

for dead, but the pair stumbled into a cache of water and, ultimately, rescue. Nick, the photographer, had been shot at by gorilla poachers in Africa and had contracted malaria along the Amazon. Yet he told me the closest he's ever felt to death was on that hike. Cahill's account of the experience was titled "Two Half-Dead Dumbs— in the Desert." You get the idea. If you'd like to duplicate their trek, call Death Valley National Monument (619-786-2331) for more information and a chance to be talked out of it.



TAKE ME TO THE RIVERS

The Ozark National Scenic Riverways is what Congress calls the protected Jacks Fork and Current rivers, which wind for 140 miles through southeast Missouri's Ozark foothills. Hundreds of springs pour into the rivers, including North America's biggest, Big Springs, which daily spews 276 million gallons. Local outfitters rent canoes and inner tubes for float

trips along oak-lined streams (call 800-333-5628 or 314-323-4274). Seven developed campgrounds are available for the cookout afterward. All the sites include grills and tables, some for only \$6 per night (for as many as six people and two tents). If you have a group of 15 to 45, you can reserve a group site for \$1.50 per person per night. Call 314-323-4236. Cabins and a lodge can be found adjacent to Big Springs; for lodge and cabin rates and reservations, call 314-323-4423.



A NEON OASIS

White's City, just outside Carlsbad Caverns National Park, is the progeny of Charles White, one of the early exploiters of the immense cave system in southeastern New Mexico. When Carlsbad became a national park in the 1930s, White owned the desert scrub surrounding the only road to the caves; over the years he—and later his grandson, the current Mr. White—built a rambling neon testament to bad taste. White's City (505-785-2291) now boasts a campground, two hotels, a gift shop, a bar, a convenience store, two restaurants, a laundromat, and a gas station. Got a complaint? Take it up with White, or cross 20 miles of desert to the next town.



STARRY, STARRY NIGHTS

Zion National Park, in Springdale, Utah, is gaining popularity and visitors, but you can still find a corner of your own. Mountain ridges, hidden canyons, lush greenery, fields of wildflowers, gurgling falls, and great gobs of empty space make Zion a spring paradise. And at night, you'll have a zillion stars overhead to entertain you as you camp out. In addition to a traditional lodge, the park has secluded duplex cabins; last year, they each rented for \$54 a night per couple. Call 801-772-3256.



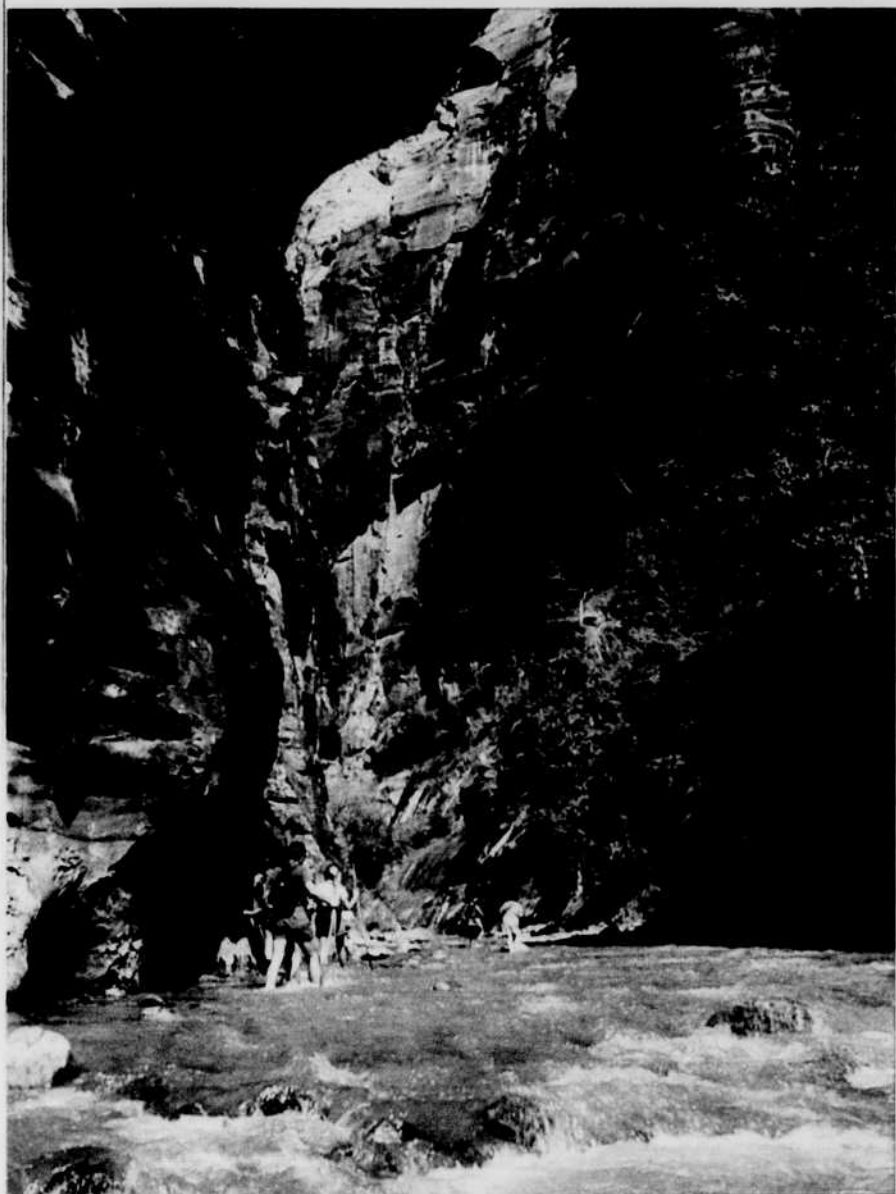
FOR THE TERMINALLY HIP

In the Roaring Twenties, just north of Monterey in Pacific Grove, California, noted architect Julian Morgan designed the core of the Asilomar State Beach and Conference Center. Later structures were built around his desert-deco theme. Now it's run by the State Park System and it's open to public and private parties. Nightly rates range from \$44.94 for a single in the historic inn to \$108.26 for a deluxe cabin for four. Call 408-372-8016. Besides having an in-park beach and swimming pool, Asilomar is near art colonies, deep-sea charters, Pebble Beach's famed golf course, and Clint Eastwood's hangout, Carmel.



A LONE STAR CLASSIC

Bastrop State Park, in Bastrop, Texas, contains cabins in classic style: hand-hewn timbers and native stone, kitchens, fireplaces, porches—all built by crews from the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. Each cabin goes for \$25 per night for two people; a group lodge sleeps eight for \$50 a night. The park offers fishing, hiking, and swimming and is surrounded by the cool piney woods of East Texas. Call 512-321-2101.



Hikers check out the beauty of the Virgin River in Utah's lush Zion National Park.