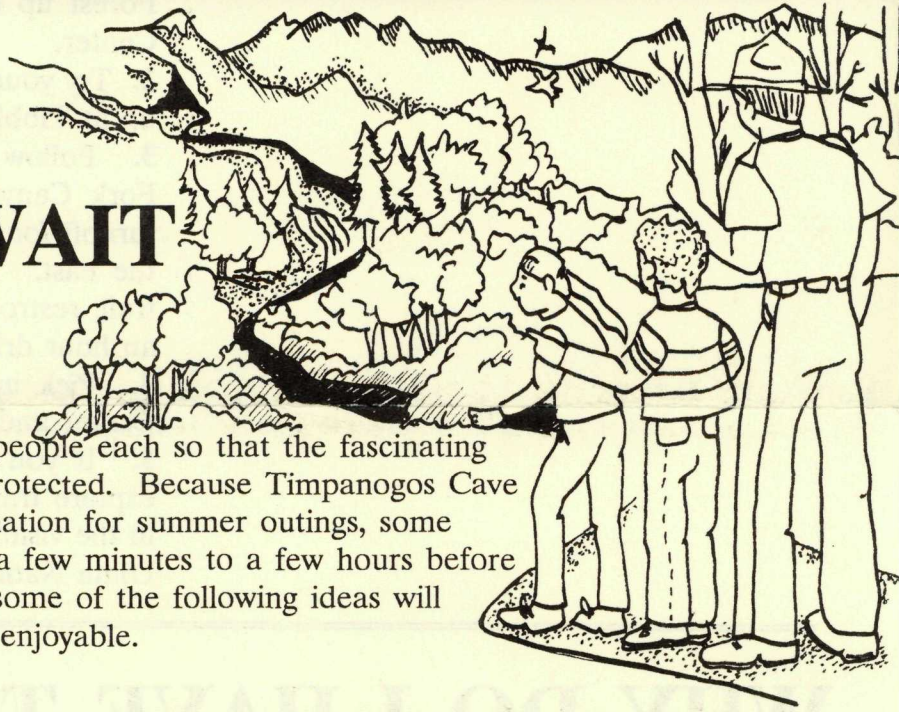


Timpanogos Cave National Monument

R.R. 3 Box 200
American Fork,
Utah 84003
(801) 756-5238

WHAT TO DO WHILE YOU WAIT



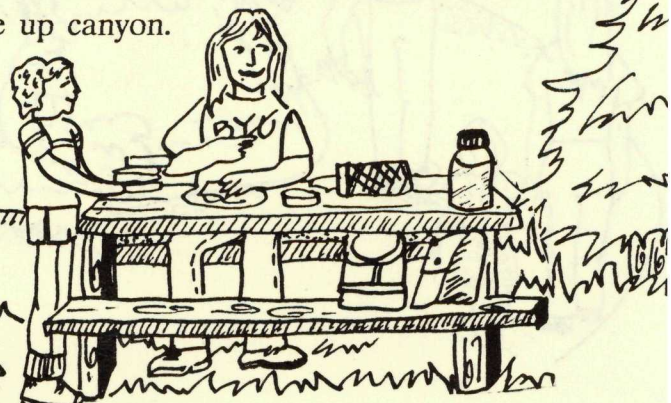
Tours of the cave system are limited to 20 people each so that the fascinating yet delicate formations can be adequately protected. Because Timpanogos Cave National Monument is a very popular destination for summer outings, some visitors may end up waiting anywhere from a few minutes to a few hours before beginning the hike to the caves. We hope some of the following ideas will make the time go faster and the wait more enjoyable.

ACTIVITIES THAT TAKE A HALF HOUR OR LESS

1. Slide Show: Get a 12-minute introduction to the caves and the surrounding area.
2. Timpanogos Cave Video: This will give you a 30-minute preview of the caves and their exciting history.
3. Stroll across the walkway, directly across the parking lot, to the American Fork River. Take in the sights and sounds of a mountain stream.

ACTIVITIES THAT TAKE UP TO ONE HOUR

1. Check the display board to the left of where you purchased your cave tour tickets for special events.
2. If you have at least an hour and feel like a relaxing walk before heading for the caves, pick up a trail guide for the Five Senses Nature Trail that begins just below the parking lot on the opposite side of the river. The trail is just over a half mile round trip.
3. For a different look at the canyon than you will see on the cave trail, walk up the 1/4-mile Canyon View Nature Trail that starts directly across the highway from the visitor center. You'll notice that the vegetation on this south-facing slope is quite different from that along the cave trail.
4. Drive 2.4 miles up the canyon and turn left on Route 144. Follow this road 3 more miles to Tibble Fork Reservoir for an excellent view of the north face of Mount Timpanogos.
5. If you planned to picnic or if you would simply like to sit outdoors and enjoy the scenery, there are two picnic areas nearby: one in the monument 1/4 mile down canyon and the other in the Uinta National Forest a mile up canyon.



ACTIVITIES THAT TAKE TWO HOURS OR MORE

1. If you came prepared for a picnic, there are numerous scenic picnic areas in American Fork Canyon. The nearest one is within Timpanogos Cave National Monument, 1/4 mile down canyon on the north side of the highway. Several more are in the Uinta National Forest up canyon from the Timpanogos Cave Visitor Center.
2. Try your luck fishing in the American Fork River or up at Tibble Fork Reservoir.
3. Follow Highway 92 for nine miles up American Fork Canyon to the summit. Just beyond it is the turnoff for Cascade Springs, which is another 7 miles to the east. This Forest Service area has a new nature trail, restrooms, and a picnic area. Allow at least half an hour driving time each way.
4. Pick up a bird list from a ranger in the Visitor Center and explore the nature trails in the park.
5. If you are an energetic hiker and would like to explore trails outside the National Monument, rangers in the visitor center can provide information on nearby Uinta National Forest trails.

WHY DO I HAVE TO WAIT?

WHY ONLY 20 PEOPLE ON EACH TOUR?

Many years of experience in conducting interpretive tours of the caves have proven that visitors have a more enjoyable experience and the caves are best protected by restricting the number of people on each tour. The 20-person limit was established after years of experimenting with different group sizes. Groups larger than 20 have been taken through the caves, and a self-guiding system was even attempted in the 1970s, but both of these resulted in damage to cave formations.

COULD TOURS BE SCHEDULED MORE OFTEN?

During the summer tours are scheduled as often as every 10 minutes. Providing them even more frequently creates congestion in the caves and results in a much less enjoyable experience for visitors.

With 20-person tours every 10 minutes, up to 120 people may visit the caves every hour. On summer weekends and holidays, however, people arrive at the visitor center at a much greater rate. As a result some people have to wait for a tour, and by early afternoon all tours for the day may be sold out.

We ask you to wait until 1 1/2 hours before your tour time before starting up the trail since there is only a small area at the cave entrance where you can wait safely and comfortably.



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