

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

STARVED ROCK STATE PARK & LODGE

ARE YOU OPEN YEAR ROUND?

Yes, the Lodge and Park are open 365 days a year.

DOES THE PARK CLOSE IF IT IS FLOODED?

Even if the river level parking lots flood, the park does not close. Trail closures can occur with flooding. Trail closures are posted on the Starved Rock Lodge and State Park websites and Facebook pages.

WHERE CAN I PARK?

Parking lots are available for day trippers by the Starved Rock Visitor's Center and Overflow Parking lot, off the Route 71 entrance into the park. For overnight guests, we have a gated parking lot on the western end of the Lodge. The Front Desk gives you a gate code upon check-in. For dining, activities and shopping customers, the main parking lot on the eastern end of the building is available. We occasionally close our parking lot to the public and only allow hotel guests and customers to park here (holiday weekends).

CAN WE ACCESS THE TRAILS FROM THE LODGE?

Yes, there are three access points from the Lodge that take you to the trails. The first is the staircase on the eastern end of the Veranda, the second is east of the cabins (near the eagle woodcarvings) and the third is west of the cabins (hiking across the bridge by the west shelter).

WHERE ARE THE WATERFALLS?

Seasonal waterfalls are in many of the 18 canyons in the spring or after a heavy rain. The most scenic waterfalls at Starved Rock are in St. Louis, French, Wildcat, Tonty, LaSalle, Hennepin, Ottawa, Kaskaskia and Illinois Canyons. At Matthiessen State Park, they are at Matthiessen Lake Falls and Cascade Falls.

WHERE CAN WE SEE BALD EAGLES?

Eagles can usually be seen from December through February fishing below the Starved Rock Lock and Dam and roosting on Leopold and Plum Islands. The highest concentration of eagles is during the coldest time of year, usually January. When the river freezes, eagles have to find open water to search for fish, which they find in the turbulent water below the dam. The best place to view the bald eagles is from the top of Starved Rock. Binoculars are loaned out at the Starved Rock Visitor's Center by leaving your driver's license. The Visitor's Center is open 9am to 4pm daily and closed on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.

WHERE ARE THE ICE FALLS?

Ice falls are in 14 of the 18 canyons, weather permitting, during fall and winter. The most scenic ice falls at Starved Rock are in St. Louis, French, Wildcat, Tonty, LaSalle, Hennepin, Ottawa and Kaskaskia Canyons. At Matthiessen State Park, they are found at Matthiessen Lake Falls and Cascade Falls.

WHEN DO THE COLORS ON THE TREES CHANGE FOR FALL?

Mother Nature is the only one that can tell us when the trees will start changing. Generally, the trees start to change by October 1st and peak around the middle of October; however, this can change from year to year depending upon the weather.

IS THERE ICE CLIMBING IN THE PARK?

Ice climbing is allowed at Starved Rock in French, Wildcat, LaSalle, and Tonty Canyons depending on conditions. Ice climbers must sign in and out at the park office. No equipment rental is available. The park staff decides when there is enough ice to climb.

CAN WE CROSS COUNTRY SKI IN THE PARK?

No. Cross country skiing at Starved Rock State Park is prohibited. However, it is permitted at Matthiessen State Park. When snow permits, six miles of rolling, un-groomed trails are available at Matthiessen State Park (one mile south of Starved Rock). Ski trails are open daily. Ski rentals are available at Matthiessen on weekends from December through March.

ARE THERE SNOWMOBILE TRAILS IN THE PARK?

No. Snowmobiling is allowed on the Illinois and Michigan Canal, one mile north of Starved Rock, when snow conditions permit. The DNR link to I&M Canal is: <http://dnr.state.il.us>.

ARE PETS ALLOWED IN THE PARK?

Yes, they are allowed in the park, on the trails and in the campground. They must be kept on a leash and you must pick up after them. Pet litter bags are available at the Visitor Center. Pets are prohibited in buildings, with the exception of our pet-friendly cabins. Learn more: <http://www.starvedrocklodge.com/accomodations/pet-friendly-cabins/>

CAN WE ROCK CLIMB IN THE PARK?

No, due to the fragile nature of the rock, rock climbing and rappelling are strictly prohibited. Rock climbing is allowed in the following state parks: Giant City and Ferne Cliff near Carbondale, Illinois, and Mississippi Palisades near Savanna, IL.

ARE THERE ADA ACCESSIBLE TRAILS IN THE PARK?

No. The trails at Starved Rock and Matthiessen are in and out of canyons with many stairways; therefore, they are not accessible. However, there is a one mile sidewalk surrounding Starved Rock Lodge with an observation deck behind the Lodge. There is a sidewalk along the river by the main parking lot which gives a good view of Starved Rock from its base. There are wheelchair friendly exhibits at the Lodge and the Visitor's Center. Visitors can drive to the Illinois Waterway Visitor Center and observe the park from the north. There is a wheelchair friendly concrete trail near the Matthiessen Lake Falls parking lot that guests can visit as well.

ARE THERE BICYCLE TRAILS IN THE PARK?

No. Bicycling is not allowed on the trails. It would be too dangerous and disruptive to the trails and others. The closest place to bicycle is on the Illinois & Michigan Canal, one mile north of the park in Utica. This is a 62 mile trail.

CAN WE GRILL OUTSIDE OUR CABIN?

No, grilling is not allowed on the Lodge grounds. If you want to bring a grill, you may grill in the picnic areas in the lower park near the Visitor's Center.

ARE ANY OF THE ROOMS SMOKING ROOMS?

No, Starved Rock Lodge is a smoke-free facility. Per Illinois state law, you can smoke outside as long as you are 15 feet from any door.

DO YOU OFFER WIRELESS INTERNET?

Yes, the Lodge has free, wireless internet in all the rooms, public areas and cabins for overnight and corporate guests. Please see the Front Desk for current password.

HOW OLD DO YOU HAVE TO BE TO RENT A ROOM OR CABIN?

You must be 21 and present to rent a room or a cabin at Starved Rock Lodge.

ARE THERE ADJOINING ROOMS?

Yes, some of the rooms in the Lodge and Sunset Cabins have adjoining rooms. Please check with the Front Desk for availability.

DO YOU HAVE ADA/HANDICAPPED ROOMS?

Yes, we do have a few rooms that are wheelchair accessible. If you are in need of one of these rooms, please let us know so we can try to accommodate you.

WHAT ARE CHECK-IN AND CHECK-OUT TIMES? CAN I CHECK-IN EARLY?

Check-in is guaranteed at 4pm on the day of your arrival. Check-out is at 11am on your day of departure. Early check-ins are not usually available.

WHEN ARE PACKAGES AVAILABLE?

Overnight packages are generally available Sunday through Thursday nights throughout the year. Please make sure you check the specific information for the package you are interested in for date restrictions.

DO WE NEED RESERVATIONS FOR DINNER?

Reservations are highly recommended for all meals at The Main Dining Room. Reservations are required for Holiday Buffets. Within the Lodge, dial Extension 321 for reservations.

DO THE CABINS HAVE KITCHENS?

No, the cabins at Starved Rock Lodge are basic hotel rooms in a cabin setting.

WHAT ARE THE POOL HOURS?

The pool is open from 9am to 10pm Sunday through Thursday and 9am to 11pm on Friday and Saturdays.

CAN I PAY TO USE THE POOL FOR THE DAY?

No, our insurance does not allow anyone to use the pool unless they are a room or cabin guest of Starved Rock Lodge.

PARK RULES

Starved Rock State Park, Starved Rock Visitor's Center and Starved Rock Visitor's Center parking lots are free and open to the public.

Hiking trails are open all year from sunrise to sunset.
The Starved Rock Visitor's Center parking lot is open from 6:30am to 9pm.
Hikers are urged to show extreme caution in all areas of the park.
Stay on marked trails.

To protect the park and its visitors:

DO NOT hike after dark.
DO NOT rappel or rock climb.
DO NOT hike off marked trails.
DO NOT swim or wade in river or canyons.
DO NOT pick or remove anything (including wildflowers).
DO NOT allow pets off leash (leash must be 10 ft. or shorter).
No alcohol January 1 through May 31.
No alcohol is allowed on park trails or in campground.

NO bicycles are allowed on hiking trails.
Camping is allowed ONLY at the Campground.