

# South Rim

GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK • ARIZONA



National Park Service  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

The Grand Canyon is 1 mile deep, ranges in width from 4 to 18 miles, and is 217 miles long. Man can measure its size, but not its impact on the human spirit. From the rim, the Colorado River appears insignificant and we look down onto the tops of "mountains" several thousand feet high. People and mules on the trails appear no larger than ants.

The Colorado River carved the Grand Canyon. It worked steadily over a period of time estimated at between 2.6 million and 10 million years. The canyon is the most awesome example of the power of running water in existence today.

As the river carved the canyon it opened windows on the past. Some rocks in the Inner Gorge may be 2 billion years old. Layers forming the upper two-thirds of the canyon provide a record of the evolution of life from about 570 million years ago (the age of trilobites) to 225 million years ago (the beginning of the age of dinosaurs). Nowhere else on earth is such a complete geological record exposed.

As the river carved the canyon it created a series of microclimates, one above the other. The Inner Gorge is desert, hot and dry, with plants and animals associated with southern Arizona or Mexico. The canyon rims are forest. The pinyon-juniper forest of the South Rim (7,000 feet above sea level) is typical of the Great Basin area of the United States. The spruce, fir, and aspen forest of the North Rim (8,000 feet) is similar to those common in the north.

Each climate, each group of plants, supports its own distinctive animals. Desert animals such as the Grand Canyon rattlesnake, the chuckwalla, and the desert bighorn sheep live within the canyon. On the canyon rims live forest animals such as mule deer and porcupine. Elevation makes the difference.

The Colorado River has opened one of the finest geological and biological museums on earth. Appreciation of this great natural spectacle stems from understanding—and, of course, from getting used to looking down thousands of feet.

The Visitor Center in Grand Canyon Village is the best place to begin a visit to the Grand Canyon. Park rangers are on duty to answer questions and provide information. Exhibits, publications, guided walks and hikes, and ranger programs weave the many Grand Canyon stories into a single tapestry, or follow single threads across the panorama. Scenic roads, overlooks, and trails provide opportunities for everyone to become a part of the Grand Canyon.

## SEASONS

South Rim roads and facilities are open year-round.

Spring may be cold. In summer, from June through September, temperatures are comfortable; mid-40's at night, mid-80's during the day. June is usually dry. Brief thunderstorms are frequent in July and August. Inner Canyon summer temperatures commonly exceed 100° and sometimes soar to 120°.

Autumn is short. The first snow sometimes falls in October, and winter lasts from November until April. Nighttime temperatures may fall below freezing. Winter days are crisp and clear, with high temperatures in the 40's and 50's.

## HOW TO REACH THE SOUTH RIM

I-40 (U.S. 66) crosses northern Arizona through Flagstaff and Williams. The South Rim is 82 miles north of Flagstaff and 59 miles north of Williams by paved road. Desert View, the eastern entrance to the park, is 32 miles west of Cameron (U.S. 89a).

Flagstaff is served by air, bus, and rail lines; Williams is served by bus. Navi-Hopi Tours provide scheduled bus service to the South Rim.

Grand Canyon Airport 7 miles south is served by Hughes Airwest, Cochise Airlines, and Scenic Airlines. Commercial transportation is available from the airport to Grand Canyon Village.

## ACCOMMODATIONS AND SERVICES

*Campgrounds* with tables, fireplaces, and water are at Grand Canyon Village and Desert View. Reservations may not be made in advance. So that as many people as possible may enjoy camping at the Grand Canyon, camping is limited to 7 days. Campfires may be built only in fireplaces and must be completely extinguished before the campsite is vacated. Firewood may not be cut or gathered; firewood and other fuels can be purchased from concessioners. Place all rubbish in trash containers.

*Trailer Village*, near the Visitor Center, has utility hookups and, in the summer, a sanitary dumping station.

*Grand Canyon Village* provides facilities for most visitor needs: hotel and restaurants, medical services, bank, service station, garage, laundry, showers, and post office (Grand Canyon, AZ 86023). Accommodations are also available 1 mile outside the park at Tusayan on Arizona Route 64.

*Rates and Reservations, Hotels and Lodges.* Write Fred Harvey, Inc., Grand Canyon, AZ 86023, or Grand Canyon Chamber of Commerce, Box 507, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023.

*Telephones* are at most service facilities.

*A movie and slide program* of early Colorado River exploration is shown daily for a small charge at Kolb Studio west of Bright Angel Lodge.

*Picnic areas* are along South Rim roads.

*Church Services* (Baptist, Latter-day Saints, non-denominational Protestant, and Roman Catholic) are conducted every Sunday. Times and places are posted at the Shrine of Ages Chapel and on bulletin boards.

## DOWN INTO THE CANYON

*By muleback.* Mule trips to Plateau Point (1 day) and Phantom Ranch (2 days) are conducted year-round, weather permitting. Reserve a mule well in advance of your visit. Write to Fred Harvey, Inc., Grand Canyon, AZ 86023. Persons weighing more than 200 pounds and children under 12 years of age are not permitted to take the mule trips.

*On foot.* Walking below the rim is arduous. Unless you are in excellent physical condition, do not hike to the river. The Grand Canyon has been described as an upside-down mountain. Going down is deceptively easy. The uphill grind, an ascent of nearly 5,000 feet, is tough. Allow plenty of time—a full day to ascend from the river to the rim. Carry an adequate supply of water; one gallon a day for each person is recommended. Wear a hat and long-sleeved shirt. Before beginning any canyon hike, obtain the *Hiker Information Bulletin* at the Visitor Center.

Hiking is most enjoyable in the spring and fall when the weather is mild on the rim and in the canyon.

*Reservations* are required for all campgrounds below the rim. They can be made at the Visitor Center and by mail. *Permits* (obtained in person at the Visitor Center) are required for all trails except the Bright Angel and Kaibab.

*Bright Angel Trail* follows a twisting 8-mile course from Grand Canyon Village to the river. The 9-mile round trip to Indian Gardens is a good 1-day hike for those in excellent physical condition. Water (summer only) is available at only 2 locations between the rim and Indian Gardens. There is no safe drinking water between Indian Gardens and the river, the hottest part of the trip. Permits are not required for day-hikes. Reservations are required for Indian Gardens Campground.

*River Trail*, 2 miles, connects the Bright Angel and Kaibab Trails.

*South Kaibab Trail* leads 7 miles from the rim at Yaki Point to the river. The hike to Cedar Ridge, 1½ miles down the trail, is a good half-day outing. Because no water is available, daylight ascent of this trail during the summer is not recommended. Hikers with reservations (write Fred Harvey, Inc., Grand Canyon, AZ 86023) can be accommodated at Phantom Ranch. A permit is not required for day-hiking. Reservations must be made for use of Bright Angel Campground.

*North Kaibab Trail*, 14 miles, joins South Kaibab Trail at the river. It completes the cross-canyon link with the North Rim. The trail follows Bright Angel Creek and Roaring Springs Canyon to the rim. There are two campgrounds between Phantom Ranch and the rim; reservations are required.

*Hikers below the rim need to know that:*

Enjoyable trips reflect careful planning.

Reservations are required for all camping below the rim. Permits are required for all trails except Bright Angel and Kaibab.

Wood-gathering and fires are prohibited. Carry out all trash.

Mule parties have the right-of-way. Step to the side of the trail and stand quietly as the mules pass.

Wheeled vehicles are not permitted on park trails.

Trail short-cutting, rock-rolling, and rock throwing are forbidden and are extremely dangerous. Hikers below may be in the path of rocks that may be dislodged, either by intent or by accident.

Trail telephones, for emergency use only, are along the Bright Angel and Kaibab Trails.

Swimming in the Colorado River is extremely dangerous and is prohibited by law.

IN CASE OF ACCIDENT, notify a park ranger.

## VISITING HAVASU CANYON

Havasupai Canyon is known for its spectacular waterfalls, turquoise blue water, and oasis setting. The Havasupai Reservation lies within the canyon, 188 road miles from Grand Canyon Village. Campground reservations, which are required, may be obtained from Havasupai Tourist Information, Havasupai Tourist Enterprise, Supai, AZ 86023; telephone 602-448-2121. Information about saddle and pack stock and accommodations is available from the same source.

## THE INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM

*The Visitor Center* is in Grand Canyon Village. Exhibits depict portions of the human and natural history of the canyon. Park rangers are on duty to provide information, answer questions, and to issue trail permits and canyon campground reservations.

*Yavapai Museum* is on the rim, 1 mile east of the Visitor Center. Geological exhibits complement the excellent view of the canyon.

*Tusayan Ruin and Museum* is on the East Rim Drive. The ruin is Tusayan Pueblo, built about 1185. The museum, open only in summer, contains exhibits about the early human history of the canyon area. Interpretive talks are presented at nearby Desert View in the summer.

*Evening programs* are given throughout the summer at the amphitheater near the Visitor Center and at Desert View. A varied interpretive program is presented throughout the year. Complete interpretive schedules are posted on bulletin boards and are available at the Visitor Center information desk.

*Publications* about Grand Canyon and related topics are sold by the Grand Canyon Natural History Association at National Park Service museums and by mail. Write Box 219, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023.

## THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

*Visitors are legally responsible* for obeying the regulations designed to protect national parks. Complete regulations are available at the Visitor Center and at ranger stations. If you are in doubt, please inquire.

*Regulations* forbid removing, defacing, or destroying any rock, fossil, or plant; hunting, feeding, or disturbing any form of wildlife.

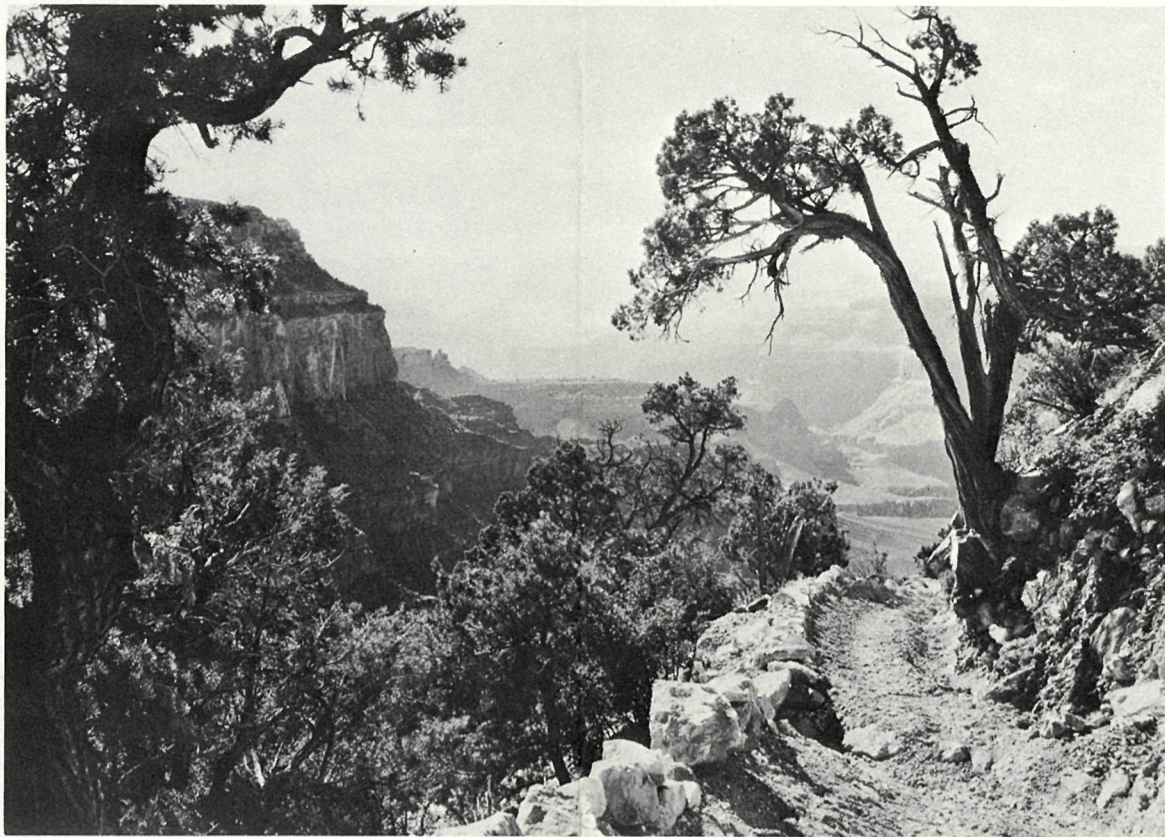
*Firearms* must be unloaded and sealed or cased.

*Pets* must be leashed or otherwise physically controlled at all times. Pets are not allowed on any park trails.

*Water* is a limited resource—help us conserve it.

*Fishing* in park streams requires an Arizona license, which may be obtained at the general store or outside the park.





**GUIDE TO THE SOUTH RIM**

*West Rim Drive* leads 8 miles from Grand Canyon Village to Hermits Rest. Several canyon overlooks are located along the way. West Rim bus tours leave from the Bright Angel Lodge.

*East Rim Drive* leads 25 miles from the village to Desert View, where the Watchtower overlooks the canyon. Tusayan Ruins and Museum (open summer only) are on this drive and Lipan Point offers one of the finest views in the park. East Rim bus tours leave from the Bright Angel Lodge.

*Rim Trail*, an easy walk, follows the edge of the canyon for 4 miles from Yavapai Museum to Maricopa Point. The self-guiding 1½-mile *Canyon Rim Nature Trail* follows part of the Rim Trail. Tour booklets are available at both ends of the trail—at the Visitor Center and near the El Tovar Hotel.

*Up-to-date recorded information* on the weather, road conditions, and interpretive schedule may be obtained 24 hours a day by calling 602-638-2245.

*Littering* is punishable by fine.

*Park roads* are not high-speed highways. They were designed for leisurely enjoyment of the park scenery. Maximum speed is 45 mph. Inquire at the Visitor Center or a ranger station before traveling on unpaved roads.

*Payment* of entrance and campground fees is required by Federal regulation.

**IN CASE OF ACCIDENT** or other emergency, notify a park ranger or call 638-2411.

**SAFETY** is everybody's business. A visit to a national park should be a pleasurable and rewarding experience. It can be a time of vexation, distress, even tragedy. Most problems can be avoided if you and your family observe the simple rules of the park. Safeguards protect people and the natural park environment.

**ADMINISTRATION**

Grand Canyon National Park is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent whose address is Grand Canyon, AZ 86023, is in charge.

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.

