

Grand Canyon.com's Spring Travel Guide Second Edition

Helping You Get *Even More* Out of Your Grand Canyon Vacation!



Thank you for choosing [Grand Canyon.com](http://GrandCanyon.com) as your Southwest destination specialist! You've chosen a truly extraordinary place for your spring vacation, and our mission is to help you get the most out of your trip. Having helped thousands of busy people like you plan their Grand Canyon vacations for over 20 years, our staff has made a few observations and picked up a few **insider tips** that can help save you time, money and hassle - sometimes all three at once! It was to that end that we presented our **First Annual Spring Break Travel Guide** in February.

Since then, peoples' response has been nothing short of overwhelming. But with spring break extending well into April this year, we realized that a few things needed updating in order for *you* to be as well informed as possible before hitting the road. It is to *that* end that we present:

Grand Canyon.com's First Annual Spring Travel Guide:
The Second Edition

Before you dig in, we recommend that you grab a few things: a map or road atlas, a pen and/or a highlighter, maybe a beverage, a few minutes of quiet time, and your

[“Grand Canyon Top Tours Brochure.”](#)

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

**Got most of your trip figured out already? Skip to Chapter 8*

Traveler Tip 1 - Where’s It At and What Side Am I On?

The Grand Canyon is in Northern Arizona. Grand Canyon’s North Rim is closed until mid-May, so our discussion will focus on the South Rim, and Grand Canyon West.

Traveler Tip 2 – How Do I Find it On a Map?

Your [Grand Canyon Top Tours Brochure](#) has one. If using MapQuest, Yahoo!, or similar program, use Zip Code “86023,” or Airport Locator Code “GCN.”

Traveler Tip 3 - How Do I Get to the Grand Canyon?

FLYING:

Most park visitors opt to fly into one of two metropolitan airports located within half a day’s drive of the park: Las Vegas, Nevada (LAS), 280 miles from the South Rim, average drive time 5 hours; or Phoenix, Arizona (PHX), 240 miles from the South Rim, average drive time 4.5 hours. Car rentals are available at both of these airports.

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; Page, Arizona (PGA), served by United Airlines/Great Lakes Airlines out of Phoenix, 140 miles from the South Rim, average drive time 2.5 hours. These airports also offer car rentals. For availability and pricing of flights and car rentals in each of these cities, call **(800) 916-8530**. Grand Canyon National Park Airport (GCN), primarily a sightseeing airport, is served by [Scenic Airlines](#) out of Las Vegas. Located in Tusayan, 1 mile South of the park entrance, drive time 10 minutes. No car rentals offered, but taxi service is available on an on-call basis.

DRIVING:

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: 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. **In bad weather, take Interstate 40 from Flagstaff West to Williams; in Williams, take Highway 64 North to the Grand Canyon.* Average drive time: 4.5 hours

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



From Flagstaff, Arizona: *If the weather is good* take Highway 180 30 miles Northeast to Valle; From Valle, take Highway 64 25 miles North to Grand Canyon Village. *If the weather is bad:* take Interstate 40 to Williams, Arizona; from Williams, take Highway 64 55 miles North to Grand Canyon Village. Average drive time: 1.5 hours.

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.

Need a door-to-door itinerary customized just for you? Call GrandCanyon.com at (866) 944-7263 or e-mail info@grandcanyon.com

BY TRAIN:



From Williams, Arizona: get to the Grand Canyon 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. Consult your [Grand Canyon Top Tours Brochure](#), or call GrandCanyon.com for booking information at (866) 944-7263.

BY BUS:

Day bus tours to the Grand Canyon are available from Las Vegas, Phoenix, Flagstaff, or Sedona. For more information on these, contact GrandCanyon.com at (866) 944-7263. Scheduled bus service is available from Phoenix or Flagstaff.



Traveler Tip 4 - Where Do I Stay?



If you haven't booked your hotel room yet, chances are slim that you'll be able to find accommodations in the immediate vicinity of the park. In-park lodging is typically booked 8 months to a year in advance for major holiday periods, and most hotels in Tusayan, Arizona (10 minutes from the South Rim) are sold out through mid-April.

If unable to [secure lodging in Tusayan](#), your next best options will be Williams, Arizona, 60 miles South of the park, Flagstaff, Arizona,

85 miles Southeast of the canyon, or Page/Lake Powell, Arizona, 140 miles Northeast of the park. For more information on hotels in these areas, contact Grand Canyon.com, or call (800) 780-5733 and punch in discount code #133162.

Traveler Tip 5 - How About Camping or RV Parks?

Before you commit to camping, remember, nights are still cold up here! Average lows are still in the 30's, and sometimes the 20's. Advance reservations are also recommended for campgrounds and RV Parks. Trailer and tent sites are offered at Trailer Village inside the park, which is administered by the in-park concessionaire, Xanterra Parks & Resorts (www.grandcanyonlodges.com), who can be reached at (888) 297-2757. In-park camping is also offered at Mather Campground. Reservations can be made at (800) 365-2267. The gateway communities of Williams and Flagstaff also have many fine RV Parks and Campgrounds. For more information, visit www.rvpark.com/ariz.htm or www.azrvparks.com

Traveler Tip 6 - How Long Should I Stay?



For most of families, two or three days will be plenty. If you have more time to spend, we can tell you how best to use it, whether you have a day, a weekend, a week, or more. You 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 your "home base" for

exploring the area. If you have a week to spend, *pay special attention to Traveler Tip 15.*

Traveler Tip 7 - Do I Have to Pay to Visit Grand Canyon?

Yes, Grand Canyon National Park is a Federal Fee Area. Effective May 1st, National Park Entrance Fees will rise from \$20 per vehicle to \$25 per vehicle. Persons entering the park by bicycle, foot, motorcycle, bus, train or other type of commercial vehicle must pay a fee of

\$10 per person. Your entrance fee is good for 7 days, so be sure to keep your receipt with you each time you exit and re-enter the park. **Time-saving tips:** Avoid long lines at the park by getting there early, or prepay your park entrance fee *before you get there* at one of two National Park Fee 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 allows you to pass through the Express Lane when entering the park. **Are you visiting more than one National Park on your vacation?** Read Traveler Tip 15 or visit www.nationalparks.org to learn more about the National Park Pass.

Traveler Tip 8 - Can I Drive My Car in the Park?

Yes, with a couple of exceptions: the West Rim/Hermit's Rest Road is closed to private vehicles, as is Yaki Point on the East Rim/Desert View Road. Complimentary shuttle service is offered to these viewpoints, as well to the various hotels, restaurants and gift shops in the Grand Canyon Village area. It is *highly recommended* that you use the shuttle service whenever possible.

Parking spaces inside the park are at a premium. Shuttles pick up the various stops approximately every 10 minutes from sunrise to sunset. Check your information packet that you receive at the park gates for exact schedules. The East Rim/Desert View Road is open to private vehicles year-round.



Traveler Tip 9 - Where Else Should I Go?






When you enter the park, you will be given a map and schedule of activities by the staff at the entrance gate. Drive North about 5 miles and you'll get your first view of the Canyon from Mather Point. Here, you should also take the opportunity to visit the Information Plaza just across the street. Yavapai Point is 1 mile West of Mather Point. At press time, the Yavapai Observation Station and Geology Museum is closed for renovations. Another mile West of Yavapai Point is the Grand Canyon Village's business center, where you'll find a National Park Service Visitors' Center, a bank, post office and general store, Yavapai Lodge, and two campgrounds nearby. 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 through along the Canyon Rim. Along the way, you can explore 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.

Traveler Tip 10 - How's the Weather?

Early spring can be one of our favorite times of year at the Grand Canyon, with crisp days perfect for a brisk walk along the rim. Average daytime highs are between 55-65° F, with nighttime lows still dipping down into the 20's and 30's (F). Afternoons are typically breezy and cool. But even though the calendar says it's spring, wintry weather is known to resurface as late as May. At press time of the second edition of this guide (April 2006), the area has experienced a few late season storms. Pack a jacket, and a few pieces of warmer clothing along with your regular spring travel gear, just in case. A rain poncho is also not a bad idea. Temperatures drop quickly after the sun sets, so do carry that jacket and maybe gloves for that sunset stroll on the canyon rim.

Check the weather as your trip date gets closer, either on your favorite weather website using the zip code 86023, or [check Grand Canyon.com's weather](#) page for up-to-the-minute conditions and weekly forecasts.

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		
Mostly Sunny	Mostly Sunny	Sunny
H 47 / L 9	H 51 / L 14	H 56 / L 14

Traveler Tip 11 – Will My Cell Phone Work in the Park?

Don't count on it. The primary providers in the Grand Canyon area are Alltel and Verizon, but even their subscribers report occasional inconsistencies with their service. If you need to have a phone number for family or work to get ahold of you, your best bet is to provide your hotel phone numbers. Contact Grand Canyon.com for assistance at (866) 944-7263.

Traveler Tip 12 - So, How About Those Mule Rides?



Grand Canyon Mule Rides are extremely popular and typically sold out 9 months to a year in advance. [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 Day Float Trip](#)," "[Canyon River Adventure](#)," the "Colorado River Journey," and the "Grand Voyager Tour" from Las Vegas.

If you'd like to try your luck with the Mule Rides, you must call the in-park concessionaire Xanterra Parks & Resorts at 888/297-2757. *Before you make that call, however, you should know that there are physical requirements that all mule riders must meet - **no exceptions**.* They are: 1. No rider may weigh more than 200 pounds fully dressed (ALL riders are weighed, and if you weigh 201, you will not ride); 2. All riders must be 4'7" tall (children are measured if necessary); 3. All riders must speak and understand fluent English (if in doubt, they check you out); and 4. No pregnant women. The trip is also not recommended for those with back, hip or knee problems, fear of heights or large animals.

Traveler Tip 13 - Are Rafting Trips Available?



Yes, a variety of them. GrandCanyon.com arranges one day smooth water and white water trips. Children must be at least 8 to take part in a white water trip; smooth water trips can be enjoyed by those ages 5 and up. Most rafting trips start running on March 15th. Consult your [Grand Canyon Top Tours Brochure](#), or call GrandCanyon.com at (866) 944-7263 for more information. If you're going to be here before the 15th, one-day trips are offered out of the Las Vegas area and at Grand Canyon West (smooth water only). Check your [Grand Canyon Top Tours Brochure](#) for the "Black Canyon Adventure," the "Grand Voyager Tour," or the "Rim to River Expedition."

Traveler Tip 14 - What Else is There to Do?

The National Park Service offers a variety of quality programs, like the world-famous "Junior Ranger" Program. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/grca. Consult your [Grand Canyon Top Tours Brochure](#) or call (866) 944-7263 for suggestions on day hikes, [airplane tours](#), [helicopter tours](#), [jeep tours](#) and more. In Tusayan, just outside the park, visit the National Geographic Visitors' Center. While you're there, be sure to check out the spectacular IMAX Movie "Grand Canyon: The Hidden Secrets." *Ask how GrandCanyon.com can get you preferred IMAX tickets!* Call (866) 944-7263.



Traveler Tip 15 - Do I Need a Permit to Hike the Canyon?

If you'd just like to take a day hike, then no, a permit is not required. **You still need to do your homework and know your limitations.** 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 OPENLY AND STRONGLY DISCOURAGED AT ALL TIMES!** If you're with small children or the elderly, 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. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/grca Backcountry



camping permits or Reservations at Phantom Ranch are required for anyone hiking overnight in the Canyon. Here again, *if you don't have reservations by now, you're unlikely to be able to get them.*

Traveler Tip 16 - 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, Paria Canyon Wilderness. The possibilities are too numerous to do justice to here! Give us a call at (866) 944-7263 and we'll happily help you coordinate a vacation that's relaxing, rewarding and fun. GrandCanyon.com is also a member of the Grand Circle Association, another excellent source for information about travel destinations around the Grand Canyon area. To order their free travel guide, visit www.grandcircle.org

Traveler Tip 17 - Should I Get a National Park Pass?



If you're spending a week here, or visiting more than one National Park on your vacation, a National Park Pass is definitely a good investment, and a great deal. For \$50, you and everybody who rides in your vehicle are granted access to all National Parks, Monuments and Federal Fee Areas in the United States for one year (except Indian Tribal Parks). Visitors 62 or older qualify for a Golden Age Passport, which grants you lifetime access to all National Parks for a one-time fee of \$10. **Time-saving tip:** Purchase your National Park Pass before you hit the road at www.nationalparks.org or call 1-888-Go-Parks. Golden Age Passports must be purchased in person. If you are

disabled, ask about the Golden Access Passport.

Traveler Tip 18 - Any Good Restaurants in the Area?



Tons! The El Tovar Hotel Dining Room is probably the area's most famous, featuring a palate-pleasing mix of Southwestern and Continental cuisine. Reservations are recommended for dinner call (928) 638-2631 and breakfast and lunch are also served. The Arizona Steakhouse is another excellent choice for dinner, located at Bright Angel Lodge. Bright Angel Lodge also features a family-style restaurant serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. Maswik and Yavapai Lodges offer cafeteria-style eateries. **Insider tip:** If you're going to any of these restaurants for lunch, get there before noon. That is when the Grand Canyon Railway arrives, dropping off

hundreds of visitors to compete for those few tables. You'll also find many excellent establishments 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. The Quality Inn's Atrium restaurant 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 specialty of the house 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." If you're staying in Flagstaff, Williams, Page or Sedona, you have many choices of both chain and independent restaurants. Check the local newspapers or radio stations, or your hotel front desk for recommendations.

Traveler Tip 19 – We Want to Play in the Water!

If spring break just isn't spring break without making a splash, consider making Lake Powell your "base camp" for exploring Northern Arizona and Southern Utah. Located near the Arizona/Utah border, Lake Powell and the Glen Canyon National Recreation area boast stunning scenery, fun activities and lots of water! The South Rim of the Grand Canyon is an easy 2.5 hour drive from Lake Powell, making it a 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 area include rafting, safari-style slot canyon tours, hiking, scenic flights, and fishing, which is expected to be superb this year. 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. For Lake Powell water temperatures and fishing information, visit [www.wayneswords.com](#)



Traveler Tip 20 – How are Gas Prices Out There?

At press time (April 2006), Arizona gas prices ranged from \$2.41 a gallon to \$2.89 a gallon. In Utah, they range from \$2.12 a gallon to \$2.55 a gallon. **Insider tip:** It can be a long way between gas stations, so fill 'er up when you get the chance. Also, the best gas prices are not necessarily where you'd expect to find them. Some good websites to check out are [www.arizonagasprices.com](#), [www.utahgasprices.com](#) and [www.gasbuddy.com](#)

Traveler Tip 21 – Are Any Events or Festivals Going On?

Yes, lots. You can ponder ancient rock art or listen to classical music in Sedona; vote for the next Miss Route 66 in Williams; play some golf for a good cause in Page; or lend a hand with Canyon conservation projects in Flagstaff. If you'll be here over Easter Sunday, there will be special sunrise services all throughout the state. Visit www.arizonaguide.com for a full calendar of events across the state, or check the local newspapers and radio stations when you arrive in the area you'll be visiting.

Traveler Tip 22 – What is “Grand Canyon West?”

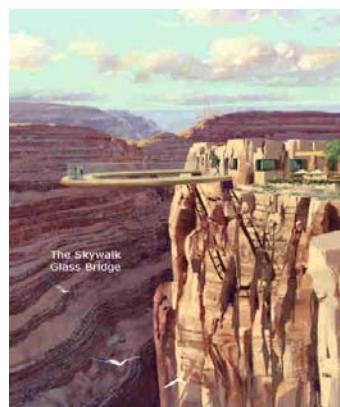


Grand Canyon West (also known as the “West Rim”) is another developed area of the Grand Canyon located on the Hualapai Indian Reservation just North of Peach Springs, Arizona. If you have limited time for a Grand Canyon trip, and you're going to be passing through Las Vegas, Phoenix or Sedona, a trip to Grand Canyon West may be just what you're looking for. Grand Canyon West offers opportunities like helicopter trips to the canyon floor, 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 some suggestions. Or, mark your calendar for this summer and the opening of the incredible Grand Canyon Skywalk!

Traveler Tip 23 – Grand Canyon Skywalk? What's That?

The Grand Canyon Skywalk is an amazing attraction slated to open at year's end at Grand Canyon West. This glass-bottomed horseshoe-shaped walkway will jut seventy feet out from the lip of the canyon, which means that you'll feel like you're floating 4,000 feet in the air above the Colorado River! It will also have a café and gift shop attached to it. Even though the Skywalk won't be ready for you on this trip, Grand Canyon West still warrants consideration as an expeditious and exciting alternative to the South Rim. Especially if you're in Las Vegas, Phoenix, or Sedona, your time is at a premium, but you know you've come too far not to see it.



Traveler Tip 24 – What Time Is It Out There?

Arizona is on Mountain Standard Time year-round. That means that when the rest of the country “springs forward,” we don’t (exception: the Navajo Indian Reservation). Therefore, when Daylight Savings time takes effect, the Grand Canyon is on the same time as Nevada, but is one hour behind Colorado and Utah.

Traveler Tip 25 – Last Word/First Word



SAFETY FIRST – ALWAYS! We don’t want to hear about your trip being ruined by an accident or other mishap. Here are a few last tips culled from years of 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. 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. Avoid stopping suddenly in the middle of the road. 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.

2. Do a “reality check” on all roads you plan to travel. Make sure the route you want to take is open and passable, even if you’ve mapped your trip on the internet. Several inaccuracies about local roads still persist on some mapping sites. Many roadways depicted on area maps are actually unpaved, and flash flooding can wash them out. These roads are often rough, which means you might want to think twice about taking your rental car down some of them (unless it’s a 4WD). *When in doubt, check it out.* Inquire at your hotel front desk, or check road conditions at www.az511.com

3. Remember the altitude. Grand Canyon’s South Rim is 6,000’ above sea level. Acclimation takes about two weeks for a healthy person. Those with heart or lung problems should exercise care when visiting the Grand Canyon. Know your limitations and don’t overdo it. If you’re hiking in the canyon and need to take a break, TAKE A BREAK!



4. 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.

5. Never forget that you're STILL in the desert. Don't let pleasant temperatures or even a little rain or snow fool you. Conditions here are probably much drier than you're used to. Take care not to become dehydrated, especially when hiking. Carry water and drink it. Protect yourself from the sun. Wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen. Moisturize often.

Extreme weather dangers: **Flash floods** can occur even when you can't see a cloud in the sky! Check weather before venturing into slot canyons. NEVER try to drive across a flooded roadway. Some parts of this area can also be 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. For more information, visit the Arizona Department of Public Safety's website at www.azdps.gov



6. Don't feed the wildlife. Deer, elk, squirrels and other animals may look perfectly tame, but they're not. Animals and birds who become accustomed to human handouts lose their ability to fend for themselves, and can become aggressive when food runs out. Remember, this is a National Park where hunting is prohibited, as is throwing objects at animals or birds. Also, deer and elk are notoriously nocturnal and can dart into an oncoming traffic suddenly. Be especially vigilant when driving at night.

7. **BE CAREFUL WITH FIRE!** 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, and no teak surfing! Be aware of the dangers of carbon monoxide when boating (for more information, visit www.cdc.gov).

Thank you for reading the Second Edition of GrandCanyon.com's First Annual Spring Travel Guide

We hope this guide has helped you plan an awesome Spring vacation. We look forward to publishing this and other special holiday and seasonal guides annually. We welcome and encourage your comments, suggestions and questions. Please contact us at GrandCanyon.com or by calling (866) 944-7263 [Toll Free in the US] or International Toll, (928) 645-6845, or e-mail info@grandcanyon.com



Thanks Again and Happy Travels!

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