

National Parks of Utah Road Trip

An EPIC Road Trip Designed by Mel Coker

May 8-19, 2019 | 12 Days, 11 Nights



Resources:

www.visitutah.com

[Utah's National Parks - The Mighty 5](#)

<http://www.outdoorproject.com/blog-news/utahs-five-national-parks>

<https://www.outdoorproject.com/blog-news/perfect-7-day-itinerary-zion-and-bryce-canyon-national-parks>

<https://www.outdoorproject.com/blog-news/perfect-7-day-itinerary-capitol-reef-arches-and-canyonlands>

<https://www.outdoorproject.com/blog-news/photographers-itinerary-utahs-national-parks>

*** Canyonlands and Capitol Reef National Parks are designated as International Dark Sky Parks**

Day	City/Town	Destination / Activity	Time	Description	Cost Per Couple
1 - May 8		Fly to Salt Lake City (roundtrip)	6:15 AM	leave CAE 6:15 am; arrive SLC 1:12 pm	889
Wednesday		Rental Car (BOOKED 1/13) Hyundai Santa Fe	2:00 PM	Costco/Alamo rental - shared cost	285
		Zion National Park (85/53 degrees)		Earth Trekkers 10 Great Hikes	
		Websites:		Joe's Guide to Zion	
	Zion NP	Zion National Park Kolob Canyons Visitor Center	6:00 - 6:15	275 miles / 4 hours	
		Scenic Rd to Kolob Viewpoint / Timber Creek Trail	6:30 - 7:15	Kolob Canyon Scenic Rd; 1 mile RT trail	
		Taylor Creek Trail (Kolob Canyons Rd) Optional	3.5 hrs total	5 miles RT; hike part way - app. 1 mile???	
HOTEL	La Verkin	La Quinta Inn & Suites La Verkin - Gateway to Zion	8:00 p.m.	Free breakfast; buy snacks and water!	112
	La Verkin	River Rock Roasting Company - 1.4 miles away	8:20 p.m.	Closes at 9:00 - pizza, sandwiches, beers, coffee	
2 - May 9	Zion NP	Visit Zion National Park		leave La Quinta by 7:35 a.m.	
Thursday		Visitor Center / Zion Shuttle	8:15 - 9:15		
		Court of the Patriarchs	9:30 - 10:00	2 minutes to viewpoint	
		Zion Lodge / Emerald Pools Trail to Middle Pools	10:30 - Noon	2 miles RT	
		Weeping Rock / Weeping Rock Trail	12:30 - 1:00	15 min. walk	
		Temple of Sinawava Stop / Riverside Walk	1:30 - 3:00	2 miles RT; 1 1/2 hrs - then hotel checkin	
HOTEL	Springdale	Desert Pearl Inn (FOR 2 NIGHTS - MAY 9 & 10)	3:30 pm	King riverside; pool/hot tub; guest laundry	590
	Springdale	<i>Recommendations for dining: Oscar's Café (.3 mi); Bit & Spur Restaurant & Saloon (.7 mi); Also King's Landing or Blondie's Diner or Whiptail Grill</i>			
3 - May 10	Zion NP	OPTIONAL: 5:30 a.m. Pre-dawn drive for sunrise pics with short hike on Canyon Overlook Trail - first light hitting the East Temple			

Friday	The Grotto / Angel's Landing Trail (walk part way) Or, Observation Point : take plenty of water/snacks/binocular Big Bend Shuttle Stop / Pool time at hotel / Early Dinner Canyon Junction Bridge shuttle or walk from visitor center	8:15 - 12:30 12:45 - 1:45 7:45 - 8:45 pm	Iconic trail; 5 mi. RT (4 hrs); sheer dropoffs START EARLY! (5 hours) Great White Throne Viewpoint Dinner - 6:15 ? View of Watchmen for sunset - 8:28 pm	
4 - May 11	Springdale Leave Desert Pearl Inn	8:15 a.m.	Just coffee... and we will have early lunch	
Saturday	Zion NP Canyon Overlook Trail Zion NP Checkerboard Mesa Viewpoint Hatch Hoodoo Hideout Cafe or Outlaw Saloon- Hwy 89 Bryce Canyon National Park (64/33 degrees) Websites: BryceCanyon.com Fairyland Point Vista Bryce Canyon Visitor Center Drive UT 63 to end at Rainbow Point Yovimpa Point Vista & Rainbow Point Vista Hike: Bristlecone Loop Trail - 1 mile RT Vistas: Black Birch Canyon (2.1 m); Ponderosa Canyon (.9 m); Agua Canyon (1.1 m); Natural Bridge (1.5 m) Back to Hotel	8:30 - 9:30 9:45 - 10:00 11:15 - Noon 12:45 - 1:15 1:45 - 2:20 3:15 -4:00 4:15 - 5:00 6:30 pm	On the way out of Zion; 1 mile RT (1 hr) Lunch! (Bob & Connie at Hoodoo Hideout) NPS Virtual Tour The Greatest Road Trip - Bryce Canyon Great first view of Hoodoos ** 17 miles - NO stops; stop at vistas on the return (right side)	
HOTEL	Bryson Canyon City Best Western Grand Hotel - 2 nights, May 11/12		Free Breakfast; King Room; 3 miles to visitor center	446
5 - May 12	Bryce NP Sunrise Pt for Sunrise pics - optional - Mel does it! Breakfast Hike: Navajo Loop>Queens Garden>Rim Trail Inspiration Point Overlook Paria View Overlook Bryce Point Overlook / Hat Shop Trail Ebenezer's Barn & Grill	5:45 - 6:45 7:00 - 7:45 8:45 - 11:00 11:15 - Noon Noon - 12:30 12:30 - 3:00 6:45 - 9:30	leave hotel by 5:45 - 4 miles / 10 minutes Start at Sunset Point - 2.8 miles total 4 miles RT to Hat Shop / Take lunch for trail Cowboy Music Dinner Show	75
6 - May 13	Leave Bryce Canyon NP Bryce Canyon to Page, AZ to Mexican Hat, UT Utah State Line Sign Time change -- Now 8:00 a.m. in Arizona	leave 6:30 am <u>8:50 - 9:00</u> ***	EARLY Depature! Coffee and snacks in the car. Quick Picture at State Line on US Hwy 89 (141 miles) Must be at Glen Canyon NRA by 8:10 for 8:30 tour	

	Page, AZ	Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (& Dam)	8:00 - 9:30	Dam tour lasts 45 minutes - 8:30 - 9:15	10
	Page, AZ	Glen Canyon Dam Overlook	9:45 - 10:00	Great pictures here	
	Page, AZ	Horseshoe Bend - 4200 ft. elevation	10:15 - 11:00	2/3 mile walk from parking lot; incredible views	
	Page, AZ	Lunch at Sonic in Page	11:00 - 11:30	Tight schedule - eat quickly! (2 hrs to Monument Valley)	
		AZ/Utah State Line - Welcome to Utah Sign	1:45		
		Time change -- Now 2:45 pm in Utah / Navajo	2:45	Best pics in AM in Monument Valley, but...	
	AZ / UT	Oljato-Monument Valley - fee \$20 per car	3:00 - 6:15	Monument Valley Guide by EarthTrekks	10
	AZ / UT	Monument Valley Navajo Spirit Tours	3:00 - 6:15	Meet at Hogans in Tribal Park at 2:45	160
		Forest Gump Point - MM Marker 13 Hwy 163	6:30 - 6:45	Picture at iconic spot	
HOTEL	Mexican Hat	Hat Rock Inn	7:00 p.m.	Swingin' Steak or Hat Rock Café for dinner	150
7 - May 14		Sunrise pics over Monument Valley	6:00 a.m.	Link for photography / 8 mi to Forest Gump Pt	
Tuesday		Leave Mexican Hat	7:30		
		Drive to Mexican Hat Road (#2161) - 2 miles away	7:35 - 8:00	Unmarked trail around Mexican Hat	
		Valley of the Gods Road Overlook - OPTIONAL	8:05 - 8:30	1/3 mile down a dirt road; 5.5 miles from Mexican Hat Rock Rd	
		Wilson Arch (Hwy 191); Hole N The Rock	10:15 - 10:45	Optional	
		Lunch in Moab ?	11:00 - 11:50		
		Arches National Park (82/52 degrees)			
	Websites:	The Greatest Road Trip - Arches	The Arches >>>	10 Amazing Hikes in Arches National Park	
	Arches NP	Arches National Park Visitor Center	Noon - 12:45	Earth Trekkers Best Things in Arches NP	
		Park Avenue Trail	1:00 - 2:00	2 mile RT;	
		La SaL Mountains Viewpoint	2:10 - 2:20		
		Balanced Rock	2:30 - 3:00	1/2 mile RT	
		Windows Loop Trail	3:00 - 4:00	1 mile loop	
		Double Arch Trail	4:10 - 4:45	6/10 mile RT	
		Panorama Point Viewpoint	5:00- 5:15		
		Upper Delicate Arch Viewpoint (Optional)		1 mile roundtrip	
		Hike Skyline Arch OR Landscape Arch (OPTIONAL)	5:30 - 6:00	4/10 mile RT	
		Devil's Garden Trailhead / Landscape Arch (best)	5:30 - 6:30	1.6 mile RT; 309 ft. is longest arch!	
				** Snacks/sandwiches for lunch tomorrow **	
May 14-16	HOTEL	Red Cliffs Lodge (3 NIGHTS BOOKED)	6:45 - 7:15	Shared Queen Cabin	586
	HOTEL	1 cabin for all of us - booked; paid one night	<i>Cowboy Grill</i> >	Breakfast & Lunch Buffets & Dinner (reservation)	
	@Red Cliffs	Moab Castle Creek Winery (11-6) / Moab Museum of Film & Western Heritage / The Cowboy Grill			
		Places to eat: The Cowboy Grill, The Sunset Grill (read about Charles Steen), The Atomic Grill & Lounge			

8 - May 15

Wednesday

Leave hotel for Canyonlands National Park
[Canyonlands National Park \(78/48 degrees\)](#)

7:15 AM 7:15 or earlier (maybe 6:15)? 1 hour to Mesa Arch trailhead

[Earth Trekkers One Day in Canyonlands](#)

Websites: [The Greatest Road Trip - Canyonlands](#)

[Earth Trekkers Best in Canyonlands](#)

Canyonlands Mesa Arch trail

8:15 - 9:30 1/2 mile RT; best at or just after sunrise (6:08 am)

Grand View Point Overlook

9:45 - 10:00

OPTIONAL Grand View Point Trail - 2 miles RT / 1 hour

IF days starts earlier than 7:15 departure, do this!

Orange Cliffs Overlook

10:05 - 10:15

White Rim Overlook Trail

10:20 - 11:30 1.8 mi RT; great views

LUNCH stop (pack lunch previous day!)

11:35 - 12:15 Picnic shelters at White Rim

Buck Canyon Overlook

12:20 - 12:35

Candlestick Tower Overlook

Noon - 12:10 Small turnoff (no sign)

Green River Overlook

12:30 - 1:00 Green River views

Upheaval Dome Trail

1:15 - 2:30 Hike to 2nd Viewpoint - 1.8 miles RT

Whale Rock Trail

2:35 - 3:10 1 mile RT

Shafer Canyon Viewpoint

3:30 - 4:00

Visitor Center - Island in the Sky

4:05 - 4:45 Viewpoint here across the street is great

False Kiva (closed ?)

www.gjhikes.com/2014/02/false-kiva.html

Return: Red Cliffs Lodge for winery, museum , dinner

5:45

9 - May 16

Thursday

Arches NP [Delicate Arch - leave at 4:45 am !!! \(50 min. drive\)](#)

5:30 - 7:45 3 miles RT / 2 hrs; fairly difficult; Spectacular arch!

If everyone does not go to Delicate Arch; 45 minutes back to Red Cliffs Lodge; back at 8:30

Dead Horse Pt [Dead Horse Point State Park / Visitor Center / Hike](#)

9:30 - Noon **leave Red Cliffs Lodge at 8:45 am**

10

HIKE >>> East Rim Trail from Vis. Ctr > DHP > W. Rim Trail > Meander Overlook > Back to NECK > E. Rim Trail to Vis. Ctr. (app. 4 miles)

Moab Moab Lunch/Shopping

1:00 - 4:00

Moab [Moab: Shop/Tom Till Gallery/Mexican Margarita](#)

Moab YouTube Mexican: Miguel's Baja Grill or Fiesta Mexicana or La Hacienda

Moab [Canyonlands by Night & Day - Dinner & Boat Tour](#)

6:30 - 9:45 TAKE JACKET! Back to Red Cliffs Lodge app. 10:15 & PACK!

158

10 - May 17

Friday

Leave Red Cliffs Lodge
[Capitol Reef National Park \(75/48 degrees\)](#)

7:45 a.m.

140 miles from Moab; 2 hrs

Website: [The Greatest Road Trip - Capitol Reef](#)

[The Mandagies: Capitol Reef NP](#)

Capitol Reef Orientation Pullout

9:45 - 10:00 Near east park entrance

Hickman Bridge trail

10:15 - 11:15 2 mile RT; Natural bridge, canyon views

Capitol Reef Visitor Center

11:20 - 11:45

		Gifford House Museum & Store & Pies	11:50 - 12:45	Cherry pie! Snacks for lunch	
		Capitol Reef Scenic Drive - 2 hours RT			
		Cassidy Arch Trail	1:00 - 3:00	3.2 mile round-trip; walk on the arch; named for Butch Cassidy	
		Goosenecks Overlook / Sunset Point Trail	3:30 - 4:30	.8 mile RT; great views late day / sunset	
		Panorama Point (best for sunset)	4:40 - 5:15		
	Torrey	Dinner: Rim Rock Patio OR Broken Spur OR Café Diablo	5:30 - 6:45		
Hotel	Teasdale	<u>Lodge at Red River Ranch</u>	7:00 pm	Anasazi room (Coker); Saratoga room (Vinson)	225
11 - May 18		Drive towards Salt Lake City	8:30 a.m.	leave Red River Ranch	
Saturday	Mapleton	Visit with Scott & Kaori Allen	11:00 - 2:00	Or, Timpanogos Cave National Monument	
	OPTIONS:	Midway/Heber City (5 miles) area: Homestead Crater, Legacy Bridge, Midway Adventure Co Bike Ride			0
HOTEL	Midway	Zermatt Utah Resort & Spa	3:00 p.m.	check-in is 4:00	189
12 - May 19		Leave Hotel	10:15 AM	50 miles / 50 minutes to airport	
Sunday		Turn in Rental Car	11:15 AM		
		Fly to CAE (via Dallas)	2:05 PM	leave SLC 2:05 pm; arrive CAE 9:52 pm	
				Meals estimate	1100
				Gas, airport parking, etc (shared cost)	155
				Total Cost	5150
		Take NPS Senior Pass and binoculars; sunscreen, lip balm, camera bag			
	***	Approximate sunrise and sunset in Utah for May: 6:15 am / 8:25 pm			
		Buy 2 cases of water for the trunk; snacks to include breakfast snacks			
		GREEN = hotel or activity booked			
BEST of the BEST:		Angel's Landing hike; Navajo / Queens Garden hike through hoodoos; Monument Valley tour			
		Delicate Arch sunrise hike; Mesa Arch; Cassidy Arch Trail, Colorado River Boat tour at night			