

# Grand Canyon Vacation Guidebook

## How to Get the Most Out of Your Grand Canyon Vacation

Thank you for choosing Grand Canyon.com as your Southwestern vacation specialist! You've chosen a truly extraordinary place for your next vacation, and our mission is to help you get the most of your trip. Having lived and worked in the Grand Canyon area for over 20 years, our staff has made a few observations and picked up some "insider tips" that can help save you time, money and hassle - sometimes all three at once!

If you've gotten most of your Grand Canyon vacation planned by now - booked your flights, reserved your rental car, secured hotel rooms, mapped your itinerary, etc. - then take your left hand, put it on your right shoulder, and pat yourself on the back! You get to **skip to Travel Tip #9!**

For those who've just now decided on the Grand Canyon as their next travel destination, we hope you'll find this guide helpful in putting together a trip you'll be smiling about for years to come!

Before you dig in, we recommend that you have a few minutes of quiet time, a map or road atlas, a pen and/or a highlighter, maybe a beverage, and your **"Grand Canyon Top Tours Brochure."**

*Let's get started and get YOU to the Grand Canyon!*



## Travel Tip 1 – Where Is the Grand Canyon?

Grand Canyon National Park is in Northern Arizona.

## Travel Tip 2 – What Side Can I See it From?

**Grand Canyon South Rim** and **Grand Canyon West** (*a.k.a.* “*the Western Rim*”) located on the Hualapai Indian Reservation, separate from the National Park) are open year-round.

**Grand Canyon North Rim** is usually open from mid-May through mid-October, but opening and closure dates can vary with weather.

## Travel Tip 3 – How Do I Find it on a Map?

Your [Grand Canyon Top Tours Brochure](#) has one. You can also find several [excellent maps](#) on our website. To find the Grand Canyon’s location on MapQuest, Yahoo! Maps, etc., use Zip code “[86023](#)” or “[Grand Canyon, Arizona](#)” for **Grand Canyon South Rim**.

You can also use Airport Locator Code “[GCN](#).” Mapping **Grand Canyon North Rim** is a bit tricky. We’ve found it best to use **Jacob Lake, Arizona** as your reference point, and from there, the park is 50 miles South via Highway 67. For **Grand Canyon West** (*a.k.a.* the “**West Rim**,”) **Meadview, Arizona** seems to be the closest mappable location.

**Insider tip:** Be sure to do a “reality check” on all roads you plan to travel. Some mapping sites may inadvertently route you through unpaved roads, which can be impassable in inclement weather or to vehicles without 4-Wheel drive. *When in doubt, check it out.* Inquire at your hotel front desk, or check road conditions online. For Arizona, use [www.az511.com](#) ; for Utah, visit [www.dot.state.ut.us](#) **Note that most rental car insurance policies WILL NOT cover damage sustained by taking vehicles off-road!**

## Travel Tip 4 – What’s the Best Time of Year to Go?

The four seasons are very distinct at the Grand Canyon, and not just in terms of weather. When you choose to travel will depend largely on who you’re traveling with. Most families, for example, will invariably visit the Grand Canyon in the spring and summer (when school is out). If you’re traveling with your spouse, a group of adults or perhaps solo, you’ll no doubt have more flexibility.

For those able to pick and choose when to visit the Grand Canyon, **our favorite times of year** are **late spring** and **early fall**. By late spring, we mean late April to early May. At this time of year, Grand Canyon weather is typically very sunny and pleasant, with daytime highs at the South Rim ranging from 65° to 75°F. Breezy afternoons are the norm (as they are year-round), and wintry weather has been known to resurface at that time of year, but in general, the spring break crowds have subsided slightly and have yet to return to peak of summer levels. Grand Canyon North Rim is not open until mid-May, therefore **you would be limited to visiting either Grand Canyon South Rim or Grand Canyon West in the springtime.**



**Insider Tip:** Spring can be an excellent time for viewing wildflowers throughout Arizona. It is, of course, contingent on sufficient precipitation. To monitor wildflower blooms throughout the Southwest, visit [www.DesertUSA.com](#) and click “Wildflower Report.”

At GrandCanyon.com, **our hands-down favorite time of year** is **early fall**, which we interpret as mid-September to early October. Grand Canyon weather is about as close to perfect as it gets with daytime highs also in the 65-75° range. Late September does tend to be prone to the occasional afternoon thunderstorm, but in general, sunny, breezy days predominate. The crowds also tend to thin out in the fall as schoolchildren get back into their regular routines. As mentioned in Travel Tip #2, **Grand Canyon South Rim** and **Grand Canyon West** are **open year-round**, so fall is a good time to visit both of these areas.



**Insider tip:** **early autumn** is prime time for a visit to the **Grand Canyon's prettier, cooler and quieter side – the North Rim**. At 8,000', Grand Canyon North Rim supports plant and animal life that the drier South Rim cannot. In addition to Ponderosa pine trees, the Kaibab National Forest on the North Rim has oaks, birches, aspens and even some trees in the maple family. In about mid-September, the forest breaks out in a dazzling array of autumn color that has to be seen to be believed (photo above right). The North Rim is in recovery from a major forest fire that took place in 2006, so there is a large burn area about 25 miles North of the park. Access to that area may be limited to facilitate clean-up and restoration efforts.

**Summertime** is the **Grand Canyon's warmest and most crowded time of the year**. If you're not traveling with children and don't have your heart set on having access to lots of services, activities, etc., here again, consider a visit to Grand Canyon's North Rim. If you are traveling with children, the South Rim will be your best bet as it has more of a variety of hotels, activities and tours that are kid-friendly. At 4,000' in altitude, **Grand Canyon West** is more typical of a desert landscape, meaning **treeless and HOT**. If extreme heat bothers you, **you probably wouldn't want to visit Grand Canyon West in the summertime**.



In **wintertime**, Grand Canyon National Park almost becomes a different world. The time period **from November through February is unquestionably the quietest time of year** at the park, with only 15% of its annual visitation occurring then. **Since Grand Canyon North Rim closes from mid-October to mid-May, you would want to choose between Grand Canyon West and Grand Canyon South Rim for a wintertime visit**. Winter, as you can imagine, is very cold, with average daytime highs ranging from 35-50°F. Nights are even chillier, typically getting down to the teens and even below zero on occasion. And of course, snow is a contingency one always has to plan for. But, if you're seeking peace and solitude, and a photo opportunity like no other, winter is a wonderful time to visit the Grand Canyon. Plus, most of the popular Grand Canyon tours are still operating.

**Insider tip:** Save money by scheduling your trip between November 1<sup>st</sup> and March 1<sup>st</sup>, when **Grand Canyon hotels discount** season can mean anywhere from \$10 to \$40 a night savings – you *won't* see savings like these in peak season!

## Travel Tip 5 - How Do I Get to the Grand Canyon?

### FLYING:

Most visitors begin their Grand Canyon vacations from one of four metropolitan airports within a day's drive of the park:

✈ **Las Vegas, Nevada (LAS)**, 280 miles from the *South Rim*, average drive time 5 hours; 310 miles from the *North Rim*, average drive time 5.5 hours



✈ **Phoenix, Arizona (PHX)**, 240 miles from the South Rim, average drive time 4.5 hours; 375 miles from the *North Rim*, average drive time 6.5 hours

✈ **Salt Lake City, Utah (SLC)**, 410 miles from the *North Rim*, average drive time 7 hours OR

✈ **Albuquerque, New Mexico (ABQ)**, 400 miles from the *South Rim*, average drive time 7 hours; 490 miles from the *North Rim*, average drive time 8.5 hours

**Commuter flights** are also offered into several municipal airports closer to the park:

✈ **Flagstaff, Arizona (FLG)**, served by America West/Mesa Airlines out of Phoenix, 85 miles from the *South Rim*, average drive time 1.5 hours; 230 miles from the *North Rim*, average drive time 5 hours.

✈ **Page, Arizona (PGA)**, served by Great Lakes Airlines out of Phoenix or Denver. 150 miles from the *South OR North Rim*, average drive time 2.5 hours.

✈ **St. George, Utah (SGU)**, served by Delta/Skywest Airlines out of Salt Lake City, 165 miles from the *North Rim*, average drive time 3 hours

Car rentals are available at all the above airports. For availability and pricing of flights and car rentals, call (800) 916-8530.

✈ **Grand Canyon National Park Airport [South Rim] (GCN)** is primarily used as a sightseeing and general aviation airport. Limited scheduled flights are available through [Scenic Airlines](#) out of Las Vegas/Boulder City (61B). Charter service is offered from other cities. Located in Tusayan, 1 mile South of the park entrance, drive time to South Rim 10 minutes. No car rentals offered, but taxi service is available on an on-call basis.

### DRIVING:

Around here, before you get somewhere, you have to go through a whole lot of nowhere. One of the most challenging aspects of Grand Canyon travel is the distances between places. Things are more spread out here than you're probably used to, so unless you fly into one of the airports located near the park, be prepared to spend some time behind the wheel. You're on vacation, so relax and enjoy the scenery! But don't forget it can be a long way between gas stations, so fill up when you get the chance (*see Travel Tip 27 about gas prices*).

## DRIVING TO THE SOUTH RIM:

☞ **From Las Vegas, Nevada** - take Highway 93 Southeast to Kingman, Arizona; in Kingman, take I-40 East to Williams, Arizona; from Williams take exit #165 North to Grand Canyon National Park. Average drive time: 5 hours. **Insider tip:** Leaving Las Vegas? Get an early start to avoid construction delays at Hoover Dam.



☞ **From Phoenix, Arizona:** Take Interstate 17 North to Flagstaff, Arizona; from Flagstaff, \*take Highway 180 Northeast to Valle, Arizona; from Valle, take Highway 64 North to the Grand Canyon. \* ☞ **OR:** \*from Flagstaff take Interstate 40 to Williams, Arizona; from Williams, take Highway 64 55 miles North to Grand Canyon Village. *The latter route is the better alternative in case of inclement weather.* Average drive time: 4.5 hours

☞ **From Flagstaff, Arizona:** Take Highway 180 30 miles Northeast to Valle; From Valle, take Highway 64 25 miles North to Grand Canyon Village. ☞ **OR** take Interstate 40 to Williams, Arizona; from Williams, take Highway 64 55 miles North to Grand Canyon Village. *The latter route is safer in inclement weather.* Average drive time: 1.5 hours.

☞ **From Williams, Arizona:** Take Highway 64 North approximately 60 miles. Average drive time: 1 hour.

☞ **From Page, Arizona:** Take Highway 89 South to Cameron, Arizona; from Cameron, take Highway 64 West to Grand Canyon Village. Average drive time: 2.5 hours.

## DRIVING TO THE NORTH RIM:



☞ **From Las Vegas, Nevada:** Take Interstate 15 Northeast to St. George, Utah; from St. George, take UT-9 to Hurricane, Utah; in Hurricane, take UT-9 through Zion National Park to Kanab, Utah; in Kanab, follow Highway 89 to Fredonia, Arizona, where UT-11 becomes Alt-89 (89A). Take 89A to Jacob Lake, Arizona. From Jacob Lake, Arizona, take Highway 67 South 60 miles into the park. Average drive time: 6 hours.

☞ **From Phoenix, Arizona:** Take Interstate 17 to Flagstaff, Arizona. In Flagstaff, take US-89 to Bitter Springs, Arizona; from Bitter Springs, take Alternate 89 (89A) to Jacob Lake, Arizona. From Jacob Lake, Arizona, take Highway 67 South 50 miles into the park. Average drive time: 7.5 hours.

☞ **From Salt Lake City, Utah:** Take I-15 South. About 10 miles South of Beaver, Utah, take UT-20 East for about 20 miles. Take US89 South to Kanab, Utah. In Kanab, follow the signs to Fredonia, Arizona, where UT-11 becomes Alt-89 (89A). Take 89A to Jacob Lake, Arizona. From Jacob Lake, Arizona, take Highway 67 into the park. Avg drive: 8 hours.

**From Page, Arizona:** Take US89 South to Bitter Springs, Arizona; from Bitter Springs, take Alternate 89 (89A) to Jacob Lake, Arizona. From Jacob Lake, Arizona, take Highway 67 South 50 miles into the park. Average drive time: 2.5 hours.

**REMINDER: Grand Canyon North Rim is CLOSED from October 15<sup>th</sup> – May 15<sup>th</sup>.**

## DRIVING TO GRAND CANYON WEST:

**Before you commit to driving to Grand Canyon West, note that one of its primary access roads is unpaved.** Only properly equipped (4WD) vehicles should travel this road. If you are renting a car, your agency may openly discourage you from driving on this road. Many rental-car insurance policies will NOT cover damage sustained by driving off-road. *It is strongly recommended that you take advantage of Grand Canyon West's "Park and Ride" service, available from the Welcome Center near Meadview, Arizona for a nominal fee.*



**From Las Vegas, Nevada:** Take U.S. Highway 93 south to Hoover Dam; continue south another 40 miles to the Dolan Springs/Meadview City/Pierce Ferry Road exit. Turn left and follow Pierce Ferry Road to Diamond Bar Road (about 28 miles). Turn right at the sign and stay on Diamond Bar Road to Grand Canyon West (about 21 miles). Average drive time: 3 hours.

**From Phoenix, Arizona:** Take U.S. Highway 93 Northwest 105 miles; get on Interstate 40. Take I-40 West to Kingman, Arizona. In Kingman, take U.S Highway 93 north about 30 miles to Dolan Springs/Meadview City/Pierce Ferry Road exit. Follow Pierce Ferry Road to Diamond Bar Road (about 28 miles). Turn right at the sign and stay on Diamond Bar Road to Grand Canyon West. Average drive time: 5 hours.

**From Grand Canyon South Rim:** Take AZ64 South to Williams, Arizona, get on Interstate 40. Take I-40 West to Kingman, Arizona. In Kingman, take U.S Highway 93 north about 30 miles to Dolan Springs/Meadview City/Pierce Ferry Road exit. Follow Pierce Ferry Road to Diamond Bar Road (about 28 miles). Turn right at the sign and stay on Diamond Bar Road to Grand Canyon West. Average drive time: 4 hours.

Need a Las Vegas Grand Canyon tour map, or a door-to-door itinerary customized just for you? Call GrandCanyon.com at (866) 944-7263 or e-mail [info@grandcanyon.com](mailto:info@grandcanyon.com)

## BY TRAIN:



**From Williams, Arizona:** get to Grand Canyon South Rim "Old West" style, on the [Grand Canyon Railway](#) ! Relive the journey undertaken by travelers throughout two centuries, in a genuine steam train dating back to the early 1900's. The Grand Canyon Railway operates year-round (except for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day), departing daily from Williams, Arizona, with a 3-4 hour layover at the South Rim (layover time varies by season).

Overnight packages are also available where you can spend the night at the historic Grand Canyon Railway Hotel in Williams and/or inside Grand Canyon National Park. AMTRAK service is available from several major U.S. cities to Williams or Flagstaff, Arizona. For more information call 1-800-USA-RAIL or visit [www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com).

**Insider tip:** Neither the Pullman Coach nor Club cars of the Railway offer air-conditioning, which is not a problem in fall, winter or spring, but can be uncomfortable in the summer months. If you prefer an air-conditioned ride, choose First Class, Observation Dome or Luxury Parlor Cars. Children must be at least 11 to ride in the Dome or Parlor cars; all ages are welcome in First Class, Coach or Club. Consult your [Grand Canyon Top Tours Brochure](#), or call GrandCanyon.com for booking information at (866) 944-7263.

## BY BUS:

 [Greyhound](#) has **scheduled bus service** to Grand Canyon gateway cities such as **Phoenix, Flagstaff, Las Vegas and St. George (Utah)**. Scheduled shuttle service from **Phoenix, Flagstaff and Williams** is provided several times daily by [Open Road Tours](#) (1-800-766-7117). A **guided Grand Canyon Bus Tour** from **Las Vegas, Phoenix, Sedona or Flagstaff** is also a great way to see the Grand Canyon when your time and/or funds are limited. For more information on **Grand Canyon Bus tours**, contact GrandCanyon.com at (866) 944-7263 or (928) 645-6845.



## Travel Tip 6 - Where Should I Stay?



There are 6 hotels inside the park at **Grand Canyon South Rim**: the **El Tovar Hotel, Kachina Lodge, Thunderbird Lodge, Bright Angel Lodge, Maswik Lodge and Yavapai Lodge**. The first four lodges are situated on the very rim of the canyon; Maswik and Yavapai Lodge are ¼ mile and 1 mile from the canyon rim respectively. Grand Canyon South Rim hotels are typically booked 8 months to a year in advance from mid-March through mid-September, as well as for major

wintertime holidays such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's and the Martin Luther King and Presidents' Day holidays.

Inside the park at the **North Rim**, there is only one hotel: the **Grand Canyon Lodge**, which consists of cabins and some motel rooms. This lodge is also usually booked well in advance during season, which is only from mid-May through mid-October.



All of the in-park lodges both at the North and South Rim are managed by the official concessionaire, **Xanterra Parks & Resorts**, who can be reached at 888/297-2757 inside the US or 303/297-2757 outside the US. Online, visit [www.GrandCanyonLodges.com](http://www.GrandCanyonLodges.com) (South Rim) or [www.GrandCanyonNorthRim.com](http://www.GrandCanyonNorthRim.com) (North Rim). **If your trip is within peak season and less than 3 months away, you are unlikely to be able to secure lodging inside the park.** Your best bet will be to look at the park's "gateway communities" (cities and towns located nearby) for your Grand Canyon lodging.



### South Rim Gateway Lodges and Communities

Tusayan is located an easy **7 miles (10 minutes)** from **Grand Canyon South Rim**. Our preferred hotel property, the **[Best Western Grand Canyon Squire Inn](#)** is located here.

This Grand Canyon hotel offers the most for families, like an on-site play center with a 6-lane bowling alley, video arcade, and billiard tables. The Squire offers both fine dining and family style restaurants, as well as a cocktail lounge, gift shop,

outdoor pool and Jacuzzi, workout room, salon, gift shop, even a cowboy museum. Other hotels in Tusayan include the **Quality Inn Canyon Plaza**, the **Red Feather Lodge**, the **Holiday Inn Express** and the **Grand Hotel**. For availability and pricing of these hotels, call (800) 916-8530. If hotel rooms are not available in Tusayan, your next best options will be:

[The Grand Canyon Inn](#) in Valle, Arizona, 30 miles South of the park

[The Cameron Trading Post](#) in Cameron, Arizona 60 miles East of the Village

[Williams, Arizona](#) , 60 miles South of the park

[Flagstaff, Arizona](#) , 85 miles Southeast of the park

[Page/Lake Powell, Arizona](#) , 150 miles Northeast of the South AND North Rim

### North Rim Gateway Lodges and Communities

If you're going to Grand Canyon North Rim, a variety of lodging choices are available in several neighboring towns:

[The Kaibab Lodge](#) , 30 miles North of the park (*open seasonally*)

[The Jacob Lake Inn](#) at Jacob Lake, Arizona, 60 miles North of the park

[Marble Canyon Lodge](#) , at Lees Ferry, Arizona, 90 miles North of the park

[Cliff Dweller's Lodge](#) , at Lees Ferry, Arizona, 90 miles North of the park

[Kanab, Utah](#) , 100 miles Northwest of the park

[Page/Lake Powell, Arizona](#) 150 miles Northeast of the North AND South Rim

[St. George, Utah](#) , 180 miles Northwest

[Springdale, Utah](#) , 180 miles Northwest, at the Western entrance of Zion National Park

### Grand Canyon West Lodging

The **Grand Canyon West Ranch** is located 14 miles Southeast of the Grand Canyon West Airstrip on the Diamond Bar Road. For more information, call 1.800.359.8727 or visit [www.grandcanyonranch.com](http://www.grandcanyonranch.com) .

In the town of **Peach Springs**, the **Hualapai Lodge**

([www.destinationgrandcanyon.com](http://www.destinationgrandcanyon.com) , or phone 928-769-2230) offers hotel-style accommodations, with a restaurant and gift shop, about 2.5 hours away from Grand Canyon West. About 10 minutes South of Peach Springs is the **Grand Canyon Caverns Inn**, a family-owned facility within easy access of the **Grand Canyon Caverns** ([www.gccaverns.com](http://www.gccaverns.com) or phone 928.422.3223).



**Insider tip:** Peach Springs is located on one of the last active segments of [Historic Route 66](#) . Many of the businesses from that era have been very well-preserved and are still in operation.



The next nearest lodging to Grand Canyon West would be in [Kingman, Arizona](#) , about 90 minutes Southwest of Grand Canyon West. Laughlin, Nevada is another excellent choice and is 2 hours away. For more information on Grand Canyon hotels – or lodging at any other stops on your tour - visit [www.GrandCanyon.com/hotels.html](http://www.GrandCanyon.com/hotels.html) or call (800) 916-8530.

## **Travel Tip 7 - How About Camping or RV Parks?**

At **Grand Canyon South Rim**, trailer and tent sites are offered at **Trailer Village**, which is managed by Xanterra South Rim LLC ([www.grandcanyonlodges.com](http://www.grandcanyonlodges.com) , 888/297-2757 or 303/297-2757). Tent sites and limited trailer sites are also offered at **Mather Campground**, which is near Trailer Village. Mather Campground does not have hook-ups for trailers, but does have a dump station, pay showers and a Laundromat at the Camper Services building.



At the **North Rim**, the campground is open from mid-May through mid-October. There are no trailer hook-ups, but a dump station is available. In-park campgrounds for both North and South Rims are administered by the **National Park Reservation Service**. Advance reservations are strongly recommended for Grand Canyon camping during peak travel periods. Reservations for Grand Canyon and other National Park campgrounds can be made by phone at 877-444-6777 or on-line at [www.Recreation.gov](http://www.Recreation.gov)

### First-come, First-Serve Camping



There are a **few Grand Canyon campgrounds which are operated on a first-come, first-served basis**. 2 miles South of Tusayan, the U.S. Forest Service’s [10-X Campground](#) offers “dry camping” from May through October. There are no utilities or hook-ups at individual campsites, but pit toilets and cold water spigots are located throughout the campground. 26 miles East of Grand Canyon Village is the [Desert View Campground](#). Run by the National Park Service, it is also open to tent campers and trailers, though there are no hook-ups.

In **Valle**, 30 miles South of Grand Canyon South Rim, a remnant of true-blue American roadside kitsch still stands: **the Flintstones Bedrock City**. Built in 1972 (under the official auspices of Hanna-Barbera, no less), you can’t miss Bedrock City. Here, campers can park their trailers or tents next door to colorful replicas of Fred and Wilma’s house (or Barney and Betty’s if one prefers). There’s a theatre on-site that plays (what else?) Flintstones cartoons, a diner that serves up Brontosaurus Burgers and a “kiddie train” that tours a “volcano.” Though showing its age according to recent visitors, many still get a kick out of Bedrock City’s unabashedly cheesy character. Located at the junction of Highway 64 & 180. For more information, call (928) 635-2600.



**At the North Rim**, the [Tuweep](#) (also known as Toroweap) Campground is located in the remote Arizona Strip on the Northwest side of the canyon. The National Park Service oversees this facility, which is known as a “primitive campground:” picnic tables, fire grates, and composting toilets are provided, but no electricity or water is available. Sites may fill during spring months, especially on weekends.

The [DeMotte Campground](#) is run by the U.S. Forest Service. Due to its location just 7 miles from the park, it is a popular RV and tent camping spot for Grand Canyon North Rim visitors. During the height of visitor season the campground – which does not accept advance reservations – is usually full by noon each day. DeMotte is a “dry” campground. All North Rim campgrounds are open from mid-May through mid-October, weather permitting.

On both the North and South Rims, “**dispersed camping**” or “**camping-at-large**” is permitted within National Forest Lands as long as one’s vehicle is situated ¼ mile or more from the main highway. Some restrictions may apply, particularly at the North Rim.

The gateway communities of Williams, Flagstaff, Page, and Kanab, Utah also have many fine RV Parks and Campgrounds. For more information, visit [www.rvpark.com](http://www.rvpark.com)

**Insider tip:** Before you commit to camping, remember that nights get cold up here. Overnight lows in the 20’s are reported as late as Memorial Day. Bring a good sleeping bag!

**Insider’s Guide Reader Tip:** “If you don’t wish to bring your own camping equipment, you can rent it (tents, sleeping bags, etc.) in Las Vegas ([www.westernwanderer.com](http://www.westernwanderer.com)), Flagstaff ([www.peacesurplus.com](http://www.peacesurplus.com)) or at Grand Canyon South Rim’s Canyon Marketplace (928/638-2622).” – Jill G.

## Travel Tip 8 - How Long Should I Stay?



The typical Grand Canyon family vacation is two or three days (see Travel Tip 22). You tell us how much time you have to spend, and we can tell you how best to use it, whether you have a day, a weekend, a week, or more. Tell us how you’re getting here, how much driving you’re willing to do (or not do), and we’ll help you coordinate a vacation that will last a lifetime in your memories, whether you’re coming through Phoenix or Las Vegas, staying inside the park, or making Flagstaff, Williams, Sedona or Page/Lake Powell your “home base” for exploring the area.

## Travel Tip 9 - Do I Have to Pay to Visit Grand Canyon?

Yes, Grand Canyon National Park is a Federal Fee Area. **It is \$25 per vehicle to enter the park** via the **South Rim** or **North Rim**. Persons entering the park by bicycle, foot, motorcycle, bus, train or other type of commercial vehicle must pay a fee of \$12 per person. Your entrance fee is good for one week’s time, so be sure to keep your receipt with you each time you exit and re-enter the park.

**Insider tip:** Avoid long lines at the South Rim by getting there early, or prepay your park entrance fee *before you get there* at one of two National Park Service Pay Stations located at the [Valle Travel Stop](#) in Valle, Arizona (between Williams and the South Rim at the Junction of Highway 180 & 64) or at [the IMAX Theatre](#) in Tusayan (1 mile South of the Park Entrance). Pre-purchasing your Grand Canyon Pass will allow you to enter the park via one of two Express Lanes. *If you're visiting two or three National Parks on your trip, see Travel Tip 23 about the "America the Beautiful National Parks and Federal Lands Access Pass."*



**Grand Canyon West** is part of the **Hualapai Indian Tribal Lands**, which are separate from the National Park. **Entrance fees start at \$29/person.** Activities such as sightseeing tours, helicopter flights, cultural performances or the [Grand Canyon Skywalk](#) cost more.

### **Travel Tip 10 - Can I Drive My Car in the Park?**

All viewpoints on the **North Rim** are usually accessible to private vehicles. The North Rim is recovering from a major forest fire, which means that temporary road closures may result to facilitate clean-up and restoration efforts. These should primarily affect off-road areas, but for your safety, please steer clear of the burn area and obey all road closure signs.



On the **South Rim**, the *West Rim Drive* (a.k.a. the “**Hermit Road**”) is **closed to private vehicles from March through November**, during which time complimentary shuttle service is offered to these overlooks. This shuttle line is known as the “[Hermit’s Rest Route](#)” or the “[Red Line](#)” and begins at the West Rim Interchange near Bright Angel Lodge.

Shuttle service is also offered to the various hotels, restaurants and gift shops in the *Grand Canyon Village* area. The “[Village Loop Route](#),” also known as the “[Blue Line](#)” runs year-round. **It is highly recommended that you use this shuttle service whenever possible.** Parking spaces inside the park are at a premium during peak travel periods. Shuttles pick up the various stops approximately every 15 minutes from sunrise to sunset. Check your information packet that you receive at the park gates for exact times. The *East Rim Drive* (or the “Desert View Road”) is open to private vehicles year-round, *with the exception of Yaki Point and the South Kaibab Trailhead*. This area is served by shuttle busses (the “[Kaibab Trail Route](#)” or the “[Green Line](#)”) year-round.

When you enter the park, you will be given a map and schedule of activities by the staff at the entrance gate. These will indicate which roads you can use to tour Grand Canyon South Rim. Be sure to obey any and all road closure signs you may encounter.

At **Grand Canyon West**, *which is separate from Grand Canyon National Park*, you can drive your vehicle into the complex, but remember that the main access road is unpaved. A “[park and ride](#)” shuttle is offered at the Grand Canyon West Welcome Center near Meadview. Advance reservations are required for this service. Call (702) 260-6506.

## Traveler Tip 11 –

### What Are the “Don’t Miss” Places at the Grand Canyon?

At the South Rim, you’ll get your first view of the Canyon from **Mather Point**. Here, you should also take the opportunity to visit the **Canyon View Information Visitor Center** just across the street. **Yavapai Point** is 1 mile West of Mather Point. Here you can learn more about the complex geological forces that shaped the Grand Canyon (and get a great view of it, too!) One mile West of the park business center is **Grand Canyon Village Historic District**. Here you should park your vehicle and walk the easy **Rim Trail** along the Canyon Rim, or ride the **free shuttle**. Don’t forget to stop and explore the hotels, gift shops and museums dating back to the early 1900’s: the El Tovar Hotel, Hopi House, Verkamp’s, Kolb Studio and Bright Angel Lodge. If you have more time, try to explore the 26-mile **East Rim Drive** and its many beautiful overlooks.



At the **North Rim, Point Imperial** is reached by a winding scenic road lined with pine, birch and aspen trees. A stunning, expansive overlook, you can see Marble Canyon, the Painted Desert and all the way across to the South Rim from Point Imperial. **Cape Royal** is a more vertically oriented viewpoint where you can see the Unkar Delta of the Colorado River through Angel’s Window, which is literally a “hole in the wall” of the Grand Canyon. At **Bright Angel Point**, you can walk out to several smaller overlooks of the Grand Canyon, plus walk through the historic **Grand Canyon Lodge**. You might even take in a ranger program or view the educational displays at the visitors’ center nearby.

If you’re visiting **Grand Canyon West**, the main canyon overlooks are **Eagle Point** and **Guano Point**. **Eagle Point** is named for the appearance of an eagle in flight in the rock face to the East. This jagged, vertical viewpoint has excellent views of the Colorado River. Grand Canyon West is also the site of the [Grand Canyon Skywalk](#), a glass-lined cantilevered bridge that will project 70’ past the lip of the canyon, making you feel as though you’re floating high in the air above the Colorado River. At **Guano Point**, named for a defunct mining operation, you can sit down to a barbecue meal with the very edge of the Grand Canyon mere feet from your table. Take a walk around the point and take a look at some of the old mining equipment, or sign up for a helicopter ride to the bottom!



## Travel Tip 12 – Can I Bring My Dog?



Dogs are welcome at Grand Canyon South Rim. **They must be leashed at all times and remain ONLY on rimside trails.** Dogs are not allowed on ANY inner canyon trails, nor are they allowed in hotels, restaurants, gift shops or other public places (service dogs for the disabled excepted). **Pets must NEVER be left unattended in a hotel room, campsite or a parked car.** Dogs get dehydrated, too, so bring enough water for your dog when out exploring.

At the **South Rim** of the Grand Canyon there are **two pet-friendly hotels**: the [Red Feather Lodge and the Grand Hotel](#) in Tusayan. Pets are not allowed to stay overnight in any of the in-park hotels, but there is a kennel inside the park. Advance reservations are recommended [(928) 638-2631 or (928) 638-0534]. Pet-friendly hotels and dog boarding facilities are also available in [Williams](#) or [Flagstaff](#). On the **North Rim**, dogs are permitted *only* on the bridle path connecting the lodge to the North Kaibab trail. The National Park Services goes as far as to suggest that pets be left at home when you visit the North Rim. The closest pet-friendly property to Grand Canyon North Rim is the Holiday Inn Express in [Kanab, Utah](#) (1.5 hours away). Other pet-friendly lodging is available in [Page, Arizona](#) (2.5 hours away). The Page-Lake Powell area also has a couple of dog boarding facilities, where advance reservations are recommended: Anderson's Feed & Fence at (928) 645-3633, or the Page Animal Hospital at (928) 645-2816. Dogs are not allowed at **Grand Canyon West**, with the exception of service dogs for the disabled.

If you stay at a hotel, a deposit will be required for your dog. Commercial boarding facilities will require proof of current vaccinations. For availability and pricing of pet-friendly hotels in the area, call (800) 916-8530. For more information on traveling with your dog, visit [www.thetravelerscompanion.com](http://www.thetravelerscompanion.com).

**Insider's Guide Reader Tip:** *"Dogs are not allowed on **any** tours (except for certified service dogs). If you're going on a tour that starts early in the morning, you will need to arrange to have your pet kenneled the night before. Make sure you plan accordingly!" – Anne M.*

### Travel Tip 13 - How's the Weather?



Grand Canyon weather in **summertime** runs the gamut from warm and dry to rainy and stormy. Daytime highs at the **South Rim** range from 85-90°F; the **North Rim** usually runs about 10° cooler. Nighttime lows can dip down into the 40's and 50's, and temperatures drop quickly after sunset. **Grand Canyon West** and the **Inner Canyon corridor trails** are just plain HOT, with temperatures of 110°-120° frequently reported. July through

September is known as "monsoon season," which is typified by brief but intense thunderstorms that move in from the South in the afternoon hours.

**Spring** and **Fall** are the best times of year to visit the Grand Canyon. Average daytime highs range from the 60's to the '70's on the **South Rim** and about 10° cooler on the **North Rim** (*though the North Rim is not open in the springtime*). Nights are still chilly with lows ranging from the 20's to the 40's. **Grand Canyon West** will typically run 10-15° warmer than the South Rim. Spring and Fall weather is also best for inner canyon hiking, with average highs ranging from 80 to 90°F at the bottom of the canyon, which is *much* more bearable than the oppressive and dangerous heat of summer. **Wintry weather is known to make the occasional appearance in early spring and late fall**, though, so **monitoring the weather prior to your trip is important at these times of the year.**

In **wintertime**, Grand Canyon weather varies from **blue skies to blizzards**. Average daytime highs at the **South Rim** can range from the 30's to the '60's. **Nights are VERY cold** with average lows ranging from subzero to the upper 20's. Grand Canyon South Rim is 7,000' above sea level, which means it snows up here, with accumulations of 12" or more occurring occasionally. Most storm systems usually drop just a few inches of snow that melt within a few days. **Grand Canyon West** is only 4,000' above sea level, so it is typically 10 to 15° warmer there than it is at the South Rim. The **North Rim** is closed during the winter months due to heavier snowfalls.

**Windy afternoons are common year-round.** Be prepared by carrying a light jacket and maybe a rain poncho in case precipitation is expected. Check the weather as your trip date gets closer, either on your favorite weather website using the zip code **86023**, [or check our weather page](#) for up-to-the-minute conditions and 10-Day Forecasts.

### **Travel Tip 14 – Will My Cell Phone Work in the Park?**

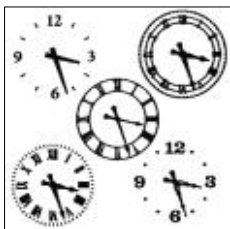
Don't count on it 100%. The primary providers in the Grand Canyon area are Alltel and Verizon, but even their subscribers report occasional inconsistencies with their service due to the ruggedness of the terrain and the altitude. If you need to provide a phone number for family or work to get ahold of you, give them your hotel phone numbers just in case.

### **Travel Tip 15 – Can I Bring My Laptop or Check E-mail?**

GrandCanyon.com's preferred hotel at the **South Rim**, the [Best Western Grand Canyon Squire Inn](#), has DSL in its Deluxe Rooms. If you are not staying at the hotel, there is also a DSL connection in the lobby where you can plug in your laptop. There is also an Internet Café in Tusayan across from the Holiday Inn Express. Inside the park, Maswik and Yavapai Lodges have internet kiosks available for a nominal fee. Check with the front desk at these hotels for pricing. If you're visiting the **North Rim**, the closest place to check your e-mail will be Vermillion Espresso in Kanab, Utah (1.5 hours away), or Beans Coffee House in Page, AZ (2.5 hours).

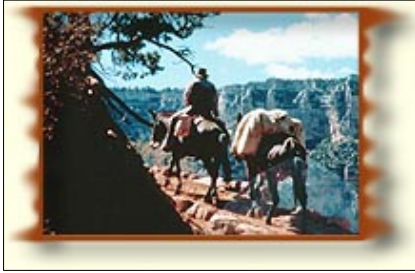


### **Travel Tip 16 – Is That the Right Time?**



The Grand Canyon is on Mountain Standard Time *year-round*. **Arizona (with the exception of the Navajo Indian Reservation) does NOT observe daylight savings time**, which means that **when the rest of the country “springs forward” and “falls back,” we don’t**. Nevada, Utah, New Mexico and Colorado all observe daylight savings time. Arizona is on the same time as Nevada during the summer months; Utah, New Mexico and Colorado are all one hour ahead. During the winter months, Arizona is one hour ahead of Nevada, but on the same time as Utah, Colorado and New Mexico. **Be sure you keep this in mind when scheduling activities, especially those that require you to cross time zones** (e.g., driving from Las Vegas to Williams for the Grand Canyon Railway during Standard Time months, or from Grand Canyon to the Navajo Indian Reservation during Daylight Savings Time periods). **When in doubt, check it out.**

## Travel Tip 17 - So, How About Those Mule Rides?



Grand Canyon Mule Rides are *extremely* popular and typically book up 9 months to a year in advance during peak travel season (March through October). Grand Canyon mule trips on the **South Rim** are managed by [Xanterra](#), who can be reached at 888/297-2757 or 303/297-2757. Before you make that call, you should know that there are physical requirements that all mule riders must meet with **no exceptions**. On the **South Rim**, they are:

- No rider may weigh more than 200 pounds fully dressed (ALL riders are weighed, and if you weigh 201, *you will not ride*)
- All riders must be 4'7" tall (children are measured if necessary);
- All riders must speak and understand fluent English (if in doubt, they check you out)
- No pregnant women.
- Grand Canyon Mule Trips are not recommended for those with chronic back, hip, neck or knee problems, or for those afraid of heights or large animals.

**Insider Tip:** demand for Grand Canyon South Rim mule trips does subside a bit during the winter months, which means you may have a chance of lucking out on a cancellation if you travel between November and February and *if you call for reservations promptly*. You should also be healthy enough to handle cold temperatures and possibly rain or snow.

On the **North Rim**, mule trips are offered by **Canyon Trail Rides**, who can be reached at 435-679-8665, or online at [www.canyonrides.com](http://www.canyonrides.com) Weight limits for North Rim mule riders vary from 200 to 220 lbs depending on the length of the ride; there are also age limits for North Rim mule trips as opposed to height limits. *Grand Canyon North Rim mule trips run from mid-May to mid-October only, weather permitting.*

**Grand Canyon West** does not offer trail rides into the inner canyon, but they do have horseback rides on the rim, or you can take a helicopter to the bottom of the canyon. For more information on Grand Canyon West, visit [www.destinationgrandcanyon.com](http://www.destinationgrandcanyon.com)

If a mule ride is not for you, GrandCanyon.com has other ways to get you to the bottom of the Canyon. See your [Grand Canyon Top Tours Brochure](#) for more information, and take particular note of tours like the "[Colorado River Adventure](#)" the "[Colorado River Day Float Trip](#)," "[Canyon River Adventure](#)," and our popular Las Vegas Grand Canyon Tour, the "[Grand Voyager](#)."

## Travel Tip 18 - Are River Rafting Trips Available?

Yes, there are a variety of one-day Grand Canyon river rafting trips – both smooth water AND white water! **Float trips** (no rapids) are offered out of **Las Vegas, Grand Canyon South Rim, Flagstaff, Sedona, and Page/Lake Powell** from March through October. Children must be at least 4 years old to take part. Tours at **Grand Canyon West** include pontoon boat rides and are available year-round, weather permitting, with no age limit.



**One day White Water Rafting Trips** originate from **Peach Springs, Arizona**, but it is recommended that you actually set aside 2 days for the trip so you can include an overnight stay in the Peach Springs area the night before. Children must be at least 8 to participate in a white water trip. Grand Canyon white water trips are available from March through October. **Multi-day Grand Canyon white water rafting trips** require a time commitment of **4 days to three weeks**, and are usually booked about a year in advance. Visit our website and [watch videos](#) of our most popular Grand Canyon rafting trips! For more

information, consult your [Grand Canyon Top Tours Brochure](#) , or call Grand Canyon.com at (866) 944-7263 or (928) 645-6845. For more information on multi-day white water trips, contact Rivers & Oceans at 1-800-476-4576 or [www.rivers-oceans.com](http://www.rivers-oceans.com)

## **Travel Tip 19 – Are Grand Canyon Air Tours Fun? How are Their Safety Records?**

A **Grand Canyon air tour** is probably **the best value for the money**, allowing you to see the most of the Grand Canyon in the shortest amount of time. Indeed, by flying over the canyon, you'll get to see areas even the most skilled of hikers would be hard-pressed to get to! Grand Canyon overflights and air/ground combination tours are available by **airplane** or **helicopter** and originate at **Grand Canyon National Park Airport in Tusayan, Boulder City Municipal Airport and the North Las Vegas Airport in Nevada.**



[Grand Canyon Airlines](#) and [Scenic Airlines](#) conduct Grand Canyon air tours in **19-passenger Twin Otter Airplanes**. Both airlines offer **overflights** and **airplane/helicopter combination tours** to Grand Canyon West that will [get you to the bottom of the canyon](#) and have bases at both Grand Canyon South Rim and Las Vegas/Boulder City. [Air Grand Canyon](#) is another touring airline, operating canyon overflights in **6-**

**passenger Cessna** airplanes out of Grand Canyon South Rim. [Vision Airlines](#) flies out of North Las Vegas in **19-passenger Dornier 228's** and **30-passenger Dornier 328's** and also offers a Grand Canyon North Rim tour. [Westwind Air Service](#) offers tours of **Lake Powell, Monument Valley, Grand Canyon and Bryce Canyon** in **9-passenger Cessna Caravans** and **6-passenger 210's**. They operate from **Phoenix/Deer Valley, Page/Lake Powell and Grand Canyon South Rim.**

Helicopter tours are provided from **Grand Canyon South Rim** and **Las Vegas** by [Papillon Helicopters](#), [Sundance Helicopters](#) and [Maverick Helicopters](#). All offer Las Vegas Grand Canyon tours that include a landing on the Canyon floor at Grand Canyon West, and overflights of the Grand Canyon from the South Rim. **Papillon Helicopters** also offers an exclusive tour from Grand Canyon South Rim to the beautiful waterfalls of the [Havasupai Indian Reservation!](#)





Helicopters seat 5-6 passengers. Helicopters are more expensive to maintain and operate, therefore a **Grand Canyon helicopter tour will be more expensive**. But, they are also allowed to fly lower than airplanes, giving you the feeling of being closer to the Grand Canyon. Airplanes, because of their higher airspeeds and higher flight altitude, will allow you to see more in terms of square mileage. Overflights range from 30 minutes to 50 minutes in length. Grand Canyon West tours range from 5 to 8 hours.

**Grand Canyon flight routes are *strictly regulated* by the Federal Aviation Administration**, therefore flight duration, price, etc. will be extremely similar no matter which company you choose to fly with. It is because of these standards that **all Grand Canyon air tour operators have excellent safety records**. Yes, **accidents have happened, but statistically, these are quite rare**. Mass media coverage of these tragic events leaves the impression that they happen more frequently than they actually do.

**Insider tip:** if you can, schedule your Grand Canyon air tour for the morning hours (between 8 am and 10 am) - cooler temperatures equal smoother flights! Afternoons tend to be windy.

## **Travel Tip 20 – What’s Appropriate for Kids or Seniors?**

All Grand Canyon tours in your [Grand Canyon Top Tours Brochure](#) are **family-oriented** and **appropriate for most ages**, with little or no strenuous activity required. Grand Canyon river rafting trips do have some age restrictions (see Travel Tip #18), but **children of all ages** are welcome on **Grand Canyon air tours, Grand Canyon helicopter tours, jeep tours and the Grand Canyon Railway**. On some jeep or van tours you will be required to provide a car seat for infants and younger children. On the Grand Canyon Railway, children of all ages may ride the Coach, Club or First Class cars, but must be at least 11 to ride the Observation Dome or Luxury Parlor cars. The Coach and First Class Cars on the Grand Canyon Railway have wheelchair lifts.



The National Park Service also offers a variety of quality free programs, such as lectures, slide shows, guided hikes, and the world-famous “**Junior Ranger**” Program. Some of these programs are wheelchair accessible. For more information, visit [www.nps.gov/grca](http://www.nps.gov/grca) or [www.nationalparks.org](http://www.nationalparks.org). In Tusayan, just outside the park, be sure to visit the **National Geographic Visitors’ Center**. While you’re there, be sure to check out the spectacular IMAX Movie “**Grand Canyon: The Hidden Secrets.**”

## **Travel Tip 21 - Do I Need a Permit for Grand Canyon Hiking?**

If you’d just like to take a day hike, a permit is **not required**. You still need to do your **homework and know your limitations, especially in the summertime**. Always remember that for every hour you hike down, it will take 2 hours to hike back up. Food and water should be taken if you plan on spending any more than an hour or going further than one mile round-trip. **FOR YOUR SAFETY, HIKING RIM TO RIVER AND BACK IN A DAY IS STRONGLY DISCOURAGED AT ALL TIMES!**



If you're with small children or seniors at the **South Rim**, a good short hike that will allow you to experience the inner canyon without stress or strain is to hike to the "First Tunnel" down the **Bright Angel Trail**. If you're in relatively good health and are up for a little more of a challenge, **Cedar Ridge** on the **South Kaibab Trail** offers outstanding views. The hike is 3 miles round-trip, requiring 3 hours to complete on average. The Kaibab Trailhead is at Yaki Point, which is only accessible by shuttle.

On the **North Rim**, a good short hike is to **Coconino Overlook** down the **North Kaibab Trail**, 1.5 miles (2 hours average) round-trip. Another moderate inner canyon hike from the North Rim is **Cliff Spring Trail**. The trailhead is off the road near Cape Royal, and the hike is 2 miles round-trip along a forested ravine. It runs past a historic Anasazi rock granary to Cliff Spring, a spring that trickles from under a prominent rocky overhang.

If you want to take an **overnight hike in the canyon, back-country camping permits or reservations at Phantom Ranch are required**. Back-country permits and lodging at Phantom Ranch are also **typically booked months ahead**. If you're interested in an overnight hike in the Grand Canyon, you must make your reservations ASAP. For more information on Phantom Ranch, visit [www.grandcanyonlodges.com](http://www.grandcanyonlodges.com) For information on obtaining a backcountry hiking permit, visit [www.nps.gov/grca](http://www.nps.gov/grca) **During the summer months, try to schedule any hiking during the cooler parts of the day. Avoid hiking in the inner canyon during the mid-day hours if at all possible.** Better yet, schedule your trip for early spring, late fall or even winter.

**CAUTION:** No matter what time of year you visit, BE CAREFUL when engaging in ANY kind of physical activity, no matter how easy it may seem. The South Rim is 6,500' above sea level; the North Rim is 1,000' higher. If you plan to walk any distance longer than a mile, pack some nutritious, high-energy snacks. Carry water and DRINK IT.

## **Travel Tip 22 - Should I Spend My Whole Week There?**

Strange as it may sound, if you have a week or more to work with, we don't recommend you spend the entire time at the Grand Canyon. Why? Because there are so many other beautiful places in the area to see, like **Sedona, Lake Powell, Zion, or Bryce Canyon. There's also Monument Valley, Navajo National Monument, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Kodachrome Basin, and the Paria Canyon Wilderness.**



Give us a call at (866) 944-7263 and we'll happily help you coordinate a vacation that's relaxing, rewarding and fun. Grand Canyon.com is also a member of the **Grand Circle Association**, another excellent source for information about travel destinations around the Grand Canyon area. Get their free travel guide at [www.grandcircle.org](http://www.grandcircle.org)

### Travel Tip 23 - Should I Get the “America The Beautiful” Pass?

If you plan on visiting a few National Parks and/or Federal Fee areas within one year’s time, the “America the Beautiful” National Parks and Federal Lands Access Pass would be a worthwhile purchase. For \$80, you and everyone in your vehicle are granted access to **all National Parks, Monuments and Federal Fee Areas in the United States for one year**; the pass also covers entrance and amenities fees at sites managed by the **Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Reclamation** and the **USDA Forest Service**. Visitors 62 or older qualify for a Senior Pass, which grants you lifetime access to all National Parks for a one-time fee of \$10. If you are disabled, ask about the free Access Pass. Senior and Access Passes must be obtained in person.



**Insider tip:** Purchase your pass *before* you go on vacation at <http://store.usgs.gov/pass> or call 1-888-ASK-USGS. *The “America the Beautiful Pass” does not grant access to State Parks or Native American Tribal Parks such as Monument Valley or Grand Canyon West.*

### Travel Tip 24 - Any Good Restaurants in the Area?

Tons! The **El Tovar Hotel Dining Room** is probably the **South Rim** area’s most famous, featuring a palate-pleasing fusion of Southwestern and Continental cuisine. Reservations are recommended for dinner (call (928) 638-2631) and breakfast and lunch are also served. The **Arizona Room** is another excellent choice for lunch or dinner, located at Bright Angel Lodge (it typically closes for winter). **Bright Angel Lodge** also features a family-style restaurant serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. **Maswik and Yavapai Lodges** have cafeteria-style facilities (Yavapai may be subject to winter closures).



**Insider tip:** If you’re going to any of the rimside restaurants for lunch, try to get there before the Grand Canyon Railway arrives. The Grand Canyon Railway arrives between 11:15 AM and 12:15 PM, dropping off hundreds of visitors to compete for a few tables.

You’ll also find many good restaurants outside the park. In **Tusayan** (7 miles from the Park), the Best Western Grand Canyon Squire Inn’s **Coronado Room** offers a fine dining experience, and a coffee-shop is located next door. **JJK’s Restaurant**, in the **Quality Inn Canyon Plaza**’s Atrium features family-style dining in a most unique setting, or enjoy cowboy style cuisine at the **Grand Hotel’s Canyon Star** restaurant.

Another restaurant that’s a *personal favorite* of just about everybody at GrandCanyon.com is the [Cameron Trading Post](#) on the **Navajo Indian Reservation**. A real Old West commerce center dating back to 1916, the house specialty is the Navajo Taco. The gift shop and gallery also have one of the area’s finest collections of Native American crafts. It’s located 60 miles from the park, but the scenic drive and delicious meal make the Cameron Trading Post well worth the trip.



**Insider tip:** the Navajo Taco comes in “regular” and “mini” size. Unless you’re ravenously hungry, order the mini. If not, be prepared to take home a “doggie bag.”



On the **North Rim**, the **Grand Canyon Lodge Dining Room** offers an upscale menu at reasonable prices in a warm, earthy atmosphere. Reservations are recommended by calling (928) 638-2611. (*Remember – the North Rim Lodge is only open through October 15th!*)

50 miles North of the Park, the [Jacob Lake Inn](#) has an old-fashioned diner known throughout the region for its delicious ice cream shakes and huge home-made cookies. In **Page, Arizona**, you can choose from fast-food chains and independently owned family-style restaurants. If a big hearty breakfast is what you're after, the **Ranch House Grille** is famous for its slogan "bring your appetite, you're gonna need it." **Stromboli's Italian Restaurant** serves "calzones as big as your head" through late October. **The Mandarin Gourmet's** all-you-can-eat Chinese buffet is a local favorite. In the mood for Mexican? **Fiesta Mexicana** will satisfy your appetite for the spicy stuff. For a good quick lunch, **Slackers'** (formerly the Sandwich Place) features "fast food fit for grown-ups."

Looking for a dining experience where getting to the restaurant is half the fun? Situated between Page, Arizona and Kanab, Utah is a popular local spot called the [Paria Outpost](#). Open for dinner only on Friday and Saturday nights mid-March through early October, the Outpost serves an all-you-can-eat Texas-style barbecue buffet, surrounded by the beauty of the Paria Canyon area. Or, between Bitter Springs and Jacob Lake, stop by the [Marble Canyon Lodge and Trading Post](#) for classic home-made American food with the Vermillion Cliffs and the Colorado River Gorge just steps from your table. Just down the road, the [Cliff Dweller's Lodge](#) is one of Northern Arizona's "best kept secrets" with one patron recently reporting he had the "best biscuits and gravy he'd ever tasted" there!



Flagstaff, Williams, Sedona, Page, Kanab or St. George also have many choices of both chain and independent restaurants. Check the local newspapers, TV or radio stations, the local Chamber of Commerce or Visitor Information Center, or your hotel front desk for recommendations. *The majority of restaurants and bars in the area are smoke-free.*

## **Travel Tip 25 – How Should I Dress?**

In the Southwest, our style is best summed up with "The 2 C's:" "**CASUAL**" and "**COMFORTABLE.**" Even the area's more upscale restaurants have a *very* relaxed dress code (if they even have one at all). At the El Tovar Hotel, for example, they just ask that you not wear shorts to dinner (they know you're here to enjoy the outdoors!). Pack a pair of khakis and maybe one long sleeve shirt; that should be as "formal" as you'll need. In **summertime, t-shirts and shorts** are usually sufficient for daytime wear, but do bring a light jacket as nights still get chilly and temperatures tend to drop quickly after sunset. During the **early spring and late fall** months, you'll want to be prepared to put on **extra layers** as morning temperatures are definitely on the cool side. In the **winter** (November through February), **hats, scarves, gloves, sweaters**, etc. should be included in your Grand Canyon vacation gear. Snow or no snow, it's still cold (usually).

Leave the wing-tips and high heels at home. You'll want to wear shoes that are comfortable for walking. Even if you plan to take it easy, many walkways in the area are unpaved, so **choose a shoe with at least a minimum of tread**. If you're the type of person who lives in sandals, forego the flip-flops and pick up a pair of **Tevas** or **Chacos**. Invented by a Colorado River guide, these "sports sandals" have sturdy soles and Velcro ankle straps that will keep most pebbles and stickers at bay while hiking through the desert, yet allow you to walk through water without removing your shoes (or worrying about ruining them). You can wear them with socks in cooler weather, and they last forever. Similar sandals are sold at most retail shoe stores. For more information visit [www.teva.com](http://www.teva.com) or [www.chacousa.com](http://www.chacousa.com) .



## **Travel Tip 26 – We Want to See the Grand Canyon; the Kids Want to Play in the Water**



If vacation just isn't vacation without making a splash, consider making **Lake Powell** your "base camp" for exploring the Grand Canyon area. Located near the Arizona/Utah border, Lake Powell and the **Glen Canyon National Recreation area** boast stunning scenery, fun activities and lots of water! Lake Powell is situated almost exactly between the North and South Rims of the Grand Canyon, which means that either side of the canyon would be an easy 2.5 hour drive away (perfect day trip). Other attractions nearby are **Zion National Park, Bryce Canyon National Park, Monument Valley, Coral Pink Sand Dunes, Kodachrome Basin, Paria Canyon**, and that's just to name a few. Other popular things to do in the Page/Lake Powell area include **rafting, scenic cruises to Rainbow Bridge** and other attractions on the lake, **dinner cruises**, safari-style **slot canyon tours**, hiking, **scenic flights, boating**, swimming (the water warms up in mid-April and can remain warm enough for swimming well into October!) and world-class **fishing**.

There are also many events and festivals held throughout the year, especially during the fall. At the Pumpkin Festival in October, citizens of the town pool their carved jack-o-lanterns in an attempt to break the record for the most lit pumpkins in one place. November's hot air balloon regatta is a three day event culminating with a night-time balloon glow right on the very main street of Page. [Room rates](#) and gas prices in Page are typically very reasonable. For more information about including Page/Lake Powell in your vacation plans, call Grand Canyon.com at (866) 944-7263 or (928) 645-6845. For more information on the Lake Powell/Glen Canyon National Recreation area, visit [www.nps.gov/glca](http://www.nps.gov/glca) . For Lake Powell water temperatures and fishing information, visit [www.wayneswords.com](http://www.wayneswords.com)

## **Travel Tip 27 – How are Gas Prices Out There?**

They are high around Grand Canyon South Rim, but you can find surprisingly reasonable gas prices in some of the surrounding areas. Just remember it can be a long way between gas stations, so fill 'er up when you have the chance. Also, the best gas prices are not necessarily where you'd expect to find them. Check out [www.arizonagasprices.com](http://www.arizonagasprices.com) , or [www.utahgasprices.com](http://www.utahgasprices.com) .



## Travel Tip 28 – Are Any Events or Festivals Going On?

Lots of them, and not just at the Grand Canyon! The many charming and friendly small towns surrounding the Grand Canyon have concerts, fairs, lectures and other family-oriented events that celebrate everything from Route 66 to rodeos and more. Spring, summer and fall, predictably, are when most events occur. Activities do tend to taper off during the winter months, but then again there are lots of Christmas craft shows and holiday lighting displays. Everyone is invited! For more information about events taking place during your vacation, visit [www.azreporter.com](http://www.azreporter.com), [www.arizonaguide.com](http://www.arizonaguide.com), [www.gatewaytosedona.com](http://www.gatewaytosedona.com) or [www.flagstaffcentral.com](http://www.flagstaffcentral.com). You can also inquire at your hotel front desk when you arrive in the area, check the local newspapers, or tune in to local TV or radio stations (photo above right: the Page/Lake Powell Hot Air Balloon Regatta, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>).



## Travel Tip 29 – What is “Grand Canyon West?”



**Grand Canyon West** (*not to be confused with “the West Rim Drive,” which is on the South Rim*) is another developing area of the Grand Canyon located on the **Hualapai Indian Reservation** just North of Peach Springs, Arizona. If you have limited time for a Grand Canyon trip, and you’re going to be passing through **Las Vegas, Phoenix, Page or Sedona**, a trip to Grand Canyon West may be just what you’re looking for. Grand Canyon West offers opportunities like **helicopter trips to the bottom of the canyon**, where you can take a float trip, even have a champagne picnic, or not. If you’re content to enjoy the view from the rim, GrandCanyon.com has tours for you, too. Take a look at your [Grand Canyon Top Tours Brochure](#) for suggestions of tours to Grand Canyon West. Grand Canyon West also has an Indian Village, cowboy town and a brand-new amphitheatre where you can watch Native American cultural performances by tribe members in full ceremonial regalia. This is also the site of the [Grand Canyon Skywalk](#), opened in March of 2007.

Remember that **Grand Canyon West is lower in altitude** than the North or South Rims, which means that it’s **VERY hot in the summertime**. Also, **one of the main access roads to Grand Canyon West is unpaved** but heavily traveled by buses and other commercial vehicles. Most rental car companies strongly discourage you from taking their vehicles to this area and you could be liable for any damage sustained by doing so. A **“park and ride” shuttle bus is offered** from the **Grand Canyon West Welcome Center** near Meadview for a nominal fee. Reservations are required and can be made by calling (702) 260-6506.

Grand Canyon West is an **Indian Tribal Park**, which means **your America the Beautiful Federal Access Pass or Grand Canyon Park Entrance Pass would not grant you access** to this area. An entrance fee is still required, unless you are going there as part of a Grand Canyon tour, in which case your entry fee is included.

## Travel Tip 30 – What is the “Grand Canyon Skywalk?”

The **Grand Canyon Skywalk** is an innovative and controversial attraction that opened in March 2007 at **Grand Canyon West**. This glass-bottomed horseshoe-shaped walkway juts seventy feet out from the lip of the canyon. Since the structure is cantilevered, no struts or support beams are visible, so you feel like you’re floating high in the air above the bottom of the Grand Canyon. **It costs a minimum of \$75/person to experience the Grand Canyon Skywalk.** Even if the Skywalk doesn’t appeal to you, Grand Canyon West still warrants consideration as an expeditious and exciting alternative to the South Rim or North Rim, especially when your time is at a premium, but you know you’ve come too far not to see the Grand Canyon.



**Insider tip:** Grand Canyon West is NOT Grand Canyon National Park. Know what you’re getting into before you commit to going to the Skywalk. Get the facts at [GrandCanyon.com](http://GrandCanyon.com).

### ***NEW Special Section: “You Asked, We Answered!”***

## Travel Tip 31 – “Can I Light Fireworks on 4<sup>th</sup> of July?”



***Absolutely not!*** Fireworks are illegal within National Park boundaries. Brush fires are a very real danger (as was proven by the 2006 Warm Fire at the North Rim), and it’s simply not worth the risk. Instead, plan to attend a **professional fireworks display** in one of the various towns around the Grand Canyon such as **Williams, Flagstaff, Kanab** and **Page**. Check the local newspapers, TV or radio stations when you arrive in the area. Even if fireworks are nixed due to dry conditions, there will probably still be parades, carnivals and other events that you can attend or participate in (take a look at Travel Tip #28).

## Travel Tip 32 – “Where Can I Watch the Super Bowl, March Madness, the Playoffs, the World Series, Etc?”

Sports fans can catch the games they want to see at one of several sports lounges in the Grand Canyon area. Inside the park, the **Maswik Lounge and Sports Bar** has not one, but *seven* TV’s tuned to sporting events around the world. Outside the park, the **Best Western Grand Canyon**



**Squire Inn** has an excellent sports lounge with billiard tables. Across the hall is the Squire’s world-famous family play center, which means that while you watch the game, the rest of the family can enjoy bowling, video games and other activities. Across the street, the **Grand Hotel’s Canyon Star Saloon** has a big screen TV as well. The gateway communities of Williams and Flagstaff (home of [Northern Arizona University](http://Northern Arizona University) ) also have several fine pubs and cocktail lounges that cater to sports fans.

## Travel Tip 33 – “What if the Weather Turns Bad?”

So what DO you do if your Grand Canyon vacation gets rained out, fogged in, snowed on or otherwise? You don’t hang out in your room and mope, that’s for sure. Just take things indoors. Here are a few things you can do if Grand Canyon weather is less than ideal:

## Foul-weather activities at the Grand Canyon:

- **Visit the Yavapai Observation Station** - HUGE picture window offering spectacular views of Grand Canyon. Of course, if it's raining or snowing, there might not be much of a view at all, but they do have a nice bookstore that's open from 8 AM to 8 PM. This historic building recently underwent a renovation. .

- Learn about Grand Canyon art and photography from the early days to modern times at the **Kolb Studio** located near the Bright Angel trailhead. The former residence of Ellsworth and Emery Kolb, who were amongst the first to photograph and film the Grand Canyon. The home has been converted to a bookstore and museum, and the auditorium also hosts the annual "[Arts for the Parks](#)" Exhibit at certain times of the year.

- Learn about one of Grand Canyon's early hoteliers at the **Fred Harvey Museum**. Located inside Bright Angel Lodge just off the main lobby, you'll not only learn a lot about [Fred Harvey](#) himself, but you'll also get a kick out of seeing how much a meal cost in 1910, the unique designs of the tea service used in the "Harvey House" dining rooms back in the heyday of train travel, the prim and proper uniforms worn by the now-legendary "[Harvey Girls](#) ." The small museum also has a fireplace whose hearth was built from stones representing each rock layer in the Grand Canyon itself.

- **Shop.** Whether you window shop or shop for real, it's a fun and educational experience at the Grand Canyon. Many of Grand Canyon South Rim's gift shops are located inside historic buildings. The [Hopi House](#) , a 101-year-old replica of a Hopi pueblo designed by premier female architect [Mary Jane Colter](#) , contains one of the park's finest collections of jewelry, pottery, basketry and rugs made by hand by members of Arizona's many Native tribes. Hopi House also offers more moderately priced mass-produced product lines. Next door, [Verkamp's](#) (the only independent concessionaire still operating within the park) is another fine curio shop whose atmosphere is reminiscent of an old West trading post. They also offer a mix of mass-produced and hand-made mementos. The showpiece in their main lobby is a huge painting of the Grand Canyon by turn-of-the-century artist Louis Aiken. Verkamp's celebrated their centennial in 2006, so be sure to pick up commemorative souvenirs when you visit. Across the way from Hopi House and Verkamp's, the [El Tovar Hotel](#) Lobby is not only a nice cozy place to hang out and sip hot coffee, the display case in the center of the room shows the "cream of the crop" of hand-made Native American jewelry. Many pieces are prizewinners at the [Inter-tribal Indian Ceremonial](#) , an annual gathering of Native artists in Gallup, New Mexico.



- Visit the **Canyon View Information Plaza**. Located across from Mather Point, Canyon View is now the park's official visitor facility. Here you will find informative displays, a large bookstore, and ample restrooms. Because this facility was designed as the terminus for a mass transit system that is not yet operating, you cannot drive to it. Park your car and ride the [free shuttle](#) or walk the short trail from Mather Point.



- Take part in a ranger-led program. Though most of these are outdoor programs, there are many that take place indoors at locations such as the Shrine of the Ages, Kolb Studio, Canyon View Information Plaza, etc. Check your copy of the Grand Canyon Guide (a newspaper that you'll receive upon entering the park), or visit [www.nps.gov/grca](http://www.nps.gov/grca).

All these activities are things you can do within Grand Canyon Village, the main visitor service area at Grand Canyon South Rim. *If road conditions permit*, take a drive along the 26-mile East Rim Drive of the Grand Canyon and do the following:

- **Visit the Tusayan Ruins and Museum** - located three miles west of Desert View and 22 miles east of Grand Canyon Village on Desert View Drive. Open daily year-round (*but may be closed due to inclement weather*), 9am to 5pm.



A visit to Tusayan Museum will provide a glimpse of Pueblo Indian life at Grand Canyon some 800 years ago, admission is free. A self-guiding trail leads through the adjacent 800-year-old ruin. Ranger-led tours of the Tusayan Ruins are offered daily. Educational materials about the park and region are sold in the non-profit bookstore



- **Visit the Desert View Watchtower and Trading Post:** Another masterpiece from architect Mary Jane Colter, the 70-foot watchtower opened in 1932. The structure is reminiscent of ancestral Puebloan (aka 'Hisatsinom' or 'Anasazi') towers found near Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado, bearing strongest resemblance to a particular ruin preserved at Hovenweep National Monument. Those willing to climb to the top are rewarded with spectacular

views of the Grand Canyon and the Colorado River on a clear day. On a cloudy day, the tower's interior also offers a glimpse of Indian culture in the form of ceremonial paintings by Hopi artist Fred Kabotie. Next door, the trading post offers a snack bar and souvenir shop.

Remember, the above activities are located on the East Rim Drive of the canyon, a very twisty, windy road, and one best avoided if it happens to be snowing. Just South of Grand Canyon Village, the community of Tusayan also offers a variety of activities that can help save the day (not to mention your vacation!):

- **Let's Bowl!** Bring the family down to [the Best Western Grand Canyon Squire Inn](#)'s on-site play center, featuring a 6-lane bowling alley, video games, pool tables (at the Sports Lounge across the hall). [Not staying at the Squire](#) ? No problem - this facility is open to all area visitors.
- **Some mamas *did* let their babies grow up to be cowboys**, and cowboys are celebrated in several places in Tusayan. The Best Western Grand Canyon Squire Inn has a small cowboy museum located in the main lobby near the gift shop. You can see actual branding tools used on livestock in this area. Across the street at [the Grand Hotel](#), fine examples of Western art can be found throughout the lobby. This hotel also has a wonderful Christmas craft show in December. The Grand Hotel pays "architectural homage" to the El Tovar.

- **Get pampered in “grand” style.** Get a haircut, a facial, maybe even a “mani and a pedi.” Yes, you can do that sort of thing at the Grand Canyon. The [Best Western Grand Canyon Squire Inn](#) has a salon and spa just down the hall from the family play center. Prior appointment required, make yours by calling (928) 638-2681.

- **See the IMAX Movie “Grand Canyon: The Hidden Secrets.”** White-water rafting, helicopters yanking and banking through the Little Colorado River Gorge, stunning photography.... it’s only 40 minutes long, but you’ll feel as though you’ve been down in the depths of the canyon when you walk out of the National Geographic IMAX Theatre. The film is shown every hour on the half hour from 10.30 AM to 6.30 PM in shoulder season, 8.30 am to 8.30 pm in peak.

### **Travel Tip 34 – “Do They Ski or Snowboard Out There?”**

Don’t laugh, there are actually quite a few wonderful ski areas in the Southwest. Unfortunately, the last couple of winters haven’t brought the usual amounts of snow. If it does happen to snow when you visit, check out the [Arizona Snow Bowl](#) in Flagstaff. At the Grand Canyon, cross-country skiing is possible in the Kaibab National Forest. You can rent skis at the Canyon Marketplace, and break trail virtually wherever you want.



Occasionally, tracks will be groomed at the Arizona Trail, 10 minutes from Grand Canyon Village on the East Rim Drive. The beautiful White Mountains are within half a day’s drive of Phoenix, with Pinetop-Lakeside’s [Sunrise Park Resort](#) providing ample opportunities for all kinds of wintertime activities. Further to the North, [Brian Head, Utah](#) is located about 3 hours from Page/Lake Powell, Arizona.

### **Travel Tip 35 – “Can We Get Married at Grand Canyon?”**



Yes, you can! Like a wedding taking place anywhere else, though, advance planning is key to a successful event at the Grand Canyon. It should be pointed out that **the Grand Canyon is best for smaller, less formal gatherings.** The park does not have facilities for large audiences (exception: the Shrine of the Ages, which seats 250+).

Some services, such as florists and wedding cake designers, are located as far away as Flagstaff. **If you would like to get married outdoors** at the North or South Rim, a **Special Use Permit must be obtained from the National Park Service.** These cost anywhere from \$150 to \$250 depending on where your wedding will be held and are non-refundable. *Only certain sites are authorized for outdoor weddings.* These are located away from major traffic areas so as not to conflict with other visitors’ enjoyment of the Grand Canyon. You must also have an Arizona marriage license, and arrange for someone to perform the ceremony. For more information on facilities, clergy and guidelines for Grand Canyon Weddings, visit [www.nps.gov/grca](http://www.nps.gov/grca) and look at the section marked “Fees and Reservations.” You can download a permit application from there as well.

Indoor weddings do not require special use permits. Grand Canyon Lodge at the North Rim does not host weddings or receptions, but Grand Canyon South Rim does have several banquet rooms available for these types of functions. For assistance, contact Xanterra South Rim LLC at 928-638-2631 and ask for the special events coordinator.

There is also a professional event planner located in Flagstaff who can help with these arrangements. Visit [www.northernarizonaweddingplanner.com](http://www.northernarizonaweddingplanner.com) or call 877-527-0690. Weddings can also be held at the bottom of the canyon at **Grand Canyon West**, where many helicopter operators offer round-trip packages from – where else? - Las Vegas.

**Insider tip:** weather can be highly unpredictable at Grand Canyon. If you plan an outdoor wedding at the South Rim, coordinate a “back-up” indoor location with Xanterra, just in case!

## Travel Tip 36 – Last Word/First Word

**SAFETY FIRST – ALWAYS!** The last thing we want to hear about is your long-awaited vacation being ruined by an accident or other mishap. Here are a few last tips culled from years of experience seeing all kinds of people get into all kinds of trouble on their Grand Canyon vacations.

1. Practice defensive driving. You’re sharing the roadways with thousands of other people who are just as unfamiliar with the area as you are, many of whom are used to driving on the left hand side of the road, or are operating a recreational vehicle for the first time. **Use your headlights, even during the daytime.** Don’t follow the car in front of you too closely. Avoid stopping suddenly in the middle of the road. If you see an animal, pretty view, or something you want to photograph, pull off the side of the road to where it’s safe, then take your picture. If you find yourself lost, again, pull off to the side of the road to where you are out of the way of traffic, then look at your map.

If you’re visiting in wintertime, remember that winter driving poses its own set of hazards. If you’re unaccustomed to driving in snow, *take it slow*. Better yet, curl up next to a nice cozy fire with a cup of hot chocolate and stay off the road altogether. If you must drive in winter, be sure to check road conditions before you head out. Inquire at your hotel front desk or visit [www.az511.com](http://www.az511.com) for road conditions or closures.



2. The altitude can affect your attitude. Grand Canyon’s South Rim is over 6,000’ above sea level; the North Rim is over 7,000.’ Acclimation takes about two weeks for a person in good health. Individuals with heart or lung problems should exercise care when visiting the Grand Canyon. If your physician advises you not to go to such high altitudes, Grand Canyon West is only 4,000’ high (but **very hot** in the summertime). Even if you’re healthy, don’t overdo it. If you need to take a break, **TAKE A BREAK!**

3. Watch children and pets at all times. Many canyon view points do not have guardrails, so approach the rim slowly, and keep your pets leashed always. **NEVER** leave a pet or a child unattended in a parked car, even with the windows cracked open. Temperatures inside parked vehicles can reach in excess of 150°F with alarming speed during the summer months. Even at cooler times of the year, leaving a child or pet in a parked vehicle is unsafe!

4. This is the desert (but then again, it's not!). Don't let pleasant temperatures on the canyon rim or even a little rain or snow fool you. Conditions here are probably much drier than you're used to. **Carry water and drink it.** Protect yourself from the sun. Wear a **hat, sunglasses and sunscreen.** Carry lip balm and moisturize often.

**Insider tip:** You'll find that your hair dries out a lot easier than at home, and hotels typically provide shampoo, but not conditioner. Bring your own. Contact lens wearers also report that the dry climate is hard on their eyes, so bring a spare pair of glasses.

**Extreme weather dangers:** Prolonged dry weather and windy conditions make the area susceptible to **dust storms.** Use caution when driving through flat, sandy terrain or unplanted agricultural fields. If you are caught in a dust storm while driving, pull off the highway a safe distance until the disturbance passes. **Flash floods** can happen even when you can't see a cloud in the sky! Check weather before venturing into slot canyons or riverbeds. NEVER try to drive across a flooded roadway. **Lightning storms** can also be treacherous. Avoid standing on the canyon rim or any high, exposed area during a thunderstorm. If you feel your hair stand on end, or smell sulphur, take cover! **Blizzards** are particularly dangerous on the highways. Avoid driving during severe snowstorms if at all possible. Road closures may result. For more information, visit the Arizona Department of Public Safety's website at [www.azdps.gov](http://www.azdps.gov) or the Arizona Department of Transportation at [www.az511.com](http://www.az511.com)



5. Watch out for wildlife and don't feed them. Deer and elk are notoriously nocturnal and can dart out in front of you before you have time to react. Obey the speed limit and keep your eyes open for them when driving after dark. During the daytime, it's not unusual to see deer, elk, squirrels and birds come right up to people and beg for food. These creatures may look perfectly tame, but they're not. Squirrels, chipmunks and other rodents also have fleas, which harbor infectious diseases. Enjoy the wildlife from a distance. Also, hunting is prohibited, as is throwing objects at animals or birds.



6. When it gets dark, it gets really, really dark. Artificial lighting is kept to a minimum in the National Parks, which makes the darkness more pronounced than you may be used to. Many of the hotel rooms inside the park are situated in the woods, too, so **bring a flashlight or headlamp** along on your sunset walk. Blindly stumbling around in unfamiliar territory is not only unnerving, but unsafe.



7. **BE CAREFUL WITH FIRE!** 2006 was a particularly bad season for forest fires as demonstrated by large-scale blazes in Sedona and at the North Rim. Fire danger could carry over into subsequent years without adequate precipitation, which may mean foregoing campfires and abstaining from smoking. Obey any and all fire restrictions in the parks you visit! Make sure that your campfire is completely out by dousing it, stirring it and dousing it again. If you smoke, grind your cigarette out in the dirt (but never on a stump or log), and NEVER toss a lit cigarette out your car window.

8. For Lake Powell Visitors: *No cliff diving, no teak surfing and no kite tubing!* Be aware of the dangers of **carbon monoxide**. Children must wear a US Coast Guard approved life vest around the water at all times. For more information on safety at Lake Powell, visit [www.nps.gov/glca](http://www.nps.gov/glca) or [www.carbon-monoxide-poisoning.com](http://www.carbon-monoxide-poisoning.com) Want more information on Lake Powell? Order your copy of *“The Insider’s Guide to Lake Powell”* by calling 866-944-7263 or 928-645-6845 or e-mail [info@grandcanyon.com](mailto:info@grandcanyon.com)



## **Getting the Most Out of Your Grand Vacation Contact List**

### **Grand Canyon Hotels In-Park (South and North Rim)**

Xanterra Parks & Resorts: ☎ 1-888-297-2757 (Toll Free/US)  
 ☎ 1-303-297-2757 (International Toll)  
 Online reservations: South Rim: 🌐 [www.grandcanyonlodges.com](http://www.grandcanyonlodges.com)  
 North Rim: 🌐 [www.grandcanyonnorthrim.com](http://www.grandcanyonnorthrim.com)

### **Gateway Community Hotels**

(Tusayan, Williams, Flagstaff, Page-Lake Powell, Phoenix, Las Vegas, Sedona)  
 ☎ 1-800-916-8530 (Toll Free/US)  
 🌐 <http://www.grandcanyon.com/hotels.html>

### **Grand Canyon Camping**

South Rim: Trailer Village (RV and tent sites) ☎ 1-888-297-2757 (Toll Free/US)  
 ☎ 1-303-297-2757 (International Toll)  
 🌐 [www.grandcanyonlodges.com](http://www.grandcanyonlodges.com)  
 Mather Campground ☎ 1-877-444-6777  
 (tent & RV sites, no hookups) 🌐 [www.Recreation.gov](http://www.Recreation.gov)

North Rim: Grand Canyon Campground ☎ 1-877-444-6777  
 (tent & RV sites, no hookups) 🌐 [www.Recreation.gov](http://www.Recreation.gov)

### **Grand Canyon Mule Rides**

South Rim: Xanterra South Rim, LLC ☎ 1-888-297-2757 (Toll Free/US)  
 ☎ 1-303-297-2757 (International Toll)  
 🌐 [www.grandcanyonlodges.com](http://www.grandcanyonlodges.com)

North Rim: Canyon Trail Rides ☎ 1-435-679-8665  
 🌐 [www.canyonrides.com](http://www.canyonrides.com)

***Weight, height, English fluency strictly enforced; no pregnant women.  
 Trips typically booked 9 months to a year in advance.***

## **Grand Canyon Air Tours (Plane)**

Grand Canyon Airlines (Grand Canyon South Rim, Las Vegas/Boulder City)	☎ 1-866-235-9422 (Toll Free/US) ☎ 1-928-638-2407 (International Toll) 🌐 <a href="http://www.grandcanyonairlines.com">www.grandcanyonairlines.com</a>
Scenic Airlines (Grand Canyon South Rim, Las Vegas/Boulder City)	☎ 1-800-634-6801 (Toll Free/US) ☎ 1-702-638-3200 (International Toll) 🌐 <a href="http://www.scenic.com">www.scenic.com</a>
Air Grand Canyon (Grand Canyon South Rim)	☎ 1-800-247-4726 (Toll Free/US) ☎ 1-928-638-2686 (International Toll) 🌐 <a href="http://www.airgrandcanyon.com">www.airgrandcanyon.com</a>
Westwind Air Service: Phoenix/Deer Valley  Page/Lake Powell	☎ 1-888-869-0866 (Toll Free/US) ☎ 1-480-991-5557 (International Toll) ☎ 1-800-245-8668 (Toll Free/US) ☎ 1-928-645-2494 (International Toll) 🌐 <a href="http://www.westwindairservice.com">www.westwindairservice.com</a>
Vision Air/Vision Holidays - North Las Vegas:  Grand Canyon South Rim:	☎ 1-800-256-8767 (Toll Free/US) ☎ 1-702-647-7000 (International Toll) ☎ 1-928-638-5331 (International Toll) 🌐 <a href="http://www.visionholidays.com">www.visionholidays.com</a>

***For more information on scheduled airline service to Las Vegas (LAS), Phoenix (PHX), Flagstaff (FLG) and Page (PGA) call your travel agent or preferred airline or visit <http://www.grandcanyon.com/airline-tickets.html>***

## **Grand Canyon Air Tours (Helicopter)**

Papillon Helicopters: Grand Canyon  Las Vegas	☎ 1-800-528-2418 (Toll Free/US) ☎ 1-928-638-2407 (International Toll) ☎ 1-888-635-7272 (Toll Free/US) ☎ 1-702-736-7243 (International Toll) 🌐 <a href="http://www.papillon.com">www.papillon.com</a>
Maverick Helicopters: Grand Canyon Las Vegas	☎ 1-928-638-2622 (International Toll) ☎ 1-888-261-4414 (Toll Free/US) ☎ 1-702-261-0007 (International Toll) 🌐 <a href="http://www.maverickhelicopter.com">www.maverickhelicopter.com</a>
Sundance Helicopters: Las Vegas/McCarran Executive	☎ 1-800-653-1881 (Toll Free/US) ☎ 1-702-736-0606 (International Toll) 🌐 <a href="http://www.helicoptour.com">www.helicoptour.com</a>

## **Grand Canyon Bus/Van Tours**

- Xanterra South Rim LLC  
(In-park bus tours, Grand Canyon South Rim)  
☎ 1-888-297-2757 (Toll Free/US)  
☎ 1-303-297-2757 (International Toll)  
📄 [www.grandcanyonlodges.com](http://www.grandcanyonlodges.com)
- American Dream Tours  
(Day Tours from Flagstaff and Williams, to Grand Canyon South Rim)  
☎ 1-888-203-1212 (Toll Free/US)  
☎ 1-928-527-3369 (International Toll)  
📄 [www.americandreamtours.com](http://www.americandreamtours.com)
- Southwest Custom Tours  
(Day Tours from Phoenix/Scottsdale to Grand Canyon South Rim, Sedona, Southern Arizona and Mexico)  
☎ 1-800-513-1381  
☎ 1-602-971-1381  
📄 [www.southwesttours.com](http://www.southwesttours.com)
- Scenic Airlines (Las Vegas/Boulder City):  
(Day tours from Las Vegas to Grand Canyon South Rim and Grand Canyon West)  
☎ 1-800-634-6801 (Toll Free US)  
☎ 1-702-638-3200 (International Toll)  
📄 [www.scenic.com](http://www.scenic.com)
- Great Ventures Tours (Sedona)  
(Day tours from Sedona and Flagstaff to Grand Canyon South Rim, Page, and Grand Canyon West)  
☎ 1-800-578-2643 (Toll Free/US)  
☎ 1-928-282-4451 (International Toll)  
📄 [www.greatventures.com](http://www.greatventures.com)
- Open Road Tours  
(Tours and shuttles from Phoenix to Flagstaff, Williams, Sedona and Grand Canyon South Rim)  
☎ 1-800-766-7117 (Toll Free/US)  
☎ 1-602-997-6474 (International Toll)  
📄 [www.openroadtours.com](http://www.openroadtours.com)
- Grayline Tours  
(Day and overnight tours from Las Vegas, Phoenix and Los Angeles to Grand Canyon South Rim)  
☎ 1-800-634-6579 (Toll Free/US)  
☎ 1-303-394-6920 (International Toll)  
📄 [www.grayline.com](http://www.grayline.com)

***For information on scheduled bus service to Phoenix, Flagstaff, Las Vegas and elsewhere, visit [www.Greyhound.com](http://www.Greyhound.com) or call 1-800-231-2222***

## **Grand Canyon Train Tours**

- Grand Canyon Railway (Williams, Arizona)  
☎ 1-800-THE-TRAIN (Toll Free/US)  
☎ 1-928-635-4224 (International Toll)  
📄 [www.thetrain.com](http://www.thetrain.com)

***For information on scheduled train service to Williams or Flagstaff, or Thruway service to Phoenix or Las Vegas, contact AMTRAK 1-800-872-7245 or visit [www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com)***

## **Grand Canyon Hiking**

Phantom Ranch Lodging and Meals:  
(Xanterra South Rim LLC)

☎ 1-888-297-2757 (Toll Free/US)  
☎ 1-303-297-2757 (International Toll)  
📄 [www.grandcanyonlodges.com](http://www.grandcanyonlodges.com)

Campgrounds (Inner Canyon only [*includes Bright Angel & Cottonwood campgrounds*])

**Backcountry permit requests accepted by fax, mail, or in person only**

National Park Service/  
Backcountry Reservations Office

☎ 1-928-638-7888 (recorded message)  
☎ 1-928-638-2125  
📄 [www.nps.gov/grca](http://www.nps.gov/grca)

Downloadable permit application:

<http://www.nps.gov/grca/planyourvisit/upload/permit-request.pdf>

To mail completed application: Backcountry Information Center / GCNP,  
P.O. Box 129, Grand Canyon AZ, 86023

## **Grand Canyon Rafting/Grand Canyon West Tours**

From Grand Canyon South Rim:

Grand Canyon Airlines  
(Colorado River Day Float Trip,  
Canyon River Day Adventure)

☎ 1-866-235-9422 (Toll Free/US)  
☎ 1-928-638-2407 (International Toll)  
📄 [www.grandcanyonairlines.com](http://www.grandcanyonairlines.com)

Scenic Airlines  
(Half-Day Plane/Helicopter/Pontoon  
Boat Combination Tours to  
Grand Canyon West)

☎ 1-800-634-6801 (Toll Free/US)  
☎ 1-702-638-3200 (International Toll)  
📄 [www.scenic.com](http://www.scenic.com)

From Las Vegas:

Scenic Airlines  
(Half-Day Plane/Helicopter/Pontoon  
Boat Combination Tours to  
Grand Canyon West)

☎ 1-800-634-6801 (Toll Free/US)  
☎ 1-702-638-3200 (International Toll)  
📄 [www.scenic.com](http://www.scenic.com)

Black Canyon Adventures  
(Half-Day Float Trips from  
Boulder City)

☎ 1-800-455-3490 (Toll Free/US)  
☎ 1-702-294-1414 (International Toll)  
📄 [www.blackcanyonadventures.com](http://www.blackcanyonadventures.com)

From Page/Lake Powell:

Colorado River Discovery  
(Half Day Smooth Water Float)

☎ 1-888-522-6644 (Toll Free/US)  
☎ 1-928-645-9175 (International Toll)  
📄 [www.raftthecanyon.com](http://www.raftthecanyon.com)

From Sedona or Flagstaff:

Great Ventures Tours (Sedona)  
(Colorado River Day Float Trips  
from Sedona and Flagstaff;  
White Water rafting tours also available)

☎ 1-800-578-2643 (Toll Free/US)  
☎ 1-928-282-4451 (International Toll)  
📄 [www.greatventures.com](http://www.greatventures.com)



## **Grand Canyon Rafting Tours (cont'd)**

From Peach Springs:  
Hualapai River Running One-Day ☎ 1-800-855-9550 (Toll Free/US)  
Grand Canyon White Water Rafting ☎ 1-928-769-2219 (International Toll)  
📄 [www.destinationgrandcanyon.com](http://www.destinationgrandcanyon.com)

*All Grand Canyon Rafting tours listed above are one day in duration or less.  
For information on multi-day Grand Canyon White Water Rafting Trips,  
Contact Rivers & Oceans at 1-800-473-4576 or visit [www.rivers-oceans.com](http://www.rivers-oceans.com)*

## **Grand Canyon Area Jeep/4x4 Tours**

From Grand Canyon South Rim:  
Grand Canyon Jeeps & Safaris ☎ 1-800-320-5337 (Toll Free/US)  
(Canyon Pines, Sunset and ☎ 1-928-638-5337 (International Toll)  
Indian Cave Paintings Tours) 📄 [www.grandcanyonjeeptours.com](http://www.grandcanyonjeeptours.com)

From Las Vegas:  
Pink Jeep Tours: ☎ 1-888-900-4480 (Toll Free/US)  
(Day trips to Grand Canyon West, ☎ 1-702-895-6777 (International Toll)  
Valley of Fire, Red Rock Canyon) 📄 [www.pinkjeep.com](http://www.pinkjeep.com)

From Page/Lake Powell:  
Antelope Canyon Tours ☎ 1-866-645-9102 (Toll Free/US)  
(slot canyon tours, Lake Powell area) ☎ 1-928-645-9102 (International Toll)  
📄 [www.antelopecanyon.com](http://www.antelopecanyon.com)

Chief Tsosie's Antelope Slot Canyon Tours ☎ 1-928-645-5594  
📄 [www.antelopeslotcanyon.com](http://www.antelopeslotcanyon.com)

Slot Canyon Hummer Adventures ☎ 1-928-645-2266  
(Waterholes Canyon, Page area) 📄 [www.slotcanyonhummeradventures.com](http://www.slotcanyonhummeradventures.com)

## **Grand Canyon Area Dinner Reservations**

El Tovar Hotel Dining Room  
(928) 638-2631 extension 6432  
*Dinner reservations accepted up to 6 months in advance for El Tovar Hotel guests  
Guests staying elsewhere may make reservations up to 30 days in advance*

The Coronado Room (inside the Best Western Grand Canyon Squire Inn)  
(928) 638-2681  
*Reservations strongly recommended during peak travel season*

***All other area restaurants are first-come first serve***









# **Thank you for reading our Grand Canyon Vacation Guidebook**

We hope this travel guide has helped you plan your Grand Canyon vacation efficiently and easily. As we continually strive to improve this and other in-house publications, we welcome your comments, suggestions and questions. Please contact us at (866) 944-7263 [Toll Free in the US] or International Toll, (928) 645-6845, or e-mail [info@grandcanyon.com](mailto:info@grandcanyon.com)

**Thank you again, and Happy Travels!**

**(866) 944-7263**

**(928) 645-6845**

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