

Sent:
Subject:

Thursday, September 17, 2026 7:17 PM
Postcard

The Wave



Wednesday morning, about 8:00 AM in the Wirepass parking lot on House Rock Canyon Road, in the Vermillion Cliffs Wilderness.

The hike starts now.

Well, not exactly. For Tanner (on the left, our guide) that's true. But for the two on the right (you know who they are) the hike started 12 years ago. That's when we first entered the North Coyote Buttes permit lottery. What? That's right, there is a lottery four months in advance of the hike dates to determine who gets a permit to hike to The Wave and who doesn't. And most people don't. Actually most people never will. But on June 1st of this year we got our lucky email. We were in!

Unfortunately, in those 12 years we have gotten 12 years older. So we actually trained for it as best we could, going up and down the one hill in Kansas, hiking with full pack loads. And we hired a guide. (Damn kid ran circles around us but he was so polite about it.) And we were as ready as we were ever going to be.



This is pretty much what we saw of Tanner except for when he was *way* out ahead.



Most of the first half of the hike was either sand or slickrock, little shade and a merciless sun.



About half way there, the rock formations started to get funky and fun.



Now the scenery was getting spectacular. And a few clouds had moved in, a breeze kicked up, and hiking became enjoyable again. We were just creaky and slow instead of creaky, slow and parboiled.



Almost there.



There.





Lunch at The Wave:



We used to carry real food. Cheese, crackers, fruit... fuhgetaboutit. Buy a bar.



Parting shot – up close and personal.



Back across sand and slickrock.



Sidebar: Permits are attached on the outside of the permit-holder's pack or person. They are big and colorful and easily spotted from a distance. A few couples walking without permits (I hesitate to say hiking) were headed up as we came down. Tanner warned them there was a ranger at the Wave checking permits and they were asking for a huge fine if encountered. The two guys from Afghanistan turned around. The two couples from last night's rave ignored him and walked on. And without water. Tanner wished them luck.



And so it ends. Really happy to see that 4Runner.

Now it's a day later. Tired, stiff, sore, glad we went, glad it's over.

D&S

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