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Tucson Executive Condos

Featured Events

26th Art Juried Spring Show

Sat, Mar 12th  
LAKE HAVASU CITY, AZ

Community Aquatic Center, 100 Park Ave - Show & sale of fine arts & crafts from all over the West, Sa 10a-5p, Su 10a-3p. Free adm. 928-855-8078

Wak Pow Wow

Sat, Mar 12th  
Tucson, AZ

San Xavier Del Bac Mission - Native American inter-tribal dancing, contests, booths with Native American food/arts & crafts, Sa 10:30a-11p, Su 10a-7p. Adults/\$6, 7 & up/\$4. 520-573-4051

Spring Plant Sale

Sat, Mar 12th  
SUPERIOR, AZ

Boyce Thompson Arboretum - 1000s of drought-tolerant plants, see mature species on grounds. Horticulturists on

We Keep Coming Back

Author: Stuart Gershon  
Date: August 15, 2003

For the past eight years, I have always begun my first day of classes as a NYC school teacher by telling my students that my wife and I have been in all fifty states. Invariably, my students inquire as to which is my favorite. I always respond by telling them, "Hawaii is beautiful, and San Francisco is THE city, but we keep coming back to southern Utah and northern Arizona!"

Less than five hours from Las Vegas (two hours on I-15 and about three hours on SR 389) is Jacobs Lake, the entrance to the North rim of Grand Canyon National Park. After a bathroom stop and a quick look at the gift shop we traveled about fifty miles through beautiful stands of trees and the most amazing meadows we've see since Alaska. Miles and miles of rolling meadows were here, on top of this plateau that overlooks the mighty Colorado River at almost 10,000 feet!

Not only was the North Rim beautiful, more majestic than the south Rim, but also it was also less crowded. Because of its isolation from major roadways, fewer people visit the North Rim and you can actually get a parking spot at the main Visitors Center which is located adjacent to the only in-park accommodations at the Grand Canyon Lodge and at all of the pull outs. It was so serene to actually walk along the veranda and watch the people sitting on benches look out at the magnificent view of the Grand Canyon. The Lodge and the cabins looked so inviting that we are sure that the next time we visit we will be staying here.

After a few hours of seeing the sights, we took off for our first night's destination, Page, Arizona. This is a two-hour ride along US 89a and the Vermillion Cliffs Highway. The road was a nice two-lane blacktop with not much traffic. About an hour-and-a-half along the road, in a "town" called Marble Canyon, we found a little side road to Lees Ferry. We took this road for about five miles and when we came to the end of it we found we could wade into the mighty Colorado River!

Lees Ferry was a spot used by the pioneers to cross the river and it's about 13 miles south of the Glen Canyon Dam at Page. Here the mighty river, which carved all of this beautiful scenery in the Four Corners area, is a mere rivulet. There was a beach and we saw some Native Americans swimming. It was awe-inspiring to think that this powerful river, which had spent millions of years carving this beautiful land, could be seen, walked into, and provide a refreshing little pleasure!

Just as we got back to the main road (US 89a), we found the Navajo Bridge. The Navajo Bridge was originally a steel arch bridge over the river for the highway. In 1995, the original bridge (which was built in 1927) was replaced by the current highway bridge. There is also a small museum, the Navajo Interpretive Center, dedicated to the history of the Navajo Indians, who own most of this land.

A half hour later, we were in Page, Arizona, the only city in this entire area. Page, wasn't a city until 1957. It was built to house the construction workers who worked on the Glen Canyon Dam. The population of Page is about 5000. The city has a couple of shopping centers, some nice hotels and restaurants to please your pallet and your wallet! The townspeople also have a sense of humor with the name of the city - the local bookstore is called "The Front Page", and more than one place is called "The Dam Restaurant"!

As you enter Page from the south, you drive down a five-mile grade, which allows you to see the expanse of Lake Powell, an absolutely beautiful sight! Lake Powell was formed when the Glen Canyon Dam was built and the water behind the dam backed up to form the lake. It took eighteen years to form the current lake (from 1958 through 1976). It is the second largest man-made lake in the United States (about 193 miles long) and it has more shoreline than the western continental US.

With all this water, recreational boating is the primary use of lake Powell. There are water sports galore throughout the lake, and house boating seems to be one of the most thriving businesses in the area. You can rent houseboats, which sleep up to twelve people and cost as much as \$6000 per week! Also, because of its startling terrain and landscape, many films, including both the original and the current "Planet of the Apes" were filmed at Lake Powell.

We spent four wonderful days here, and we met people from many parts of the world. Our

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hand to answer questions on weekend days. 8a-5p. Adults \$7.50, kids \$3. 520-689-2811

#### Spring Plant Sale

Sat, Mar 12th  
Tucson, AZ

Tucson Botanical Gardens, Nursery - Features landscape plants including many natives that are great for easy-care gardens that attract local birds, butterflies & wildlife. 9a-4p. Free 520-326-9686

American West fascinates many Europeans. As we arrived at our hotel, we were followed into the parking lot by sixteen Harley Davidsons and a pickup truck carrying the entire luggage for the group. These bikers were dressed in typical biker garb - leather chaps, bandanas, chains, etc. It was very intimidating. Yet at breakfast the next morning, all we heard these people speak was French! They were a French biker club from Marseilles, France.

Eating in Page was very reasonable. The first night we ate at a Denny's, but the next three nights we ate at the Rainbow Room of the Wahweap Lodge, located at the Wahweap Marina, where most of the water vehicles and activities at the southern end of Lake Powell began. There are boat ramps and docks and all the necessary facilities that are needed for boating on this great expanse of water. Seeing all the fancy cars and large boats, we were intimidated by the Lodge. Yet, when we visited the hotel the first night, we found the restaurant there served an extensive menu and was quite reasonable (about \$20 per person without drinks). Where else could I possibly get a vegetable lasagna in this part of the country?

The first full day in Page we took a half-day Rainbow Bridge Boat Tour of Lake Powell. The half-day tour takes about five hours and there is ample coffee, lemonade and water for all. On this tour, we were taken about fifty miles along the lake to see the beautiful Rainbow Bridge, a naturally formed "bridge/arch" deep in Navajo country. The Rainbow Bridge is a Navajo religious site, so care and decorum are very important when visiting this place. There are various tour boats and tour companies that provide this service. The tours can be hired at the Wahweap Lodge at the marina. The half-day tour was about \$85, and the full-day tour cost about \$140 including lunch.

The second day in Page we took a jeep trip of Antelope Canyon. Antelope Canyon is a "slot" canyon, a very narrow (2-6 feet wide) crevice about 300 feet long and about 100 feet deep. The only light coming in is from the opening at the top. The floor is sand so you just walk through the canyon and after meeting your group on the other side; you walk back to the jeep. The whole tour takes about 45 minutes with a bumpy twenty minute ride on Navajo land before and after. This tour was arranged by Lake Powell Jeep Tours and costs about \$26 per person.

The third and final day in Page we took a float trip down the Colorado River below Glen Canyon Dam. We met at Wilderness Outfitters and were taken by air-conditioned motor coach down to the base of Glen Canyon Dam. The dam was built over forty years ago, yet a two-mile long access tunnel, which was used in its construction, has been maintained for the maintenance of the dam and access to the river. This huge bus made its way down this long, dark, narrow passage until we were at the base of the dam. There, we had to put on hard hats (in case anything fell from above) and walked a short distance to the large, rubber float boats.

At our boat, we met our very colorful guide, Jim Duffy, who is a licensed Colorado River pilot. We got on board and began our three-hour float trip (no white water) down one of the quietest parts of this mighty river. We passed huge cliffs, narrow valleys, a 270-degree Horseshoe Bend and made a rest stop at some Indian petroglyphs. Throughout the entire ride Duffy told us some amazing stories. At the end of our excursion we wound up at Lees Ferry, the quiet part of the Colorado River where this adventure began. This half-day adventure cost \$56 per person.

The fourth day, we drove across the bridge over Glen Canyon Dam and onto Bryce, Zion and Ruby's Inn, but that's another state and another story.

Bio: Stuart is a fifty-five year old recently retired NYC school teacher. Since 1968, he and his wife have traveled in all 50 states of the US, but they keep coming back to northern Arizona.

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