

Grand Canyon

Simply Amazing



At 18 miles wide, 277 miles long and a mile deep, Grand Canyon simply takes your breath away and it is pretty obvious why it's one of the seven wonders of the world. The clouds and ever-changing angles of the sun on its various elevations make for fabulous views from any of the lookout points. About 90% of the Canyon's five million yearly visitors view it from the South Rim, as shown here. Only about 10% see the Canyon from the North Rim



“Grand Canyon is a powerful and inspiring landscape. It overwhelms our senses through its immense size and unique combinations of geologic color and erosional forms.”

www.nps.gov/grca/index.htm

because of its remote location and shorter tourist season. There are many opportunities for adventure-seekers in the Inner Canyon which includes everything below the rim. Hikers, backpackers, mule riders or river runners can all enjoy nature at its finest inside the canyon. But be prepared! It is a harsh desert environment with little shade and summer temperatures over 100°F, so make sure you take along a hat, sunscreen and plenty of water.

A free, environmentally-friendly shuttle system runs every fifteen minutes during busy months, with drop-offs and pick-ups at any stop along the route. Visit the park's website at www.nps.gov/grca/index.htm for points of interest, maps, and illustrations of the shuttle system. We took almost all afternoon on the Hermit Road Scenic Route (Red), stopping at all nine stops. The return trip is an express, with four stops. Three other routes may



be used for transportation between hotels, restaurants and campgrounds – some have viewpoints and most have canyon views a short walk away. Be sure to visit the Visitor Center and Yavapai Geology Museum. An overnight is recommended if you love the sun's affect on the Canyon as it rises or sets. We stayed at El Tovar and loved the convenience for returning the next day and the history and views are spectacular!





Moran Point Overlook



You can catch glimpses of the Colorado River making its way through the canyon at most of the lookouts, and the further east you go, the longer the glimpses become. With binoculars you might see rafters enjoying a float down. Raft trips lasting from three days to three weeks are probably the best way to really see the canyon, waking up to incredible views while camping below the rim.



Heading out of the Park and to the east, the Desert View Watchtower is a must-see. Pictured above is the view of the Painted Desert standing outside the Watchtower facing east. Views are magnificent even from the ground, but get up in that 70-foot-high stone building and you'll be at the highest point on the South Rim. Can you say WOW?

Desert View Watchtower

Built to Blend into the Environment



Mary Elizabeth Jane Colter, designer of the Watchtower wanted to make it difficult to tell where the rock of the canyon walls ended and the tower began. To achieve this, her design built-in the appearance of rubble at the base of the tower and she insisted the builders only use rocks at actual size and not cut, to keep their weathered surfaces.



A truly unique stop, Desert View Watchtower stands at the eastern end of the South Rim. Featuring a concrete foundation and steel framework beneath the stones, it offers spectacular views of the Grand Canyon and the Painted Desert at each level. Paintings adorn the interior which depict various aspects of Hopi mythology and religious ceremonies.

