

**The Name Doesn't Say It All!** Grand Canyon Coaches... and Tours, Taxis and More *(used with permission granted from Tony Venuti, Az Tourist News)*

*Note: Vocabulary Cards useful for ELL students during this reading/oral listening*

Grand Canyon Coaches is a transportation company providing tours, charters, taxi, and a scheduled service connecting the Grand Canyon Airport/Tusayan with the National Park. We have been providing transportation here at **Grand Canyon** for over 15 years. We understand the needs of visitors to the **canyon** and our goal is to satisfy each guest.

We enjoy sharing the secrets and wonders of the **canyon** and Northern Arizona while safely and conveniently providing comfortable transportation. Our driver / guides all live here and experience daily the beauties and wonders of the **canyon** and can offer story upon story of this treasure.

Our tours allow visitors to experience the **canyon** in a variety of ways. Our smoothwater (**NO RAPIDS**) **rafting** trip allows the visitor to touch the creator of the canyon, the **Colorado River**. Daily we depart from the South Rim and journey across the Navajo reservation to the Glenn Canyon Dam where visitors board **rafts** to begin a 15 mile, 4 hour soft adventure floating the **Colorado River**. Lunch and drinks are provided while on the **raft**. This is a relaxing and awe-inspiring outdoor adventure. The water is smooth and enjoyable for guests of all ages. This 11.5 hour day is one that will never be forgotten. Operates from mid March to mid November.

Our Sunset tour is a great way for guests to experience the changing moods of the canyon. As the sun begins to set, the **canyon** comes alive with shadows and colorful hues that can only be experienced at this time of day. We take our guests to the Yavapai Observation Station where after a short walk along the rim they will have great views of the western portion of the **canyon**. This tour is 1.5 hours. Operates from May to October.

Our Tour of the Universe takes guests out of this world. Using binoculars and one of the largest commercial telescopes in the state of Arizona our Starmaster opens the vast expanse of the universe just for you. Imagine seeing where stars are born and witnessing the evidence of their deaths.

Galaxies, star clusters and even the planets of our own solar system, are all part of the wonders you can experience on our Tour of the Universe. This tour takes you beyond the rim of **Grand Canyon** and out of this world. The tour is about 2.5 hours and operates from May to October.

## Bird's Eye View Will Give You a Thrill

*By Colleen Evans (used with permission granted from Tony Venuti, Az Tourist News)*

*Note: Vocabulary Cards useful for ELL students during this reading/oral listening*

A trip to the Grand Canyon is an experience which lasts a lifetime. Imagine taking in all of the Canyon's splendor from the air. Several airline and helicopter companies located at the Grand Canyon National Park Airport offer these scenic flights daily.

Grand Canyon Airlines was the first to offer these thrilling tours over the Canyon in 1928. J. Parker Van Zandt founded the airline under the name Scenic Airways and became fascinated with the idea that one could cover by air in thirty minutes what took over two days to span on ground.

Along with Grand Canyon Airlines, Air Grand Canyon and Airstar Airlines offer air tours of the Canyon on fixed wing aircraft. Narration accompanies the trip to give visitors the ultimate adventure.

There are also three local helicopter companies offering scenic tours. Their experienced pilots glide past massive rock formations, jet over the forest into side canyons and hover near sheer walls that tell the two billion year history of the Earth's evolution.

Airstar Helicopters, Kenai Helicopters and Papillon Grand Canyon Helicopters offer a wide variety of air tours, some lasting 30 to 60 minutes. Papillon also offers exclusive one-day and overnight excursions to Havasupai Indian Village in Havasu Canyon.

Along with providing access to many remote sites, air tours create minimal environmental impact to the delicate ecosystems of our nation's scenic wonders. Through the use of quiet technology, efforts to avoid sensitive sites and with the highest regard for safety these companies are helping to assure enjoyment of these wild and scenic areas for generations to come.

The view of the majestic sweep of the Grand Canyon has thrilled millions of air passengers for over 60 years and remains a popular way to see the Canyon today.

## Whitewater Day Rafting with the Hualapai River Runners

by Charlis McVey (*used with permission granted from Tony Venuti, Az Tourist News*)

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I held my breath and gripped the rope, tingling with anticipation. There was just time to notice a rainbow dancing in the spray and then, wham! We dropped into the first trough of the rapids and our white water ride began. The sheets of spray cascading down brought gasps of shock as the cold river water struck our sun warmed skin. Screams of excitement echoed on all sides as we bucked up and down on a wild carnival ride of pure fun.

This was my first white water experience and I couldn't have chosen a better place or outfit for this adventure. I was rafting the Colorado River with the Hualapai Indian tribe through their reservation land on the western edge of the Grand Canyon. The trip starts in the tribal capital of Peach Springs, located on Historic Route 66 between Kingman and Seligman.

The Hualapai River Runners offer the only one-day white water rafting trip on the river. They have more than 20 years of experience with motorized rafts that give plenty of thrills without requiring high levels of fitness and experience on the part of the participants. I spent the previous night at Hualapai Lodge, the starting point for the expedition. This new facility offers large comfortable rooms with beautifully decorated lounge areas for relaxing and a restaurant that serves up a hearty breakfast buffet.

Our group of 31 boarded a bus for the ride to the launch site. This is the only road along the south rim of the Grand Canyon where you can actually drive down to the Colorado River. Although graded and maintained, it's a bumpy 21 miles and at one point you actually drive through - and in - Diamond Creek. We arrived in high spirits to find four rafts awaiting us, loaded with our lunches and plenty of drinks and snacks.

I had visited the Grand Canyon once before - at the National Park - and was awed by the extraordinary beauty of the many famous overlooks. It was a grand day of sightseeing, but I was only an observer. Here on the river you have a different perspective, you become an active participant in the life of the canyon. You see barrel cacti clinging to the rocky ledges, a bird of prey swoops by, and if you are lucky you will spot - as we did, thanks to the sharp eyes of our guide Lana - bighorn sheep leaping nimbly from rock to rock.

A short while into the trip a special treat awaited, listed in the brochure only as "a hike to Travertine Falls." This was absolutely one of the highlights of the day! After a short walk to the bottom of a pretty little falls, we were challenged to rappel up a smooth rock slope to a cave. I had never done any rope work - but I soon learned to lean back as I walked up the rock. For the next harder bit we climbed a rope ladder, then rappelled - with a boost - up into the cave, as water flowed all around us. There the hidden treasure of the falls is to be found. The beauty of the scene, the delight of playing in the water, the novel climb - which everyone managed just fine - made this stop the favorite of many I spoke to.

After the exhilarating ride through the morning's rapids, which ranged in strength from 3 to 6, we enjoyed a tasty lunch on a sandy beach (packing a towel to sit on is a good idea). The quieter smooth water float in the afternoon gave the opportunity to concentrate more on the beauty of the canyon walls with their everchanging shapes, colors and formations. At journey's end, we disembarked to await transportation out - by helicopter!

A ride in a **helicopter** was another first for me and many of my fellow travelers. How vulnerable you feel in that tiny bubble in the sky as you rise up and up towards the rim - but how amazing the view of the **river** below where a brief moment ago you were riding on the mighty **Colorado**! At the top there is a Visitors Center with drinks, snacks and a **gift shop**. From here the bus takes everyone back to Peach Springs, some 68 miles away.

It was an amazing day, an unforgettable experience, one that you, too, can enjoy until the 15th of October - or from mid-March of next year - don't miss it! 'Til then, come and visit the Hualapai and discover the Grand Canyon as it was... and still is. Grand Canyon West is open year-round, offering a guided **bus** tour and BBQ lunch.

**Classic Tourist Trap Article - Grand Canyon Caverns A Route 66 Classic**  
by Colleen Evans (used with permission granted from Tony Venuti, Az Tourist News)

*Note: Vocabulary Cards useful for ELL students during this reading/oral listening*

Imagine - 345 million years ago the entire Southwestern U.S. was covered by ocean. At the bottom of this ancient sea the story of Grand **Canyon Caverns** begins. The shells and **skeletons** of tiny sea animals fell to the ocean floor creating a mud very rich in lime deposits. This mud eventually became the limestone bedrock that is the base rock of the **Caverns**. As time progressed the forces of volcanic eruptions and earthquakes caused the ocean floor to rise becoming the mountaintops we see today. The **Caverns'** elevation is now more than 5000 feet above sea level. As the upheavals split the earth's crust, rainwater began seeping into the limestone - thus the very beginning of the Grand **Canyon Caverns**.

In 1927, young Walter Peck literally stumbled and almost fell into a rather large hole. Walter gathered some friends together to go explore the hole and was lowered with just the light from a coal oil lantern. Walter was excited when he thought he had found a very rich vein of gold. He gathered samples and proceeded back to the surface. On his way out he discovered the remains of two human **skeletons** and remnants of a horse saddle.

The story caused a great stir and by the time the newspapers had finished with the story, these findings had become the remains of a prehistoric caveman. Soon scientists had come from the east to study the **bones**. In the midst of all the commotion Walter bought the property and the **Caverns** in preparation for gold mining. Much to Walter's dismay there was no gold - only rust and iron oxide.

Being an enterprising young man, Walter Peck soon came up with a brilliant idea. He would charge 25 cents to enter the **Caverns** to see where the "caveman" was found. **Tourists** were lowered by a primitive elevator until stairs were built in 1935, that required walking 15 stories down and 15 stories back up. In 1962, a shaft was blasted and a modern elevator was installed sealing off the natural entrance forever.

Visitors today have the convenience of traveling the 210 feet underground on a modern elevator and taking a 3/4 mile guided walking tour. While you may not see a "caveman", you will be truly amazed by the ornately formed rock and mineral deposits that grew all those millions of years ago to adorn the walls of the **Caverns**. The mission at Grand Canyon **Caverns** is to maintain this **Historic Route 66** Classic for many generations to come. Commitment to preserving the **Caverns** and expanding the understanding of this remarkable geological site are goals that are a part of daily life at the **Caverns**. Each year Grand Canyon **Caverns** strives to expand hospitality services and good value. Surrounded by attractions such as the South Rim of the Grand **Canyon**, Havasu **Canyon**, Havasupai Indian Reservation, Diamond Creek and a host of activities throughout the year, the **Caverns** is a must see for everyone.

Grand Canyon **Caverns** provides visitors from around the world with a warm "Route 66" welcome every visit! Located on **Historic Route 66**, 25 miles west of Seligman, Arizona and 60 miles east of Kingman, Arizona.

## **In a Nutshell...- Some History of the Grand Canyon**

(used with permission granted from Tony Venuti, Az Tourist News)

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"The region... is of course altogether valueless... Ours... will doubtless be the last party of whites to visit this profitless locality." Thus reported US Army Lt. Joseph Ives after his exploration of the **Grand Canyon** in 1857. His quote, so amusingly wrong from our perspective of today, is one of the many little gems to be found when delving into the history of this World Heritage Site.

The **Grand Canyon** is a window into the history of the Earth itself. Erosion has exposed rocks ranging from **1.7 billion years old** to a mere 1 million years old. Eons ago the Pacific continental plate crashed against and went under the North American plate, creating the Rocky Mountains. In time this tilting **caused the ancient Colorado River to carve a new pathway, the Grand Canyon.**

Humans began inhabiting the **Grand Canyon** region about 10,000 years ago. Starting in about the 1300's the tribes of today, or their direct ancestors, began moving into the area - the Hualapai and Havasupai, the Southern Paiutes and the Navajo. They harvested the natural riches of the land.

The first Europeans, on the other hand, were in search of another kind of riches, the supposed gold of the fabled Seven Cities of Cibola. Garcia Lopez de Cardenas, a member of the expedition led by Coronado in 1540, was the first white man to see the **Grand Canyon**.

By the 19th century America was expanding westward, and fur trappers, traders and fortune hunters traveled through the region on the way to California. In 1848 much of the Southwest was ceded to the US after the war with Mexico and the US Army dispatched surveyors to chart the unknown territory. Lt. Ives, quoted above, obviously saw little to be enthusiastic about.

He was in the minority... in 1869 Major John Wesley Powell, a fearless, one-armed Civil War veteran and his nine companions became the first to journey 1,000 miles on the **Colorado River** going through the **Grand Canyon**. The notes from their intrepid journey provided valuable information. Miners followed, then writers and artists who celebrated the beauty of the **Grand Canyon**. Soon folk clamored to see for themselves... and tourism was born.

- **The Grand Canyon is one of the seven natural wonders of the world.**
- **It is 277 miles long, 17 miles wide at the widest point, and one mile deep.**
- **The Park has nearly 5 million visitors each year.**