

Driving around the Grand Canyon

When You'll Need a Car

Flying to Las Vegas or Phoenix and then driving to the South Rim is the most common tactic for getting to the Grand Canyon. If you're planning on seeing more than the Grand Canyon on your trip - then renting a car is the best option.

Las Vegas to North Rim
5 hours - 267 miles

(\$300 to \$500 - 8 days, car or SUV)

When you won't

If you are staying inside the park on the South Rim - you won't have any use for a car since there are shuttles that go everywhere.

Besides, most places are in walking distance for a

person who is planning on hiking many miles in the Grand Canyon. (Budget Free)

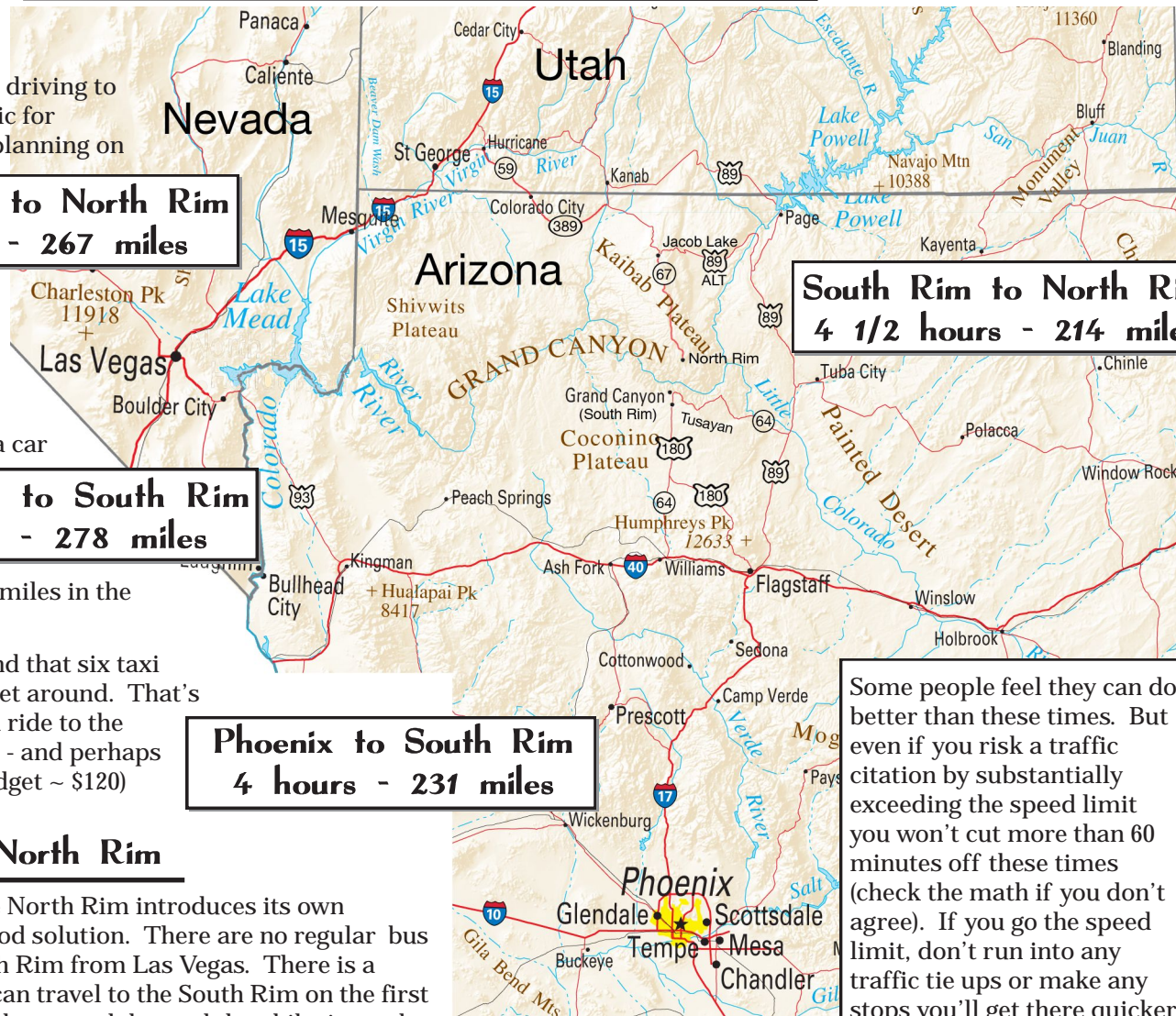
If you are staying in Tusayan you will find that six taxi rides are about the most you'll need to get around. That's a ride in and out on the day you arrive, a ride to the trailhead, a ride back from the trailhead - and perhaps one more round trip on the last day. (Budget ~ \$120)

Las Vegas to South Rim
5 hours - 278 miles

Phoenix to South Rim
4 hours - 231 miles

No easy Options - the North Rim

A rim-to-rim hike which starts from the North Rim introduces its own difficulties. No one seems to know a good solution. There are no regular bus or air connections that service the North Rim from Las Vegas. There is a daily shuttle from the South Rim. You can travel to the South Rim on the first day, take a shuttle to the North Rim on the second day and then hike in on the third day. (Budget \$75/person) You can also take the St. George Shuttle from McCarran Airport (Las Vegas) to St. George, Utah - then take a cab to the North Rim all in just one day (budget about \$ 350 for cab - \$ 30 shuttle).



South Rim to North Rim
4 1/2 hours - 214 miles

Some people feel they can do better than these times. But even if you risk a traffic citation by substantially exceeding the speed limit you won't cut more than 60 minutes off these times (check the math if you don't agree). If you go the speed limit, don't run into any traffic tie ups or make any stops you'll get there quicker than these times (perhaps as much as 30 minutes).

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Hiking the Grand Canyon the Corridor Trails

January 2008 Addendum

Work on this video began in October of 1993 and was completed in July of 2000. While most subjects would be hopelessly out of date seven years later - to the Grand Canyon seven years is not even the blink of an eye. As of January 2008 there are only 3 things in this video that require correction:

1. The Inner Canyon shop on the South Rim sells but does not rent ice crampons anymore.
2. Phantom Ranch reservations can be made 13 months ahead of time.
3. The shuttle ride between the rims now \$75 one-way.

If you happen to be reading this sometime in 2020 or even 2050 (when the authors are long gone) - it is very likely that these 3 things will have changed again...but not much else.

If you walk out of the Grand Canyon understanding that it is a place where time stands still, well, that's a start...now isn't it?

Flying to the Grand Canyon

(the best way to get there)

The Grand Canyon has always been a remote place. Even today it takes a full day of travel from most places in the USA. In the morning you're flying to Las Vegas or Phoenix and in the afternoon you're driving 4 to 5 hours to get to the South Rim. A better alternative is flying - BUT...



Flying to the South Rim can be tricky to arrange for three reasons:

1. There is NO air service from anywhere near Phoenix. You must fly into Las Vegas if you want to fly to the South Rim.
2. Air service to the South Rim concentrates on round trip "air tours" for tourists, not one-way transportation of passengers.
3. The large tour operators fly out of Boulder City Airport - which is 24 miles from McCarran Airport (Las Vegas).

Currently the two operators you'll want to consider are: Papillon (www.papillon.com) and Scenic Airlines (www.scenic.com)

When you call, reserve a Grand Canyon Overnight tour with extended stay, a hotel room for the day you plan on hiking out and a return flight the next morning. Combining the airfare with hotel reservations will be better than either alone.

Make sure you understand the specific arrangements for getting to and from the Boulder City Airport terminal. If you don't cover this you may end up with a \$60 taxi ride out of your own pocket.

If you have questions or problems with anything here - please go to our website and drop us a note.

www.grandcanyonhiker.com

Getting your Backcountry Permit

Be Flexible

Flexibility is the key to getting a backcountry permit. A permit request that leaves the requested dates open stands a much better chance than a request for specific dates. With that in mind - always get your permit - then make your travel arrangements. Build your trip around the permit - not the permit around the trip.

Be Timely

Permits can be requested 4 months ahead of time (June for October, December for April, etc.). The Backcountry Office at the Grand Canyon gets thousands of requests for permits. Most come at the beginning of the month. Your best chance is to FAX your permit request on the 1st of the month. Their routine is to randomly work through all the permits that arrive at the beginning of the month.

Be Knowledgeable

Take a few minutes to study the 'Backcountry Use Areas' and use the letter codes which the rangers are familiar with. You can find a map with these use areas online or in the popular trail maps. First time hikers will be requesting permits for Indian Garden (CIG), Bright Angel Campground (CBG), or Cottonwood Campground (CCG)

When all else fails - the 'Walk-in' Permit

If, for some reason, you're going to arrive at the Canyon without a permit - don't despair. Go immediately to the Backcountry Office and get in the queue for a 'walk-in' permit. The park service holds back a small number of slots for people who are actually at the Canyon. It's possible that you will be able to get one of these slots if you have a little extra time - maybe even the next morning.

When even that fails...

Leave your camping gear at the hotel - pack light with water, snacks and minimum gear - then dayhike. The possibilities are endless and the only thing you'll miss is sleeping under the stars. Try the South Kaibab down to Cedar Ridge, Hermit Trail to Dripping Springs, Bright Angel to Plateau Point or Horseshoe Mesa.

While we guarantee our DVD (just 1 return in 8 years) everything in this addendum is subject to change - plan accordingly.



Grand Canyon NPS HQ

928-638-7950

Call here for Road and Weather

Call here for NPS Trip Planner

www.nps.gov/grca

NPS Backcountry Office

Read all FAQs before calling

Mon to Fri - 1pm to 5pm (MST)

928-638-7875 - FAX 928-638-2125

Xanterra

(Phantom Ranch and Rim lodging)

303-29PARKS (297-2757)

888-297-2757 www.xanterra.com

Open Road Tours (Bus)

SRIM from Phoenix and Flagstaff

800-766-7117 - 602-997-6474

Trans Canyon Shuttle (\$75 one-way)

(SRIM to NRIM) (1/2 day one way)

928-638-2820

SRIM Fred Harvey Taxi (avail 24 hrs)

928-638-2631 ext 6563

The Train (from Williams, AZ)

800-843-8724 (800 The Train)

Inner Canyon Shop

(Rent and Sell Backpack Eq)

(Located inside the Park)

928-638-2262

SRIM Kennel

(must have shot records)

daycare or overnight care

928-638-0534

Mather Campground (SRIM)

www.recreation.gov

Trailer Village (SRIM)

Call Xanterra

Camper Village (Tusayan)

open March 8th

928-638-2887

TenX Campground

US Forest Service

May 1st to Oct 1st

928-638-2443

Cross country skiing

(SRIM when snow is okay)

Kaibab National Forest

928-638-2443

One other way to get there...take the train

Amtrak's *Southwest Chief* stops in Williams, Arizona where you can catch "The Train" for the South Rim. This is not the quickest way to get to the Grand Canyon - but it might be the most scenic. Coming from Chicago you'll spend one night on the train, the next night in Williams and get to the South Rim at noon the next day.