



Top Trails for Hiking and Mountain Biking in Greater Zion

Off the Beaten Path Options Provide Great Alternatives to Popular, Iconic Trails

St. George, Utah – 2019 – Greater Zion offers endless trail options for hiking and mountain biking in the southwest corner of Utah. Red and orange rocks, mountains, canyons, buttes and gorges scatter the landscape and provide gorgeous views from any trail. Between quick loops or full-day challenges, there are trails for all levels and ages.

Outdoor enthusiasts have come to know iconic trails in Greater Zion like Angels Landing, The Subway and The Narrows, however, there is an abundance of hiking and mountain biking trails that offer just as beautiful views, challenging terrain and spectacular experiences. Following are recommendations for some of the top trails, including those less traveled, in Greater Zion.

Hiking

[Babylon Arch](#) – Explore the Babylon Arch Trail for a glimpse of what Mars must look like. This family friendly trail features red sandstone formations, landscapes and a unique. Although not stroller friendly, the trail is suitable for young children with a little encouragement. The 1.5-mile trail forks, leading to the arch or Virgin River. The river is a refreshing addition to this hike and keeps the total trek to just under two hours.

[The Bowl, The Vortex](#) - Crossing lava flows, sandy walkways and red and white sandstone rocks, this trail is a moderate challenge with a rewarding journey. The trail features beautiful views, a variety of plant life and unique Navajo Sandstone features. The main feature of the trail is its namesake, a bizarre, sunken hole set high up on the rock formation. Locals have coined it “The Vortex,” as it resembles a bowl or swirling whirlwind, providing the feeling of being in the Sarlacc pit from “Return of the Jedi.” This out-and-back trail is family and dog friendly, at 2.3 miles long. This off-the-beaten-path trail provides a perfect taste of the Greater Zion desert complete with sand, slick rock and cairns.

[Water Canyon](#) - Tucked away and reminiscent of The Subway, Water Canyon is a beautiful oasis in the middle of the desert. The trail follows the fractures in the west side of the canyon, making its way to the Canaan Mountain above. Be sure to snap a picture of the waterfall before starting to climb the steep switchbacks of the canyon wall to the wilderness above. Once atop the mountain oasis, exploration waits for hikers with sandstone, hoodoos, Moqui balls, sand dunes and views of Zion National Park. The best time to hike the trail is late spring or fall, as afternoon summer temperatures might make it too hot.

[Petrified Sand Dunes](#) - Located in the heart of Snow Canyon State Park, this picturesque area allows for exploration beyond the trail, so don't be afraid to wander. The area resembled the Sahara Desert nearly 200 million years ago and has since been petrified into Navajo Sandstone of red and orange rocks. The scrambling on the dunes is not technical, allowing for hikers of all ages to explore in this natural playground. The best time to hike is early morning and early evening when the sun is low in the sky. Or overnight campers can head up for sunrise or sunset! Be sure to pack your camera as the dunes are one of the most photographed places in the area, and were even featured in Katy Perry's 2016 [“Rise”](#) music video.

[Snow Canyon Overlook](#) - Each step is worth the view at the end of this trail, allowing hikers to see all the way through Snow Canyon, past St. George and out to the Arizona Strip. The final destination surprises hikers with a 1,000-foot drop into Snow Canyon and sprawling views of sand dunes, rocks, spires and

large pinion pines. An easy hike, it's also dog and horse friendly. The hike also features unique flora and fauna of the Red Mountain Wilderness. The 4.8-mile out-and-back hike has plenty of space at the top for hikers to spread out, and rivals other popular hikes of the area.

Mountain Biking

[Barrel Roll](#) - This loop trail is one of the most popular with its convenient location near St. George. With views of Snow Canyon, the beautiful red Navajo cliffs, and Pine Valley Mountains, it's not hard to see why bikers are drawn to it. The six-mile loop has mostly singletrack, easy climbs, and a short, technical section with fast, roller coaster descents. The trail is well-marked and, although suburbia is close, riders will feel worlds away.

[Gooseberry](#) - Named after the Gooseberry Mesa, this world-class trail is part of the original trail system in Greater Zion and resembles a giant urban bike park. The trail was recognized as a National Recreation Trail in 2006 and continues to be a favorite among locals and visitors. Rated the No. 3 trail in Utah, it offers rolling slickrock, technical challenges, twisty singletrack and gorgeous views along the 13.1-mile loop. Located just outside of Zion's borders, the trail provides riders with solitude and peace.

[Jem](#) - For those with an adventurous spirit, Jem Trail is perfect with technical and speedy challenges as it follows the Virgin River and Hurricane cliffs. Named after trailblazers John, Ellen and Mike, it's a fairly easy technical ride with one tricky switchback that can be walked. As riders descend, views of the river and Zion National Park emerge, making the trail breathtaking in more ways than one. The seven-mile trail provides a shuttle from the bottom to the parking lot at the top after bikers have maneuvered their way down.

[The Whole Guacamole](#) - Another mesa trail that offers a little bit of everything is the The Whole Guacamole Trail, which almost touches West Temple and Mount Kinesava of Zion National Park. The trail offers gorgeous views of the Pine Valley Mountains as riders pass through sagebrush, juniper and desert wildflowers. This five-mile loop trail can be ridden in either direction with singletrack that gives way to rock cairns that mark the trail. It can be completed in under 90 minutes or riders can take half a day or more to explore the mesa area. Advanced riders can push themselves with ledges and stunts located just a few feet from the trail or indulge in the two side-dish trails for a challenge.

[Little Creek Mountain](#) - For bikers looking for a trail like Gooseberry with a nice flow and some fun, Little Creek Mountain Trail is perfect. This flat-topped mountain area offers expansive views, technical challenges, slickrock and singletrack. The main ride is a nine-mile loop, but the entire trail provides 20 miles of biking. Bikers should note that Little Creek is considered an environmentally sensitive area by the Bureau of Land Management and is only open April-November, preventing trail damage in the rainy/wet season, saving the trail for future bikers.

To explore these trails and more, please visit the interactive [Greater Zion Trails Website](#), featuring a good selection of mountain biking, hiking, equestrian and off-road vehicle trails in the region.

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

About Greater Zion

Located in the southwest corner of Utah, Greater Zion is a destination that 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. The Greater Zion Convention and Tourism Office is a transient-room-tax-funded entity of Washington County, Utah. For more information, please visit GreaterZion.com.

###

*For access to hundreds of searchable images in the Greater Zion media library,
please visit media.greaterzion.com.*

Media Contact:

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