

3-Day Zion National Park Itinerary

A research-backed first-timer's route through Zion's three signature hikes — Angels Landing, The Narrows, and Emerald Pools — the essentials, without the extra days.

QUICK FACTS BEFORE YOU GO

- **Best time to visit:** Spring and fall for the most comfortable hiking temperatures
- **Entrance fee:** \$35/vehicle or \$20/person on foot, valid 7 days
- **Angels Landing permit:** Required past Scout Lookout — Recreation.gov lottery
- **Getting around:** Park shuttle required Mar 7–Nov 28, 2026 — free, no ticket needed
- **Gateway airports:** Las Vegas (LAS) ~2.5 hr · St. George (SGU) ~45 min
- **Home base:** Springdale, right at the South Entrance

DAY 01

Ease In Along the Canyon Floor

Zion Canyon — Don't Miss: Riverside Walk

1 Arrive & Check Into Your Hotel

Springdale sits right at the South Entrance — several hotels are within walking distance of the gate.

45 MIN–2.5 HR FROM AIRPORT

2 Zion Canyon Visitor Center

Grab a shuttle map, check current trail and river conditions, and get oriented before you head in.

3 Ride the Shuttle to the Temple of Sinawava

Ride all the way to the end of the line — the shuttle is your only way up the canyon during shuttle season.

SHUTTLE • ~45 MIN EACH WAY

4 Riverside Walk

An easy, paved 2.2-mile round trip along the Virgin River — a perfect first taste of the canyon and the gateway to Day 3's Narrows hike.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY • 1–1.5 HRS

PRO TIP

Book your Angels Landing lottery entry before you even land — the day-before lottery closes at 3 PM Mountain Time, so don't count on doing it same-day if you're arriving in the afternoon.

DAY 02

Climb to Angels Landing

The most famous hike in Zion

1 Ride the Shuttle to The Grotto

Start early to beat the heat and the crowds — this is one of the busiest trailheads in the park.

SHUTTLE

2 Begin the Climb

5 miles round trip with roughly 1,400+ ft of elevation gain, finishing with chains along the final, exposed half-mile ridge to the summit.

DON'T MISS • ~4 HRS

3 Recover at Zion Lodge

Grab lunch, relax on the lawn, or add the easy Lower Emerald Pool loop if you've still got energy.

4 Dinner in Springdale

A casual, well-earned meal after a genuinely big day.

SAFETY NOTE

The land bridge near the summit has roughly 1,000-ft drop-offs on both sides. This isn't the day to bring anyone uneasy with heights — there's no shame in turning around at Scout Lookout.

DAY 03

Wade the Narrows, Then Ease Out

Zion's slot canyon, then home

1 Rent Gear in Springdale

Water shoes, neoprene socks, and a walking stick make a real difference in the river. Outfitters are clustered along the main road near the park entrance.

~30 MIN

2 Wade Up the Virgin River to Wall Street

No permit needed for this bottom-up route from the Temple of Sinawava — just check the river flow before you start; the hike closes above roughly 150 CFS.

DON'T MISS • ~3-4 HRS ROUND TRIP

3 Dry Off & Grab a Late Lunch

Head back to Springdale to dry your gear and warm up before the drive out.

4 Depart for Las Vegas or St. George

Allow travel time back to the airport — or extend your trip with a stop at Bryce Canyon, about 1.5-2 hours away.

DEPART

PRO TIP

The Narrows closes when flow exceeds roughly 150 CFS — check the park's current conditions page the morning of your hike, not the night before.

PLANNING NOTES

- **Reserve early:** Angels Landing lottery entry, lodging, and gear rentals should be sorted well before summer travel.
- Private vehicles cannot drive the Zion Canyon Scenic Drive during shuttle season — every stop in this itinerary is shuttle-accessed.
- Check current river flow before hiking The Narrows; it closes above roughly 150 CFS.
- Non-U.S. residents pay an additional \$100/person entrance fee as of January 1, 2026.
- Have more time? Kolob Canyons and the Canyon Overlook Trail are the natural add-ons for a longer trip.

Map This Route

Scan the QR code below to open the live, interactive Google My Map with every stop from all 3 days — color-coded by day, with driving directions built in. Tap any pin for details, and use the layers menu to toggle each day on or off.



SCAN WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA

● DAY 1 — CANYON FLOOR

● DAY 2 — ANGELS LANDING

● DAY 3 — THE NARROWS

BEFORE YOU GO OFFLINE

Cell service is spotty in the canyon, so open this map and download it for offline use before you leave Springdale. Shuttle stops are numbered in order along the Scenic Drive — the Temple of Sinawava is the last stop on the line.

Where to Stay & What to Pack

Springdale

The best single base for this itinerary — right at the South Entrance, walkable, with the most restaurants and its own free town shuttle to the park gate.

Zion Lodge

The only lodging inside the park, right on the Scenic Drive between The Grotto and the Emerald Pools trailhead. Books out far in advance — reserve direct through the park concessioner.

Hurricane & La Verkin

About 30–40 minutes west toward St. George, and noticeably cheaper. Worth it if Springdale rates are out of range in peak season.

WHAT TO PACK

Water shoes and neoprene socks for The Narrows, broken-in hiking shoes for Angels Landing, a rain jacket, a daypack, and more water than you think you'll need — the canyon heats up fast. Full gear guide with 70+ picks on the website.

Zion National Park — *one of Utah's most iconic parks*

Towering red cliffs, a slot canyon carved by the Virgin River, and Utah's most famous ridge walk — three days is enough for a first taste of the best of it.

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