



CHIMNEY ROCK - SAN RAFAEL SWELL



Rating: 5.6 PG-13 (5.3 in some books)

Length: 2-4 hours

Gear: Rope and long sling

Maps: The Blocks, UT; San Rafael Knob, UT

Season: Spring, Summer, Fall (hot in summer)

Waypoints:

Trailhead

12S 517863mE 4303136mN

N38° 52' 37" W110° 47' 39"

Chimney Rock

12S 516238mE 4303848mN

N38° 53' 00" W110° 48' 46"

Hype

Chimney Rock is just north of I-70, near Dutchman Arch, clearly visible from the Ghost Rock view area. In the book *Canyoneering*, Steve Allen mentions it as a rock climbers side note, with a 5.3 rating. Intrigued that such an impressive tower could go at such an easy rating, I had wanted to check it out for a long time. I was not disappointed, although I think the rating is likely a little stiffer, maybe 5.6, but still very reasonable and a breathtaking summit.

Tags: *climb, access: paved, access: high clearance*

Trailhead

If your goal is simply to climb Chimney Rock, parking at the Ghost Rock view area of off I-70 is likely your best option. This is near mile marker 123, and clearly signed from both directions.

If you want to visit Dutchman Arch and Locomotive Point while in the area, you need to take exit 131 from I-70 (about 30 miles west of Green River).

- Go south off the freeway and reset your odometer. The road goes west, paralleling the freeway. (12S 529666mE 4303553mN / N38° 52' 49" W110° 39' 29")
- 3.8 miles from the freeway you will find a signed junction for Head of Sinbad. Go right at this junction toward Head of Sinbad. (12S 525575mE 4299459mN / N38° 50' 37" W110° 42' 19")
- 1.0 miles past this junction a road comes in on the left, stay right. (12S 524091mE 4298700mN / N38° 50' 12" W110° 43' 21")

- Stay on this main road for 3.4 more miles (4.4 from the first junction) to a signed junction to Dutchman Arch. Go right. (12S 519548mE 4301495mN / N38° 51' 43" W110° 46' 29")
- 0.5 miles, cross under freeway. (12S 519168mE 4302142mN / N38° 52' 05" W110° 46' 45")
- Right after the freeway the road branches into several forks, you should go left on road #641, following the fence a short distance then turning north. (12S 519108mE 4302244mN / N38° 52' 08" W110° 46' 47")
- 0.2 miles from the highway is a junction, go left and Dutchman Arch. (12S 518798mE 4302528mN / N38° 52' 17" W110° 46' 60")
- 0.5 miles from the highway is Dutchmans Arch. You can park here (recommended), or continue another 0.5 miles on slightly rougher road to the start of the trailhead. (12S 518416mE 4302621mN / N38° 52' 20" W110° 47' 16")

Route

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Written By: Ryan Cornia

The approach from Dutchman Arch takes about an hour, from Ghost Rock View Area is likely about the same.

From Dutchman Arch, walk or drive another 0.5 miles west to where an old road branches off on the left. The road is closed to motorized travel, but as of 2007, was easy to find and follow. Follow this road for about 0.3 miles (5-10 minutes) until a fork. Go right. This fork could be easy to miss if you aren't watching, so pay attention. Follow this old road about 20 minutes to the base of Chimney Rock. Chimney Rock will be visible through most of the approach.

Getting Up:

The climb starts on the north side of the formation. (Side opposite the freeway.) The first section is class 4 up to a ledge. There are many options, so find the one that looks best. You will need to downclimb this as well, so keep that in mind.

Once on the ledge, head east around the tower on the narrow red ledge. It is easy walking with a fair amount of exposure in a couple of places.

Once on the east side, you will see an obvious notch. The crux is climbing from the notch up to the small bush. It is a bit sandy and insecure, with the only protection possible being a pocket you could sling near the top. (5 m (17 ft.)/ 5.6 R). Once at the bush, it eases up a bit, and is a short distance to the summit.

Remember this will need to be downclimbed as well, so stay within your comfort zone.

Getting Down:

Downclimb the same route you came up. The crux can be somewhat spotted, but is tricky. Belay everyone down, and send your best climber last.

