

Classic Tourist Trap Article

Grand Canyon Caverns A Route 66 Classic

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

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.

Whitewater Day

Rafting with the Hualapai River Runners

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

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 ever-changing 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.

The Grand Canyon

More Than a Hole in the Ground

by Mike Perez *(used with permission granted from Tony Venuti, Az Tourist News)*

Anyone who believes that Arizona's Grand Canyon is just an oversized hole to look at is in for a pleasant surprise. Swarms of tourists come to the Grand Canyon each year to have their breath taken away by its immensity. The moment you first step up to the railing and look down is one that will not be forgotten; nothing can compare to this wonder of the world. But what next? Did you travel a hundred, a thousand, or even a hundred-thousand miles just to look down?

Of course not. The Grand Canyon is an experience, not just a view, and there are many ways to experience this wonder.

From Above

See the Grand Canyon the way millions of others have. Grand Canyon Airlines was founded in 1927 and offers flights aboard their own "Vistaliners." Helicopter tours are also available through Papillon Grand Canyon Helicopters, Kenai and Airstar. Get a real appreciation for just how big the Canyon is.

From Below

An increasingly popular method of experiencing the Grand Canyon is by taking a river rafting tour. These trips range in duration from one day to several weeks. Brave the white water rapids as you venture down the Colorado River. Take hikes to beautiful, otherwise hard to reach locations. River rafting is a sure bet for the safety-minded adventurer.

Whether you want to take a short day hike or an extended backpacking trip, one of the best ways of experiencing the Grand Canyon is by walking down into it. Stroll down one of the many paths leading into the canyon for a picnic or arrange a more involved, high-difficulty backpacking trip.

Not into the whole walking thing? Let mules do the work for you. Take a mule ride down to serene Phantom Ranch. Experience the Canyon the way miners did a century ago and develop an appreciation for the majestic views without being too hard on your legs.

From Atop

Tour the historic sites along the rim of the Grand Canyon, including Bright Angel Lodge, Santa Fe Railway Station, El Tovar Hotel and Verkamp's Curios, among others. Many of these buildings have been around since the turn of the twentieth century, and all of them have a wealth of stories behind them. Looking for a place to stay? Try the Grand Canyon National Park Lodges in the park, or the Rodeway Inn Red Feather Lodge and the Holiday Inn Express, both located near the south entrance to the park.

More than just a big hole in the ground, the Grand Canyon is an experience to be had. Whatever your interests and ability levels, you will not be lacking of things to do.

More Than a Film Grand Canyon IMAX Theater

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

The Grand Canyon IMAX Theater is a unique and distinctive player in promoting Arizona's Number One Tourist Attraction. Family vehicles and air travelers must pass by the highly visible IMAX Theater Complex on their way to the Grand Canyon. Nearly 20 percent, one out of every five visitors, visit the IMAX prior to their Canyon visit. Most spend more time at the IMAX Theater than at the observation areas overlooking the Canyon. This is largely due to the fact that the Grand Canyon IMAX Theater has been planned and developed as a central tourist hub, offering a variety of services and conveniences to the visitor.

The hourly presentation of Grand Canyon-The Hidden Secrets is shown on a giant 6 story high, 82 ft. wide screen. The film has earned numerous awards, including the prestigious 2000 IMAX Hall of Fame Award, the first 15/70mm film to be inducted into the IMAX Hall of Fame. Over 11 million visitors have viewed Grand Canyon-The Hidden Secrets since its premier showing in 1984 and over 90 million people have seen the film through an exclusive leasing agreement with large-screen theaters worldwide. Also, an estimated 25,000 videos and DVD's of the film are purchased annually by visitors to show their friends.

Visitor services include the only National Park Service Fee Station outside the park, to assist in relieving congestion at the Park Entrance Station. An Arizona Tourist Information and Visitor's Center is also located in the complex to aid visitors in planning enjoyable area activities. A Courtesy Desk in the Theater Lobby enables scheduling and purchasing of airline and helicopter tours, jeep tours and Colorado River tours. An extensive family food court, southwestern gift shops and a National Geographic kiosk are among the many visitor services offered at the Grand Canyon IMAX Theater, which has become a vital part of the Grand Canyon Experience.

Camping at the Grand Canyon

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

Visitors are never disappointed with the natural pleasures that await them in Kaibab National Forest. Kaibab is one of six national forests in Arizona and serves as the gateway to both the north and south rims of the Grand Canyon.

One of the best ways to take in the natural beauty of the Grand Canyon is camping. The peace and serenity that can be found there is part of what makes the Canyon one of the seven natural wonders of the world. From Williams to the Grand Canyon plenty of campground options are provided to visitors.

Camping season at the Grand Canyon starts Memorial Day weekend and continues through the Labor Day weekend. However, many of the private campgrounds in the area are open to visitors year round.

The National Park Service and the Forest Service operate several campgrounds.

There are also commercial campgrounds with a variety of services.

Hiking in the Grand Canyon

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

Camping and hiking in Grand Canyon National Park is an exhilarating experience. It is also one that requires some careful forethought and planning. To stay overnight in the backcountry you are required to obtain a permit at least 4 to 6 weeks in advance (and may submit the request up to 4 months prior to the start date).

Information required on the application for the permit includes the names of the people camping, license plates of the automobiles to be driven to the Canyon, and the itinerary of all of the hikers. It helps to be flexible on dates. If your schedule permits, tell the rangers you will accept alternate dates and alternate trip lengths.

The fee for a Backcountry Use Permit is \$10 plus \$5 per person per night. Other fees may also apply. For day hiking no permit is required. For general park information and to obtain the permit form call 928-638-7888 or 928-638-7875 between 8am-noon and 1-5pm weekdays.

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)

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 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)

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.

In a Nutshell...

Some History of the Grand Canyon

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

"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.**

So...What's the Attraction? Proofreading Activity

Each of the following sentences has numerous errors. Read each sentence. Then select the choice with the best corrections. Look for errors in capitalization at the beginning of sentences and on proper nouns. Keep your eyes open for end punctuation and commas in a series.

- 1. the grand canyon is locaided in arizona**
 - a. The grand Canyon is locaided in Arizona.
 - b. The Grand Canyon is locaided in Arizona!
 - c. The Grand canyon is located in Arizona.
 - d. The Grand Canyon is located in Arizona.
- 2. one of the first explourers to travel down the colorado river through the grand canyon was john wesley powell**
 - a. One of the first Explorers to travel down the Colorado, River through the Grand Canyon was John, Wesley, Powell.
 - b. One of the first explorers to travel down the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon was John Wesley Powell.
 - c. One of the first explorers to travel down the Colorado river through the grand canyon was John Wesley Powell.
 - d. One of the first explourers to travel down the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon was John Wesley Powell.
- 3. at the grand canyon a person can choose to hike kamp raft or shopp**
 - a. At the Grand Canyon a person can choose to hike, camp, raft, or shop.
 - b. At the grand canyon a person can choose to hike, camp, raft, or shop.
 - c. At the Grand Canyon a person can choose to hike, kamp, raft, or shop.
 - d. At the Grand Canyon a Person can choose to Hike, Camp, Raft, or Shop.
- 4. tourists can also experiants the grand canyon by riding a mool taking a jeep ture or riding a trane**
 - a. Tourists can also experience the Grand Canyon by riding a mool, takeing a jeep tour, or riding a trane.
 - b. Tourists can also experiants the Grand Canyon by riding a mule, takeing a jeep tour, or riding a trane.
 - c. Tourists can also experience the Grand Canyon by riding a mule, taking a jeep tour, or riding a train.
 - d. Tourists can also experience the Grand Canyon by riding, a mule, taking, a jeep, tour, or riding, a train.
- 5. be carefull neer the edje**
 - a. Be carefull neer the edje!
 - b. Be careful near The edge!
 - c. Be careful near the edge!
 - d. Be careful neer the edje.
- 6. have you bean to the grand canyon**
 - a. Have you been to the Grand Canyon?
 - b. Have you been to the grand canyon?
 - c. Have you been to the Grand Canyon!
 - d. Have you bean to the grand Canyon?

So...What's the Attraction?
Proofreading Activity Answer Key

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d. The Grand Canyon is located in Arizona.

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b. One of the first explorers to travel down the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon was John Wesley Powell.

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c. Tourists can also experience the Grand Canyon by riding a mule, taking a jeep tour, or riding a train.

5. be carefull neer the edje

c. Be careful near the edge!

6. have you bean to the grand canyon

a. Have you been to the Grand Canyon?

So...What's the Attraction Multiple Choice Quiz

Choose the BEST answer.

1. Which river flows through the Grand Canyon?
 - A. Mississippi
 - B. Missouri
 - C. Colorado
 - D. Amazon
2. Some of the oldest exposed rocks in the Grand Canyon are
 - A. 1 billion years old
 - B. 1.7 billion years old
 - C. 1.7 million years old
 - D. 1 million years old
3. The Grand Canyon is _____ deep.
 - A. not
 - B. 1 mile
 - C. 1.5 miles
 - D. 2 miles
4. Each year the Grand Canyon sees approximately _____ visitors.
 - A. Five hundred thousand
 - B. One million
 - C. Five million
 - D. Twenty million
5. Which of the following activities is NOT popular at the Grand Canyon?
 - A. Shopping
 - B. Snow skiing
 - C. Mule riding
 - D. Hiking
6. At what scale are problems found at the Grand Canyon?
 - A. State level
 - B. National level
 - C. Global level
 - D. Both A and B
7. Tourists coming to see the Grand Canyon need a place to stay in order to extend their visits. If a business moves in and supplies a place to spend the night, what other businesses would be able to move in as a result?
 - A. Businesses providing food.
 - B. Businesses providing activities.
 - C. Businesses to take care of waste.
 - D. All of the above.

So...What's the Attraction
Multiple Choice Quiz Answer Key

Choose the BEST answer.

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C. Five million
5. Which of the following activities is NOT popular at the Grand Canyon
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D. Both A and B
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D. All of the above