

Grand Canyon Inner Gorge

Kaibab Trail the Canyon's autobahn
descends a lavender layered landscape
limestone sandstone shale schist
this miles-long rim-to-rim hardened legacy trail
sling-shots fancy day-hikers backpackers runners
through a labyrinth of temples
spires buttes canyons
a storied trek

Phantom Ranch guests enjoy beer and wine
steak and stew hauled on the backs of mules
then slumber in rustic cabins beneath cottonwoods
backed into billion-year-old rock
write postcards too

at Bright Angel and Cottonwood
backpackers seek shade and shelter
drink from water fountains
visit flush and composting toilets
store food in bear boxes
a well-choreographed experience
with little left to chance

a hundred *hellos howdys and how-ya-doin's*
punctuate this Wall Street of canyoneering

alas

a whining chainsaw cheers a cowbell
greet an unsuspecting Arizona Trail trekker's
North Rim arrival

The Arizona Trail: Passages in Poetry

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