

ADVENTURES

in good company



Sedona and the Grand Canyon, November 2024

Hello Arizona Hikers! It's been over a week since we were all together on our journey in the Grand Canyon State. I hope you have had time to unpack your bags, catch up on sleep, and reflect on our time together.

During our adventure we enjoyed fragrant pine forests and starry skies, challenging hikes and relaxing meals, red rocks and mysterious vortices (also known as vortexes). Here's a quick recap to help you remember our time together.

We traveled from many places to **Flagstaff**, Arizona, where we were greeted with a snow shower. We met at Little America Hotel, where we got to know each other over our first dinner together at the Silver Pine Restaurant.

On Monday, we took our first hike together at Sandy's Canyon. We hiked through Ponderosa Pines, an open meadow, and climbed up to Fisher Point for lunch. Some of us took the extra excursion to Walnut Canyon Monument, and walked the "island" loop where the ancient dwellings of the Sinagua people perched high above the canyon. While on the path, a tarantula came out to say hello. A trip to the outdoor store and dinner at Beaver Street Brewery completed our day.

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After breakfast the next morning, we packed up the vans and headed towards the **Grand Canyon**. Our first stop: Desert View Watchtower. Designed by the architect Mary Jane Coulter, this stone and wooden building blended into the landscape and offered stunning views of the canyon below. We took our first views of the majestic Grand Canyon from this windy viewpoint, and climbed the stairs of the watchtower to get a different perspective.

After a trailhead picnic, we carefully made our way below the rim of the canyon on the narrow, steep, and rocky Grandview Trail. We descended over 1000 feet in about a mile, and took a rest at an overlook with a magnificent view. Next, we checked into our rooms at the Maswik Lodge, and walked to dinner at Harvey House Cafe, located in the Bright Angel Lodge. On our chilly walk home, we turned off our flashlights and gazed up at millions of stars in the sky.

The next morning, on the drive to Hermit's Rest Trailhead, we spotted elk and mule deer. Two of us took a walk on the Rim Trail, and the rest of us hiked the Hermit's Trail to Santa Maria Springs. A fanny pack went missing, but a Dutch couple came to the rescue and retrieved it from the canyon for us. Some of us went for a spur of the moment sunset bus tour. A smoke alarm delayed the start of our dinner at the Arizona Steak House, but we eventually got our table and enjoyed a meal together.

Our last morning in the Grand Canyon included a trip to the Visitor Center, walking on the Rim Trail, and some rest time. We packed up and traveled the curvy, windy road to **Sedona**, our last stop on the trip. We checked into the lovely Sky Rock Inn, and ate take-out pizza and salad in the lobby while listening to live music.

In the morning, we shuttled to a trailhead to hike the Soldier's Pass/Bryn Mesa Loop. We hiked on hard rocky surfaces and across a mesa, surrounded by prickly pear and red rock formations. We took a side trip to a cave, where we scrambled around and enjoyed the views from our perch up in the rocks. Our hike ended near the seven sacred pools, and we shuttled back to our hotel, with a javelina sighting along the way. We took a quick bonus trip to the Chapel of the Holy Cross, where we admired the architecture and learned about its history, which was connected to one of us! At Picasso's, we ate dinner and celebrated a birthday!

The next day, after a breakfast buffet at our hotel, we visited the Airport Mesa Vortex. From this rocky perch, we sat in silence, surrounded by spectacular views, and perhaps felt the vortex energy that we had been hearing about. We hiked the Airport Mesa Loop Trail, picked up lunch

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at Whole Foods, and enjoyed a free afternoon. We ate dinner at the Golden Goose where we shared memories from the trip, and on our way home we made a stop at a star-gazing spot.

Our final morning involved breakfast, a birthday celebration, and a drive back to Flagstaff to the airport. We said our final goodbyes, and headed back home.

Thanks so much to each of you for joining us on this trip. We enjoyed your positive energy, your flexibility, and the way all of you meshed as a group. We appreciate you choosing to travel with Adventures in Good Company. Please be sure to fill out the evaluation and give us your feedback, so we can improve the trip for future travelers. Also, a reminder to add your photos to the Google drive (find the links in your portal). Perhaps we will meet again, and until then, happy travels!

Your AGC Guides,
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