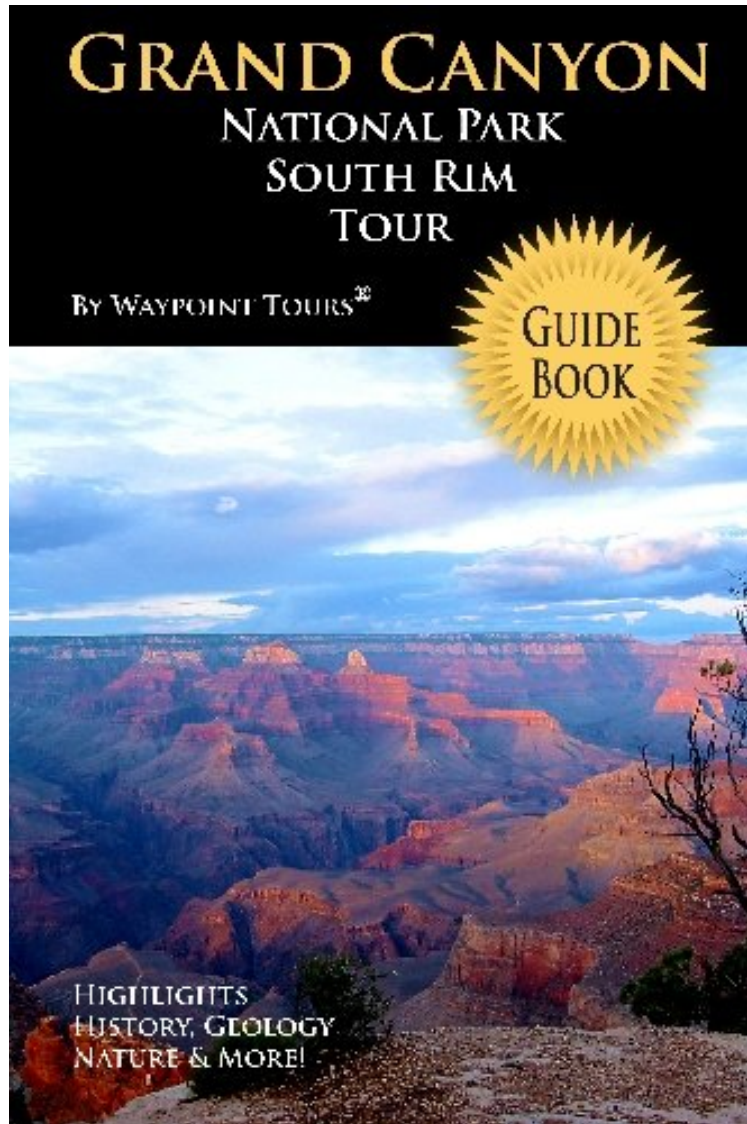


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## **Grand Canyon National Park South Rim Tour Guide: Your personal tour guide for Grand Canyon travel adventure!**

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About the Author Grand Canyon South Rim Welcome to Grand Canyon National Park! As you approach the Grand Canyon, you are crossing the Colorado Plateau, a 130,000 square mile bulge in the earth's surface spanning half of Utah and a good portion of Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado. Around its edges are the upthrust Rocky Mountains, the stretched-apart Great Basin, the contorted rocks of Arizona's Transition Zone, and ancient volcanoes. Despite all the geologic activity around it, the Plateau has managed to stay relatively flat and unfolded, but as a whole, it may have been uplifted nearly two miles. It is the uplift and the down cutting that have created the canyon. About five to six million years ago, the Colorado River began to carve its way down through the domed region on its way to the sea. Like a knife slicing through a layer cake, the mile-deep river canyon exposed multi-hued layers of time, a geologist's dream come true. However, you don't have to be a geologist to appreciate the canyon's grandeur. Erosion by wind, water, and gravity not only widened the canyon, it created an amazing variety of towers and spires, ridges and side canyons, shadows and highlights. The rainbow of rock colors is most intense in early morning or late afternoon light. If you are lucky, you will see a storm chase through the canyon, casting shadows and mist as it goes. Sightseers have been coming to view the wonders of the canyon since 1883. Prospectors soon found tourism more profitable than mining and built accommodations for them. One of the earliest visitors was Theodore Roosevelt, a lover of the West's wide-open spaces. He pushed for federal protection and in 1893, the area became a Forest Reserve. In 1908, it received a promotion to National Monument and in 1919, the National Park was authorized by Congress. The most recent upgrade was in 1975, when its boundaries were expanded, doubling its size. As you enter the park, you'll receive a copy of the park newspaper, The Guide, from the National Park Service which is a great source of information on restaurants, lodging, parking, ranger talks, activities and other guest services within or near the park. It includes maps, hours, prices and other helpful information.