

Directions: Grand Canyon to Las Vegas via Monument Valley; Page; Bryce Canyon and Zion National Park

When you leave the Grand Canyon headed to Bryce Canyon there are many places you will want to consider stopping along the way. First are the viewpoints as you head out on Highway 64 headed to the East Exit of the park. The main viewpoints with wonderful views are: Grand View Point, Moran Point, Lipan Point and Navajo Point. Then you will want to stop at the “Watchtower”, a grand stone tower at the east exit which you can climb up 30 feet to the top of for one final spectacular view before departing the park. Please watch the speed limit, which is 45 MPH along most of Highway 64.

Just after leaving the park after about 15 to 20 minutes you will see a sign that says “**Little Colorado Scenic View**”; it is beautiful. Usually you will find Native American Artists there also and they are usually willing to negotiate about 25% off the asking price for the art. Continuing on 89 North you will come to Cameron. The **Cameron Trading Post** is one of the oldest trading posts still operating. Established when the common ground of culture, art, and community met and flourished. Today it includes a US Post Office, wonderful museum of Indian Art from the region, a good restaurant (the Navajo Taco – order a small one for 2- is a specialty) and it is operated by knowledgeable staff that can enhance your understanding of the Native American culture. They also have excellent lodging at reasonable rates. www.camerontradingpost.com. Continue on AZ Highway 89 North to AZ Highway 160 North. You will shortly enter Tuba City. There is an interesting museum in Tuba City dedicated to the “Code Breakers”, a group of Native Americans that were part of a special task force in World War 2. On Fridays stop for the “Flea Market”. You will find excellent prices on Native American Art. It is a lot of fun

Continuing on AZ Highway 160 North you will come to the intersection for AZ 163 North which will take you into Kayenta, which has most of the lodging for Monument Valley. The entrance to Monument Valley is about 25 miles North in Utah. Monument Valley is part of the Navajo Nation and you will pay approximately \$10.00 for your automobile for admission. Where you enter you will see **Gouldings Lodge** on the other side of the road. It is where John Wayne and most of the “Drug Store Cowboys” stayed when making movies. They have an excellent museum (free) and the food and accommodations are the best value and of the best quality in the area. Take a look at www.gouldingslodge.com. They also offer tours of Monument Valley and my favorite, horseback riding. If you want to do a horseback ride on this trip, this is the place to do it!

Heading on to Page you will want to make a stop at **Horseshoe Bend Lookout**. It is not easy to find, but it is a jewel. There is no signage from the south. You will come to a sign that says “Welcome to Page”. Just a few minutes past this sign you will see a dirt road on the left side of the road. This is the road you want. You will find a parking lot and a path leading you to Horseshoe Bend Lookout. It is roughly 1.5 miles round trip by foot. There is a gentle slope. There is no shade so use your sun screen and always carry water. If you come to a right turn that says highway 98 you will have passed the turn you need to take for this hidden Gem!! If you have a morning in Page, Antelope Canyon is breathtaking. The best time to go is around 9:30AM to 11:30AM as it is all about the sunlight as you walk through this treasure. Dining in Page is somewhat limited. For breakfast you might want to try the **Ranch House Grill**; for lunch the Fiesta Mexicana or Dambar & Grill, or just for dinner, **Ken’s Old West** is your best choice. Locals frequent the Windy Mesa, a casual lounge with pool and occasional music on weekends. There is also the Gunsmoke Salon with entertainment on most weekends. For accommodations there is a wide selection to choose from. The Best Western is a good property at reasonable rates (928) 645-2466 and for the budget minded there is a Motel 6 (928) 645-5888. **Antelope Canyon** is just a short distance from downtown Page. This is a spectacular Canyon, carved out of limestone provides a very unusual experience. You will walk through majestic walls of sculpted rock as the sun provides dramatic views in every direction. We suggest you use Antelope Canyon Tours; you will find them at tours@antelopocanyon.com. If you are interested in a tour on Lake Powell take a look at; www.lakepowell.com.

Heading to Bryce you are in for a real treat. Take UT Highway 191 north to Interstate 70 west. In less than an hour you will come to UT Highway 72 South and from there you want to get on to UT highway 12 South at Torrey. You will now be going through the Grand Staircase. It is a very beautiful drive. Highway 12 will bring you into UT highway 89 just south of Panguitch, which provides a variety of lodging alternatives to Bryce Canyon at greatly reduced prices. The drive from Panguitch to Bryce is about 30 to 45 minutes. You will take UT 89 to UT 12 into Bryce. There are two very beautiful trails for seeing Bryce Canyon. **Navajo Loop Trail** begins at Sunset Point and travels down into the main amphitheater. This is one of the more popular trails and extra caution is advised. The Navajo Loop is 1.3 miles (2.16 KM) and takes visitors to **Two Bridges, Thors Hammer** and **Wall Street**. This is one of the few "slot" canyons in Bryce Canyon and is considered a moderate hike. This may also be combined with the Queens Garden Trail, which will create a second loop. **Queens Garden Trail** is 2.7 miles for a combined 4 miles for the Navajo Loop Trail and Queens Garden Trail. Inquire upon arrival as to the condition of trails. One very special program offered by the park service at Bryce is the "**Night Sky Program**". They have some high powered telescopes and the rangers present a wonderful program for all ages. Visit the park official web site for more information. www.gov/brca/. Take a look at all the programs. We like the **Bryce Canyon Pines** Motel for lodging and dining. www.brycecanyonmotel.com and for a complete list of accommodations you can find them at www.utah.com. There is horseback riding and some guided tours available at Bryce Canyon. If you would like to experience an "Old West" theme dinner theater you will find it available at Ruby's Inn. It is called Ebenezer's and is open seasonally with dinner at 7:00PM and the show starting at 8:00PM.

Zion is about 2 hour's drive from Bryce taking UT 89 South to UT 9 west. A beautiful little town, Springdale, is surrounded by Zion National Park. Springdale has several nice motels and a couple of good places to eat. The Best Western Zion Park Inn is beautiful and well appointed; www.zionparkinn.com and the Desert Pearl Inn is very nice (435) 772-888. For breakfast or lunch try the **Spotted Dog** or **Café Soleil** and for dinner either the **Bit** and **Spur** or Oscars are very good. One of my favorite hikes in all the National Parks is the **Riverside Walk** in Zion. It is very unique and not to be missed. The trail actually crosses the river if you follow it to the end in a section called **The Narrows**. You can rent water shoes as well as dry suits (if the river is high) for crossing the river. Zion is a very beautiful park. Plan to take several hours to explore it. From Zion you will head to Interstate 15 South and will be approximately 2 ½ hour's drive to Las Vegas. If you have a little extra time drive around St. George and surrounding areas are very beautiful. Zion also has some guided tours available. www.zionadventures.com has it all! For complete information on Zion go to www.gov/zion/. The drive from Zion to Las Vegas is approximately 2 ½ to 3 hours depending on traffic. If you have not booked a room I would go to Expedia.com. Please note that Saturday nights in Las Vegas are very busy year round and if you plan to arrive on a Saturday make a reservation. A few thoughts on Las Vegas are as follows: Most tourists want to stay on the "Strip" which is world famous for the excitement of the night life and driving up and down the strip at night is an exciting experience. Just like any big city it is **important** to stay on the main streets in the evening when walking around. If you plan to go to a show there are a couple of web sites that offer discount show prices. If you are planning ahead, go to www.goldstar.com. If there is a special show you want to see, you may want to book it in advance as some of the more popular shows do sell out, especially on weekends. For discount tickets upon arrival in Las Vegas give www.tix4tonight.com a try. They have locations around town. If you are going to be in Las Vegas for a few nights, you might want to go downtown in the evening and see the "**Freemont Street Experience**." It is a light and sound show that travels several city blocks which has been made into a mall.

Please observe all posted speed limits and watch for animals; particularly at night!
Happy Trails,

Comments on your Holiday and/or Pictures are always appreciated; Enjoy the journey!

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