

Hike the Grand Canyon Rim-to-Rim

August 31 – September 5, 2026

Led By: Tim Zeszutek and Joe Zawacki



Continuing Education
University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point





An Itinerary for Grand Canyon, Phantom Ranch **August 31–September 5, 2026**

More than five million people visit the Grand Canyon each year, often exploring it by bus, train, jeep, helicopter, or raft; however, these guided trips do not offer a comprehensive understanding of the depth and vastness of this truly majestic place. Only a small number of visitors ever complete the Rim to Rim journey, which can only be done on foot or by mule. This six day Grand Canyon program features a two day guided trek that takes you from the South Rim down to the Colorado River and then up to the North Rim, with an overnight stay at the famous Phantom Ranch deep inside the canyon. The days before and after the hike allow time for preparation, adjustment to the environment, and meaningful opportunities to learn about the canyon itself. If you are seeking a rare physical and mental challenge, if you love hiking, and if you want an experience that can truly shape your perspective alongside fellow adventurers, then this trip is for you. It may be the perfect moment to cross another dream off your bucket list.

Trip Leaders: Tim Zeszutek and Joe Zawacki

Monday, August 31, 2026 - Phoenix to the Grand Canyon

- (Travel Day)
- You will fly on your own expense to meet tour leaders Tim and Joe in Phoenix for the start of the journey.
- A shuttle transfers the group directly to the South Rim (*Grand Canyon Village*).
 - You will settle in, learn about the lay of the land, and overnight in the Grand Canyon Village. Plan the next day's hiking, activities and hiker prep with your tour leaders.
- Overnight: **Maswik Lodge**
- Meals Included: dinner

Tuesday, September 1, 2026 - South Rim of the Grand Canyon

- Enjoy a full day of acclimating to the South Rim by hiking the trails or descending the Bright Angel Trail, riding bicycles, riding shuttles and/or enjoying the Grand Canyon Village. Peruse great shops, restaurants, arts and crafts, and free activities/shows/ranger programs.
- With the tour leaders, you will review hiking preparations, partition and pack supplies, and go over food and water prep for the next two days of hiking.
 - The primary goal is to acclimate to the temperature and altitude of the South Rim.
- Overnight: **Maswik Lodge**
- Meals Included: none

Wednesday, September 2, 2026 - The Real Adventure Begins

- Rise early to beat the heat and hike down Bright Angel Trail or South Kaibab Trail. Enjoy scenic overlooks, surreal topography, desert wildlife, and unique ecosystems. Share memorable hiking experiences along the way and before noon, you will arrive at the Phantom Ranch.
 - Built in 1922, this historic oasis resides near Bright Angel Creek. Rest your feet, reflect on your achievement and enjoy the peacefulness of this place. Safely take a dip in the cold waters of the Colorado River or warmer Bright Angel Creek.
 - Enjoy a hearty home-cooked dinner at the Phantom Ranch Canteen, meet hikers from around the world and send postcards (by mule) to your family.
- Overnight: **Phantom Ranch**
- Meal Included: group dinner

Thursday, September 3, 2026 - Hiking to North Rim

- After breakfast at Phantom Ranch, head north through The Box - a narrow inner canyon that reaches to the sky. Ascend the North Kaibab Trail, a 13-mile, 5,800- foot climb and the most strenuous portion of this journey, yet it is also the most scenic and most rewarding!
 - Sense the history from ancient pictograph panels, historic structures, and by traversing some of the roughest terrain in North America. Reaching the North Rim trail head will empower you to no end! Enjoy some relaxation at the Kaibab Lodge or meander the Rim trail.
- We will celebrate success over a delicious dinner!
- Overnight: **Kaibab Lodge**
- Meals Included: breakfast, hiker lunch and dinner

Friday, September 4, 2026 - Further Explore the South Rim

- Morning shuttle transfer to the South Rim. This free day will give you a chance to rest and revel in your success or even explore the Grand Canyon some more.
- Overnight: **Maswik Lodge**
- Meals Included: none

Saturday, September 5, 2026 - Depart for Phoenix Airport

- (Travel Day)
- An early morning departure on the group shuttle will transfer you back to Phoenix and have you saying goodbye to new (and old) friends and an incredible experience, one that you will remember forever.
- Meals Included: none



Required Screenings:

Hiking Rim-to-Rim in two days in the Grand Canyon is a strenuous journey. It can be a very rewarding, once in a lifetime opportunity, but your safety and enjoyment are largely dependent on your physical preparation and health condition. To help ensure safety for all and maximize your enjoyment, this tour mandates these two requirements prior to registration:



1. **Watch this 20 minute video in its entirety through this QR Code**
2. **Self-evaluation of baseline physical fitness status:** Determine if you are capable of walking on a treadmill at 3.3 mph at 10% grade for 30 continuous minutes. If you are not capable of completing this second task now, you probably should not book this tour. Hiking Rim-to-Rim is a 22-mile journey with a total elevation change of around 10,200 feet with temperatures sometimes exceeding 120 degrees in the shade (which is often limited) and your tour leaders require a serious commitment to a regular physical training program. A recommended physical training program is provided to all hikers. Furthermore, if you have musculoskeletal issues with your spine, knees, ankles or feet, this tour is not recommended.
3. **Exercise capacity screening test required one month before tour departure** - This is a treadmill test, which can be completed in-person at our UWSP Health and Human Performance Lab or virtually online. Please note: Failing this screening test could result in UWSP Adventure Tours cancelling your participation on this tour (thus it would be subject to the cancellation policy).

Meet the Trip Leaders



Tim Zeszutek – Tim is the Marketing Specialist and Graphic Designer for UW-Stevens Point Continuing Education (CE) and has led both Day and Multi-Day Trips with CE. This will be Tim’s third trip to the Grand Canyon and second time hiking Rim-to-Rim! The hike in and out of the canyon quickly became one of his favorite hikes in the U.S. He has also led a hiking trip to Acadia National Park and a couple of the Ice Age Trail segments with CE. Lately he has been running through Schmeeckle Reserve to prepare for different marathon series and regularly biking the Green Circle Trail. In the past, Tim has gone on many hiking trips around Wisconsin and backpacked through rugged terrain in the Rocky Mountains in New Mexico.



Joe Zawacki – In his professional life, Joe is the Online Learning Specialist for the Tutoring-Learning Center at UW-Stevens Point. However, prior to his position here on campus, he developed and led multiple cross country National Parks adventures as part of an organization he created for his students at his former teaching position. Through this organization he took groups on weeklong experiences to the mountains of Idaho and Wyoming, the deserts of Utah, and the plains of South and North Dakota. He is so excited to get the opportunity to lead a trip like this again with Continuing Education. He brings with him a wealth of outdoor knowledge from his prior experiences, a hearty laugh and constant smile, and plenty of good coffee. His favorite thing about trips like these are the new friends and shared moments in amazing, wild places.



Pricing

Registration Fee

Double occupancy rates: **\$3,450 per person**

No Single occupancy rate available on this trip.

***Registration closes March 6, 2026 or earlier if filled.**

Payment Schedule:

\$450 due upon registration (*\$450 of this fee is nonrefundable*)

\$1,500 due by **Monday, March 2, 2026**

\$1,500 due by **Friday, May 15, 2026**

***Since we make financial commitments in advance, no refunds will be issued for cancellations less than 90 days prior to the trip. Cancellations received more than 90 days before the trip will receive a full refund minus \$450. However, you may send a substitute in your place. Please email us at uwspceweb@uwsp.edu to inform us of a cancellation or substitution.**

Price includes: The cost includes all accommodations (3-4 star rustic lodging and the cozy and renowned Phantom Ranch), all group transfers from beginning to end of itinerary, two dedicated tour leaders (experienced Grand Canyon hiking leaders and other adventures), meals listed in itinerary, and park entrance fee. Also included are a physical training program, traveler handbook, and traveler orientation to meet your tour leader(s), get questions answered and better prepare for the big hike.

Not included: Roundtrip airfare/transport (to/from Phoenix), extra activities, meals and drinks not covered in itinerary, extra purchases (such as souvenirs, alcoholic beverages and sundries), gratuity for local drivers and guides, laundry services and travel insurance.

Please note: The cost comprises land-only rate, per person, with variable occupancy accommodations (double occupancy at Maswik Lodge and group occupancy otherwise). Depending on weather and other variables, some activities/accommodations/schedules may change prior to or during the tour. Eligible age for this tour is 18 years and older. This tour will only accommodate those with strong fitness/health levels, however it is still required that travelers train for this hike. With some free time built in, tour leader(s) can ensure a fun and safe wellness adventure for everyone!

Group size: 10 hikers (including two trip leaders)