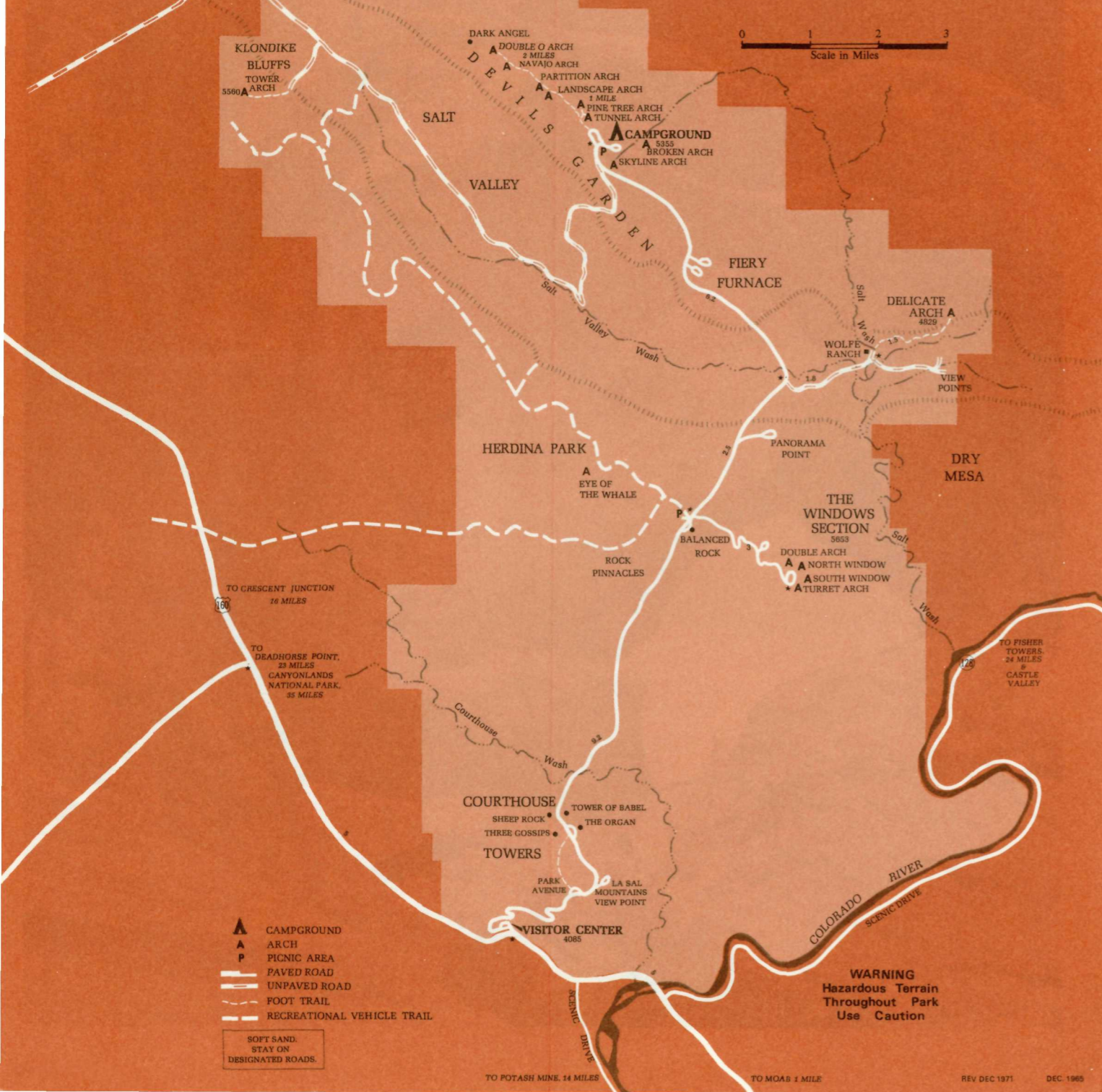


# ARCHES NATIONAL PARK



## SEEING THE PARK

You can get to most of the scenic features of the park from the road, but the trails will yield much that is missed by motorists.

**Courthouse Towers.** A paved entrance road leaves U.S. 160 at the park visitor center 5 miles north of Moab, climbs the sandstone cliffs behind the visitor center, and passes first through the Courthouse Towers section.

Here you may want to take the easy 1-mile hike through Park Avenue, a narrow corridor through towering red-rock walls topped by an orderly array of towers and spires, which resembles the skyscrapers of a great city.

As there are parking areas at each end of the trail, one member of your party can drive around to pick up the hikers. There are exciting views of the La Sal Mountains, Courthouse Canyon, and The Windows Section from the parking areas and roadside turnouts.

**The Windows Section.** In the east-central part of the park, which is the most readily accessible, a great mass of the Entrada Sandstone towers over the surrounding plain. In these walls the forces of nature have carved eight immense arches and many smaller windows, passageways, coves, pinnacles, spires, and balanced rocks. Here are Double Arch, Parade of the Elephants, Cove of the Caves, North and South Windows, Balanced Rock, and other erosional features. This section is 12 miles from the visitor center. A paved road enables you to drive within easy walking distances of most of these features.

**Delicate Arch.** The scenic features within the park are climaxed by the grandeur of Delicate Arch, with its unsurpassed setting of cliffs and massive "slickrock" domes, and with the gorge of the Colorado River beyond and the snow-capped peaks of the La Sal Mountains in the distance. A graded road leads to within 1.5 miles of Delicate Arch; there is a foot trail the rest of the way. This is also the site of the Wolfe Ranch Environmental Study Area.

**Fiery Furnace,** an intricate maze of narrow passageways and high sandstone walls, gets its name from its glow in the light of the setting sun. The guided hike here in summer gives an "inside" view of the red-hike country.

**Devils Garden.** The road ends in the Devils Garden section, 9 miles north of Balanced Rock. From the end of this road near Skyline Arch, trails lead to Fin Canyon, Tunnel Arch, and Landscape Arch (1 mile), Double O Arch (2 miles), and many other arches found in this part of the park.

Landscape Arch, 291 feet long, is believed to be the longest natural-stone span in the world. Prehistoric Indians used part of the Landscape Arch area, perhaps as a winter campground. They made arrow points and other stone implements from the chalcedony that litters the ground.

**Klondike Bluffs.** Another area which has not been adequately investigated because of the difficult terrain is Klondike Bluffs. The Klondike Bluffs parking area is 8 miles by dirt road from Skyline Arch. A 1-mile marked route leads from the parking area to Tower Arch. Inquire about road conditions before attempting this trip.

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ARCHES NATIONAL PARK · UTAH



# ARCHES

Arches National Park lies in the heart of the famed red-rock country of southeastern Utah, north across the Colorado River from the picturesque old Mormon pioneer town of Moab.

Here there are more natural stone arches, windows, spires, and pinnacles than in any other known section of this country. Nearly 90 arches have been discovered, and others are probably hidden away in remote and rugged parts of the area. Spectacular towers, sweeping coves, shapes resembling figures of men and animals, balanced rocks, and other weird forms resulting from the combined action of running water, wind, rain, frost, and sun form a setting to which the arches are a majestic culmination.

The rock in which the arches have formed was deposited as sand about 150 million years ago, during the Jurassic period. This 300-foot layer, called the Entrada Sandstone, is believed to have been laid down mainly by wind. Its characteristics suggest that it accumulated in a vast coastal desert. In time it was buried by new layers, and hardened into rock.

The rock was then uplifted, twisted, and severely cracked several times. Later, after erosion had stripped away the overlying layers, the Entrada Sandstone was exposed to weathering, and the formation of arches began. Water entering cracks in the sandstone dissolved some of the cementing material, and running water and wind removed the loose sand. Cracks were widened into narrow canyons separated by fins. More rapid weathering of softer areas in some of these vertical walls resulted in undercutting. The quarrying by water and frost persisted, perforating the fins, enlarging the perforations, or windows, and smoothing their contours until large, graceful arches were the final creation.

Some arches, such as Delicate Arch, have been left isolated by erosion of surrounding fins. Of course, the continued thinning of arches by weathering will eventually result in their collapse. You can see all stages in their development and decay in the park.

## ANIMALS AND PLANTS

Local wildlife is characteristic of the sparse pinyon-and-juniper forest communities of Great Basin Desert. Larger mammals, such as deer, coyotes, and foxes, are present but are most active at night. You may, however, see birds,

ground squirrels, kangaroo rats and other rodents, rabbits, and small reptiles. From May to August, except in abnormally dry years, colorful displays of wildflowers carpet moist places, particularly in Salt Valley.

## FACILITIES AND SERVICES

There is a modern campground for tents and trailers in the Devils Garden section. Campsites cannot be reserved.

During the summer, campfire talks are given nightly at the campground amphitheater, and scheduled trips are made regularly through the Fiery Furnace.

Trails, much less intrusive than roads, lead to many of the park's most impressive features. However, if you plan to hike, rock-climb, or camp in the back country, you should inform a park ranger. Lack of drinking water, the possibility of getting lost, and sudden storms that cause road washouts present serious hazards. To help, the park rangers must know where you are.

There is no food or lodging in the park. Restaurants, motels, and other services are available in Moab.

*Please remember* this is a sanctuary for wildlife. Hunting or use of firearms is not permitted.

Do not disturb, deface, remove, or destroy flowers, trees, wildlife, or other natural objects or artifacts.

Build fires in designated areas only.

## ADMINISTRATION

Arches National Park, established on November 12, 1971, is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is c/o Canyonlands National Park, Moab, UT 84532, is in charge of the park.

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities for water, fish, wildlife, mineral, land, park, and recreational resources. Indian and Territorial affairs are other major concerns of America's "Department of Natural Resources." The Department works to assure the wisest choice in managing all our resources so each will make its full contribution to a better United States—now and in the future.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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