

White Rim Trail – Canyonlands National Park

Full Day 4x4 Backcountry Tour

Meeting Place:	Adrift Adventures, 378 North Main St. Moab, Utah
Meeting Time:	7:30 AM
Age Limit:	4 years and up
Vehicle Type:	Jeep Wrangler

Special Attractions:

- Access to hiking trails.
- Wide variety of scenery and rock formations.

Tour Description:

Our experienced and knowledgeable guides will show you a part of Canyonlands National Park seldom visited/seen by other visitors on their own. Our guides will show you how much of Canyonlands' beauty is tucked away beyond the main paved roads. You'll witness breathtaking views while learning about the ancient history of people who inhabited the area over 1000 years ago. There are ample photo opportunities, so be sure to bring your camera. Be amazed by the mazes of side washes and canyons formed after thousands of years of erosion. Witness the natural marvels hidden from the roads, when you experience Canyonlands National Park via a 4x4 tour.

Vehicle Type:

We run our guided backcountry tours in our recent model Jeep Wranglers, which will comfortably seat 4 people. Jeeps are equipped with air conditioning for your touring pleasure.

Sample Itinerary:

Meet at our office located at 378 North Main Street in Moab, Utah. The tour will set out heading north from Moab to connect with Utah 313. This paved and well maintained road will take us to Canyonlands National Parks Island in the Sky district. From the entrance into the national park we will descend from the mesa using the famous Shafer Trail. At the bottom of the canyon the Shafer Trail connects with the White Rim Trail. Once on the White Trim Trail you will get to view such sights as the Goose Neck, Musselman Arch, and Lathrop Canyon. During the day there will be ample opportunities for short hikes to better explore this canyon riddled backcountry. These hikes are optional, and if you opt to participate they will allow you to explore hidden passages and secret canyons, otherwise missed by visitors to the national park. Somewhere along the route we will stop for a wonderful lunch break, where your guide will set up lunch for your enjoyment. After lunch we will continue on our sightseeing journey of Canyonlands National Park and the White Rim Trail as we make our way back out of the park via the route that brought us in. We will then continue back on Utah 313 and back to the office in Moab, concluding your tour.

History:

The White Rim came together as a trail using the network of uranium roads that were created during the boom times of the 1950s. It gained its name from the white sandstone rim that most of the trail follows.

Evidence of the region's earliest human inhabitants can be seen at Fort Bottom, accessed via a short hiking trail from the 4x4 road. Moki Fort at the end of the hiking trail is an Anasazi rock structure dating back almost a millennium when the Anasazi farmed alongside the Colorado River.

Most of the later history of the trail relates to the ranchers and uranium miners, who pushed their way into the region and left their impressions of the territory in some of the names they gave to features along the trail. Hardscrabble Hill was the original rough, steep cow trail that wound its way down to Hardscrabble Bottom. The narrow shelf road is referred to as "Walker Cut," after Mark Walker who apparently blasted or cut the cow trail around the edge of the hill just after the turn of the 19th century. He also built a small cabin at Fort Bottom, often called "Outlaw Cabin," possibly because of the horse-thieving that happened in the region. (Just above Taylor Canyon is Horsethief Point.)

Musselman Arch, 3 miles into the trail, was named after Ross A. Musselman, who operated a rock shop and tour business in Moab. He also developed the Pack Creek Ranch, now a country inn, located 5 miles south of Moab. The arch was named by National Geographical Society writer Jack Breed in recognition of Musselman, who had assisted Breed in his research on the region.

Murphy Hogback was named after Otho, Jack, and Tom Murphy, the stockmen who built a trail over the ridge in the 1910s to facilitate the movement of cattle down to the White Rim.

The Murphy's also named White Crack, where the present-day national park campsite is situated. Tom Murphy spotted a narrow "white crack" in the white sandstone, and in the 1910s the Murphy's blasted a rough cow trail through the gap, opening up access to grazing areas in the south. In the 1950s it was widened with a bulldozer to work uranium mines down below. This trail is now closed to vehicle use.

Howard Lathrop, a sheepman from Colorado, built a trail from the canyon rim to the Colorado River in the 1940s. Today's trail was cut through in the early 1950s to gain river access in order to supply water for the uranium mine higher up in Lathrop Canyon, above the White Rim Trail. Today, the river access is used by river operators as a pickup point.

*Please note that this itinerary is subject to change or be cancelled completely due to: weather conditions, road conditions, time of year, number of scheduled guests, and any other unforeseen factors that may affect the trip in any way.