

Grand Canyon Backpack

Adventures in Good Company's General Information

Welcome to Adventures in Good Company's Grand Canyon Backpack! We have compiled information that you may find useful in making travel arrangements to Arizona and preparing for your hiking journey.

Emergency contact information

The general number for Grand Canyon National Park is 928/638-7888. The park rangers will know our itinerary, and it is possible that, depending on where we were at the time, they could contact us. However, it will never be easy and at times almost impossible, so any attempt should be reserved for a true emergency. Cell phones don't work.

Weather

You should be prepared for two very different climates. On the South Rim it is typically in the 70s during the day and may get down to the low 40s at night. In contrast, in the Canyon the temperatures can be in the 90s during the hottest part of the day and cool off to a very pleasant 60s or low 70s at night. This is typically a dry time of year but rain showers can occur. Follow the packing list and you'll be prepared.

Suggested Conditioning

Being physically prepared for your backpacking trip will assure that you have the energy to enjoy your surroundings at the end of the day. Assuming that you are already in reasonably good aerobic condition, the single most important preparation you can make is to spend time hiking with your backpack on and loaded. If you don't have time for a weekend trip, take your backpack to the nearest park after work twice a week and walk up and down hills. Start about 4 to 6 weeks before the trip with an hour and work up to two, and gradually increase the weight in your pack. If you live in the flatlands, find some stadium stairs or a tall office building. This should be in addition to your regular aerobic exercise (Stairmasters or Stepmills are great). Please call if you would like us to help you develop a specific conditioning program.

Schedule:

We will meet at 2 p.m. on Saturday, October 3 at the Mather Campground on the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. During the afternoon the guides will review information that will help make the trip safe and fun, and we will have a chance to make final preparations to hike into the canyon the next morning. A General Store has items that you can rent as well as almost anything you

On Sunday morning, we backpack into the canyon and enjoy six days exploring this spectacular area. We return to the rim on Friday, October 9, and spend the night at Maswik Lodge. You can leave the Grand Canyon on Saturday in time to be back to Phoenix by 1 pm. Some of our campsites within the canyon may have modern composting pit toilets; most will be primitive.

Tipping Guidelines

Tipping at the end of the trip is optional. If you feel your guide(s) did an outstanding job and would like to reward him or her for their efforts, a suggested rule of thumb is US \$5-\$10 per person, per day. Oftentimes, trip members organize a group envelope (this makes it anonymous) and present it to the guides at the last shared meal.

Some possible pre-trip reading:

The Man Who Walked Through Time. By Colin Fletcher. A bit self-conscious, but very worth reading. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1967.

Exploration of the Colorado River of the West and Its Tributaries. By John Wesley Powell. Smithsonian Institution, 1875. Abridged edition: *Exploration of the Colorado River*, University of Chicago Press, 1957.

A Field Guide to the Grand Canyon by Stephen Whitney. Its really 10 field guides in one. We'll have a copy available on the trip and recommend it highly for women with an interest in natural history.

Getting there

Phoenix is the airport we recommend flying into, but you may want to look into flying directly into Flagstaff. Phoenix is served by most of the major airlines, including United, American and Northwest Airlines. Depending on where you are traveling from, low cost competitors you might consider include America West (1-800-235-9292 or www.americawest.com) and Southwest Airlines (800-435-9792 or www.southwest.com).

If you can afford to stay over, you can save some significant money by booking through one of the two web sites that offer substantial savings but do not tell you your flight times until you have already paid for the ticket. These are Priceline (www.priceline.com) and Hotwire (www.hotwire.com).

GETTING TO THE SOUTH RIM:

We assume that most women will be flying to Phoenix and carpooling from there. However, there are several different ways to get to the park.

Airlines: Commuter lines fly daily from **Las Vegas** to Grand Canyon Airport in Tusayan, eight miles south of Grand Canyon Village. For more information, please call Scenic Air (800) 634-6801 or (702) 638-3300. Shuttles run hourly from the airport to Grand Canyon Village. Taxi

service is also available.

Bus: Northern Arizona Shuttle and Tours provides public transportation from Flagstaff to the park. Please call (866) 870-8687 for more information.

Greyhound Bus Lines provides service to Flagstaff; (800) 231-2222.

Grand Canyon Coaches offers connecting service from Grand Canyon, Williams and Flagstaff. Please call (928) 638-0821 or (800) 746-8439 for more information.

Open Road Tours and Transportation also provides transportation from Phoenix Airport and Flagstaff to the Grand Canyon. Please call (800) 766-7117 or (602) 997-6474 for more information. Reservations are required.

Nava-Hopi Tours runs 2 buses a day from Phoenix airport and one per day from Flagstaff (800-892-8687; fax 928-774-7715). Cost is \$22 + \$12.50 = \$34.50. At Phoenix airport you can buy the ticket from Arizona Shuttle Company in the Meet & Greet area of terminal 2. The bus stops at the Bright Angel Lodge, a half-hour walk from our campsite.

Rental Car: Cars may be rented in Tusayan or Grand Canyon Airport, Flagstaff, Phoenix and Las Vegas. Driving time between Flagstaff and the Grand Canyon is about 1.5 to 2 hours. The canyon is about 4 hours from Phoenix, or six hours with a scenic drive through Oak Creek Canyon and Sedona.

By Car: From the west, take Highway 64 at Williams to South Entrance (59 miles). From the east, you have two choices. Take U.S. Highway 160, to Highway 89, to Highway 64, and then go on to East Entrance (89 miles). You can also take I-40 to Highway 89, to Highway 64, and then proceed to the East Entrance. From Flagstaff, take Highway 180 to Highway 64, and then continue on to the park (80 miles).

Shuttle Service to the Park: Hourly shuttles run between Grand Canyon Village and Tusayan, eight miles south of the Village. For rates and schedules, please call (928) 638-0821.

Train: Amtrak serves Williams and Flagstaff. Grand Canyon Coaches offers a connecting Grand Canyon-Williams-Flagstaff shuttle. Connecting rail service from Williams is available on Grand Canyon Railway.

Taxi: For South Rim taxi service 24 hours a day, please call (928) 638-2631, ext. 6563.

Lodging

Depending on your connections, you may be able to fly into Phoenix the morning of the trip. If not, here are some possible lodging options. Prices were current at the time, but may have changed, and do not include taxes. Let us

know if you're interested in finding someone on the trip to share a room with and we'll try to hook you up.

If you have a gambling spirit, the cheapest way to find a hotel room is to go through Priceline (www.priceline.com). When you have a choice of area, choose the airport area. All, or almost all, of the hotels in this area offer an airport shuttle. Last year our guides got a \$55 per night room for \$30.

If you prefer to know what you're getting into, the following are a sample of the possibilities:

Super 8 -Airport (800) 800-8000 or (602) 244-1627

3401 E Van Buren, Phoenix, AZ 85008

Average rate: \$70 - \$120

Heated pool and spa. Free airport shuttle service and local area transportation, restaurant nearby

Sleep Inn Sky Harbor Airport (800) 631-3054 or (480) 967-7100

2621 S 47th Place, Phoenix, AZ 85008

Average room rates: \$95 - \$130

Heated pool, deluxe continental breakfast, restaurant nearby. Free airport shuttle service. Our guides have stayed here and found it completely acceptable.

Hampton Inn Phoenix Airport (800) HAMPTON or (602) 267-0606

4234 S 48th St, Phoenix, AZ 85040

Average rate: \$75 - \$125

Heated outdoor pool, continental breakfast, adjacent restaurant. Airport shuttle.

Holiday Inn Select (800) HOLIDAY or (602) 273-7778

4800 E Washington St, Phoenix, AZ 85012

Average rate: \$65 - \$105

Heated pool, continental breakfast, restaurant nearby. Airport shuttle.

Fairfield Inn by Marriot (800) 228-2800 or (480) 829-0700

4702 E University Dr. Phoenix, AZ 85034

Average rate: \$80 - \$140

Heated pool, continental breakfast, restaurant nearby. Airport shuttle.

If you plan on arriving early, make sure you have lodging or camping reservations well in advance.

Grand Canyon Lodges: Reservations for the lodges in the park can be made in advance by calling 602-638-2401.

Mather Campground: Reservations for Mather campsites may be made in advance through Biospherics at 800-365-2267. Reservations can also be secured through a web site at <http://reservations.nps.gov>. Reservations can be made up to 5 months in advance.

Tusayan: Lodging facilities are also located in the town of Tusayan, just outside the park's south entrance on U.S. 64 south. (The Grand Canyon airport is located in Tusayan.) There's also a U.S. Forest Service campground just outside the south entrance. Reservations for the Forest Service campground may be made by calling 928-638-2443.