

Spearhead Canyon • Zion National Park

Rating:	4B V
Best Season:	Summer or fall.
Time:	About a day and a half for the entire route. Probably best to hit the start of Behunin Ridge at dawn, leaving enough time to summer, then descend the canyon and get to water near the end of the middle of the canyon before dark.
Longest Rappel:	150 feet (50 m)
Access:	Begins and ends at Grotto Trailhead and ends on Emerald Pools Trail—can return to Zion Lodge or Grotto Trailhead.
Permit:	Required. Available at the Visitor Center.
Seasonality:	<u>Summer</u> —HOT! Bring plenty of water and get an early start. Not a good adventure for the hottest of days. <u>Fall</u> —The preferred season, with nice temperatures and scenery. <u>Winter and Spring</u> —No access—high elevation with lots of snowpack and dangerous ice conditions in the canyon exist.
Equipment:	A bolt kit is wise to bring along, helmets, rappelling gear, webbing and rapid links.
Cold Protection:	None.
Drinking Water:	Sparse, bring plenty.
Flash Flood Risk:	Moderate—there are only a few sections of sustained narrows.
Skills Required:	Difficult navigation and access, logistics of a long day and skills appropriate to descending a seldom visited canyon.
Anchors:	Natural—bringing a bolt kit is advised.

Spearhead is a nice, rarely visited canyon in a difficult to get to location. The entry into the canyon is big and scary, with potentially very difficult anchors. The middle part of the canyon is easily descended using natural anchors. The final, bolted chimney section is a rarely-used climbing descent route.

Spearhead is the canyon running south from the pass between Cathedral Mountain and Mount Majestic. It descends behind The Spearhead into the Emerald Pools cirque.

The Approach: Start by hiking up the West Rim trail and attain the summit plateau of the Majestic/Cathedral massif. The best route is probably Behunin Ridge – the ridge that climbs toward the northern summit of Majestic Mountain from the top of the first rappel in Behunin. Climb steeply from the flat slickrock, then cut left and avoid the sub-peak and attain a loose, steep, brushy gully heading toward the top. The last pitch follows the crest of the ridge, and weaves through trees on steep 4th-class rock to the plateau rim. The ridge is south-facing and steep, and unpleasant in all but the coolest weather.

Cross the Manzanita to the col between Majestic and Cathedral. From the Majestic side, spy out the best descent route down the wall across the way. About 500 feet south of the apex of the canyon, note two large snags, the second next to a 30-foot red cliff. Just beyond the second snag, note a "Christmas Tree" on a small ledge about 40 feet down from the rim.

The Canyon: Hike around to the rim above the single tree.

R1: 40 feet (12 m) from a tree to the single pine tree on ledge.

R2: 290 feet (88 m) to a brushy ledge. Note: the pine tree is not particularly sturdy, and is perhaps not suitable as an anchor. I suggest that placing bolts on the white ledge 30 feet below the pine might be appropriate. Follow the ledge right (upcanyon) and down some to a tree perched on the edge of a drop.

R3: 165 feet (50 m): Rap 40 feet (13 m) down a steep wall, then through brush another 125 feet (40 m) to a stout tree.

