

Below is the proposed itinerary for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

DAY 1

Meet in St. George for introductions and Welcome Dinner

Our trip starts today at the St. George, Utah airport (SGU). Plan on flying in by 3:30PM to meet the group by 4PM. It's a small but bustling airport. Nestled in a vast expanse of red rock scenery, St. George is listed as one of the best places to live in the United States and on the list of Fortune 500's "Great Places to Retire In." We'll start getting to know each other and have a trip orientation in the evening before sharing our first dinner. Bedtime is likely to be early tonight! (D)

DAY 2

Explore Snow Canyon, Travel to Zion

After an early breakfast, we'll load up and drive to a nearby hidden gem. Our first hike of the trip is at Snow Canyon State Park, a 7,400-acre scenic park quietly tucked amid lava flows and soaring sandstone cliffs in a strikingly colorful and fragile desert environment. We will see a little bit of everything the park has to offer on a loop connecting the following trails: Butterfly, Lava Flow, West Canyon, Red Sands, Whiptail, and Petrified Dunes. (4.8 miles, 639 feet elevation gain) Amidst a backdrop of red rocks and sage brush, we'll have a picnic lunch here before continuing on to Zion. Tonight we'll eat dinner in the open dining area at the Lodge where we can watch the sun slip away beneath the horizon and the stars come out to play. (B, L, D)

Overnight Zion Lodge.

DAY 3

Hike/Wade in Zion Narrows

This morning, we'll pick up the gear we need for the Narrows in the charming town of Springdale. We'll then head to the park for our wade up the Narrows. This is the name given to a spectacular gorge in the upper reaches of Zion Canyon that is 16 miles long and up to 2,000 feet deep. Our destination is Orderville Canyon, about 2 hours upriver and site of some of the most spectacular scenery in the Narrows. However, it is an out and back hike so turning around earlier is also an option, depending on the weather and our energy. If the weather or the conditions don't permit a hike into the Narrows, the guides will take you on one of the other phenomenal hikes in Zion. (B, L, D)

Overnight: Zion Lodge.

DAY 4

Hike to Scout's Lookout or Angel's Landing, Drive to Bryce Canyon National Park

Today our choice of hikes starts on the trail to Scout's Lookout. This paved trail switchbacks up on a wide trail for about 2 miles. For those who have no fear of heights and want a mental challenge, we offer **Angels Landing, one of the classic hikes in Zion. From Scouts Lookout, the trail follows a narrow ridge (there are chains there for support) out to a fantastic overlook high above Zion Canyon. For many, however, this will be far enough, and you can either wait (the view is amazing) or hike along the West Rim Trail. In either case you can make your final decision once you've actually seen the trail. Hiking up to Angels Landing is about .5 miles out and back. If your legs are demanding a bit of a rest today, walking along the Virgin River is always a good choice.

Whichever you choose, we'll prepare for our drive to Bryce Canyon. This is a very scenic drive of about 2 hours. We'll pass Checkerboard Mesa and go through the

Whenever you choose, we'll regroup for our drive to Bryce Canyon. This is a very scenic drive of about 2 hours. We'll pass Checkerboard Mesa and go through the Zion Tunnel, an engineering marvel from the days when cars were smaller. We'll arrive in time to settle in and, since our rooms are only 5 minutes from the Rim, we can get our first look at this unique landscape. Tonight we'll enjoy a delicious dinner at the wonderful old Lodge there.

Overnight Bryce Canyon Lodge (B, L, D)

****Angelâ€™s Landing** is now permit-only, and you must apply on the NPS website prior to starting the trip: <https://www.nps.gov/zion/planyourvisit/angels-landing-hiking-permits.htm>.

DAY 5

Hike Among Hoodoos on the Fairyland or Peekaboo Loop

Our hike today, the Fairyland Loop, will leave you breathless - both by the brightly colored rock spires that have been carved into a myriad of fascinating shapes by erosional forces, and from the altitude. Bryce is at the top of the Grand Staircase, and the rim of the canyon is around 8,000 feet.

The loop will help us understand the concept that Bryce Canyon is not truly a canyon. This 8-mile trail, which follows a loop around a major formation with constantly changing views, provides an excellent opportunity to see hoodoos from the bottom up. The trail starts with a fairly flat 2.5 miles before plunging down into the hoodoos of Fairyland Canyon. The scenery is spectacular: along the way we get a great view of the Chinese Wall, hike past Sinking Ship Mesa, and take a short spur to Tower Bridge. With much less traffic here than other trails in the park, it may be one of the park's best kept secrets.

Or you can choose the equally spectacular Peekaboo Loop. This 6-mile hike includes the Navajo Trail, Peekaboo Loop, and the Queens Garden Trail. The Navajo Trail descends into the canyon in a series of dramatic switchbacks, winding under hoodoos, and down to a trail junction at the bottom. From here it's a short distance to the Peekaboo Loop, an undulating 3-mile trail that gets its name from the "windows" along it. Returning to the junction with the Queen's Garden Trail, we'll follow it along the foot of the escarpment for about a mile.

This evening we can gaze at the sunset over some of the most amazing geology you will ever see. Bryce is also known for having one of the most glorious nighttime skies of anyplace in the U.S. and if stargazing appeals to you, this is the perfect place to do it.Â

Overnight Bryce Canyon Lodge (B, L, D)

DAY 6

Drive to Grand Canyon North Rim, Hike Widforss Trail Along the Rim

Today we say good-bye to the top of the Grand Staircase and drive to the top of the bottom of the staircase. The 4-hour drive will take us to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. At 8,000 feet, it is 1,000 feet higher than the south rim. Its distance from metropolitan areas results in 10 times fewer visitors than its southern counterpart.

We start our visit here with a hike on the Widforss Trail, a relatively flat trail that follows the rim of the Transept. There are numbered stops and a brochure that are a great introduction to some of the natural and human history of the Grand Canyon. 5 miles total. Overnight: Jacob's Lake Inn (B, L, D)

DAY 7

Hike the North Kaibab Trail into the Grand Canyon

We will hike down into the Canyon on the North Kaibab Trail. The North Kaibab Trail is the least visited but most difficult of the three maintained trails at Grand Canyon National Park. If we hiked all the way to the Colorado River (which we do not because it is 14 miles one way), we would pass through every ecosystem to be

found between Canada and Mexico. Initially we hike through fir trees and aspen. Next we descend through the Redwall Limestone where the trail is blasted directly into the cliff.

We will stop at Roaring Springs, where water gushes directly out of the canyon walls to form Bright Angel Creek. After a long drink and a chance to bathe our feet, we retrace our steps up the 4.7 miles and 3,000 feet we came down. Some women prefer going up steep trails, some prefer going down; both will get their wish today.

Overnight: Jacob's Lake Inn (B, L, D)

DAY 8

Hike to Bright Angel Point, Drive Back to St. George

Oh no! Can this be our last day? Yes, so we will not waste it! We start with the very short hike out to Bright Angel Point. Afterwards we'll drive the scenic 3-mile Cape Royal road to Point Imperial, which at 8,803 feet is the highest point on either rim. Our last hike is a half-mile nature trail that goes by Angels Window, an eroded opening that frames a view of the Colorado River, the perfect way to end our time here. (B, L)

It's about a 3-hour drive back to St. George. We'll have you at the airport by 3:30PM and you can fly out any time after 5PM