Hike four Waterfalls! Rainbow Falls, Stairway Falls, Turtle-back Falls, and Bust-yo-butt Falls!

These four waterfall hikes are only 4 miles intotal located near Lake Toxaway, NC. The trail is primarily used for hiking, and camping and is accessible year-round.

This short hike along the Horse pasture River features outstanding views of 4 large waterfalls and good camping. Start the trail by descending on a moderate grade downhill.

Look for a metal post on the left and turn left on the side trail. It's past the sign about entering the National Forest. It's only a quarter mile from this point to Stairway Falls, but the trail is steep and narrow. After descending a short distance, you'll reach the river and campsite. This is the top of Stairway Falls (pic above).

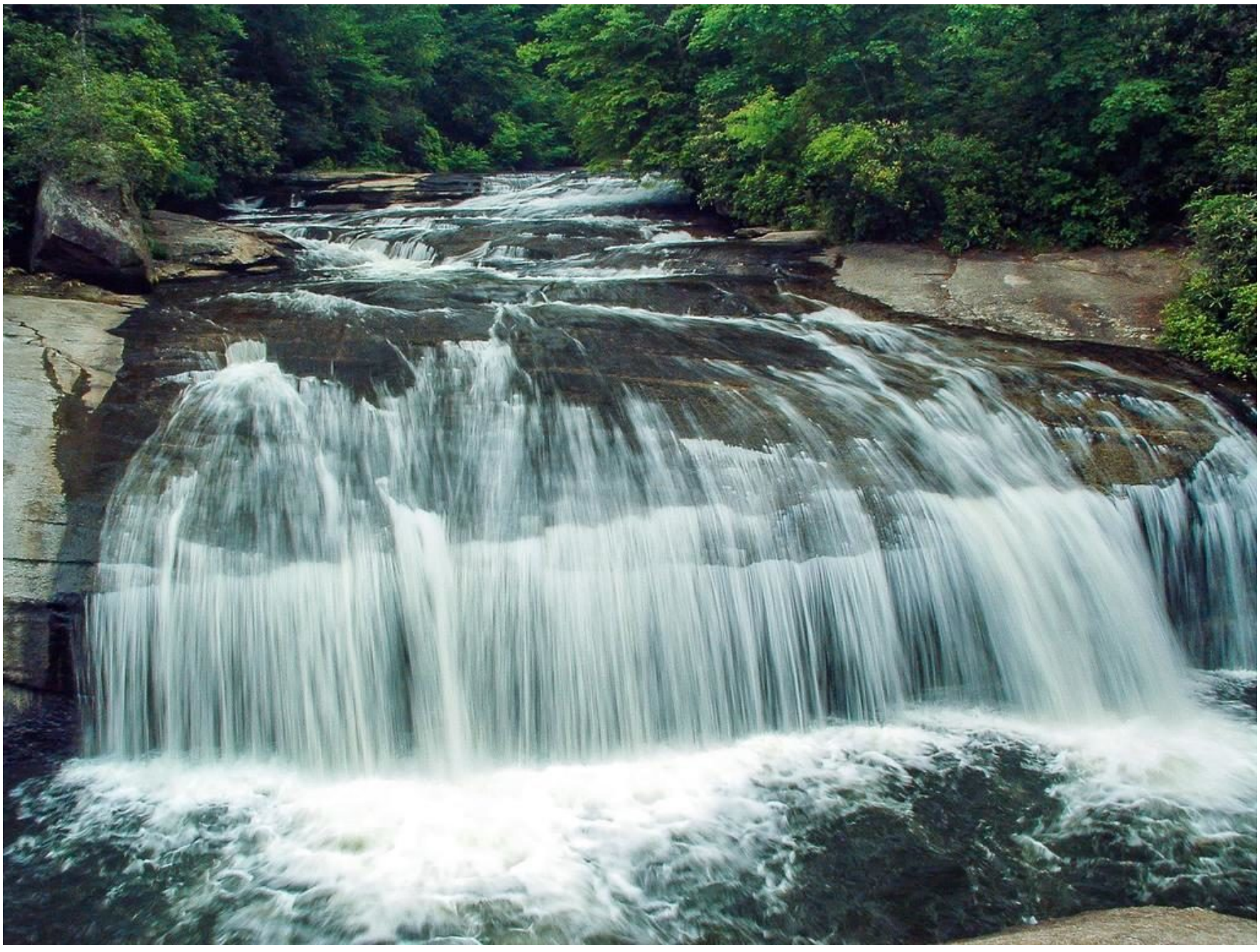
Continue on the trail down river to reach the base of the waterfall. Again, it's steep so wear your good hiking shoes! You'll see a side trail to the right that takes you to the top tier of the falls. But continue straight and the trail will take you to the base pool. There's another campsite there that is seldom used. This is a great stop for lunch as it's very private and beautiful! When ready retrace your steps back to the main trail.

After about 1/2 mile you'll hear the rushing water of Turtleback Falls, before proceeding to this waterfall, go right, down a rhododendron enshrouded side trail. This side trail is a 1/4 mile and dead ends at a US Forest Service blockade. Look for the 40 foot Bust-yo-butt Falls, it can be viewed from this point. Retrace back and continue on to Turtleback Falls and the thundering Rainbow Falls. Turtleback Falls is a great place for a summer swim, just a few hundred yards downstream is the impressive Rainbow Falls. When viewing rainbow falls from the top, extreme caution should be used, this is not a safe place to be on top of! Continue down the river trail. The trail is not marked, but as long as you keep the river on your right, you're ok. At the 1.25-mile mark is a very nice clearing for tenting. Continue up to the parking lot.

Directions:
Approximately 10 miles east of Cashiers, NC, take NC-107 toward Glenville Turn left at Bee Trail Road for 22 miles then right on Cedar Creek Road for 6mi to left on 64 thru Safire for 9 miles then turn left onto grassy Ridge road into the access to the Gorges State Park Visitor Center. The parking area is part of the Gorges State Park on the right. The trail leaves the visitor center heading upstream.

Address: (GPS unreliable)
Gorges State Park Visitor Center
976 Grassy Ridge Road
Sapphire, NC 28774

Bring water, and something to cook for lunch then stop in Whiteside Brewing in Cashiers for the best wings and cinnamon doughnuts before heading home!



Turtle Back Falls

Bust-Yo-Butt Falls

Rainbow Falls

Stairway Falls