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If You Have Four Hours To Spend At Arabia Mountain NHA

Walk through an untamed Georgia at Panola Mountain State Park.

One of the Georgia monadnocks that was never quarried, Panola Mountain offers a glimpse into a landscape that existed long before Atlanta. Park rangers offer guided daytime and nighttime hikes of the park, as well as archery, tree climbing and other activities. Access to the mountain is limited; hikers must register for a guided tour with Panola Mountain State Park staff.

Panola Mountain State Park is located at 2620 Highway 155 SW, Stockbridge, GA 30281, and is open 7 a.m. to dark. Parking is \$5, with annual passes available. For more information, call 770-389-7801.

Visit the Monastery of the Holy Spirit.

Located in Conyers, this historic Trappist monastery is a place of peace and beauty. Visitors can enjoy the museum, gift shop, bakery, and garden center (all located within the Visitor's Center), visit the beautiful Abbey Church, or take a walk through some of the Monastery's protected greenspace. People of all faiths and backgrounds are welcome. Visit today! The monastery is located at 2625 Highway 212 SW, Conyers, GA 30094, and is open Monday-Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Note that the museum, visitors' center and gift shop are closed on Sundays.

Take a bike ride along the South River.

The Arabia Mountain PATH has a segment running alongside the South River, ending at the Monastery of the Holy Spirit. Park at the trailhead located on Daniels Bridge Road, just off Union Church Road in Stockbridge, and enjoy a peaceful ride along the waterway. The Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area is located in Georgia's piedmont region, so know that this ride is quite hilly.

If you're looking for a longer excursion:

Explore the Arabia Mountain PATH. It won't just take you along the South River – the Arabia Mountain PATH is a paved trail extending over 30 miles, criss-crossing every corner of the National Heritage Area. You can use the PATH to explore everything from one of the last dairy farm landscapes in DeKalb County to the forests surrounding Arabia and Panola mountains to downtown Lithonia, the historic "City of Stone." Whether on foot or biking, the PATH will take you across a landscape 400 million years in the making.

Retreat to the Monastery of the Holy Spirit:

For those seeking peace and seclusion, the Monastery of the Holy Spirit offers a variety of retreats, including a self-guided, nondenominational personal retreat. For those looking to learn more about the lives and spirituality of the monks themselves, the monastery also offers a guided preached retreat program. Whether coming to reflect in nature or to explore your own spirituality, these monastic retreats are accessible and welcome to everyone.

If you're hungry and want a bite to eat, the bakery and gift shop at the Monastery of the Holy Spirit have plenty to offer. Or, you can go to the cafes of downtown Lithonia. There's plenty to quench your appetite!