

Slot Canyons by Day, Hoodoo Sunsets by Night — A 3-Day Southern Utah Road Trip

DURATION

3 Days

BEST TIME TO GO

April – May & September –
October

the shoulder seasons, with mild highs in
the 60s–70s°F (16–24°C) in Zion

Dinner — Whiptail Grill, Springdale

~1 hour · entrees \$14–24 USD

A converted 1930s gas station turned patio restaurant serving Mexican-inspired plates and margaritas a five-minute walk from the park's south entrance — arrive early, the wait grows fast in peak season.

Whiptail Grill · (435) 772-0283 · whiptailgrillzion.com

Overnight — Cable Mountain Lodge, Springdale

From \$260–320 USD/night, for 2 people

A canyon-view hotel at the edge of town with a rooftop pool deck looking straight up at the Watchman formation — walkable to the park's pedestrian entrance and Springdale's restaurant strip.

Cable Mountain Lodge · (435) 772-3366 · cablemountainlodge.com

Day 2

The Narrows to Bryce Canyon

An early start into the Zion Narrows before the crowds, then the drive up and over Highway 9 through the Zion–Mt Carmel Tunnel and Red Canyon to catch sunset over Bryce Canyon's hoodoos.

Zion Narrows — Bottom-Up Hike

~3–6 hours round-trip (to Big Spring), self-guided · gear rental from \$30 USD/person

Wading up the Virgin River between thousand-foot sandstone walls is Zion's signature hike and needs no permit if you start at the Temple of Sinawava and turn around before Big Spring; a canyoneering-shoe and dry-pants rental from a local outfitter makes the river crossings far easier. Angels Landing is the park's other marquee hike, but it now requires winning a \$6 USD lottery permit through recreation.gov the day before — worth entering if you have a backup plan for when it doesn't come through.

Zion Adventure Company · (435) 772-1001 · zionadventures.com

Scenic Drive — Zion–Mt Carmel Tunnel to Red Canyon

~1.5 hours, 55 miles · self-drive via UT-9 & UT-12

Highway 9 switchbacks up past Checkerboard Mesa and through the 1.1-mile Zion–Mt Carmel Tunnel (built in 1930) before dropping into open high desert; past Mt Carmel Junction, Highway 89 and then Highway 12 climb through Red Canyon's crimson rock arches on the final approach to Bryce.

Sunset — Sunset Point & Inspiration Point, Bryce Amphitheater

~1 hour, self-guided · included with *inCH2.90C\$.3m \$3vehiclee 7-v thsers*) UT-12

