



## **Greater Zion Unlocks the Adventurous Spirit in a Location as Diverse as its Communities and Visitors**

**St. George, Utah – 2019** – The rare wonder of Greater Zion unlocks the adventurous spirit in all who visit. Located in the southwest corner of Utah, Greater Zion offers more than 2,400 square miles of adventure and inspiration. Zion National Park, the fourth most visited National Park in the United States, is the premier attraction, but Zion is only the beginning. Four state parks and a multitude of year-round recreational lands set the stage for a burgeoning mountain biking scene, some of the best off-highway vehicle riding in the country, scenic and challenging play at 12 top-rated golf courses, world-class cultural performances at Tuacahn Center for the Arts and so much more.

The vibrant communities of St. George, Springdale, Hurricane, Ivins and towns in between offer a wide range of lodging options, dining experiences and access to outdoor pursuits through local outfitters and tour companies. Home to the 2021 IRONMAN 70.3 World Championships, Greater Zion also is a world-class destination for sporting events, conferences and meetings.

Greater Zion provides a picturesque setting with snow-capped mountain peaks, red rock canyons and red sand mountains. The region is where several geological regions converge – the Mojave Desert, Colorado Plateau and the Great Basin. The destination is in the northeastern most part of the Mojave Desert and adjacent to the Pine Valley Mountains. These layers of geological formations create the most visited National and State Parks in Utah.

### **National & State Parks**

Greater Zion is home to Utah's first National Park – Zion – and its youngest State Park – Sand Hollow. Zion is the fourth most visited in the United States. The park is distinguished by Zion Canyon's steep, red cliffs accented with massive sandstone cliffs of cream and pink that soar into a brilliant blue sky. Zion Canyon Scenic Drive cuts through its main section, leading to forest trails along the Virgin River. The river flows to the Emerald Pools, which have waterfalls and a hanging garden. Also, along the river, partly through deep chasms, is The Narrows, a popular wading hike. The park is known for several iconic hikes such as Angels Landing and Observation Point.

Kolob Terrace is a lesser visited area of the park between Zion Canyon and the Kolob Canyons. The Kolob Terrace offers a 21-mile scenic drive to Lava point, starting at the small town of Virgin. There are several adventures that originate from Kolob Terrace including the iconic Subway canyoneering route, that's a fun, popular semi-technical slot canyon. North Guardian Angel also can be accessed from this area and the Sierra Club listed it as the "top 100 desert peaks to do."

There also are four State Parks that offer distinctive experiences and just as much beauty as Zion. There is the juxtaposition of Sand Hollow with its brilliant blue reservoir for boating, fishing and diving and acres of adventures on the dunes of Sand Mountain. Snow Canyon State Park is notorious for its unique geologic features such as ancient lava flows, sand dunes, petrified dunes, and deep red sandstone cliffs. Quail Creek State Park features a 600-acre reservoir that is popular for boaters and anglers. Lastly, Gunlock State Park and Reservoir is surrounded by rustic red rock and extinct, black lava, cinder cones. Gunlock comes to life in spring with seasonal mountain runoff sometimes forming waterfalls that can be accessed via a short hike.

## **Mountain Biking Hidden Gem**

According to *Bike Magazine's* Bible of Bike, "... (Greater Zion) is well known to desert aficionados as a singletrack oasis and has hosted the world's premier freeride competition, Red Bull Rampage, off and on since 2001. Still, it remains something of a hidden gem to the rest of the riding world ...." With more than 300 miles of trails, there is a diverse mountain biking experience to discover. The Greater Zion mountain biking experience started with Gooseberry Mesa, which put the destination on the map and was dedicated as a National Recreation Trail in 2006. This, coupled with four other mesas, distinguishes the biking experience in the region.

Local's favorite, Hurricane Cliffs, provides a network of trails that, together, form a 21-mile loop featuring amazing scenery. There also are cross-country favorites like Hurricane Rim, J.E.M. and Dead Ringer. Greater Zion also offers the only year-round bike park in Utah with the recent opening of the Snake Hollow St. George Bike Park that offers 80 acres of skill zones with gravity jumps, a pump track, skills loop and more.

In addition to the Red Bull Rampage, Greater Zion plays host to several other destination mountain bike events such as the True GRIT Epic and 25 Hours in Frog Hollow.

## **Off-Highway Vehicle Haven**

Greater Zion offers acres and miles of off-highway vehicle (OHV) driving throughout the region, however, no single destination is as popular as Sand Mountain located in Sand Hollow State Park. Located near Hurricane, Sand Mountain features more than 20,000 acres of sand dunes and rock formations to explore via ATVs, dirt bikes and side-by-sides. Rentals are available in Sand Hollow State Park and nearby shops. Experienced outfitters and guides can offer tips and information for the dunes, crawling or climbing, as well as provide unique experiences like sunrise or sunset tours. OHV is highlighted in some annual destination events as well, including the Winter 4X4 Jamboree and the Tri-State ATV Jamboree.

## **Outdoor Adventures**

Although anchored by popular activities such as mountain biking, OHV adventures and hiking, Greater Zion offers adrenaline seekers and soft adventure enthusiasts an unlimited list of activities. The juxtaposition of water in the desert is not lost on visitors to Greater Zion. There is recreational boating, fishing and diving in the middle of the desert at Sand Hollow, which features underwater wrecks including an old Volkswagen bus and a Cessna 320-twin engine plane.

With the region's diverse landscape, rock climbing and canyoneering are popular ways to explore steep canyon walls. Travelers seeking an adrenaline rush can zipline down from mesas and mountaintops. Or, experience the beauty of Greater Zion from above with helicopter tours and hot air balloon rides.

## **Golf**

Greater Zion features a dozen world-class golf courses within a 40-miles radius. Red rock cliffs, coral-colored sand dunes and rugged, black lava rock provide the backdrop for manicured fairways in this unique desert setting. With resort play that doesn't reflect its competitors' resort pricing, golf in Greater Zion provides a great value for a top-rated golf experience.

Golfers can easily play 36 holes at two different courses in one day. From 7,029-yards of challenging play designed by Keith Foster at Coral Canyon to Dixie Red Hills Golf Club, which was the first built in Greater Zion, there are courses for every type of golfer. Courses such as Sand Hollow (Championship) and Entrada at Snow Canyon have been named among *GOLF* magazine's "Top 100 Courses You Can Play." The area also has received several accolades for its golf experience including *Golf Digest* naming Greater Zion as a "Top 20 Buddies Trips Destination."

## **World-Class Culture**

With nearly 40 galleries and museums, Greater Zion also provides a great cultural experience for those interested in the arts or performing arts. The latter is anchored by the Tuacahn Center for the Arts, which is set amid a stunning red rock backdrop deep in Padre Canyon with a 90-foot stage and 2,000-seat

amphitheater. For more than two decades, Tuacahn has featured world-class music, comedy and theatrical performances. Tuacahn features Broadway-style musicals with elaborate sets and costumes, seasonal concerts and other special performances. This year's performances include "A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder," "The Sound of Music," "Disney's When You Wish," and "The Little Mermaid," to name a few.

### **Events**

Greater Zion offers a robust, year-round calendar of events that ranges from adrenaline, heart-pumping challenges like the Red Bull Rampage (mountain bike competition) to those which test the most fit athletes in the world, such as the IRONMAN 70.3 North American Championship, and IRONMAN St. George in 2020. There also are participatory sporting events such as the Huntsman World Senior Games, the St. George Marathon and the NJCAA Women's Fast Pitch Championships. Athletes from around the world will descend on St. George in 2021 for the IRONMAN 70.3 World Championships. For a year-round calendar of events, please visit [GreaterZion.com](http://GreaterZion.com)

### **Diverse Accommodations**

There are more than 100 lodging options found throughout Greater Zion, ranging from luxury hotels to boutique properties, RV parks and campgrounds to glamour camping, a.k.a. glamping. Properties like Red Mountain Resort have put St. George on the map with its fitness, wellness and hiking programs. A new 60-room Marriott Autograph Collection hotel called The Advenire is opening in downtown St. George in 2019, while Cable Mountain Lodge in Springdale just opened a new luxury spa. Luxury also can be found in the new Under Canvas Zion glamping resort just minutes from the Kolob Canyon entrance to Zion National Park.

Popular national brands such as Hyatt Place, TRU by Hilton, Staybridge Suites and Holiday Inn Express are available. There also are locally owned and operated hotels such as Inn on the Cliff, perched on a mesa overlooking all of Greater Zion.

For more information on lodging, activities and dining throughout Greater Zion, please visit [GreaterZion.com](http://GreaterZion.com) or call (435) 634-5747.

###

*For access to hundreds of searchable images in the Greater Zion media library, please visit [media.greaterzion.com](http://media.greaterzion.com).*

### **Media Contact:**

Kristin Yantis, Malen Yantis Public Relations, [kyantis@myprco.com](mailto:kyantis@myprco.com), (970) 949-7919 or (775) 351-7904