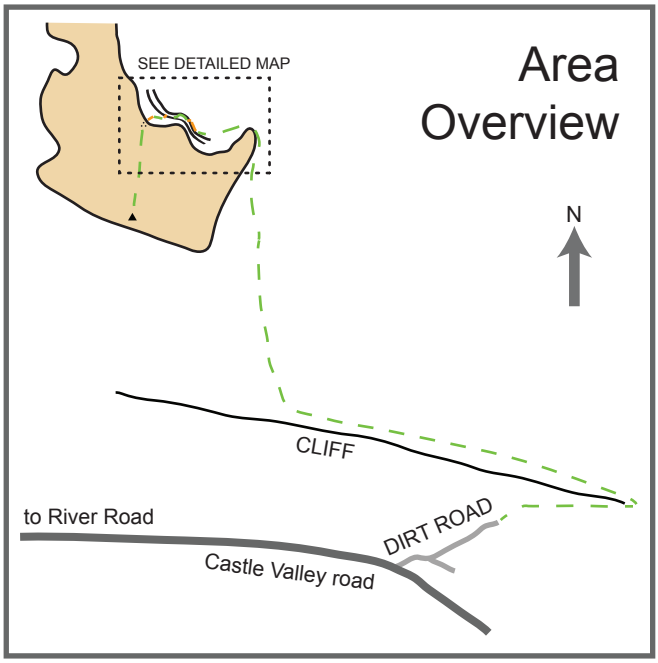
Parriott Mesa

Regular Route (easy 5th class)

(with fixed ropes in all 5th class sections)



GETTING THERE

Just north of Moab, Highway 191 (from I-70) crosses the Colorado River. On the south side of the bridge is Highway 128 (aka River Road). Turn east on this road and follow it 15.3 miles to the signed Castle Valley turnoff. Turn right (south) into Castle Valley. Go 3.2 miles and turn left onto an easy-to-miss dirt road. It'll fork soon after; take the left fork and go half a mile to the obvious trailhead. If you have a passenger car, park on the paved Castle Valley road or as far along the dirt road as you feel comfortable driving.

GEAR

Harness, prusik cord and biners for the fixed lines, rappel device (for the horizontal fixed lines, it's nice to have 2 cords/slings to clip in with*)

ROUTE

(Numbers correspond to the numbers in the route detail map below)

Hike up the trail, going up and right up the steep slope and below some cliffs. When the trail tops out above the cliffs at a little pass, head back left up the ridge line toward Parriott Mesa. Eventually, the trail will start angling right (north-ish) underneath the big cliffs of Parriott Mesa. The trail through here is faint but not too difficult to follow. Be on the lookout for cairns to help you stay on the trail. You'll encounter some very short cliff steps that you'll need to scramble over as you approach the big cliffs of the mesa proper.

The path takes you around the mesa's corner and upward (1). You'll eventually come to the the first section of fixed lines (2). There's a steel cable and then static rope, going horizontally across a narrow ledge system. This section is super exposed. If you fall, you'll die, so stay clipped in. At the end of the horizontal fixed lines are some fixed lines up a 5th class chimney (3). After the chimney, keep following the trail. At an exposed section where you need to make a step across (4), there's a bolt and sling to grab on to. The trail then leads to a fixed line in a 5th class chimney in a corner (5). Climb up the chimney and head right about 50 feet, where the final fixed rope is (6). Head up the fixed rope and you're on top of the mesa. Note the several large cairns marking the spot.

Walk several hundred feet south-ish toward the obvious high point of the mesa. There's a big rock pile and summit register on top.

DESCENT

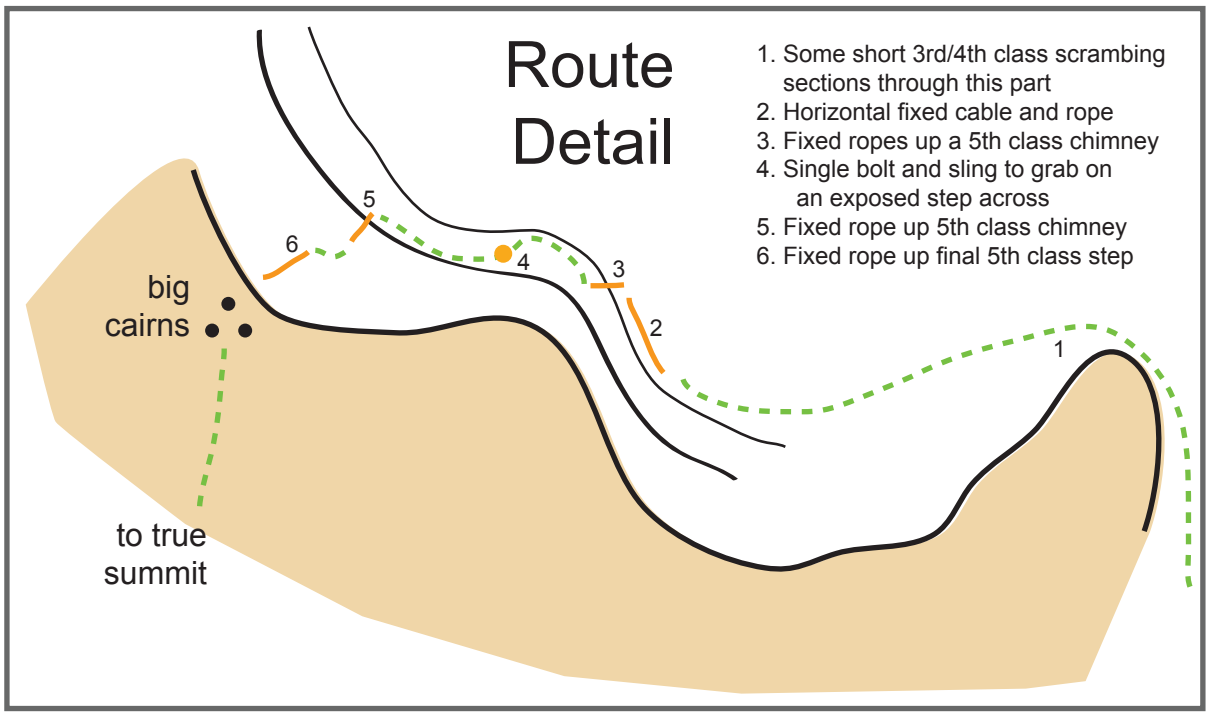
Go back the way you came, rappelling down the fixed lines that you came up. **The top two fixed lines are relatively thick static rope and it might require some serious work getting them to fit in your rappel device.**

***NOTE ON GEAR**

Everyone in my party had a 48" sling and a 24" sling, each with a carabiner attached. We used the 48" sling to tie a klemheist knot for safely going up the places with the fixed lines.

On the horizontal fixed lines, there are a few places where you have to unclip your tether and clip it back on again (to get around the bolts holding the steel wire in place), and having the 24" sling allowed each person to be attached at all times with at least one tether.

Climbing down the fixed lines wouldn't be very fun; make sure you bring those rappel devices.



© Tristan Higbee/ TheAloof.com
This may not be reproduced or used elsewhere in print or digital format.