

Canyon Overlook

2000



2001

Welcome to Canyon de Chelly National Monument!

Canyon de Chelly is best known for its red sheer cliff walls stained with streaks of desert varnish. The reddish hue of the cliff varies in intensity with the time of day. The beauty of the canyon draws many more visitors each year. The cultural histories at Canyon de Chelly are multi-faceted and fascinating.

Established as a national monument in 1931 by President Herbert Hoover, there are 83,340 acres or 130 square miles within the park boundaries of the monument. The elevation at the visitor center is 5,500 feet above sea level and 7,000 feet at the end of the rim drives. The canyon depth ranges from 30 feet deep at the mouth to over 1,000 feet deep fifteen miles away. The canyon was formed by a combination of stream cutting and land uplifting to create the characteristic sheer cliff walls of Canyon de Chelly. The flora and fauna include a wide variety of plants and animals which made Canyon de Chelly an ideal location for making a home. It is no wonder why Canyon de Chelly has been extensively and almost continuously occupied by first the ancient Puebloans, then the Navajos for almost 2,000 years.

The length of a visit to the canyon can be two hours or two days. Activities range from driving the canyon rims and hiking the White House Trail on your own, to joining a tour into the canyon or hiring an authorized Navajo guide to hike, horseback or travel by 4-wheel drive.

The Long Walk

For many years the canyon has served as a refuge and fortress to the Navajo people. The story of the Long Walk is a pivotal moment in Navajo history and culture. It brought a close to the Navajo universe as it was before the melding of cultures.

To stop the continuous raiding between conflicting cultures, General James H. Carleton ordered Colonel Kit Carson to lead the expedition into Canyon de Chelly to remove the Navajos from their homeland and relocate them onto a reservation. During this "Scorched Earth Campaign", livestock, homes, and crops were destroyed, including the precious peach trees originally planted by the Hopi during their use of the canyon prior to Navajo occupation. A few canyon residents eluded capture by escaping to the top of Fortress Rock, where water and food had to be hauled up. Facing starvation, the Navajos began to surrender themselves by the hundreds during the winter of 1863. They were escorted to Fort Defiance and held there until 1864 when they were marched more than 300 miles to Bosque Redondo, New Mexico. Here along the Pecos river, beyond the four sacred mountains, the Navajos endured dysentery, loneliness, starvation and depression. More than 9,000 Navajos were counted among those that surrendered, but only about 4,000 survived the four long years at Bosque Redondo. On June 1, 1868 the last peace treaty was signed between the Navajos and the United States allowing the surviving Navajos to return home. When the first boundary lines for the Navajo Reservation were drawn, Canyon de Chelly was intentionally in the center. The current Navajo population is the descendants of these persistent people.

For a Safe Visit...

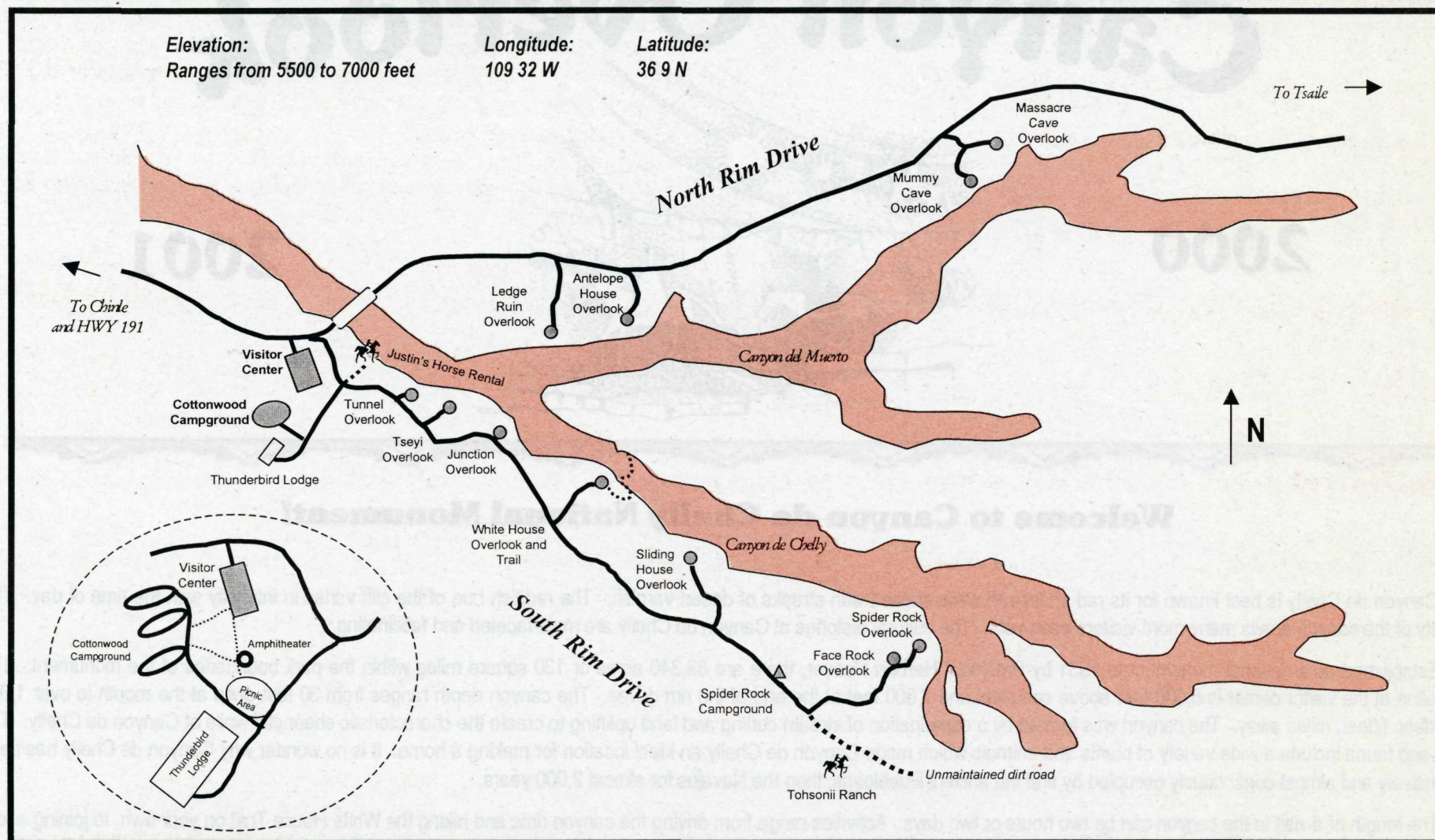
- **Watch your step!** The rim drive overlooks provide excellent views of the canyon below, but they also present the potential for a serious fall. Please stay away from the edge, remain behind the retaining walls, and control children and pets.
- **Watch for livestock on the highways!** The Navajo Reservation has an open range policy where livestock roam freely. Obey the speed limits and remain alert for stock, especially after dark.
- **Watch for lightning storms!** Remember that lightning is attracted to tall objects, so avoid being in the open along the canyon rim in a storm. Stay away from grounded metal objects such as railings or tripods.

What's in a Name?

The word 'de Chelly' is a corruption of the Navajo word "Tseyi", which means "in the rock." The word *Chegui* was found in Spanish diaries referring to the canyon and was probably spelled according to what was heard. As American settlers moved to the southwest they also adopted the Spanish name, *Chegui*. Once again, settlers mispronounced and misspelled *Chegui*, assuming it was a Spanish word for canyon, hence Canyon de Chelly.

The town of Chinle, on the other hand, got its name from its location. The Navajo word, Ch'inli', refers to the mouth of the canyon where the water flows out. As with many towns around the reservation, Chinle began as a trading post in 1882. Traders influenced missionaries, schools and government agencies to set up near trading posts as that's where people would gather. Chinle's first mission was established in 1904 and the first government school in 1910.

Warning: Lock your car and secure your valuables from sight whenever you leave your vehicle. Thefts from vehicles do occur at the Rim Drive Overlooks. Report any suspicious activity to a Park Ranger immediately.



ON YOUR OWN

The Visitor Center

The visitor center serves as the park headquarters and information center where the staff will answer questions to assist you with your visit to Canyon de Chelly. A small museum introduces you to the cultures that have inhabited the canyons for many generations. *Canyon Voices*, a 22 minute video provides some insight into the cultural significance of the canyon. Open every day of the year, except Christmas Day, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for winter and until 6:00 p.m. for summer.

Self-guided Drives

Driving the canyon rims and viewing from the canyon overlooks is an excellent introduction to Canyon de Chelly and gives you an idea of how else you might want to explore the canyon. To help you, a motoring guide and a trail guide are available at the bookstore.

North Rim Drive - From the visitor center to the last overlook is about 15 miles one-way. There are 4 overlooks from which to view Canyon del Muerto. Allow 2 hours for this drive.

South Rim Drive - From the visitor center to the last overlook is about 16 miles one-way. There are 7 overlooks from which to view Canyon de Chelly. Allow 2 hours for this drive.

White House Trail - This trail begins at the White House Overlook and is about 2.5 miles round trip. Allow approximately 2 hours to complete the trail. The drop from the rim to the canyon floor is 600 feet. Since the trail is considered moderately strenuous, please wear proper clothing and shoes, hat, and sunscreen. Please take plenty of drinking water. Pets are NOT allowed on this trail.

If you have:

1 Hour

Stop at the first 2 overlooks on either the South Rim or the North Rim.

2 Hours

Drive either the South Rim OR North Rim and visit its overlooks in a round trip.

3 Hours

Join a guided tour into the canyon by hiking, horseback or vehicle. Check at the visitor center for more information.

1/2 Day

Drive both the North and South Rim Drives and stop at all the major points of interest OR hike the White House Trail and visit either rim drives.

1 Day

Plan to visit both rim drives and hike the White House Trail. You could also do a half-day activity plus a guided tour into the canyon OR elect to do an all-day guided tour.

Ranger Activities

The National Park Service offers interpretive programs throughout the summer. For more information and updates, please check at the visitor center or the bulletin boards. Regularly scheduled programs include:

- Hogan Talks - offered several days a week through labor day.
- Campfire Programs - offered several nights a week through labor day.
- Special Programs and Activities - check for announcements at the visitor center.



Travel within the Canyon

Quicksand, deep dry sand and flash floods make the canyons hazardous, especially for vehicle travel. For your safety, the protection of the many fragile ruins, and respect for the privacy of the canyon residents, you are allowed to travel in the canyons only when accompanied by a park ranger or an authorized Navajo guide. Park personnel at the visitor center will assist with locating an authorized guide and issue the necessary permit. In winter and at certain other times of the year, the canyons are impassable and the Superintendent may restrict travel into the canyon. Travel into the canyon is at your own risk. National Park Service assumes no responsibility for vehicle damage, loss or towing expense within Canyon de Chelly National Monument.

GUIDED TOURS

By Horseback

Justin's Horse Rental

Located at the mouth of the canyon. Prior reservations are suggested by calling (520)674-5678 or writing to P.O. Box 881, Chinle, AZ 86503.

Totsonii Ranch

Located 1.25 miles beyond the end of the pavement of the South Rim Drive. Call (520)755-6209 or write P.O. Box 434, Chinle, AZ 86503.

By Vehicle

Tsegi Guide Association

Located at the visitor center. Guides are available to lead tours in your own vehicle. FOUR WHEEL DRIVE REQUIRED. Minimum of three hours. Up to five vehicles per guide. Call (520)674-5500 for more information.

De Chelly Tours

Four-wheel drive vehicle provided, including Unimog Group Tours. Call (520)674-3772/5433 or write to P.O. Box 2539, Chinle, AZ 86503, www.dechellytours.com (Internet).

Thunderbird Lodge Canyon Tours

Office located at Thunderbird Lodge gift shop. Half-day and All-day tours available in six-wheel drive vehicles. Call (520)674-5841 or 1-800-679-2473 or write to P.O. Box 548, Chinle, AZ 86503.

By Hiking

Tsegi Guide Association

Guides can be hired at the visitor center. Minimum of three hours. All-day and overnight camping available. Discuss details with guide upon arrival or call for prior arrangements for large groups or overnight hikes. One guide per 15 people. A park ranger will assist with obtaining the necessary permit. Call (520)674-5500 or write to P.O. Box 1903, Chinle, AZ 86503.

Canyon Hiking Service

Located 1/4 mile north of Thunderbird Lodge. Meet the guide at the designated place and time for a canyon hike. For more information call (520)674-1767 or write to P.O. Box 2832, Chinle, AZ 86503.

VISITOR ACCOMMODATIONS

Lodging

Thunderbird Lodge

Located 1/2 mile south of the visitor center on South Rim Drive. Lodging, cafeteria, gift shop, and canyon tours available. Call (520)674-5841 or 800-679-2473 or write to P.O. Box 548, Chinle, AZ 86503. Fax (520)674-5844. www.tbirdlodge.com (Internet), tbirdlodge@cybertrails.com (e-mail).

Holiday Inn

Located 1/4 mile west of the visitor center on Route 7. Lodging, restaurant, outdoor pool, and gift shop available. Call (520)674-5000 or 800-HOLIDAY or write to P.O. Box 1889, Chinle, AZ 86503. Fax (520)674-8264. www.holiday-inn.com (Internet), holidayinncdc@cybertrails.com (e-mail).

Canyon de Chelly Inn - Best Western

Located in Chinle, 3 miles west of the visitor center near the junction of Hwy 191 and Route 7. Lodging, restaurant, seasonal indoor heated pool and gift shop available. Call (520)674-5875 or 800-327-0354 or write to P.O. Box 295, Chinle, AZ 86503. Fax (520)674-3715

Camping

Cottonwood Campground

This NPS maintained campground is located southwest of the visitor center. Open year round on a first-come, first-serve basis. No reservations required. Tents and RVs are welcome. 96 site available with restrooms. No shower or hookups available. There is a dump station with water. Groups of 15-50 people for tent camping may make reservations for group campsites.

Other Services in Chinle

Laundromats, Bank, ATMs, Gas Stations, Propane Stations, Grocery Stores, and Post Office are located 3 miles from the park in the town of Chinle.

Other Destinations

Chaco Culture N.H.P.	505-786-7014	Hubbel Trading Post N.H.S.	520-755-3475	Navajo N.M.	520-672-2366
Grand Canyon N.P.	520-638-7888	Mesa Verde N.P.	970-529-4465	Navajo Nation Museum	520-871-7941
Hopi Museum	520-734-6650	Monument Valley Tribal Park	435-727-3353	Petrified Forest N.P.	520-524-6228

Note: The National Park Service does not endorse any commercial establishment listed. This is for information only.

What time is it?



The Navajo Reservation, although mostly in Arizona, observes Daylight Savings Time (DST) from April through October.

During this period, the time will be the same as in New Mexico, while the rest of Arizona and the Hopi Reservation remain on Mountain Standard Time (MST).

Pets



Pets are not allowed in the visitor center, on hiking trails or on guided tours. Pets must remain on a leash. There are no kennel or boarding services in the area.

IF you encounter dogs at the overlooks or campground, please do not feed them. Most of these dogs are not strays, but are sheepdogs that belong to families living near the overlooks.

Photography



Taking pictures is a wonderful way to keep treasured memories of a place. We offer the following tips:

- Ask permission first before taking photos of the Navajo people, their homes or animals.
- Lighting for pictures is best on the North Rim in the morning, and on the South Rim in the afternoon.

Put litter in its place!



Most of us know that littering is unlawful, but it still occurs. During your visit, please dispose of litter in the trash cans provided. Visitors into the canyon, please carry out your trash upon leaving. Help us keep the park clean.

Important Numbers

For an emergency dial **911** or

Police	520-674-2111
Hospital	520-674-7001
Ambulance	520-674-7097
Fire	520-674-5222
Park Ranger	520-674-5500 ext. 270
after hours only	520-674-5523 or 5524

For park information:

Visitor Center	520-674-5500
Internet	www.nps.gov/cach

Just for Kids!



Before you begin your journey into the park, stop at the visitor center and pick up a Junior Ranger brochure.

The Junior Ranger Program is for all young visitors who want to learn more about the canyon and its cultural history. Complete the activities during the rim drives or guided tour then return it to a park ranger. You will then receive a badge and certificate recognizing you as an official Junior Ranger of Canyon de Chelly National Monument.

What? No fees?



While most National Parks collect entrance fees, Canyon de Chelly National Monument is one of few parks with **NO** entrance or camping fees. The park does; however, accept donations to supplement the cost of visitor services, including special events and interpretive programs. For your convenience, a donation box is located inside the visitor center. Thank you for your support!

Southwest Parks and Monuments Association

One of the best ways to support the park is to become a member of the Southwest Parks and Monuments Association. SPMA is a nonprofit organization that operates bookstores, produces publications, and supports the educational and scientific activities for over 50 National Parks. SPMA carries interpretive material such as books, maps, guides, videos, postcards and posters to enhance your understanding of our national parks. Proceeds from each sale is returned to the park. Annual or Lifetime SPMA Memberships are available entitling you to a discount at all SPMA outlets.

For information, publications list or to order contact:

520-674-5500 ext. 229
SPMA
P.O. Box 588
Chinle, AZ 86503
www.spma.org
info@spma.org



Seasonal Temperatures



	High	Low	Rain	Snow
Jan	46	15	0.13	4"
Feb	55	21	0.50	6"
Mar	61	26	0.20	2"
Apr	72	33	0.15	
May	82	46	0.10	
Jun	89	53	0.15	
Jul	95	46	1.15	
Aug	92	53	1.64	
Sep	83	51	1.00	
Oct	70	39	0.97	
Nov	62	29	0.60	
Dec	44	19	0.80	

Date	Sunrise	Sunset
	(Mountain Standard Time)	
Jan. 1	7:29	5:14
Jan. 15	7:28	5:27
Feb. 1	7:19	5:44
Feb. 15	7:06	5:59
Mar. 1	6:49	6:12
Mar. 15	6:29	6:25
Apr. 1	6:05	6:39
	(Daylight Savings Time)	
Apr. 15	6:45	7:51
May 1	6:25	8:05
May 15	6:12	8:17
June 1	6:02	8:29
June 15	6:00	8:37
July 1	6:04	8:40
July 15	6:12	8:36
Aug. 1	6:25	8:24
Aug. 15	6:36	8:10
Sept. 1	6:49	7:47
Sept. 15	7:00	7:27
Oct. 1	7:13	7:03
Oct. 15	7:24	6:44
	(Mountain Standard Time)	
Nov. 1	6:40	5:23
Nov. 15	6:54	5:11
Dec. 1	7:10	5:04
Dec. 15	7:21	5:05

Superintendent
Canyon de Chelly National Monument
P.O. Box 588
Chinle, Arizona 86503