

# Adventures in Good Company

## General Information for Exploring Utah's Canyons

### Contact Information

4/20: Travelodge Ambassador Strip Inn 702.736.3600  
4/21: Zion Lodge 435.772.7700  
4/22-24: Bryce Canyon Lodge 435. 834.5361  
4/24-26: Cottonwoods In-Town  
4/26: Best Western Abbey Inn 435.652.1234

### Weather Conditions

April is a great time to visit the national parks in Utah, although this time of year can bring a bit more unpredictable weather. And depending on which Park we are in and the altitude, the weather varies. Highs are typically in the 60s and 70s during the day and the lows are 20s-30s at night. It can be a bit rainier during the spring, and it could even snow.

### Conditioning

Being physically prepared for your hiking trip will assure that you have the energy to do everything you choose to. If you already exercise regularly, the single most important additional preparation you can make is to spend time hiking with your daypack on and loaded with water and gear for the day. Consider taking your daypack 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. This should be in addition to your regular aerobic exercise. If you live in the flatlands, either find a stadium and do stadium steps or a tall building and walk up flights. Stairmasters will also get your uphill leg muscles in shape.

If you don't exercise regularly now, we advise you to start an exercise program at least three months before your trip. For example, you might start walking 4 or 5 times a week for half an hour, at a pace that is fast enough to make you breathe deeply. Hills are good for this. Gradually add time until you are comfortable hiking for two hours. Other options are working out at a health club on a Stairmaster or treadmill, aerobics classes, cross country skiing or any activity that makes you breathe harder. The key is to exercise at a rate that makes you work, but not so hard that you are unable to talk or gasping for breath. Alternate longer days with shorter days. Two months before the trip also incorporate day hikes as suggested above. Aerobic conditioning is much more important than strength training. Please call if you would like us to help you develop a specific conditioning program.

### Getting There

All the major airlines fly into Las Vegas (LAS), as well as many of the low cost competitors. Check for fares and availability. Our hotel has an airport shuttle. You are welcome to arrive anytime but plan to be there by 6pm if you want to join your guides for dinner.

### Suggested pre-trip reading

There are many wonderful resources available to help you prepare for a journey in Utah's canyons.

**A Naturalist's Guide to Canyon Country** • David Williams • Gloria Brown • 2001

A compact field guide to the wildlife of the high desert of the Colorado Plateau and the nine national parks of the region, including Arches and Canyonlands, featuring handsome watercolor illustrations by Gloria Brown. A former ranger based in Moab, Williams includes an overview of the history, geology and ecology of the high desert in addition to basic information that you'll need to identify common plants and animals. Published in cooperation with Canyonlands Natural History Association.

**Desert Solitaire** • Edward Abbey, 1968

A beloved classic, read aloud at campfires throughout the Southwest. It's one of the great works on the value of the desert, eloquent and laugh-out-loud funny. Although Abbey writes specifically about the Colorado Plateau and his experiences as a ranger at Arches National Park outside Moab Utah, his message is universal.

**Raven's Exile, A Season on the Green River** • Ellen Meloy, 2003

Meloy, a champion of the Green River and expert navigator of its twists and turns, describes a summer in Desolation Canyon with her river ranger husband, interweaving her own often humorous experiences with natural and human history. Winner of the Western Writers of America Spur Award.

**The Bassett Women** • Grace McClure

The story of a pioneering family in eastern Utah, drawn from interviews, historical documents and memoirs. "Queen" Anne Bassett and her family were a resilient group who endured the harsh life of settlers in eastern Utah.

**Roadside Geology, Utah** • Halka Chronic

Designed for the roadside traveler, this series explains in detail the geologic history of Utah as seen through the car window. A great introduction to basic geomorphology and how the dramatic landscapes were formed.

**Basin and Range** • John McPhee

McPhee's illuminating account of travels in the company of geologist Kenneth S. Deffeyes along Route 80 from Utah to California.

**Cadillac Desert, The American West and Its Disappearing Water** • Marc Reisner

A definitive history of water development in the American desert -- and a now-classic chronicle of wrong-headed policies and misadventures controlling the great rivers of the West.

**Useful web sites**

[http://www.fodor.com/scenicdestination/utah\\_canyons](http://www.fodor.com/scenicdestination/utah_canyons)  
Fodor's travel guide on-line. Learn about history, culture, geology, flora and fauna. Nice slide show as well.

<http://www.nps.gov>

This web site will give you access to the National Park Service web sites for all the Parks we are visiting in Utah. Just click on the National Park you want to view. Has a lot of interesting and useful information about each place.

**Tipping Guidelines**

Tipping at the end of the trip is completely optional. If you feel your guide(s) did an outstanding job and would like to reward them 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.