



AZRA
GRAND CANYON

Bright Angel Trail
READ NOW
Lower Canyon

If you have not yet done so, please read the **IMPORTANT: Potential Bright Angel Trail Logistics Change** document in your portfolio. It explains that you may be hiking on the South Kaibab Trail instead of the Bright Angel Trail. However, by carefully reading the information below, deciding that this trail is a good fit for you, **AND** by preparing properly, you will be able to hike either the Bright Angel or South Kaibab trail.

You have signed up for a trip that involves hiking the Bright Angel Trail. **IT IS IMPERATIVE YOU READ THROUGH THIS ENTIRE DOCUMENT UPON RESERVATION TO ENSURE YOU HAVE CHOSEN A TRIP WITHIN YOUR ABILITIES AND THE ABILITIES OF EVERYONE IN YOUR PARTY.** It is very important to us that you are matched with the best trip option. Many guests have a preconceived assumption that hiking down is easier than hiking up. It is less of a cardiovascular workout, but hiking down often has a longer lasting physical impact. Muscle fatigue and joint pain can negatively impact the remaining days on the trip.



Your adventure will begin with a hike descending the Bright Angel Trail. **The hike is very doable for most people if you take the hike seriously, train appropriately, are in good physical condition (both healthy and fit), pack lightly, stay cool, and eat and drink properly.** Many of our guests understand the seriousness of choosing to hike the Bright Angel Trail, but we do have guests evacuated via helicopter during or after the hike on occasion. This puts you and the emergency medical services at risk. We also have a few guests every year who take upwards of 12 hours to complete the 7.5 mile hike, becoming extremely sore, dehydrated, and sometimes injured in the process. **Most of those who have trouble on the hike overestimate their ability and/or underestimate the strenuous nature of the hike.** If you have a pre-existing condition that mildly irritates you, it will be significantly **amplified** on the Bright Angel Trail. We see the majority of evacuations on the Bright Angel Trail occur for those hiking in, as their body just gives out.

The Bright Angel Trail is **7.5 miles (12.9km) long and descends almost a mile (4,460 ft or 992m) in elevation between the South Rim and the River (you do not go to Phantom Ranch).** While the trail is well-traveled by hikers and maintained by the National Park Service, it is a difficult hike including challenges such as elevation change, steep drop offs, uneven footing, large steps, rocks, and slippery surface conditions. The amount of time it takes to complete the trail varies on your physical fitness, experience and weather. **You should plan on making the hike in 6 hours or less.** You must carry your personal gear for the trip with up to 3 quarts of water (weighs about 6 lbs). The weather is variable from day to day, season to season. During the summer it can easily be over 100 degrees F (38 Celsius) and in the early spring there could still be ice on the trail.

You should be a person who lives an active lifestyle rather than a sedentary one. You should engage in strenuous physical activity several times a week and you should have experience carrying a loaded backpack on trails with significant elevation change.

Ask yourself and everyone in your group the following questions:

- Do you live an active lifestyle?
- Do you regularly hike or at least walk long distances of 5 or more miles with hills?
- Do you vigorously exercise at least three times per week?
- Do you participate in some sort of strength training exercise?
- Do you have experience carrying a backpack weighing 20-30 lbs?
- Is this the best trip option for you?
- Do you think the Bright Angel Trail sounds like fun?
- Did you do your own research when booking this trip?



THE ANSWER TO ALL OF THESE QUESTIONS SHOULD BE **YES!**

While most of our guests make the hike without incident, you should also consider other trip alternatives if any of the following conditions apply to you or anyone in your group. These conditions may not exclude you from making the hike, but can pose complications and should merit additional thoughtful consideration: asthma (exercise and dust induced), history of heat related problems (heat exhaustion or stroke), pregnancy, taking prescription medications which might increase your susceptibility to dehydration or hyponatremia, heart disease, vertigo, balance issues or extreme fear of heights, foot, ankle, knee, hip or back issues, a generally sedentary lifestyle, more than a few pounds overweight, smoker, out of shape, age (*be honest with yourself about your current physical capabilities*).

There are other options. You can sign up for a full Canyon trip that does not involve hiking the Bright Angel Trail. In addition, if your party consists of a wide range of physical fitness levels or medical conditions, there is the option for part of the group to do the full Canyon and part of the group do a half Canyon trip involving the hike. Keep in mind, it is often best to choose the trip that fits the fitness level of the person in your group with the least ability rather than to oblige someone to do something above their capabilities. If you have any doubts about your physical condition and ability to hike this trail, consult a physician to discuss the particulars of your current physical condition. ***If you are having serious doubts about the Bright Angel Trail at this time, contact our office immediately so we may discuss your concerns and consider other trip options if needed.***

Between now and your trip date, continue to EXERCISE, CONDITION, AND TAKE THIS HIKE SERIOUSLY. Be sure to concentrate on muscle strengthening in your core, legs, calves, and quads. If you need advice on how to train for your hike, please consult a physical fitness trainer.

Because of the physical requirements necessary to make the hike, again, we strongly recommend you give careful consideration to purchasing **Trip Cancellation Insurance**. To speak with a knowledgeable trip insurance agent regarding insurance options, contact Travelex at 800-228-9792 or www.travelexinsurance.com.

"Your information should stress the need to bring less stuff for those who are hiking into or out of the Grand Canyon. It is surprising how little you need. Many in our group woefully over packed." John O., Phoenix, AZ

"After hiking down the Bright Angel Trail my muscles ached for 3 days, making all the other hikes more difficult. I wish I had gotten in better shape before the trip." Diane M., Metacher, NJ



**Arizona Raft Adventures
Grand Canyon**