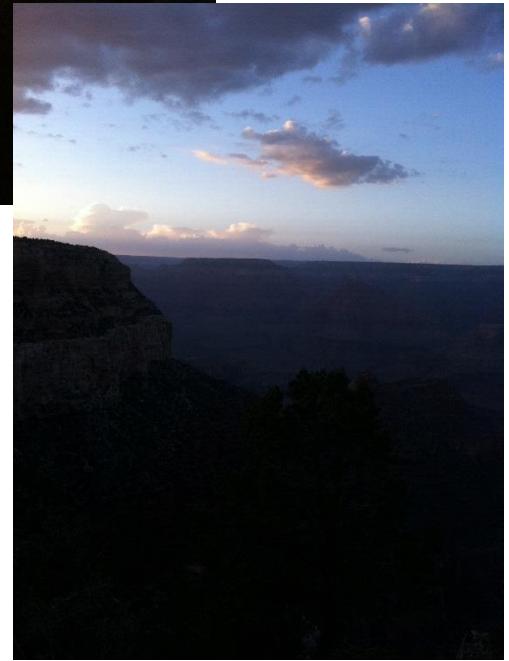
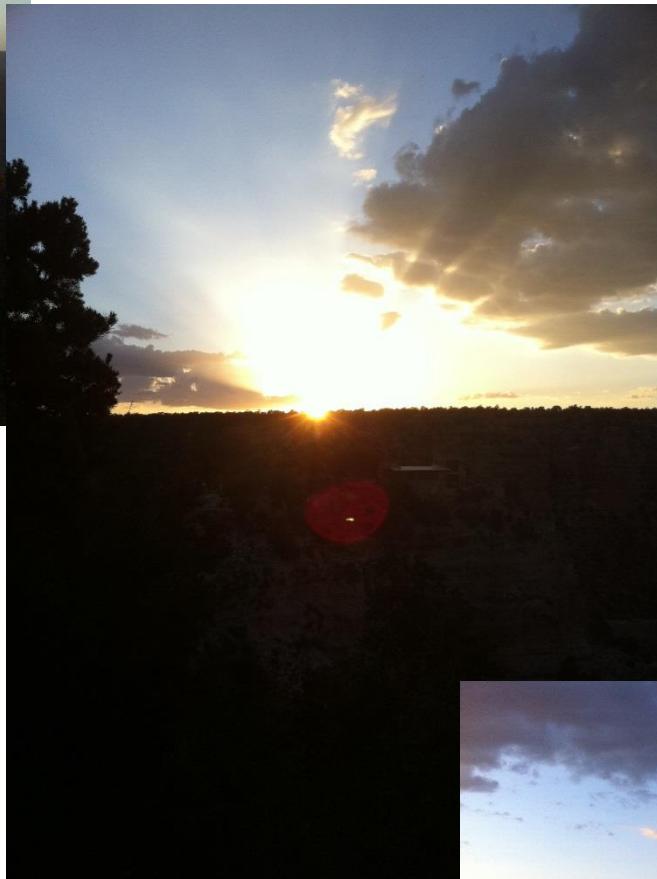
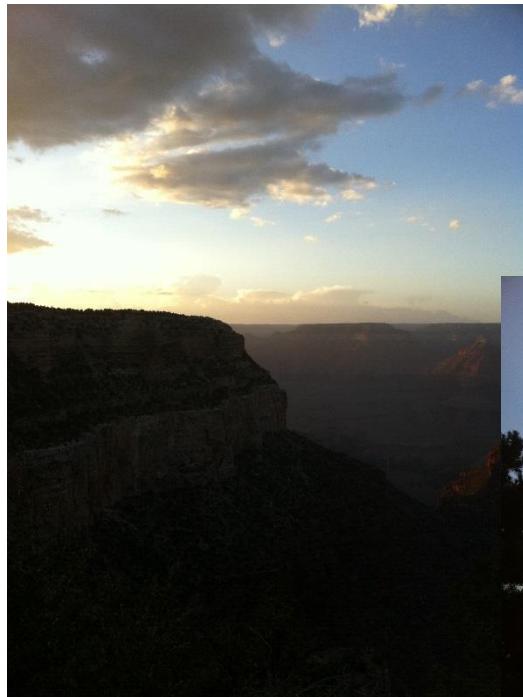


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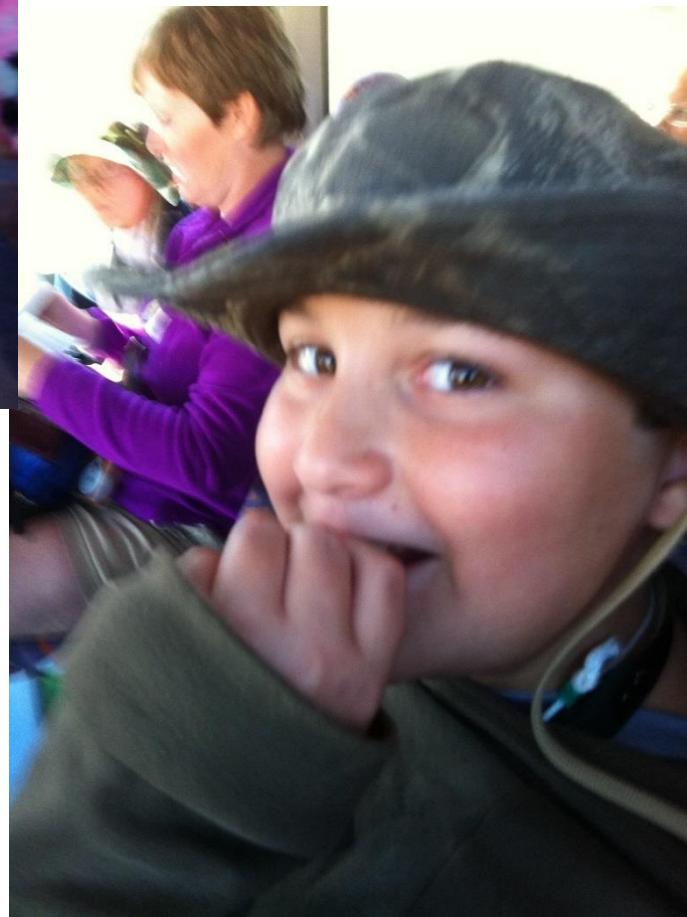
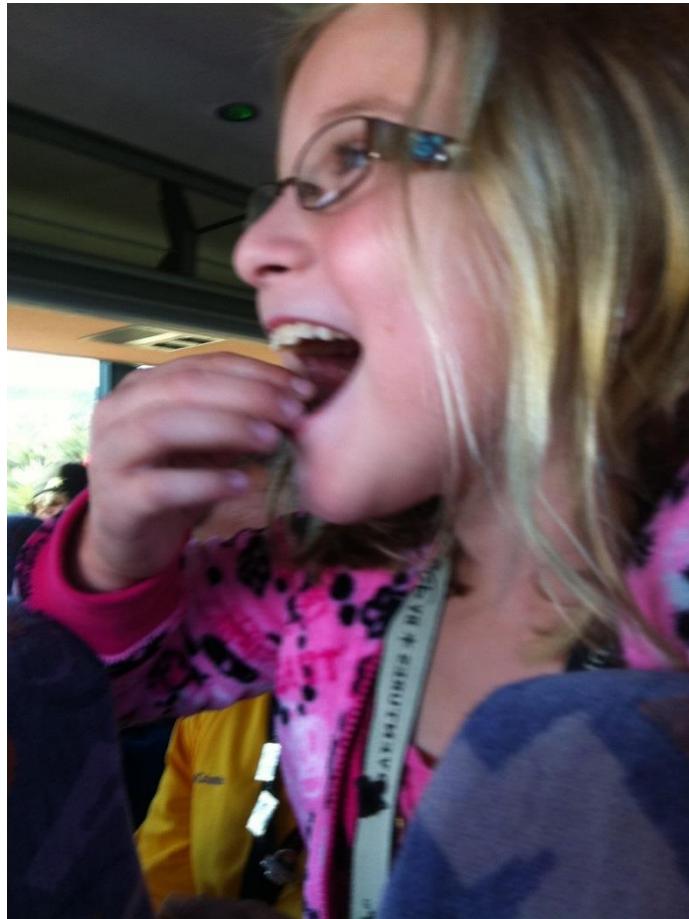
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**Sunsets and Sunrises**



Kids Ate Chocolate Covered Bugs on Trip after playing games on bus



### Forest Gump



Our Guides told us our trip was going to get better after the Grand Canyon and we didn't believe them. At least not until we got into Moab, Utah. On our way, we stopped along the road for the Forest Gump Mile Marker 13 shot. This is the famous scene where he stopped "ruunnnning" during the movie and said "I'm tired and I think I'll go home now." Because Lonny and I's first date was watching Forest Gump, this stop was extra special for us.



### Monument Valley

The road approaching Monument Valley gives the most famous image of the valley. The highway cuts through the mesas at Monument Pass.



The majestic beauty of Monument Valley is indescribable. This great valley is located entirely in the Navajo Nation. We took a 4x4 jeep guided tour through these mythical formations. The isolated red mesas and buttes surrounded by empty, sandy desert have been used for countless movies including, Back to the Future, Griswold's Vacation, Easy Rider, Mission Impossible, and just about every Old Western Movie starring John Wayne. This is a shot of John Ford's point. Doesn't it look like Pride Rock from The Lion King??

The Valley is not a valley in the conventional sense. Rather, it is a wide flat, sometimes desolate landscape, interrupted by the crumbling formations rising hundreds of feet into the air. Most of Monument Valley can only be seen from the 17-mile dirt road. The road is dusty, steep in a couple places, and rather uneven. Visitors are not allowed to hike away from the road closer towards any of the formations. The valley lies at an elevation of 5,564 and has an annual rainfall average of 8.5 inches.

Monument Valley was established as the first Navajo Tribal Park by the Navajo Tribal Council on July 11, 1958. It encompasses 29,816 acres, and contains over 100 Anasazi Indian ruins. There are over 40 named "monuments" in the valley. Monument Valley is young as geological time goes. The natural forces still continue to shape the land, today.

### Lunch at Goulding Lodge

Goulding Lodge was established as a trading post in 1923 by Harry Goulding and his wife, Mike, who took an active interest in helping the Navajos make the sometimes painful adjustment to the 20th century.

### Luke attempted a Navajo Taco



**On the East side of the Road: West Mitten Butte, Merrick Butte and East Mitten Butte**



**Merrick Butte**



### **The East and West Mittens**

**The Mittens**, according to the Navajo, are two hands that lie dormant, left behind by the gods as signs that someday the holy beings will return and rule with power from Monument Valley.



Right side of road: Mitchell Mesa - rising 1,000 feet above.

### Elephant Butte



Has a high sheer-sided block of sandstone on one side and a narrow, tapering ridge but improves thereafter.

### Three Sisters

A group of thin pinnacles, eroded remnants of a narrow ridge extending southwards from one corner of Mitchell Mesa -- together with adjoining Wetherill Mesa these two flat-topped hills shield this part of Monument Valley from the highway. **The Three Sisters** are believed by the Navajo to be three Holy People who have turned to stone. The south sister stands 600 ft/183 m; the middle sister is 325 ft/99 m; and the northernmost sister stands 575 ft/175 m. Their names are Faith, who is praying;



Hope, who is gazing up at Faith; and Charity, looking like Mother Superior. That's right, Harry Goulding, who named many of the monument in the valley thought that they looked like nuns.

Castle rock and Bear and Rabbit are nearby

### **Shot of John Ford's point**



**Artist's Point**

We recreated the iconic image of a lone rider on a horse standing at the edge of the viewpoint for just \$2 per person. Looks just like a postcard!



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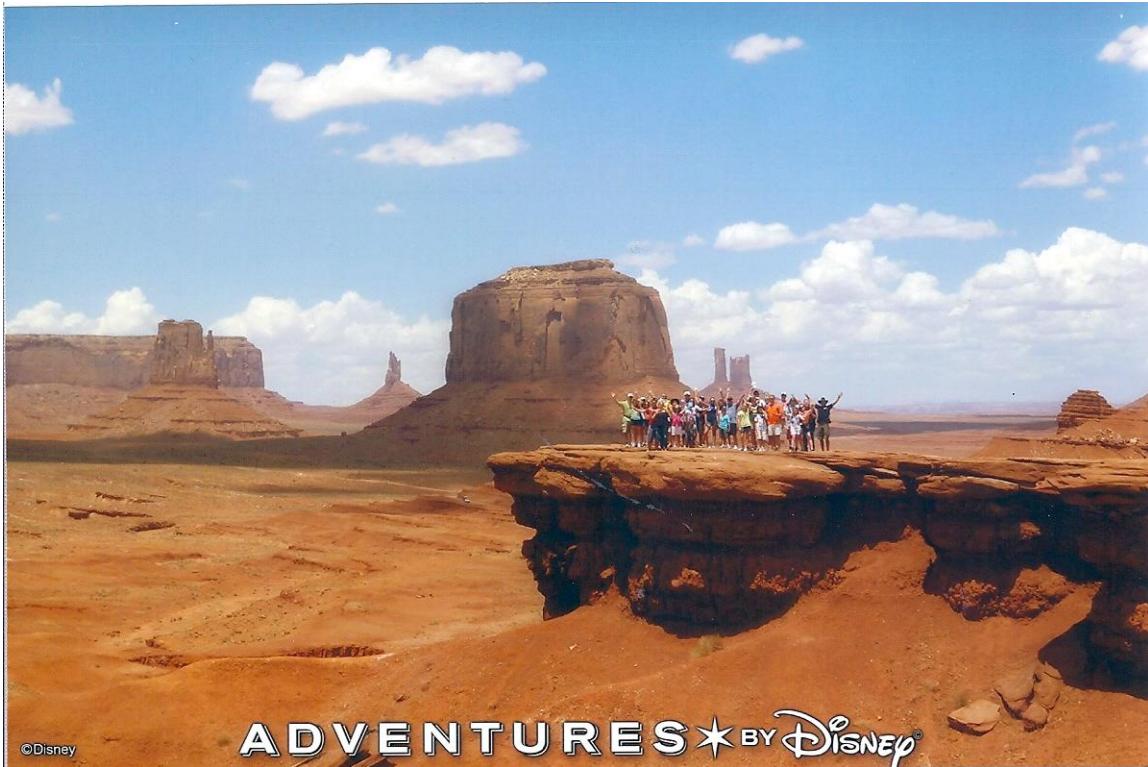
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### **Camel Butte**



### **North Window**

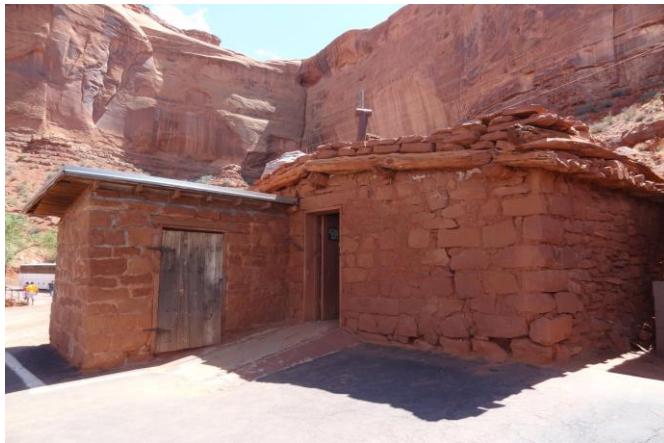
A gap between the edges of Elephant Butte and Cly Butte which frames East Mitten Butte.

The Mitten looks different from this angle as the distinctive spire on its north side is not in view.



### **John Wayne's Cabin**

Used when he was filming in the area.



### **Mexican Hat**

Located just outside the northern boundary of both the Navajo Nation and Monument Valley. The rock outcropping on top is a curiously sombrero-shaped, 60 foot wide by 12 foot thick rock. It is 4,400 feet above sea level.

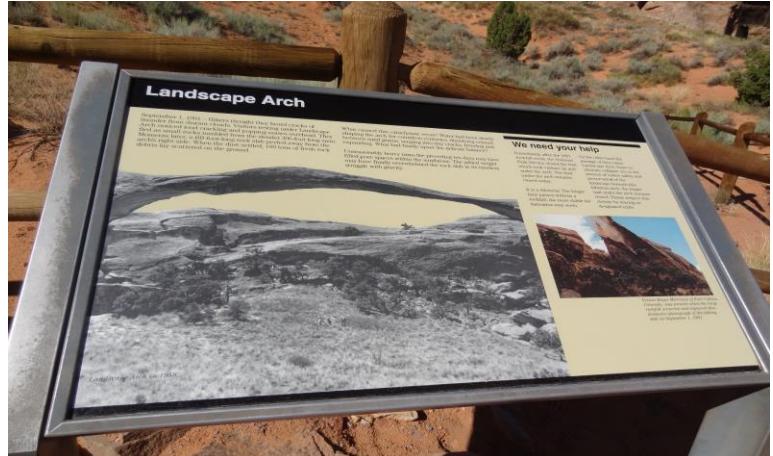


### Arches National Park



Arches National Park near Moab, Utah has over 2,000 natural Entrada sandstone arches. The national park lies atop a one-mile thick underground salt bed which is the main cause of the formation of the arches. It was deposited on the Colorado Plateau 300 million years ago when a sea flowed into the region and eventually evaporated. Over millions of years, the salt bed was covered with debris eroded from the Uplift to the northeast. During the early Jurassic (210 Million years ago), desert conditions prevailed in the region and the vast buff-colored Navajo Sandstone was deposited. The salmon-colored Entrada Sandstone was deposited on top of the Navajo about 140 million years ago. The arches of the area are developed mostly within the Entrada formation. The weight of the cover caused the salt bed below to liquefy and thrust up layers of rock into salt domes. Faulting occurred and whole sections of rock subsided into the area between the domes.

We took a grueling hike to Landscape Arch,



the longest natural arch in the world. It is hard to believe that a piece of rock like this can exist. Its thinnest section is only 6 feet thick, yet supports a span of rock 290 feet long. In Sept 1991, a 60 ft long 180 ton rock slab fell from the right side of the arch. Knowing that it could collapse at any time made our hiking journey far more precious! Notice the moon above the arch on the right side in our picture.

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Lonny and Luke continued the hike without Claire and I to Double "O" arch another 2 miles! I was just proud I made it as far as we did!



## Devil's Garden

Features a series of rock fins that have broken out of the earth due to erosion.



**Petrified Fossils displayed on the bus**



**It's Alive!**

This knobby, black crust is dominated by cyanobacteria, which is one of the oldest life forms. It is thought that these organisms were among the first



land colonizers of the earth's early land masses and played an integral role in the formation and stabilization of the earth's early soils. Extremely thick mats of these organisms converted the earth's original carbon dioxide-rich atmosphere into one rich in oxygen and capable of sustaining life.

### **Baby Arch**

The first arch you see after driving into Arches National Park.



**Ham Rock (It actually resembles a canned ham!) or Balanced Rock --**

Balanced Rock is one of the most popular features of Arches National Park is a large balancing rock, the size of three school buses.

The total height of Balanced Rock is about 128 feet. Until recently, there was a much smaller balanced rock named "Chip Off The Old Block", which fell during the winter of 1975/76. It is caused by Evidence of wind and water changing directions and scoured the sandstone



**PotHole Arch - also known as Toilet Seat**

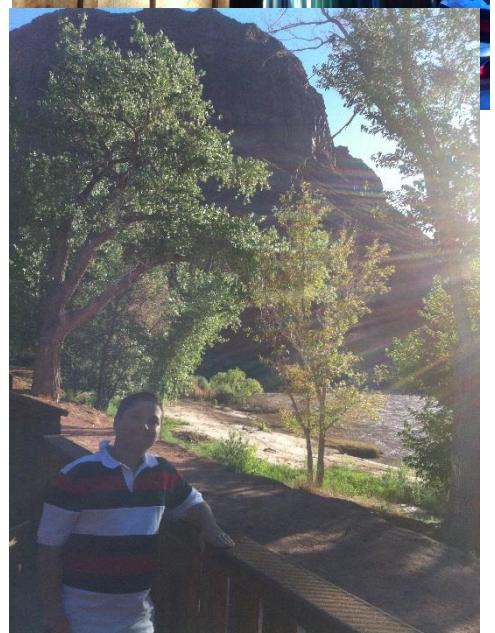


### **Red Cliffs Lodge**



While in Moab, we stayed in a cabin at the fabulous Red Cliffs Lodge. Our private patio was on the bank of the Colorado River with the best white water rapids at the foot of the Red Rock Cliffs. This is an incredibly beautiful place with friendly people who welcomed us there like a long lost family. Also located on the property is

Castle Creek Vineyard Winery with daily wine tastings! We most enjoyed the Outlaw Red, a red wine blend.



**Date Night:**

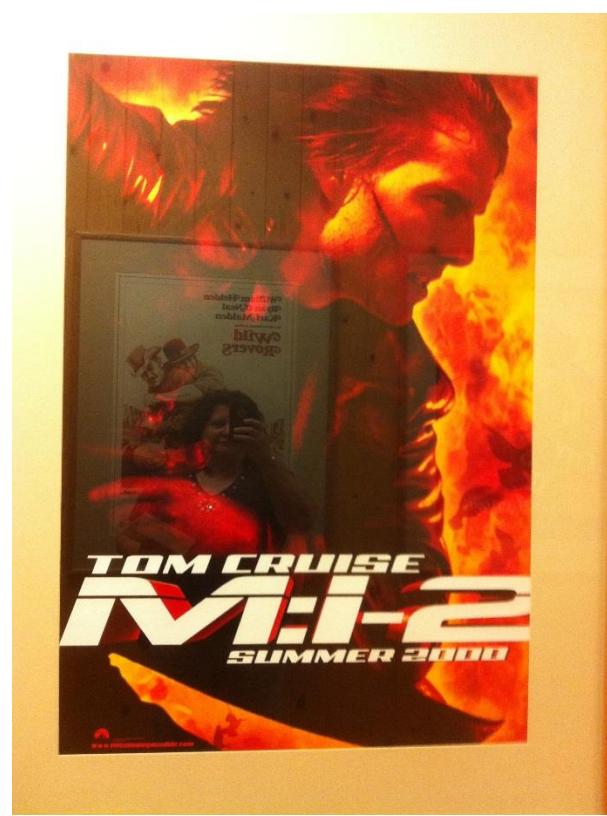
One evening, the Junior Adventurers had a party and the adults got to have date night at the Lodge.

This was our view from our table.



### Moab Museum of Film and Western Heritage

There is a movie museum at the Red Cliffs Lodge displaying lots of local movie memorabilia. Some of many movies include the John Ford Westerns, Geronimo, City Slickers, Indiana Jones, Thelma and Louise, and over 100 commercials have used the Moab area as a location.



**We even took our pictures with John Wayne.**



A dummy of Thelma, from the movie, Thelma and Louise, was used in the final scene where the car drives off the cliff. The dummy was recovered after the scene was shot.

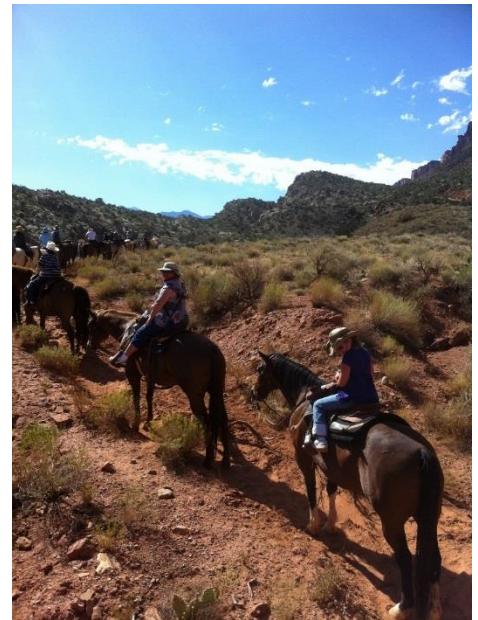


### **Horseback Riding**



We went horseback riding through the beautiful trails of Castle Creek Canyon amidst 2,000 foot towering red rock cliffs. I was on a horse who refused to follow directions! He was originally named "Blunder" because he was mistakenly

born inside the horse trailer. If there were two paths to follow, when all the other horses were going one way, of course, Blunder went the opposite way. He brought me on a wild ride through trees, bushes, cactus.....you name it! We also crossed shallow creeks several times as the views just kept getting better! The kids, especially Claire, truly enjoyed this outing.



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**The Famous Castle Rock**



### **Overboard!**



This is the last picture I took before Luke and I fell out of the raft! Because of the tremendous rains this year, the Colorado River is running at 20,000 cfs. Normal speed is only 4,000 cfs. We were only supposed to be in Class 1 and 2 rapids. They estimate the rapid we hit was prob a Class 3 or 4. Also, our raft was off-balance because we were the only boat with only 7 in the raft instead of 8. Luke and I were on the left side with 4 and Claire and Lonny were on the right side with only 3 people. I don't remember going overboard when we hit the rapid. But, I remember opening my eyes completely underwater and saw my camera floating in the water in front of me. Luckily, we fell next to the raft. As I surfaced, I held on to the raft for dear life as we continued through the rapid. After I looked for my children and realized they were OK, my next immediate thought was how in the world was I going to get back in the raft! My life jacket saved my life but was now up around my ears while trying to hold on to the raft. I began to panic and hyperventilate. Our guide, Chris, was still in the water with me and spoke calmly and soothed me. By the time they pulled and pushed me back onto the raft, I realized we were still only halfway through the rafting trip! What a shock to turn a mild rafting trip into a wild rafting trip!

**Farewell!**

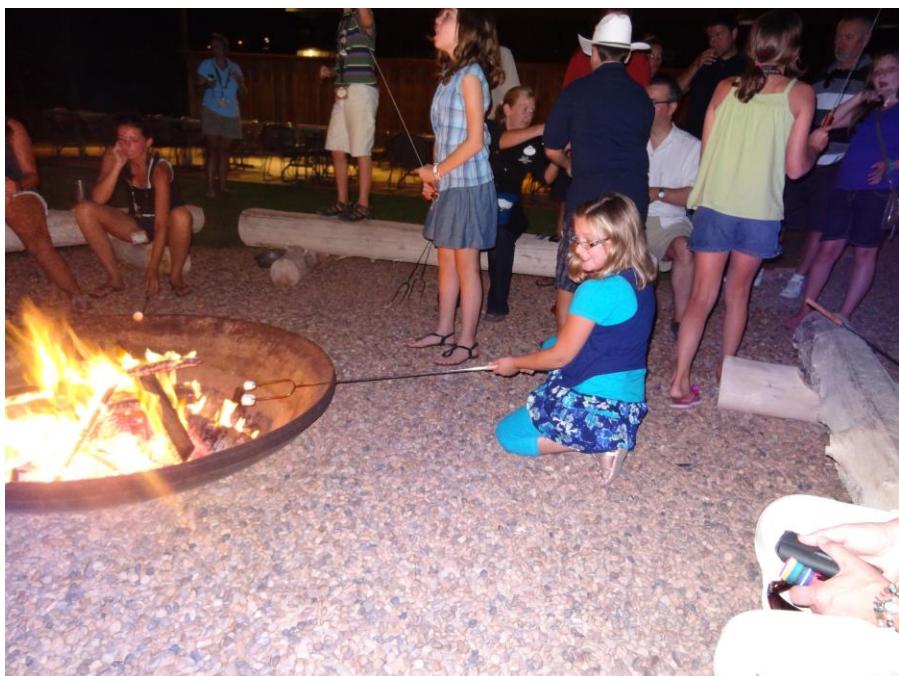


Farewell! All good things must come to an end. The final night of an Adventures by Disney Vacation also includes special surprises. I don't want to spoil the magic for anyone who may consider taking one of these adventures. There are many more stories I could tell! I hope you have enjoyed my sharing of so many great memorable moments of

our incredible family vacation. Our family feels blessed, honored and extremely lucky to have made this journey this summer. We definitely got our money's worth out of this vacation. I usually don't share this much info about our lives, but I felt this was too exciting not to share. We're hoping to take another ABD Vacation sometime in the future. They go to some of the most intriguing and beloved places all over the world! They are certainly not paying me to say this..... But, If you are interested, check it out at [abd.disney.go.com](http://abd.disney.go.com). Please let me know if you do!

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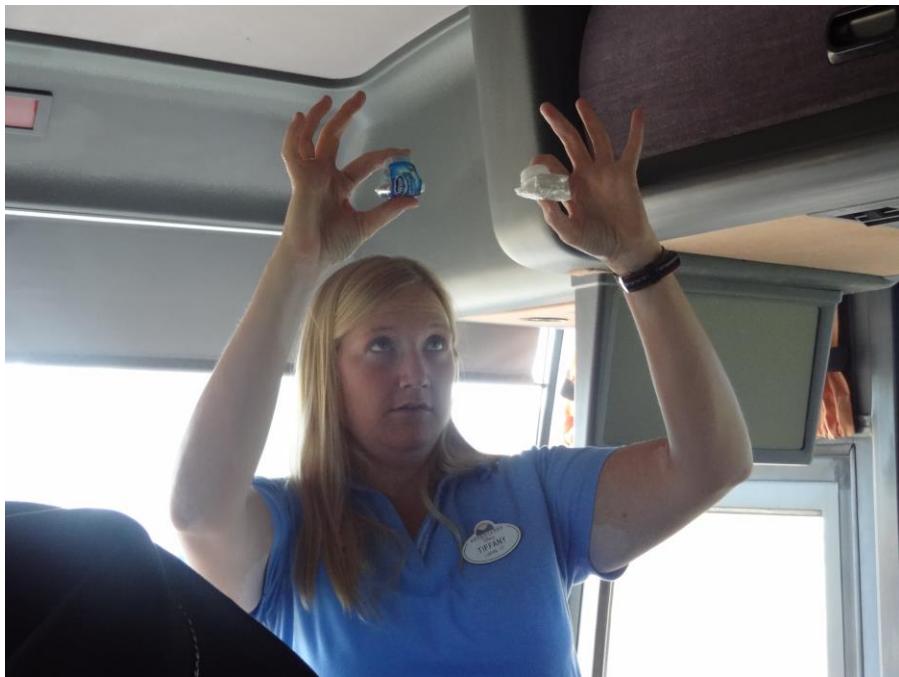
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**Winners of The Crushed Bottle Contest on the Bus!**



**Driving to Grand Junction Colorado to catch a plane back to Phoenix!**



**Arizona Diamondbacks Game**



Took the Light Rail to Chase Field, home of the Arizona Diamondbacks. They were playing the Colorado Rockies. The retractable roof was pleasantly closed with the AC on high! We were told that the roof opens and closes to its own music, which is composed to time out at exactly the four and a half minutes needed to move it. We even saw a grand slam homerun by the Arizona Diamondbacks!

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It was Native American Night at Chase Field!



Disney's Mickey Mouse! We were curious why he was located at Chase Field. Also, the new DBacks logo looks a great deal like the Disney logo?? Weird??



The Big Dawg Stand had some crazy options for their foot long hot dogs. Lonny and Luke got the Arizona Dog featured melted cheese, sausage, and red and black tortilla strips. Claire tried the Wisconsin Dog which was topped with macaroni and cheese and bacon -- and she ate it all!

**There was a bird in the Phoenix airport who wanted to fly home!**



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