nileGUIDE
ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP

The Grand Canyonlands

Chinle, Canyonlands National Park, Angels Camp, 4 Days

Table of contents:

Guide Description 2

Itinerary Overview 3

Daily Itineraries 4

Canyonlands National Park Snapshot 11

Copyright ©2000-2010 Nile Project. All rights reserved.

Guide Description

AUTHOR NOTE: This trip through Canyonlands National Park is an adrenaline-fueled variety of adventures. Off-roading, whitewater rafting, pueblo-viewing junkies will all get their fix with this four-day smorgasbord.

Because of its fairly remote localtion, trips to Canyonlands require a little extra prep. This one in particular calls for a vehicle or two (one for some awesome off-roading), camping gear and four days worth of food.

Photo courtesy of Rob Lee

Copyright ©2000-2010 Nile Project. All rights reserved.

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - Canyonlands National Park

DAY NOTE: It's your first day in Canyonlands, and what better way to start appreciating the gorgeous scenery than with an early morning hike to Mesa Arch. Sunrises here are flat-out spectacular. After that (and maybe a picnic breakfast), take your crew out to Elephant Hill road for some challenging, exciting off-roading.

Get a permit (ahead of time) and find a campsite when you're done on Elephant Hill Road. Set up camp, make dinner and appreciate the stars.

Mesa Arch
Early-morning must. Half-mile, easiest in Park, trail guide

Elephant Hill road
Very challenging 4WD road

Backcountry overnight stays
Permits for backcountry overnight stays

Day 2 - Angels Camp

DAY NOTE: Whitewater rafting on the Colorado is epic. Pick an outfitter that sounds good to you. OARS has been doing this for years and has it down to a science - a fun science. Then, pack up your swimsuit and sunscreen and prepare yourself for a faceful of whitewater and a day full of fun.

After a day on the river, mosey home to your campsite for dinner. Rest up - it's another big day tomorrow,

OARS Canyonlands Inc
Rafting, kayaking, horseback riding, hiking. All ages.

Day 3 - Chinle, Canyonlands National Park

DAY NOTE: Today's activities are for the history buffs (adventure junkies, don't worry - you'll still have fun). Choose between Canyon de Chelly - a Navajo Tribal Trust Land - or Hovenweep National Monument - prehistoric puebloan villages. Either way, you're in for a fascinating look at the people who have (and in some cases still do) call this area home.

Afterward, head to the Colorado River for a dinner, then narrated float on the Moab Queen. The Canyonlands by Night Tour includes professionally-told stories about Canyonlands, delicious cowboy-style food and music.

Spend the night camping again, or try something different at the Runnin' Iron Inn, a rustic hotel that will blend nicely with your Canyonlands by Night experience.

Canyon de Chelly
Beautiful ancient canyon ruins, yet still home to modern Navajo

Hovenweep National Monument
Puebloan-era villages in a remote location

Runnin' Iron Inn
Peace and serenity in an old West setting

Day 4 - Canyonlands National Park

DAY NOTE: You've been off-roading, you've been whitewater rafting and you've seen some of Canyonland's unique history. Round out your trip with a day of hiking. Enjoy this slightly slower-paced day as you wander Elephant Canyon, Grand View Point Trail or Island in the sky. Pick the hike that best suits your fitness ability and have fun.

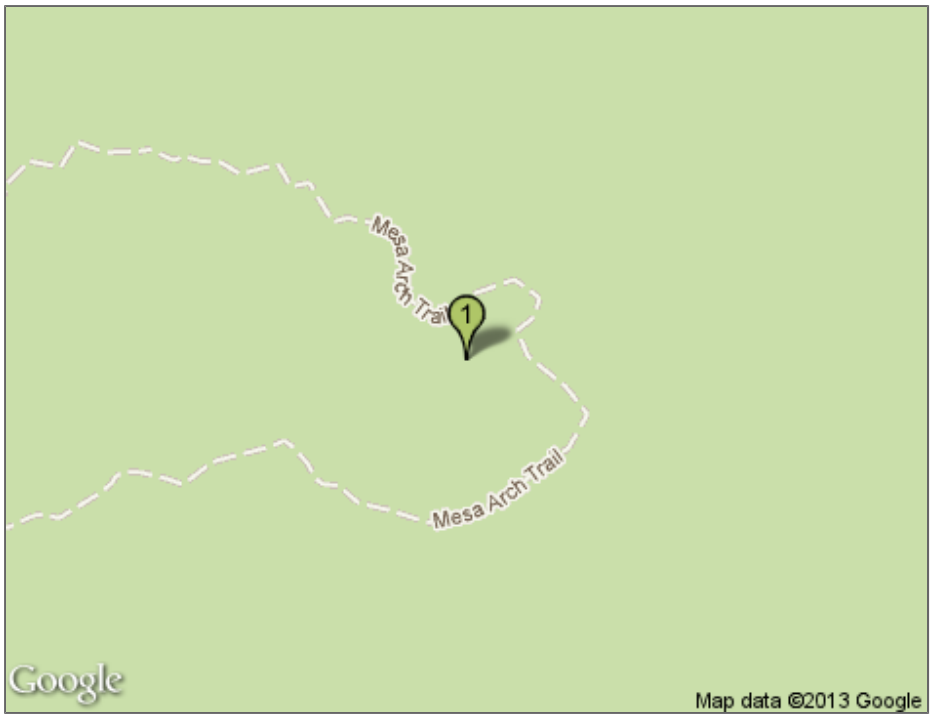
Elephant Canyon / Druid Arch
One of the best views of the Needles. 11 miles

Grand View Point Trail
Easy, flat 2-mile walk to stunning viewpoint. Great for kids

Island In the Sky
Stunning mesa, also a main activity area of Canyonlands

Copyright ©2000-2010 Nile Project. All rights reserved.

Day 1 - Canyonlands National Park



QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: It's your first day in Canyonlands, and what better way to start appreciating the gorgeous scenery than with an early morning hike to Mesa Arch. Sunrises here are flat-out spectacular. After that (and maybe a picnic breakfast), take your crew out to Elephant Hill road for some challenging, exciting off-roading.

Get a permit (ahead of time) and find a campsite when you're done on Elephant Hill Road. Set up camp, make dinner and appreciate the stars.

contact:
tel: (435) 719-2313
fax: (435) 719-2300
http://www.nps.gov/cany/planyourvisit/iskyshorthikes.htm

location:
Canyonlands National Park
Canyonlands National Park
UT 84532

1 Mesa Arch

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:
Bring a headlamp or flashlight to navigate the trail in pre-dawn darkness

DESCRIPTION: Located in the popular Island in the Sky District, Mesa Arch sits right at a clifftop, providing dramatic views. Best seen at sunrise, this famous little arch attracts hordes of photographers just before dawn nearly every day in the busy season. Off-season, you might find yourself the only one enjoying a spectacular sunrise from this most excellent of viewing spots. At only half a mile roundrtrip, it's great for kids. © NileGuide

Photo courtesy of pedrofp

Copyright ©2000-2010 Nile Project. All rights reserved.

contact:
tel: (435) 719-2313
fax: (435) 719-2300
http://www.nps.gov/cany/planyourvisit/needlesroads.htm

location:
Canyonlands National Park
Canyonlands National Park
UT 84532

Elephant Hill road

DESCRIPTION: One of the most technical four-wheel-drive roads in Utah, Elephant Hill presents drivers with steep grades, loose rock, stair-step drops, tight turns and backing. This is also difficult mountain biking terrain. Over the hill, equally challenging roads lead to various features, as well as to BLM lands south of the park. No water is available at the campsites, but vault toilets are provided at all camping areas except New Bates Wilson. Groups camping at New Bates Wilson must bring their own toilet. © National Park Service

Photo courtesy of indigoprime

contact:
http://wikitravel.org/en/Canyonlands#Sleep

location:
Canyonlands National Park
UT

Backcountry overnight stays

DESCRIPTION: Permits are required for all overnight stays in the backcountry, including backpacking, four-wheel drive or mountain bike camping, and river trips. Permits are also required for day use by vehicles, bikes and horses in Horse/Salt Creek and Lavender canyons in the Needles District. Permits are not required for day hiking. Permits costs vary in price from $15 to $30 depending on activity, and are valid for groups of as many as fifteen people. Permits can be obtained at the visitor centers, and all permits can be reserved in advance. Those not reserved in advance are available to walk-ins first-come, first-served (see http://nps.gov/cany/reserve.htm for more information). Walk-in permits are only available the day before or the day of a trip. Permits are issued up to one hour before the close of business each day. River permits are issued (usually in advance) from the Reservation Office in Moab. Permits (except day use) are good for a maximum of fourteen days. Exact sites/zones and dates must be determined when the permit is issued. Backpackers may stay up to seven consecutive nights in any site or zone. Visitors using the designated vehicle camps may stay a maximum of three consecutive nights at a camping area before having to relocate. Reservation office staff are available by phone to answer questions and assist with trip planning Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (MST), at (435) 259-4351. When workload permits, phones may be answered until 4:00 p.m. Please have a map available if you would like assistance with trip-planning. Visitors may also email questions to canyres@nps.gov. Reservations may not be made over the phone or by email. © Wikitravel

Photo courtesy of Rob Lee

Copyright ©2000-2010 Nile Project. All rights reserved.

Day 2 - Angels Camp

DAY NOTE: Whitewater rafting on the Colorado is epic. Pick an outfitter that sounds good to you. OARS has been doing this for years and has it down to a science - a fun science. Then, pack up your swimsuit and sunscreen and prepare yourself for a faceful of whitewater and a day full of fun.

After a day on the river, mosey home to your campsite for dinner. Rest up - it's another big day tomorrow,

---

contact:
tel: (209) 736-4677
http://www.oars.com/utah/

location:
PO Box 67
Angels Camp CA 95222

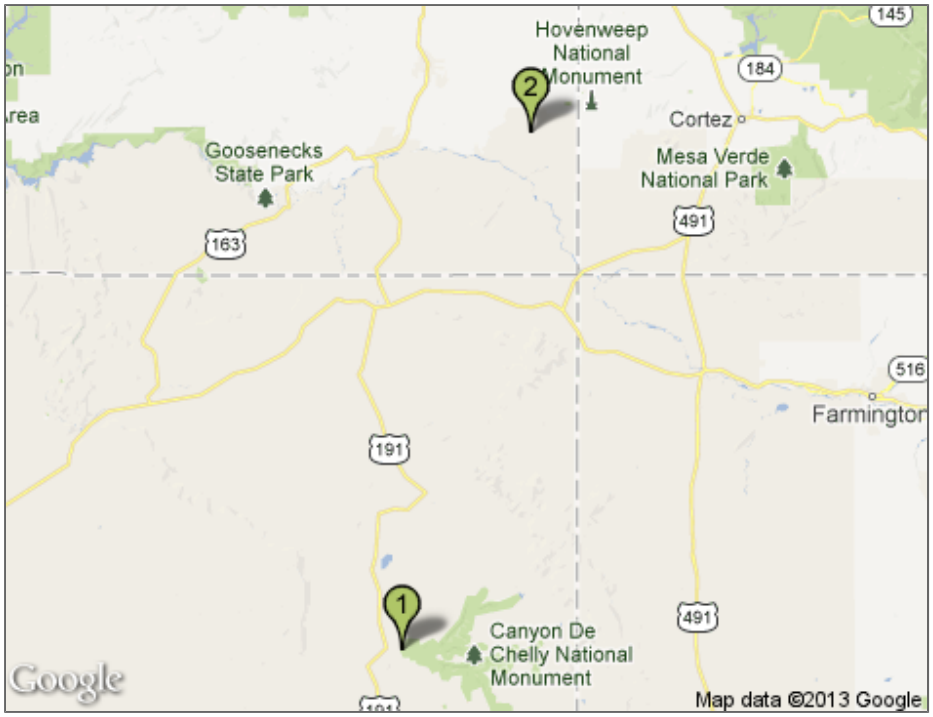
OARS Canyonlands Inc

DESCRIPTION: O.A.R.S. (Outdoor Adventure River Specialists) knows what it's doing. With over 40 years of experience in the outdoor adventure business, you could say they have rafting, kayaking, horseback riding and hiking down to a science…but that doesn't make it sound fun enough. And fun is certainly what they dish up. They welcome travelers of all ages and levels of experience to take part in their guided tours; professional and experienced guides will make sure their guests are safe, well fed and having a blast. © NileGuide

Photo courtesy of O.A.R.S.

Copyright ©2000-2010 Nile Project. All rights reserved.

Day 3 - Chinle, Canyonlands National Park



QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: Today's activities are for the history buffs (adventure junkies, don't worry - you'll still have fun). Choose between Canyon de Chelly - a Navajo Tribal Trust Land - or Hovenweep National Monument - prehistoric puebloan villages. Either way, you're in for a fascinating look at the people who have (and in some cases still do) call this area home.

Afterward, head to the Colorado River for a dinner, then narrated float on the Moab Queen. The Canyonlands by Night Tour includes professionally-told stories about Canyonlands, delicious cowboy-style food and music.

Spend the night camping again, or try something different at the Runnin' Iron Inn, a rustic hotel that will blend nicely with your Canyonlands by Night experience.

contact:
tel: (928) 674-5500
fax: (928) 674-5507
http://www.nps.gov/cach/

location:
Canyon de Chelly
Chinle AZ 86503

1 Canyon de Chelly

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:
Unpredictable weather; be prepared!

DESCRIPTION: Canyon de Chelly has ancient ruins and is also still home to modern Navajo. They consider this their spiritual home as well as historic, although as a people they arrived long after the native Ancestral Puebloans who also inhabited the Southwest. Canyon de Chelly is part of Navajo Tribal Trust Land, which means the Navajo Nation works with the National Park Service to govern this precious cultural resource. Ranger-led trips are available, and local Navajo guides maybe hired as well.
© NileGuide

Photo courtesy of John Monson

Copyright ©2000-2010 Nile Project. All rights reserved.

contact:
tel: (970) 562-4282
http://www.nps.gov/hove/

location:
McElmo Route
Cortez CO 81321

2 Hovenweep National Monument

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:
Way off the beaten path, bring plenty of water, food, and anything you'd need to get yourself in and out safely. You also drive through and past private property en route; please be respectful.

DESCRIPTION: Hovenweep National Monument protects six prehistoric, Puebloan-era villages spread over a twenty-mile expanse of mesa tops and canyons along the Utah-Colorado border. Multi-storied towers perched on canyon rims and balanced on boulders lead visitors to marvel at the skill and motivation of their builders. Hovenweep is noted for its solitude and undeveloped, natural character. © National Park Service

Hovenweep

contact:
tel: (435) 587-2351
http://canyonlandsbestkeptsecret.com/

location:
Mile Post 79 1/2 on Hwy 191
Monticello UT 83536

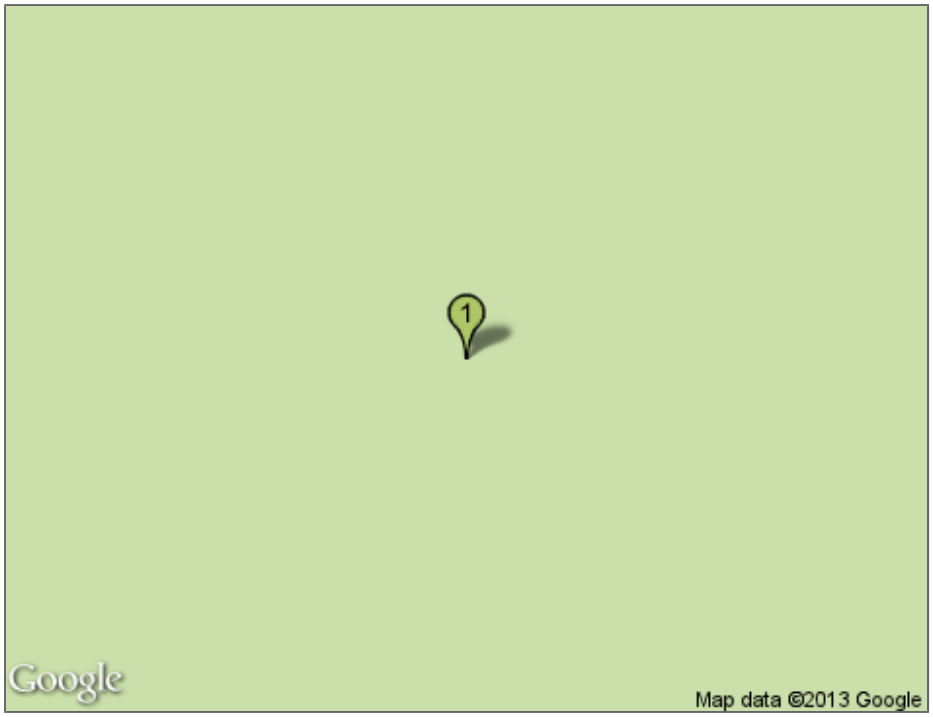
Runnin' Iron Inn

DESCRIPTION: The old fashioned Runnin' Iron Inn pairs Western hospitality with modern convenience. Five rooms, each with a special personality (and name to match) can be rented to groups or couples. Right next door to Monticello's steak house, the Inn also features the Rusty Lillie Lodge with a common kitchen, sitting room with fireplace and private entrances. © NileGuide

Photo courtesy of the Runnin Iron Inn

Copyright ©2000-2010 Nile Project. All rights reserved.

Day 4 - Canyonlands National Park



QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: You've been off-roading, you've been whitewater rafting and you've seen some of Canyonland's unique history. Round out your trip with a day of hiking. Enjoy this slightly slower-paced day as you wander Elephant Canyon, Grand View Point Trail or Island in the sky. Pick the hike that best suits your fitness ability and have fun.

---

contact:
tel: (435) 719-2313
fax: (435) 719-2300
http://www.nps.gov/cany/planyourvisit/needleslonghikes.htm

location:
Canyonlands National Park
Canyonlands National Park
UT 84532

Elephant Canyon / Druid Arch

DESCRIPTION: This trail offers one of the most spectacular views in the Needles. It follows the Chesler Park access trail to Elephant Canyon, then travels along the canyon bottom across a mixture of deep sand and loose rock all the way to its upper end. The last .25 mile is a steep climb involving one ladder and some scrambling. Three backpacking sites. Water available seasonally. © National Park Service

Photo courtesy of Ben+Sam

---

contact:
tel: (435) 719-2313
fax: (435) 719-2300
http://www.nps.gov/cany/planyourvisit/iskyshorthikes.htm

location:
Canyonlands National Park

1 Grand View Point Trail

DESCRIPTION: An easy walk out to the very end of the Island in the Sky mesa. Great views of the Green River Valley. Overlooks the White Rim Trail on the way back, which is popular with mountain bikers and off-road vehicles.
© NileGuide

Photo courtesy of hyperfly12

Copyright ©2000-2010 Nile Project. All rights reserved.

Canyonlands National Park
UT 84532

contact:
tel: (435) 719-2313
fax: (435) 719-2300
http://www.nps.gov/cany/planyourvisit/islandinthesky.htm

location:
Canyonlands National Park
Canyonlands National Park
UT 84532

Island In the Sky

DESCRIPTION: The Island in the Sky mesa rests on sheer sandstone cliffs over 1,000 feet above the surrounding terrain. Every overlook offers a different perspective on Canyonlands' spectacular landscape. The Island is the easiest district to visit in a short period of time, offering many pullouts with spectacular views along the paved scenic drive. Hiking trails and four-wheel-drive roads access backcountry areas for day or overnight trips. © National Park Service

Photo courtesy of Rick McCharles

Copyright ©2000-2010 Nile Project. All rights reserved.

Canyonlands National Park Snapshot

Local Info

If you're looking for an opportunity to discover the mystical quality of the American West, then Canyonlands National Park is an ideal place to get lost in history, time, and the natural wonders of the earth.

Carved out by the Colorado and Green Rivers, this rugged landscape is located just south of Moab, Utah, and beckons tourist visits by the thousands every year. In part, the sheer diversity of the landscape is enough to keep you snapping photos. Add to this the ability to engage in hiking, climbing, camping, horseback riding, and even four-wheel drive excursions, and you've got yourself a packed schedule.

Mighty plateaus and breathtaking vistas are tied together in the park's five main regions. The Needles District offers sites like Elephant Park, Chesler Park, and Confluence Overlook, where sandstone spires pop up from around the landscape, offering color and majestic beauty that is typical of Canyonlands. Or, for evidence of some of America's earliest rock art, head over to Horseshoe Canyon where The Great Gallery highlights life-size human-like figures with intricate details painted by ancient inhabitants of the region.

4x4 routes – ranging from extremely difficult and technical to moderate – span the wilderness around Canyonlands. The 100-mile long White Rim Road offers expansive views of the Island Mesa from your 4x4 vehicle. The exposed sections of the Shafer Trail, Lathrop Canyon Road, Murphy's Hogback, Hardscrabble Hill, and the Mineral Bottom switchbacks make the White Rim loop an exciting route by vehicle and a challenging bike ride as well.

Unique opportunities for exploration are divided among the main regions of the park, though all bear similar qualities in terms of natural wonder. Between the Maze, The Needles, and The Island in the Sky, you'll be amazed by the power of time and natural forces that have created such a fascinating landscape. With multiple outdoor excursions arranged daily, you'll find options that suit people of all ages and with varying physical needs.

© NileGuide

History

From the 1880s to 1975, local ranchers used much of Canyonlands for winter pasture, constructing trails to move their stock across the rugged terrain. In the 1950s the growth of America's nuclear arms program created a high demand for uranium. To encourage prospectors, the Atomic Energy Commission offered monetary incentives and built almost 1,000 miles of road in southeast Utah. In Canyonlands, these roads include the popular White Rim Road at the Island in the Sky. Though the region produced substantial amounts of uranium, miners discovered very little in what is now Canyonlands. However, the newly created roads led to other discoveries. For the first time, much of Canyonlands could be seen from a car. Tourism slowly increased as more people learned about the area's geologic wonders. By opening canyon county to travel, the miners blazed the trail for the creation of a National Park.

In the 1950s and early 1960s, Arches National Monument Superintendent Bates Wilson advocated the creation of a National Park in what is now Canyonlands. On September 12, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed Public Law 88-590 establishing Canyonlands National Park. Initially consisting of 257,640 acres, Congress expanded Canyonlands to its present size of 337,598 acres in 1971.

©

Hotel Insights

Although there are no hotels inside of the park, Canyonlands is a short distance fromMoab, withlodging options that will fit just about any tourists' needs. From hostels to chain motels to classier hotels to utterly luxurious resorts, chances are you'll find a great plase to lay your head at night in Moab.

For those interested in nestling down inside the park, Canyonlands has two main campgrounds.Squaw Flat Campground is in the Needles district, and features tent and RV sites. There are bathrooms, picnic tables, fire grates, tent pads, and water available all year.Willow Flat Campground is in the Island in the Sky district. Slightly smaller, these sites are also available year round for RVs and tents. There are tables, fire grills, and vault toilets available.

©

Restaurants Insights

Unless you bring your own food, Moab is your best option when looking for good eats at Canyonlands! Located 30 miles east of the Park's Island in the Sky district, Moab offers plenty of dining options for even the most discriminating palates. Eat pizza atZax, grab a burger atBuck's Grill House, enjoy fine local cuisine at theDesert Bistro. Mexican, Asian, morning coffee, evening pastries – if any of those float your boat, you'll find them in Moab. It's quite likely you'll be staying in Moab during your Canyonlands visit, unless you camp at the Park's only lodging in their campgrounds, so you'll have easy access to the area's restaurants.

Other restaurants near Canyonlands National Park, located in the nearby towns ofMonticello and Blanding, stick to the tried-and-true formula of Southern Utah – local ingredients, prepared simply, but with a bit of Southwestern flair.

BBQ lovers are at home at theLine Camp Steakhouse, with its variety of smoked-meat-centric options to fill their bellies. Considered one of Canyonland's "Best Kept Secrets," this Monticello establishment serves quality cuts or meat cooked perfectly, with chicken, salmon, and lobster for those not as steak-inclined.

Combining Italian and American food with a Santa Fe influence,Lamplight Restaurant in Monticello serves big portions and value with a healthy serving of creativity as well. Where else can you order Herb Roasted Duck Confit served alongside the largest(and yummiest) milkshake the area has to offer?

Be aware of Utah's alcohol laws when dining out – not every establishment has a full liquor license, so beer and wine might be your only options if you desire a stiff drink.

NOTES ON UTAH'S LIQUOR LAWS

Contrary to popular opinion, it is not impossible to get a beer in Utah. In fact, beer is available in most supermarkets and convenience stores. It is true, however, that

Copyright ©2000-2010 Nile Project. All rights reserved.

your drinks will most likely have a lower alcohol content then what you are used to back home.

Fully licensed restaurants are free to serve 'heavy beer'(over 3.2% alcohol), wine, and liquor from noon until midnight, with regular beer(3.2% or under) from 10 AM until 1 AM. To drink in a restaurant, you must order a meal and be served at either your table or a waiting area. Restaurants with a limited liquor license cannot serve spirits.

Spirited beverages are strictly portion-measured in Utah. Beer sold in supermarkets and convenience store are a maximum of 4.0% alcohol. For those cocktail enthusiasts out there, be aware that mixed drinks in Utah are limited to 1.5 oz of base spirit per drink, with the option of adding another 1.25 oz of "secondary alcoholic flavoring". Wine is limited to 5 oz per glass.

A 'tavern' is any venue where the sales of beer exceed the sales of food. Beer is sold from 10 AM – 1 AM and can be purchased without food, sold both on draft and in bottles/cans. For those looking to take some beer back to your hotel, most taverns will sell you bottled/canned beer to take home.

Regarding the infamous "private clubs" laws, forcing patrons to take out a membership to imbibe at a full liquor service club, as of July 1st 2009, this law will no longer be in effect. In an effort to supplement Utah's booming tourist industry, the state legislature has struck down the strange-to-outsiders law.

For more information on Utah's liquor laws, please visithttp://abc.utah.gov/Liquor_Laws/liquor_laws_affecting_visitors.html

© NileGuide

Nightlife Insights

There isn't much to do after dark near Canyonlands, but for those with a whole evening to spare, you might get to experience one of the most fascinating tours of Canyonlands you're likely to find. Canyonlands by Night, a dinner/ boat tour/ musical revue, will fill your belly, widen your eyes, and teach you a bit about the fantastic environment around you. Beer and wine are available during the dinner portion on the shore.

It has been mentioned in this section before: if you want to drink in Utah, make sure you understand the intricacies of Utah liquor laws, as they may determine whether you can have a bottle of beer or glass of wine during dinner. In response to tourist demand, some of these laws are currently changing, so be sure to check in with the establishment you're visiting before you embark.

NOTES ON UTAH'S LIQUOR LAWS

Contrary to popular opinion, it is not impossible to get a beer in Utah. In fact, beer is available in most supermarkets and convenience stores. It is true, however, that your drinks will most likely have a lower alcohol content then what you are used to back home.

Fully licensed restaurants are free to serve 'heavy beer'(over 3.2% alcohol), wine, and liquor from noon until midnight, with regular beer(3.2% or under) from 10 AM until 1 AM. To drink in a restaurant, you must order a meal and be served at either your table or a waiting area. Restaurants with a limited liquor license cannot serve spirits.

Spirited beverages are strictly portion-measured in Utah. Beer sold in supermarkets and convenience store are a maximum of 4.0% alcohol. For those cocktail enthusiasts out there, be aware that mixed drinks in Utah are limited to 1.5 oz of base spirit per drink, with the option of adding another 1.25 oz of "secondary alcoholic flavoring". Wine is limited to 5 oz per glass.

A 'tavern' is any venue where the sales of beer exceed the sales of food. Beer is sold from 10 AM – 1 AM and can be purchased without food, sold both on draft and in bottles/cans. For those looking to take some beer back to your hotel, most taverns will sell you bottled/canned beer to take home.

Regarding the infamous "private clubs" laws, forcing patrons to take out a membership to imbibe at a full liquor service club, as of July 1st 2009, this law will no longer be in effect. In an effort to supplement Utah's booming tourist industry, the state legislature has struck down the strange-to-outsiders law.

For more information on Utah's liquor laws, please visithttp://abc.utah.gov/Liquor_Laws/liquor_laws_affecting_visitors.html

© NileGuide

Things to Do Insights

Hiking is the most popular Canyonlands activity, and it's easy to see why. With three outstanding areas(Island in the Sky, theNeedles district, and theMaze district), there are seemingly endless trails, canyons, and scenic overlooks to explore. Some trails are perfect for a short walk with children, while others should only be attempted by experienced backcountry travelers with topographical maps and appropriate gear; it is famous as one of the most remote backpacking destinations in the United States. Whatever your skill level, Canyonlands is sure to impress with its natural beauty.

Looking for adventure on wheels? 4WD is hugely popular in Canyonlands, and there are multiple trails/roads for the 4WD aficionado.Elephant Hill road is one of the most challenging and technical in Utah, complete with loose rocks and gravel, stair steps, tight turns and backing. TheColorado Overlook is slightly tamer, but ends in a fantastic overlook. There is also a multitude of mountain biking trails in Canyonlands National Park. Because of its popularity with 4WD, most roads in Canyonlands can also be used by mountain bikes(with the exception of Horse Canyon Road).

River rafting is another way visitors can get their adrenaline-fix; all rafters must have permits, and for those unfamiliar with the Colorado, Green, and Virgin Rivers, a guided tour with a company is advised.Adrift Adventures,Holiday Expeditions, andDon Hatch River Expeditions both offer years of experience, knowledgeable guides and a guaranteed good time. Many of the outfitters also offer biking, hiking, and climbing guided tours – perfect for a first-time visit to Utah's National Parks.

© NileGuide

Travel Tips

By car

Travel to Canyonlands generally requires a car. Once in the park, each district offers different opportunities for exploration. The Island in the Sky is the most accessible district and the easiest to visit in a short period of time. All other destinations require

Copyright ©2000-2010 Nile Project. All rights reserved.

some boating, hiking or four-wheel driving to see the area's attractions.

By air

Daily air tours to Canyonlands National Park in a Cessna aircraft are provided from the Canyonlands Field Airport. The aircraft seats about 7 people(including the pilot). The flights take you over all of the most scenic parts of Canyonlands including the Maze District, Island in the Sky, Dead Horse Point, the Colorado River and more. Typically flights last about 1-2 hours. Helicopter flights are also available as a tour-by-air option.

Flight Operators:

Moab Adventure Center, 225 S. Main St.,Moab, UT 84532, Ph:(888) 622-4097Arches& Classic Helicopter Services, 2251 S. Hwy 191, Moab, UT 84532(435) 259-4637

Canyonlands by Night& Day, 1861 N Hwy 191, Moab, UT 84532(800) 394-9978Red Cliffs Lodge Trails, Highway 128 – Mile 14,Moab, UT 84532,(866) 812-2002
©

Fun Facts

1. Interesting fact: Canyonlands is largely covered by cryptobiotic crust, a living soil, comprised of algae, lichens, and bacteria.

2. Fun fact: Cataract Canyon is a popular rapids section of the Colorado River. The highest recorded flow was in 1984 at 114,900 cfs, or cubic feet per second.

3. Daring fact: The first known successful rafting of Cataract Canyon was by the 1869 John Wesley Powell expedition.

4. Scientific fact: Cataract Canyon may be one of the world's most actively filling canyons. Scientists discovered 260 feet of sediment below the water's surface.

5. Interesting fact: Naturally-occurring small depressions in sandstone called"potholes" collect water, which is a vital resource in this extremely dry climate.

6. Weird fact: Nineteenth century cowboys corralled wild horses onto today's Dead Horse Point State Park. Supposedly, one herd left on the point died of thirst.

7. Outlaw fact: The Robbers Roost hideout of Butch Cassidy's Wild Bunch gang is near the Maze district. This remote area was one of the last mapped sections of the lower United States.

8. Weird fact: In 2003, adventurer Aron Ralston became trapped alone in a slot canyon near the Maze district. He cut off his own arm to save his life.

9. Eerie fact: Nearby Moab's popular breakfast spot the Jailhouse Café used to be an actual jail. In the late 1800s the building was the area's first county courthouse, complete with jail cells.

10. Local pinyon pines produce delicious pine nuts, which can only be harvested every three to seven years.

11. Pictographs(ancient paintings on sandstone, called rock art) in the Horseshoe Canyon area show human habitation from as long as 4,000 years ago.

12. In December 2008, activist Tim DeChristopher attempted to save pristine public areas near Canyonlands from oil and gas drilling leases.
© NileGuide

Copyright ©2000-2010 Nile Project. All rights reserved.