

Snoopy Rock Beckons

By Marilyn Litvak



Our car rounded the curve of the narrow two-lane highway and there they were: the huge dark red rock formations that signaled we were approaching Sedona. The monolithic formations were awe-inspiring; many rising a 1,000 feet or so out of the dry brown upper plateau land of northern Arizona—officially known as the Upper Sonoran Dessert.

My son and his wife had picked my daughter and me up at the Phoenix airport at 10:30 that morning and here we were two hours later ready for lunch in this magnificent setting.

The drive had been easy. A four lane freeway north from the airport had taken us to an elevation some 4,000 feet above sea level. At which point, we exited the freeway and travelled on a narrower state road heading west for about 10 miles.

We had a handy sightseeing guide book with us as we proceeded along the gently curving road heading towards the town of Sedona.

And we soon spotted the mighty red Cathedral Rock hovering over the highway, but didn't stop to explore further. The nearby Javelina Cantina with wonderful Mexican food and great views of surrounding red rock formations was beckoning.

Traffic had become heavier and our car was probably only traveling at about 25 miles per hour. It was, after all, the Christmas/New Year's vacation season with perfect weather. The sun was shining; the temperature was in a comfortable mid-60's range.

The type of weather that entices hikers to explore the spectacular rock formations that are spread as far as one can see. Or those that are not as adventurous, can take a Pink Jeep tour and let a guide point out the sights.

After lunch, and, as we were on a limited time budget, we elected to stay in the car and drive ourselves around. Getting closer to the town of Sedona, we first decided to check

out the Chapel of the Holly Cross, a modernistic building constructed on top of one of the areas enormous red rock buttes. The guide book described the site perfectly and we were looking forward to a hike up to the chapel, but parking and traffic near the site were a problem so we continued on.

We then reached one of the many round-a-bouts that can be found on the route leading to Sedona from Interstate 17 and veered off to the right heading east but still south of the main town area. Our goal was to find the Snoopy Rock (Dog) formation that was described in the guide book. (See postcard picture above.)

We proceeded about 2 miles along a still narrower road, Schnebly Hill Road, to a parking area for hikers and campers. The four of us got out of the car. And now the fun began as we all seemed to have a different take on which of the visible formations was THE DOG.

There was no clear winner despite referencing the postcard picture of Snoopy Rock. But no matter, we had a wonderful afternoon just enjoying the great outdoors of Sedona—as well as browsing through some of Sedona’s fun shops.

And before we knew it, 4:00pm had arrived and it was time for us to head back to Phoenix. After all, we had a 7:00pm dinner reservation back in the city which we didn’t want to miss.

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