**Day 2**

**Taum Sauk, MO to Magazine Mountain, AK:** 6.5 hours, 355 miles

Follow MO-21 S to US-60 E in Kelly Township 1 h 14 min (62.8 mi)

Turn left onto US-60 E 7 min (7.3 mi)

Turn right onto MO-21 S 24 min (22.4 mi)

Turn right onto US-160 W 5 min (3.9 mi)

Follow MO-21 S and AR-115 S to US-62 W/US-67 S in Pocahontas 36 min (29.0 mi)

Follow US-67 S, US-64 W and I-40 W to AR-363 S in Pottsville. Take exit 88 from I-40 W 2 h 48 min (181 mi)

Take AR-247 N, AR-27 S, AR-10 W and AR-309/Mount Magazine Scenic Byway to Mt Magazine Rd in Mountain Township

Directions from summitpost: Take I-40 West to HWY 247 just before Pottsville, and take Route 27 West (and slightly South) to Route 10 West to Route 309 North.

Mount Magazine State Park is clearly marked on route 309 going in either direction. At the visitor center, you follow the signs and take the park roads to the various trailheads. I recommend getting a park map from the Visitors Center.

Views of the Bluffs are about 2 miles down the road.

**About the Mountain**: Mount Magazine, officially named Magazine Mountain, is the highest point of the U.S. Interior Highlands and the U.S. state of Arkansas, and is the site of Mount Magazine State Park. It is a flat-topped mountain or mesa capped by hard rock and rimmed by precipitous cliffs. There are two summits atop the mountain: Signal Hill, which reaches 2,753 feet (839 m), and Mossback Ridge, which reaches 2,700 ft (823.0 m).

Mount Magazine’s peak named “Signal Hill” is the highest point in Arkansas and the Ozark Plateau (aka the Ozarks). Many incorrectly consider Mount Magazine to be part of the Ouachita Mountains, though it is really part of the Arkansas River Valley.

The Arkansas River Valley is loosely defined as the area between the Ozark and Ouachita Mountains the River Valley is characterized by flat lowlands covered in fertile farmland and lakes periodically interrupted by high peaks. Mount Magazine, Mount Nebo, and Petit Jean Mountain compose the Tri-Peaks Region.

Mount Magazine lies within a southern extension of the Ozark National Forest despite being very close to the Ouachita National Forest. The mountain range itself is considered part of the Northern Ouachitas, but it is considered part of the Ozarks because it is in the Ozark National Forest.

Several Trails lead to the highest summit in Arkansas

The trails vary in length from 1.0 to 2.3 miles. The total trail system in the park is almost 9.0 miles

At 2,753 feet, Mount Magazine-Signal Hill is Arkansas's highest mountain. Signal Hill Trail from the Cameron Bluff Campground to the highpoint is under 1/2 mile in length (one way). Other trails include Greenfield, Benefield, Mossback Ridge, and the Will Apple's Road Trail. Two trails (Huckleberry Mountain Horse Trail and the Cove Lake Trail) connect to trails winding through the National Forest. Back country camping is allowed off the National Forest trails. This trail system is listed in both the day and overnight hiking sections due to the versatility offered by the varity of access points, distances, and terrain. This is truly a unique setting, offering some of the most expansive views in Arkansas.

(NOTE: Park operates under special use permit from the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest)

Here are the various trails:

Benefield Trail (West Loop)

LENGTH: 1 mile

DIFFICULTY: Easy

TRAILHEAD: Benefield Picnic Area

DESCRIPTION: In the 1870's Benjamin Benefield homesteaded 160 acres on the southeastern leg of Mount Magazine. It's hard to imagine orchards, vineyards, and row crops once occupied this area. In 1939 WPA/CCC crews built campgrounds and picnic facilities in this area. Some of their work was abandoned during World War II only to be recently rediscovered. Today this trail makes a one-mile loop through a mixed pine and hardwood forest. It crosses Highway 309 and leads to a wildlife pond. The eastern end of the Mossback Ridge Trail starts near the pond. From that pond, the Benefield Trail loops back to the highway at the entrance road to the picnic area. Enjoy wildflowers, butterflies, and birds. Watch for deer and bear. (Blue Blazes)

Mossback Ridge Trail

LENGTH: 2 miles

TRAILHEADS: Benefield Wildlife Pond, Greenfield Picnic Area, and House Gap

DIFFICULTY: Moderate

DESCRIPTION: Mossback Ridge was named after Albert Morsbach, a settler, farmer, and teacher. It connects the Benefield, Greenfield, and Signal Hill trails. Most of the walking is easy on top of the ridge. Watch for a variety of wildflowers and signs of bears moving rocks and logs. (Yellow Blazes)

Greenfield Trail LENGTH: 1 mile

TRAILHEAD: Greenfield Picnic area

DESCRIPTION: The Greenfield picnic area was a family farm before the Great Depression. This trail crosses the headwaters of Big Shoal Creek and connects to the Mossback Ridge Trail and is a good place to start a longer trek across the park. Some hikers continue all the way to Cove Lake for over night trips. (Green Blazes)

Signal Hill Trail LENGTH: 1.5 miles

TRAILHEADS: Cameron Bluff campground, House Gap, and Old Lodge Site

DESCRIPTION: Signal Hill is the highest point in the state. No visit to Mount Magazine is complete without having hiked half a mile from the campground to the highpoint. At the top is a stone map of Arkansas approximately 400 square feet. A wide variety of plants make this a nice nature walk. Sign the register at the top. (Red Blazes)

Will Apple's Road Trail LENGTH: 2.3 miles

TRAILHEADS: Horse Camp, Visitors Center

DESCRIPTION: Named after a farmer, who cultivated several acres of corn on the northeastern leg of the mountain, this was one of the first roads to the mountain. Features include: historic homesites, wildflowers, escaped domestic flowers, woodland songbirds, stone fences, and ruins of a swimming pool built in the 1920's. Mountain bikes are allowed on this trail.

**Camping**: Mount Magazine State Park has 18 campsites. Campers must register at the Visitor Center before occupying a site. For more information on camping accessibility see the links page to go to the park website, or call the park headquarters at: Phone: (479) 963-8502

**Magazine Mountain, AK to Hot Spring NP:** 83.4 miles 2 hours

Follow MO-21 S to US-60 E in Kelly Township 1 h 14 min (62.8 mi)

Turn left onto US-60 E 7 min (7.3 mi)

Turn right onto MO-21 S 24 min (22.4 mi)

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Hot Springs National Park is an American national park in central Garland County, Arkansas, adjacent to the city of Hot Springs, the county seat. Hot Springs Reservation was initially created by an act of the United States Congress on April 20, 1832 to be preserved for future recreation. Established before the concept of a national park existed. The area was made a national park on March 4, 1921 making it the oldest park National Park. The hot springs flow from the western slope of Hot Springs Mountain, part of the Ouachita Mountain range.

The park includes portions of downtown Hot Springs, making it one of the most accessible national parks. There are numerous hiking trails and camping areas. Bathing in spring water is available in approved facilities at extra cost. The entire Bathhouse Row area is designated as a National Historic Landmark District that contains the grandest collection of bathhouses of its kind in North America, including many outstanding examples of Gilded Age architecture. The row's Fordyce Bathhouse serves as the park's visitor center; the Buckstaff and Quapaw are the only facilities in 2015 still operating as bathhouses. Other buildings of the row are being restored or are used for other purposes.

Gulpha Gorge **campground** is first come, first served. There are no reservations allowed at the campground. Your best bet is to arrive early and check the fee station for any available campsites.

There likely is **free camping** in the nearby Ouachita NF.

We are an urban Park. Nestled in the heart of downtown Hot Springs, the National Park is surrounded by shops, diners, roads, and other attractions. There is a network of hiking trails and beautiful mountain overlooks for those looking to escape the feeling of city life that is also a part of the Park.

**There is no entrance fee**.

While there is metered street parking throughout downtown, there is a **free parking garage** located at 128 Exchange Street.

**Hot Springs Mountain Tower -** The mountain tower is over ten stories high with a staircase and elevator going up to the top where there is an enclosed lookout are and an exposed balcony over top. It's a very geometric shaped tower its many sharp edges and angles. Hot Springs Mountain has had a lookout tower since at least 1877. This is the third tower to stand near this location and still gives a great view of the surrounding mountains. Located on Hot Springs Mountain Drive, the 216-foot tall tower overlooks 140 miles of the beautiful Ouachita Mountains. There is a fee to go to the top of the tower.

From Central Ave, turn east on to Fountain St, and right on to Hot Springs Mountain Dr and go about 3 miles.

