

## **UTAH SIDE TRIPS**

St. George is the closest city in Utah to Las Vegas. It is 115 miles Northeast of Las Vegas and home to 5 National Parks, 5 National Monuments, and a National Recreation Area. For detailed information on the National Parks go to [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov) and for quick hotel information for cities in Utah go to [www.utah-hotels.org](http://www.utah-hotels.org). Southern Utah has many outstanding camping and backpacking opportunities. If you are interested in this type of activity, contact Preston Motes ([skamotes@aol.com](mailto:skamotes@aol.com)) for more information

**ZION NATIONAL PARK** - Located 160 miles from Las Vegas outside the town of Springdale, Utah it is renowned for its sheer cliffs, massive buttresses, and deep alcoves. The Virgin River cuts through the Sandstone to form the Zion Narrows which is about 25 feet wide with 2000 foot walls on either side. From April to October, cars are excluded from Zion Canyon and a shuttle moves visitors through the canyon. There are numerous hiking opportunities which allow you to explore the canyon. Zion Lodge is located in the park but reservations must be made well in advance. Many hotels are available in Springdale. The Bit & Spur is a great place for lunch or dinner.

**BRYCE CANYON NATIONAL PARK** - Located 235 miles from Las Vegas near Utah's newest town, Bryce Canyon City (probably not on maps yet), is not a canyon but a beautiful example of erosion. The rock spires, hoodoos, cover the side of the plateau as it gives way to the terrain below. The Amphitheater, Rainbow Point and a walk below the Rim are the highlights of Bryce. The lodge in the park at Bryce and Ruby's Inn located in Bryce Canyon City are good places to stay.

**NORTH RIM OF GRAND CANYON** – It is actually in Arizona but you must enter through Utah. It is 280 miles from Las Vegas. It has much less visitation than the South Rim but spectacular views of the canyon. It is 1000 feet higher than the South Rim and the climate differs significantly. It is normally closed by snow from November through April. The Lodge in the park and Jacob's Lake Inn are about the only places nearby to stay. Kanab, Utah is the next closest place.

**CAPITOL REEF NATIONAL PARK** – This park is 360 miles from Las Vegas and is another sandstone wonderland with massive formations that resemble the dome of the Nations Capitol. It was a Mormon farming community and the fruit orchards still provide visitor with apples, pears, apricots, and peaches during the season. Torrey is the nearest town with accommodations. Utah highway #12 is a scenic highway that connects with Bryce Canyon. Boulder, a small town on this road was the last town in the lower 48 to receive mail by horseback because of lack of roads. Calf Creek Falls is a surprise in the desert near Escalante.

**CEDAR BREAKS NATIONAL MONUMENT** – Located near Cedar City, Utah this is a small version of Bryce Canyon at an elevation of 10,000 feet.

**GRAND STAIRCASE ESCALANTE NATIONAL MONUMENT** – Much of the area outside the above National Parks has been incorporated into this national monument. It is administered by the Bureau of Land Management rather than the National Park Service and was somewhat controversial in its designation. There are visitor's centers in Kanab and Escalante. There is very little development in the monument and most roads are dirt. Be prepared for all situations and insure that you have a full tank of gas before you venture off the pavement.