

EXPLORE!

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Why book this trip?

The American Southwest is what road trips were meant for. Thanks to an abundance of natural wonders in a relatively small space, we pack in visits to six spectacular national parks during this eight-day trip. We'll spend plenty of time seeing the highlights but also take in some quieter spots along this classic road-trip route.

- **Six awe inspiring national parks** - Starting at Zion, visit all of Utah's 'Big Five' parks before a fitting end at the Grand Canyon, Arizona
- **Sunrise to sunset** - Witness magnificent dawns and dusks through the windows of Arches, over the hoodoos of Bryce Canyon and at the incomparable Grand Canyon
- **Monument Valley** - Discover this Navajo Nation's park, looking out over the iconic sandstone buttes that

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emerge out of the scrub



INCLUDED MEALS



TRIP STAFF
Explore Tour
Leader / Driver



TRANSPORT
Maxiwagon



ACCOMMODATION
8 nights
comfortable hotel



TRIP PACE:
Full on



GROUP SIZE:
8 - 13

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Land in Las Vegas and drive to St George for Zion National Park

Our trip begins in the 'Neon City' of Las Vegas. We'll meet our Tour Leader and the group in the lobby of the OYO Hotel, before departing the bright lights immediately for the wild landscapes of the southwest.

Our minibus will leave the OYO Hotel at 4pm, so in order to arrive at the hotel for this time, the latest your flight can arrive is 2pm. We will provide shuttle bus transfers to take you from the airport to the city (approximately 15 minutes), and you will receive a voucher containing instructions on how to take the transfer prior to departure.

We will then travel together as a group and the drive will take approximately two hours (200 kilometres) to our hotel for the night in the Utah city of St George. With its warm weather, historic downtown area and close proximity to Zion National Park, St George is the perfect place to rest for the night. Red sandstone rocks provide the backdrop to the city, and the Mormon influence can be seen in many of the buildings, notably the enormous St George Utah Temple.

If flight times into Las Vegas prevent you from landing at 2pm, or if you want to experience this energetic city before your tour starts, we recommend booking an additional night's accommodation at the OYO Hotel so that you'll be there when the group arrives.



ACCOMMODATION:
Ramada Inn, St George (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Spend the day at Zion National Park; drive to Bryce Canyon

This morning we will take the one hour drive to Zion National Park, aiming to get there early to explore.

The main area of the national park that we will visit is Zion Canyon, a 15 mile rift in the beautiful red and tan Navajo sandstone. We may take a walk along the Watchman's Trail, a moderate hike of approximately two hours that will take us past many of the park's famous geological formations, including the Towers of the Virgin and the Altar of Sacrifice. The very end of the walk brings us to a spectacular overlook of the Watchman, a red rock pinnacle that dominates the skyline. Photographic opportunities are plentiful, with a great contrast between the red of the rocks and the running rivers that we'll pass.

There are so many walking possibilities in Zion, and your Tour Leader will outline the options to you from the easy to the strenuous. Angel's Landing is one of the most famous trails, a challenging hike of four hours that affords breathtaking views across the valley. For those of us who aren't hikers, the park's shuttle bus takes people along the valley floor with regular stops to get out, explore and jump back on the next vehicle. Quite simply, there is something in Zion for everyone.

Later, we drive to Bryce Canyon via Buffalo and Mt Carmel Junction.



ACCOMMODATION:
Ruby's Inn (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 3 - Early morning at Sunrise Point, Bryce Canyon; time to explore this natural wonder

Bryce is without doubt one of the natural highlights of this journey - a world of surreal kaleidoscopic sandstone forms that are steeped in the tales of the Paiute tribe. Legend has it that the sandstone 'hoodoo's' of Bryce are in fact the petrified followers of the Coyote God, turned to stone as they stood listening to his angry tirade. Looking out over these towering pillars that litter the floor of Bryce Canyon's great amphitheatre, you could almost believe that you're facing a crowd of people, all awaiting their judgement.

This morning we see Bryce at its most radiant, in the golden hues of sunrise as we drive up to Sunrise Point to watch the dawn break across the landscape. This afternoon we will explore something of the myriad shapes and shades of this fairytale realm, hiking along the Navajo Loop, or taking in the grandeur of the Queen's Garden. Bryce was created as a national park in 1928 and is actually a part of the Grand Staircase that follows the rim along the Paunsaugunt Plateau. As you look out across the pink, orange and red spires it is easy to sympathise with Ebenezer Bryce, a Mormon farmer who is best remembered for the profound words, 'Well it's a hell of a place to lose a cow!'



ACCOMMODATION:
Ruby's Inn (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 4 - Drive to Moab via Capitol Reef National Park; walk to Delicate Arch for sunset

Today we drive west to Moab, taking State Highway 24 directly through the most remote and undervisited of Utah's 'Big Five' National Parks: Capitol Reef. The red rock park encompasses a landscape of colored sandstone cliffs, twisting canyons, monoliths and spires. We'll stop en route to take in some of the parks many awe-inspiring viewpoints before continuing to Moab.

This evening we plan to make a sunset visit to Arches National Park. It's a two hour walk to Delicate Arch,

probably one of the most iconic arches in the American southwest. At 20 metres tall and freestanding, this natural rock archway is a perfect spot to watch the sun set on this magnificent landscape. After sunset, the lack of light and air pollution in the area should afford us a dazzling display of stars. After our walk we then head back to Moab for the evening.



ACCOMMODATION:
Big Horn Lodge (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 5 - Hikes in Arches and Canyonlands National Parks

Arches National Park is home to the world's largest concentration of natural sandstone arches. With over 2000 arches, giant sandstone fins, balancing rocks and towering spires, the park provides a unique setting for this morning discovery. We may take in the Devil's Garden, a three-hour hike that takes us through a landscape littered with arches, including one of the world's longest - Landscape Arch. Time-allowing we may also take a more gentle walk around The Windows Loop (approximately 1.5 hours), before leaving the park.

In the afternoon we visit Arches' neighbouring park, and the last of Utah's Big Five National Parks, Canyonlands. The park is a wilderness of countless canyons and buttes carved by the Colorado River and its tributaries, which also divide the park into four districts: the Island in the Sky, the Needles, the Maze and the rivers themselves. We plan to head into the Island in the Sky district, where we will take an easy trail to the spectacular Mesa Arch, a natural rock arch on the edge of a cliff that gives us panoramic views of the region.

We'll drive back to Moab this evening.



ACCOMMODATION:
Big Horn Lodge (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 6 - Drive through Monument Valley to Page; optional Jeep tour with a Navajo guide

Today we drive to the town of Page via the Navajo Reservation, the biggest in the country, founded in 1888 to provide a protected region for the Navajo people. The Navajo Nation constitutes the largest tribe left in the United States, the last survivors of a people who were decimated by the arrival of the white man and his quest for land and gold.

Monument Valley lies within the heart of this vast tribal area and in spite of its familiarity through the exposure by Hollywood, nothing can truly prepare you for the sheer grandeur and spectacle of this incredible setting. Isolated monoliths, sandstone pinnacles and towering spires rocket skywards, as much as 1000m above the desert floor. As the only way to experience Monument Valley's dramatic backcountry, we offer you the chance to take an optional guided jeep tour of the valley with a Navajo guide, affording a closer exploration of this compelling land before we head on to our night stop in Page.

As we continue through native lands towards Page, the warm embrace of the late afternoon glow alters the landscape's appearance as the sun dips towards the horizon. Time-permitting, we aim to experience the final dip of the sun at the famous Horseshoe Bend on the Colorado River.



ACCOMMODATION:
Quality Inn (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 7 - Chance to discover Antelope Canyon; drive to the Grand Canyon arriving for sunset views

This morning we have the option to visit the famous Antelope Canyon, a beautiful peach-gold canyon formed by the force of flash floods coming from the plains above, or otherwise spend time at the enormous Lake Powell, with its scenic azure waters.

Later, we'll continue our journey towards the southern rim of the Grand Canyon, arriving this afternoon. Once described by Theodore Roosevelt as 'the one great sight every American should see', the canyon extends some 445 kilometres from east to west, from the western edge of the Navajo Reservation, to the Nevada border around Lake Mead. Reaching a depth of 1600m the canyon's floor is littered with some of the oldest rocks on the planet and as we take in the views from Desert View, we gaze out across a land that has taken over 2 billion years to create.



ACCOMMODATION:
Red Feather Lodge (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 8 - Explore the rim on foot or walk into the canyon; drive to Las Vegas

This morning has been left free to make the most of this natural wonder at your own pace. You may wish to hike various parts of the rim trail (easy to moderate walking), taking you along the top edge of the canyon with some stunning view points; or perhaps the Bright Angel Trail, a steeper walk that takes you further down below the rim of the canyon and into the abyss itself. There are a multitude of different walking options available, all of which will offer you some spectacular scenery of this amazing landscape.

In the late afternoon we leave the Grand Canyon behind us and return to the big city, Las Vegas. We will arrive late, around 8pm.



ACCOMMODATION:
La Quinta Inn - Las Vegas (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 9 - Trip ends in Las Vegas

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Las Vegas.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart from Las Vegas at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to depart from Las Vegas International Airport (LAS), which is a 15 minute drive away.



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

Trip information

Climate and country information

USA

Climate

There are great variations in the altitude and terrain of the areas visited and this is reflected in the temperatures. Desert areas can be extremely hot in the summer months (49°), though temperatures can drop dramatically at night. The mountains are cooler and wetter especially in the north of the Rockies. At the beginning and end of the season there may still be some snow around in the high passes and it can be cold, whereas in mid-summer the day time temperatures can soar.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
-9	2 Pin Flat	Christian	English

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

There are a number of exciting optional excursions you can do on tour. These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Page - Antelope Canyon excursion US\$ 45 - \$80 (depending on seasonal peak hours and availability)

Monument Valley - Jeep excursion US\$45-75 including lunch

Grand Canyon - Helicopter overflight approximately US\$ 254-284

Clothing

Pack for hot conditions in summertime. For departures earlier and later in the year, the weather can be cooler, especially at night in the desert so make sure you bring some warmer layers including a fleece. At anytime of year, you should pack a lightweight waterproof jacket, swimwear and a sun hat.

Footwear

Lightweight walking/hiking boots with good ankle support, trainers and/or sandals for travelling.

Luggage

20Kg

Luggage: On tour

Bring only the bare essentials - one main bag plus a small daysack for walking and for personal items. Main luggage cannot be accessed during the day. Soft luggage is more practical as it is stored in the trailer during travel. Bring plastic bags to keep things dry. Laundry facilities are available at various points during the trip.

Equipment

Bring a water bottle (3 litre capacity), high factor sunblock, and sunglasses. You may find a walking pole and insect repellent useful especially in June and July.

Tipping

Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. However,

you might want to recognise a leader that's done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It's a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we'd recommend between US\$5 to US\$10 per person per day as a guideline.

Local crew

In North America tipping 15%-20% is a recognised part of life across the service industry, including restaurants, activity suppliers, taxis and guides. Local staff will look to you for personal recognition of particular services provided.

Unlike other Explore trips, during our trips in North America our Explore leaders will not operate a tips kitty. However, they will be more than happy to provide guidance throughout the trip on who to tip when and to suggest appropriate amounts.

USA

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£15	£21	£Varies for different towns, average £4.00	£1.1

Foreign Exchange

Local currency	Recommended Currency For Exchange
US Dollars.	Bring your money in US\$ cash.

Where To Exchange

Banks or 'Forex' offices in main towns/cities. Your tour leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability	Credit Card Acceptance
Widely available.	Widely accepted just about everywhere.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Maxiwagon

Accommodation notes

We use a range of comfortable rated motels, lodges and hotels during this trip, all well-located to make the most of the USA's natural wonders.

You may notice that there is no breakfast included during this tour. In fact, in St George and Page the hotels occasionally provide a small continental offering which may be sufficient for some travellers. Otherwise we will be up and out early, making sure that we stop at a local cafe, diner or bakery to fuel up before our day of explorations.

Essential Information

Government Travel Safety Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

When travelling to the USA, you will need the following:

ESTA - Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia and passport holders from several EU countries can apply for an ESTA here - <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> - you must have an electronic passport with a digital chip containing biometric information. If you have visited Libya, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, Syria or Yemen since March 2011, or dual national of these countries, you cannot travel with an ESTA. In this case you will need to apply for a visa from the nearest US embassy or consulate.

Please note for your ESTA application you will be required to supply Point of Contact information. This will be provided in your final documentation, which you will receive 3-4 weeks before departure. Explore's USA contact information will be listed as the first nights' hotel in the US. If you are leaving for the USA before this, please call the Explore team to get this information.

ETA - only if transiting via Canada

Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia and passport holders from several EU countries can apply for an ETA here - <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta.asp> - other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa

through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

Find out more about [Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions](#) before you book.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full

amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them here.

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

USA

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, polio and hepatitis A. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Additional Information



Reviews



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**