BRYCE CANYON COUNTRY
Hiking Itinerary

Fill your days with back-country hiking excursions while staying in historic communities, and enjoying cultural experiences. This multi-day itinerary within Bryce Canyon Country offers an entire week of outdoor adventure.
Red Canyon
Located along Scenic Byway 12 and just 9 miles from Bryce Canyon, Red Canyon enchants tourists with the magic of its shimmering, red sandstone rocks which congregate in abundance throughout the silent oasis of this Southern Utah county oasis. Part of the Dixie National Forest, Red Canyon is nestled in the forest’s two million acre, 170 mile long valley range that sweeps along the red rock’s dusty shimmer of hoodoos before wandering up to the lush woodlands of Cedar Mountain forest.

Thunder Mountain Trail
Perhaps the most famous view of Red Canyon can be seen from the ridge teetering off a series of steep switchbacks that accumulate on the 7 mile, Thunder Mountain trail. Boasting some of the most spectacular red rock formations in all of Utah, Thunder Mountain trail take travelers along tree covered washes to the pink and white limestone cliffs of the Claron Formation, passing across a thin spine of trail where cliffs drop off on both sides in dramatic, canyon land fashion. From the top of the trail, travelers can submerge themselves in the majestic views of the distinguished red cliffs below.

Combine Thunder Mountain with Red Canyon Bicycle Trail, Grandview Trail and Coyote Hollow Road to make a great 15 mile round-trip adventure. Thunder Mountain trail is open to bikers, hikers, and can even be traversed on horseback. The trail can be done in a loop, or many tourists prefer to take two vehicles, leaving one at the top and one at the bottom of the trail to make for a one way adventure.

Day 1
Hiking Red Canyon
www.BryceCanyonCountry.com
Things to See
Looking for more sightseeing options? Stop by the Red Canyon Visitor Center, located along Highway 12. The Red Canyon Visitor Center offers traveler’s detailed information on hiking, ATV, 4WD, horse and bike trails that run throughout the canyon. The center is open from Labor Day to Memorial Day.

Places to Stay
Hatch: Just 15 miles south of Panguitch and 24 miles southwest of Bryce Canyon National Park on US-89, Hatch, Utah is a quintessential small town for travelers looking for a quaint, rural experience of Southern Utah’s canyon land cities. Established in 1872, Hatch has a population of 130 people and offers a variety of accommodations including several motels and campgrounds/RV parks. Choose from an array of rustic mountain cabins and Harley Davidson-themed rooms to more traditional quarters, there is plenty of affordable lodging in Hatch. Campers will enjoy views of the area’s stunning red rock and arid vistas.

Panguitch: As the county seat of Garfield County, Panguitch Utah offers a large variety of accommodations for travelers, from camping/RV parks to hotels and lodges. Junction US 89 & SR12 offers an array of camping and sleeping accommodations or visitors may choose to venture in to Bryce City for overnight needs.
**Bryce Canyon:** Queens Garden / Navajo Loop

Further down highway 12 lies the majestic wonders of Queens Garden and Navajo Loop. Take a look on “Trip Advisor” or any online rating site and you’ll quickly discover the love travelers have for these stunning trails. In fact, Bryce Canyon Ranger Kevin Poe calls it the best 3-mile hike in the world. Undoubtedly one of the finest ways to see the hoodoos of Bryce Canyon, Queens Garden provide views from both sunrise and sunset point, giving viewers a breathtaking vista of these royal canyon lands. Travelers often describe the view of the hoodoos from Queens Garden/Navajo Loop and the view from the canyon floor as experiencing two different Bryce Canyons. It’s well worth the trip.

The Navajo Loop starts hikers on Wall Street – a narrow canyon surrounded by high rock walls. If hiking the trail in the winter, travelers must brave the “slippery sloop,” a series of switchbacks surrounded by towering cliffs. At the accent of these switchbacks, travelers can steal a glimpse of Thor’s Hammer, a tall spindle of sandstone rock topped by a square outcrop that appears to be balancing gracefully on top. From there it’s a short walk up a few longer switchbacks to the top of Sunset Point (and your car). Once you reach the flat canyon floor you have the option of to finish the Navajo Loop or continue to Queens Garden Trail to view some of the most stunning formations in the park.

**Places to stay:** Hatch, Panguitch, Junction US 89 & SR12, Bryce City, Tropic

**Things to see:** Visitor Center at Park, Wildlife Museum - Approx. 5 miles away from park (west).

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**Day 2**

**Hiking Bryce Canyon Country**

www.BryceCanyonCountry.com
Bryce Canyon: Fairyland Loop

For a less crowded trail, the 8 mile long Fairyland Loop not only seduces travelers with a path of gnarled trees and sweeping skyline views of Boat Mesa and Sinking Ship Mesa, this clearly marked trail is not difficult to navigate, and gives hikers a 3 and ½ hour adventure through the quiet hush of the canyon’s ghostly, 60 million year old hoodoos. September – October is the ideal time to hike this loop. The trail is covered in snow in the winter.

For visitors camping in Bryce Canyon at the North Campground, it is easiest to begin this hike along the Rim Trail; just hike a short distance east of the campground on any of the accessible hiking paths until you intersect the Rim Trail.

**Directions:** From Bryce Canyon Visitors Center follow State Road 63 north for 1.0 miles to a signed junction. Turn right (east) and follow the road for 1.0 mile to the signed Fairyland Trail-head.

**Places to stay:** Hatch, Panguitch, Junction US 89 & SR12, Bryce City, Tropic
Slot Canyons

Willis Creek and Bull Valley Gorge Slot Canyons
Explore the wonder-filled phenomenon of Southern Utah’s slot canyons. Formed by the pressure of water rushing through rock, a slot canyon is a narrow canyon which is significantly deeper than it is wide. Mostly formed from sandstone and limestone rock, these deep canyon crevasses appear throughout the canyon as secret entry points to ancient and lost civilizations. Carved from the rugged landscape of the Grade Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Bull Valley Gorge is a dimly lit canyon with deep and scattered walls that pull down rays of sunshine through the empty cavern, giving the impression of heaven piercing through caves of treasures hidden in darkness. Once you leave the tight confines of the slot’s opening, this mesmerizing hallow beckons travelers with the sound of running water, to the haunting glow of Willis Creek, a gathering of ancient, carved rock surrounding a cobblestone stream that wanders through the quiet passage of the canyon’s lost secrets. For an easier trek through this haunting slot canyon, simply take the trail backward and venture as far as you desire before turning around and heading toward the trail-head at Willis Creek.

Things to see along the way: Stop by the Visitor Center in Cannonville for a detailed list of sites throughout the canyon.
Coyote Gulch is the most popular hike in the Escalante Canyons. Brimming with sites and formations that make Southern Utah famous, this notorious “gulch” boasts two rock arches, a naturally constructed bridge, abundant waterfalls, and an eyeful of stunning formations. In fact, there is so much natural beauty and majestic hikes to be experienced here that many recommend a minimum of 3 days just to explore the length and wonders Coyote has to offer. The perennial stream in Coyote Gulch begins about 1 mile down wash from the Red Well trail-head. In Hurricane Wash the gulch lies about 3.5 miles from the Hurricane Wash trail-head. Be prepared to traverse ankle-deep water all the way to the Escalante River, until you reach the start of the water flow – from there enjoy dry and sandy ground. Hurricane Wash joins Coyote Gulch approximately 5 miles from the Hurricane trail-head. Along the length of the gulch are easy to difficult hiking trails.

Things to see along the way: Devils Garden, Calf Creek, Box Death Hallow

Places to stay: Escalante or Boulder
Lower / Upper Calf Creek Falls (2 hikes)

Deep within the vast canyons of Utah’s desert landscapes lays a lush fountainhead of aged monolith rocks known as Calf Creek Falls. Perhaps one of the most magical spots on the Grand Staircase-Escalante, this lavish creek was a scarcely known destination among tourists until the formation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. Not only are travelers who venture into the falls immerse themselves in Utah’s famous natural wonders, the pass is filled with pre-historic rock art, paradisiacal pools, and cliffs made of rich minerals that shimmer in the desert sun.

**Lower Calf Creek Falls**

This 5.84 round trip hike is moderate in difficulty, surrounded by lush greenery, and the more popular of the two waterfalls of Calf Creek. Visitors can swim in the deep pool that lies 130 feet below the falls.  

**Upper Calf Creek Falls**

Although the Upper Calf Creek Falls have less water than the lower area, visitors will enjoy a serene and uncultivated taste of the areas secluded nature. As the crowds are smaller at Upper Calf Creek, visitors can swim in a more relaxed environment 88 feet below the falls.

**Directions:** Calf Creek Falls offers a trail-head near the nearby campground on Highway 12, only 11 miles south of Boulder and 15 miles east of Escalante. Travelers can follow almost the entire route of the trail along the highway, until reaching the bluff on the east side of the canyon.

**Things to see along the way:** Devils Garden, Calf Creek, Anasazi Museum State Park, Hog Back, Dixie National Forest. **Places to stay:** Escalante or Boulder.