

DEAD HORSE POINT STATE PARK

(Allow 3 hours round trip).

Dead Horse Point is reached by following the route described for the Island in the Sky Tour. It is 23 miles from U.S. Highway 191 to Dead Horse Point State Park via Utah Highway 313. Dead Horse Point is a peninsula connected to a large mesa by a narrow strip of land. At one time, cowboys captured wild mustangs by driving them across this narrow neck of land onto Dead Horse Point and then closing a brush fence behind them. From the rim of Dead Horse Point, one can view a vast panorama of canyon country. Two thousand feet below, the Colorado River continues to shape its intricate canyon system.

Park facilities include a visitor center, picnic area, and campground with drinking water, flush toilets, and shade ramadas. Nightly campfire programs and daily guided walks are offered from Memorial Day through Labor Day weekend. The Park has 7 miles of hiking trails following the canyon rim around the park.

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KANE CREEK CANYON

(Allow 2 hours round trip; most of route is a maintained gravel road.)

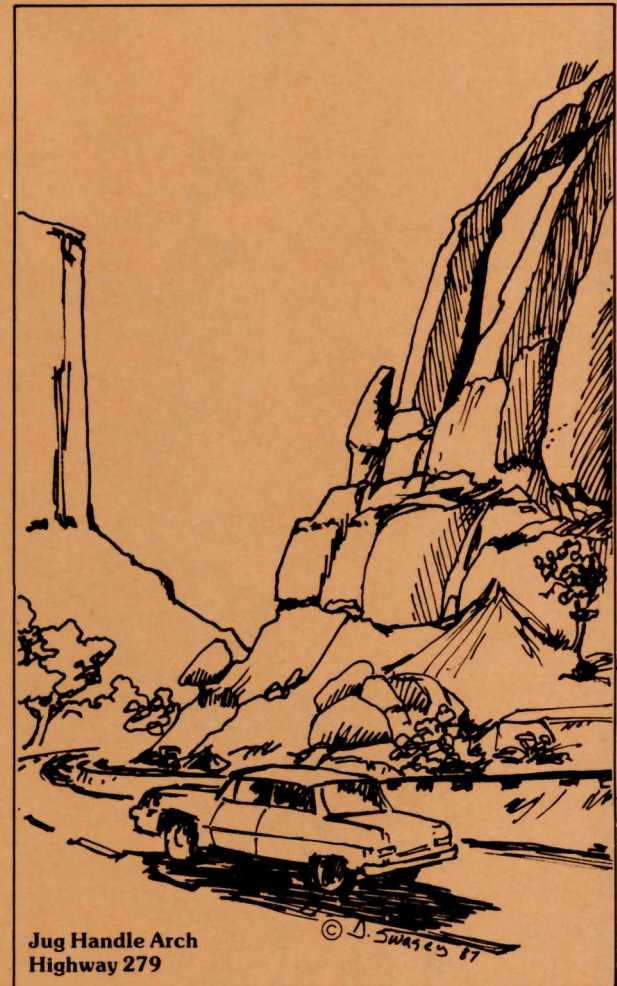
This tour follows paved Kane Creek Boulevard from Moab along the south bank of the Colorado River to the mouth of Kane Creek Canyon. From this point, a dirt road offers a gentle introduction to touring the back roads of canyon country. It is suitable for passenger cars as far as the Kane Creek stream crossing.

Begin the tour at the intersection of Kane Creek Boulevard and U.S. Highway 191 in Moab. The tour route soon reaches the Colorado River near the Portal and then parallels the river for several miles. Look for Little Arch, which is actually quite large, near the top of the cliffs across the river shortly after passing through the Portal. The sandstone domes on the north side of the river are collectively known as Poison Spider Mesa.

Kane Creek flows into the Colorado River just beyond the end of the paved road. From here, the gravelled road follows Kane Creek Canyon. For the first part of the drive into the canyon, the cliffs climb higher and higher. The watchful will discover petroglyph panels on two large rocks along the right side of the road. Stop at the turnout just before the road heads down the switchbacks for a view of the canyon and its surrounding ocean of rock. Try to pick out the route of Kane Creek as it meanders toward the Colorado River.

Hunters Canyon, which features fine hiking, is located about 1 mile beyond the switchbacks. In another mile, Kane Creek Canyon widens considerably and presents a broad vista of cliffs and colorful rock formations. The auto tour ends at a point 13.3 miles from Moab, where the road crosses Kane Creek. Four-wheel drive is recommended beyond this point.

Moab Area AUTO TOURS



Moab Visitor Center
805 N. Main Street (Hwy 191)
Moab, Utah
(801) 259-8825

CANYONLANDS NATIONAL PARK

Canyonlands National Park is divided by the Colorado and Green Rivers. Surrounding the rivers are three vast and very different regions of the Park: to the north, Island in the Sky; to the east, the Needles; and to the west, the Maze. This brochure describes routes along paved roads in the Island in the Sky and Needles areas. Information about the Maze and additional travel routes is available from Canyonlands National Park.

NEEDLES DISTRICT

(Allow 1 day round trip.)

To reach the Needles section of Canyonlands National Park, drive south from Moab on U.S. Highway 191 for 40 miles and then drive 30 miles west on Utah Highway 211 to the Park visitor information station. Recreation opportunities in the Needles section of the Park are centered upon the scenic drive and the network of hiking trails and four-wheel drive routes that lead into a colorful world of open parks, red and white sandstone monoliths, towers, arches, and canyons.

On the way to Canyonlands, you will descend into Indian Creek Canyon, the location of Newspaper Rock State Park. Many interesting Indian petroglyphs are inscribed on this large rock art panel.

The campsites at Squaw Flat Campground, the destination for many Park visitors planning an overnight stay, are nicely spaced in a scenic setting. Day-end at Squaw Flat often produces a lovely sunset display upon the nearby rock formations. Drinking water, picnic tables, toilets, and evening interpretive talks are available at the campground.

ISLAND DISTRICT

(Allow 1 day round trip.)

To reach the Island in the Sky district of Canyonlands National Park, drive north from Moab 9 miles and turn west onto Utah Highway 313. Highway 313 quickly climbs out of Seven Mile Canyon. The highway travels across a plateau before reaching the turnoff to Dead Horse Point State Park. Continue on the main road towards the Canyonlands National Park visitor contact station near "The Neck". Be sure to stop at the nearby observation point and look down upon the Shafer Trail.

The "Island" gets its name from the fact that, with the exception of the narrow route across The Neck, it is a huge mesa isolated from the canyons below by towering cliffs. Major places of interest to the visitor include Grand View Point, the Green River Overlook, and Upheaval Dome. From Grand View Point, one can look out over Monument Basin, the White Rim, and the vicinity of the confluence of the Green and Colorado Rivers. From the Green River Overlook, the view includes the White Rim, the Green River, and the Orange Cliffs. Colorful, crater-like, 1,500 foot deep, Upheaval Dome can be viewed from a 3/4 mile round trip walking trail. Fourteen other hiking trails are located in the Island District. Numerous other viewpoints are available along the main roads.

Campfire programs are presented several times a week in season at the Willow Flat Campground, a primitive camping area with limited facilities and no water.

Park Entrance and Camping Fees

Entrance fees are charged at Canyonlands and Arches National Parks and at Dead Horse Point State Park. Overnight use fees are charged at most public campgrounds.

ARCHES NATIONAL PARK

(Allow 3 hours for an introduction .)

The visitor center and entrance to Arches National Park are located 5 miles north of Moab along U.S. Highway 191. Arches National Park, known for its dramatic rock formations, includes massive sandstone buttes and walls, petrified dunes, meandering canyons, balanced rocks, and soaring arches. The scenic park highway is 18 miles long.

From the visitor center, the highway climbs several switchbacks while presenting views of Moab Canyon and adjacent cliffs. Major points of interest along the first half of the road include Park Avenue and Balanced Rock. From Balanced Rock a paved road leads to the Windows section of the Park. This area features the Cove of Caves, Parade of Elephants, Turret Arch, the North and South Window Arches, and the fabulous Double Arch. While the arches are visible from the road, they are best viewed from the short walking trails leading from the parking areas.

Beyond Balanced Rock, the main park road continues past the turnoff to the short dirt road to the Delicate Arch trailhead and historic Wolfe's Ranch. From the Delicate Arch turnoff, the Park road travels past Fiery Furnace and Skyline Arch to end at the Devil's Garden trailhead. Landscape Arch, an incredibly long and slender span, is an easy 1 mile stroll from the trailhead.

Visitors may obtain a detailed Arches National Park auto tour brochure at the visitors' center. The Devil's Garden Campground and a picnic area are located near the end of the main Park road. Evening campfire programs are presented at the campground several times per week in season. Several four-wheel drive and graded dirt roads provide access to more seldom visited portions of the Park. Inquire at the visitors' center about road conditions.

CANYON RIMS RECREATION AREA

(Allow 3 hours for round trip to Needles Overlook.)

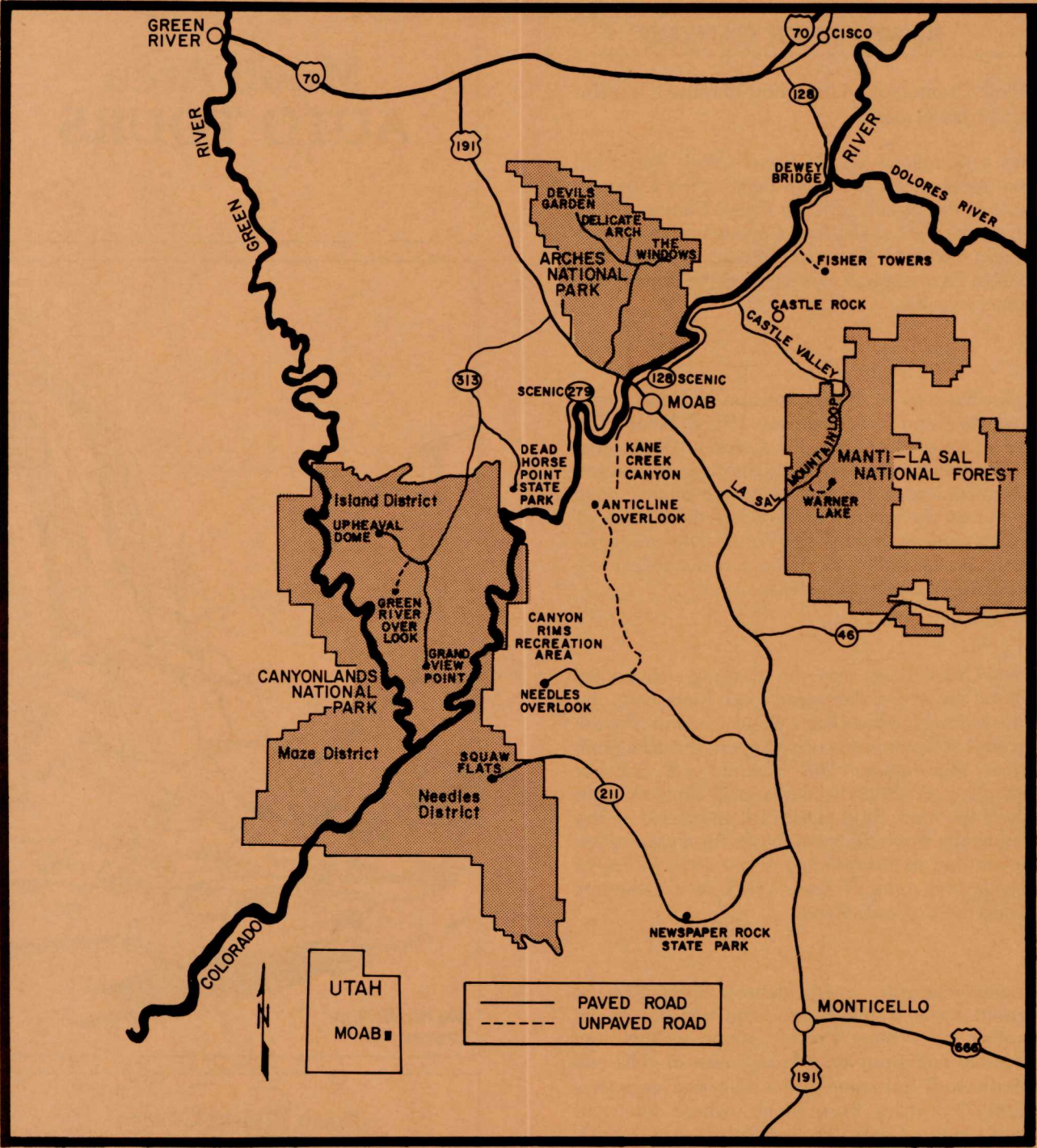
The entrance to the Canyon Rims Recreation Area is located 32 miles southwest of Moab along U.S. Highway 191. Situated between Moab and Canyonlands National Park, Canyon Rims features extensive vistas of the canyonlands region from lofty overlooks and two campgrounds. Comments found in the visitor registers frequently compare the scenery with that found at the Grand Canyon. An excellent one-day auto tour would combine a visit to Canyon Rims Recreation Area with a drive into the Needles section of Canyonlands National Park.

The main roads in the Canyon Rims Recreation Area are designed with the photographer in mind. The visitor will find several photo point turnouts and short spur roads to view points.

Nestled between sandstone bluffs, Wind Whistle Campground is 6 miles from the entrance via a paved road. The paved road continues for 16 miles from the Needles Overlook. This overlook offers a sweeping view of the heart of the Canyonlands region. An interpretive display describes the geologic processes at work in the area.

The Hatch Point Campground and Anticline Overlook may be reached via a high-standard gravel road that branches from the paved road about two-thirds of the way out to the Needles Overlook. These areas are 25 and 32 miles from the entrance. From the Anticline Overlook, one looks across the Colorado River to Dead Horse Point State Park.

The campgrounds have toilets, drinking water, and individual campsites, Picnic tables and toilets are available at the overlooks.



COLORADO RIVER SCENIC ROUTE UTAH HIGHWAY 279

(Allow 2 hours round trip.)

Begin the tour by driving north across the Colorado River bridge on U.S. Highway 191 and then turning onto Utah Highway 279. In 2 miles, Utah Highway 279 passes through the Colorado River Portal, and enters a narrow canyon. Altogether, the highway follows the north bank of the river for 17 miles.

The Moab area is known for its abundance of Indian rock art. Petroglyphs were carved on cliff faces during prehistoric times. The tour features several petroglyph panels with many individual carvings depicting symbolic animals and anthropomorphs. A late afternoon start is rewarding as the sunset on the reddish-orange sandstone cliffs along the route is especially beautiful on the return drive to Moab.

After passing through the Portal, Jaycee Park is the first point of interest. This small park has picnic tables and drinking water. Hikers may want to try the 1.5 mile trail to the Portal Overlook which starts at the park. The panoramic view from the overlook encompasses Arches National Park, the Colorado River, Moab Valley, and the LaSal Mountains.

Farther downriver, two "Indian Writings" signs indicate the location of the Petroglyph panels. An interpretive sign provides additional information.

Visitors stopping at the "Dinosaur Tracks" turnout will find two view tubes. The first tube points to the location of a series of three-toed dinosaur tracks. The second tube shows another petroglyph panel. Binoculars or scrambling are required for a close view.

Next, Utah Highway 279 passes the Corona Arch trailhead. Corona Arch, which has a 140-foot by 105-foot opening, and nearby Bow Tie Arch, may be reached via the 1.5-mile-long trail. Gold Bar Arch is visible high above the right side of the highway.

Descriptively-named, Jug Handle Arch is adjacent to the highway. It is 46 feet high and only 3 feet wide. After Jug Handle Arch, the canyon bottom widens. The sheer cliffs of Dead Horse Point State Park are visible above the Texasgulf potash plant. Potash, a mineral used as a fertilizer, is extracted in solution at this facility by flushing large volumes of water through an extensive system of tunnels. The auto tour ends at this point. The dirt road ahead continues into Canyonlands National Park. Four-wheel drive is recommended. Backcountry permits are required for overnight stays in the Park.

Advice For the Motorist:

Estimated driving times from Moab for the tours in this brochure assume that drivers will make brief stops at major points of interest. The estimate of driving time does not allow for side trips. The described routes follow well-maintained public highways and roads. Several tours, such as that into Kane Creek Canyon and the LaSal Mountain Loop Road, include sections of graded dirt and gravel roadway. For all trips, except those in the immediate vicinity of Moab, visitors are advised to fill their gas tanks before starting. Potable water is not commonly available along the tour routes. Always carry ample drinking water when touring in canyon country.

Further Information:

For Canyon Rims Recreation Area, the Colorado River along Utah Highway 128 and Utah Highway 279, and Kane Creek Canyon contact: Bureau of Land Management, Grand Resource Area Office, P. O. Box M (Sand Flat Road), Moab, Utah 84532 (801-259-8193).

For Arches and Canyonlands National Parks contact: National Park Service, 125 West 200 South, Moab, Utah 84532 (801-259-7164).

For the Manti LaSal National Forest contact: Forest Service, Moab Ranger District, 125 West 200 South, Moab, Utah 84532 (801-259-7155).

For Dead Horse Point State Park contact: Dead Horse Point State Park, P.O. Box 609, Moab, Utah 84532 (801-259-6511).

COLORADO RIVER SCENIC ROUTE (UTAH HIGHWAY 128) AND LA SAL MOUNTAIN LOOP ROAD

(4 hours round trip, 1 mile unpaved, generally open May through October)

The LaSal Mountain Loop tour features a wide variety of canyon country scenery. The 60-mile-long route begins by following the Colorado River, then it approaches the LaSal Mountains via Castle Valley. The route through the Manti LaSal National Forest offers great views of the 12,000 foot plus peaks and the red rock canyons far below. Completion of the loop brings the motorist back to Moab via U.S. Highway 191.

Drive north from Moab on U.S. Highway 191 and turn right onto Utah Highway 128 just before the bridge. Arches National Park is located along the opposite side of the river. Negro Bill Canyon's small stream meets the Colorado 3 miles up-river from the bridge. This canyon is well known for its hiking opportunities. White Ranch, the setting for several western movies, is 14 miles from the bridge.

At the Castle Valley road, you can either turn right and follow the main loop tour or take a side trip along Utah Highway 128 to Fisher Towers (5.6 miles) and the historic Dewey suspension bridge (15 miles).

Driving up Castle Valley, the Priest and Nuns and Castle Rock are situated on your left about 4 miles from Utah Highway 128. If these formations look familiar, its because they have also been "in the movies". The LaSal Mountain Loop Road turnout is 11 miles from Utah Highway 128. Turn right.

As you enter the National Forest, notice how the vegetation changes as you gain elevation. Pinyon and juniper trees give way to oak, then to larger pines and aspen. The highest timbered areas are covered with spruce and fir. Be sure to stop at the overlooks along the road. A 5-mile-long graded dirt side road leads to the Forest Service campground at Warner Lake. The campground has drinking water, toilets, picnic tables, and fire grills. After the Warner Lake turnout, the Loop Road descends into Mill Creek Canyon and then climbs again before starting its descent to Moab. The tour route rejoins U.S. Highway 191 south of Moab.