



Arches National Park

Hey , Spring is on the way!

Spring is on the way and it's time to start planning your spring and summer trips. I've always been captivated by silhouetted images; I find them striking. Do you think this image is an arch or a window? I never thought much about this distinction until we visited Arches National Park in Utah. The one captured here is a window. Arches occur at or near the base level of the ground, whereas windows are found above the ground level.

Arches is one of the Big 5 Utah National Parks. It lies in the northwest corner of Utah and is just outside of Moab. The park covers 310.31 square kilometers and there are over 2000 documented arches in the park. You can spend anywhere from 1/2 day to several days exploring the park depending on whether you want to do a lot of the hikes or just see some of the major sites. The best times to visit are April/May and September/October.



As you can see, we visited the park at sunrise, which happened by mistake. We had reservations to the park in the afternoon and we missed our allotted time because we were engrossed in exploring the Colorado National Monument area. The park requires reservations from April to October unless you go to the park before 7 AM or after 4 PM. So, due to this hiccup, we visited the next day at sunrise. It turned out to be an awesome blunder, and we highly recommend going at sunrise. Not only will you be treated to breathtaking sunrise views, but you'll also have cooler temperatures and ample parking at the various sites along the scenic drive

The Moab area has lots more to do and see with Canyonlands National Park just around the corner and there are plenty of off-road trails, jeep rentals and hikes. The town of Moab is full of restaurants and hotels and enough to do that make it an excellent family destination.

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Our Arches Video on YouTube.



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Lourdes France



Miracles and Beauty

We saw Lourdes featured on a 60 minutes episode and since we were exploring the south of France we decided to '*travel thru*' on the last few days of our last trip. This might be a place you've never thought of going. It's located in the foothills of the Pyrenees mountains. It is a town that has both spiritual significance and natural beauty. Renowned for the apparitions of the Virgin Mary to Bernadette Soubirous in 1858, Lourdes has evolved into a global pilgrimage destination, drawing millions of visitors annually. The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes, centered around the revered Grotto where these divine encounters occurred, is a place where people gather to pray. There is an air of expectation and hope as people come from all over the world, perhaps seeking a miracle of their own. We've never heard so many different languages spoken in one place. As you walk through the town you'll hear French, English, Irish, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Greek and others we didn't recognize. It was amazing to see people of all races and nationalities drawn together for a common reason.



The town welcomes those with disabilities and even has a special place for people with disabilities to stay. There are carriages pulled by volunteers throughout the city to help those with difficulties get to where they need to go. There are many religious ceremonies held each day in one of the three basilicas or in the grotto area. Beyond its religious allure, Lourdes is a beautiful and picturesque town, with a historic fortress perched atop a hill offering stunning views of the charming town below. Whether you seek a spiritual journey, historical exploration, or simply a tranquil escape, Lourdes invites all to experience the profound serenity and wonder that define this captivating town.

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Watch our Lourdes video





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