



Discovering Our Planet Together



Moab, Arches & Canyonlands Photo Expedition

Capture Iconic Scenes & Hidden Surprises of Utah's Red Rock Desert



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Trip Details:

Days
6 Days /
Mar–Apr,
Oct

Price
From
\$\$6995

Moab, Arches & Canyonlands Photo Expedition

Capture Iconic Scenes & Hidden Surprises of Utah's Red Rock Desert

On this awe-inspiring foray into the canyon country surrounding Moab, every vista is a masterpiece, sculpted by the artistry of wind and water over millennia. From the elegant sandstone spans of Arches National Park to the deep chasms of Canyonlands cut by the Colorado and Green rivers, Utah's high desert is world-renowned among landscape photographers, and this adventure sets you up to capture the best of it. Just over the state line lies the Colorado National Monument, one of the region's best kept secrets, which is also on our itinerary, along with the Upper Colorado River Scenic Byway featuring Castle Valley and the Fisher Towers—rounding out a collection of striking natural features that offer an array of diverse subjects. Outside the bustle of Moab, stay in rustic luxury at our luxury lodge on the banks of the Colorado River, the perfect base for our photography explorations.

Trip Highlights

In Arches, Canyonlands, Dead Horse Point and beyond, photograph the region's signature pinnacles, mesas, natural bridges and chasms from sunrise to starlight

Optimal astrophotography in International Dark Sky Parks, with expert coaching—departures are timed around the new moon for the best possible conditions

Discover remote trails and lesser-known viewpoints, and explore highly popular Arches on strategically timed visits when visitor numbers are fewer



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Itinerary At A Glance

- Day 1**
Grand Junction, Colorado
- Day 2**
Colorado National Monument /
Moab, Utah / Sunset Photo Shoot
- Day 3**
Canyonlands National Park—
Island in the Sky/
Astrophotography
- Day 4**
Dead Horse Point / Sunset
Photography at Delicate Arch
- Day 5**
Sunrise in Arches National Park /
Petroglyphs
- Day 6**
Colorado River Sunrise / Upper
Colorado River Scenic Byway /
Grand Junction / Depart

Moab, Arches & Canyonlands Photo Expedition Itinerary

Capture Iconic Scenes & Hidden Surprises of Utah’s Red Rock Desert

Day 1: Grand Junction, Colorado

Arrive in Grand Junction, the nearest major airport to Moab, where you are met and transferred to our hotel. A once humble railroad hub and ranching outpost in western Colorado, Grand Junction has become a flourishing agricultural center and vibrant university town renowned for its farm-to-table fare, abundant microbreweries and nearby Palisade wines. On the northeastern edge of the Colorado Plateau, it’s also a gateway to adventure, especially for the magnificent Utah desert that lies next door. Ours begins this evening with a welcome dinner with our Photo Expedition Leaders. Chosen for their expertise in both photography and natural history, our guides offer an overview of the journey ahead, including an orientation to the rewards and challenges that come with creating images in these arid, colorful environs known for their challenging light conditions. We’ll also get a preview of the rich history, geology, wildlife and ecology of the Colorado Plateau, the grand backdrop for the photography adventures to come.





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Day 2: Colorado National Monument / Moab, Utah / Sunset Photo Shoot

Our day begins early with a sunrise photo tour to the Colorado National Monument just west of Grand Junction, one of the area's best kept secrets. Although it is filled with stunning red rock canyons and monoliths like the better-known national parks in the region, the monument remains less visited than its more famous neighbors. Following the scenic 23-mile Rim Rock Drive, we climb more than 2,000 feet in elevation. Completed in 1950, the winding two-lane road features three historic tunnels carved through solid rock and offers pullouts with commanding compositions of sweeping canyons, the lone sandstone tower of Independence Monument and the distant Rocky Mountains.

Continue to Moab, an optimal base for photographing more of the Colorado Plateau, a vast landscape covering 130,000 square miles across parts of Colorado, Utah, Arizona and New Mexico. The high-desert terrain is characterized by elevations between 5,000 and 7,000 feet and its distinctive geology of deeply eroded canyons, flat-topped mesas and colorful rock formations. We stop first at a dinosaur track site, where we encounter ancient history etched into rock. On a scenic hike, walk through a rugged landscape of slickrock and juniper to encounter fossilized footprints left by long-extinct creatures, offering a glimpse into a prehistoric world. This afternoon, settle into our riverside rooms at Red Cliffs Lodge, tucked away in a peaceful setting outside the adventure hub of Moab. Perched on the edge of the Colorado River beneath imposing canyon walls, the lodge is our comfortable base for the next three nights, perfectly positioned for exploring and capturing the beauty of the surrounding red rock landscape. Our Expedition Leaders start with a photo presentation at the lodge, before we head out on our first sunset photo shoot.

Day 3: Canyonlands National Park—Island in the Sky/ Astrophotography

Covering more than 300,000 acres of the Colorado Plateau, Canyonlands National Park is a vast red rock wilderness carved by the Colorado and Green rivers over millions of years. Its varied geography spans four distinct sectors, and our focus today is the Island in the Sky district, a dramatic mesa perched high above the surrounding landscape, offering sweeping views of deep canyons and layered sandstone formations. We get an early start to photograph the sunrise at Mesa Arch, perhaps the most iconic view in the park. As the first rays of dawn break over the horizon, the underside of the arch glows deep orange and vermilion, framing a classic vista of the canyon below—an essential shot for photographers. More of Canyonlands' wonders await the lens as we continue to dramatic overlooks and hike over terrain revealing the region's remarkable geology. Following a winding trail across slickrock expanses, past ancient rock art, we find an intimate connection to the region's cultural history as we gain a deeper appreciation for the immense forces that shaped this landscape.

Later this afternoon, there's time to rest and recharge at our lodge before a captivating night of astrophotography (weather permitting). Under some of the darkest skies in the country—both Canyonlands and Arches are International Dark Sky Parks—the absence of urban light reveals a brilliant celestial canvas. With guidance from our Expedition Leader, refine techniques for capturing the night sky, experimenting with long exposures and careful composition. As the Milky Way stretches overhead and constellations come into focus, we are immersed in the wonder of photographing the cosmos, finding a deeply moving connection to the beauty and mystery above us in the silence of the desert night.



Day 4: Dead Horse Point / Sunset Photography at Delicate Arch

After a relaxed morning following our late night of astrophotography, more stunning vistas await in and around Moab. With our Expedition Leader at the helm, whose knowledge of our environs runs deep, we seek out a variety of striking landscapes and intriguing sites, from ancient petroglyph panels that offer a glimpse into the region's cultural heritage to lesser-known arches and sweeping canyon viewpoints. Our itinerary is flexible, allowing for spontaneous stops and creative opportunities along the way. A highlight is Dead Horse Point State Park, an immense expanse of layered canyons, mesas and high-desert woodlands that is every bit as spectacular as its national park neighbors. The view from the point is one of the most photographed scenic vistas in the world, and it has been featured in many films. Two thousand feet above the Colorado River, the overlook surveys a dramatic view of Canyonlands' sculpted pinnacle and buttes, with the river twisting below. Legend holds that Dead Horse Point got its name because of its use as a natural corral by cowboys in the 19th century, where horses often died of exposure.

In late afternoon, we head out for a hike to Delicate Arch, the most recognizable natural arch in Arches National Park and perhaps the world. Arriving in time for golden hour, we watch the lowering sun ignites the sandstone in luminous hues of red, rust and gold. This is one of the Southwest's most iconic photography locations, and the play of light on rock showcases nature's geological artistry in constantly shifting perspectives. There's time to experiment with various settings as shadows lengthen and the landscape transforms with every passing minute. Witnessing Delicate Arch in the fleeting light of sunset, we understand why Edward Abbey wrote in *Desert Solitaire*, "If Delicate Arch has any significance, it lies...in the power of the odd and unexpected to startle the senses...to compel us into a reawakened awareness of the wonderful—that which is full of wonder."

If weather conditions align, we may have another opportunity this evening to capture the wonders of Moab's night sky. Designated as an International Dark Sky Community by DarkSky International, Moab offers exceptionally low light pollution and expansive desert horizons—ideal for photographing the Milky Way, star trails and other celestial highlights.



Day 5: Sunrise in Arches National Park / Petroglyphs

Few geological phenomena are as emblematic of a place than the 2,000-plus sandstone arches within Arches National Park. These rock formations are the physical evidence of the power of erosion, as wind, rain, sun and time converge to shape the malleable landscape. Entrada Sandstone, which comprises most of the park's arches, is particularly susceptible to erosion due to its composition. Water seeps into cracks, freezes and expands, breaking the rock apart, while wind carries away loose particles. The result is an intricate tableau of stone shapes that evoke wonder and whimsy at every turn.

Our day dawns in the park, where we capture the first rays of sunrise transforming the landscape with a shifting palette of warm hues. The sandstone formations seem to glow from within, their red and orange tones deepened by the intensifying sun's rays. Shadows stretch long across the desert floor, creating striking contrasts that highlight the textures and contours of the rugged terrain. The remainder of the morning is devoted to photographing more of the park's natural arches and sandstone features with our Expedition Leader, who excels at finding moments of solitude to contemplate the wonders before us. In the afternoon, we photograph ancient petroglyphs etched into the canyon walls by the ancestral Puebloan people who inhabited this region some 2,000 years ago. These rock carvings offer insight into the lives and worldview of the area's early inhabitants, depicting animals, human figures and geometric patterns.

Day 6: Colorado River Sunrise / Upper Colorado River Scenic Byway / Grand Junction / Depart

Rise early to photograph another magical desert sunrise on a quiet walk along the Colorado River. Given our lodge's optimal location, we don't have to go far to experience this daily splendor. After breakfast, it's time to start making our way back to Grand Junction along the 44-mile Upper Colorado River Scenic Byway, a winding two-lane road that traces the river's path through a dramatic gorge. Passing through Castle Valley, look for the famous profiles of Castleton Tower and the Fisher Towers, observing how the gleaming light of morning transforms these sandstone spires from maroon to vermillion, rust and gold. The surrounding terrain has been featured in many movies, including famous westerns, which are remembered at the Moab Museum of Film & Western Heritage located at Red Cliffs Lodge. Cross the Colorado River at the site of Dewey Bridge, which was the original wooden span carrying Highway 128 over the river. Built in 1916, the famous suspension bridge was the second longest west of the Mississippi and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places until it was destroyed by a fire in 2008. Once we're back in Grand Junction, you may enjoy exploring this lively western town on your own if your flight schedule permits.



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Accommodation Details:

Red Cliffs Lodge

Hotel Maverick

For detailed descriptions, visit nathab.com/us-national-parks-tours/moab-canyonlands-photo-expedition/accommodations

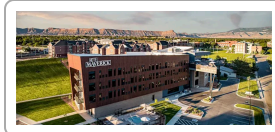
Moab, Arches & Canyonlands Photo Expedition Accommodations

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Red Cliffs Lodge

Located along the Colorado River in Moab, this lodge blends rustic seclusion with modern amenities, featuring spacious rooms with river and creek views, a seasonal outdoor pool and direct access to nature.



Hotel Maverick

A boutique hotel located on Colorado Mesa University's campus, this "New West" property features spacious rooms, an outdoor pool, and a rooftop restaurant with panoramic views featuring distinctive local fare.



Nat Hab's In-Depth Expertise & Access Set You Up for Stunning Photos

For photographers seeking world-class shots of Utah's spectacular red rock desert landscapes, this compact trip is designed to give you the best possible opportunities to get the images you covet from Arches and Canyonlands national parks and surrounding environs. Here's how we do it:

1. A Compact Yet Comprehensive Survey of All the Moab Area Highlights

In just six days, we get you to Arches and Canyonlands national parks, Dead Horse Point State Park, Colorado National Monument, the Upper Colorado Scenic Byway along the river, and ancient petroglyph sites revealing the presence and influence of Indigenous cultures on the land over millennia. Every day holds an exciting slate of subjects to focus your lens on.

2. An Itinerary Crafted with Our 'Insider' Knowledge

There's no question, Arches and Canyonlands are popular parks. But via our in-depth local knowledge of where to be when, you'll find hidden corners others often miss, and we make sure you get to the coveted highlights at less-busy times.

3. Experience All the Wonder & None of the Hassle

Utah's magnificent national parks are globally coveted destinations. It's imperative to book accommodations months out, and in-demand lodging often fills within hours of space made available annually. Most visitors end up fighting to see the sights with hundreds of others, trying to plot routes while juggling maps and guidebooks. With Nat Hab, you'll worry about none of that: You get a stress-free trip with outstanding interpretation and no headaches.

4. Small Groups Led by Two Expedition Leaders

Our trips are limited to 13 photographers, and each is guided by two Expedition Leaders, for the utmost in personal attention, individualized coaching, flexibility and quieter nature encounters. And we divide into even smaller groups, traveling in two vehicles that can access places larger groups can't reach.

5. Outstanding Guides Help You Get the Shots You Covet

Our Expedition Leaders are both naturalist guides and top professional nature photographers—a combination of skills that gives you the richest experience, both in interpretive detail of the amazing region you are immersed in, and in personalized coaching—whatever your skill level—to help you take your shots to the next level. They know these landscapes and light conditions intimately, guiding you to locations and camera settings to optimize your images. With lots of surprises up their sleeves, our Expedition Leaders share a side of these enchanting landscapes many visitors miss. See **Expedition Leader bios** with traveler comments regarding the quality of our leaders.

6. Sunrise & Sunset Photography in Arches National Park

On two separate outings, we head into Arches to capture its most distinctive features when the light is best: hike into Delicate Arch late in the day, when the sandstone span is illuminated by the setting sun, and go again into the park at sunrise to experience the magic of golden hour, with dawn's rays turning the rock formations from maroon to deep red, rust, vermilion and orange.

7. Practice Astrophotography Under Some of the Country's Darkest Skies

Arches, Canyonlands and Moab hold certifications from Dark Sky International recognizing their status as places where the natural night sky is protected, offering a tableau of the heavens little affected by



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artificial light. Combined with regularly clear weather in this high-desert environment, conditions are outstanding for star photography. You're likely to see the Milky Way prominently arched overhead, and our Expedition Leaders point out constellations and planets glittering in the inky blackness.

8. Stay at a Secluded Luxury Lodge on the Colorado River

You won't be jostling with hordes of tourists at a hotel in downtown Moab. We've chosen a luxury lodge on the banks of the Colorado River, well outside town, as our base for daily forays into the surrounding red rock country. Smell the sage, listen to the water course past, and stay in peace under the stars.

9. Nat Hab's Exclusive Custom Vehicles Enhance Viewing

Our **North America Safari Cruisers** are customized vans that are exceptionally comfortable and equipped with either a pop-top roof or wide roof hatches that open for unimpeded sightseeing and photography. Designed for exploring America's national parks, they offer the best of both necessities: an expedition-ready exterior and a spacious, luxurious interior for the ultimate in comfort. We never fill them to capacity, so every guest gets a window seat plus plenty of room for your personal belongings.

10. Our Quality-Value Guarantee Ensures Your Superlative Photo Tour

With Nat Hab, you receive our exclusive guarantee that clearly states that we will meet the high expectations we set forth in our promotional materials. To our knowledge, this is the most ambitious guarantee made by any adventure travel company. **Read our important promise.**

11. Feel Good About Your Carbon-Neutral Journey

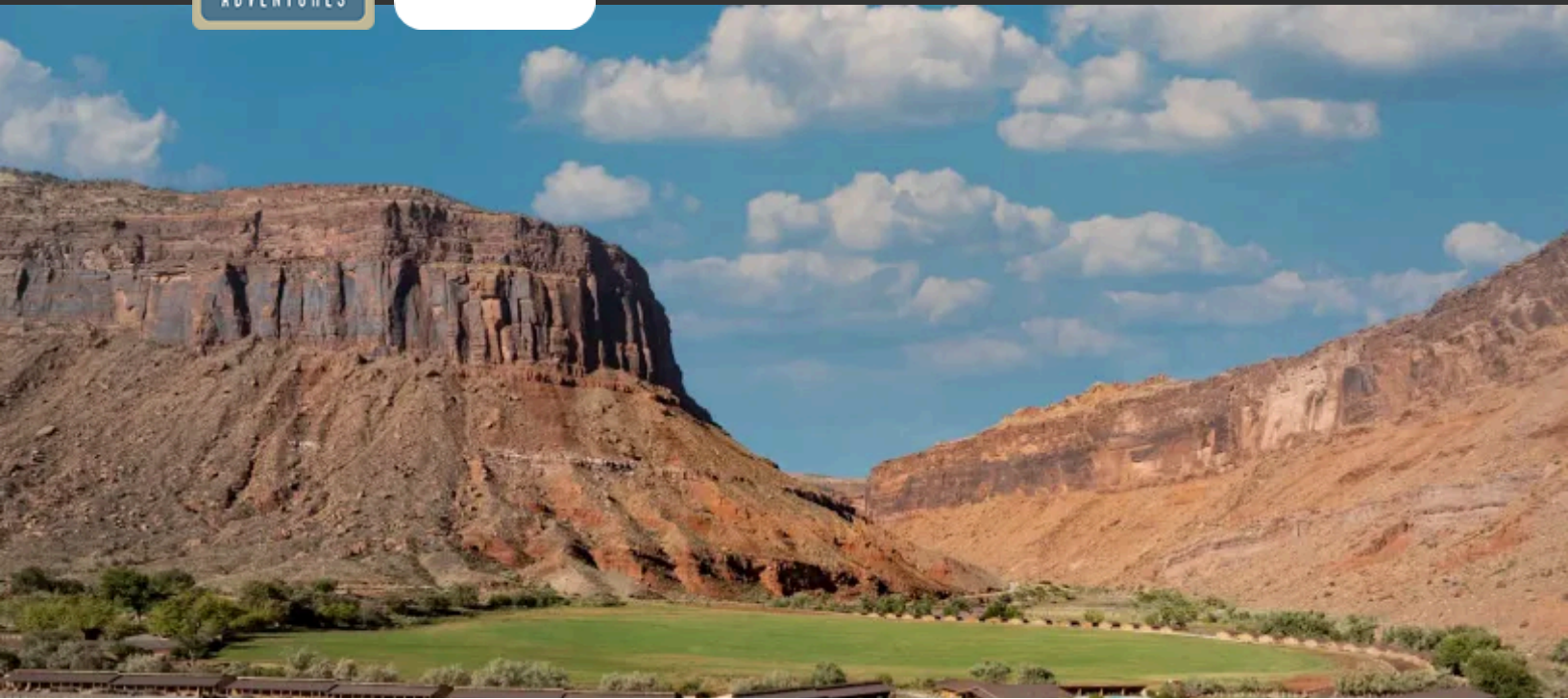
We care deeply about our planet, as we know you do. When you travel with us, the carbon emissions from your trip are 100% offset—including your round-trip flights from home. Natural Habitat Adventures has been the world's first carbon-neutral travel company since 2007.

12. Natural Habitat Adventures Is WWF's Travel Partner

Because of our commitment to environmentally friendly travel, as well as the exceptional quality of our small-group nature adventures, World Wildlife Fund, the world's leading environmental conservation organization, has named Natural Habitat Adventures its worldwide travel partner—a designation that makes us exceedingly proud!



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Dates & Pricing Summary:

Prices: From \$\$6995

Group Size: Limited to 12 Travelers

Moab, Arches & Canyonlands Photo Expedition Dates, Pricing & Info

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2027 Departures

Departure	Return	Notes
Oct 29, 2027	Nov 3, 2027	\$6495 USD

2028 Departures

Departure	Return	Notes
! Prices and dates not confirmed for 2028		
Mar 26, 2028	Mar 31, 2028	\$6495 USD

Apr 23, 2028 Apr 28, 2028 \$6495 USD



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Departure	Return	Notes
! Prices and dates not confirmed for 2028		
Oct 24, 2028	Oct 29, 2028	\$6495 USD

Pricing

See <https://nathab.com/us-national-parks-tours/moab-canyonlands-photo-expedition/dates-fees> for the latest pricing details.

Included

Accommodations, meals from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on final day, drinking water throughout the trip, services of Nat Hab Expedition Leader, airport transfer on Day 1 and final day, some gratuities, all permits, entrance fees and taxes.

Not Included

Travel to and from start and end points of trip, alcoholic beverages, some gratuities, passport and visa fees, optional activities, items of a personal nature (phone calls, souvenirs, etc.), airline baggage fees, airport and departure taxes, optional travel insurance.

Getting There & Getting Home

This trip begins and ends in Grand Junction, Colorado. **You must arrive in Grand Junction by 4 pm** on Day 1 to attend a welcome dinner beginning at 6 pm. Guests arriving before 1 pm on Day 1 will have the option to join a guided scenic driving tour of Colorado National Monument, with opportunities for short walks along the way.

You may depart Grand Junction any time after 12:30 pm on the final day.



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