

## MAY 27 - ZION NATIONAL PARK, UT

I guess our luck had to change at some point and today was the day.

We left early for Zion NP and arrived at about 8:30 at the ticket booth, after a 40-mile drive from Kanab. Once we showed our pass, we continued our drive to the parking area and Visitor Centre. Along the way we went through two tunnels: a short one and then the 1.1 mile Zion Mount Carmel tunnel - no lights at all in the tunnel. Fortunately the park authorities were operating it as a one-way tunnel but this meant waiting for cars to come through before our line could proceed.



This is "Checkerboard Mesa" a prominent example of naturally sculpted rock art.





We're heading down there.

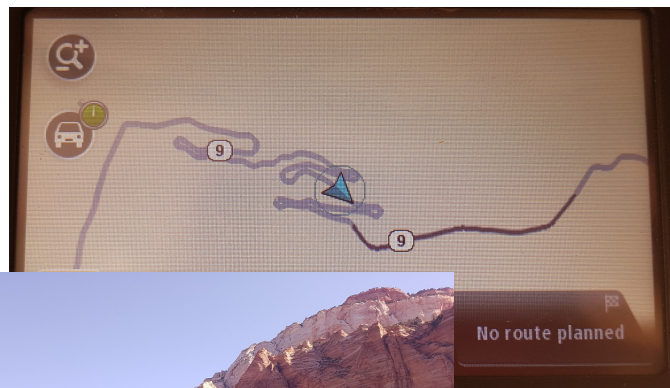


We arrived at the parking lot area and parked the van. But we were not ready for what faced us! Literally thousands of people, some still driving the parking lots looking for a space to park; others patiently waiting in line for a shuttle bus to take them into the canyon proper.

Jen had read that the park showed a 22-minute film, so we inquired at the Visitor's Centre. "Yes, it's in the building at Stop 2 (of the shuttle)." We looked at each other and decided - "another time". The young Ranger must have sensed our disappointment. "This is the busiest day of the year" he offered.

Unfortunately for us, we arrived in Kanab on the US Memorial Day weekend and very happy that we were able to find space in an RV park on such short notice. If we had planned our trip/route a little better, perhaps we could have visited Zion on a weekday. But it is what it is, so we will have to return another day.

We started back to the east entrance. The first chore was lining up again for the one-way tunnel, and then following a line of cars east. We stopped and I took this picture of Maud, our GPS. If you look closely you can see the Zion Mount Carmel tunnel. It is the darker part of the line (route).





It was now definitely time for a coffee. On the trip back we stopped here and had a nice breakfast.



We've been up this part of the Grand Staircase twice now and Jen finally managed to get a picture of part of it. Grand Staircase - Escalante is the largest Monument in the US - nearly twice the size of Rhode Island. Over 250 million years of Earth's geologic history reveals itself in technicolor cliffs of dark chocolate, bright vermillion, white, gray, and pink. Jen read that the staircase starts at Bryce Canyon and ends at the Grand Canyon.



Tomorrow we leave Kanab and head west towards Ely, NV. See you there.