

Zion National Park: Two Nights in Springdale, Built Around the Last Shuttle

Because paying \$80 for a cab twice would be a tragedy. Once was already educational.

o) Your Trip at a Glance

Detail	Your Spec
Dates	Tuesday, August 4 to Thursday, August 6, 2026 (2 nights)
Group	2 adults, decent hikers
Budget	Up to \$900 total
Must-haves	Springdale lodging within walking distance of the park entrance; real shuttle times with the confirmed last ride back from Temple of Sinawava; hike days built backward from that last shuttle with a buffer
Interests / pace	Riverside Walk + The Narrows (bottom-up), possible Watchman sunset; early breakfast, packed lunch, casual dinners
Travel	Rental car from Las Vegas
Special request	Explain what the Angels Landing permit lottery would require if you wanted it

1) At a Glance

Item	The Confirmed Facts (as of June 2026)	Source
Last shuttle OUT of the canyon from Temple of Sinawava (Stop 9)	8:15 PM (valid May 17–September 12, so your dates are covered)	NPS Shuttle page
First Zion Canyon Line shuttle from Visitor Center (Stop 1)	7:00 AM	NPS Shuttle page
Last Zion Canyon Line shuttle leaves Visitor Center (Stop 1)	7:00 PM	NPS Shuttle page
Shuttle cost	Free, no ticket or reservation needed	NPS Shuttle page
Round-trip shuttle time (VC ↔ Temple of Sinawava)	~90 minutes (about 45 minutes each way)	NPS Shuttle page
Springdale Line (town shuttle) hours	First bus 8:00 AM; last bus leaves Zion Canyon Village (Stop 1) at 8:00 PM	NPS Shuttle page

Item	The Confirmed Facts (as of June 2026)	Source
Park entrance fee (US residents)	\$35 per private vehicle, valid 7 days	NPS / zionguru
Narrows permit	None required for bottom-up from Temple of Sinawava going upstream	NPS Shuttle page
Narrows gear (Warm Weather Package)	\$35 per person for the day	Zion Outfitter product page
Angels Landing permit	Lottery only; \$6 application fee + \$3/person if selected	Recreation.gov
Drive from Las Vegas	~160 miles, ~2 hr 40 min via I-15 N to St. George, then UT-9 E	Multiple
Time zone gotcha	Utah (Mountain) is 1 hour AHEAD of Las Vegas (Pacific). You lose an hour.	Rome2Rio / forums

The headline you actually care about: From May 17 to September 12, the first shuttle leaves the Zion Canyon Visitor Center at 7:00 AM, the last shuttle leaves the Visitor Center at 7:00 PM, and the last shuttle out of the canyon from the Temple of Sinawava (Stop 9) departs at 8:15 PM. That 8:15 PM is your immovable deadline. The park is refreshingly blunt about the consequences: you should not wait for the last shuttle of the day. If the last shuttle is full, or if you miss the last shuttle, you may have to walk nine miles back to the Zion Canyon Visitor Center. No cab required to ruin your evening this time, just your own two feet for nine miles. So we build in a real buffer.

1b) Recommendation & Best Alternative

Recommended base: Cable Mountain Lodge. This is the closest hotel to the pedestrian park entrance and Visitor Center, which is precisely your stated must-have. Located adjacent to the Zion National Park Visitor Center, this Springdale lodge offers a seasonal outdoor heated pool and a hot tub with canyon views. Reviewers repeatedly note you can literally walk into Zion from Cable Mountain Lodge, with no need to bother with finding parking or taking the town shuttle. It also has a seating area with satellite TV, a microwave and small refrigerator in each air-conditioned studio or suite, and a convenience store and gift shop on site, which is perfect for stashing your packed lunches and drinks. Being a one-minute walk from the entrance means you completely sidestep the town shuttle at the end of a long Narrows day.

Guide-value price range: expect roughly **\$300–\$450 per night** for a peak-summer weeknight (guide value, as of June 2026). Hotel rates sit behind a live booking widget, so treat this as an anchor, not a binding quote.

Best alternative: Cliffrose Springdale, Curio Collection by Hilton. Also right at the south entrance, riverside, and a Hilton-points option. It offers a five-minute walk to the main park entrance, or you can take the complimentary Zion Canyon shuttle into and through the park. This 4-star hotel

offers a serene garden and amenities including a restaurant and spa, 24-hour service including concierge and room service, and a made-to-order breakfast. Guide-value price range: roughly **\$350–\$500 per night** (guide value, as of June 2026).

Second alternative (kinder on the budget): SpringHill Suites by Marriott Springdale.

Slightly farther from the entrance but on the Springdale Line shuttle route, typically **\$250–\$350 per night** (guide value, as of June 2026). Choose this one if you want to keep the total closer to your \$900 ceiling (see the honest budget math in Section 3).

1c) Book Now

What	By When	Where / Link
Hotel: Cable Mountain Lodge (or Cliffrose / SpringHill Suites)	ASAP. Springdale peak summer sells out; book weeks ahead.	cablemountainlodge.com , <i>You will see the binding price for your exact dates and occupancy at the provider’s booking step, it changes daily.</i>
Narrows gear (Warm Weather Package, \$35/person/day)	Reserve a few days out; walk-ups often fine but reserve to be safe	zionoutfitter.com/...
Park entrance pass (\$35/vehicle)	Buy digital in advance to skip the gate line	recreation.gov (search "Zion entrance")
Angels Landing permit (ONLY if you want it), day-before lottery for a Wed Aug 5 hike	Apply Tuesday Aug 4, 12:01 AM–3:00 PM MT	recreation.gov/...
Rental car from Las Vegas (LAS)	Book early for August peak pricing	Your preferred rental provider

 **Pass tip:** If you might visit any other national park within 12 months, the **America the Beautiful pass at \$80** covers entrance for the vehicle and pays for itself in under three park visits. The Resident Annual Pass for U.S. citizens and residents is \$80.00.

2) Day-by-Day Plan

All times below are Utah / Mountain Time. Remember: you lose an hour driving from Vegas.

Day 1, Tuesday, August 4: Drive from Las Vegas, easy afternoon warm-up

- **Morning:** Depart Las Vegas. Take I-15 North from Las Vegas to reach Zion National Park in approximately 2 hours and 40 minutes without stops, passing through Mesquite, Nevada, and St. George, Utah, before arriving at Springdale. The road distance is 160 miles, with a road distance of 158.2 miles.

- **Fuel & supplies stop:** Gas up and grab groceries in La Verkin or St. George. La Verkin is the last place to buy groceries at a real grocery store; Davis Food & Drugs is the only one in town, and Springdale has only a few smaller markets and delis. Stock your packed lunches and water here.
- **Afternoon:** Check in at Cable Mountain Lodge, walk to the Visitor Center (literally next door), and ride the shuttle in for a low-key warm-up. Good first-day options that don't risk the clock: **Court of the Patriarchs** viewpoint (Stop 4) and the **Grotto/Lower Emerald Pools** area. It's one mile round trip to the small waterfall at Lower Emerald Pool, with 80 feet of elevation gain.
- **Dinner: Zion Canyon Brew Pub**, right by the pedestrian entrance. Hours are daily 11:30 am–10:00 pm, and the pub accepts major credit cards. Casual brewery fare and Southern Utah's original microbrewery. (Utah pours are on the lighter side by law, so pace yourself.)

💡 **Tip:** Set your phone clock and confirm it flipped to Mountain Time. People miss shuttles and dinner reservations over this exact one-hour gotcha.

☁️ **Plan B (afternoon thunderstorm):** August is monsoon season. If storms roll in, skip the trails and do the flat, paved **Pa'rus Trail** near the Visitor Center or explore Springdale's galleries and shops, then an early dinner.

Day 2, Wednesday, August 5: The Narrows (bottom-up) + Riverside Walk, built backward from 8:15 PM

This is your big day. The Narrows requires no permit going upstream from Temple of Sinawava. You do not need a permit to hike the Narrows from the Temple of Sinawava going upstream in the Virgin River.

Morning setup:

- **7:00–7:30 AM:** Early breakfast. **Oscar's Cafe** opens at 7:00 AM daily and does a hearty breakfast plus a "Light Start" hiker menu. Oscar's Cafe is open Mon–Sun, 7:00 am, 9:00 pm. It's a Springdale cafe located at the mouth of Zion National Park. Address: 948 Zion Park Blvd. → [Map](#)
- **Pick up Narrows gear:** Zion Outfitter, 7 Zion Park Blvd, right outside the main entrance. The Warm Weather Package is \$35.00 and includes Canyoneering Boots, Neoprene Socks and a Wooden Hiking Stick, recommended May through October on warm days. Add a waterproof backpack if you like: Waterproof backpacks can be added to any package for an additional \$20. You can grab gear the evening before to save time. → [Map](#)
- **~7:45–8:00 AM:** Board the first shuttles (they start at 7:00 AM) and ride to Stop 9, Temple of Sinawava (about a 45-minute ride).

On the trail:

- **Riverside Walk first:** The Riverside Walk starts at the Temple of Sinawava and follows the river; the trail is two miles round trip and takes about one hour, is rated easy, and is mostly paved. It delivers you to the mouth of The Narrows.
- **The Narrows bottom-up:** From there you walk in the river. There is no trail; you will always be hiking in the water. Wear closed shoes that can get wet. The water is not warm and there's not much sun so it can be a cold hike, even in summer. Go as far up as you like (toward Wall Street) and turn around when you're at half your energy.

Building backward from the 8:15 PM last shuttle (with a fat buffer):

Target	Time (MT)	Why
Absolute last shuttle from Temple of Sinawava	8:15 PM	The hard deadline
Your personal turnaround-to-be-back-at-Stop-9 buffer	Be at the Stop 9 boarding area by 6:30 PM at the latest	Gives ~1.75 hr cushion; you will NOT wait for the last bus
Start heading back down-canyon in the river	By ~5:00–5:30 PM	Allow time to wade back + walk the Riverside Walk
Turnaround point upstream	Whenever you hit half your energy, no later than ~3:30–4:00 PM	The wading is slow both directions

💡 **Tip:** The park explicitly warns against gambling on the last bus. Aim for the **6:30 PM** shuttle at the latest, not 8:15. You'll be tired, the trail is slow, and there's no shame in a comfortable margin. This is exactly how you never see an \$80 cab again.

💡 **Monsoon / flash-flood tip:** Rain and thunderstorms up-stream can create flash floods, even when there are blue skies overhead. Be very careful and remember that you must take responsibility for your own safety in The Narrows. The outfitter's own advice for August: During August, we always recommend hiking earlier in the day and exiting the river by early afternoon. **Check the flash-flood forecast at the Visitor Center that morning before you commit.**

☁️ **Plan B (flash-flood risk or Narrows closed):** If the Virgin River is running high or a flood watch is posted, the Narrows can close. Pivot to the **Emerald Pools loop** (Stop 5) and the **Watchman Trail** (from the Visitor Center), both stay open in most weather and keep you far from the river bottom. High water can prevent travel: high water may prevent travel in the Narrows, so check the park's current conditions before you start your day.

- **Return gear** to Zion Outfitter (due back 1 hour before closing) and shower there if you like, they have showers on site.
- **Dinner (choose one, you asked for casual):**
 - **Oscar's Cafe** (if you didn't already), Tex-Mex, huge portions, open to 9:00 PM. → [Map](#)
 - **Zion Canyon Brew Pub**, burgers + beer, open to 10:00 PM. → [Map](#)
 - **Camp Outpost** (near Desert Pearl Inn), rotisserie, burgers, fried chicken. Camp is open daily for breakfast (7–11 am) and lunch & dinner (11 am–8 pm). Note the earlier 8 PM close. → [Map](#)

Day 3, Thursday, August 6: Watchman sunrise/short hike, then drive back to Vegas

- **Early:** Breakfast (Oscar's opens 7:00 AM, or Deep Creek Coffee for a quick latte and sandwich). Check out of the hotel.
- **Watchman Trail:** Since sunset on a departure day is awkward, do the **Watchman Trail** in the cooler morning hours. It starts right at the Visitor Center (no shuttle needed), a moderate ~3.3-mile round trip with great canyon views. This is your Watchman fix without racing the evening light or the clock.

💡 **Tip:** If you'd genuinely prefer a **Watchman sunset**, swap it to the evening of Day 1 (Tuesday) after check-in, the trailhead is at the Visitor Center, walkable from Cable Mountain Lodge, and you won't be reliant on the canyon shuttle. August sunset is roughly 8:15–8:25 PM; carry a headlamp for the descent.

- **Drive back:** Head out on UT-9 W to I-15 S. Remember you **gain** an hour returning to Nevada, so a mid-morning departure gets you to Vegas comfortably by early afternoon Pacific time.

🌧️ **Plan B (morning storm):** Skip Watchman and take the scenic drive on the **Zion–Mt. Carmel Highway** (in your own car, since it's outside the shuttle-only zone) for the tunnel and slickrock views on your way out east, or just start the drive to Vegas early.

2b) The Angels Landing Permit, What It Would Require (You Asked)

You listed Angels Landing as a "maybe," so here's exactly what it takes. A permit is mandatory for the chained final section. Everyone who hikes from Scout Lookout to Angels Landing needs to have a permit under the Angels Landing Pilot Permit Program. Good news: the first 2 miles (and 1,000 feet of elevation gain) to Scout Lookout do NOT require a permit; Scout Lookout has excellent views and includes the famous Walter's Wiggles switchbacks. Only the final 0.5 miles from Scout Lookout to the summit requires a permit. So even with no permit, you can hike to Scout Lookout for a stellar view.

Two ways to get a permit, both via Recreation.gov only:

1. **Seasonal lottery** (plan-ahead): Permits are issued for three time slots each day (before 9AM; 9am–12pm; and after 12pm). Visitors may enter once and apply for up to 6 people, with a \$6 non-refundable application fee, and visitors issued permits are charged a \$3 per-person fee. For your August dates, this falls under the **Summer** lottery (hikes June 1–August 31). When applying, up to seven dates or date ranges along with preferred start times may be selected in preference order. There is a \$6 non-refundable application fee, and applicants issued permits will be charged a \$3 per-person fee.
2. **Day-before lottery** (for people already in town): Hikers may apply for a permit starting at 12:01 a.m. through 3 p.m. Mountain Time the day before their intended hike. For example, a visitor who wishes to hike on a Tuesday can apply any time on Monday from 12:01 a.m. to 3 p.m. You'll be notified by 4:00pm whether you received one or not. So for a **Wednesday, August 5** hike, you'd apply **Tuesday, August 4**, the day you arrive.

The catch to plan around: Angels Landing and the Narrows both eat a full day, and both start deep in the canyon. If you win a permit, you'd likely swap it into Day 3 morning (before 9 AM slot) and shift the Narrows to Day 2, or drop Watchman. And take it seriously: it's a 5.4-mile round-trip that climbs 1,488 feet to a narrow rock fin with 360-degree views, and the final half-mile involves holding chains while navigating exposed cliffs with 1,000-foot drop-offs on both sides. Print or screenshot the permit, mobile phone service is very limited in the park, so an electronic copy should be downloaded or screenshotted prior to starting the hike.

3) Practical Notes, Checklist & Budget Reality

Checklist

- ☐ Rental car booked (LAS pickup)
- ☐ Hotel booked in Springdale (walking distance confirmed)
- ☐ Park pass purchased digitally on Recreation.gov (\$35 vehicle, or \$80 annual)
- ☐ Narrows gear reserved at Zion Outfitter (or plan to walk up)
- ☐ Groceries/packed-lunch supplies bought in St. George or La Verkin
- ☐ Angels Landing lottery applied for (only if you want it)
- ☐ Flash-flood forecast checked each morning at the Visitor Center
- ☐ Clocks flipped to Mountain Time
- ☐ Headlamp, 1 gallon water/person/day, sun protection, quick-dry clothes
- ☐ Plan to catch the 6:30 PM (not 8:15 PM) shuttle out of the canyon

Estimated Cost Overview vs. Your \$900 Budget

Item	Estimate (USD)	Notes
Lodging, 2 nights	\$500–\$900 (guide value, check the exact date price with the provider)	Cable Mountain Lodge peak-summer weeknights; the single biggest variable
Park entrance (vehicle, 7 days)	\$35	Or \$80 for the annual pass if you'll visit more parks
Narrows gear, 2 people × 1 day	\$70	\$35/person, Warm Weather Package
Optional waterproof backpacks	\$40	\$20 each, optional
Angels Landing permit (optional)	\$12	\$6 app fee + \$3/person if selected
Dinners, 2 nights × 2 people	\$80–\$130	Casual; add 15–20% tip (Utah has no separate posted "plus tax" the way some states do, but sales tax applies)
Breakfasts + packed lunch groceries	\$40–\$70	Bought en route
Fuel (round trip ~320 mi + local)	\$50–\$80	Gas is cheaper in Nevada; fill before St. George

Honest budget reality: Your \$900 ceiling is realistic **only if lodging stays near the lower end** (roughly \$250–\$300/night). Springdale in early August is peak season, and the closest hotels (Cable Mountain Lodge, Cliffrose) frequently run \$350–\$500/night, which would blow through \$900 on lodging alone. **Two honest paths:**

1. **Keep Cable Mountain Lodge and accept the total may land \$1,100–\$1,400+**, with lodging being the culprit; or
2. **Book SpringHill Suites by Marriott (~\$250–\$350/night, guide value)** or a smaller Springdale motel, still shuttle-accessible, and you can realistically land near or under \$900 total.

Everything except lodging is tightly controlled and cheap here, the park is genuinely affordable once you're through the gate. Lodging is where Springdale gets you.

💡 **Money-saver tip:** With the shuttle being free and Cable Mountain Lodge (or any near-entrance hotel) letting you walk in, you never touch a taxi, never pay for in-park parking, and never risk the nine-mile death march. The whole plan is engineered so your worst-case transport cost is \$0. Consider the ghost of that \$80 cab officially exorcised.

4) Sources (checked June 2026)

Shuttle schedule & park logistics (NPS official)

- [nps.gov/...](#)
- [nps.gov/...](#)

Fees & passes (NPS official)

- [nps.gov/...](#)
- [nps.gov/...](#)

Angels Landing permits (official)

- [recreation.gov/...](#) (Summer lottery, June 1–Aug 31)
- [nps.gov/...](#)
- [nps.gov/...](#)

Narrows gear rental (operator official)

- [zionoutfitter.com/...](#)
- [zionoutfitter.com/...](#)

Lodging

- [cablemountainlodge.com](#) (booking; prices live)
- [cliffroselodge.com](#)

Dining

- [oscarscafe.com](#)
- [zionbrewery.com](#)
- [zion.eatatcamp.com](#)
- [greaterzion.com/...](#)

Drive from Las Vegas

- [rome2rio.com/...](#)
- [gatewayrvresort.com/...](#)

One last honest note: hotel and rental-car prices sit behind live booking widgets, so the lodging figures above are guide values, not binding quotes. Everything else, shuttle times, entrance fee, Narrows gear, permit fees, is drawn from the providers' own current pages. Have a fantastic, cab-free trip.

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