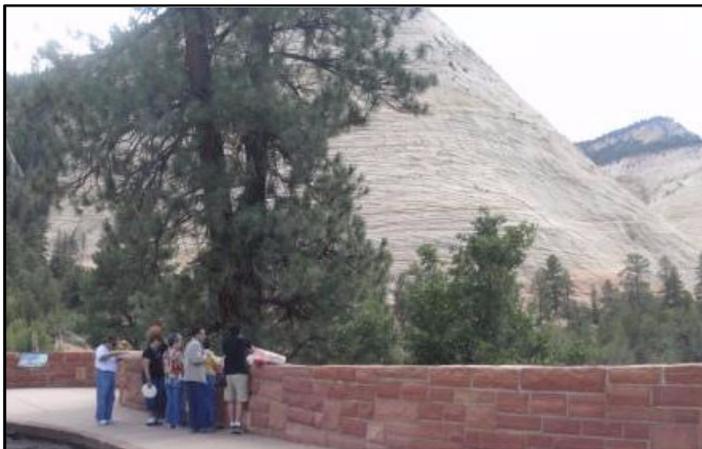


TRAVELOGUE 1 - LAKBAYAN TRIP TO YELLOWSTONE

The Lakbayan "Lakad Bayan" tradition continued amongst a close knit group of Upscans when seven of us convened to Las Vegas host Tony & Bernie Nievera's house. Philippine residents Jimmy & Mercy Abad flew in from Manila, as did Mon & Mimi Pasicolan. After the trip, both couples would go off to visit their children in Baltimore and Milwaukee, respectively. Lisa and I, on the other hand, had been done visiting the children in Los Angeles, New York and Jersey City, among others, over the past 2-1/2 months, and will fly back to the Manila, thence Tanjay, within a few days after getting back to New Jersey. Newly retired Tony Estrera flew in from Los Angeles, but better half Josie couldn't make it due to her teaching assignments as school was just starting. Another frequent Lakbayaner Erwin Gomez, backed out at the last moment. And he had no chance of catching up with us midway as he had done so 4 years ago when an even bigger Lakbay group was touring France.

Both Tony's - Nievera and Estrera - made all the arrangements with hotel reservations, van rental, etc. The itinerary was a day in Zion and Bryce Canyon National Parks in Utah, then five days in Yellowstone and the Grand Tetons which straddles Montana, Wyoming and Idaho.



Top photo shows the group having a stand-up picnic lunch along the road at a viewing point of the mountain whose main attraction was its oddly shaped checkerboard surface. Lower left photo is the famous Hoodoo figures made by wind and water erosion on the other reddish mountain. Last photo is the jagged rock formations typical of Bryce Canyon.



TonyE supervising the loading up of the rental van. TonyN would drive his Mercedes, shown beyond, and in addition to Bernie and Mercy, would also have Yaya, the Nievera domestic helper. The rest of us, all 6, would fit in the van.



At the Bryce Canyon entrance. left to right, Bernie & Tony Nievera, Mon Pasicolan, Lisa Gil, Mimi Pasicolan, and Mercy & Jimmy Abad.



Driving through the back routes of Utah approaching Zion Park, landscape shows mesas, or flat mountain tops.

Distance from Las Vegas to Zion Canyon is about 170 miles, a good 2-1/2 hours drive. After driving through Zion, Bryce Canyon is another 70 miles further north. We left Tony's house at about 8:30 am after a light breakfast, and then with all the pit stops for gas, bladder breaks, shopping at curio shops, etc, we found ourselves having a snack at a Burger King at almost 11 am, then stopping for a picnic lunch at about 2 pm at a viewing point on the winding road on the way to Bryce Canyon.



We spent our first night at the Bryce Canyon hotel. It was almost freezing. But nonetheless, three souls braved it out late that night to capture photos of the dazzling night sky at a vantage point within the Canyon where stray light from the nearby town would not pollute the night sky. Photo of left was taken by TonyN, showing the planet Saturn(?) low in the horizon, amidst the starry sky. The Milky Way was even more spectacular.

to be continued

Danny Gil, 12 Sep 2010