

FLAGSTAFF, Arizona (Achieve3000, January 16, 2019). The Grand Canyon is in the U.S. state of Arizona. There aren't many words that can truly describe it. "Beautiful" and "awesome" aren't enough. To begin to understand, you can look at the photo with this Article. But to grasp how amazing the canyon is, you need to go there. Lieutenant Joseph Christmas Ives didn't think many people would want to see it. Ives led the first white Americans to the Grand Canyon in 1858. He thought they would be the last. "Ours has been the first, and doubtless will be the last party of whites to visit this [place]," he wrote. "It seems intended by nature that the Colorado River, along the greater portion of [the canyon's] lonely and majestic way, shall be forever unvisited and undisturbed." Well, not completely undisturbed. After all, Native American peoples, including the Navajo, the Hopi, and the Havasupai, had lived in the area for hundreds of years. But Ives couldn't believe that anyone would want to visit. The canyon was hard to reach. And he thought it was too craggy to enjoy. As it turns out, Ives was wrong. Each year, the Grand Canyon now draws more than six million tourists. Most are happy to look down into a 1-mile (1.6-kilometer) deep gorge. Some raft down rivers, hike the trails, or camp under the stars. These days, you can fly, drive, or take a train into the Grand Canyon. But even when travel was difficult, people visited. And soon it became clear that there was money to be made. Early entrepreneurs charged a dollar (a lot back then) to hike down a trail. What if you needed a drink of water? You had to pay. What if you needed to use the bathroom? You had to pay for that, too. Business-minded people set up campgrounds and hotels. Others wanted to build ranches and mines in the canyon. That worried some people. They wanted to protect the canyon. Imagine if the Grand Canyon was filled with restaurants and shops. But it's not. The canyon is still about the same as it was when Joseph Ives saw it. And that's because people worked to have it preserved as a national park. Theodore Roosevelt was one. "Leave [the canyon] as it is," said Roosevelt. "You cannot improve on it." Roosevelt was U.S. president from 1901 to 1909. He couldn't get the U.S. government to make the Grand Canyon a national park. But his side won out in 1919. February 26, 2019, marked 100 years since Grand Canyon National Park was created. And anyone who has ever visited the park probably agrees with Roosevelt: It can't get any better.