

Kodachrome Basin State Park

Map and Guide



Kodachrome Basin

Kodachrome Basin is a spectacle of towering sandstone chimneys, changing in color and shadow with the day's mood - from red-tinged spires against a blue sky, to soft evening light settling over the desert. This color and contrast prompted the National Geographic Society in 1949, with consent from Kodak Film Corporation, to name the park Kodachrome.

Nearly 70 monolithic spires, ranging from six to 170 feet in height, jut up from the valley floor or protrude from the sandstone. These natural towers stand like stone sentries overlooking the park, creating a backdrop that is sure to delight the senses and spark the imagination. The redrock and semi-desert climate make this state park attractive to visitors all year.

Kodachrome Basin can be reached by following Scenic Byway 12, an All American Road and one of the most spectacular drives in the West, to Cannonville, then south nine miles on a paved road.



Geology

The story of Kodachrome Basin began more than 180 million years ago. It is the story of the Earth itself, and of the constant changes that occur due to the forces of nature. Like the chapters in a book, each rock layer reveals a chapter in Kodachrome Basin's history, telling of times when this desert land was covered by vast inland seas and raging rivers. It reveals times of great violence and upheaval and times of relative peace, and how the relentless power of wind and water shaped the landscape around us.

You will have to reread this story many times because, unlike most stories, this one has no ending. It is being rewritten everyday by each drop of rain that falls and each gust of wind that blows.



Geologic History

Kodachrome Basin State Park is located on the Colorado Plateau, an uplifted region that covers much of the four corners area of Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado. Within the park, the exposed formations range from the middle Jurassic Period (180 million years ago) to the Cretaceous Period (95 million years ago).

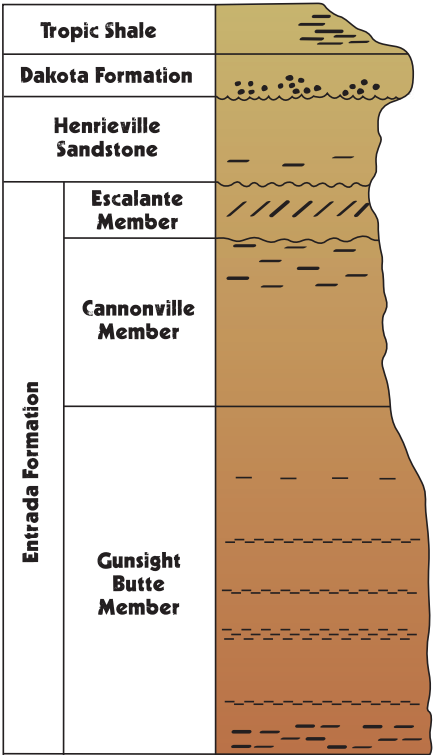
Carmel Formation: Deposits from an inland sea that existed 180 million years ago formed this layer. This is the oldest exposed formation in the park. The Carmel Formation is characterized by solid layers of the mineral gypsum, which forms white striations in the red colored cliffs in the lower elevations of the park.

Entrada Formation: Lying just above the Carmel Formation is the red colored Entrada. The Entrada was formed from deposits that were laid down during the mid-to-late Jurassic Period, approximately 180 to 140 million years ago.

It is primarily composed of fine grained sandstone along with gypsum, shale, quartz, and clay. This formation is one of the most scenic in the park due to its color. It also forms the ubiquitous "slickrock" of southern Utah. Most of the sedimentary pipes found within the park occur in this formation.

Henrieville Sandstone: Deposited near the end of the Jurassic Period, the Henrieville Sandstone is white to tan in appearance. Deposits of Henrieville Sandstone are almost unnoticeable in the main part of the park. However, Grosvenor Arch, located approximately 11 miles south of the park, was formed within this sandstone.

Dakota and Tropic Shale Formations: These are the uppermost formations visible in the park. They were deposited approximately 95 million years ago when a vast seaway covered much of the interior of North America, including most of Utah.



Sedimentary Pipes

The most distinctive features in the park are the large columns of sedimentary rock that rise from the basin floor. These are known as sedimentary pipes. Approximately 67 sedimentary pipes have been identified in Kodachrome Basin and in the area adjacent to the park. Geologists are unsure of the exact origin of the pipes, but several theories have been proposed that might explain their formation.

Evidence recorded in the rock layers within the park indicate this area was seismically active throughout most of its geologic history. Earthquakes may have provided the force necessary to cause coarse, water-saturated sediments to scour pathways through the overlying rock layers. These pathways became filled with the coarse sediment and eventually re-cemented and became harder than the surrounding rock. Over time, erosion has removed the softer layers, revealing the pipes.

A second theory explains the pipes as the remnants of ancient springs. The springs became choked with sediments, which eventually cemented together and became more erosion-resistant than the surrounding rock. The softer rock layers were eventually worn away by erosion, exposing the sedimentary pipes.

Recently, a new theory proposes that the pipes were formed from water-saturated pockets buried under layers of other sediments over a period of several million years. Pressure from the overlying sediments forced the wet slurry upwards. The rising slurry scoured pathways through the overlying rock, eventually cementing into hard rock. Erosion stripped away the softer rock layers revealing the landscape you see today.

No matter how they were formed, the pipes provide a landscape that is truly unique to Kodachrome Basin.



Plants

At an elevation of 5,800 feet, the lands of Kodachrome Basin are classified as semi-desert in the upper Sonoran life zone. Plants must adapt to drought conditions and extreme temperatures. Medium-sized trees include pinyon pine and Utah juniper. Common plants are big sage, rabbit brush, single leaf ash, ephedra (mormon tea), fremont holly, and buffalo berry. Flowering plants and grasses also thrive and include bee balm, Indian paintbrush, evening primrose, yellow flax, biscuit root, locoweed, Indian rice grass, corral grass, and needle and thread grass.



Wildlife

Animals must also adapt to this rather harsh environment. Coyote, bobcat, and grey fox are commonly found and prey on the black-tailed jack and cotton tail rabbits, grey squirrel, and chipmunk. Larger animals of the area include mule deer and mountain lion or cougar. There are also kangaroo rats, mice, Sonoran whip snakes, gopher snakes, Great Basin and midget faded rattlesnakes, and fence and whip lizards. Several species of birds include the common raven, golden eagle, pinyon jay, scrub jay, rock wren, logger head shrike, titmouse, and chipping sparrow.

Nearby Activities

In addition to photography, hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking, visitors should plan to visit the Grand Staircase - Escalante National Monument. Grosvenor Arch, an intricate double arch located 11 miles southeast of Kodachrome Basin, is one of the state's most impressive arches. Also, Cottonwood Canyon and the Paria River area, south of Kodachrome Basin, offer unlimited possibilities to explore.



Facilities

Our facilities include 3 campgrounds with 62 sites total, 28 of those with power and water, and each site comes equipped with a picnic table, firepit, and stunning views. Fresh water is also available throughout the park along with firewood and a laundromat to fulfill your camping needs. The Basin Campground and Oasis Group Site both have restrooms with hot showers to help you relax in the evening and don't forget to check out our newly renovated visitor center/gift shop!

Reservations

Reservations are available for individual sites (with or without power), a group-use campsite, and 6 person bunkhouses where you must provide your own bedding. Individual reservations may be made a minimum of two days in advance of arrival date and up to four months in advance from park check-out date. Group-use reservations may be made up to 11 months in advance.

To make a reservation, call (800) 322-3770 or go to stateparks.utah.gov. Reservations are not required but are advised. Unreserved sites are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

User Fees

Use fees are charged for day-use, camping, and extra vehicles. Extra vehicle fees will be charged for a limit of 1 additional vehicle per site. Shower and dump fees apply to day-use visitors wanting to use those facilities.

Services

A laundromat is available at the park as well as showers, a dump station, and Wi-Fi which can be accessed at the visitor center only.

Weather

Have you ever heard the saying, “If you don’t like the weather, wait five minutes and it will change”? Perhaps nowhere is this truer than in southern Utah. The weather here is very unpredictable and can change rapidly and with very little warning. Plan ahead and be prepared for inclement weather at all times of the year.

Spring: April, May, and early June can be very pleasant times of the year at Kodachrome Basin. Daytime temperatures are generally warm, but overnight temperatures can drop into the 20s. There is still a chance of snow in April and blustery winds are a possibility throughout the season.

Summer: Late June, July, August, and early September are the hottest months at the park. Daytime highs are in the 90s to near 100 degrees. Nighttime temperatures are perfect for sleeping and often drop into the 50s. Summer thunderstorms are a real threat this time of year and can produce heavy downpours, extreme winds, dangerous lightning, and flash flooding.

Fall: Warm days and cool nights are the norm in late September and early October with daytime highs in the 70s and overnight lows in the 30s. By the middle of October, nights can get very cold. The first hints of winter are experienced in November as both daytime high temperatures and overnight lows begin to drop and snow becomes a possibility.

Winter: Cold is the watchword through the winter months at the park. Daytime highs from December into March are often not much above the freezing point. Overnight lows can be well below zero. Heavy snow can occur at any time during this period, making travel and outdoor activities perilous, if not impossible.



Visitor Center

FREE Wi-Fi Access

Come in for hard serve ice cream, cold drinks, coffee, and tea. We also offer a variety of hot foods and our store has plenty of apparel, stickers, books, magnets, and postcards in stock to fulfill your Kodachrome inspired souvenir needs.

We are open daily year-round with hours subject to change.

You can also rent games, climb our rockwall, and ask about our bike and disc golf rentals.



Safety

Weather: Summer temperatures can be extremely hot. Seek shade during the hottest part of the day and drink plenty of water... at least one gallon per person, per day. Dress appropriately (loose fitting, light colored cotton or lightweight, breathable synthetic clothing is best) and wear sunscreen and a hat.

Summer thunderstorms can bring frequent and extreme cloud-to-ground lightning strikes. Seek shelter anytime thunderstorms are in the area. These storms can produce large amounts of rain which can cause flash flooding in low-lying areas, in washes and canyons, and along streams. Damaging hail is also common from these storms.

Temperatures during winter months can be extremely variable and weather conditions can change rapidly and without warning. Wear layers of clothing and equip yourself for extreme cold, wind, and precipitation.

Animals: Rattlesnakes, scorpions, and poisonous spiders all inhabit this area. LOOK before putting your hands in or under vegetation, in rocky crevices, or in any other area where these animals might seek shelter. Always carry a light at night and watch for snakes along roadways, trails, and walking paths.

Roads: Most roads in this area are dirt or gravel and can quickly become impassable due to rain or snow. Make sure your vehicle is in good repair and that you have at least one good spare tire and a reliable jack before traveling on backcountry roads. Take water, food, and extra clothing with you.

Check current road conditions at the park visitor center or at any BLM Visitor Center before traveling. Always leave a travel itinerary with a friend or family member when traveling in the backcountry.

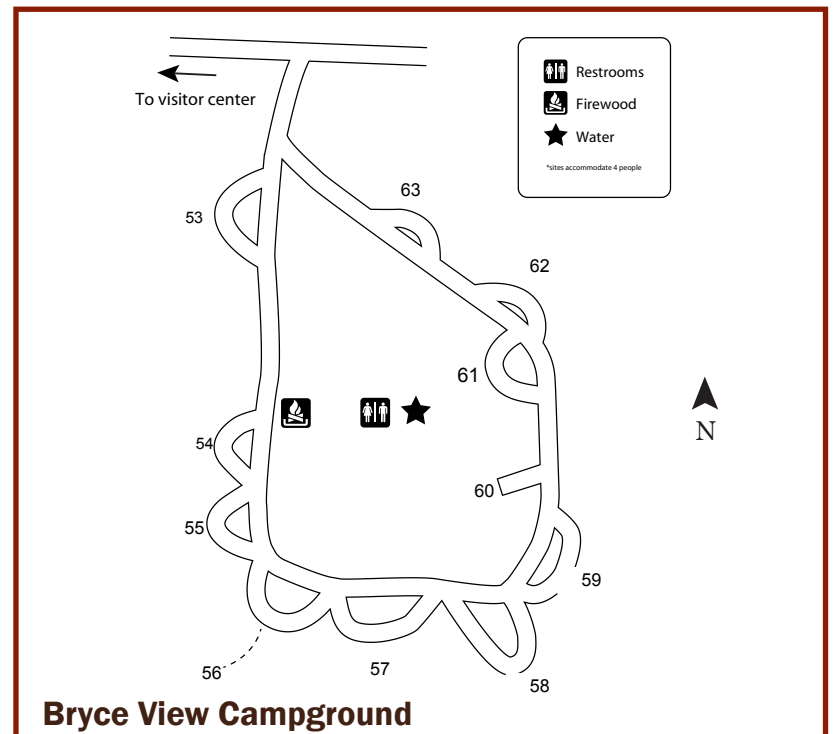
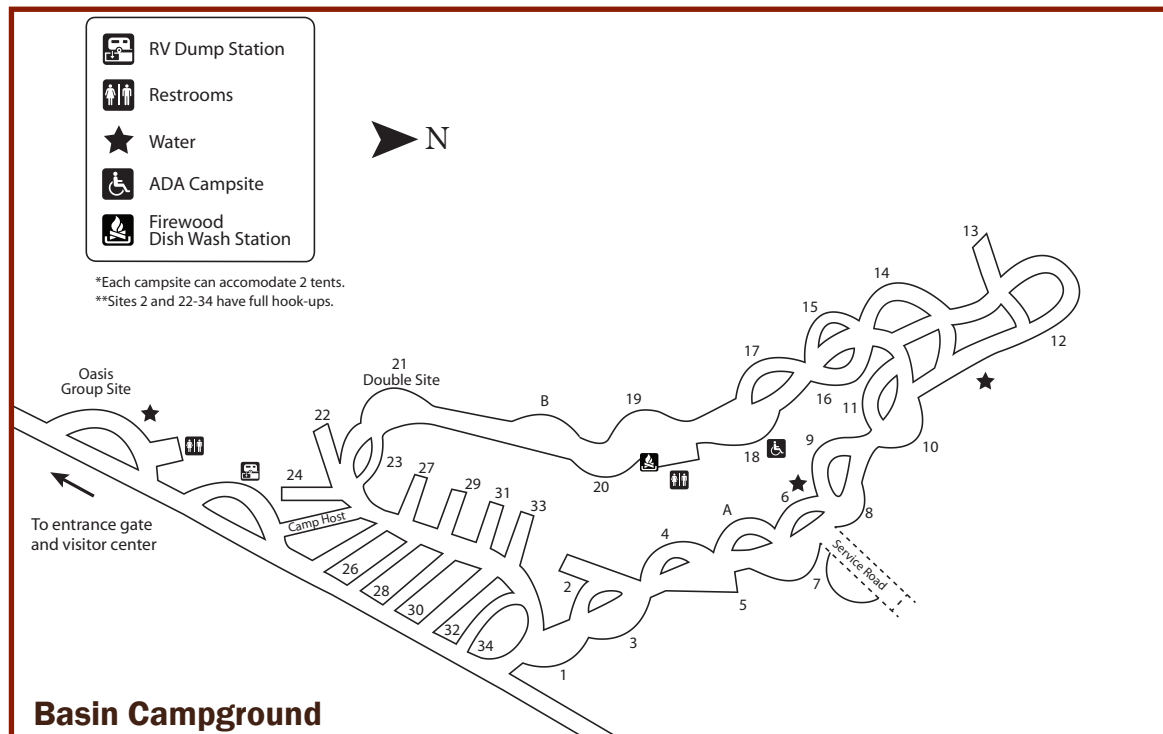
Scan the QR code or visit
parkspass.utah.gov to purchase your
day-use online.



**PLEASE ENJOY YOUR VISIT
AND
PLEASE STAY SAFE!**

Camping at Kodachrome Basin

Generator Hours - Noon to 4:00 p.m. ONLY



Park Guidelines

Please observe the following park regulations to ensure a safe and pleasant visit.

Camping - Camp only in designated areas. Each permit covers one vehicle and any attached recreational equipment. One extra vehicle is allowed per campsite for an additional fee.

Keep exterior lighting at campsites to a minimum to help others enjoy the beauty of the night skies.

- * Sites 1-34, 40-63, & bunkhouses are reservable.
- * Sites A and B are first-come, first-served and are available for up to 14 nights.
- * We also offer 2 backcountry campsites.

Fires - Campfires may be built in specified areas only. Do not leave fires unattended. Use only water,

Check-out is at noon

not dirt or sand, to extinguish fires. Gathering firewood is prohibited.

Fireworks - Unless authorized by the park manager, explosives, fireworks or firecrackers are prohibited in state parks.

Pets - Pets must be on a maximum six-foot leash at all times. Service animals are the only animals admitted in park buildings. Do not leave pets unattended and please clean up after them.

Plants and Animals - All plants, animals, minerals, and other natural features in state parks are protected. It is unlawful to remove, alter, or destroy them.

Trash - Please dispose of trash properly. Dumpsters are located in the campground and at the Oasis Group site. Please do not burn trash in fire rings or grills.

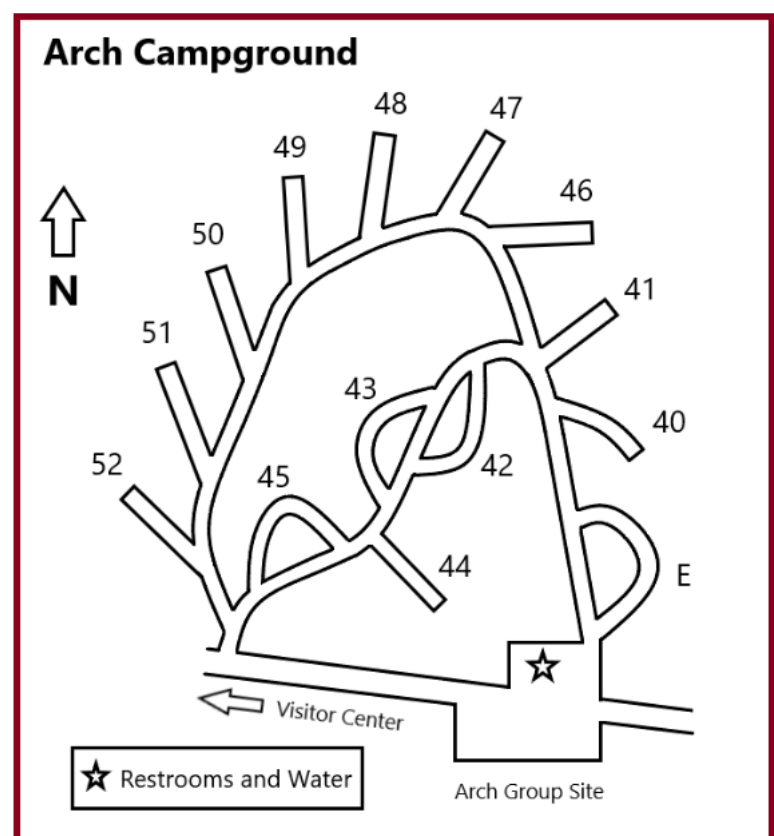
Vandalism - It is unlawful to mutilate or deface any natural feature or man-made structure. Please help keep our parks beautiful.

Wastewater - It is unlawful to dump or drain wastewater from campers or trailers onto the ground or into lakes and streams. A disposal station is located on the east side of the campground.

Vehicles - Vehicles and bicycles must stay on roadways or designated trails. Please, no bicycles on campground pathways. OHVs not registered as "street legal" must be kept on trailers while in the park.

Quiet Hours - 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. quiet hours are strictly enforced. No unreasonable noise at anytime.

Generator Hours - Noon to 4:00 p.m. only.



Park Location:

Nine miles southeast off of Highway 12.
GPS: type in "Kodachrome Basin State Park"

Operating Hours:

The park is open year-round.
7 a.m. to 10 p.m

Address Inquiries To:

Kodachrome Basin State Park
P.O. Box 180069
Cannonville, UT 84718-0069
(435) 679-8562
or
Utah State Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 146001
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-6001
(801) 538-7220
stateparks.utah.gov

For Reservations Call:

(800) 322-3770

Utah State Parks Mission:

To enhance the quality of life by preserving and providing natural, cultural, and recreational resources for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations.

Information contained in this brochure was accurate at the time of printing. Policies, facilities, fees, hours, and regulations, etc., change as mandated. For updated information please contact the park.

The Utah Department of Natural Resources receives federal aid and prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability. For information or complaints regarding discrimination, contact Executive Director, Utah Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 145610, Salt Lake City, UT 84114-5610 or Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1801 L Street, NW, Washington DC 20507-001.

Utah State Parks & Regions



Your park fees provide for the care, protection, and enhancement of this park.

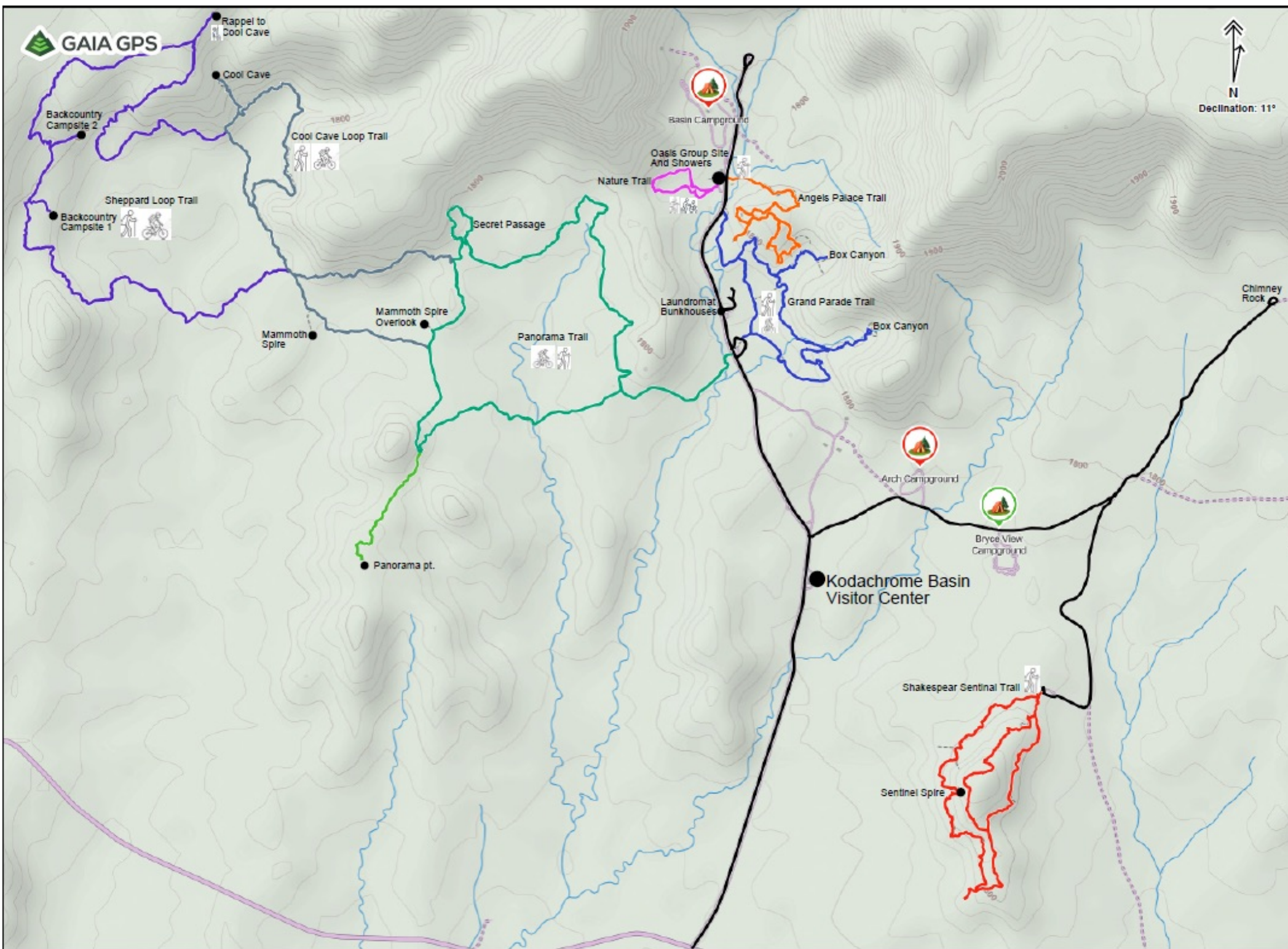


Check out our 18-hole disc golf course located next to the visitor center. Discs are available to rent or buy.



Guided horse back rides are also available in the park. Call or stop by the corral to make a reservation.

(435) 679-8100



Trail Descriptions

Grand Parade Trail: A scenic 1.5-mile (2.4km) trail that stays on the valley floor of Kodachrome Basin. Users will be able to observe bird and plant life and explore two box canyons along the trail. Difficulty: Easy. Open to: Hiking, and Biking.

Panorama Trail: A 3 mile (4.85km) trail winding its way across the western side of the park. This trail allows users to view several sedimentary pipes and explore some interesting geological features such as "Secret Passage", Ballerina Spire, and "Mammoth Spire Overlook". Difficulty: Easy/Moderate. Open to: Hiking and Biking

Panorama Trail Extensions:

Panorama Point: A 1 mile (1.6km) round trip extension of the Panorama Trail that offers breathtaking views of Kodachrome Basin and the Grand Staircase National Monument.

Cool Cave Loop: This 2 mile (3.2km) extension of the Panorama Trail meanders along the valley floor taking you into a large alcove formation called Cool Cave named aptly for its cooler temperatures and it really is "pretty cool"!

Shepherd's Loop: This is an additional 3 mile (4.85km) extension off of the Cool Cave Loop. Classified as strenuous for the elevation gain and loss throughout the trail. This trail offers stunning views of Kodachrome Basin as well as views of Powell Point, Bryce Canyon, and the Grand Staircase National Monument. There is a rappel option that offers 3 separate rappels, the longest rappel being 105' with the last rappel dropping into Cool Cave. If you do not want to rappel, your return trail will complete the loop near Cool Cave. Shepherd's Loop is also the only trail in the park to offer backcountry camping with 2 backcountry sites.

Angel's Palace Trail: Rising 150ft (46M) above the basin floor, this 1.5-mile (2.4km) trail affords magnificent views of Kodachrome Basin, Bryce Canyon, and the surrounding area. It's an excellent trail for photographers. Difficulty: Easy/Moderate. Open to: Hikers

Nature Trail: Informational panels along this .5 mile (0.8km) hard surface trail will give the user an introduction to plants, animals, and geology of the area. Difficulty: Easy. Open to: Hikers, ADA accessible.

Sentinel Trail: A 1.7 Mile (2.7km) loop that gives close access to the Sentinel Spire which you can see when entering Kodachrome. Difficulty: Easy to Sentinel Spire, moderate to strenuous after. Open to: Hikers

Trail Rules and Regulations

1. Hike only on designated trails. Hiking off trail, shortcutting, crosscutting, and creating "Social" trails can damage fragile desert plant life and soils, and increase erosions and runoff.
2. Backcountry camping available only in designated backcountry sites.
3. Pets must be kept on leash at all times. Please clean up after your pet and dispose of pet waste in dumpsters.
4. Be prepared and stay safe. Know your route, your physical limitation, and the weather forecast. Always carry plenty of water.

Please Stay On Trails