

TRAVELER

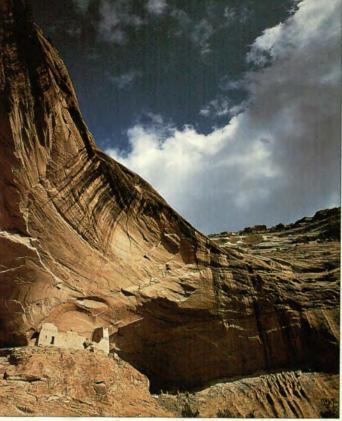
MAY/JUNE 1993 VOLUME X, NUMBER 3 An Educational Travel Resource



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Prague, page 76 Canyon de Chelly, page 66

ARTICLES

Brandywine Valley

By James S. Wamsley Photographs by Anthony Edgeworth

Not far from Philadelphia and Wilmington, the soft-flowing Brandywine River drifts past sumptuous du Pont estates, humble stone farmhouses, world-class museums, and the timeless landscape that the Wyeths painted into the American psyche.

Kluane National Park Reserve, Canada 50

By Ann Iones

Photographs by Michael Melford

Venture north to explore a Yukon wilderness of sweeping glaciers, alpine lakes, and brooding spruce forests. Enjoy hiking, rafting, and "flight-seeing" over the world's largest nonpolar ice fields.

Canyon de Chelly, Arizona 66

By Tony Hillerman

Within the dramatic red-rock gorges of this national monument



Kluane National Park Reserve, page 50

in northeastern Arizona, silent ruins and cryptic pictographs tell the poignant story of the Navajo and their predecessors over the last 3,000 years.

Prague

By Charles N. Barnard

This "most precious stone" in Europe's crown invites travelers to enjoy fine arts amid fine architecture, and to join in the Czechs'

shaky but enthusiastic transition from communism to capitalism.

Scenic Drive: Nebraska's Highway 2

By Mel White

Photographs by Michael Melford From the flat fields along the Platte River, Nebraska's Highway 2 shoots westward across the rolling, wide-open Sand Hills to the land of giant stone toadstools.

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Llama trekking offers a unique—a	nd ecolog-

try. (And no, llamas don't spit . . . much.) Weekends

ically sound—way to see Yellowstone coun-

By K.M. Kostyal New York State's Chautauqua Institution offers an annual showcase of world-class lecturers and the arts.

Win a Dream Holiday, Camera, or Cash in TRAVELER'S 5th Annual Photo Contest!

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Places worth a visit when you're in the vicinity.

Learning Vacations

By James S. Wamsley

Swing into summer with a perfect swingthe one you develop during a week of golf instruction at the Pine Needles Learning Center in Southern Pines, North Carolina.

Highlights:

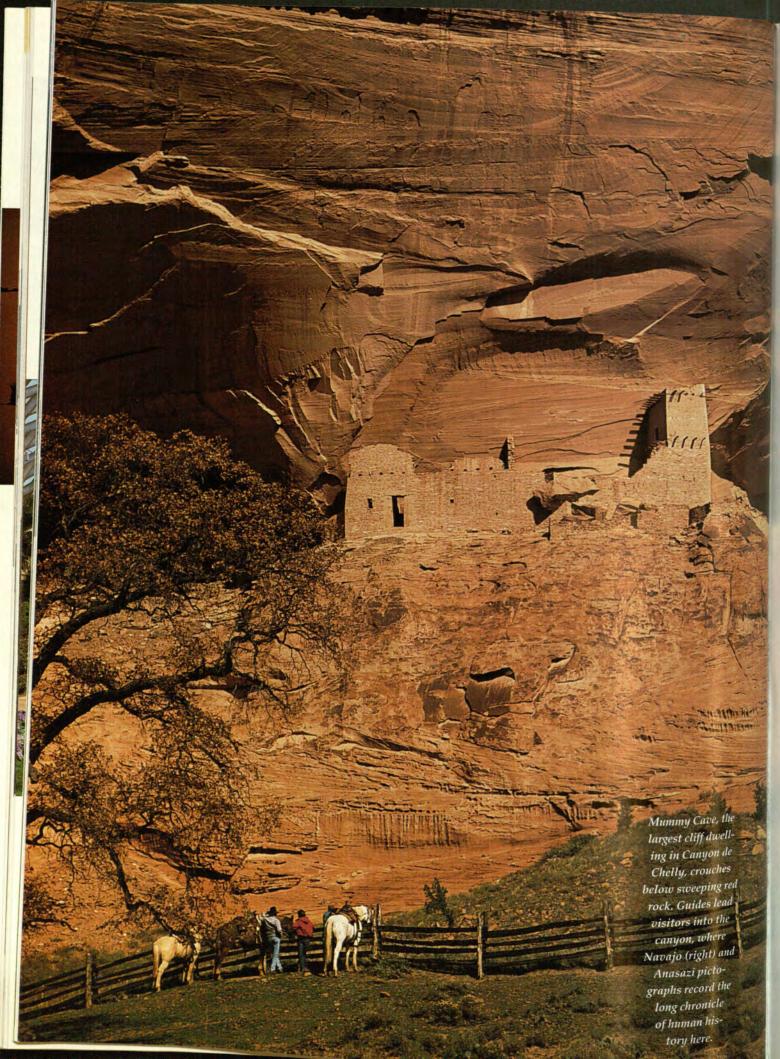
A Calendar of Events Compiled by Johanna G. Farren **Bookfare**

Reviews of current travel books. Geography Trivia Quiz

A fun and challenging quiz to test your knowledge of world geography.

COVER: On a fine May morning in the Brandywine Valley, an elegantly outfitted carriage heads toward the annual point-to-point races at the Winterthur estate. (See page 34.)

PHOTOGRAPHS: COVER-ANTHONY EDGEWORTH: CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT-MICHAEL MELFORD, CHRISTIAN SAPPA/CEDRI, DAVID HISER/PHOTOGRAPHERS ASPEN, LINDA B. MEYER-RIECKS/NGS, GEORGE F. MOBLEY/NGS





A MUSEUM

etched in

Dramatic red-rock
canyons are
suffused with
mysterious traces
of the ancient



Anasazi and the spirit-filled world of the modern Navajo.



STONE

Down through the years, I have developed my own ritual for visiting the vast stone labyrinth called Canyon de Chelly. I drive north from the Navajo town of Window Rock, then follow the road that snakes along the canyon's main branch. I stop at overlooks that allow spectacular aerial views of the 800-year-old ruins below.

Seen from the north rim, the canyon is awe inspiring. From this height, which is like standing on top of a 60-story building, even the larger ruins seem trivialized by the vastness. The fields, horses, and hogans of the Navajo who now live along the stream on the canyon floor are diminished to toy-box size.

The atmosphere is far different down on the canyon floor, which is accessible to the public only on tours led by Navajo guides and park rangers or by making the long climb down the trail to the White House Ruin. The cliffs close in around you, excluding the outside world as thoroughly as if you were standing on the bottom of a giant stone bottle. If you stay late, you can watch darkness creep up the sandstone walls as the sun sinks. Stay later, and you can watch the opposite effect—pale yellow moonlight moving down the cliffs.

The effect is even more dramatic if you risk the climb out on a moonless night, when the canyon floor is lit only by stars. With no

By Tony Hillerman

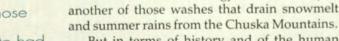


man-made lights to diminish the effect and no haze to dilute it, starlight at this altitude is dazzling. In the narrow slot of sky visible above the rim, a billion stars shine.

ON THE MAP MOUNTED ON THE WALL ABOVE MY word processor, Canyon de Chelly (pronounced de SHAY) resembles the track a bird might leave in the mud. The heel mark is the canyon mouth. The toes form its three main branches: Canyon de Chelly itself in the center, cutting 25 miles eastward into the Defiance Plateau; Canyon del Muerto (Massacre Canyon), extending about 20 miles to the northeast; and Monument Canyon, angling southeastward.

On that map Canyon de Chelly seems relatively insignificant, a medium-size gorge (by Rocky Mountain standards) sharing the territory with the immensity of the Grand Canyon.

Unlike the view from the north rim, de Chelly does not make much of an impression when you drive to its mouth, near the town of Chinle. While its flat, sandy bottom is almost 300 yards wide, the cliffs walling it in at this point rise only about 30 feet. In terms of geology or hydrology, it seems to be just



But in terms of history and of the human spirit, Canyon de Chelly is a unique outdoor museum chronicling a progression of cultures over the last 3,000 years. And then there is the beauty of its sheer sandstone walls. The shapes and colors of those stratified layers tell the story of seas advancing and retreating 230 million years ago, of sand and gravel and sediment piling up in layers hundreds of feet deep, of streams slicing through the layers, of weathering and erosion widening the channels into a labyrinth of canyons.

Many of the canyon cliffs are formed of smooth sandstone. In the flat light of a midsummer noon, their colors range from pale pink to the faintest tan. But as afternoon turns to dusk and shadows form, the walls take on sculptured shapes. The pink deepens into a rich salmon. The manganese oxide streaking the cliffs, dark brown at noon, develops undertones of black and red. In places, the cliffs suggest the canvas of a cosmic abstractionist whose palette had every color except blue.

No one knows when hunter-gatherers first wandered into this desert canyon, but we do know what lured them here: a permanent source

whose palette had every color except blue.

In places,

the cliffs

suggest the

canvas of a

cosmic

of water. Even in the driest of years, these nomads knew they could find springs seeping cold, clear water by walking upcanyon. In fact, the name de Chelly comes from the Navajo word for "where the water comes out of the rock," an apt description for the canyon mouth, where Chinle Wash is as wide as three football fields.

This water first supported year-round inhabitants just before the birth of Christ—a culture that scholars call the Basketmakers. Only a few families lived here, 200 people at most. They wove baskets, grew corn and squash in the same fields that Navajo farm today, and kept their surplus in storage cysts scooped out of the sandstone beneath overhanging cliffs. In these cysts, still visible at Mummy Cave in Canyon del Muerto, they also buried their dead. Soon, as their numbers grew, the Basketmakers began building large stone granaries above ground.

Over the next nine centuries, these canyon-bottom dwellers learned to make pottery and hunt with the bow and arrow. As the population continued to grow, they moved into stone-walled, apartment-style cliff houses. We call these pueblo dwellers the Anasazi, part of the same culture that flourished at Mesa Verde and Chaco Canyon and throughout the Colorado Plateau.

By the 13th century, 800 or so Anasazi inhabited the canyon. They raised dogs and turkeys, wove cotton textiles, and made fine pottery decorated with intricate designs. They had a political hierarchy and a complex religion that may have been influenced by cultures from as far away as Central America.

In 1264 THE ANASAZI CUT THE LAST TIMBER FOR their cliff dwellings at Canyon de Chelly; this timber became a roof beam in a three-story stone structure known as the Tower, which perches high on a sandstone shelf on the east cliff of Canyon del Muerto, next to Mummy Cave. The first time I saw the Tower was late one afternoon, when the slanting sunlight illuminated the top of the cliff above it. Seen from the premature twilight of the canyon depth, the walls of the ruin seemed to glow. Absolute silence. My imagination began to stir.

Had the Tower been built as a fortress? I wondered. Were the Anasazi or their predecessors seeking refuge from hostile nomads? We know that several mummified bodies found inside the Tower had died violently. Had there been combat, then, in this peaceful place?

As I leaned against the cool cliff, I let my thoughts travel back in time. In my mind's eye, I imagined invaders scrambling up that steep

slope under the walls to slaughter exhausted defenders. I could see the last Anasazi families hurrying away, carrying only a few baskets and pots and ceremonial objects. They may have migrated to the east, settling the Hopi villages and developing the Pueblo Indian cultures of the Rio Grande Valley and western New Mexico.

Whatever the cause, civilization ended between the great pink cliffs. Silence descended on the canyon, disturbed only by the wind and the occasional visitor.

Canyon de Chelly had no full-time residents again until about 1750, when Navajo being pushed westward by Ute and Comanche tribes found refuge in the canyon and began farming land abandoned five centuries before. Today about 450 Navajo still plant corn and tend goats and sheep on the canyon bottom during the

summer, then move out to their winter homes on the plateau or in nearby Chinle when the snow comes. Frigid air sinks to the canyon floor, and the winter sun, low on the southern horizon, doesn't reach in with its heat. But if you enjoy lonely silence, as I do, winter afternoons are a good time to come to Canyon de Chelly.

Reminders of man's efforts to survive in this harsh land surround you at Standing Cow Ruin, one of the

largest ruins in the 84,000-acre national monument. Here the Anasazi built 60 stone-walled rooms for living and storage, as well as three round underground kivas for ceremonies. The cliffs for hundreds of yards up and down the canyon are a gallery of pictographs recording more than a thousand years of art and graffiti, from hand prints and abstractions left by the Basketmakers to 19th-century Navajo renderings of their deadly encounters with Mexican and American soldiers. Within a mile you can puzzle over concentric circles, stylized humanoids with looped arms and birdlike feet, figures holding hands, humans with horns, and a lifesize Navajo drawing of a standing cow that gives the ruin its name.

Up the cliff, pale against the dark red sandstone, is one of the West's most remarkable pictographs. A troop of Mexican dragoons march in a line across the stone; they wear broadbrimmed hats, carry muskets, and ride sticklegged horses toward their terrible victory. Dispatched in 1804 to help New Mexico militiamen fight the Navajo, the Mexicans drove Navajo braves and their families deep into Canyon del Muerto, where they took refuge in a cliffside cave 600 feet above the canyon floor. I doubt if a veteran of ground combat in any war can walk



Up and

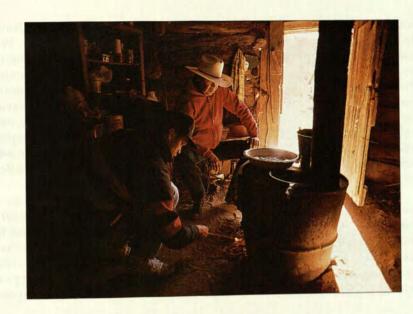
down the

stream.

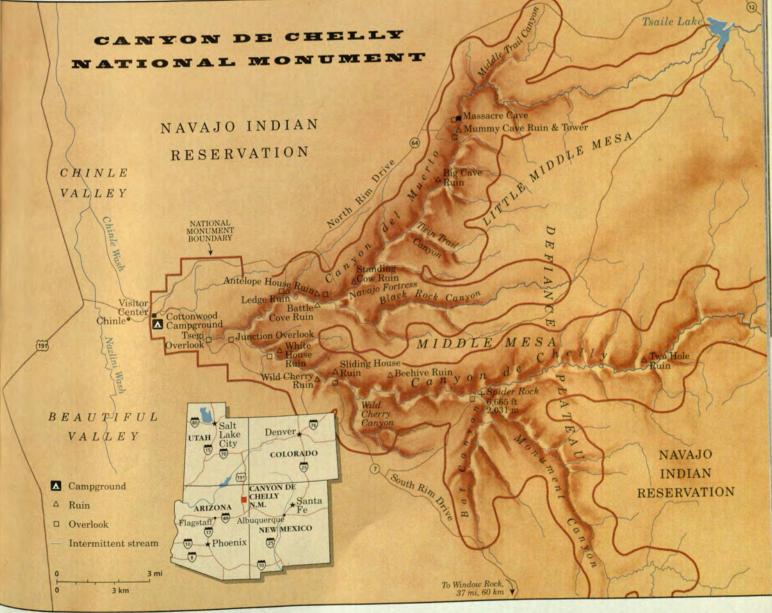
painted on

the dark,

of desert
varnish that
streak the
canyon
walls, are
pictographs.



Sunlight floods a Navajo hogan in the canyon. Like their Anasazi predecessors, the Navajo consider this canyon land now a national monument within their reservation (map) - a powerful place. Both peoples have left behind hand prints (opposite) as signatures on canyon walls.



up the canyon's sandy floor without respecting the courage of those troops or the brutality of their campaign. Riding into this canyon must have been like riding into the jaws of death.

The Mexicans slaughtered the Navajo by deflecting musket balls off the overhanging roof. The cave roof and walls still bear the pockmarks of hundreds of bullets, and the floor is littered with bones, many of them of children. That bloody incident gave both this branch of the canyon and Massacre Cave their names.

AFTER CANYON DE CHELLY BECAME UNITED STATES territory, whites pushed into Navajo lands. In 1863 the territorial governor decided to apply a "final solution," believing that gold could be found in the Chuskas and points west if the Navajo were eliminated. He sent an expedition led

Today
about 450
Navajo still
plant corn
and tend
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sheep on
the canyon

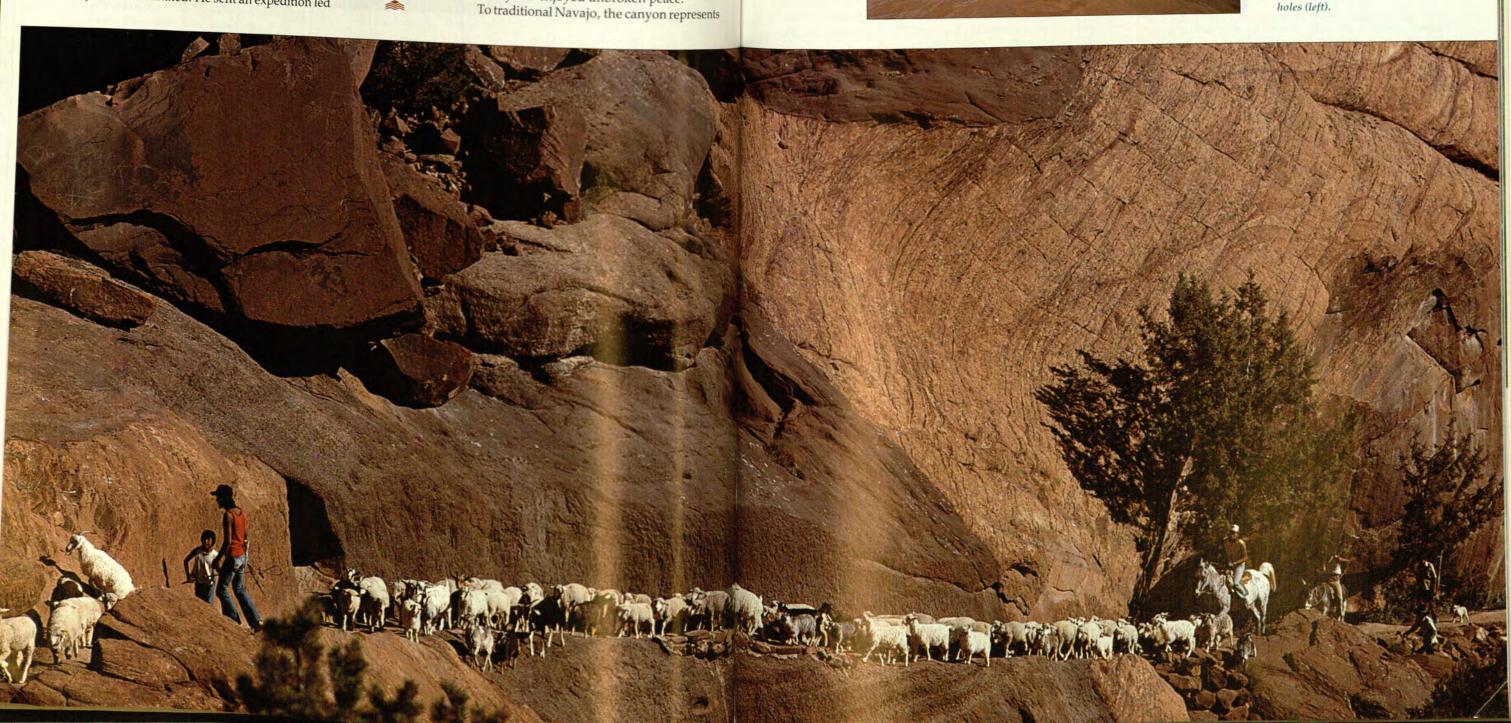
bottom.

by Col. Kit Carson to harass the Navajo and kill or capture as many as possible. When winter came, Carson's troops rode through deep snow into Canyon de Chelly and rounded up hundreds of Navajo. More troops returned the following summer; they burned Navajo hogans, chopped down 5,000 peach trees, and captured Barboncito, one of the most respected headmen. More than 8,000 captives were herded eastward onto the dismal Bosque Redondo reservation in New Mexico.

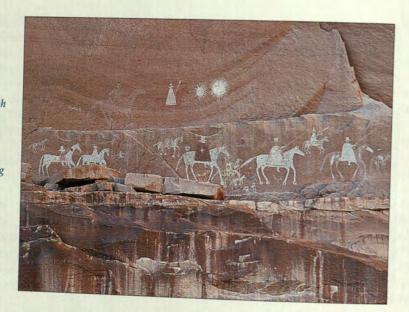
Canyon de Chelly lay silent for four heartbreaking years, until Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman freed the Navajo, and Barboncito brought his people home to the "very heart of our country." Since that spring of 1868, Canyon de Chelly has enjoyed unbroken peace.

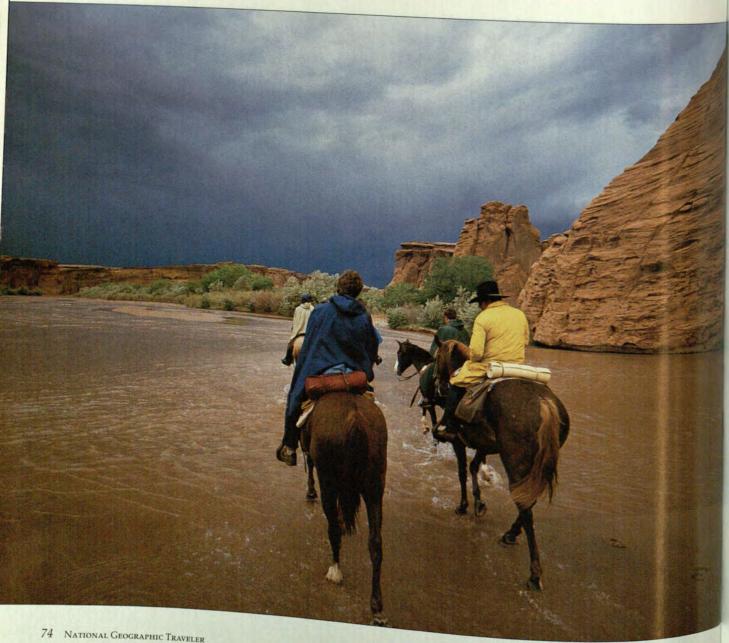


Searching out pasturage for their sheep, Navajo herders travel an old Anasazi trail through Canyon de Chelly. Since the mid-18th century, the Navajo have grazed herds and planted crops in the canyon-and sometimes enjoyed its swimming holes (left).



Riders mosey up Canyon del Muerto on an overnight pack trip. A famous Navajo pictograph (right) shows less benevolent riders-Spanish cavalry-invading the region. Opposite: Heir to a rich tradition. a Navajo woman models her finely crafted turquoise jewelry.





much more than a historic battleground. It is one of the holiest places in the tribe's mythology. It was here that the mythological Holy People taught the Navajo how to live, and only here can their medicine people conduct the ceremonies that restore harmony to mind and spirit.

empty places. Even in the busy summer season-when Navajo guides are driving tourists around, and farmers are working their cornfields, and herders are tending their flocks under the silvery leaves of the olive trees-it's easy enough to find silence and solitude in this huge stone labyrinth. But if you share my taste for isolation, late autumn and early spring are ideal times to visit. I like to follow the self-guided trail from the south rim to the White House Ruin,

the shallow water to the cottonwoods under the cliff dwelling, once home to several Anasazi families. It's a quiet place. The 600-foot sandstone cliffs soaring toward the open sky make the ruin seem as small as a dollhouse.

Sitting in the shade here many years ago and gazing up at those stone houses, just as their builders did almost a thousand years ago, I thought I heard the trill of a flute drifting from upcanyon. A flute like that of Kokopelli, the humpbacked figure drawn on these cliffs by Anasazi artists. But no, it was the tinkling bells of a Navajo's goats, blended into a tenor-

like warble by the echoing cliffs. That day I decided to devote my writings to the Navajo and their sacred land.

Up and down the stream, painted on the dark, sooty stains of desert varnish that streak the canyon walls, are pictographs—the work of Basketmaker, Anasazi, and Navajo. I wander among the cliffs, finding abstractions, snakes, birds, men with the feet of birds, the humpbacked Kokopelli playing his flute, a frog, a large man with arms raised in supplication, a

have forgotten how to read. The cliffs remind me of how little space I occupy; the pictographs,

A resident of Albuquerque, New Mexico, and the author of 18 books, Tony Hillerman is best known for mystery novels involving the Navajo Tribal Police. He was elected Grand Master of the Mystery Writers of America in 1990. He has won the French Grand Prix de Littérature Policière and the Special Friend of the Dineh Award of the Navajo tribe.

CANYON DE CHELLY TRAVEL WISE

Planning Your Trip

When to go Canyon de Chelly National Monument is open year-round. The tourist season peaks in June, July, and Aug., when daytime temperatures soar into the low 90s (F). The area is less crowded in spring and fall (highs range from 70° to 83°).

What you should know The monument is located on the Navajo Indian Reservation, which is regarded as a sovereign nation that makes and enforces its own laws. The reservation is the only area in Arizona that observes daylight saving time. Note: The area code for all numbers below is 602.

How To Get There

By Amtrak To Phoenix, Ariz., and Albuquerque, N.M., three times weekly. By car Canyon de Chelly lies 345 miles northeast of Phoenix and 235 miles northwest of Albuquerque. By plane To Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport or Albuquerque International Airport.

Things To See and Do

There is no admission fee to the monument, but you'll need to obtain a free permit at the visitor center on North Rim Dr.;

674-5500 or -5501. Access to the canyon is limited to hikers, horseback riders, and four-wheeldrive vehicles. All visitors must be accompanied by a monument ranger or authorized Navajo guide; inquire at the visitor center.

Visitors may not pick up or remove any objects or climb or sit on the walls of canyons or ruins. Be sure to ask permission before entering a hogan or photographing a Navajo.

Driving Tours Two rim drives provide views of the canyons and ruins from scenic overlooks. From the visitor center, South Rim Dr. (State 7) is a 36-mile round-trip to Spider Rock Overlook; North Rim Dr. (State 64) is a 34-mile round-trip to Massacre Cave Overlook.

You may use your own four-wheel-drive vehicle by making reservations at the visitor center; 674-5500 or -5501. Guides are available daily Apr.-Oct.; \$10 per hour per vehicle. Thunderbird Lodge (P.O. Box 548, Chinle 86503; 674-5841) offers half- or full-day guided jeep tours,

which depart daily Apr.-Oct. at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. Prices range from \$31.50 per person (half day) to \$51.45 per person (full day, including lunch).

Hiking The only self-guided hike is the trail to the White House Ruin (21/2 miles round-trip), which descends almost 600 feet from the White House Overlook to the canvon floor. Allow about two hours, and be prepared to wade across Chinle Wash. Monument rangers lead free scheduled hikes, while Tsegi Guide Association guides charge \$10 per hour.

Horseback Riding Justin Tso Horse Rental (P.O. Box 881, Chinle 86503; 674-5678), located at the beginning of South Rim Dr., offers riding tours year-round for \$8 per hour per horse and \$8 per hour per guide. Twin Trail Tours (P.O. Box 1706, Window Rock 86515; 674-8425) runs day and overnight trips from May 15 to Oct. 15. Stables are located on North Rim Dr., eight miles north of the visitor center. Prices range from \$35 to \$60 per person.

Places To Stay and Eat

There are lodging and dining facilities in the town of Chinle, three miles from the visitor center. On the monument grounds are Cottonwood Campground (674-5436; no showers or hookups; free on a first-come, first-served basis) and Thunderbird Lodge (P.O. Box 548, Chinle 86503; 674-5841 or -5842; 72 units; \$87-92; reservations recommended; cafeteria).

For More Information

Contact Canyon de Chelly National Monument, P.O. Box 588, Chinle, AZ 86503; 674-5500 or -5501.

All information is accurate as of press time. It is, however, sub-

Even in the

busy

summer

season, it's

easy

enough to

find silence

and

solitude in

this huge

stone

labyrinth.

take off my shoes and socks, and splash through

mountain goat impaled by a lance.

I think of these as messages left for me that I of how little time.