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PRESS RELEASE

Adventure Playground

by Tina L. Snyder

Moab is where adventure begins and a nature provides the playground. Home to Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, Dead Horse Point State Park, the Colorado River and LaSal Mountains, you will enjoy spectacular scenery no matter which activity you choose.

Arches National Park is a red rock wonderland containing some of the most scenic and inspiring landscapes on Earth, Arches National Park contains the world's largest concentration of natural sandstone arches. Although over 2,000 arches are located within the park's 76,518 acres, the park also contains an astounding variety of other geological formations. Colossal sandstone fins, massive balanced rocks, soaring pinnacles and spires dwarf visitors as they explore the park's viewpoints and hiking trails. Geologic faulting has exposed millions of years of geologic history within the park.

Canyonlands is the largest national park in Utah, and its diversity staggers the imagination. It is divided into three districts by the Green and Colorado Rivers - the *Island in the Sky*, (atop a massive 1500 foot mesa - quite literally an Island in the Sky with lofty viewpoints from which visitors can see nearly 100 miles in any given direction.); the *Needles* (beautiful sandstone spires that jut out of the ground creating an unforgettable spectacle.) and the *Maze* (a perplexing jumble of canyons that has been described as a "30 square mile puzzle in sandstone" in what is ranked as one of the most remote and inaccessible sections in the United States. .

Activities include hiking, biking, four-wheeling, ATV riding, river running, horseback riding, golfing, scenic flights and even skydiving! Choose an activity and then define how extreme an adventure you desire. Want a major adrenaline rush, just a little heart pounding, or something that soothes the soul? You can design the perfect adventure for everyone in the family

Hiking in and around Moab is a wonderful way to explore the beautiful country. Day hikes in the National Parks range from a 30-minute leisurely stroll, to all day excursions with such obstacles as narrow ledges, slickrock, and narrow canyons. Arches National Park offers great rewards for your efforts with the breathtaking beauty of the Delicate Arch (3 mile round trip), or for the youngsters, a natural box of sand pouring through Sand Dune Arch (0.4 mile round trip). Several other trails in the parks, of varying length and difficulty, make it easy to pick a hike that fits your family.

Mountain biking and road biking trails throughout the Moab valley provide another great family outing. Trails range from the low-impact Mill Creek Parkway providing miles of in town riding, to the Slick Rock Bike Trail guaranteed to challenge even the most experienced riders. The Colorado River Scenic Byway 128 will take you upstream, twisting and turning as it follows the nature's course through the majestic canyons. Or head downstream on the Potash-Lower Colorado River Scenic Byway 279, for a 17-mile route through the Colorado River Portal, and along the banks of the river through a narrow canyon. Along Scenic Byway 313 there are ample opportunities to appreciate the geology, archaeology and scenery on this route to Dead Horse Point State Park and the Island in the Sky District of Canyonlands National Park.

For those who prefer to use less people power, there are a multitude of four-wheel drive trails that will transport you into a magical world of breath-taking scenery. Visitors can rent jeeps or take guided tours with one of the many experienced tour operators in Moab. Trails are rated for difficulty and a visit to the Moab Information Center will help to determine which trails best suit your skill level.

While ATVs are not allowed in the National Parks, riders will find thousands of miles of unpaved roads in the public lands surrounding Moab. Particularly popular is the White Wash Sand Dunes located 48 miles north of Moab, where in addition to the dunes, you'll find miles of dirt roads which can be used to access Crystal Geyser and the Green River.

Raft, canoe, or kayak the mighty Colorado River, where again, you define the intensity of the adventure. From calm water rafting to the thrilling rapids of Cataract Canyon, half day, full day, or several days, you are sure to find the perfect river adventure.

Soothe your soul, now and again later, with the images you capture with a camera in this photographer's paradise. Under conditions of constantly changing light, the red rock landscapes provide limitless photographic opportunities.

Calm enough for youngsters, yet exciting enough for the most extreme adventure seeker, Moab has something for everyone. Great for a weekend get-a-way, spring break, or an extended family vacation, Moab is where your self-defined adventure begins.

For more information contact the Moab Area Travel Council at: 800-635-moab (6622) or visit www.discovermoab.com.