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GRAND CANYON TREK ITINERARY



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ONE OF THE SEVEN NATURAL WONDERS OF THE WORLD, THE GRAND CANYON IS A SETTING OF DAZZLING SUPERLATIVES.

A spectacular World Heritage site, it can boast one of the oldest and most majestic landscapes on earth, plunging down to depths of over a mile in parts. Carved by the waters of the mighty Colorado River, its breathtaking vistas provide the backdrop to this incredible challenge.

Heading away from the well worn pathways of the usual tourist trails around the Grand Canyon, this remarkable trek takes you deep into the heart of the ancient homelands of the Havasupai Indians, trekking through sandstone canyons that have been carved by the passage of time. You'll pass beautiful cascading falls and pools of clear blue water, wade across creek beds and follow steep winding switchbacks into canyons of towering red buttes.

The days will be hot and challenging, whilst the evenings will be spent camped amongst the serene tranquillity of the desert, where you will be expected to join in with the camp chores. Then it is on to the bright lights of Vegas, where you can celebrate the success of the trek in style, amongst the glitz and glamour of one of America's most unique and energetic cities.

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DAY 1: Depart London for Phoenix, Arizona

You will meet at the airport today for your afternoon flight on to Phoenix, Arizona. A Charity Challenge representative will be on hand to assist with check in and answer any last minute questions that you might have. On arrival in the United States you will then be met at the airport and transferred on to your hotel, where you'll have a chance to freshen up before a welcome meeting and a group dinner later this evening.

DAYS 2: Drive to Sedona & trek the Oak Creek Canyon - 8kms trek

Departing Phoenix after breakfast this morning you'll drive on through the beautiful landscapes of the Sonoran Desert, towards the sandstone buttes and dramatic rock formations around Sedona. Steeped in Native American culture, these haunting sandstone vistas provide the backdrop to our first day of trekking, as we hike through the breathtaking Oak Creek Canyon. Often described as the smaller cousin of the Grand Canyon, our 3-4 hour trek this afternoon provides the perfect opportunity to acclimatise to the heat and terrain of the high desert, in readiness for the challenge ahead. This evening we'll spend our first evening camping beneath the desert sky.



DAY 3: Drive to the Grand Canyon trailhead & hike Havasu Canyon - 16kms trek

A spectacular offshoot of the Grand Canyon, Havasu Canyon has been home to the Havasupai Indians for over 800 years. The smallest of the Native American tribes, the Havasupai are well named. The literal translation is the 'people of the blue-green waters', an apt description to describe the cascades and travertine pools that flow through this stunning setting. Driving to the trail head at Hualapai Hilltop this morning, we'll then begin with a steep 2.5 kilometre descent into the canyon, following a winding series of switchbacks down to a dry wash. We then follow a narrow canyon on to the small and isolated town of Supai, in the heart of the Havasupai Indian Reservation. One of the most remote towns on the U.S. mainland, the only way in is by mule, foot or helicopter! Continuing on through the village, it is then around 3 kilometres further to our campground near Havasu Falls.

DAY 4: Hike to Mooney & Beaver Falls - 12kms trek

A day of adventure and spectacular scenery, we leave camp this morning and head out along the trail towards the towering red sandstone walls and crystal blue waters of Mooney Falls. One of our most challenging days so far, the trek takes us down the falls by way of a series of ladders and tunnels that are not for the faint-hearted. Challenging though our descent may be, it does allow us to enter the beautiful canyon landscapes below the falls. Following the course of the river, we then head out along a rough trail that take us across the creek on several occasions (so be prepared to get wet), before we finally reach the tumbling cascades of the Beaver Falls. Overnight at Havasu Falls camp.

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DAYS 5: Havasu Canyon & the Spring Mountain National Recreation Area - 16kms trek

Hiking back out of the valley early this morning we then drive on to the Spring Mountain National Recreation Area, part of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. Known locally as Mount Charleston, this stunningly rich landscape of mountains, desert and alpine meadows is home to a staggering array of rare and indigenous flora and fauna. Known as the 'Sky Island', it encompasses everything from Mojave Desert scrub, Joshua trees and Utah juniper, to alpine tundra and forests of pine and fir. Spending much of our time at the higher elevations today (between 1,500-2,700 metres), we'll explore the alpine meadows, canyons and windswept ridges of this beautiful area, before spending the evening camping amongst this serene landscape.

DAY 6: Trek the Mount Charleston wilderness - 13kms trek (with option to extend for those that wish)

We spend the whole day today trekking through the foothills and valleys surrounding Mount Charleston. Towering over 3,600 metres above the breathtaking panoramas below, this is one of the top 10 highest Peaks in Nevada and its lower slopes are covered in forests of ponderosa pine and white fir. Home to Rocky Mountain elks, chipmunks, white-tailed antelopes and ground squirrels, it provides a stunning setting for our final day's trekking, as we tackle trails that lead through copses of aspen and bristlecone pine considered the "longest living trees," average age is 1,000 years, with the oldest being over 4,000 years, towards a final challenging ascent that takes in the sweeping panoramas across the valley below. Overnight wild camp.

DAYS 7: Las Vegas

After a morning's hike up along the Mary Jane, Big Falls trail, we'll say goodbye to our desert camps and head for the bright lights of Las Vegas, the entertainment capital of the world. One of America's most unique, and least subtle cities, it is home to exploding volcanoes, pirate ships, dancing fountains and some of the most famous casinos on the planet. On arrival you'll have a chance for a well-earned hot shower, before hitting the streets in time to enjoy a celebratory dinner and a night out in one of the most popular destinations anywhere in the continental United States. There is an option this evening to enjoy an entertaining limo tour of some of the city's more eclectic highlights including Fremont Street, the Las Vegas sign and the city's famous Strip.

DAY 8: Depart Las Vegas

After a free day to make more of Vegas's myriad of delights, you'll transfer to the airport early this evening for the overnight flight back to the UK.

DAY 9: Arrive UK

Morning arrival back into London.

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