



The West Temple and Towers of the Virgin, Zion Canyon

Glenn Van Nimwegen

"There is an eloquence to their forms which stirs the imagination with a singular power and nothing in the mind . . . a glowing response. . . . Nothing can exceed the wondrous beauty of

Zion. . . . in the nobility and beauty of the sculptures there is no comparison." When geologist Clarence E. Dutton wrote that description in 1880, southern Utah was a wild, rugged

country of little-known canyons and plateaus. Slowly, scientific reports, magazine articles, and photographs spread the word that deep within this remote territory lay the scenic phe-

nomenon of Zion. Some refused to believe such a place existed, just as others had scoffed at the first stories of Yellowstone. But the massive multi-colored vertical cliffs and deep

canyons were real, and in 1909 this area was added to the National Park System. Take time and discover Zion on its roads, and beyond.

On The Road

The roads of Zion introduce you to the park's spectacular cliff-and-canyon landscape. You can drive, bicycle, or take a guided tram tour, depending on your time and interests. Zion Canyon Scenic Drive, the Zion-Mt. Carmel Highway, and the Kolob Canyons Road are open year-round. The Kolob Terrace Road is usually closed by snow from late November to May.

If you are driving, remember the roads are designed for sightseeing, not speed. They are narrow, winding, and sometimes steep. Obey posted speed limits. If you want to stop use a roadside parking area. Be alert for hazards, particularly pedestrians, bicyclists, wildlife, fallen rocks, and other motorists.

Bicyclists will find the level, often shaded roads in Zion Canyon easiest to ride. No special biking lanes are provided.

Zion Canyon Scenic Drive Sheer, vividly colored cliffs tower above as you follow this road along the floor of Zion Canyon. This narrow, deep canyon is the centerpiece of the park. Long ago it inspired fear in Paiute Indians, who refused to stay here after dark. It awed early visitors like Frederick Vinson Fisher, a Methodist minister who named the Great White Throne, Angels Landing, and many other massive cliffs. Today the canyon continues to

spark a sense of wonder and disbelief in those who come and stand beneath its 610- to 910-meter (2,000- to 3,000-foot) high walls.

Along the bottom of the canyon flows the Virgin River. It is a river with the looks of a creek and the muscle of the Colorado. This small river almost singlehandedly carved the profound rock gorge of Zion Canyon. It began its downcutting more than 13 million years ago and continues its work today.



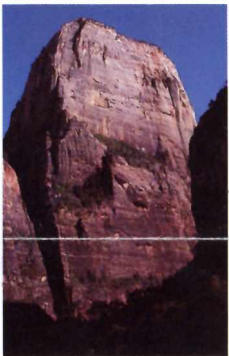
The Virgin River in autumn

David Muench

You may witness the river's power during a flash flood, when it turns muddy and violent, carrying cottonwoods and boulders like twigs and pebbles.

On most days, though, the Virgin winds through the canyon peacefully. Fremont cottonwoods, willows, and velvet ashes along its banks provide shady spots for a picnic or a short walk. Mule deer and many birds, too, seek refuge from the extreme midday heat of summer

beneath this canopy. Other wildlife, including ringtail cats, bobcats, foxes, rock squirrels, and cottontails, rest under rocky ledges. The best times to see animals along the road are early morning, evening, and at night, when they are most active. These are also ideal times to see the conspicuous white trumpet-shaped flowers of the sacred datura. This common roadside plant is also called moonily because its blossoms open in the cooler hours of evening



The Great White Throne

Glenn Van Nimwegen

and wilt with the rising heat of the day. Few people have ever lived in Zion Canyon year-round. Mormon settlers once did. They were here in summer, when dramatic thunderstorms send dozens of waterfalls, large and small, cascading off the cliffs; in autumn, when the green canyon trees turn gold; in winter, when light snow dusts the rocks; and in spring, when wildflowers fed by melting snows bloom. You may want to

sample a different season on your next visit to Zion Canyon. You can be sure that whenever you return, and no matter how often, Zion Canyon will always repay you generously for the time you spend here.



View out long tunnel

Allen Hapgood

Zion-Mt. Carmel Highway Outstanding works of man and nature compete for attention along this route. The road, completed in 1930, was considered an "almost impossible project," an engineering marvel of its time. Built across rough up-and-down terrain, it connects lower Zion Canyon with the high plateaus to the east. Two narrow tunnels, including one 1.8 kilometers (1.1 miles) long, were drilled and blasted through the cliffs to finish the construction job.

As you travel from one side of the long tunnel to the other, the landscape changes dramatically. On one side lies Zion Canyon with its massive cliff walls. The colossal size of the canyon is matched by one of the most striking attractions along this road—the Great Arch of Zion, a "blind" arch carved high in a vertical cliff wall.

On the other side of the tunnel is slickrock country. Here rocks colored in white and pastels of



Checkerboard Mesa

David Muench

orange and red have been eroded into hundreds of fantastic shapes, etched through time with odd patterns of cracks and grooves. The mountain of sandstone known as Checkerboard Mesa stands as the most prominent example of this naturally sculpted rock art.

Roads to the Kolob Two roads lead into the northwest corner of the park, where streams have carved spectacular canyons at the edge of the Kolob Terrace. The Kolob Canyons Road penetrates the heart of the brilliant red rock country of the steep-walled Finger Canyons. The Kolob Terrace Road overlooks the white and salmon-colored cliffs of the Left and Right Forks of North Creek. Both routes climb into forests of pinyon and juniper, ponderosa pine,

fir, and quaking aspen are found at Lava Point. In summer there is often a feel of mountain coolness to the air atop the Kolob's highcountry plateaus. And in the winter and early spring the Kolob is buried under a thick snowpack. The sparkling white of the snow heightens the colors of this already colorful landscape.



A finger canyon of the Kolob

Allen Hapgood

Beyond the Road

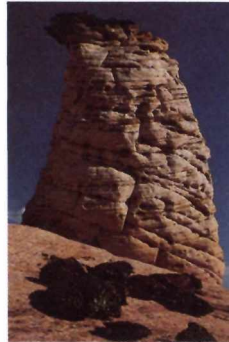
The names of the trails in Zion—Emerald Pools, Hidden Canyon, Gateway to the Narrows, Canyon Overlook—hint at some of what you can find beyond the road. There are surprises, too—a desert swamp, a petrified forest, springs and waterfalls, and the always unpredictable appearance of wildlife. You may be overwhelmed by the size and scale of the park as it surrounds you, or fascinated by the tiny details of a rock pattern or a cactus bloom.

Before you head out on your first hike, consult "Hiking Zion," a brief guide to the park's trails on the opposite side of this folder. Naturalists take guided trips along some of these trails from late March to November. They also lead off-trail hikes through canyons, up the Virgin River, and over slickrock country.

Guided horseback trips are offered April through October. Private horseback parties should check in at either visitor center. The Weeping Rock access to the East Rim Trail is closed to horses because the steep and narrow path is unsafe for them. The Lava Point trailhead is the safest access to the West Rim Trail.

Technical climbing is permitted in the park. Registration at Zion Canyon Visitor Center is voluntary, but a free backcountry permit is required for overnight climbs. Climbing alone is not recommended.

A Gallery of Sculpted Rock A hiker stands knee-deep in the Virgin River, dwarfed by the dark sandstone walls of Zion Canyon. In some stretches, barely 5 meters (16 feet) separate canyon sides that loom 610 meters (2,000 feet) high. The canyon is an overpowering testimony to the creative powers of erosion. There are many such displays of wind and water-sculpted rock beyond the road's end. From trails on the plateau

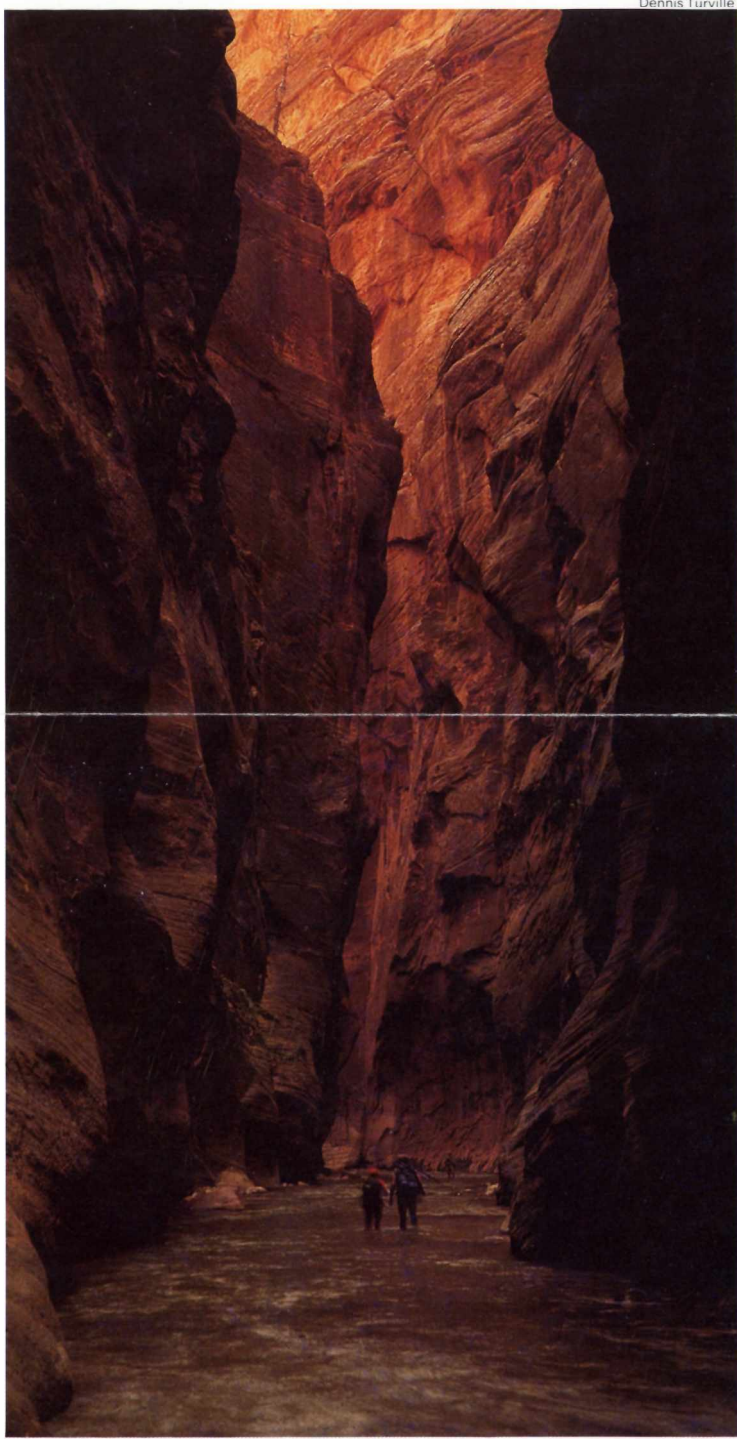


A hoodoo

Gordon Anderson

rim there are sweeping vistas of Zion Canyon and the massive and equally colorful canyon of the Right Fork of North Creek. Other trails lead through smaller, narrow side canyons with graceful curving walls as smooth as polished stone.

One observer called Zion "a singular display of nature's art mingled with nonsense." Perhaps nothing reflects this idea better than the hoodoos do. These weird, iron-capped rocks resemble enormous mushrooms, or king-sized footstools, or whatever your imagination fancies. A multitude of other interesting rock forms—from arches to alcoves to potholes—are scattered here, there, everywhere.



In the Narrows of Zion Canyon

Dennis Turville

A Refuge for Wildlife The name Zion suggests a place of peace and refuge. This is true not only for visitors but for wildlife as well. The park is a sanctuary for roadrunners and golden eagles, mule deer and mountain lions, cactus and cottonwood. Some of the best opportunities for encountering wildlife are along park trails. You may surprise lizards or Gambel's quail on a hike along a wooded wash on the desert's edge. Or hear echoes of the clear gushing song of the canyon wren in a pygmy forest of pinyon and juniper. Watch for tracks; they may be the closest you get to rarely seen species like the mountain lion or the nocturnal ringtailed cat.

Wildflowers are common throughout the park, particularly in spring and fall. Even where there is nothing more than a tiny pocket of soil in a rock crack, plants manage to take root and grow. Some cliffs, like those at Weeping Rock, are thick with golden and cliff columbine, scarlet monkey-flower, and maidenhair fern. Springwater seeping through the porous rock walls nourishes these lush hanging gardens.



Hanging gardens

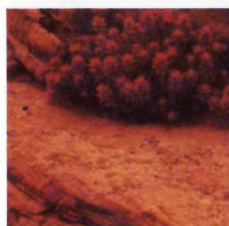
David Muench



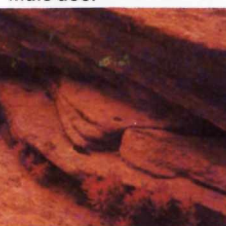
Utah beavertail cactus



Shooting stars



Slickrock paintbrush



Golden columbine



Mule deer

Glenn Van Nimwegen

A Wilderness Preserved Protected within Zion's 595 square kilometers (229 square miles) is a wilderness full of the unexpected. It includes the world's largest arch—Kolob Arch—with a span that measures 94 meters (310 feet), and simpler natural wonders, such as small waterfalls and clear backcountry pools. The fundamental qualities of wild America—quiet and solitude—are here, too.



Kolob Arch

Victor Jackson



Emerald Pools waterfall

Eck Cooper

General Information and Services

The Zion Canyon Visitor Center offers a wide variety of information and services year-round. Many books and free brochures, topographic maps, and exhibits are available. Park rangers can assist you in planning your visit to get the most out of your time.

The smaller Kolob Canyons Visitor Center offers information and a limited range of services year-round.

Campgrounds Watchman and South Campgrounds are open on a first-come, first-served basis. One is open year-round; both are open in summer. A fee is charged. Both have fire grates, picnic tables, water, restrooms, and a sanitary disposal station for trailers. There are no utility hook-ups or showers. Some sites are set aside for the handicapped in Watchman. Group campsites are available by reservation to organized educational or youth groups.

The Lava Point Primitive Campground is usually

open from May to October. Fire grates, tables, and toilets are provided, but there is no water. No fee is charged.

Camping is limited to 14 days and is permitted only in designated sites or in the backcountry.

Picnic Areas The park's two picnic areas are the Grotto Picnic Area in Zion Canyon and a site at the end of the Kolob Canyons Road. The Grotto has fire grates, picnic tables, water, and restrooms. The more primitive Kolob site has tables and pit toilets.

Zion Lodge Cabins, a restaurant, snack bar, and gift shop are located at Zion Lodge. For information on cabin rentals, write: the Utah Parks Division of TW Services, Inc., 451 N. Main St., Cedar City, UT 84720; or call (801) 586-7666. Advance reservations are recommended in the summer. The cabins, and the rest of the lodge services, are available from April to November.

Tram Tours Concession-operated tours of Zion Canyon aboard open air trams are run several times daily in the summer.

Reservations and information are available at the lodge.

Horseback Rides Guided trail rides are available April through October. Reservations and information are available at the lodge, or you can call (801) 772-3967 or 679-6665.

Nearby Services and Accommodations Springdale, Mt. Carmel, and the larger towns of Hurricane, St. George, Cedar City, and Kanab have motels, restaurants, service stations, and grocery stores. A private

campground in Springdale has full utility hook-ups and hot showers. Other private campgrounds are located within 40 kilometers (25 miles) of the park. The nearest hospitals are in St. George, Cedar City, and Kanab.

Park Activities Naturalist-guided walks, evening programs, and talks are given from late March to November. Activity schedules are posted in the visitor centers and throughout the park.

From June to early August, children ages 6

through 12 can learn about the park at the Zion Nature Center. Sessions are conducted five days a week.

Fishing A Utah fishing license is required in the park. Angling success is poor.

Climate From May to October temperatures range from 22° to 40°C (72° to 105°F) in the day and from 7° to 23°C (45° to 73°F) at night. Brief afternoon thunderstorms are common in July and August. Winters are mild in Zion Canyon with temperatures often reaching

above 4°C (40°F). Little snow falls in Zion Canyon, but snow accumulates on the plateaus. Spring and fall are ideal times to visit the park. During these seasons temperatures range from 7°C (44°F) at night to 27°C (80°F) in the day.

Information For more information write: Superintendent, Zion National Park, Springdale, UT 84767; or call (801) 772-3256.

As a visitor to Zion, please take a moment to read these precautions to protect yourself and the park.

Summer temperatures can reach 43°C (110°F). Guard against becoming overheated. Drink even when you don't feel thirsty. You can lose a lot of water in this dry heat and not know it.

Watch your step at overlooks and along other cliff edges. It is particularly easy to lose your balance when taking photos or looking through binoculars. Keep a close eye on children.

Flash floods are a potential danger whenever thunderstorms are in the area. Stay out of drainage areas when a storm is near. Be alert to the threat of lightning, too.

Watch for rockfalls and landslides. Although they rarely do damage, they do occur frequently.

Plants, animals, and all other natural features are protected and should not be disturbed. Hunting or the use of firearms is prohibited.

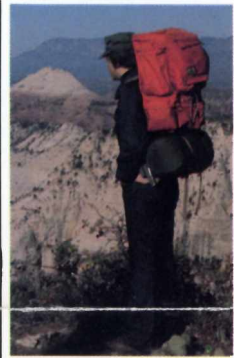
Pets must be kept under physical control at all

times. They are prohibited in public buildings, on trails, and in the backcountry.

Fires are permitted only in campstoves or provided grills. Keep them small and controlled. Collect only dead and down wood.

In an emergency contact a ranger, or call (801) 772-3322 or 772-3311.

Hiking Zion



Victor Jackson

trail with a ranger. Carry a topographic map when hiking longer trails or off-trail. Water is scarce in the backcountry; you should carry four liters (one gallon) per person per day. Carry some water even on short hikes. Don't drink water you find in the backcountry without boiling or treating it. Carry food on long trips. Pack out all trash. See "For a Safe Visit" for more information.

There are trails in Zion for those who want an easy 10-minute walk, a two-day backpacking trip, or something in-between. The chart at right lists the park's most popular trails. When choosing a hike consider not only your time and interests but also your hiking experience and physical fitness. Easy trails are short and mostly level. Moderately strenuous trails require hiking long distances, often uphill. Extreme summer heat makes any hike more difficult and exhausting. Early morning, late afternoon, and evening are best for hiking, unless you come in spring or fall when it is much cooler.

Always let a friend or relative know where you are going and when you expect to return. Stay on trails unless you have discussed plans to hike off-

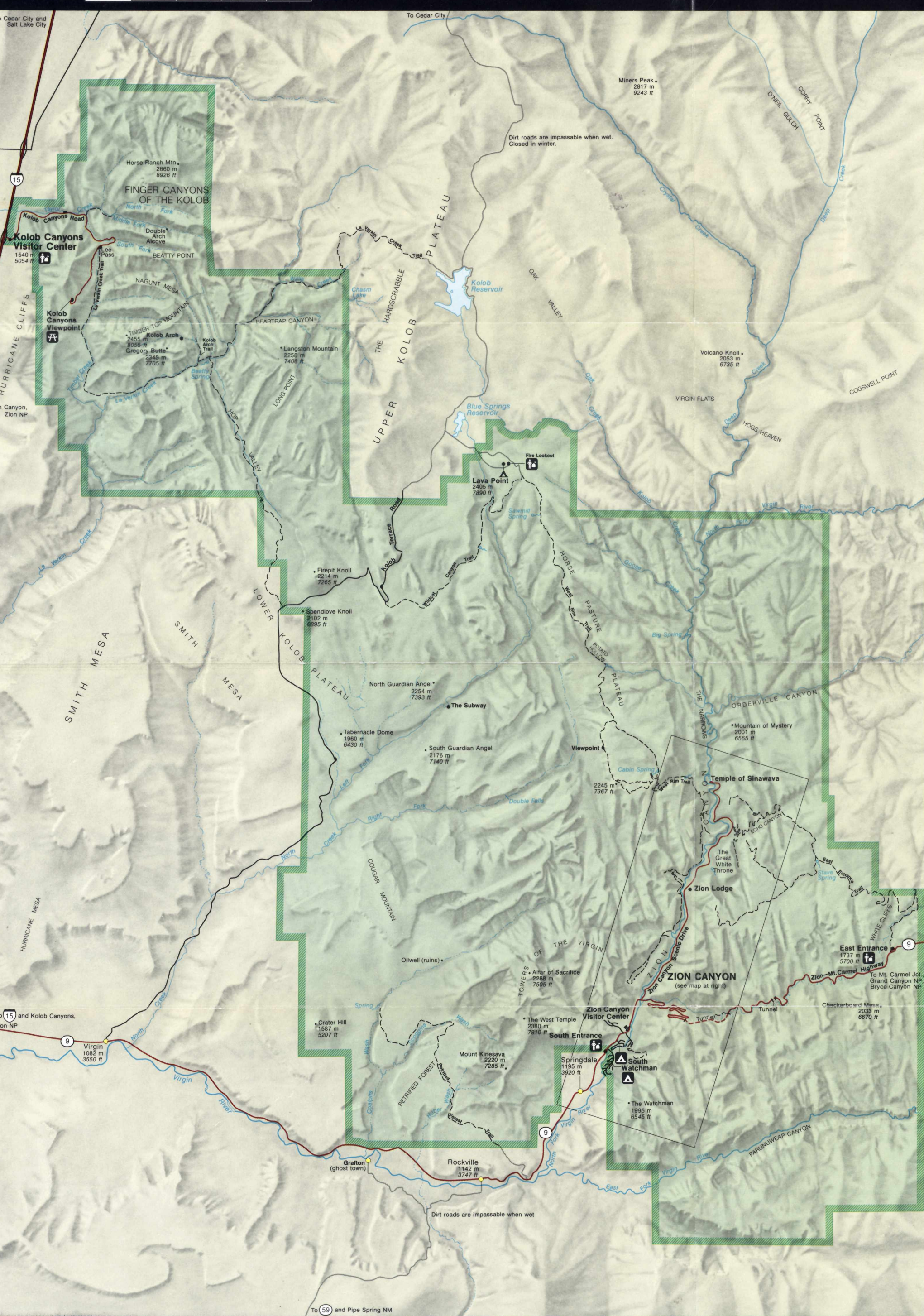
Backcountry Camping Free backcountry permits are required to camp on a hiking trip. Permits are issued at the Zion Canyon Visitor Center and the Kolob Canyons Visitor Center. Camping is not permitted within 1.6 kilometers (1 mile) of a road or trailhead.

The Narrows The Narrows of Zion Canyon is one of the park's most popular, and most strenuous, off-trail hikes. Hiking through the Narrows is a 26-kilometer (16-mile) trip requiring at least one full day. Much of the trip involves wading through the Virgin River. The Narrows may be closed because of the threat of flash floods. Permits are required for trips through the length of the Narrows. They are available at either visitor center.

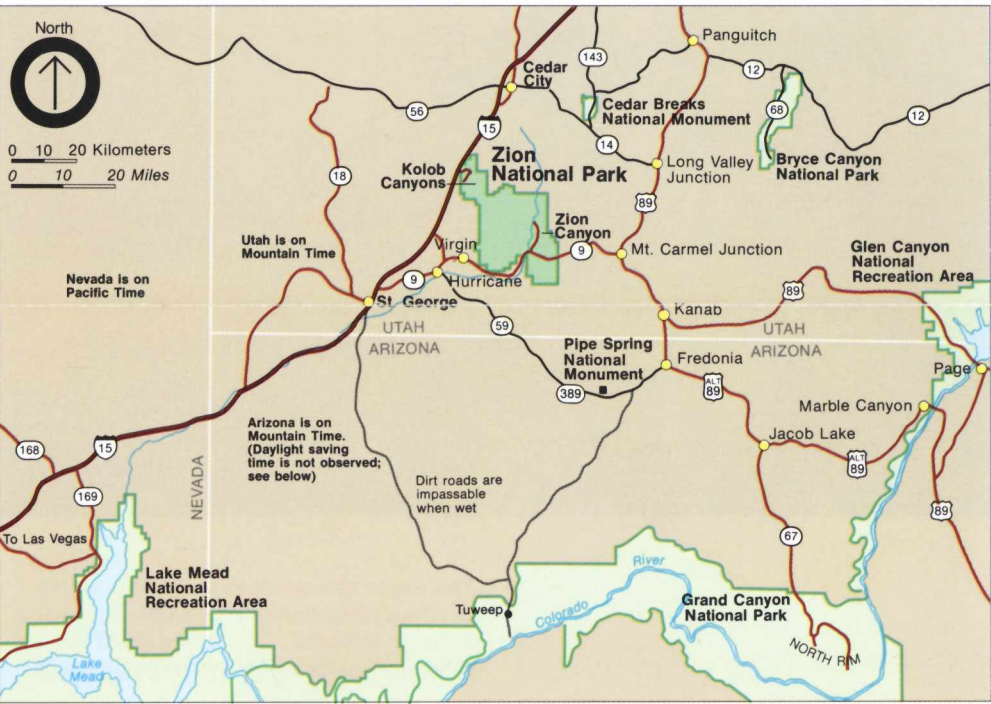
Trail	Trailhead	Round Trip (km/mi)	Round Trip (avg. time)	Ascent (m/ft)	Description	
Weeping Rock	Zion Canyon Scenic Drive—Weeping Rock parking lot	0.8/0.5	½ hour	30/98	Easy. Self-guiding trail. Ends at Weeping Rock, a rock alcove with dripping springs.	Hanging gardens of wildflowers decorate the walls in spring and summer.
Canyon Overlook	Zion-Mt. Carmel Highway—just east of long tunnel	1.6/1.0	1 hour	50/163	Easy. Self-guiding trail; guidebooks are available at visitor center and trailhead.	Ends at spectacular viewpoint of lower Zion Canyon, Pine Creek Canyon, and Zion-
Emerald Pools	Zion Canyon Scenic Drive—opposite Zion Lodge	1.9/1.2	1 hour	21/69	Easy. Ends at Lower Pool and three waterfalls. Accessible to handicapped, with some	assistance. To reach Upper Pool, hike another 1.6 kilometers (1 mile); this is more strenuous. Upper Pool is larger, sits at base of high cliffs.
Gateway to the Narrows	Zion Canyon Scenic Drive—Temple of Sinawava	3.2/2.0	1½ hours	17/57	Easy. Follows Virgin River upstream to Zion Canyon Narrows, where paved trail	ends. Hanging gardens of wildflowers in spring and summer. Trailside exhibits.
Watchman	Zion-Mt. Carmel Highway—South Campground Amphitheater	3.2/2.0	2 hours	112/368	Moderately strenuous. Ends at viewpoint of lower Zion Canyon, Oak Creek Canyon,	and town of Springdale. Recommended for hiking in fall, winter, and spring.
Hidden Canyon	Zion Canyon Scenic Drive—Weeping Rock parking lot	3.2/2.0	3 hours	259/850	Moderately strenuous. Leads through narrow side canyon carved in joint of rock. Trail	ends at canyon mouth; can hike beyond end of the trail for another 1 kilometer (0.6 mile). Natural arch.
Sand Bench	Zion Canyon Scenic Drive—Court of the Patriarchs	5.8/3.6	3 hours	152/500	Moderately strenuous. Good views of lower Zion Canyon and the Three Patriarchs.	Crosses ancient landslide. Ends below the Streaked Wall. Recommended for
Angels Landing	Zion Canyon Scenic Drive—Grotto Picnic Area	8.0/5.0	4 hours	453/1488	Strenuous. Ends at summit high above Zion Canyon floor. Last 0.8 kilometer (0.5 mile)	follows a steep ridge; chains and railings have been added for safety. This hike is not
East Rim	Zion Canyon Scenic Drive—Weeping Rock parking lot	12.0/8.0	7 hours	655/2148	Strenuous. Climbs to Observation Point high above the floor of Zion Canyon. Excellent views of the canyon. Trail gives access to other East Rim plateau trails.	lent views of the canyon. Trail gives access to other East Rim plateau trails.
Kolob Arch	Kolob Canyons Road—Lee Pass	22.0/14.0	8 hours	213/699*	Strenuous. Follows Timber and La Verkin Creeks and ends at Kolob Arch, the	world's largest freestanding arch. This red rock span is 94 meters (310 feet) long.
West Rim	Zion Canyon Scenic Drive—Grotto Picnic Area	42.6/26.6	20 hours	1095/3593	Strenuous. Climbs to high country viewpoint of canyon of Right Fork of North Creek	(20.4 kilometers/12.8 miles), and continues to Lava Point, an alternate starting point.
				*Descent		Trip to Lava Point should not be attempted as one-day hike.

- Unpaved road
- Trail
- Picnic area
- Self-guiding trail
- Campground
- Primitive campground
- Overlook or parking area
- Ranger station
- Amphitheater
- Private campground

The Park



Traveling in the Area



Zion is part of the South-west's "Grand Circle" of national parks, monuments, historical areas, and recreation areas—one of the world's great concentrations of outstanding natural and cultural features. Driving distances from the Zion Canyon Visitor Center to many of these sites and to area towns are listed here for your convenience.

Bryce Canyon National Park, 138 km (86 mi); **Cedar Breaks National Monument**, 122 km (76 mi); **Cedar City**, 96 km (60 mi); **Grand Canyon National Park**: North Rim, 190 km (119 mi) and South Rim, 405 km (253 mi); **Kanab**, 66 km (41 mi); **Lake Mead National Recreation Area** (Hoover Dam area), 304 km (189 mi); **Lake Powell** (Glen Canyon National Recreation Area), 184 km (115 mi); **Las Vegas**, 253 km (158 mi); **Pipe Spring National Monument**, 101 km (63 mi); **St. George**, 69 km (43 mi).

Be aware of time changes as you travel throughout this region. Nevada is always one hour earlier than Utah, and thus on the same time as Nevada.

the same time from late October to late April. But from late April to late October Arizona is one hour earlier than Utah, and thus on the same time as Nevada.

Detailed Map of Zion Canyon

