



MEDIEVAL CHAMBER - MOAB



Rating: 3A

Length: 2-4 Hours

Gear: Standard Technical Gear

Maps: Moab, UT

Rappels: 2 - Bring 2-50 m (165 ft.) Ropes if doing the simultaneous rappel, otherwise 1-60 m (197 ft.) & 30 m (99 ft.) of webbing.

Water: Little/none. No wetsuit needed.

Flash Flood Danger: Moderate / low.

Season: Any, no snow

Waypoints:

Trailhead	12S 631760mE 4271696mN N38° 35' 02" W109° 29' 14"
First Rap	12S 629929mE 4272616mN N38° 35' 33" W109° 30' 29"
Climbers Exit	12S 629863mE 4272893mN N38° 35' 42" W109° 30' 32"
Negro Bill Exit/Trailhead	12S 627649mE 4274526mN N38° 36' 36" W109° 32' 02"
Loop Exit	12S 630928mE 4273401mN N38° 35' 58" W109° 29' 47"
Jeep Road	12S 630973mE 4272861mN N38° 35' 40" W109° 29' 46"
Stay Straight	12S 630955mE 4272713mN N38° 35' 36" W109° 29' 47"
Stay Straight #2	12S 630954mE 4272626mN N38° 35' 33" W109° 29' 47"
Rejoin Wash	12S 631138mE 4272147mN N38° 35' 17" W109° 29' 39"

Hype

Medieval Chamber is a short route just outside of Moab. Although not very long, it is renowned for its last rappel, which can be done as a simul rap off an arch. The last rappel, Morning Glory Arch, is very popular with tourists, so expect a crowd awaiting your dramatic entrance from above.

There are several possible exits: the full route down Grandstaff Canyon, a loop UP Grandstaff Canyon, or a spicy and fun climbers only exit. If you have two cars, down Grandstaff is my recommendation as it is scenic and a really nice way to end the day. Without two cars, UP Grandstaff makes a nice loop as well.

Note: To access the trailhead, you have to enter Sand Flat Recreation area. There is a fee you will need to pay as you enter. (currently less than \$10).

Tags: canyon, access: 2wd

Trailhead

From downtown Moab, turn left (east) on Millcreek road, and follow it to the Sand Flats road. Take the Sand Flats road, passing the pay booth and slickrock biking trail. 1.5 miles past the biking trail, the road crosses a wash. This is the wash you will be traveling down. Park your car off the road anywhere near here. The radio tower group area is just before the wash.

Optional Shuttle

If you have 2 cars, and would like to do the shuttle, leave one car at the Grandstaff Canyon trailhead. It is reached by heading north out of Moab about a mile, and turning right on Highway 128. Go up Highway 128 about 3 miles to the obvious and signed Grandstaff trailhead on the right. The Grandstaff trailhead was recently improved. **Note: This is the preferred option for most groups. The climb out without the shuttle requires climbers or experienced canyoneers only.**

Route

From the trailhead, walk north down the wash. Many side drainages will come in, and you will have to skirt around a few dryfalls. Nothing very difficult, keep winding your way downstream. About 30-45 minutes from the car, the canyon will plummet into the Medieval Chamber at a 30 m / 100' drop with a hanging pool 3/4 of the way down. Two bolts on the left (LDC) can be used for the anchor.

Once at the bottom, a 50 m section of slot leads to a wide open view down into Granstaff Canyon, and the final obstacle, a 35 m. You have two choices:

Option 1:

A tree on the left can provide a good anchor. Bring plenty of webbing, it is a ways back from the edge. If rapping from webbing extended to the edge, a 60 m rope is enough.

Option 2:

Most will be here for option 2, the simultaneous rappel off the arch. I won't go into details, but this exercise is for highly experienced canyoneers only! Be careful if doing the simultaneous rappel option.

Warning: Hikers from the bottom heavily visit Morning Glory Arch. **DO NOT THROW YOUR ROPE!** (Or assume that by yelling ROPE, people will know to move out of the way.) Instead, slowly lower your rope down to avoid hitting a potential unsuspecting hiker. There have been a few close calls.

Warning: This rappel will deposit you next to a pool that is surrounded by poison ivy! Be careful on the rappel, and while coiling ropes to avoid contact with the plant. With a little caution, it can easily be avoided.

Getting out there are three options: If you spotted a car at the Grandstaff Trailhead, simply walk down from the arch to the junction with Grandstaff Canyon, turn left, and head downstream about 2 miles to your car.

UP Grandstaff Canyon Loop Exit:

From the bottom of the rappel, head down canyon to the confluence with Grandstaff Canyon. Go right (up canyon), following the most used social trail, keeping an eye on your watch. In about 1.1 miles (20-30 minutes) of easy hiking, after the canyon has made a gentle bend south, then another bend back east, keep an eye out on the right for the only reasonable looking weakness leading to the rim.

Work up the gully and weakness (no scrambling required) to the rim of the canyon. From the rim, CAREEFULLY pick your way around the cryptobiotic soil heading south and a touch west on an emerging social trail. The trail meets up with an old 4wd road. Follow it south, staying straight at the two junction, to where it re-joins the approach wash. Go left up the wash a few minutes to the trailhead.

Climbers Route Out:

Experienced canyoneers or climbers only. Climbing shoes or sticky approach shoes help.

If you don't have a shuttle, head down from the last rappel keeping a close eye on the right for the first reasonable looking place to climb out (5-10 minutes).

The climb out is at a series of 3 fins that climb out just down canyon from a side/fault canyon on the right. The 3 fins are separated each by a shallow groove and get steeper as you go down canyon, You want to ascend the middle of the three fins. There is some exposure on the climb out, and a bit of slab climbing in it. (5.4)

Be careful on the rib, there is little room for error, and a fall would be bad. Once you reach the top of the fin, you can circle up left and around to the top of the mesa. As you head back, you will find a 4x4 road that provides easy access to a nice overlook of Morning Glory Arch. Follow the 4x4 road back to the main road and your car, or the approach wash and follow the approach was back to your car.

