



NROCKS Outdoor Adventures
141 Nelson Gap Road
Circleville, WV 26804
877-435-4842 toll free
[38° 42' 1.465" N 79° 28' 19.99" W](#)

Visitor Registration Packet

- I. NROCKS Outdoor Adventures Via Ferrata Climber Agreement
- II. Via Ferrata Climb Overview
- III. Via Ferrata Frequently Asked Questions
- IV. Directions to NROCKS Welcome Center

Visitors & parent/guardian of visitor under age 18:

Please carefully read the Climber Agreement and the Via Ferrata Climb Overview. The Climber Agreement must be completed and signed by each visitor. **PLEASE NOTE: All participants must be 13 years or older.** Visitors between the ages of 13 and 17 must also have the Climber Agreement signed by the minor's custodial parent or legal guardian. Please use a separate form for each visitor. The form may be completed and signed in advance and brought with you to NROCKS.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our office at (877) 435-4842 or visit our web site at www.NROCKS.com.

Thank you for your cooperation,
NROCKS Staff



Via Ferrata Climber Agreement

(Including Acknowledgement of Risks and Agreements of Release and Indemnity)

This document contains important information about the Via Ferrata at NROCKS Outdoor Adventures (referred to herein as “NROCKS”) and the properties on which it is located. It may affect the legal rights of climbers of the Via Ferrata and their families. It must be read, understood and signed by all Climbers 18 years or older. If a Climber is a minor (under 18 years of age) his or her parent or legal guardian (referred to herein as “Parent”) must sign, for himself or herself and on behalf of the minor child.

In consideration of being allowed to climb the Via Ferrata and to move about its premises, the undersigned adult Climber and Parent, if applicable, acknowledge and agree as follows:

The Via Ferrata

The Via Ferrata is a hiking and rock climbing route with permanently fixed rungs, cables, and other climbing aids to assist in movement over the vertical rock faces. The Via Ferrata utilizes steel climbing rungs on steeper sections to decrease the difficulty of the climb. The climb is steep and arduous with approximately 900 feet of elevation gain/loss over the approximately three mile hike/climb. The hiking and climbing surfaces are loose, slippery and unstable and will require Climber to use his or her hands in order to maintain balance. At times, Climber is exposed to a potential fall of over 200 feet. The Via Ferrata includes one suspension bridge that has open spaces between the support boards and is 200 feet long and 150 feet above the ground. Climber is required to attach, un-attach and re-attach himself or herself to an accompanying cable or steel rungs by means of a double, or “Y”, lanyard, allowing Climber to remain attached by one leg of the lanyard while re-attaching, by means of the other leg, to a new location on the cable/rungs. The Via Ferrata requires Climber to be alert and demonstrate careful judgment and strict attention to remaining attached to the cables/rungs at all times.

The Via Ferrata experience is designed for use by persons of at least average mobility, strength, physical ability, emotional stability, and in good health. Climber must carefully consider health issues – physical and emotional, including the use of prescription or non-prescription medications – before choosing to participate, and inform Via Ferrata staff, in writing, prior to the beginning of the experience, of any issue which might affect his or her performance on the route. Climber – not Via Ferrata staff – has the responsibility of determining his or her level of fitness and other qualifications, physical and emotional, to participate in the Via Ferrata experience. Climber agrees that he or she will not use, and will not be under the influence of, any recreational drug or alcohol while climbing the Via Ferrata.

Climber understands that he or she must be attentive to instructions and warnings posted at the Via Ferrata registration area and provided by Via Ferrata staff during the hiking and climbing portions of the experience. Failure of Climber to abide by all rules, guidelines and instructions of Via Ferrata staff may, at the sole discretion of the staff, result in the dismissal of Climber from the Via Ferrata climb without refund of any fee or other expense paid.

Risks

The risks of the Via Ferrata and hiking to and from the climbing site, include, among others, rockfall (including rocks dislodged by other climbers), slips, falls, and jolts at the end of a lanyard, causing abrupt contact with the rock face, climbing aids or other climbers. Climbing gear may fail, be misfitted or misused. Climbing aids, however permanently affixed they may appear, may fail. Climber is responsible for his or her own safety and if Climber has doubts about his or her ability to manage the risks of the adventure he or she must not climb. Via Ferrata staff cannot, and must not be expected to, be responsible for the actions of Climber. Staff members and participants may make mistakes of judgment and conduct. Climbing the Via Ferrata and hiking to and from it will expose Climber to the unpredictable forces of nature, including, but not limited to, changing weather conditions, high winds, lightning and hail. Climber may come in contact with plants and insects that create hazards, including allergic reactions, and a variety of wild animals including, but not limited to, deer, snakes, bear, bobcat, and skunks. The Via Ferrata experience occurs in a remote location where radio and telephone communication is unpredictable and medical care and evacuation may be significantly delayed. These risks are inherent in the Via Ferrata experience; that is, they cannot be eliminated without destroying the unique character of the experience. These and other risks may result in injuries and illnesses, including pinches, scrapes, twists bruises, sprains, lacerations, fractures and other physical and emotional trauma, and in extreme circumstances even death.

Assumption of Risks. I, adult Climber or Parent of a minor Climber, have read and understand the information above, and have viewed images and received additional information at the registration counter and/or on the web site of the Via Ferrata, (www.NROCKS.com)

I understand that the above description of risks of the Via Ferrata is not complete and that these and other, including unknown or unanticipated, risks, inherent and otherwise, may result in loss or property, injury or death. If I am a Parent of a minor Climber I have

discussed the activities and their risks and possible outcomes with my child, and he or she wishes to participate nevertheless.

I expressly and voluntarily agree to accept and assume all of the risks of enrollment and participation in the Via Ferrata experience and related activities, and moving about the premises of the experience, whether or not described above and inherent or otherwise.

Release. I, adult Climber or Parent of a minor Climber (Parent, for myself and, to the fullest extent allowed by law, on behalf of my minor child), hereby voluntarily release Wild West Virginia Outdoor Adventures LLC, doing business as NROCKS Outdoor Adventures, and Fun & Dreams West LLC, and their respective owners, members, officers, directors and staff (“Released Parties”) from any and all claims, demands or causes of action, which are in any way related to my, or the minor child’s, enrollment or participation in the Via Ferrata experience, including the tour, and the use of Via Ferrata equipment, vehicles, structures, and adjoining premises. This release includes claims of negligence of a Released Party and to the fullest extent allowed by the laws of West Virginia, claims of aggravated forms of negligence, and other careless or wrongful conduct of a Released Party.

Indemnity. I, adult Climber or Parent of a minor Climber, agree further to indemnify (that is defend and protect, and pay or reimburse) the Released Parties and each of them from any claim, by whomever it might be brought, including the minor child, other participants and members of my, or the minor child’s, family, arising from my, or the child’s enrollment or participation in the Via Ferrata experience, including the tour, and the use of Via Ferrata premises, equipment, vehicles and structures. This indemnity includes losses suffered by me, or the child, and losses caused by me or the child. This indemnity includes claims of negligence of a Released Party and to the fullest extent allowed by the laws of West Virginia, claims of aggravated forms of negligence, and other careless or wrongful conduct of a Released Party. Should a Released Party or anyone acting on his or her behalf incur attorney’s fees and costs to enforce this agreement or otherwise defend a claim, I agree to indemnify and hold them harmless for and pay or reimburse all such fees and costs to the extent such a claim is withdrawn or relief is not granted on the claim by a court of competent jurisdiction.

Other. I, adult Climber or Parent of a minor Climber, further agree:

- a. I have adequate insurance to cover any injury or damage I, or the minor Climber, may cause or suffer while participating in the activities at the Via Ferrata or moving about the premises.
- b. In the event that I, the child or anyone on my or the child’s behalf files a lawsuit against a Released Party, I agree that the venue of any such suit shall be Pendleton County, West Virginia. I further agree that the substantive laws of West Virginia shall apply in the action without regard to the conflict of law rules of that state.
- c. I have had sufficient opportunity to read this entire document. I have read and understood it and I agree to be bound by its terms. I intend it to be binding on me, members of my family, my heirs and estate.
- d. I hereby authorize Wild West Virginia Outdoor Adventures LLC to utilize any photo/video or any other media containing images/sounds of myself, or of my child, for promotional or other purposes, without compensation.
- e. If any part of this document is deemed unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining provisions will nevertheless remain in full force and effect.

Medical Information. I, adult Climber or Parent of a minor Climber, understand that participating in the Via Ferrata experience is a strenuous activity. Obesity, high blood pressure, cardiac and coronary artery disease, pulmonary problems, diabetes, asthma, allergies, seizure disorders, pregnancy, arthritis, tendonitis and other joint and muscular-skeletal problems, recent surgery and other medical issues – physical and emotional (such as fear of heights) – will increase the inherent risks of the experience and cause Climber to be a danger to himself or herself and to others. It is with this understanding that I have listed below my, or the minor Climber’s, medical conditions pertinent to the Via Ferrata experience.

If Climber is a female, I acknowledge that participating in the Via Ferrata is not recommended for women who are pregnant and that I am not, or the minor Climber is not, pregnant at this time.

Climber, adult or minor, is taking the following medications: (If none, indicate none)

Climber, adult or minor, has the following medical conditions which might affect his or her participation in the Via Ferrata climb: (If none, indicate none)

I have truthfully completed the medical and special needs information called for above. NROCKS Outdoor Adventures staff is authorized to provide or obtain emergency medical care for me, or my child, and to exchange pertinent medical information with a third party medical care giver.

Participant’s Name (printed): _____ Date: _____

Adult Participant’s Signature: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

In case of emergency contact: _____ Phone: _____

Relation to Participant: _____

Participant’s Age (if under 18): _____ Participant’s Birth date (if under 18): _____

If Participant is less than 18 years of age, Parent must also sign.

Minor’s Name (printed): _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (printed): _____ Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____



Via Ferrata Climb Overview

Advance registration is required. When you arrive at the NROCKS, you will meet the staff and your guides at the Welcome Center. Prior to beginning your climb, you will complete any remaining paperwork and waivers, be fitted into your personal fall protection equipment and attend to safety instructions that will need to be adhered to during your climb. At the base of the Via Ferrata your guide will provide you with an orientation to the equipment and demonstrate some appropriate climbing techniques. Your guide will also address the inherent risks on the Via Ferrata and mountain terrain.

It's difficult to compare the Via Ferrata experience to anything else. It can be very demanding or not so demanding depending on one's level of fitness. It can also be emotionally taxing depending on one's level of comfort with heights. Round trip, you will experience a 3.5 mile hike/climb with an elevation gain of 900 feet and a subsequent elevation loss of 900 feet. At points you will experience over 200 feet of vertical exposure. While on the Via Ferrata you will be climbing on small ledges and stepping out over airy voids. For those who find the challenge to be more than anticipated, there are two exit routes in the first section of the Via Ferrata, prior to the suspension bridge. After crossing the 200 foot long bridge, there is the optional Headwall Section -- a 45-foot vertical climb and an opportunity to stand on top of the rocks. The climb down from the Headwall is the only significant down climb on the tour and can be as equally challenging as the climb up. This optional route then rejoins the main Via Ferrata route. Remember, the Headwall is optional and is a good place to sit and take a break if that is best for you. The Via Ferrata ends in the upper-corridor section near the top of the mountain. To conclude your day, there is an optional section of climbing that ends at the very summit of the rocks with an amazing 360-degree view. Either way there is a 30+ minute hike back to the Welcome Center – all downhill from this point.

Climb Duration	3 – 5 hours depending on group size and ability.
Difficulty Level	It's difficult to compare the Via Ferrata experience to anything else. It can be very demanding or not so demanding depending on one's level of fitness. It can also be emotionally taxing depending on one's level of comfort with heights. It is not recommended for those who are trying to overcome an intense fear of heights. <i>Please take a minute to explore our photo gallery to get a better idea of what the climb entails.</i>
What to Wear	Dress in layers so you can make adjustments as you warm up and cool down. In general wear comfy, loose-fitting clothing that does not restrict your movement. Short shorts are not recommended and many climbers prefer to wear pants or capris to keep their knees covered.
Footwear	Sturdy athletic shoes or lightweight hiking shoes/boots. No sandals (including Chacos or Texas), or FiveFingers shoes.
Bring With You	Waivers, small daypack, 2-quarts of water, trail snacks, sunscreen, camera (optional, must be secured), rain gear (if necessary), fingerless bicycle style gloves (recommended).
Minimum Age	13. No exceptions.
Group Size	The maximum number of participants on any climb is 14. If your group size is larger than 14, please call us at 877-435-4842 to schedule a tour.
Late Policy	If you are late and miss the orientation, there will be no refunds or transfers. Please plan to arrive 20 minutes before your scheduled departure time.



Frequently Asked Questions about the Via Ferrata

What does "Via Ferrata" mean?

"Via Ferrata" is Italian for "by way of iron" or "iron road".

What is a Via Ferrata?

A via ferrata is basically a generic term subscribed to any system of cables, ladders, bridges, spikes, rungs or other anchors that are permanently fixed to rock faces or steep terrain to help climbers maneuver.

Where does the idea come from?

Via ferratas have been used in Europe for a century or more. The first were probably built by alpine guides to allow their clients access to more challenging mountaineering routes. During the World Wars, via ferratas were used to help move troops through high mountain terrain, and played an important part in some mountain battles. By making the excitement, exposure and scenic beauty enjoyed by climbers accessible to many more people, via ferrata climbing has become a very popular sport in Europe, with hundreds of routes in existence and more being built all the time. The Via Ferrata at Nelson Rocks is the first American-designed and built via ferrata. It includes a high swinging footbridge that is 200' long and 150' high, one of the longest such bridges in the country.

Is the Via Ferrata safe?

It is impossible to remove all risks from an adventure activity. Via Ferrata climbing is not like an amusement park ride where you're strapped in and your safety is guaranteed. It is an active, participatory sport, not unlike skiing, white water boating, mountain biking, etc. It requires alertness and careful judgment. Dangers include falling, rock fall, lightning, and a variety of other inherent risks. You will receive an orientation when you arrive at NROCKS that explains how to manage your fall protection equipment and negotiate the inherent risks associated with via ferrata climbing.

How do I manage my fall protection equipment?

The design of our Via Ferrata allows you to be in control of your own fall protection equipment. The Via Ferrata route is equipped with a series of cable loops which you attach yourself to using a double lanyard and two carabiners. It is important to note that you should be attached to the cable 100% of the time by at least one carabiner while on the Via Ferrata. There should NEVER be a time when you are not clipped in to the system by at least one carabiner.

Do I have to be in good shape to climb the Via Ferrata?

You should be in relatively good health, meaning you should be fit enough to complete a steep, rugged trail hike and flexible enough to step up on rungs and rocks that are irregularly spaced apart.

Do I have to have strong arms and hands?

Surprising to most people that are new to climbing, you actually use your legs more than you do your arms. Think of it in terms of using your legs to step up to move along the route and using your arms for balance and to hold yourself onto the route.

Is there an age limit?

You must be 13 or older to climb the Via Ferrata.

My 11 year old is _____ (very athletic, very adventurous, big for his/her age, etc.). Can s/he go?

No. 13 years old is the minimum age allowed to climb the Via Ferrata. Younger guests are more than welcome to zipline on the North Fork Valley Canopy Tour, or hike the trails.

How scary is the Via Ferrata for non-climbers?

The majority of the Via Ferrata route is very high and exposed and so can be intimidating for some visitors that are not comfortable with heights. However, there is always a handhold for you to hold on to and a foothold for you to step on, so the route is very doable for visitors who are in relatively good health. Our guides are trained to assist, but it is your responsibility to make good judgment calls on what is best for you.

I'm scared of heights, should I climb the Via Ferrata?

If you have a general, healthy fear of heights you should be okay. If you are intensely scared of heights, this might not be the best activity for you. Please explore our photo gallery to get an idea of what the Via Ferrata route entails.

What if I start the Via Ferrata and decide I don't want to continue. Can I get off?

Yes. There are two escape (exit) routes on the Via Ferrata, should you decide you don't want to continue. Both are towards the beginning of the route before you cross the bridge. After you cross the bridge you are committed for the remainder of the trip.

What equipment is used?

NROCKS provides Via Ferrata climbers with a standard climbing harness and helmet, and a shock-absorbing lanyard specifically designed for via ferrata climbing.

What is a via ferrata lanyard and how is it used?

The lanyard attaches to the belay loop of a climbing harness. It is a double or "Y" lanyard with two cords running to carabiners (snap links), which are used to anchor the climber to the fixed cable and occasionally to the fixed rungs along the route. As the climber moves past an anchor point on the cable (one of the bolts that attach the cable to the rock), one of the two carabiners is unclipped and clipped on the other side of the anchor, followed by the same sequence for the second carabiner, so that the climber is attached with at least one side of the lanyard at all times. On the bridge crossing, the lanyards are always clipped to an independent cable overhead. The lanyard is equipped with a load-limiting (shock absorbing) device to reduce the jolt to the climber in the event of a fall.

Can I bring my own gear?

No. All participants are required to use NROCKS gear.

How is Via Ferrata climbing different from rock climbing?

There are a lot of different styles of rock climbing, but in general, with via ferrata climbing you are using fixed anchors such as rungs, cables, ropes and bridges. Also with via ferrata climbing you are using your own fall protection equipment to attach yourself to the fixed anchors where as with most styles of rock climbing the climber is belayed with a rope by his or her partner.

"Real" climbers don't climb the Via, do they?

Many experienced rock climbers have enjoyed climbing the Via Ferrata. It is a nice change of pace that gives climbers a chance to leave their rope and rack in the car and climb nonstop for a couple of hours without stopping to belay. It is also a great workout and a spectacular way for climbers to introduce non-climbing friends to the vertical world.

What should I wear?

You should dress for movement and according to the weather. The temperature tends to be about 10°F cooler in the mountains but you will be climbing and working up a sweat so it is recommended that you bring layers (long sleeve tee-shirt, sweatshirt etc) so you can layer and de-layer accordingly. Short shorts are not recommended and many climbers prefer to wear pants or capris to keep their knees covered.

Should I wear gloves?

We recommend wearing fingerless gloves while climbing, but they are not a necessity. They help with protection against minor cuts and abrasions. Fingerless bicycle style gloves are the best option because they don't interfere with your ability to operate the carabiners.

What shoes should I wear?

Sturdy, close-toed shoes such as lightweight hiking shoes or lightweight hiking boots are best. Please do not wear sandals of any kind, including Chacos, Teva , FiveFinger shoes or Crocs.

What should I bring with me?

Waivers

A small daypack

Water (at least 2 quarts)

Sunglasses

Sunscreen

Personal medications (if needed on the trip)

Camera (optional, must be secured)

Extra clothing (light rain jacket, sweatshirt, long sleeve t-shirt, etc.)

Fingerless bicycle style gloves (recommended)

A snack or lunch to eat throughout the day

How long will the climb take?

Between 3 - 5 hours, depending on group size and ability.

I have a very large group. Is this ok?

Yes. The maximum number of participants on a typical climb is 14. If your group size is larger than 14, it's not a problem but we'll need you to call us at 877-435-4842 to schedule a tour.

Do I need a guide?

Yes.

Can't I just guide my own group or myself?

No. All trips must have a Via Ferrata Guide with them.

Can I rock climb at Nelson Rocks?

The preserve is currently open for guided climbing only. Please see our Rock Climbing page for approved guiding services and for additional information on climbing.



Directions to NROCKS Welcome Center

Physical Address*

NROCKS Outdoor Adventures
141 Nelson Gap Road
Circleville, WV 26804

* Please note*

- When navigating with a GPS your best bet is to use the coordinates:
[38° 42' 1.465" N 79° 28' 19.99" W](#)
- Print out and bring the written directions with you. There is no cell service in the area.
- Schedule extra travel time. Mountain roads can be windy, and travel can easily take longer than expected due to weather, and other unforeseen circumstances.

1. From Washington, D.C./Baltimore/Northern Virginia: Travel time from the intersection of I-66 and the D.C. Beltway (I-495) is around 3 hours.

Locate Interstate 81 in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. From I-81 there are two options:

(Option 1) At the second exit south of the I-66/I-81 interchange near Strasburg, take Rt. 55 west into West Virginia. Proceed through the towns of Wardensville, Moorefield and Petersburg (staying always on Rt. 55 - watch for signs) to Seneca Rocks. At Seneca, bear left at the three-way stop on Rt.33 east. Proceed about 11 miles. Cross the river at Judy Gap, and after traveling over the small bridge, take an immediate right on Rt.28 south. Drive about 1/2 mile to Nelson Gap Road, a gravel road on the left. Turn left. The NROCKS Welcome Center is a short distance on the left.

Time from I-81: about 2 hours.

(Option 2) From I-81 at Harrisonburg, Virginia, take US Route 33 west into West Virginia, passing through Brandywine and Franklin, WV (follow signs to stay on 33). 14+/- miles past Franklin, still on 33, pass through Judy Gap and take a left on Rt. 28 south toward Circleville. Follow Rt. 28 south about 1/2 mile to Nelson Gap Road, a gravel road on the left. Turn left. The NROCKS Welcome Center is a short distance on the left.

Time from I-81: about 1 hour 45 mins.

2. From Charleston/ western WV/ Ohio/ Pittsburgh/ western Maryland:

Locate Interstate 79 in WV. At 79 in Weston, WV, take US Route 33 east, through Buckhannon to Elkins. At Elkins take the highway exit to stay on 33 east, follow signs through town and proceed east on Rts. 33/55 to Seneca Rocks. At Seneca Rocks, bear right at the three-way stop on Rt.33 east. Proceed about 11 miles. Cross the river at Judy Gap, and at the end of the bridge turn right on Rt.28 south. Drive about 1/2 mile to Nelson Gap Road, a gravel road on the left. Turn left. The NROCKS Welcome Center is a short distance on the left.

Time from Weston: about 1.5 hours.

3. From Davis, WV and Canaan Valley resort area:

Take WV Rt. 32 South to Harman, WV. At the stop sign, proceed onto Rts. 33/55 east toward Seneca Rocks (12 mi.). At Seneca Rocks, bear right at the three-way stop onto Route 33 east and proceed about 11 miles. Cross the river at Judy Gap, and at the end of the bridge turn right on Rt.28 south. Drive about 1/2 mile to Nelson Gap Road, a gravel road on the left. Turn left. The NROCKS Welcome Center is a short distance on the left.

Time from Canaan Valley: about 50 mins.

4. From The South:

Locate Interstate 64. Take it to I-80 and proceed north to Harrisonburg, VA. From I-81 at Harrisonburg, Virginia, take US Route 33 west into West Virginia, passing through Brandywine and Franklin, WV (follow signs to stay on 33). 14+/- miles past Franklin, still on 33, pass through Judy Gap and take a left on Rt. 28 south toward Circleville. Follow Rt. 28 south about 1/2 mile to Nelson Gap Road, a gravel road on the left. Turn left. The NROCKS Welcome Center is a short distance on the left.

Time from I-81: about 1 hour 45 mins.

*There are several secondary routes through the scenic Monongahela National Forest but I suggest you bring an atlas. Cell service is limited at best in this area.

