

Chiricahua National Park Trip Assistant



How Much Time?

The park is relatively small (12,025 acres), with one main road stretching about 8 miles from the park entrance to its conclusion at Massai Point. You'll find just 17 miles of official trails.

So, you can see/hike the highlights (Echo Canyon, Heart of Rocks, Lower Rhyolite Canyon) in a full day. However, you should spend at least one night. The campground is nice (**reservations** required, available up to 3 months in advance from recreation.gov), the setting is sublime, and I feel pretty confident you'll be happy to catch a sunrise or sunset while you're here.

The only real downside is that there isn't much in term of accommodations nearby beyond the campground. If that isn't your thing, you'll have to stay about 30 minutes away in Wilcox, which is a small town off I-10. You'll find a variety of overnight accommodations and a Safeway for groceries.

The "National Park" may not take much time to explore, but it is surrounded by Coronado National Forest on 3 sides. Here you'll find several campgrounds and many more miles of hiking trails. A few notable destinations include: Cochise Head, Chiricahua Peak, John Hands Waterfall, and Barfoot Lookout.

Need to Know

- **Reservations** are required for camping.
- Staff permitting, the park runs a hiker shuttle during the busiest days (typically weekends, fall through spring). It's a one-way shuttle from Faraway Ranch to Massai Point or Echo Canyon. You must hike back to your car (5.7-9 miles). You'll descend about 1,500 feet in elevation along the way. It is not easy. It is beautiful, especially if you loop through Echo Canyon and Heart of Rocks.
- Visitation peaks during spring break in March/April.
- While most travelers avoid Arizona in summer, weather in these mountains can be pleasant, especially in the early morning.
- Visitation is nothing like Yosemite or Yellowstone, but remember how small it is. Parking at Massai Point and Echo Canyon is limited and fills up on the busiest days (hence the hiker shuttle).
- Rock climbing is not permitted within the park (loose volcanic rock).
- Pretty standard pet policy here. Your pet can essentially go where your car can go, and two trails (Bonita Creek and Silver Spur Meadow). They can also use the trail connecting the campground and visitor center.



Favorite Trails

Easy

[Echo Canyon Grottoes](#)

[Massai Point](#)

Moderate

[Echo Canyon Loop](#)

[Sugarloaf Mountain](#)

(there's a lookout at the top)
[Natural Bridge Loop](#) (while the canyon is pretty, the ending is a viewpoint of the bridge, it's quite a ways away across the canyon)

Strenuous

[Heart of Rocks Loop](#)

[Big Loop](#)

(You'll want a map for these two hikes. There are several trails (Sarah Deming, Hailstone, Ed Riggs, Upper and Lower Ryholite Canyon, and Echo Canyon). They're all worth checking out, but the highlights remain, imo, Heart of Rocks and Echo Canyon. Inspiration Point is quite nice, too.

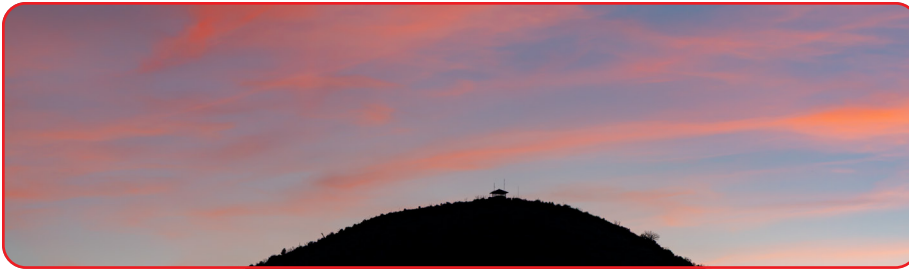
Activities

Hiking | Biking | Stargazing
Horseback Riding (bring your own horse) | Birdwatching

See this [Google Map](#) for pins to favorite trails and attractions.

Highlights

Echo Canyon
Heart of Rocks
Rhyolite Canyon
Sugarloaf Mountain



Maps

Chiricahua: [PDF](#) | [JPG](#)

Region: [PDF](#) | [JPG](#)

[Google Map w/ Trails and Attractions](#)

All 63 National Parks Map: [PDF](#) | [JPG](#)

Southern NPS Units Map: [PDF](#) | [JPG](#)

Road Trip

Here's a [Google Map](#) to help plan road trips from the east (White Sands), north (Grand Canyon), west (San Diego, CA), and south (Mexico border). It's a good start, but I'd highly recommend making your own.

There's much more to our country. Here's another [Google Map](#) with points of interest across all types of public land.

For campers, here's a [Google Map](#) with National Forest campgrounds. National Park campgrounds are difficult to reserve (there are about 200!). With nearly 5,000 national forest campgrounds, you can usually pull in and find a spot.

Road Trip Highlights

[Organ Mountains-Desert](#)

[Peaks NM](#) (NM)

[Mt. Lemmon SkyCenter](#)

[Observatory](#) (AZ)

[\(Coronado National Forest\)](#)

[Sedona](#) (AZ)

[Superstition Mountains](#) (AZ)

[Lost Dutchman SP](#) (AZ)

[Imperial Sand Dunes](#) (CA)

[Organ Pipe Cactus NM](#) (AZ)

[Coronado NM](#) (AZ)

[Coronado National Forest](#)

(AZ) (Cochise Head, Chiricahua Peak, John Hands Waterfall, Barfoot Lookout, etc.)

[Apache NF](#) (AZ)

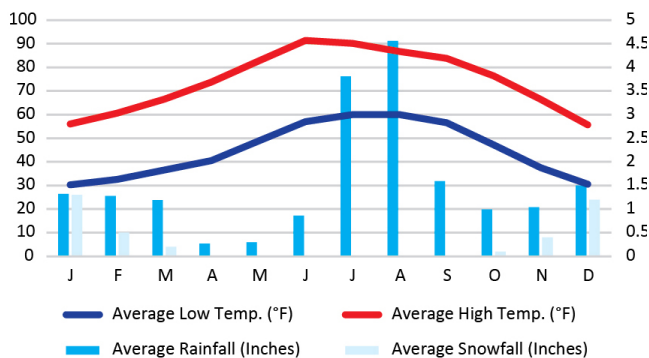
[Gila National Forest](#) (AZ)

Sedona (Coconino National Forest), the Superstition Mtns (Tonto NF/Apache Trail), and Organ Pipe are particularly good. If you're adventurous (enjoy canyoneering, cliff jumping), look into Salome Jug). There's a lot more to see/do in this region and beyond.

When To Go

Weather

Chiricahua: 5,250 ft Elevation



Visitation

Chiricahua Visitation

