



Walking the Western US National Parks

USA - TRIP CODE WUS

WALKING AND TREKKING

Why book this trip?

This walking trip takes you to some of the most stunning natural wonders that America has to offer. Marvel at the magnificent Grand Canyon, feel on top of the world at Angel's Landing in Zion, hike amid the surreal hoodoos in Bryce and watch the sunset through Delicate Arch.

- **National Parks** - Explore five beautiful National Parks, each spectacular in their own right
- **Grand Canyon** - Be awe struck standing on the rim of the Grand Canyon
- **Las Vegas and Route 66** - Drive along this historic highway



INCLUDED MEALS
Lunch: 4



TRIP STAFF
Explore Tour
Leader / Driver



TRANSPORT
Maxiwagon



ACCOMMODATION
9 nights
comfortable hotel



WALKING GRADE:
Moderate



GROUP SIZE:
8 - 13

Itinerary

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

DAY 1 - Trip starts in Las Vegas

Our trip begins in Las Vegas, a name that conjures up images of flashing lights, wedding chapels, slot machines and limousines - you will find all of this and so much more in this decadent, sense assaulting metropolis.

Due to the number of evening flights into Las Vegas, your Leader plans to do the welcome meeting on the morning of day two, and will leave a message in reception with details on timings and everything else that you'll need for the day. There are no activities planned today, so you are free to arrive in Las Vegas at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to arrive into McCarran International Airport (LAS) which is short drive from the hotel.

If your flight arrives earlier in the day, you could choose to take a stroll along the strip where you can see dancing fountains, a pirate ship, an erupting volcano, a pyramid and the Eiffel Tower all within a short walk of each other or take the opportunity to try and win a little holiday spending money! With multiple bars and restaurants to start your culinary journey in the US, Las Vegas is a great place to really get into that holiday mood.



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

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Drive Route 66 to Grand Canyon

You will meet with your local Leader after breakfast this morning for the initial tour briefing before we leave behind the bright lights of Vegas and drive towards the, aptly named, Grand Canyon. We will travel today along Historic Route 66, one of the most well known driving routes in the world and one of the original highways within the US Highway system. Well documented in songs and television programmes we will travel this historic route, stopping for lunch in the quirky Route 66 themed, Seligman before continuing on to the first of our National Parks, the Grand Canyon. Late afternoon we will first take in the grandeur of this magnificent fissure with a walk along the rim from the to Yavapai Point.

Today's four and half kilometre hike is expected to take around one hour along a flat route.



ACCOMMODATION:
Red Feather Lodge (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 3 - Full days hiking at the Grand Canyon

The Grand Canyon National Park is a sight to behold. A unique combination of geologic colour and eroded forms make this massive fissure in the ground one of the 'must see' sights of America. At 446 km long, up to 29 km wide in places and 1.8k m deep, the sheer size of the Grand Canyon overwhelms our senses. We have a full day to explore the routes and trails around the South Rim of the canyon. With routes ranging from easy to strenuous and regular buses to drop you at the various trail heads you will have the opportunity to choose the walk that most suites you.

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 evening, if you wish to see more of the canyon, there is the opportunity for an optional helicopter ride over the canyon or, if you prefer to keep your feet on the ground to visit the local IMAX theatre.



ACCOMMODATION:
Red Feather Lodge (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 4 - Drive to Zion National Park via Page; hike Watchmans Trail

Leaving the south rim this morning we travel to Page, a small town in northern Arizona situated on the shores of magnificent Lake Powell. After a short break for lunch we will continue for our first short hike of the day at Horseshoe Bend. The trailhead is located just outside Page and overlooks one of the most spectacular views on the Colorado River. Created when the Colorado plateau uplifted (a mere five million years ago) and the river became trapped in its bed, causing it to cut its way through the rock to seek a new natural level and forming a 270 degree horseshoe-shaped bend in the canyon.

After our short hike at Horseshoe Bend we continue to Springdale and Zion National Park. The main area of the national park that we will visit is Zion Canyon, a 24km rift in the beautiful red and tan coloured Navajo sandstone and the location for our hiking this afternoon and tomorrow. Our first visit into the park takes us 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.

Today's two-and-a-half kilometre morning hike to Horseshoe bend is expected to take around one hour with 240 metres of ascent and descent. The afternoon hike in Zion is three-and-a-half kilometres, taking approximately two hours with 170 metres of ascent and descent.



ACCOMMODATION:

La Quinta Inn - Springdale (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: LUNCH

DAY 5 - Hike Angel's Landing and/or Emerald Pools

Taking the shuttle bus from Springdale today we enter Zion for a full day of exceptional hiking. Zion National Park is the showcase of the west with, what are known as, the best hikes in Utah located inside. For those with a head for heights, the magnificent Angels Landing trail will offer you some of the best views across the whole of the Zion Canyon. Starting with 21 steep switch backs known as Walter's Wiggles, the route takes you first to Scout Lookout - a point with some great views and a turnaround for those that tend not to want to continue the more strenuous ascent. From here the route takes narrow paths, with some steep drop offs and chains provided for portions of the last 800 metres to the 1,760 metres at the top. For those inclined to continue to the top, you are rewarded with some of the most spectacular views and a definite sense of achievement. The whole of the Zion Canyon and beyond opens up beneath you and you truly feel on top of the world.

Pending weather conditions, an alternative and beautiful trail is a moderate hike to the Emerald Pools - lower, middle and upper - that offer us waterfalls, misty trails, hanging gardens and winding paths along with a taste of the beauty that Zion National Park has to offer.

Today's nine kilometre hike to Angels Landing is expected to take around five hours with 440 metres of ascent and descent.



ACCOMMODATION:

La Quinta Inn - Springdale (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 6 - Drive to Bryce Canyon; hiking in the National Park

Departing from Springdale this morning we continue through Utah to Bryce Canyon. Not actually a true canyon, but a series of natural amphitheatres, Bryce is distinctive due to its geological structures known as 'hoodoos'. These unusual structures are formed by a combination of frost and water erosion of sedimentary rocks and result in an 'other worldly' landscape of pinnacles, spires and wonderful rich colours that are not seen in such abundance in any other area. Our hiking this afternoon takes us down amongst these wonderful formations on an assortment of trails which interlock and cross over giving you the opportunity to make your walk as long or short as you like.



ACCOMMODATION:
Bryce View Lodge (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: LUNCH

DAY 7 - Sunrise at Bryce Canyon; drive to Moab; hike Devils Garden

This morning you have the option to return to Bryce Canyon for a walk at sunrise. Given the nature and colour of the hoodoos in Bryce, one of the most stunning times to see them is when the sun exaggerates the golds, oranges and reds of the stones. Our journey then takes us on to Moab, the adventure capital of Utah and home to both Arches and Canyonlands National Parks. Arches National Park has over 2,000 natural stone arches as well as soaring pinnacles, giant balanced rocks and winding hiking trails. This afternoon we make our first visit to Arches with a hike into Devil's Garden to view one of the world's

longest natural arches, Landscape Arch. As we continue along this primitive trail across fins of sandstone, we are afforded unparalleled views into this maze of rock slabs.

Today's seven-and-a-half kilometre hike is expected to take around three hours with 120 metres of ascent and descent.



ACCOMMODATION:
Moab Rustic Inn (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: LUNCH

DAY 8 - Hike Fisher Towers; Sunset at Delicate Arch

We take a moderate hike this morning to the Fisher Towers site, a short drive outside Moab. These rock pinnacles are isolated remnants of a 225 million year old floodplain deposit located in western Colorado. When the Colorado plateau lifted the salt deposits underlying the region buckled and collapsed and subsequent erosion caused the formation valleys and cliff escarpments. Now these rock pinnacles soar above the red and purple hued canyons below and are a favourite spot for hikers in the area. Mid-day is left free to discover more of the townsite around lunch time.

Set in slick rock country, Moab attracts thrill seekers from around the globe. Late this afternoon we will once again visit Arches and take a hike to the most iconic area of the park, Delicate Arch. 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.

Today's seven kilometre morning hike to Fisher Towers is expected to take around four hours with 550 metres of ascent and descent. The afternoon hike to Delicate Arch is five kilometres, taking approximately two hours with 170 metres of ascent and descent.



ACCOMMODATION:
Moab Rustic Inn (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 9 - Morning hike in Canyonlands, drive Salt Lake City

This morning we visit the last of our National Parks on this trip, Canyonlands. 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. Our hikes this morning take us 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 before hiking on to the Grand View Point, aptly named for its beautiful panoramic views of the region. After a picnic lunch we return to our vehicle and drive to Salt Lake City. The capital and most populated city in Utah is bordered by the waters of the Great Salt Lake and the snow - capped peaks of the Wasatch Range. It is home to the headquarters of the Mormon Church at Temple Square where you will find the majestic 19th Century Salt Lake Temple and the neo-Gothic Assembly Hall.

Today's four-and-a-half kilometer hike is expected to take around two-and-a- half hours along a flat route.



ACCOMMODATION:
Salt Lake Plaza Hotel (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: LUNCH

DAY 10 - Trip ends Salt Lake City

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Salt Lake City.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart from Salt Lake City at any time. If your flight is departing later in the day luggage storage facilities are available at our hotel. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you need to depart from Salt Lake City International

Airport (SLC) and 10 minutes' drive from the hotel.



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.

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Grand Canyon Helicopter flight approximately US\$ 235-265 (1 hr), IMAX cinema US\$ 13

Clothing

This trip covers a variety of altitudes and, being early and later season the temperatures will get cold experience freezing or below freezing temperatures and could encounter snow.

Bring light and comfortable clothing that can be layered according to the temperature. The weather conditions in the mountains can be changeable, and it can become cool, especially at night, so bring warmer layers. Tops made from wicking materials which keep you drier and warmer are recommended as a base layer, and walking trousers are preferable to trousers of heavier material such as jeans. A waterproof jacket is essential at all times in case of rain and wind.

- Breathable wind and waterproof jacket (you may also wish to bring waterproof trousers)
- T-shirts
- Long sleeved tops
- Sunhat
- Long trousers
- Shorts (if you prefer to walk in them)
- Swimwear and towel
- Midlayer Fleece/pullover
- Socks (liner and thicker pair)
- Insulated jacket
- Scarf
- Hat
- Gloves

Footwear

We recommend you bring walking boots with ankle support- leather or fabric are both fine. Make sure that your boots are worn-in and comfortable before the start of the trip. Also trainers or sandals for relaxing and general wear. We suggest that on international flights you either carry your walking boots in your hand luggage or wear them - should your luggage be lost or delayed, your own boots are the one thing that will be irreplaceable.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main bag plus a small daypack for walking and for personal items. Main luggage cannot be accessed during the day. Soft luggage is more practical than a hard shell suitcase for loading into the trailer. Please pack light as you will be expected to carry your own luggage at times. Laundry facilities will be available at various points during the trip. A 20-30 litre day sack is recommended. You will need to carry what you need for the day which may include a raincoat, jumper, camera, sun-cream, water and picnic lunch. On hot days you will carry fewer clothes but more drinking water.

Equipment

- Sunglasses
- Sun cream
- Small Torch (with spare batteries and bulb)
- Camera
- Walking poles (if you usually use them)
- Personal toiletries
- Personal first aid kit - On each walk a first aid kit is carried but you should have your own blister kit,

supply of plasters, aspirin and other essentials.

-Insect repellent

-Small waterproof dry bag (for items such as your mobile phone)

-Reusable water bottle (minimum 1 litre) - Get 15% discount on a Water-to-Go bottle
www.explore.co.uk/about-us/responsible-travel/water-to-go-discount-with-explore

-Lunch bag/Tupperware (for packed lunches)

For camping itineraries also bring:

-Sleeping bag 2 or 3-season (temperature -5°C to 0°C)

-Sleeping sheet or liner (a thermal ground pad is provided)

Please note: Sleeping bags can be purchased from a store for as low as US \$50. Please ask your Tour Leader on arrival.

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

Widely available.

Credit Card Acceptance

Widely accepted just about everywhere.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals**Transport Information**

Maxiwagon

Accommodation notes

For the camping departures, all camping equipment is provided except a sleeping bag. Like many adventures of this type, much of the team spirit and camaraderie is developed through mucking in and helping out with basic camp responsibilities. This will include the setting up and taking down of your tent, the loading and unloading of the trailer, meal preparation, washing and clearing up. Be prepared for some early starts and some long days - there is an enormous amount to see! All camping sites used throughout the trip have communal toilet and shower blocks, and are in beautiful natural locations. Your local tour leader will cook you up some tasty food in the evenings. Some campsites include launderette and kitchen areas, and others have space for barbecues and fire pits.

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.

Ability to swim

An ability to swim is essential for your safe enjoyment of the water based activities on this trip. If you wish to participate in these activities then we insist that you are able to swim.

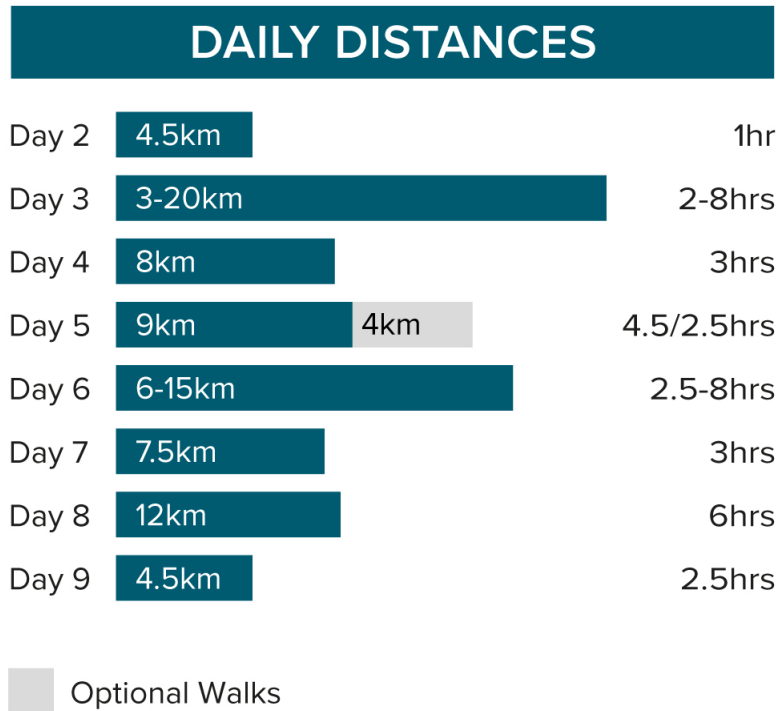
USA

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.

Walking and Trekking information



Walking grade

Moderate

Trek details

Walks on 8 days for between 1 to 8 hours. Choice of distances in Grand Canyon and Zion. The walks are on well-maintained and well-defined paths, some are steep in places with switch backs.

Additional Information



Why book this trip

To allow for extra flexibility, we offer this trip with hotel accommodation in the early spring and later autumn and during the warmer months we camp. The hotels we use are standard 3-star accommodations, situated close to the national parks for easy access to the superb hiking. The hotel-based departures give you the opportunity to see the parks as spring arrives or as the colours of autumn start to change. With cooler night time temperatures, sleeping in a hotel rather than under canvas during these times will be more comfortable. For those of you who prefer four walls and an ensuite bathroom, these dates could also be for you. The camping departures still run at quieter times of the year (i.e. outside of the school holidays) and we stay at sites with great facilities situated close to the national parks. Camping gives you the chance to dine al fresco and watch the stars.

Reviews



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**