



Canyonlands National Park

Includes →

Day Hikes.....	180
Driving.....	187
Sights.....	191
Sleeping.....	192

Best Hikes

- Grand View Point Trail (p183)
- Mesa Arch (p182)
- Upheaval Dome Overlook Trail (p183)
- Aztec Butte Trail (p180)
- Slickrock Trail (p183)
- Lathrop Canyon (p181)

Best Views

- Grand View at Island in the Sky (p183)
- Horseshoe Canyon's Great Gallery (p192)
- Dead Horse Point State Park (p190)
- The Maze (p191)

Why Go?

Rugged, otherworldly, untamed and at times impenetrable, Canyonlands offers up some of the most remote hiking, cycling and rafting in all of Utah's national parks. This is desert solitude at its best.

Scorched red rocks, resplendent layers of sandstone, buttes and sun-crested canyons shape the landscape's curves while, below, in the serpentine canyons of the Green and Colorado Rivers, you'll find a wonderworld of gleaming water, forgotten box canyons, foaming white water and delicate desert fauna that blooms ever so daintily with new spring rains.

Grand adventures here can last 10 days, while smaller-scale pursuits can be had from the main entrances at Needles and the aptly named Island in the Sky. Head to the edge of this tortuous rift in the Earth's crust and look hard enough and you might just see the curve of our firmament as it cascades with nonstop momentum to the West.

Driving Distances (miles)

Canyonlands National Park (South Entrance)	100			
Capitol Reef National Park (Visitor Center)	155	220		
Moab	30	75	145	
Zion National Park (East Entrance)	325	370	180	315

Canyonlands National Park (North Entrance)
 Canyonlands National Park (South Entrance)
 Capitol Reef National Park (Visitor Center)
 Moab

Note: Distances are approximate

Entrances

The Colorado and Green Rivers divide the park into three separate and distinct areas, called 'districts' by the National Park Service (NPS) – Island in the Sky, the Needles and the Maze.

Island in the Sky and the Needles feature visitor centers, developed campgrounds and paved roads to scenic overlooks, as well as dirt roads and hiking trails. The less-visited Maze and Horseshoe Canyon, an unconnected unit northwest of the Maze, offer only 4WD-accessible dirt roads, hiking trails and primitive campgrounds.

No roads cross the park. Instead, well-marked secondary spurs from two major highways access Canyonlands' districts.

Island in the Sky is the most developed district. To get there from Moab, drive north on Hwy 191 for about 30 minutes to Hwy 313; both roads are paved.

The Needles District lies about 75 miles (90 minutes) southwest from Moab via paved Hwys 191 and 211.

The Maze is about 130 miles from Moab, accessible along dirt roads off Hwy 24; take Hwy 191 north to I-70 then west to Hwy 24 south. Horseshoe Canyon also lies off of Hwy 24 via dirt roads.

DON'T MISS

Boating Canyonlands is a singular experience that will stay with you for a lifetime. The upper sections of the Green and Colorado Rivers offer flatwater that is perfect for kayaks, canoes and paddleboards. At their confluence, the rivers form Cataract Canyon, one of the gnarliest stretches of Class III to V white water in Utah.

When You Arrive

- Canyonlands is open year-round.
- Admission to the Island in the Sky and Needles districts, good for seven days, costs \$25 per car, \$15 per motorcycle or \$10 per person arriving by bicycle or foot.
- There is no fee to enter the Maze.
- Consider purchasing a Local Passport (\$50) for admission to Arches and Canyonlands National Parks and Natural Bridges and Hovenweep National Monuments for a year.
- Reserve your backcountry permit in advance through the Backcountry Permits Office (p184).
- No district in the park offers food, gas, firewood or ice.
- Water is limited, so bring your own.
- Arrange tours ahead of time with a Moab operator.

PARK POLICIES & REGULATIONS

Canyonlands follows most of the national park hiking and backcountry use regulations. A few rules to note:

- No ATVs allowed. Other 4WD vehicles, mountain bikes and street-legal motorbikes are permitted on dirt roads.
- Backcountry campfires are allowed only along river corridors; use a fire pan, burn only driftwood or downed tamarisk, and pack out unburnt debris.
- Free or clean-aid rock climbing is allowed, except at archaeological sites or on most named features marked on US Geological Survey (USGS) maps. Check with rangers.
- Bear-proof food canisters and human-waste removal is required in some backcountry areas; check with the park for details.

Fast Facts

- Total area: 527 sq miles
- Elevation: 5800ft
- Average high/low temperature in July: 118°F/51°F (48°C/10°C)

Resources

- **Canyonlands National Park** (www.nps.gov/cany)
- **Canyonlands Natural History Association** (www.cnhha.org)