

UPPER GALLERY CANYON

As mentioned in my report on the middle and lower portions of this canyon, I am not including maps of its location due to the difficulty involved in accessing the middle and upper portions of this canyon. However, those interested in visiting this canyon who have much experience in hiking in Death Valley should be able to determine this canyon's location from some of the photos provided in this report.

This is the impasse mentioned near the end of my Gallery Canyon report:



It can be bypassed very easily on the left side:



Then, around the corner, the canyon enters a spectacular section of slot narrows:



The following five photos give an idea as to how impressive this short slot is:



The canyon opens up briefly just beyond the slot, then enters a narrower section:



Nice red and black stripes on the canyon walls through here:



This is the beginning of the narrower section of the canyon, and it is the kind of scenery which we would be seeing for a while in this canyon:



Here we encounter the first of the two boulder jams in this canyon, this one being easier to climb than the second:



Up ahead is the second boulder jam; as we had a long distance to go on this short December day, we did not stop to take as many photos as we might have:



Continuing up this narrower section of the canyon:



Finally, around a sharp bend in the canyon, we encounter this tall dryfall:



It appears to be bypassable on either side, but the terrain to the right seemed easier:



The canyon splits around a rocky section just above the fall:



Looking down at the top of the fall, we can see that there is evidence of canyoneers having descended this canyon sometime in the past:



The left fork of the split has this short dryfall:



The right fork has some shorter dryfalls which are easier to climb:



Continuing up-canyon, the wash is wide for a short distance, and somewhere in this area is where it forks into a left and a right fork (we take the right fork):



It was here that we saw the remains of a bighorn sheep, and a gigantic mountain lion scat; this made us quite nervous for the remainder of the hike, especially in the narrow section at the end of the canyon:



Up ahead the canyon enters another narrow area:



The next three photos show the short dryfalls in this constriction:



Here we see that the canyon either enters a tight slot or hits a major impasse (with the second being more likely):



The canyon does indeed encounter a dryfall, which is surprisingly colorful; it was these kinds of colors which caused the canyon to be named Gallery Canyon by another hiker, and for me to have previously referred to it as Rococo Canyon (noting the pastel colors of the paintings of that era as opposed to the typical subjects of that art):



Panorama looking up-canyon from the bypass of this dryfall:



The canyon now enters another narrower area:



As we round a nice bend in the canyon, we wonder if we will encounter another major impasse:



Sure enough, this is a major dryfall which must be bypassed:



There is a simple workaround to the right of this dryfall:



Just above the dryfall shown two photos ago is this short dryfall, so we continue on the workaround to bypass it. Note that there was no trace of canyoneers or others in the wash at this point:



Up ahead we can see that the canyon appears to enter some slot narrows:



From looking at Google Earth, I had great hopes for these narrows, but they kept seeming to just be around one more turn:



Here the rock gets increasingly colorful:



And we continue racing ahead to see what is around the next bend in the wash:



The canyon widens once more:



There is a lot of nice colorful rock in this canyon:



Finally, we are entering the narrows:



This was one particularly colorful spot on the canyon wall:



Up ahead are the narrows, which pass through some red and black rock:



We were somewhat nervous going through these narrows due to the previously observed presence of a mountain lion, thus we were not able to fully appreciate this part of the canyon:



An incredible overhang near the start of these narrows:



There was a long, straight passageway at the start:



The next nine photos show our continued progress up this narrow part of the canyon; in looking back at my photos, it is a much more spectacular set of narrows than I had thought when hiking through it:



We attained the ridge to the left once the canyon began getting steep and less narrow:



We then followed the ridge down, and got some views looking into the left fork which we had seen taking off on our way up-canyon:



Looking back at a nice set of dryfalls in this left fork:



Looking back up the left fork:



Photo of where the left and right forks of this canyon join:



One final HDR photo of the sun setting as we are walking back to where we parked:

