

ROCKY MOUNTAINS AND THE GREAT PLAINS

COLORADO – WYOMING – MONTANA – NORTH DAKOTA – SOUTH DAKOTA – NEBRASKA



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ROCKY MOUNTAINS AND THE GREAT PLAINS

Denver to Canon City, Colorado

Canon City to Vail, Colorado

Vail to Grand Junction, Colorado

Grand Junction, Colorado to Rock Springs, Wyoming

Rock Springs, Wyoming to
Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming/Montana/Idaho

Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming/Montana/Idaho
to Billings, Montana

Billings, Montana to Medora, North Dakota

Medora, North Dakota to Rapid City, South Dakota

Rapid City to Hot Springs, South Dakota

Hot Springs, South Dakota
to Scotts Bluff National Monument, Nebraska

Scotts Bluff National Monument, Nebraska
to Estes Park, Colorado

Estes Park to Denver, Colorado

2 hours and 3 minutes / 186km

2 hours and 39 minutes / 214km

2 hours and 20 minutes / 237km

4 hours and 43 minutes / 409km

4 hours and 49 minutes / 415km

4 hours and 17 minutes / 323km

4 hours and 9 minutes / 452km

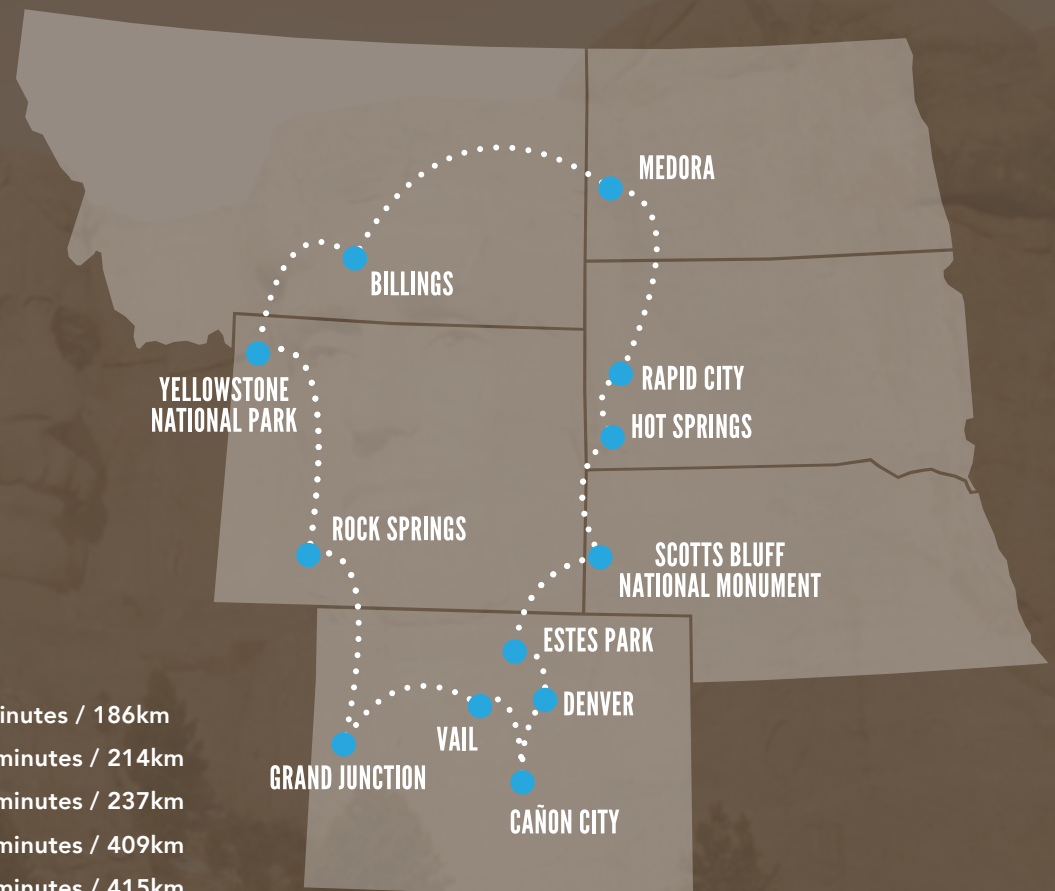
3 hours and 55 minutes / 378km

59 minutes / 92km

2 hours and 28 minutes / 234km

3 hours and 7 minutes / 294km

1 hour and 21 minutes / 103km



DENVER, COLORADO

Day 1

Denver is the perfect blend of outdoor beauty and big-city charm. It was also one of the first U.S. cities to embrace the craft brewing movement. To celebrate this fact, grab a pint and join a tour of the **Denver Beer Trail**, home to some 20 craft breweries, including the city's oldest microbrewery, **Wynkoop Brewing Company**. Denver's **Larimer Square**, now a bustling hub of shops, restaurants, bars and clubs, was the city's first block, founded before Colorado became a territory. **LoDo**, the city's lower downtown area, is Denver's oldest neighborhood. It's also where you'll find the Colorado Rockies baseball stadium, numerous art galleries and boutiques, and dozens of restaurants and bars. Denver's visual arts scene is impressive; begin exploring at the **Denver Art Museum**,

one of the largest art museums in the West, boasting a major collection of Native American art. Save time to visit **Denver's Museum of Contemporary Art** to see cutting-edge works in a variety of mediums, or get outside and meander through the Mile High City's many galleries. The **Art District** on Santa Fe, with some 60 galleries, hosts an art walk the first Friday of each month, as does the **Golden Triangle Museum District**, home to more than 50 galleries. While strolling around Denver, make note of the city's collection of more than 300 pieces of public art, including sculptures, murals, and sound- and light-based works.

Accommodation: Denver, Colorado



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Red Rocks Park Amphitheater, Morrison



Little Man Ice Cream, Denver

DENVER TO CAÑON CITY, COLORADO

● ● ● ● ● 2 hours and 3 minutes / 186km

Day 2

Stop in Colorado Springs at **Garden of the Gods Park**, which features dramatic sandstone formations set against the breathtaking backdrop of **Pikes Peak**. Another must-see stop is **Seven Falls**, a series of waterfalls cascading 181 feet through a box canyon. Go to the fabulous **Broadmoor** luxury resort for lunch before continuing to **Royal Gorge Bridge & Park** just outside tonight's destination, Cañon City. In addition to seeing one of the world's highest suspension bridges, take in the stunning scenery and experience some amazing thrill rides, including the **Cloudscraper Zip Line** and **Royal Rush Skycoaster**.

Accommodation: Canon City, Colorado

CAÑON CITY TO VAIL, COLORADO

● ● ● ● ● 2 hours and 39 minutes / 214km

Day 3

Depart Canon City via the **Gold Belt Byway**, and experience spectacular views of deep canyons and lush parklands. Stop and enjoy lunch in the charming ski destination of **Breckenridge**, once a mining town and now home to unique boutiques and restaurants in quaint historic buildings. Continue to Vail, where you will overnight in the upscale resort town at the base of **Vail Mountain**. It's a haven for skiers and snowboarders. Guests can choose from a variety of lodges with world-class spas and restaurants. In the summer, the city buzzes with mountain bikers, hikers and golfers. Vail hosts an annual **Hot Summer Nights Concert** series as well as a bustling farmers market and art show each summer Sunday. Get ready to browse hundreds of boutiques and galleries in this pedestrian-friendly city. Shops sell everything from cowboy gear and ski equipment to jewelry, art and clothing.

Accommodation: Vail, Colorado





VAIL TO GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO

● ● ● ● ● 2 hours and 20 minutes / 237km

Day 4

Drive an hour west to scenic Glenwood Springs, known for its hot springs and caves. Springs such as **Glenwood Hot Springs Pool** and **Iron Mountain Hot Springs** are said to have healing powers. For the more adventurous, get your adrenaline roaring with a whitewater-rafting trip on the **Colorado and Roaring Fork rivers**. Tour companies offer options for experienced rafters as well as for families desiring a milder adventure. Find even more fun activities at **Glenwood Caverns Adventure Park**, where there are cave tours, thrill rides (including Colorado's longest alpine roller coaster) and numerous restaurants. Drive an hour west to Grand Junction, where you will overnight and can enjoy a truly immersive food and beverage experience. Grand Junction has been Colorado's fruit-growing hub since the late 1800s. Stroll through local vineyards and stay for a wine tasting at places such as gorgeous **Grande River Vineyards** and **Plum Creek Winery** in Palisade. In summer and early fall, grab a basket and tour the downtown farmers market for the day's freshest produce and prepared goods. Just a few minutes outside the city, take in the stunning, panoramic views of the red rock canyons at **Colorado National Monument** on the 23-mile Rim Rock Drive. You may see wildlife such as desert bighorn sheep or collared lizards.

Glenwood Hot Springs Pool

Accommodation: *Grand Junction, Colorado*

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● 4 hours and 43 minutes / 409km

Head north and stop at **Dinosaur National Monument**, where you can visit the quarry and see dinosaur bones and fossils encased in rock. Hike into the mountains and canyons, where you may see elk and mule deer, or view the ancient petroglyphs at **McKee Springs**. Continue northwest with a stop at **Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area**, where many lookout points provide spectacular views of its crystal reservoir and red rocks. Your destination this evening is the historic mining town of Rock Springs. Arrive in time to visit the **Bureau of Land Management** wild horse viewing area. If you have an SUV or four-wheel drive vehicle, take the **Pilot Butte Wild Horse Scenic Loop**.

ROCK SPRINGS, WYOMING TO YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, WYOMING/MONTANA/IDAHO

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● 4 hours and 49 minutes / 415km

Continue north to the Jackson Hole valley and stop for lunch in the small town of Jackson, which embraces a pioneer sensibility, evident in stagecoach tours, rodeos and heritage tours. The **Town Square** is famous for four large arches made from elk antlers collected at the nearby **National Elk Refuge**. In the winter, take a sleigh ride at the refuge to view the majestic elk. Continue through **Grand Teton National Park** to **Yellowstone National Park** along the John D. Rockefeller Memorial Highway. No trip out West would be complete without a visit to Yellowstone National Park, the USA's first national park. This enormous park – more than 90 percent is in Wyoming with small segments in Montana and Idaho – sits atop a volcanic hot spot that creates impressive geothermal activity.



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Yellowstone National Park



**Accommodation: Yellowstone Area,
Wyoming/Montana/Idaho**

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● 4 hours and 17 minutes / 323km

Head north out of Yellowstone through Gardiner toward the eclectic railroad town of Livingston. Stop at this picturesque destination for lunch, browse art galleries and go to the **Livingston Depot Center**, a museum where you can learn about railroad history. Follow the Yellowstone River Valley east to Billings, the state's largest city. Surrounded by seven mountain ranges, you can explore the Montana wilderness and discover a wealth of wildlife. Discover the many museums that portray the history and culture of the Old West. Do not miss a chance to visit the **Moss Mansion**; the architect also designed the Waldorf Astoria and Plaza hotels in New York City. Experience the excitement of a rodeo.

Accommodation: Billings, Montana



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Yellowstone National Park



Theodore Roosevelt National Park

BILLINGS, MONTANA TO MEDORA, NORTH DAKOTA

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● 4 hours and 9 minutes / 452km

Day 9

On the way east to Medora, take a slight detour to visit the **Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument**, site of the famous 1876 battle led by Lt. Col. George Custer. Explore the visitor center and **Custer National Cemetery**. Continue the journey northeast into North Dakota to the **Theodore Roosevelt National Park**. Take the Scenic Loop Drive to experience the **Northern Great Plains** and the **Badlands**, where bison still roam.

Accommodation: Medora, North Dakota

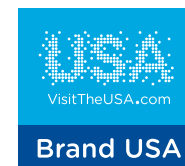
MEDORA, NORTH DAKOTA TO RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● 3 hours and 55 minutes / 378km

Day 10

Drive east to the **Painted Canyon Visitors Center** to take in spectacular views of the Badlands from its scenic overlook before traveling south into South Dakota. Go through **Spearfish Canyon**, then head to the historic mining town of **Deadwood**, site of one of the Old West's most famous gold rushes. A stop at **Mount Moriah Cemetery**, the final resting place of Calamity Jane and Wild Bill Hickok, is a must. Continue through the stunning scenery of the Black Hills to Sturgis, home of the famous **Sturgis Motorcycle Rally** and the **Sturgis Motorcycle Museum & Hall of Fame**. Your final stop today is Rapid City. Visit **Main Street Square**, view life-size bronze statues of past U.S. presidents and explore the many galleries, museums and restaurants.

Accommodation: Rapid City, South Dakota



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RAPID CITY TO HOT SPRINGS, SOUTH DAKOTA

● ● ● 59 minutes / 92km

Day 11

For a great experience, and to encounter fewer crowds, depart early for Keystone to see the sun rising over **Mount Rushmore National Memorial**. The hand-carved monument, jutting from the granite of the Black Hills of South Dakota, depicts the faces of U.S. Presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt. While there, stop in the **Lincoln Borglum Visitor Center** to learn more about the monument's creation. Continue to another South Dakota wonder, **Crazy Horse Memorial**, a mountain monument under construction of the famed Lakota leader. After a 15-minute drive, arrive at **Custer State Park**, famous for its buffalo herds and scenic drives. Explore the history, nature and sheer beauty of this park, the state's largest. The next destination is Hot Springs, where after a day of exploring and driving, a must-stop place is **Evans Plunge Mineral Springs**, the town's oldest attraction. Do not miss the **Mammoth Site**, an ancient sinkhole, where the fossilized remains of more than 61 mammoths have been discovered.

Accommodation: Hot Springs, South Dakota

HOT SPRINGS, SOUTH DAKOTA TO SCOTTS BLUFF NATIONAL MONUMENT, NEBRASKA

● ● ● ● ● 2 hours and 28 minutes / 234km

Day 12

Travel south to Nebraska, where your first stop is Chadron to tour the **Museum of the Fur Trade** at the **James Bordeaux Trading Post**. Continue to Fort Robinson State Park, where Crazy Horse died in 1877 and the Cheyenne Outbreak happened in 1879. The spectacular scenery and herds of longhorn and buffalo make this destination worth further exploration. At **Scotts Bluff National Monument**, walk on parts of the original Oregon Trail. Drive to the summit of the bluff for breathtaking valley views of the **North Platte River**.

Accommodation: Scotts Bluff, Nebraska

SCOTTS BLUFF NATIONAL MONUMENT, NEBRASKA TO ESTES PARK, COLORADO

● ● ● ● ● ● 3 hours and 7 minutes / 294km

Day 13

Depart Scotts Bluff and travel southwest to Cheyenne, Wyoming's capital, which is filled with Old West character. Visit the **Cheyenne Depot**, a 19th century railroad station that now houses a visitor center and interactive museum. Continue with a walking tour of downtown, making sure to stop at one of the many western wear shops to try on cowboy boots and hats. Eat lunch before departing for Estes Park, gateway to **Rocky Mountain National Park**.

Accommodation: Estes Park, Colorado



Scotts Bluff National Monument

ESTES PARK TO DENVER, COLORADO

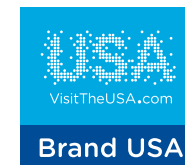
● ● ● 1 hour and 21 minutes / 103km

Day 14

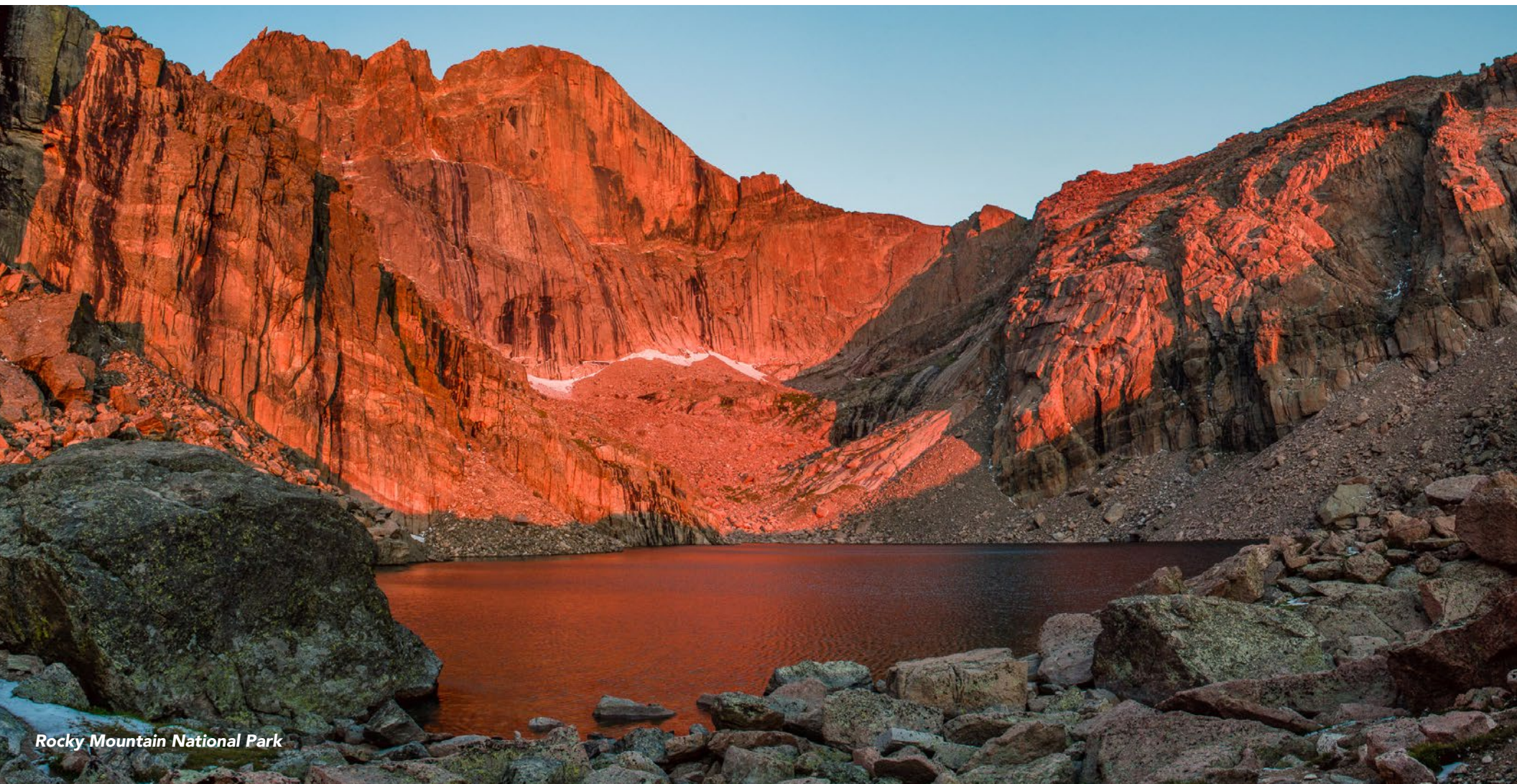
Enter **Rocky Mountain National Park** and explore this wilderness. In the summer months, take the Trail Ridge Road. Start at the **Beaver Meadows Visitor Center** and follow the trail to the **Alpine Visitor Center**; see spectacular views of **Sundance Mountain** and **Tombstone Ridge** along the way. Continue to Grand Lake for lunch on the historic boardwalk with views of the pristine mountain lake.

The journey will continue along the shores of Lake Granby. Travel to the beautiful **Winter Park Resort**, and hike trails through meadows bursting with flowers. Tonight, return to Denver to discover anything you missed at the start of your journey.

Accommodation: Denver, Colorado



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Rocky Mountain National Park

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