

USA – GRAND CANYON & THE SOUTHWEST

15-days / 14-nights hotel based guided walking & sightseeing in America's spectacular southwest



See the landscapes and breathtaking scenery of America's southwest in this unforgettable holiday. Visiting some of the USA's most memorable and dramatic national parks, this tour takes you to Utah, Colorado, Nevada and Arizona, the land of movie Westerns, never-ending horizons, unique geological formations, and a fascinating history, dating back over 1400 years to the settlements of mesa-dwelling Native American peoples. Experience the majestic splendour and vastness of the Grand Canyon with visits to the national parks of Zion, Bryce Canyon, Arches, Canyonlands and more. Stay in dramatic locations in or near to the national parks and in the dazzling city of Las Vegas and learn about the history and culture of Native American tribes.

Cost from: **\$13,600** per person twin share Single room supplement on request

Departures: 11 May, 5 October 2024

Includes: 14 nights' accommodation; Meals including 14 breakfasts, 13 lunches, 14 dinners, guided walks led by specialist local guides and tour leader; transport by air-conditioned coach / minibus; sightseeing and entrance fees; tips. Transfers from/to Las Vegas airport at set times are included – ask for details when booking.

Not included: International flights, other meals, drinks, visa or passport fees, personal expenses.

Grading: Walks are 2 to 7 miles (3 to 11km) with up to 2000 feet (600m) of ascent. Some walks follow paved paths, others are on more rocky terrain or slickrock. The weather is typically hot and dry during the day and many walks have very little shade.

Accommodation: 3 to 4-star modern hotels offering spacious rooms with excellent facilities. Most hotels have a pool and some also offer spa or jacuzzi, where you can relax in the evening after the day's walks. Hotels are set amongst magnificent scenery and offer ideal locations for access to the national parks.



Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations

Suggested itinerary:

Day 1: Arrival day

Arrive in Las Vegas. Transfer at a set time from Las Vegas airport (ask for details when booking) or make your own way to our 3-star hotel and casino not far from the world-famous Las Vegas Strip. There is time at leisure to wander under the dazzling neon lights and explore the festive atmosphere of Sin City.

Day 2: Snow Canyon

We travel to Snow Canyon State Park, in Utah, for a loop hike passing by ancient lava flows and slickrock with moqui marbles, small sandstone spheres with iron oxide shells. Later, we learn about the area's prehistory, visiting one of many local sites of fossilised dinosaur footprints. We continue to Zion National Park for two nights.

Day 3: Zion National Park

A full day to explore Zion National Park. We walk the Sand Beach trail alongside the Virgin River, surrounded by cottonwood, piñon and juniper. We ascend the remains of a landslide that occurred thousands of years ago, damming the river and creating a lake. We gain views of Zion's iconic landmarks, including the pink and red sandstone of the Court of Patriarchs and the Sentinel.

Day 4: Zion to Bryce Canyon National Park

An early start this morning to hike the Watchman trail, lined with cactus and hardy desert vegetation, to a lookout point on the slopes of the towering Watchman Spire, for views across the valley below. Afterwards we drive to Bryce Canyon National Park in time for sunset.

Day 5: Bryce Canyon

A full day in the eerie and extraordinary landscapes of Bryce Canyon National Park, where we hike surrounded by 'hoodoos' – pillars of rock sculpted into strange and fantastic shapes. Here we see the forces of wind and rain, frost and snow truly at work, eroding the landscape into these distinctive formations. We walk on the Navajo Loop trail and Peekaboo trail for fantastic views of the hoodoos – keep your eyes open for Queen Victoria!

Day 6: Capitol Reef National Park

A morning drive along scenic Highway 12 past petrified sand dunes to Capitol Reef National Park in the heart of Utah's red rock country. We walk the Grand Wash Trail along a dry riverbed canyon, before veering on to the Cassidy Arch trail. With natural rocks carved like stairs, the route climbs steeply in places, but we are rewarded with a birds-eye view of the arch at the top. Later we head to our hotel in the heart of the park.

Day 7: Capitol Reef to Green River

On our second day of walking in Capitol Reef National Park we view the ancient petroglyphs, some almost 3000 years old, created by Fremont and Ancestral Puebloan people. It's then on to the Hickman Natural Bridge trail for spectacular views over the Fremont River, Fruita, and the mouth of Cohab Canyon below. After, we drive to Green River, where our hotel sits by the town's namesake river, a tributary of the Colorado River.

Day 8: Arches National Park

Arches National Park is a red rock wonderland of over 2000 stone arches, plus a multitude of rock formations including towering pinnacles, sandstone fins, and giant balancing rocks. We walk through the piñon and juniper of Devils Garden to Double O Arch. Later if time permits, we walk to Delicate Arch, the largest free-standing arch in the world, and a symbol of Utah. We head to the outdoor enthusiast's paradise Moab for two nights.



Day 9: Canyonlands National Park

We drive to Canyonlands National Park, to the remote Needles area (named for the sandstone spires which dominate), stopping at Newspaper Rock to view the extensive concentration of Ancient Puebloan petroglyphs. Our walk follows part of the Chesler Park trail, taking in the intense hues of the surrounding rock formations and providing numerous panoramic views of the Needles.

Day 10: Monument Valley

Scenic Highway 163 leads us into breathtaking Monument Valley, with its red sandstone monoliths and buttes made famous by countless Westerns, and we take a Jeep tour exploring this iconic landscape. We drive on to Canyon de Chelly where we stay in the historic, Navajo-owned Thunderbird Lodge.

Day 11: Canyon de Chelly

We explore Canyon de Chelly and surrounding sacred Navajo land on an all-day walk with a local Navajo guide. We walk along the slickrock of Bare Trail to the base of the canyon, then walk along the canyon floor, sometimes through creeks, past Native American ruins and rock art.

Day 12: To The Grand Canyon

We visit Horseshoe Bend, a much-photographed hairpin curve in the Colorado River, and we stretch our legs with a short walk at Antelope Canyon, another highlight for photographers, where shafts of sunlight shine down into the sculpted red and pink rock of the slot canyon. We continue to the Grand Canyon where we spend two nights. With luck we arrive in time to watch the sun set over the vast and majestic expanse of the canyon.

Day 13: The Grand Canyon

We descend into the canyon with a local guide on the Bright Angel Trail, a walk that provides a different understanding of the immensity of the canyon which many visitors do not experience. Bright Angel Trail was built in the 1920s and connects the South Rim of the canyon with the Colorado River. We follow the trail as far as Three-Mile Resthouse where, weather permitting, those looking for a challenge can continue down to Havasupai Gardens. The ascent back to the rim can be hot and exposed so we stop frequently to soak in the views and attempt to capture the canyon's vast beauty in photographs.

Day 14: Grand Canyon to Las Vegas

There is free time this morning – perhaps organise a helicopter ride (at extra cost) to experience the Grand Canyon from a completely different perspective. Afterwards we drive on historic Route 66 to fabulous Las Vegas, for a final night to perhaps see one of the city's famous shows, or head to Fremont Street for live music, light shows and street performers.

Day 15: Departure day

Tour ends after breakfast.



Outdoor Travel offers guided or self-guided walking holidays in many parts of Australia including Tasmania, Victoria & South Australia, the USA, Canada, Japan, China, the UK, Ireland & in Europe. Popular are England's **Coast-to-Coast** trail or Scotland's **West Highland Way**, the **Ring of Kerry** in Ireland the **Camino de Santiago** in France & Spain, Italy's **Amalfi** or **Cinque Terre Coast** or **Via Francigena**.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

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