

Trip Overview

- **Dates:** August 29 – September 1 (4 days / 3 nights)
 - **Group Size:** 4 people (1 beginner hiker)
 - **Mode:** Car camping + day hikes
 - **Parks:** Zion National Park & Bryce Canyon National Park
 - **Camping:** Established campgrounds with reservations
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Itinerary Breakdown

Day 1 – Thursday, August 29: Arrive & Camp in Zion

Base: Zion National Park (South Campground)

- **Morning/Afternoon:**
 - Drive to Zion National Park (closest major airports: Las Vegas or Salt Lake City)
 - Stop in Springdale for groceries & gear if needed
 - Check in at **South Campground** (book via recreation.gov)
- **Evening:**
 - Easy warm-up hike: **Pa'rus Trail** (3.5 miles RT, paved, scenic river walk)
 - Sunset views from **Canyon Junction Bridge**
 - Campfire dinner & star gazing

 **Campground:** South Campground

 **Permit Note:** No backcountry permit needed

Day 2 – Friday, August 30: Zion – Moderate Challenge

Goal: Test endurance with safe but rewarding trails

- **Morning Hike:**
Emerald Pools + Kayenta Trail Loop
 - 4 miles RT, moderate, scenic waterfalls & pools
 - Beginner-friendly but includes some stairs and narrow paths
- **Lunch break:** Back at camp or riverside picnic
- **Afternoon Hike (Optional):**
Canyon Overlook Trail (1 mile RT, short but dramatic views)
- **Evening:**
 - Cookout at camp
 - Optional: Attend ranger talk (Zion often has nightly presentations)

 **Pro Tip:** Great photo ops without major exposure or crowds

Day 3 – Saturday, August 31: Bryce Canyon Adventure

Base: Bryce Canyon National Park (North Campground)

- **Early Morning:**
 - Drive to **Bryce Canyon** (2 hrs 15 min)
 - Check in at **North Campground** (first-come-first-serve or reserve site)
- **Day Hike:**

Navajo Loop + Queen’s Garden Trail Combo

 - 3 miles, moderate, 600 ft elevation gain
 - Descend into hoodoo-filled amphitheater and loop back up
 - Beginner-friendly but visually *epic*
- **Evening:**
 - Sunset at **Sunset Point**
 - Campfire dinner & marshmallows

 **Campground:** North Campground, Bryce Canyon

 **Must-see:** Thor’s Hammer rock formation

Day 4 – Sunday, September 1: Sunrise + Depart

- **Early Morning:**
 - Optional sunrise at **Bryce Point** or **Sunrise Point**
 - Coffee & quick breakfast
 - **Late Morning:**
 - Pack up and drive back to Las Vegas or Salt Lake City for departure
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Camping Reservations

- **South Campground (Zion):** [recreation.gov – Zion](https://www.recreation.gov)
- **North Campground (Bryce):** [recreation.gov – Bryce](https://www.recreation.gov)

 **Reserve ASAP** – Labor Day weekend is popular

Gear & Safety Tips

- Lightweight hiking shoes or trail runners for all
 - Hydration: Bring 2–3L water per person per hike
 - Trekking poles (optional for beginner confidence)
 - Headlamp, layers (desert nights = cold), sunscreen
 - Bear-proof food storage is **not required**, but good to practice Leave No Trace
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