

# Alabama State Park // Profile

## CATHEDRAL CAVERNS STATE PARK



BILLY POPE

Originally called Bats Cave, Cathedral Caverns was opened to the public by Jacob Gurley in the 1950s. The cave was renamed because of its cathedral-like appearance.



The first feature most people notice about Cathedral Caverns is its massive entrance. The huge opening measures 126 feet wide and 25 feet high, a world record for commercial caves. The grand entrance is only the beginning. In-

side the cavern are some of the most beautiful formations Mother Nature has ever created including "Goliath"—the largest stalagmite in the world measuring 45 feet tall and 243 feet in circumference.

Cathedral holds four other world records: largest flowstone wall, the largest "frozen" waterfall, largest stalagmite forest and the most improbable stone formation in the world — a stalagmite that is 35 feet tall and 3 inches wide!


The cave maintains a comfortable 60-degree temperature year round, which makes it an excellent field trip for school, church or other groups. Cave tours

are given throughout the day and are wheelchair accessible.

New at Cathedral is gemstone mining, an activity for any age, but especially popular with younger visitors. A bag of mining dirt is purchased and then sifted through running water in custom-made flumes. You can identify your finds using the gemstone identification display.

Primitive tent camping is available at Cathedral Caverns. A community water faucet and bathroom facilities are located near the campsites. If you prefer less rustic accommodations, consider overnighting at nearby Lake Guntersville State Park's lodge.

Forever Wild purchased land adjacent to the park in 2008 to protect the cave and support park operations.

Cathedral Caverns is a short drive from several great north Alabama attractions including Lake Guntersville, Monte Sano State Park, Desoto State Park, Buck's Pocket State Park, Decatur, Huntsville, and the Marshall Space Flight Center. 

**LOCATION:** 30 miles south-east of Huntsville, near Grant, Ala.

**HOURS OF OPERATION:** 7 a.m. to sundown, year round.

### CAVE TOURS

**Adults:** \$12, **Children 6-11 years:** \$6, **Children under 5:** free with parent or guardian. Visit [www.alapark.com](http://www.alapark.com) for more rate information.

### TOUR TIMES

**September 1 - March 14, Daily:** Every two hours beginning at 10 a.m.; last tour at 4 p.m.

**March 15 - August 31, Daily:** Hourly beginning at 10:15 a.m.; last tour starts at 4 p.m.

**Closed:** New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day

### WELCOME CENTER:

Information, restrooms, souvenirs, gifts and refreshments.

**CAMPING:** \$12 per night per site, call the park for more details.

**GEM MINING:** 9a.m. - 6 p.m.; bag of mining dirt \$6 plus tax.

**PAVILION RENTAL:** Two large picnic pavilions; call park office to reserve.

### RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES:

Playground, cave tours



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