

Lodge Canyon • Zion National Park

Rating:	4A III R (4A IV 5.4 R if also ascending Mountain of the Sun)
Best Season:	Summer or fall.
Time:	5 to 7 hours.
Longest Rappel:	200 feet (60 m)
Access:	Requires short hitchhike or car spot.
Permit:	Required—Available at the Visitor Center.
Seasonality:	<u>Summer and Fall</u> —The preferred seasons, with nice temperatures and scenery. <u>Winter and Spring</u> —Could be done in dry winters and dry spring conditions, but would be really nasty and difficult in wet conditions. The canyon faces north, so can hold snow and ice into spring.
Equipment:	Helmets, rappelling gear, lots of webbing and rapid links. Consider extra sets of ropes in case a rope gets stuck.
Cold Protection:	None required.
Drinking Water:	None, bring plenty.
Flash Flood Risk:	Low/moderate.
Skills Required:	Pay careful attention to rigging and extending anchors to avoid stuck ropes.
Anchors:	Natural and bolted.

Lodge Canyon offers only modest charms and several opportunities to get the rope stuck. Mountain of the Sun is one of the more-accessible semi-technical wilderness summits in the park, and the ascent of the one and descent of the other makes for a quality day. The big-wall exit out Lodge is a common place to get ropes stuck, so this adventure can only be recommended to experienced canyoneers. It is wise to bring an extra set of ropes on this adventure.

Lodge Canyon runs north between Mountain of the Sun and Deertrap Mountain, dropping into the main canyon south of Zion Lodge, through the alcove known as Wylie Retreat, and coming out to the road through the employee housing area of Zion Lodge. Over the years, it has accumulated numerous other names, including Employee Canyon, Wylie Canyon and Mountain of the Sun Canyon.

Driving: Lodge starts where Pine Creek crosses Highway 9 one third of a mile (500 meters) east of the main tunnel. There is poor parking at this spot - park closer to the tunnel at a real parking spot and walk the side of the road to the crossing of Pine Creek. The FIRST canyon coming from the south, east of the Tunnel is NOT Pine Creek - it is Shelf Canyon, and it does not lead anywhere useful. Continue past this to the major canyon that proceeds north with 15 minutes of walking on flat sand. On the map it can be seen that this is Pine Creek, while the creek beside the highway is called Clear Creek.

Lodge Canyon ends at Wylie Retreat, behind the Zion Lodge.

Approach: The approach to the bowl of upper Spry also provides access to Lodge Canyon.

Walk this wide and sandy wash about 15 minutes (1/2 mile, 800 meters) to where the canyon starts to narrow. Exit the bed of the canyon left up a 4th class slickrock watercourse and climb up and a little right several hundred feet to a bench. Follow the bench north then west into a slickrock bowl below the impressive south buttress of Deertrap Mountain. Climb the center of the bowl (4th class), then up and right to the top of the pass. Keep your eyes peeled for faint petroglyphs on vertical orange wall a couple hundred feet below the pass.

From the top of the pass, looking west, left to right you see: the big peak of the East Temple; then the upper bowl of Spry Canyon; the Twin Brothers; a notch pass next to Twin Brothers, leading to Lodge Canyon; then a ridge leading up to Deertrap Mountain. From the top of the pass, traverse right and slightly down toward the slot pass and to the head of a narrow slot that cuts across the slope below. Climb into the head of the slot and, pushing through some brush, follow the slot most of the way down to the canyon floor. When convenient, exit to the right and descend steep broken slabs to easier

terrain. You are now in the upper bowl.

Turn north and climb to the notch pass between Twin Brothers and Deertrap Mountain, and drop over the other side. Descend small trails steeply through trees and around a few minor drops to an open slickrock area below Mountain of the Sun.

Mountain of the Sun Variation: Overall Rating (MOS and Lodge Canyon): 4A IV 5.4 R

From the open slickrock area in Lodge Canyon, follow a huge, tree-spotted ramp up and left, then right to the MOS - Twin Brothers pass (3rd class). Climb dirty slabs with brush on the right-hand corner of the south face to the base of an orange vertical wall facing Deertrap Mountain. Follow the ledge/gully at the base of the orange wall north (right) several hundred yards (200m) to near its end, where a steep gully allows easy escape up and left. Follow a faint trail up and around to the summit. Pay attention - the trail can be difficult to find on the way down. Enjoy the expansive views, then return the way you came. Allow 2 hours for the round trip from the canyon floor.

The Canyon: The canyon soon slots up. Avoid the first slot section by following the left edge about 50 feet to a weakness that is descended into the canyon. Downclimb as far as possible, then cross the canyon to a narrow, sandy ledge and traverse to a small tree.

R1: from small tree 165 feet (50m) to the edge of a small pool. SCAAAARY! - as of 2005, the small tree is not long for this world. Evaluate carefully, then find another anchor in the area.

R2: from bolt anchor on left 165 feet (50m) to the edge of a large pool. This rappel tends to get stuck - extend the anchor as far as you can.

R3: from bolt anchor on right 30 feet (10m) to ledge.

R4: from bolt anchor, rap 40 feet (12m) to the top of a buttress on the right - NOT down the chute. Walk right (east) to the other side of the buttress.

R5: from bolt anchor at right side of buttress, rap off right side of buttress 200 feet (60m) to a ledge. Watch out for loose rock. Ropes get stuck on this one - extend the anchor as required.

R6: from bolt anchor 165 feet (50m) beside waterfall to the ground.

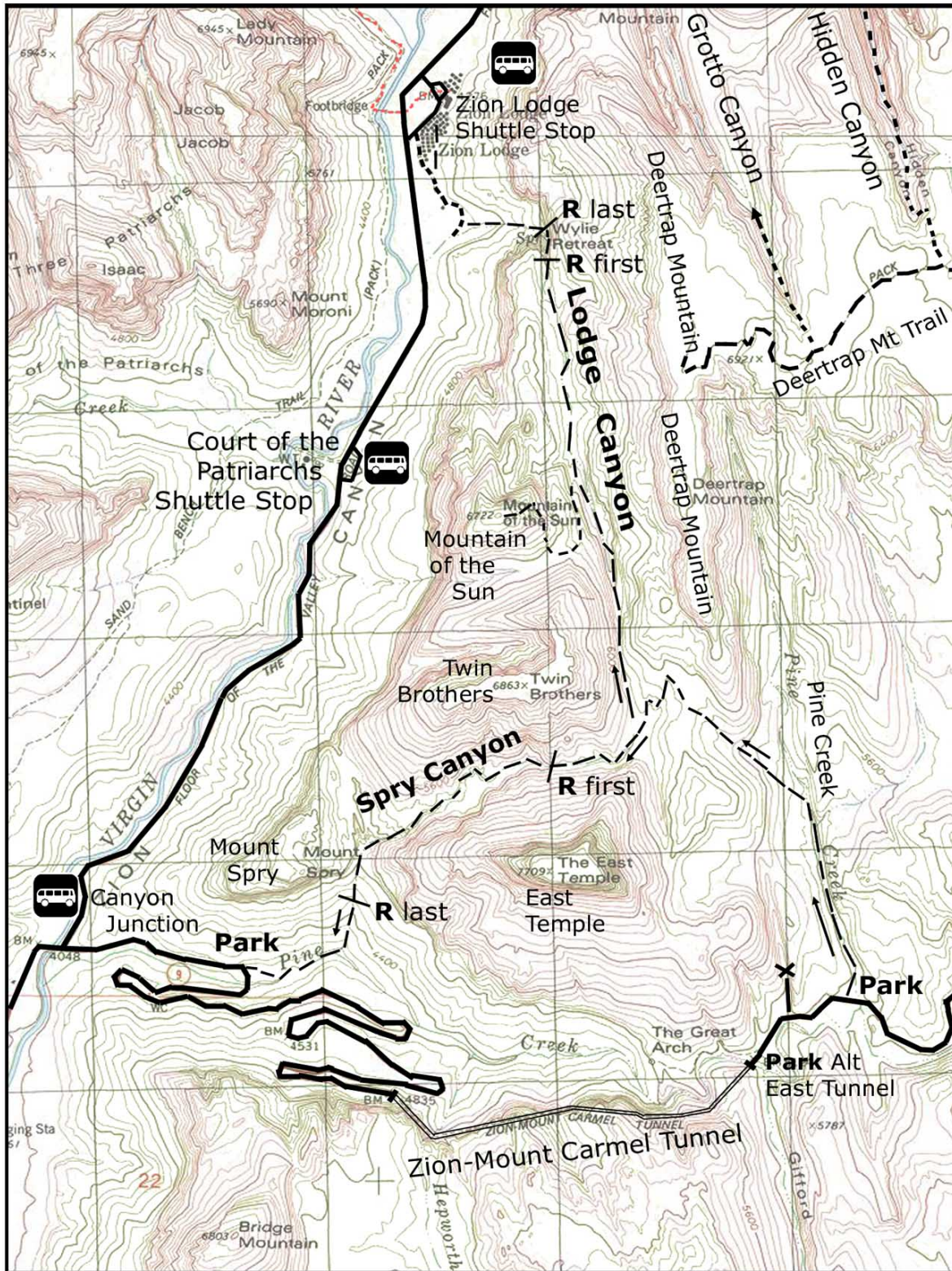
Special Warning: You **MUST** exit the watercourse part way down rappel 4. The final drop down the watercourse is longer than 300 feet (100m). The descent route is on the other side of the buttress - be **SURE** to go that way.

This canyon is famous for sticking ropes. There are long slings on a couple of the anchors, and they may not be long enough to place the rappel point over the edge. Rig your rappels carefully and test-pull. Carrying an extra rope or two is a good idea in this canyon, and might prevent an unplanned bivy.

Loose rock falling on the last rappel station has been responsible for one fatality. Wear a helmet, clip into the belay, and pay attention to what you are doing.

Follow game trails down and left, past a small waterfall to the main canyon. Find a discrete way to get to the road, then follow the road to the back of Zion Lodge. You are walking through employee housing - please respect the resident's privacy as much as possible.

SPRY CANYON & LODGE CANYON



↑ North

Scale of Miles

