

# ZION



When Mormon pioneers discovered Zion, they thought they had found heaven on earth. You'll probably feel the same way when you get there. The park is known for its canyon carpeted with ash and poplar trees and its massive sandstone cliffs of cream, pink, and red that soar into a brilliant blue sky.

HIKING IN THE NARROWS



# WHAT TO DO

## MOUNT CARMEL HIGHWAY

### ZION-MOUNT CARMEL HIGHWAY ★★★

This is one of the **most scenic routes** ★★★ in all of the American West. It will take you up and down switchbacks at an altitude of 1,130 to 2,700 metres, through a two-kilometre-long tunnel and delivers spectacular **views** ★★★ of the canyon, especially if you start at the **East entrance of the park, which we strongly suggest if possible!**

The best time to drive this 17-kilometre stretch of road is in the morning, when the light in the park is sublime. For the best views, drive from east to west.

You will also avoid long lineups by arriving early. Just after the Rangers booth, stop on your left for a look at **Checkerboard Mesa** ★, an immense grey sandstone formation whose smooth surface is marked by a criss-cross pattern of horizontal and vertical fissures.

### CANYON OVERLOOK TRAIL★★★

**Distance (round-trip):** 1.6 km  
**Time (round-trip):** 30 minutes  
**Level:** Easy  
**Elevation gain:** 135 m

The **Canyon Overlook Trail**★★★ is a short (30 minutes, round-trip) hike just before the entrance of the Zion-Mount Carmel Tunnel. The trail, which has some precipitous drops (not recommended if you have a fear of heights!) leads to a breathtaking panoramic view of the southern part of the canyon with its jagged peaks in shades of ochre and cream.

## ZION NATIONAL PARK ★★★

**Season:** Open year-round, 24 hours a day.

**Visitor centers:** Hours may vary

- **Zion Canyon Visitor Center** is usually open daily from 8 am to 7 pm in summer. Open daily from 8 am to 5 pm the rest of the year. Closed on Christmas Day.
- **Kolob Canyon Visitor Center** is open daily from 8 am to 5 pm. Closed on Christmas Day.

**Shuttle service inside the park?** Yes (see box below).

[www.nps.gov/zion](http://www.nps.gov/zion)

**\*Note: if you are travelling by RV, you will have to pay an additional \$15 fee to drive through the Zion-Mount Carmel Highway Tunnel.**

**\*\*\* A permit is now required in order to hike Angels Landing.**



VIEW ON ZION-MOUNT CARMEL HIGHWAY

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CANYON OVERLOOK TRAIL

© iStockPhoto, ViewApart



## ZION CANYON

Here is a list of the most beautiful stops along the Zion Scenic Drive, which runs through the canyon over a distance of 13 kilometres:

### COURT OF THE PATRIARCHS ★

**Distance (round-trip):** 160 m  
**Time (round-trip):** 5 minutes  
**Level:** Easy  
**Elevation gain:** 12 m

The Court of the Patriarchs is the 4<sup>th</sup> stop for the Zion Canyon Shuttle. A quick and easy trail takes you to a little viewpoint above the trees with a superb view of three 2,000-metre sandstone cliffs named for the biblical figures Jacob, Isaac and Abraham who make up the Court of the Patriarchs.

### EMERALD POOL TRAILS ★

**Distance (round-trip):** 4.7 km  
**Time (round-trip):** 90 minutes  
**Level:** Easy  
**Elevation gain:** 185 m

**Emerald Pool Trails** ★ is an **easy** hike that will take about **90 minutes** if you want to see all three waterfalls, **Lower Emerald Pool**, **Middle Emerald Pool** and **Upper Emerald Pool**. To get to the trailhead, get off at shuttle stop #5, Zion Lodge. This popular four-kilometre trail leads to a series of desert oases separated by lush vegetation, waterfalls and red rock monoliths. On the way back, you could take the **Kayenta Trail** ★, which is close to Lower Emerald Trail and leads to the next shuttle stop. This trail offers a superb view of the canyon and the banks of the Virgin River below.

### THE NARROWS ★★

**Distance (round-trip):** Variable  
**Time (round-trip):** Variable  
**Level:** Easy to intermediate

**The Narrows** ★★ is the narrowest section of the canyon, where the cliffs come close together. At the end of



ZION CANYON

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the road, a paved 45-minute round-trip path leads to the magical, awe-inspiring gateway to the Narrows. You'll feel like you're in paradise! If you wish to go further, you can pursue the adventure up the Virgin River.

Depending on the water level, this hike is considered easy to intermediate and is suitable for most children over 4 feet tall. You can hike in as far as you like and come back at any time. The best light for photos is between 10 am and 3 pm.

This iconic hike is sure to be a memorable experience! As the riverbed is rocky, you need to wear closed shoes or rent appropriate footwear in the park. Speak with park rangers for weather and water levels, which vary with the season.



THE NARROWS

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**ANGELS LANDING ★★★** 

**Distance (round-trip):** 8 km  
**Time (round-trip):** 5 hours  
**Level:** Difficult  
**Elevation gain:** 497 m

**Angels Landing ★★★** is rated as a difficult trail because of its steep ascent and very narrow sections, but it is also the most popular hike in Zion.

Take the West Rim Shuttle to The Grotto. There is also a parking lot at the Grotto Picnic Area.

The first 2 km of the trail are paved. It then climbs a series of 21 steep switchbacks. The last section (0.8 km) follows a narrow ridge to Angels Landing, a fantastic viewpoint with breathtaking views of Zion Canyon. There are chains bolted into the cliff to provide secure handholds along some sections of the trail. Not recommended for anyone fearful of heights.

**CAMPER VANS**

If you are traveling with a large RV, you will have to **purchase a \$15 tunnel permit** in order to drive the Zion-Mount Carmel Highway, in addition to the regular park entry fee.

As the tunnel is not wide enough to accommodate large vehicles when both lanes are open, Rangers posted at both ends of the tunnel **convert two-way tunnel traffic to one-way for larger vehicles**, ensuring safe passage.

Some vehicles are prohibited from driving through the tunnel, including vehicles over 13 feet tall or over 40 feet long. No need to worry about your rental RV, as they normally do not exceed the maximum permitted measurements.

The road is open to large vehicles every day, usually from 8 am to 7 pm in summer - the schedule varies according to the season, so please consult the park website for current times.

**SHUTTLE SERVICE ONLY!**

From **March through November**, the main road through Zion Canyon, the **Zion Canyon Scenic Drive\***, is closed to private vehicles and the only way to reach the different points of interest is via the park's very efficient shuttle service.

There are **several stops** along the shuttle route, **which leaves from Zion Canyon Visitor Center**: Zion Human History Museum, Canyon Junction, Court of the Patriarchs, Zion Lodge, The Grotto, Weeping Rock, Big Bend and Temple of Sinawava.

**Good to know:** There is even shuttle service to the town of Springdale. If you are staying there or beyond, leave your car there and take the shuttle! This is the best way to avoid delays entering the park and problems finding parking once inside the park. The shuttle stops at 9 locations in town: look for the "Zoom Canyon Shuttle" signs or check the park website.

When shuttle service is not available, you can explore the park in your own vehicle. However, it can be very difficult to find parking, especially between 10 am and 3 pm.

**Authentik advice:** choose the hikes you want to do ahead of time, and go early in the morning to avoid parking problems.



**FESTIVAL**

**Zion Canyon Music Festival**

**Dates :** late September  
If you are planing a USA itinerary of 14 days or more in September, you may want to plan a couple days in Zion to attend this two-day event filled with music and fun! The festival is held in the O.C. Tanner Amphitheater. You can also browse through a variety of original art, fine craft vendors as well as several local restaurant booths.  
[www.zioncanyonmusicfestival.com](http://www.zioncanyonmusicfestival.com)





ZION-MOUNT CARMEL HIGHWAY

## WHERE TO EAT

### IN THE PARK

#### 1 RED ROCK GRILL / ZION LODGE (\$-\$-\$)

The Red Rock Grill offers unbeatable views with its large windows overlooking the floor of the canyon and its soaring stone walls. The spacious dining room is decorated with pictures of the region. The menu features American fare such as soups and salads, steak, pork, chicken, tacos, cheeseburgers, and more. Reservations recommended for dinner!

ZION CANYON SCENIC DRIVE  
ZION NATIONAL PARK  
435-772-7760  
WWW.ZIONLODGE.COM/DINING/  
RED-ROCK-GRILL

### SPRINGDALE

#### 2 CAFE SOLEIL (\$-\$)

This popular eatery serves breakfasts, pastries, coffee, smoothies, sandwiches, wraps, pizzas and salads that are prepared using healthy, organic & local ingredients whenever possible. Vegetarian and vegan options are also available.

205, ZION PARK BOULEVARD,  
SPRINGDALE  
435-772-0505

#### 3 OSCAR'S CAFE (\$-\$-\$)

This is a great place for a hearty breakfast or a lunch on the go. The largest of appetites are sure to be satisfied by the range of Mexican dishes including meats, southwestern salads, tacos, wraps, burgers and vegetarian and vegan dishes, served in a casual atmosphere.

948, ZION PARK BOULEVARD,  
SPRINGDALE  
435-772-3232  
WWW.OSCARSCAFE.COM

#### 4 BIT & SPUR RESTAURANT & SALOON (\$-\$-\$)

The rustic walls made of wood and stone combined with the exposed ceiling beams give this restaurant the feel of an old western saloon. The cuisine is Mexican-inspired with burritos, flautas and "rellenos" peppers.

1212, ZION PARK BOULEVARD,  
SPRINGDALE  
435-772-3498  
WWW.BITANDSPUR.COM

#### 5 SPOTTED DOG CAFÉ (\$-\$-\$)

This casual American bistro at Flanigan's Inn is very popular with its cozy art-filled dining rooms and European-style sidewalk café. The handcrafted cuisine is prepared using fresh local produce and sustainably harvested fish. Menus change with the seasons. The restaurant also has an award-winning wine list.

450, ZION PARK BOULEVARD,  
SPRINGDALE  
435-772-0700  
FLANIGANS.COM/DINING

### ST-GEORGE

#### CLIFFSIDE RESTAURANT (\$-\$-\$)

A good place in St-George to stop for a meal. The restaurant is located directly on the cliff above the boulevard with magnificent views of the scenic St. George valley. The outside patio dining area offers particularly stunning sunset vistas. With modern and classic cooking techniques, the menu offers straightforward, delicious

Contemporary American-style dining with bold flavours and an elegant touch.

511, SOUTH AIRPORT ROAD,  
ST-GEORGE  
435-319-6005  
WWW.CLIFFSIDERESTAURANT.COM

#### PAINTED PONY (\$\$\$\$)

If you're in the mood for a gourmet meal, the Painted Pony is an excellent choice. Tucked away in Ancestor Square in the heart of St-George, the restaurant offers a true fine dining experience. You will be won over by the extensive wine list, delicious desserts, attentive service and romantic atmosphere. It also has a lovely patio.

2, WEST ST-GEORGE BOULEVARD,  
ST-GEORGE  
435-634-1700  
WWW.PAINTED-PONY.COM

