



Discovering Our Planet Together



Desert Southwest Photo Expedition

Capture Iconic Vistas & Sublime Light in America's Canyon Country



Table of Contents:

Trip Overview	3
Trip Itinerary	4
Trip Accommodations	9
What Makes Nat Hab Different?	11
Make It Private	14
Dates & Pricing Information	15



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Trip Details:

Days:

8 Days / May & Sep

Price:

From \$7895
(+ Air)

Physical**Requirements:**

Easy to Moderate

Desert Southwest Photo Expedition

Capture Iconic Vistas & Sublime Light in America's Canyon Country

The striking desert landscapes of the American Southwest have long captivated photographers who have sought to arrest its drama in images. Standing on the edge of the Grand Canyon's mile-high precipice, pondering layers of color and shadow carved over millennia; marveling at pink spires of Bryce Canyon's sandstone hoodoos; witnessing plumes of water pouring off the vertical cliffs at Zion...Such classic vistas offer thrilling opportunities for photographers. Capture these coveted scenes and more on our intimate photo expedition, including dramatic aerial shots over Bryce Canyon from a helicopter. With our expert photographer guides, find exciting subjects and unexpected surprises in lesser-known corners of all three renowned Southwest national parks. Whether you're a seasoned pro or a novice photographer with a passion for adventure, these mighty monuments promise inspiring encounters that will send you home with a trove of images you'll be proud of.

Trip Highlights

Just 10% of visitors get to the Grand Canyon's more remote North Rim—promising a chance for distinctive images of the world's most famous chasm.

Get rare aerial shots of Bryce's intricate sandstone "forest" of colorful hoodoos and the surrounding Colorado Plateau on a 30-minute helicopter flight

Desert photography can be tricky, with the sun's glare and deep contrasts in shadowy canyons—our guides are pros in helping you navigate challenging light



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Itinerary At A Glance

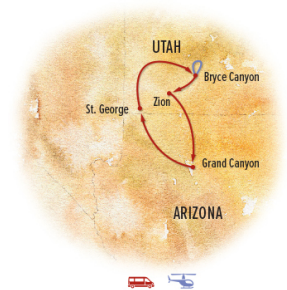
- Day 1**
St. George, Utah
- Day 2**
Bryce Canyon National Park—Dark Sky Experience
- Day 3**
Photographing Bryce Canyon National Park
- Day 4**
Bryce Canyon Sunrise / Zion National Park
- Day 5**
Hiking in Zion National Park / Scenic Helicopter Flight
- Day 6**
Morning Hike in Zion / Grand Canyon National Park—North Rim
- Day 7**
Grand Canyon Sunrise / Hiking the North Rim

Desert Southwest Photo Expedition Itinerary

Capture Iconic Vistas & Sublime Light in America's Canyon Country

Day 1: St. George, Utah

Few landscapes are as frequently photographed as the American southwest canyonlands, a complex realm of foreground elements featuring intricate layers and shapes that seem to shift depending on the dramatic light. Here, the ravines and rivers lead the eye through the vast expanse, while the shadows evolve, depending on the sun's location in the sky.



Our canyonlands adventure begins in the red rock country of St. George, Utah, which offers an abundance of red sandstone cliffs and formations, and slot canyons. This evening we meet for a welcome dinner at a local restaurant with our Photo Expedition Leader. Chosen for their photography and naturalist expertise, our guide will offer a brief overview of our journey ahead, including a primer on shooting images in this arid, striking realm. Learn about the history, geology, wildlife and ecology of the Colorado Plateau, which we explore in depth in the days to come on our foray through three of the world's most magnificent national parks.



Itinerary At A Glance

Day 8
Grand Canyon / St. George /
Depart

Day 2: Bryce Canyon National Park—Dark Sky Experience

Today's focus is landscape photography, and your Photo Expedition Leader will explain the art of capturing the rich red, yellow, orange and ochre hues of the surrounding geology as we drive the exhilarating route to Bryce Canyon. Along the way, we'll stop at several scenic spots, possibly including Cedar Breaks National Monument and its yawning canyon, visible from the rim at 10,350 feet. To capture the half mile-deep geological amphitheater of stacked orange layers, fins and pinnacles, we'll focus on composition, framing and exposure as we optimize the natural light. These features tell a fascinating story of dynamic natural forces throughout the Grand Staircase.

Later this afternoon we reach Bryce Canyon, established in 1925. This fantastical landscape feels like a portal to another world, and we'll shoot its pink pinnacles, limestone formations and natural amphitheaters. You'll have opportunities to experiment with silhouette and panoramic photography. Red rock walls are rent with deep channels while whimsical hoodoos—rock spires carved eons ago by erosion—rise hundreds of feet into the sky.

After dark, we'll have our first astrophotography session under Bryce's dark night skies. Joined by a dark night sky ranger, we head just outside the park boundary, away from any artificial light, to capture the astral sky in images. We'll concentrate on wide angle and long exposure to make silky images of a starlit sky. Offering an extraordinary view of the cosmos, Bryce holds International Dark Sky status, and the absence of light pollution reveals more than 7,500 stars on a clear night, while the Milky Way arcs overhead. When there is a new moon, the sight is otherworldly, as planets, constellations and distant galaxies are visible. Hone your astrophotography skills tonight in anticipation of additional sessions in Zion and Grand Canyon.

Day 3: Photographing Bryce Canyon National Park

Capture the morning's golden hour light as we set out early on foot today. As the sun climbs into the sky, the morning light fills the iconic Hood Amphitheatre. Your Photo Expedition Leader will advise on filters and hoods to reduce flare spots and lines. We'll play with light and detail, zooming in and out to create images that document how different this ancient landscape can appear, depending on the conditions. Then, we continue our photo walk, descending roughly 550 feet into the lower canyon. Here the landscape is forested with pinyon pines and junipers, which offer a vibrant green contrast to the looming hoodoos. Here, nature's power is writ large, and our images are an opportunity to reflect how small one can feel when immersed in its grandeur. [Guests who don't wish to tackle the elevation gain can walk the paved trails on the rim.] In the afternoon, more opportunities await to photograph Bryce from different spots, including a panorama across the vast landscape of the natural amphitheater crowded with hoodoos.



Day 4: Bryce Canyon Sunrise / Zion National Park

We rise at dawn and head to the Bryce Canyon rim to shoot the soft morning light. Our Photo Expedition Leader can explain the advantages of starburst photos as we photograph a striking array of colors as the changing light illumines the stone pinnacles and sheer cliffs. A morning hike offers yet more angles on this wondrous landscape, more evocative with each turn in the trail.

Then it's time to head for Zion National Park on one of the most scenic drives in the American Southwest. Keep an eye out for bighorn sheep as we follow the narrow two-lane road that cuts through canyons and twists below towering monoliths. As we approach Zion, we pass Checkerboard Mesa, a 6,250-foot landmark of striated Navajo Sandstone. Early Mormon pioneers gave Zion its name—so striking was its beauty that it evoked images of the biblical Promised Land. The U.S. government agreed and made it a national park in 1919. Multi-hued sandstone ramparts rise above the valley floor where the Virgin River flows among the cottonwoods, carving a deep canyon over millennia and blending lush greenery with dramatic rocks.

Day 5: Hiking in Zion National Park / Scenic Helicopter Flight

Begin the day photographing Zion Canyon on foot, following narrow trails below 2,000-foot cliffs of Navajo Sandstone. Our Photo Expedition Leader will discuss aperture and its importance when you're shooting different subjects in the same place—like Zion's prolific bird life and its remarkable landscape. The Virgin River carved this canyon millions of years ago, and using slow shutter speeds, we capture its elegant path and the life it sustains, like tiny wildflowers or mule deer and rock squirrels. Trails along the river lead to quiet recesses, where we may hear and see many birds unique to the American West: canyon wrens, golden eagles, prairie falcons, American dippers and phoebes, among others. Then climb higher for dramatic views of the towering canyon walls and shadowy depths below. Throughout the day, we task ourselves to capture Zion's sheer size, using the massive canyon walls for perspective and focus.

And for even more perspective, enjoy a scenic helicopter flight in and around Zion National Park, featuring aerial views of Smith Mesa, Kolob Canyon and Red Butte Mountain, in addition to notable landmarks of the park itself. Note that photo opportunities are limited during the flight.



Day 6: Morning Hike in Zion / Grand Canyon National Park—North Rim

Following a peaceful morning hike in Zion, we travel south to the Grand Canyon, established in 1919. Lying entirely within the state of Arizona, the park encompasses 278 miles of the Colorado River and adjacent plateau. Located on the ancestral homelands of 11 tribal communities that hold the space sacred, Grand Canyon is one of the most spectacular examples of erosion anywhere on Earth. We'll use the canyon's natural layers as leading lines as we focus today on landscape composition.

Grand Canyon's popularity can mean many visitors, so we avoid the bulk of the crowds by concentrating on the less visited but no less spectacular North Rim. With only 10% of the total number of visitors to the national park each year, this area proffers more secluded and uninterrupted photo opportunities. We spend two nights at Grand Canyon Lodge, tucked among the ponderosa pines at 8,000 feet on the canyon's edge. The classic lodge, now a National Historic Landmark, is the only accommodation inside the park on the North Rim. Built in 1928 by architect Gilbert Stanley Underwood, the lodge on Bright Angel Point was constructed of native Kaibab limestone and heavy timber logs that capture the rustic national park style of the era. After a fire four years later, it was rebuilt in 1936, preserving the original stone, and that venerable structure endures today.

Our time at the Grand Canyon will be devoted to making pictures that tell the story of this special place. Humans have lived in the Grand Canyon region for 25,000 years, a mere blip in time compared to the 1.7-billion-year-old Vishnu Schist rocks visible along the Colorado River in the bottom of the canyon. Our relatively open schedule allows plenty of time to frame and shoot the drama of one of the planet's most magnificent natural landscapes. It may be helpful to think of today as reconnaissance, practicing certain shots in preparation for tomorrow. We conclude the day with a sunset shoot.



Day 7: Grand Canyon Sunrise / Hiking the North Rim

Today is the culmination of all we have practiced—working with light (and its absence), natural leading lines, composition, exposure and detail. It's also an opportunity to gaze into the mile-deep chasm of the Grand Canyon in the ethereal light of sunrise and sunset to capture the fleeting beauty in images. Our Photo Expedition Leader knows the best overlooks to capture the beauty of sunrise, including Cape Royal and Point Imperial, though really, any spot on the rim is going to offer a stunning experience. Sunset will likewise bring astonishment as we watch the canyon depths shift from orange and rust to pink and purple as the sinking sun casts its glow in contrast to with the shadows moving across the etched peaks and crevasses.

We spend the day on several hikes, tapping the deep knowledge of our Photo Expedition Leader who knows the best trails and viewpoints for a more secluded encounter with this extraordinary geological phenomenon. Capture vistas from different viewpoints along the rim and just below, enjoying moments of relative solitude. Tonight, we share a farewell dinner at the lodge. Then, step out onto the stone terrace for your last opportunity to capture the sunset and to shoot the Grand Canyon's celestial wonders. The park was recognized as an International Dark Sky Park in 2019, after a three-year endeavor to protect its night skies by altering light fixtures and taking measures to reduce light pollution.

Day 8: Grand Canyon / St. George / Depart

Rise at dawn for your final chance to capture the sunrise over the North Rim before we depart after breakfast. Although you're leaving this inspirational landscape, the anticipation of reviewing, editing and sharing your images builds. Soon you'll be sharing the stories of America's canyon country. For now, we travel back to St. George, arriving in time for afternoon flights home (book no earlier than 12:30 pm).

Please note: This itinerary is subject to change, as departures may visit Grand Canyon, Zion and Bryce in a different order than what is outlined above. Your precise itinerary will be communicated to you once your trip dates are confirmed.



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Accommodation Details:

Hyatt Place St. George

Bryce Canyon Lodge

Bryce Canyon Grand Hotel

Ruby's Inn

Zion Lodge

SpringHill Suites Zion

Grand Canyon Lodge

For detailed descriptions, visit nathab.com/us-national-parks-tours/grand-canyon-bryce-zion-photo-expedition/accommodations/

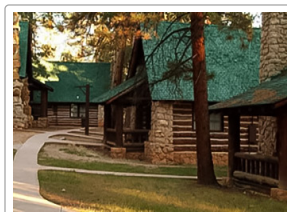
Desert Southwest Photo Expedition Accommodations

Capture Iconic Vistas & Sublime Light in America's Canyon Country



Hyatt Place St. George

The premier place to stay in St. George, Hyatt Place offers a central location, grand views of the red rock surroundings, and large, light-filled rooms in earthy desert tones.



Bryce Canyon Lodge

This venerable 1920s lodge stands alone inside the national park, offering rustic cabins, contemporary hotel rooms and unrivaled access to trails, stunning views and the Bryce Amphitheater.



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Bryce Canyon Grand Hotel

The newest lodging in the Bryce Canyon area, this highly acclaimed full-service hotel offers deluxe accommodations in spacious 350-square-foot guest rooms



Ruby's Inn

Opened to Bryce Canyon visitors as "Tourist Rest" in 1919, the original historic lodge was rebuilt after a 1984 fire yet retains the same family-run hospitality with a fourth generation at the helm.



Zion Lodge

The only accommodation located inside the national park, Zion Lodge offers coveted proximity and classic 1920s atmosphere, backdropped by the canyon's massive sandstone ramparts.



SpringHill Suites Zion

Just a mile from the entrance to Zion National Park, this stylish jumping-off point for exploring Utah's canyonlands offers spacious modern suites filled with natural light and red rock views for breakfast.



Grand Canyon Lodge

The North Rim's only lodging inside the national park, this historic 1928 lodge on Bright Angel Point was built in harmony with nature using native Kaibab limestone and ponderosa pine timbers.



No Better Context for Canyon Photography

While most people are familiar with the sweeping panoramas and fantastic formations of Bryce, Zion and the Grand Canyon, few manage to obtain outstanding photos of these iconic national treasures. Relegated to bus tours and heavily traveled trails, or going it on their own with little local intel, most visitors miss the best context in which to photograph these magnificent monuments. Our expert guides get you off the standard track to find rare compositions in these classic national parks, revealing lesser-known locations and dramatic perspectives. Here's why our approach stands out:

1 Capture All the Wonder Without All the Planning

Zion, Bryce, and Grand Canyon are among America's most popular national parks, with accommodations filling months in advance and crowds competing for the perfect shot at every viewpoint. When you travel with Nat Hab, you'll worry about none of those concerns: We arrange the most desirable lodging, navigate park roads, provide exceptional interpretation, and reveal hidden photo spots and subjects others miss.

2 Small Groups Led by Two Photo Expedition Leaders

Our group is capped at just 10 photographers—and we divide you between two vehicles, ensuring plenty of room for all your equipment and the ability to reach prime photography spots that larger tour buses can't access. In a small group, we enjoy the utmost in flexibility, comfort and personal interaction with two Nat Hab Photo Expedition Leaders—you won't find a better guide-to-guest ratio!

3 Our Expedition Leaders are Both Naturalists and Professional Photographers

Our expert guides know Canyon Country like none other, intimately versed in its millennia of natural history, ecology, wildlife and cultural heritage. And they possess equally impressive photography expertise, able to offer photographers of all ability levels a host of tips, tricks and tactics for capturing superlative images in light conditions that can be both tricky and pure magic. You'll get all the personalized coaching you want in our small-group context.

4 Chase the Best Light for Photography

Our small group is nimble enough to move when the light is best, and to move on when it isn't. We rise early to catch the first rays of dawn reflected off the rock formations, bathing them in a vermilion glow. As the sun climbs, it reveals a shifting palette that transforms the natural bridges, cliffs and canyon walls. And we'll linger at sunset, watching the colors glow, deepen and fade.

5 Get Aerial Shots by Private Helicopter over Bryce Canyon

Take to the skies on an exhilarating 30-minute helicopter flight over the "forests" of pink sandstone hoodoos Bryce Canyon is renowned for. Our aircraft is able to fly low and slow, allowing you to get exciting angles on famous formations and the broader canyon landscape.



6 Nat Hab's Exclusive North America Safari Cruisers Enhance Photography

Our North America Safari Cruisers are customized luxury vans that are exceptionally comfortable and equipped with either a pop-top roof or wide roof hatches that open for unimpeded photography. Designed for exploring America's national parks, they offer the best of both necessities: an expedition-ready exterior and a spacious, luxurious interior for the ultimate in comfort. We never fill them to capacity, so every guest gets a window seat plus plenty of room for your gear.

7 Focus on the Grand Canyon's Quieter North Rim

Ninety percent of visitors to the Grand Canyon concentrate on the South Rim, which is far more touristed and heavily paved than its counterpart across the chasm. More remote and less accessible, the North Rim evokes an experience of the Grand Canyon as it was decades ago, when the predominant sound was wind in the pines and you could wander trails on the rim in relative solitude. This quiet atmosphere provides ample opportunities for shooting fantastic, unobstructed photos.

8 Enjoy Stays at Coveted Accommodations

Grand Canyon Lodge on the North Rim is a quintessential part of U.S. national park heritage, and staying here enhances your experience with its ambience and proximity for big views right outside the door. We likewise use other in-demand accommodations in key locations, ensuring you're close to nature, not towns and strip malls. Plus, you won't have to struggle for almost-impossible-to-get reservations: we've already secured them. (While all departures include Grand Canyon Lodge, other hotels may vary based on your departure date; please inquire for details.)

9 With Decades of Experience, Your Guide Knows Every Trail

Our expert guides' depth in the American Southwest is second to none. They know where the best "paths less traveled" are located, for wildlife watching and breathtaking landscape shots. They know how to avoid the biggest swarms of tourists. With lots of special stops and surprises up their sleeves, our Expedition Leaders share a side of Canyon Country with you that most visitors never see.

10 Our Quality-Value Guarantee Ensures Your Exceptional Canyons Photography Experience

With Natural Habitat Adventures, you receive our exclusive guarantee that clearly states that we will meet the high expectations we set forth in our promotional materials. To our knowledge, this is the most ambitious guarantee made by any adventure travel company.

11 Feel Good About Your Carbon-Neutral Journey

We care deeply about our planet, as we know you do. When you travel with us, the carbon emissions from your trip are 100% offset—including your round-trip flights from home. Natural Habitat Adventures has been the world's first carbon-neutral travel company since 2007.



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12

Natural Habitat Adventures Is World Wildlife Fund's Travel Partner

Because of our commitment to environmentally friendly travel, as well as the exceptional quality of our small-group nature adventures, World Wildlife Fund, the world's leading environmental conservation organization, has named Natural Habitat Adventures its worldwide travel partner — a designation that makes us exceedingly proud!





Make It Private with Your Family or Friends

Travel privately, exclusively with your immediate family, multi-generational family or group of friends. And when you choose a private departure, you're assured the most exclusive and authentic Canyon Country Photo Expedition on offer. Request your private departure by completing the form below.

Please note that on Desert Southwest Photo Expedition Make It Private departures we require a minimum group size of 7 travelers.

Also, please be aware that your per-person cost on a Make It Private trip will vary depending on the number of travelers in your group and may be as much as 10%-30% higher (ship-based trips may be even higher) than our normal trip cost unless you fill the trip.

This **Make It Private** option is available on nearly every Nat Hab trip for family and friend groups. Call an Adventure Specialist at 800-543-8917 or look for the "Make It Private" icon in the **pricing section** of a trip online at nathab.com to see prices based on your specific group size.



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Dates & Pricing Summary:

Prices:
From \$7895
(+ Air)

Group Size:
Please note that on Make It Private departures we have a minimum group size of half the maximum size of our regularly scheduled departures.

Physical Requirements:
Easy to Moderate

Desert Southwest Photo Expedition Dates, Pricing & Info

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2025 Departures

Departure	Return	Notes
May 17, 2025	May 24, 2025	
Sep 28, 2025	Oct 5, 2025	

2026 Departures

Departure	Return	Notes
May 12, 2026	May 19, 2026	
Sep 29, 2026	Oct 6, 2026	



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Pricing

2024 Prices

- ▶ **Photo Expedition Price**
\$7595

Single Occupancy: For a single room add \$1795.

Deposit: \$500 per person.

2025 Prices

- ▶ **Photo Expedition Price**
\$7895 - \$7995

Single Occupancy: For a single room add \$1795.

Deposit: \$500 per person.

Trip prices are per person based on double occupancy and are given in U.S. dollars.

2026 Prices

- ▶ **Photo Expedition Price**
\$8495 - \$8595

Single Occupancy: For a single room add \$1795.

Deposit: \$500 per person.

Trip prices are per person based on double occupancy and are given in U.S. dollars.



Included

Accommodations, services of Nat Hab's professional Expedition Leader(s) and local staff, scenic helicopter ride over Bryce Canyon, van transportation, all meals from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on final day, some gratuities, airport transfers on Day 1 and final day, all activities and entrance fees, all taxes, permits and service fees.

Not Included

Travel to and from the start and end point of your trip, alcoholic beverages, some gratuities, passport and visa fees (if any), optional activities, items of a personal nature (phone calls, laundry and internet, etc.), airline baggage fees, airport and departure taxes (if any), optional travel protection and medical evacuation insurance.

Physical Requirements

Easy to Moderate

This adventure does not require a high degree of physical fitness. However, in order to participate, travelers should be able to walk at least two miles unassisted over uneven terrain and inclines, with some altitude gain, and at altitudes up to 9,115 feet above sea level. An optional mule ride is available for participants weighing less than 200 pounds on our North Rim itinerary. Most of the trip takes place in an arid desert environment, and the sun can often be



intense. Our days generally start quite early and are very full with activities, including a few long drives. While travelers are not required to participate in all activities, should you opt out of the day's scheduled activities, we cannot always guarantee that alternatives will be available.

On custom or private departures with smaller groups, our ability to accommodate varying levels of physical abilities or interests is limited, since these trips are staffed with a single Expedition Leader who may be assisted, pending availability, by local guides.

Important Information About This Trip

This trip offers our guests a chance to encounter a side of the American Southwest that most casual tourists miss. The main goal of our seasoned Expedition Leaders is to get our travelers to less-visited areas away from heavy crowds in order to experience the wildlife and natural grandeur of the canyonlands in the most secluded manner possible. Specific dates cannot be booked with the national parks until August (for the following year). Trip dates listed are likely to change slightly and will be confirmed at that time. Depending upon availability, itineraries may run in a different order.

Mandatory Insurance

Since the areas we travel to are remote and wild (that's why we go there!), we require that all guests have, at minimum, medical evacuation insurance for this program. This is for the safety of all guests. We require that your chosen independent insurance plan includes at least \$250,000 in medical evacuation coverage.

To protect your investment and to provide peace of mind while you travel, we also strongly recommend purchasing comprehensive travel insurance. Plans may cover everything from medical treatment to trip cancellations and delays and lost luggage. Please contact our office if you would like more information about the medical evacuation and comprehensive travel insurance policies we offer by calling 800-543-8917.

Getting There & Getting Home

We recommend that you arrive to St. George, Utah, by 5 pm on Day 1 in order to join your group orientation at 6 pm. If you are departing out of St. George, Utah, you are free to depart after 12:30 pm on the final day and will be transferred to the airport. If you are traveling to Las Vegas via shuttle, you are free to depart on the shuttle any time after 12 pm and will be transferred to the shuttle station. We recommend booking flights out of Las Vegas for 3 pm or later, depending on your shuttle departure time.



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WWF's membership travel program is operated by Natural Habitat Adventures (Nat Hab). To date, Nat Hab has provided more than \$6 million in support of WWF's mission and will continue to give 1% of gross sales plus \$175,000 annually through 2028. WWF® and ©1986 Panda Symbol are owned by WWF. All rights reserved.