.

Where To Play

The organization of each day has been thoughtfully planned in order to group activities together by proximity, ideal time of day to visit, and the best nearby dining choices. It's all been laid out for you, along with directions, maps, travel tips, links to more info, and more. We cover the most worthwhile activities to do in a destination (based on our own family's reviews) without forgetting that vacations are meant to be fun and relaxing, not a list to be checked off while hauling around whining children.

You'll find plenty of outdoor activities for the family as well as cultural and historical sites unique to the destination. Many itineraries include easy



hikes, bike rides, and float trips that have been selected for their kid-friendly length and ease of difficulty as well as their scenic beauty. (Always worth it!) We are all about getting families outdoors so we include as much fresh air as we can in our itineraries, whether it is a day-long trek in a national park or just the location of a fantastic playground perfect for a break from sight-seeing.

Unbiased Recommendations

At the founding of Simply Awesome Trips, we agreed to travel as we always have with our families—on our own dime. No free nights, no comped visits, not even any swag. We continue to feel good about that decision. We do participate in affiliate marketing with some of the companies that we personally use (Booking.com, VRBO.com). They don't pay us to write, we simply get a commission if you enter those sites through our "gate" as opposed to say a Google search. But we also recommend lodging, restaurants, and activities, where we don't receive any commission, such as Airbnb or private rental companies. If it's good; it's good. We don't change recommendations based on vendor.