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PIONEERS & MOUNTAINS

16 day itinerary



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Cover image Hornbek Homestead, Florissant, Colorado

PIONEERS & MOUNTAINS

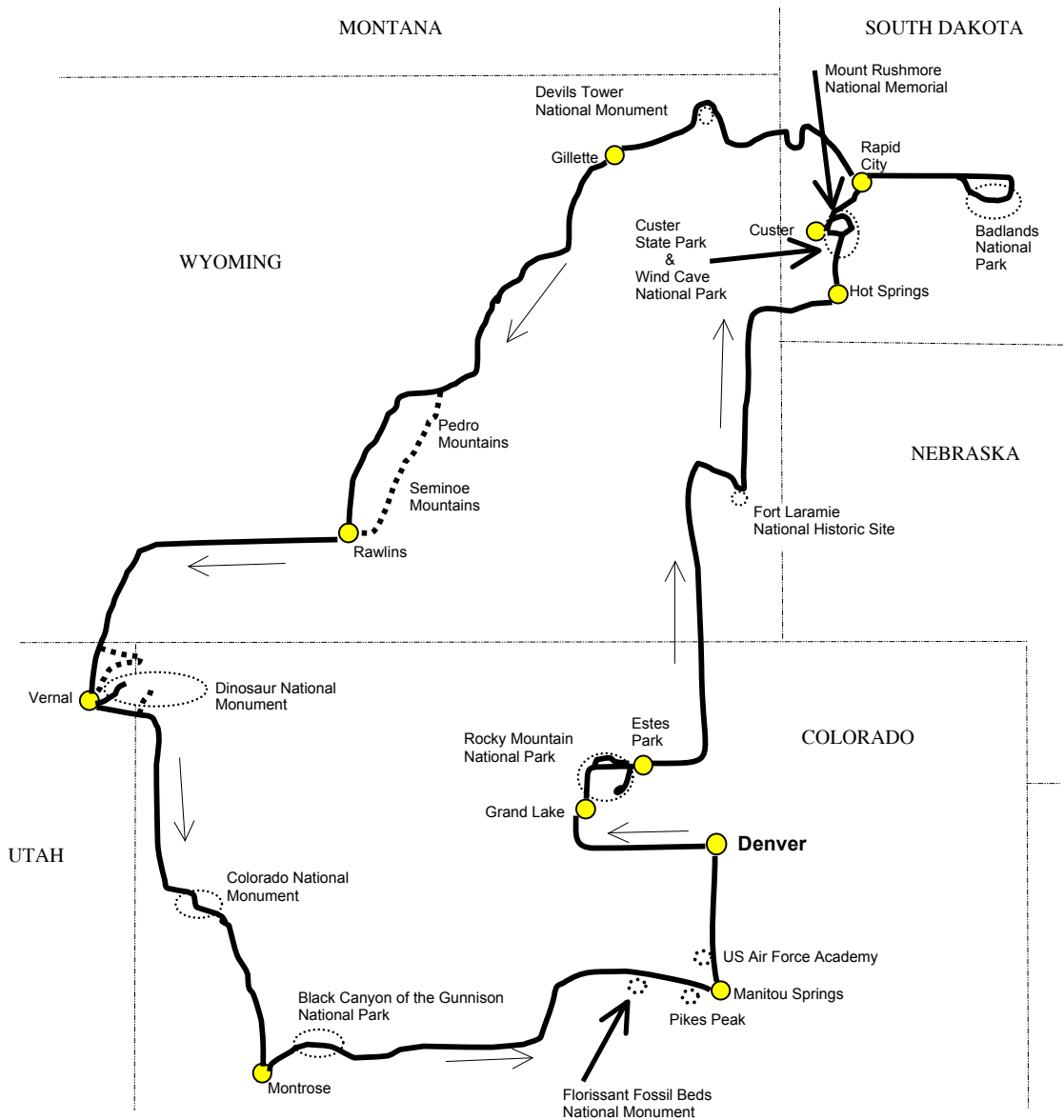
16 day itinerary

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PIONEERS & MOUNTAINS

16 day itinerary



Many years of travelling, and thoroughly enjoying, the States and National Parks of the USA have provided a good insight into the essential features to see and things to do, at all the locations along this route. There are so many books to read, and tourist information to absorb on arrival at each destination, that precious time can be lost in trying to discover the most advantageous points of interest. This itinerary sets out in clear bulleted lists just what to see and do.

There is no preoccupation with giving advice about the cheapest or best airline, car-hire company, restaurant, or hotel. You are free to choose any of these, without any reference to the itinerary. No inducements or enticements are taken from organisations trying to boost their profits. This itinerary is pure fact, to help you get the best out of your holiday.

Although we are unashamedly English, we have toured the USA for many years, and love it. We keep on returning to the same places, and 'test' the routes with friends who enjoy the clear itineraries. We make no apology for some 'English' ways of expressing (and spelling) the details, and do not pretend to try to write in an 'American' manner. We have no doubts about the ease of understanding the content.

This itinerary has been prepared with various assumptions, and attempts to provide good, hard facts, without the need to instruct travellers in the art of travelling. This means that there has been no attempt to give tiny details, such as how to read a map, or where to find specific places, unless the signposts are not clear enough. Most places are well signposted.

The necessity to purchase expensive road maps is very doubtful. It has been our experience that the very cheap State maps, which are available in so many outlets, such as filling stations, book shops and gift shops, are easily the best way to find one's way about. They are small, easy to fold, easy to follow, and easy to replace if they become worn, or lost.

Many of the places in this itinerary can be visited at any time of the year. However, we have assumed that the itinerary will be followed during the summer months, and so there will be few problems with opening times of parks, monuments, museums, or hotels, etc. The walks suggested are suitable for the summer months.

Accommodation is always easy to find, and on most occasions it is not necessary to book in advance. However, if you wish to stay at specific locations, then it is very strongly advised to book several months in advance. Camping is sometimes allocated on a 'first come, first served' basis, and allocation usually starts early each day. Some campsites do accept reservations - we recommend that you enquire.

Day numbers allow for one day of travelling at each end of the itinerary. Most people will need these travelling days.

Although the days are marked as Day 1, Day 2, etc., there is no reason why you cannot spend two or more days at one of the overnight stops. You may have relatives in the area, or just wish to lengthen the tour a little, to accommodate some aspect you find particularly interesting, or do some shopping. Just alter the day number, and carry on at your own pace.

Mileages on each day should be taken as being rather approximate, depending on how many features you visit along the route. Some days you may find you cover fewer miles. Some days you may cover more - but the overall distance should be about right.

OVERVIEW

This itinerary covers three main aspects of geography. In the centre, there are the Rocky Mountains. To the north and east, there are the plains with mountains and hills dotting the landscape. To the west, there is the Colorado Plateau, which varies in elevation, between 2,000 and 10,000 feet, with three major rivers cutting through. Denver - the 'Mile High City' sets the scene, being 5,280 feet above sea level, and the lowest point along the itinerary is still around 2,500 feet.

The history of the area, over the last 150 years, has been dominated by pioneers, who arrived to take advantage of the land and its resources. The Rocky Mountain area has provided wide-ranging metals and minerals, including gold, silver, coal, oil and, recently, methane. The mountain landscapes are beautiful, but it was the prospect of a homestead for many pioneers, which drew them to the lower levels.

The summer temperatures can vary depending on the location. In Denver and at the higher altitudes, it is usually between 60° and 80°F (and occasionally below 50°F). Temperatures at Badlands National Park are usually at least 90°F, and often exceed 100°F. It has been the overall experience of *itforit* during summer reconnoitres, that the weather has been pleasantly warm and favourable. On occasions, there has been low cloud on the mountains, obscuring the view.

Brief History

It is thought that the first humans arrived in the area about 20,000 years ago. They had migrated from Asia, and travelled south into Northern America, through areas we now call Alaska and Canada. There are many Native Indians in the area, but they are comparative newcomers, being part of the Athabaskan group, which migrated from Canada around the 1400s AD. They roamed the area to find their food as hunter-gatherers.

The Ute Indians settled in the Rocky Mountains in the 1500s, but it was not until the late-1700s and early-1800s that white men arrived, known as mountain men. They trapped for fur and made friends with the Native Indians. Beaver fur was especially popular for men's hats between the 1820s and 1840s, but went out of fashion as the beaver population declined.

The Spanish had conquered and owned much of the western section of the continent from the mid-1500s, but it was then ceded to the French in 1800. The French consequently owned the 'Louisiana Territory', and other parts of North America, which amounted to about one-third of the present USA. In 1803, the United States purchased, at 3 cents per acre, a large amount of uncharted land from France in the 'Louisiana Purchase'. That purchase started large-scale exploration, as President Jefferson wanted to know what had been bought.

More mountain men arrived, and trading posts were established from the 1840s, often as forts, although there was no fear of attack from Native Indians in the early days. As the decades passed, homesteads were set up, and the Native Indians became restless that their lands were being given to white men. The forts took on the function of being military posts, particularly from the 1850s.

Gold was discovered in 1859 at Idaho Springs (Colorado) and miners flocked to the area. The Union Pacific Railroad arrived in the mid-1860s, and mass emigration moved from the pioneer trails and onto the railroad. The 'wild west' era of lawless mining towns had started, and it continued for up to half a century, until the gold ran out, and the outlaws were run out of town.

continued.....

Sheep and cattle-ranching expanded onto the plains where wild buffalo still roamed, which caused more hostility between white men and the Native Indians. This hostility continued until the late-1860s, by which time the various Indian tribes had been moved onto reservations. However, the problems did not stop there - for example, 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie had given the Black Hills solely to the Lakota Sioux Indians, and an 1874 discovery of gold there broke that treaty.

A massive discovery of gold was made at Cripple Creek (Colorado) in 1891. Wealth for the entire area of this itinerary now seems to have been inevitable, as oil, coal and natural gas have created new industries to take it into the 21st century.

Pioneers and Trails

The international fur trade collapsed in 1839, and there were economic recessions in 1837 and 1841. From the 1840s, pioneers were encouraged to emigrate west. At first, they were lured by the promise of free land and then of gold. Initially, California was the popular destination, but then Oregon drew pioneers, and Utah became the goal for Mormons who were escaping from persecution.

Many pioneer trails were set up - famous ones being the Oregon Trail and the Santa Fe Trail. There were many variations in the trails, and across the plains the trails were not so well defined, as the wagons could spread out to avoid the dust from other wagons. However, there were some situations where there were no options, but to cross a river, or traverse a mountain pass, in one place. Frequently, these were the more dangerous sections of the trails. Life on the trails was hard, with many deaths from disease, accidents, bad weather and lack of food or water. There were also deaths from violent encounters with Native Indians, although these were few in comparison with the other causes.

Each spring, as soon as grazing was sufficient for the livestock, the wagon trains would start along the trails. Migrants learned that it was time to set off when the grass was long enough for an ox to wrap its tongue around a blade of grass. The journey then had to be completed by the time the winter snows came - particularly if the trail had a mountain range to negotiate. This deadline meant that short cuts were taken, which were often more risky.

This itinerary goes north and (later) south through Wyoming, which was a main access for the Oregon Trail, the California Trail, the Mormon Pioneer Trail and the Pony Express Trail as they went from east to west. Evidence will be seen in the form of wagon ruts, inscriptions by pioneers on rocks, and two forts.

The 2,000-mile California Trail and the 2,400-mile Oregon Trail both started in Missouri, and were used from 1841. The 1,300-mile Mormon Pioneer Trail started in Nauvoo ("na-voo"), Illinois, and was used from 1846 to 1857. The arrival of the Union Pacific Railroad in the mid-1860s very quickly took over from the overland wagon trains, with migration moving onto the railroad. By 1869, the wagon trains were redundant.

The 2,000-mile Pony Express Trail also started in Missouri, but only lasted for 19 months, having started in 1860. The advent of the 1861 transcontinental telegraph service meant the closure of the Pony Express just two days later.

The Bozeman Trail also crossed the area of this itinerary. It was an offshoot of the Oregon Trail, and went north to the goldfields of Virginia City, Montana. The 500-mile trail started in 1863, but was closed in 1868, because of hostilities with Native Indians.

The government believed in a policy of 'manifest destiny' - a duty to extend and expand its principals of freedom and democracy, and this meant encouraging citizens (and would-be citizens) to migrate westwards. The first Homestead Act was passed in 1841, which allowed pioneers to purchase 160 acres of land at a very low price in the plains areas. Consequently, many pioneers did not migrate as far as California or Oregon, but stopped along the route.

continued.....

The eastern states were thought to be becoming overcrowded, so the government passed the 1862 Homestead Act. For a small administration fee, people were given 160 acres of undeveloped land free of charge, provided they complied with certain conditions. Each claimant had to be the head of a family and be at least 21 years old, be a loyal citizen of the United States (or undertake to become one), live on the land and build at least one small house, and improve the land in certain ways. Further acts enhanced and improved the opportunities for homesteaders.

USEFUL INFORMATION

What to see and do

- It is not expected that everything in this itinerary will be undertaken.
 - You would need far more than 16 days to achieve everything!
 - There are 1,000s of years of ancient history, and a large area of land to cover.
- *itforit* recommends that you select the day's activities from the choices described, and allocate time accordingly.
- Essential places to visit are ***in bold and underlined***.
- Interesting places, such as towns and villages, walks, etc. are ***just underlined***. As many of these places as possible should be included in the itinerary, in order to achieve maximum enjoyment, together with understanding of the history and culture of the area.
- *Suggested walks are in italics. Distances are always stated for the total return or loop.*
 - *Walks suggested are some of the easier ones, with good views or particular interest.*
 - *It is recommended to do as many walks as possible, to get the most out of this itinerary.*
- It cannot be stressed too much how important it is to visit the Visitor Centers, where they are available.
 - They always give a very good overview of the area, together with its history, culture, geology, etc.
 - *itforit* does not presume to be a better authority than Visitor Centers.
 - *itforit* itineraries prepare you for a place of interest, and suggest the essential items to see and do.
- All places have rules about damage to the environment, litter, camping, and so on. Please ensure that you abide by these regulations.
- There are many good museums along this itinerary.
 - Several weeks could be spent going into every museum - many towns seem to have one.
 - Particular museums have been chosen, which provide variety, and also a flavour of the area.
- Pleasure parks and most man-made enjoyments (such as trains, zoos, golf courses and other sporting activities, etc.) have generally been omitted. If these are found to be enjoyable, then time can easily be found by avoiding the many other aspects of this itinerary, or by extending your visit.

continued.....

Admission charges

- Nearly every place makes an admission charge.
 - Exceptions to this are government establishments.
- It is worth looking for coupons giving discounts on admission prices. You will find these at Visitor Centres, hotels, etc. If none is on display, it is still worth asking.
- An 'America The Beautiful - The National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Annual Pass' allows 'free' entry into all National Parks, National Monuments and other Federal sites, for all passengers in a car for twelve months. It is more commonly called an 'Interagency Pass'. In the case of this itinerary alone, it is not a good 'investment'. However, if other National Parks, etc. are to be visited at another time, then it may be worth considering. Retired USA citizens, and those with lifetime disabilities, may obtain benefits at reduced rates.
- Many museums and other places of interest have been included in the itinerary. Some of these charge an admission fee, some do not - this may change.
- The Automobile Association of America (AAA) has reciprocal arrangements with overseas associations, providing some membership benefits.
 - For example, members of the British AA, Australian AAA and New Zealand NZAA can all benefit from various discounts for some admission charges, and particularly accommodation.
 - Ask if a 'Triple A' rate is available.

Driving information

- If you are hiring a vehicle, then you should read the hire agreement carefully, in order that you do not contravene any of the conditions of hire.
 - If driving on un-paved roads is not permitted, then a few of the suggestions in this itinerary should be avoided.
 - Many parking areas are not paved, and it is suggested that driving on this type of surface may well be acceptable to the hire company.
 - It has been our experience that driving on good quality dirt roads, which are marked on State maps, is acceptable to hire companies.
 - However, *itforit* cannot be held responsible for varying conditions of hire companies.
- The total distance you will travel on this itinerary will be about 2,520 miles.
 - Conventional 'Fly-Drive' itineraries often state just the minimum distances, which do not allow for the normal extra bits of driving - like going out for a meal, going shopping, missing the exit off the road, etc.
 - *itforit* believes the total will be a reasonable judgement of your actual mileage, based on:
 - Our own experiences.
 - The assumption that you go to some of the less-major excursions, but not all of them.
 - Where there are alternative routes, you take the longer ones.
- Numbers and names of interstates, freeways, parkways, routes, turnpikes, highways and roads can be confusing to non-Americans. For simplicity:
 - Each Interstate Highway is referred to as 'Interstate', with its number.
 - Every other road, route, highway, etc. is referred to as 'Route', with its number.
- There is a general misconception in Europe, that the maximum road speed allowed in the USA is 55mph.
 - This is not true.
 - The Interstate Highways, and other 'fast' roads, often have speed limits of 65mph, 75mph and even up to 80mph.
 - The limits for urban areas are generally a little lower than those in Europe.
 - There is no necessity to exceed the speed limits, in order to cover the itinerary.

continued.....

Driving information (continued)

- The provision of signposts, is generally very good. However, a car compass has been found to be a useful aid, on occasions.
- Fuel (gasoline/petrol/diesel) is not always readily available, particularly within the National Parks. It is suggested that you ensure your tank is kept full.

State information

	<u>Colorado</u>	<u>Wyoming</u>	<u>South Dakota</u>	<u>Utah</u>
Capital	Denver	Cheyenne	Pierre	Salt Lake City
Population	> 4.3 million	> 0.49 million	> 0.8 million	> 2.2 million
Nickname	Centennial State	Equality / Cowboy State	Sunshine State	Beehive State
Bird	Lark Bunting	Meadowlark	Ringnecked Pheasant	California Gull
Tree	Blue Spruce	Blue Spruce	Black Hills Spruce	Paloverde
Flower	Columbine	Indian Paintbrush	Pasque Flower	Sego Lily
Land Area	> 103,700 sq. miles	> 97,100 sq. miles	> 77,100 sq. miles	> 82,100 sq. miles
Time zone	Mountain	Mountain	Mountain *	Mountain
Abbreviation	CO	WY	SD	UT

* Only the area being visited on this itinerary

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16 day itinerary

Overnight summary, with alternatives

<u>Day 1</u>	Denver (Colorado)
<u>Day 2</u>	Denver (Colorado)
<u>Day 3</u>	Grand Lake (Colorado) Alternatives: Granby or Estes Park
<u>Day 4</u>	Estes Park (Colorado)
<u>Day 5</u>	Estes Park (Colorado)
<u>Day 6</u>	Hot Springs (South Dakota) Alternative: Custer
<u>Day 7</u>	Custer (South Dakota) Alternatives: Rapid City or Keystone
<u>Day 8</u>	Rapid City (South Dakota) Alternatives: Rapid City or Keystone
<u>Day 9</u>	Rapid City (South Dakota) Alternatives: Rapid City or Keystone
<u>Day 10</u>	Gillette (Wyoming)
<u>Day 11</u>	Rawlins (Wyoming) Alternative: Rock Springs
<u>Day 12</u>	Vernal (Utah)
<u>Day 13</u>	Montrose (Colorado) Alternative: Delta
<u>Day 14</u>	Manitou Springs (Colorado) Alternatives: Cascade or Colorado Springs
<u>Day 15</u>	Denver (Colorado) Alternative: Castle Rock
<u>Day 16</u>	Your onward journey

Date.....

Travelling day

- This page may be used to make notes about your travelling arrangements, in order to arrive at Denver - ready to start on your itinerary on Day 2.
- If you have arrived early at Denver, and wish to see some of the sights, please refer to Day 2.

Overnight at Denver (Colorado)

Date.....

The first day of your *itforit* itinerary! There's a lot to see and do in Denver. Enjoy as much as you can.

Approximate miles = 10

Day in and around Denver

- This the capital of Colorado, nicknamed the 'Mile High City'.
- In 1858, gold was found at Cherry Creek, about 2 miles southeast of the present Colorado State Capitol, but it did not last.
 - Very soon, gold was found elsewhere, and Denver became a mining supply town. It was found at Auraria, now a Denver suburb, and then major amounts at Central City (see 'Oh My Gawd Road' on Day 3).
 - In 1858, the new town was named after James William Denver (1817-1892), who was the Governor of Kansas Territory.
 - In 1861, 'Denver City' was incorporated as a city, but shortened its name to Denver in 1865.
 - In 1868, Kit Carson was taken ill here, while on government business, and died before reaching home in Taos, New Mexico.



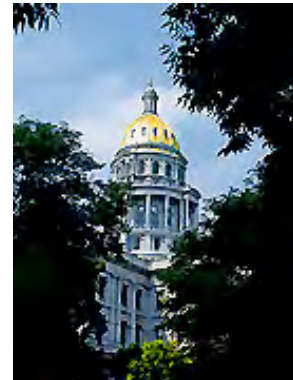
- Denver is proud of its pioneer connections, and a Colorado county, to the east, is named 'Kit Carson County'.
- The Pioneer Monument is 150 yards northwest of Colorado State Capitol, and honours the pioneers' suffering and courage.
- In 1876, it became the Capital of the new Colorado State.
 - Colorado is Spanish for 'coloured red'.
- It rapidly grew to be the centre of commerce for the large surrounding area of mining and agriculture.
- In the 1990s, the population expanded by 30%.
- It is a now city of over half a million people, and is still a centre for commerce.
 - Being over 600 miles from the nearest city of the same size, or larger, it provides major storage and supply facilities.
- **Parking**
 - There is some on-street parking, depending on arrival time, and the length of stay.
 - An alternative is the Cultural Complex Garage is on the corner of 12th Avenue and Broadway - with the entrance in 12th Avenue.
 - It is close to the central historic areas and museums, and is open daily from 6:00am to 11:00pm.
- **LoDo** ("loh-doh")
 - This is the nickname for Lower Downtown, which is the historic, original part of Denver.
 - It is about 1 to 1.5 miles northwest of Colorado State Capitol (see below).
 - It has been rejuvenated, and become a popular area for shopping and nightlife.


continued.....

Day in and around Denver (continued)

• **Colorado State Capitol**

- This is at 200 East Colfax Avenue.
- Completed in 1908, after 25 years of planning and building, it has the usual gold dome, as have other Capitol buildings.
 - The grey exterior wall are of granite from Gunnison, Colorado.
 - It cost nearly \$3million, compared with its original estimate of \$1million.



- On the main steps (on the west side), there is a step indicating 'One mile above sea level' - hence Denver's nickname.
 - 1 mile is 5,280 feet.
- 
- The original calculation was made in 1909, and a brass plaque was inserted on the step. However, the brass plaque was stolen so many times, the step was eventually engraved in 1947.
- In 1969, a re-calculation was made, and a new brass plaque was installed three steps higher.
- In 2003, another re-calculation was made, and another brass plaque was installed two steps lower than the first (five steps lower than the 1969 step).
- Inside, there is beautiful pink onyx, together with marble floors, ornate brass fittings and carved oak.
 - Additionally, there are wonderful murals, wall-hangings and stained glass.
- The building is open to the public Monday to Friday, with free self-guided and 45-minute guided 'Historical Tours' for which reservations are not required.
- Tours of the Dome also give access to the Dome Observation Deck, which provides excellent 360° views of the surrounding city and the Rocky Mountains.
 - There are 94 steps to reach the Dome.
 - Tours are Monday to Friday, and should be booked in advance at:
http://www.state.co.us/gov_dir/leg_dir/lcsstaff/CapitolTour/

• **Civic Center Park**

- From the main steps of Colorado State Capitol, walk across Lincoln Street and into this park.
- It continues (west) across Broadway.
- It has 30 different species of trees, with many flower beds, statues, fountains and a Greek amphitheatre.

continued.....

Day in and around Denver (continued)

• **City and County Building**

- This is at 1437 Bannock Street.
 - From the Civic Center Park, walk across Bannock Street, and it is directly opposite.
- Completed in 1932, it is the centre of political power in Denver and Colorado.
- The outstanding neo-classical architecture was designed by a group of 39 local architects.



- It has over 5 miles of wires, with over 20,000 lights - providing one of the best lighting effects in the USA.

• **United States Mint**

- This is at 320 West Colfax Avenue.
 - From City and County Building, walk right (north), and after about 100 yards, turn left along West Colfax Avenue. It is then about 100 yards on the left, after Cherokee Street.
- Coins are minted here, but not notes.
- Other United States Mints are at Philadelphia (Pennsylvania), San Francisco (California), West Point (New York) and Washington (DC).
- Free 40-minute tours are available, and can be booked in advance on:
www.usmint.gov/mint_tours/index.cfm?action=StartReservation
- There are many items, which are not permitted in the building, including cameras and personal bags, unless the bag will fit into a pocket.

• **Byers-Evans House Museum**

- This is at 1310 Bannock Street - within a corner site of Denver Art Museum.
 - From the United States Mint, walk south about 400 yards along Bannock Street, and then turn right (east) along West 13th Avenue. It is then about 100 yards on the left.
- Built in 1883 for William Byers, the *Rocky Mountain News* publisher, he sold it to William Gray Evans in 1889.
 - William Gray Evans worked for the Denver Tramway Company.
- The furnishings are those of the Evans family, and show a very wealthy lifestyle.
- A film explains the lives of the two owners.
- It is open from 11:00am to 3:00pm, with guided tours usually starting at 11:00am, 12:30pm and 2:00pm. It is not open on Mondays.
- Combination tickets with Colorado History Museum (see below) are available.

continued.....

Day in and around Denver (continued)

• **Denver Art Museum (DAM)**

- This is on two sites, one on each side of West 13th Avenue.
 - From the Byers-Evans House Museum, walk about 100 yards left (east) along West 13th Street.



- The old building (next to the Byers-Evans House Museum) houses the permanent collections of art from around the world, particularly from north-American Indians and Spanish colonial times.
- The new 'Frederic C. Hamilton Building' is across the road, and is architecturally interesting - even from the outside.
 - Opened in 2006, it houses modern works of art, particularly sculptures and video projections onto the walls - every one of which is not vertical, and are all at different angles from each other.
- **Colorado History Museum**
 - This is at 1300 Broadway - on the corner of West 13th Avenue.
 - From Denver Art Museum, walk about 200 yards east along West 13th Avenue to the junction with Broadway.
 - It is run by the Colorado Historical Society, which has 10 museums and sites around Colorado.
 - This museum has collections of Colorado artefacts, and changing exhibitions about the state's past, such as its Indians, immigrants, miners and ancient history.
 - Combination tickets with Byers-Evans House Museum (see above) are available.
- **Colorado Governor's Mansion**
 - This is at 400 East 8th Avenue - on the corner of Logan Street.
 - From Colorado History Museum, walk south along Broadway.
 - After about 0.5 mile, turn left along East 8th Avenue.
 - It is about 0.25 mile on the right.
 - In 1908, it was built for the Cheeseman family in the Georgian style, and later sold to the Boettcher family.
 - In 1959, it was given to Colorado State.
 - In 1960, it became the Governor's Mansion, amid much debate.
 - The house has many antiques and works of art, and the dramatic Waterford crystal chandelier in the drawing room was once in the White House.
 - The gardens are beautiful, with flamboyant fountains.
 - Free tours have been available on some Tuesdays and Thursdays during summer months, depending on the Governor. It is advisable to check, by telephone, on 303-837-8350.

continued.....

Day in and around Denver (continued)

- **Molly Brown House Museum**
 - This is at 1340 Pennsylvania Street, off West 13th Avenue.
 - From Colorado Governor's Mansion, continue walking east along East 8th Avenue.
 - After about 100 yards, turn left (north) along Pennsylvania Avenue.
 - It is about 0.6 mile on the right.
 - Completed in 1889, this house was purchased by Molly and James Brown in 1894 with money made from discovering gold at Leadville, Colorado - about 100 miles southwest of Denver.
 - The Browns lived a high life, similar to other millionaires, and furnished the 3-storey house in typical Victorian manner.
 - In 1902, while Molly and James were on a trip round the world, the house temporarily became Colorado Governor's Mansion, as the usual Governor's Mansion was being remodelled.
 - Molly enjoyed the high life more than James, and it became a source of marital disharmony.
 - After 23 years of marriage, they separated in 1909.
 - Molly Brown also became famous for surviving the sinking of the Titanic on its maiden voyage in 1912.
 - It has been restored and furnished as in 1910.
 - 45-minute guided tours start on the hour and half-hour. It opens at 10.00am. The last tour is at 3.30pm.
- **Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Art**
 - This is at 1311 Pearl Street, on the corner of West 13th Avenue.
 - From Molly Brown House Museum, return south along Pennsylvania Street.
 - After about 100 yards, turn left along West 13th Avenue.
 - It is about 100 yards on the left.
 - It is a nationally important museum of 20th century art, having many facets, including furniture, ceramics, paintings, fabrics, sculptures, tableware and crafts.
 - It is split into three sections, being decorative art, Colorado art, and Vance Kirkland's art.
 - It is generally not open on Mondays.

continued.....

Day in and around Denver (continued)

• **Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception**

- This is at 1530 Logan Street - on the corner of East Colfax Avenue.
 - From Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Art, walk north along Pearl Street.
 - After about 300 yards, turn left along East Colfax Avenue.
 - It is about 200 yards on the right.



- In 1902, building commenced, and it was completed in 1911.
 - In 1921, it was consecrated as a cathedral.
 - In 1979, it was promoted to a minor basilica.
 - A basilica has extra ceremonial privileges, granted by the Pope.
- In 1912 and 1997, lightning struck the west and east spires respectively, and major re-buildings work was required.
- The twin spires rise to 210 feet from the ground.
- In 1993, Pope John Paul II held mass here during World Youth Day celebrations.
- It was built using Indiana limestone and Gunnison (Colorado) granite in the French Gothic style.
- The altar, bishop's chair and various statues were made from Italian marble.
- The 75 stained glass windows are particularly noteworthy, having been made in Munich, in the German state of Bavaria.

• **Brown Palace Hotel and Spa**

- This is at 321 15th Street, on the corner of Tremont Place.
 - From Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, go west along East Colfax Avenue.
 - After about 400 yards, turn right along Broadway, with the Pioneer Monument on the opposite corner.
 - After about 300 yards, turn left along 17th Street.
 - It is about 100 yards on the right.
- Opened in 1892, this continues to be the best hotel in Denver.
- It was named after Henry C Brown, who was once a carpenter in Idaho, and later became an entrepreneur.
 - The story is that he was refused entry to another hotel in Denver, because of his cowboy clothes, so he decided to build a bigger and better hotel, and named it after himself.
- The Italian Renaissance style exterior is built of red sandstone, with dark red granite on the ground floor, which belies its beautiful, extravagant interior.
- The open atrium lobby is eight storeys high, with balconies having ornate cast iron panels.
- Afternoon tea is served to guests in the atrium, usually to the accompaniment of a pianist or harpist.
- Free, 45-minute guided tours are available on Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:00pm.



continued.....

Day in and around Denver (continued)

- **Museum of Contemporary Art**
 - This is at 1840 17th Street, on the corner of Delgany Street - on the edge of LoDo (see above).
 - From Brown Palace Hotel, continue along 17th Street.
 - After about 0.5 mile, turn left along Arapahoe Street.
 - After about 0.25 mile, turn right along 15th Street.
 - It is just over 0.5 mile on the left.
 - This has changing exhibits of contemporary art.
- **Denver Botanic Gardens**
 - These are at 1005 York Street, which is about 1.75 miles to the east of Colorado State Capitol.
 - **Note:** This is not really within walking distance. There is a free parking area on the opposite side of the road.
 - From Lodo, return to Colorado State Capitol, and continue east along East Colfax Avenue.
 - After about 1.25 miles, turn right (south) along York Street.
 - The gardens are then about 0.5 mile on the right (west).
 - Set in 23 acres of grounds, there are over 30 separate sections of the gardens to explore.
 - Plants are on display from all over the world, and particularly from the Denver region of Colorado, showcasing vegetation of the altitude and characteristics of the climate.
 - There are many ponds and water features, and a tropical conservatory with over 1,000 plants from the tropics.
- **Denver Museum of Nature & Science**
 - This is at 2001 Colorado Boulevard, which is north of Denver Botanic Gardens - a journey of nearly 3 miles.
 - **Note:** This is not really within walking distance. There is free parking at the museum.
 - From Denver Botanic Gardens, continue south along York Street.
 - After about 200 yards, turn left, and then immediately left again, to go north along Josephine Street, which becomes York Street (again).
 - After about 1.5 miles, turn right (east) along East 23rd Avenue.
 - After about 1 mile, turn right (south) along Colorado Boulevard.
 - It is then about 0.25 mile on the right.
 - It has scientific exhibitions with many interactive and hands-on displays.
 - There are major exhibitions about dinosaurs, minerals, space, Egyptology, Indian cultures health and wildlife.
 - Although the museum is aimed at education of children, there is much of interest for adults.
 - There are also an IMAX theatre and a Planetarium.

Overnight at Denver (Colorado)

Date.....

More time in Denver, but there's plenty to see on the way to Rocky Mountain National Park.

Approximate miles = 110

Start the day in Denver (Colorado)

- Bear in mind that you may be able to allocate time at the end of the itinerary to see more of Denver, depending on your onward travel plans.



Leave Denver west on Interstate 70.

'Oh My Gawd Road' (extra 17 miles return)

- This starts about 35 miles from Denver.
 - From Exit 241 of Interstate 70, travel along Colorado Boulevard towards Idaho Springs.
 - After about 0.75 mile, fork right.
 - After about 0.25 mile, take the first right along Virginia Canyon Road, also called 'Oh My Gawd Road', signposted for Central City.
- It winds its way from Idaho Springs to Central City in the Rocky Mountains.
- It is a very steep, dirt road through old, deserted mining camps, eventually leading to Central City and Black Hawk.
- **Central City**
 - Gold was discovered here in 1859, and within two months 10,000 people had arrived. It became known as 'The richest square mile on Earth'.
 - It had various fires, including one major fire in 1874. However, it survived because the gold continued and the wooden buildings were replaced with brick and stone structures.
 - The gold ran out in the early 1880s, although some small-scale operations re-started in the 1930s.
 - It is worth driving around the streets to see the many original brick buildings. A notable building is the Opera House, in Eureka Street. It was completed in 1878, having been built by Welsh and Cornish miners.
 - In 1991, it became a gambling town, which has revived its fortunes.
- On returning to Colorado Boulevard in Idaho Springs, turn right to travel through the town.

continued.....

Idaho Springs

- This is about 35 miles from Denver, just off Interstate 70, at Exit 240.
 - If 'Oh My Gawd Road' has been taken, simply turn right (west) on returning to Colorado Boulevard, and it is about 0.25 mile.
- It was the first major gold-rush town in Colorado, gold having been discovered in January 1859.
- It is now a gold-mining tourist town.

Return to Interstate 70, and continue to travel west.

After about 8 miles, take Exit 232, and go west and north along Route 40.

Berthoud Pass ("bur-thud")

- This is about 15 miles north of Interstate 70, along Route 40.
- It is at 11,307 feet, at the Continental Divide, which is crossed on five occasions during this itinerary.



- The Continental Divide is an imaginary line, which runs in a seemingly erratic way from north to south of the USA. It is also called the Great Divide. It runs through Rocky Mountain National Park.
- It starts in Alaska, passes through Canada, the USA, Mexico, and ends near the southern tip of South America.
- All streams and rivers to the west of it flow into the Pacific Ocean.
- All streams and rivers to the east of it flow into the Atlantic Ocean.

Granby

- This is about 31 miles north of the Berthoud Pass, along Route 40.
- In 1905, it started as a railroad town, mainly for farming, and has since become a golf and winter skiing resort.

About 0.5 mile north of Granby, turn right (east) along Route 34.

Grand Lake

- This is about 17 miles north of Granby, along Route 34.
- It was first settled in 1876, but suddenly became a centre for supplies in 1879, when silver and gold were found at the nearby Colorado River.
 - The gold and silver deposits were only small, and the prospectors then moved elsewhere.
- From around 1900, summer homes were being built in the area, and tourism became, and still is, the main source of income.
- **Kauffman House Museum**
 - This is on the corner of Pitkin Street and Lake Avenue, at the waterfront.
 - Built in 1892 as a hotel by Ezra Kauffman, it stayed in his family as a hotel until it was sold in 1946 as a private residence.
 - In 1973, the Grand Lake Area Historical Society purchased it, and renovated it as a museum.
 - It is the only Grand Lake log hotel remaining, which was constructed before 1900, and its present appearance is very similar to its original.
 - All the usual rooms are open to view, with furnishings from the late 1800s.
 - It is open from 11:00am to 5:00pm daily. Admission is by donation.
- **Adams Falls Trail**
 - *This starts near the end of West Portal Road, to the southeast of Grand Lake.*
 - *A parking area is about 2 miles from Grand Lake.*
 - *It is a 1 mile return walk, ascending about 80 feet, with a small loop, to an attractive series of cascades known as Adams Falls. The walk goes through a forest, and is within Rocky Mountain National Park.*
 - *Take the East Inlet Trail, and after about 600 yards, turn right along a well-signposted trail to Adams Falls.*
 - *The trail follows the falls for about 100 yards, and then loops back to the East Inlet Trail. It is then about 700 yards back to the parking area.*
 - *You may consider walking further along East Inlet Trail (turning right at the end of the loop) to enjoy any amount of the attractive trail.*
 - *After about 200 yards, East Inlet Trail opens onto meadows alongside the East Inlet. It then continues to follow East Inlet, in and out of meadows and trees.*



Rocky Mountain National Park

- If you have arrived early at Grand Lake, then you may like to start exploring Rocky Mountain National Park - see Day 4 for details.

Overnight at Grand Lake (Colorado)

Date.....

The first of two days in Rocky Mountain National Park, with its wonderful mountain scenery.

Approximate miles = 60

Leave Grand Lake (Colorado) on Route 34.

Rocky Mountain National Park

- Generally, only one road (Route 34), goes through the National Park, from Grand Lake in the southwest, to Estes Park in the northeast.
 - Excluding any diversions, it is a distance of 46 miles, and takes about 2 hours to drive, without stopping.
 - The central section, opened in 1932, is called 'Trail Ridge Road', and includes 11 miles of road above the tree-line, having alpine tundra conditions, where the subsoil is permanently frozen.
 - Particularly in the alpine tundra areas, there are plants and organisms also found at the Arctic circle.
 - In Rocky Mountain National Park, the tree-line varies from about 11,000 to 11,500 feet, above which trees do not grow.
 - The highest point along the road is at 12,183 feet.
 - There are many stunning views across the mountains, up to 14,259 feet high.
 - There are over 60 summits over 12,000 feet high.
 - *There are over 350 miles of trails.*
- **How to visit Rocky Mountain National Park**
 - On Day 4 (today), it is suggested to explore as much as possible of the Trail Ridge Road (Route 34), between Grand Lake and Estes Park ("ess-tis").
 - This section is mostly inspiring overlooks. It has trailheads for some short trails, but mostly for longer distances.
 - On Day 5, explore south from Estes Park, along Bear Lake Road. Then explore north from Estes Park, including along Old Fall River Road. If time permits, explore more of Trail Ridge Road.
- The points of interest are in order along Trail Ridge Road from Grand Lake to Estes Park.
- The first section of about 10 miles, going north, follows the Colorado River.
- **Kawuneeche Visitor Center** ("kar-wun-ee-chee")
 - This is about 1 mile north of Grand Lake, just off Route 34.
 - It has exhibits about human influence and ecology in the park.
 - Kawuneeche is Arapaho ("a-rap-a-ho") for coyote.
- The Grand Lake Entrance Station is about 0.25 mile further north, along Route 34.



continued.....

Rocky Mountain National Park (continued)

- **Coyote Valley Trail** ("ky-oh-tee" or "ky-oh-t")
 - This 1 mile return trail, with a loop at the end, starts about 5 miles north of the Grand lake Entrance Station, on the left (west) of Route 34.
 - It is an easy, level, paved trail on the wide floodplain of the Colorado River.
 - The trail crosses the Colorado River, and is known for good sightings of elk and moose in the early morning and evening.
 - It has good views of the Never Summer Mountains.
- **Holzwarth Historic Site Trail / Never Summer Ranch Trail**
 - This starts about 2 miles north of the Coyote Valley Trail.
 - It is an easy, level, 1 mile return walk, which crosses the Colorado River.
 - The source of the Colorado River is about 10 miles to the north.
 - In 1917, John Holzwarth arrived from Denver, as the prohibition law stopped his business as a saloon keeper.
 - He intended to become a rancher, but with the increase of people travelling, he started Holzwarth's Trout Lodge.
 - After 10 years, it became a dude ranch, where tourists paid to experience a cowboy lifestyle.
 - In 1973, all modern buildings were removed after the sale of the ranch by John Holzwarth's son.
 - It has been restored to how it was in the 1920s, and is run by the National Park Service.
 - Visitors can see the ice house, taxidermy, a log cabin and a tent cabin.
 - It is free to visit, and open from 10-00am to 4-00pm.



- **Fairview Curve Overlook**
 - This has a magnificent view over the Kawuneeche Valley with the Colorado River, towards the Never Summer Mountains.



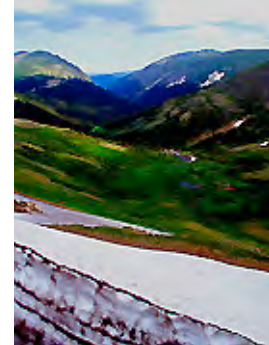
- The correct translation of the Arapaho Indian name is 'Never No Summer Mountains'.
 - In the Colorado River, beaver ponds can be seen.
- **Milner Pass and Overlook**
 - At 10,759 feet, this is at the Continental Divide (see Day 3).
 - It has good views towards the Never Summer Mountains, which are about 3 to 4 miles to the west.
 - Specimen Mountain, at 12,489 feet is about 1 mile to the north, and has a clear tree-line.



continued.....

Rocky Mountain National Park (continued)

- **Medicine Bow Curve Overlook**
 - This gives a good view of the Medicine Bow Mountains, about 20 miles to the north.
 - Below the overlook is a treeless valley with its small stream, which becomes the Cache la Poudre River.
- **Alpine Visitor Center**
 - This provides excellent information about alpine tundra, and has a good viewing platform above a glacial amphitheatre.



- **Gore Range Overlook**
 - This gives a wide view of the Gore Range, about 75 miles away.
- **Trail Ridge Road - highest point**
 - At 12,183 feet, this highest point is about 0.5 mile southwest of Gore Range Overlook.
- **Lava Cliffs Overlook**
 - These cliffs were formed about 26-28 million years ago from continuous volcanic activity in Never Summer Mountains.
 - They are made up of tuff (consolidated ash) and rhyolite (extruded igneous rock containing crystals of quartz and feldspar).
- **Rock Cut Overlook**
 - At over 12,000 feet, this is the highest overlook along Trail Ridge Road.
 - It is named after the nearby cutting through the rock during construction of Trail Ridge Road.
 - **Tundra Communities Nature Trail**



- *This self-guided, 1 mile return trail gives good views across mountains and wildflower meadows. It ascends 260 feet.*
 - *There are explanations how plants and animals have adapted to the harsh conditions of high winds, a short growing season and strong light because of the elevation.*
- **Forest Canyon Overlook**
 - This provides a wonderful view down into Forest Canyon and the Big Thompson River. On the other side of the canyon, there is the Hayden Gorge, and also the Gorge Lakes to the west.
- **Rainbow Curve Overlook**
 - The vegetation here has been drastically affected by the wind and other conditions.
 - Trees commonly only have branches downwind, as others do not survive.

continued.....

Rocky Mountain National Park (continued)

- **Many Parks Curve Overlook**
 - This provides a good view across various grassy, meadow areas in the mountains, which are called 'parks'.

Estes Park

- This is about 3 miles west of Rocky Mountain National Park.
- It is a resort town, at 7,500 feet in the Rocky Mountains.
- Although the Native Indians had known the valley, it was discovered by Joel Estes in 1859, and he moved here in 1860 from California with his wife and 13 children to start a ranch.
 - In 1864, the owner of the Rocky Mountain News, William Byers, visited the valley, and named it Estes Park.
 - In 1866, Joel Estes sold his homestead, as the short summer made ranching difficult.
 - Various wealthy people have lived in Estes Park over the decades.
 - In 1909, the Stanley Hotel opened, and drew many tourists, but it was the establishment of Rocky Mountain National Park, in 1915, which promoted it as a resort town.
- On 15th July 1982, an earth dam burst at Lawn Lake, above the town in Rocky Mountain National Park. The floodwater swept away much of the centre of the town.
 - The disaster was an incentive to the town, which set about recreating itself, being named 'The Gutsiest Little Town in Colorado'.
- The town centre has a Victorian atmosphere, with pleasant gardens along the river and the waterfront of Lake Estes.
- **Estes Park Museum**
 - This is at 200 4th Street, in the centre of the town, close to Lake Estes.
 - It has exhibits about the interesting history of the valley and surrounding area.
 - It has free admission, and is generally open until 5:00pm daily.

Overnight at Estes Park (Colorado)

Date.....

The second day in Rocky Mountain National Park. Try to do as much walking as possible, to appreciate the wonders of nature.

Approximate miles = 70

Leave Estes Park (Colorado) west on Route 34.

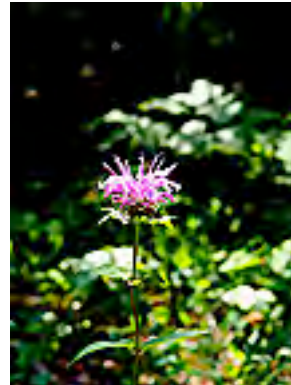
Rocky Mountain National Park

- A full day to visit parts of the National Park, which were not explored on Day 4.
 - **Note:** Route 7, south from Estes Park has not been included in this itinerary, as most of it is not in Rocky Mountain National Park, and trailheads are for longer distances.

- **Bear Lake Road area**

- Leave Estes Park southwest along Route 36.
- **Beaver Meadows Visitor Center**

- This is about 2 miles from Estes Park, just off Route 36.
- It is the headquarters of Rocky Mountain National Park, and has excellent information, and exhibits.



- The Entrance Station is about 1 mile further along Route 36. About 300 yards after the Entrance Station, turn left (south) along Bear Lake Road.
- **Note:** The parking area at Bear Lake is not always large enough for demand. It is recommended to drive to Bear Lake first, and then work back along Bear Lake Road. The following descriptions are in that order.
 - If there is any doubt about parking, a free shuttle bus system operates from a parking area opposite Glacier Basin Campground, which is about 6 miles south of Beaver Meadows Visitor Center.

- **Bear Lake**

- This is about 9 miles along Bear Lake Road - at the end.
- It is a popular place to start many trails.



- **Bear Lake Trail**

- *This is a 0.6 mile loop around the lake, on a paved trail.*

continued.....

Rocky Mountain National Park (continued)

- **Bear Lake** (continued)

- **Nymph Lake Trail**

- *This is a 1 mile return trail to an attractive lake with water lilies. It ascends 225 feet.*



- **Dream Lake Trail**

- *This is a further 1·2 mile return trail from Nymph Lake to another attractive lake. It ascends another 200 feet.*



- **Emerald Lake Trail**

- *This is a further 1·4 mile return trail from Dream Lake to a beautiful lake, set below craggy mountain peaks. It ascends another 180 feet.*



- **Alberta Falls Trail**

- *It is a 1·1 mile return trail to attractive falls in Glacier Creek. It first descends about 285 feet, and then ascends about 160 feet.*



- **The Loch Trail**

- *This is a further 2·1 mile return trail from Alberta Falls to a truly beautiful lake. It ascends another 780 feet.*



continued.....

Rocky Mountain National Park (continued)

- **Sprague Lake Trail** ("sprayg")
 - *This starts about 3.25 miles northeast of Bear Lake, at the Sprague Lake parking area, which is in a small side road on the right (east).*
 - *It is an easy 0.5 mile loop trail, which is level and paved around Sprague Lake.*
 - *The mountain view across the lake frequently appears in Rocky Mountain National Park advertisements.*
 - *It is named after Abner Sprague, who homesteaded in the area from 1875 to 1904, and dammed the stream to create a trout lake.*
- **Moraine Park Museum**
 - This is about 4 miles north of Sprague Lake (almost opposite the turning for Moraine Park), and is on the right (east).
 - It has interactive displays explaining the formation of the landscape.
- **Old Fall River Road**
 - **Note:** This is a one-way dirt road, which is steep in places. It is not suitable for low-clearance vehicles, or RVs, trailers, etc. It is frequently used by normal 2-wheel-drive vehicles.
 - Leave Estes Park northwest along Route 34. Fall River Entrance Station is after about 4 miles.
 - About 2 miles after the Entrance Station, turn right (northwest) at a junction for Old Fall River Road.
 - Alternatively, from Bear Lake Road, turn left (west) along Route 36.
 - After 3 miles turn right (north) along Route 34.
 - After about 2 miles, turn left (northwest) at a junction for Old Fall River Road.
- **Alluvial fan**
 - This is about 1 mile from the junction.
 - There is a good view on the right (north) of the alluvial fan of debris, which was deposited when the earth dam burst at Lawn Lake in 1982 (see Day 4).
- Old Fall River Road is a 9 mile dirt road starting at Endovalley - about 3 miles west of the alluvial fan.
- It is an interesting journey up the old road, with different views from those along the Trail Ridge Road.
- It gives an experience of travel over the Rocky Mountains before Trail Ridge Road was built.
- **Chasm Falls**
 - These are about 1 mile along the dirt road, on the left.
 - There is a steep clamber down the trail, for a view back up the falls.
- It ends at the Alpine Visitor Center, and to return to Estes Park, it is necessary to travel east along the Trail Ridge Road.



Overnight at Estes Park (Colorado)

Date.....

A long distance to drive, but there's plenty to see about pioneers and mammoths.

Approximate miles = 370

Leave Estes Park (Colorado) east on Route 34.

Devil's Backbone

- This is about 26 miles along Route 34, just before entering Loveland.
- It is an unusual ridge of sandstone on the left (north) of the road.
- It is about 1.75 miles long, and looks like a backbone of vertebrae along a ridge.
- It is thought to have formed when the Rocky Mountains pushed up through sedimentary layers of rock.
 - The sedimentary rock was folded and forced to be vertical.
 - Most of the sedimentary sandstone has eroded away, but this unusual ridge has been left behind, because it was more hard-wearing.

About 8.5 miles east of the Devil's Backbone, travel north on Interstate 25.

Fort Collins

- This is about 12 miles north of Exit 257 just off Interstate 25, at various exits around Exit 269.
 - It is then about 3 miles west of Interstate 25.
- In 1862, it was founded as Camp Collins - an army post to protect travellers in the area.
- In 1864, the camp was washed out by floods, and was rebuilt as Fort Collins.
- It has steadily grown into a desirable place to live, on the banks of the Cache la Poudre River.
 - In 2006, it was voted as the best place to live in the USA, by *Money Magazine*.
- Colorado State University is here, with its attractive campus.
- There are six micro-breweries, providing free guided tours. As commercial enterprises, they are not recommended by *itforit*.

Continue north along Interstate 25, crossing into Wyoming after about 30 miles. After about 92 miles, leave Interstate 25 at Exit 92.

Guernsey

- This is about 15 miles east of Interstate 25, along Route 26.
- In the 1880s, Charles A Guernsey homesteaded here. The town, pleasantly situated on the banks of the North Platte River, was named after him.
 - Charles A Guernsey took part in the establishment of the town, promoted mining in the area, and was involved in the construction of Guernsey Dam.

continued.....

Guernsey (continued)

- The Oregon Trail ran to the south of the town and the river. In the 1840s, it was a popular place for emigrants to wash their clothes and themselves in warm springs south of the river. It was called "the emigrant's wash tub".
 - The warm springs are on land now owned by the U.S. Army, and are not accessible to the public.
- In 1902, the railroad arrived and Guernsey was incorporated as a town.
- It now calls itself the 'Hub Of The Oregon Trail'.

• **Oregon Trail Ruts State Historic Site**

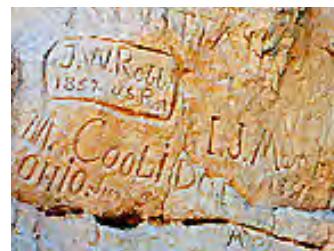
- The turning for this is south of the centre of Guernsey, along South Wyoming Avenue - right (south) from Route 26.
 - After 0.4 mile, turn right (west) along a dirt road.
 - After a further 0.4 mile, turn left (south) along another 0.25 mile dirt road.



- There is a 0.25 mile concrete loop path to some ruts, but others can be found by walking away from the path at the summit.
- Ruts can be seen where wagons on the Oregon Trail were forced to follow, one behind the other.
- The Oregon Trail used this route from 1841, although there is evidence that the route was used as early as 1812.
 - Thousands of pioneers and their wagons passed this way between 1841 and 1869, when the Union Pacific Railroad was completed. After 1869, the use of the trail declined.
- Many ruts are up to 5 inches deep. In places, ruts became trenches 5 feet deep, and the axle-marks can be seen in the side walls.
- The distance between ruts is about 4 feet - indicating the narrow width of the wagons.
- Across the plains, the wagons could spread out to avoid the dust from other wagons, and ruts did not form.

• **Register Cliff State Historic Site**

- This is about 3 miles southeast of Oregon Trail Ruts State Historic Site.
 - From Oregon Trail Ruts State Historic Park, return along 0.65 mile of dirt road, and turn right along South Wyoming Avenue.
 - After about 1.7 miles, turn left (north) along 0.5 mile of dirt road.
- A path leads to the base of a soft stone cliff, where many inscriptions can be seen, which were made by travellers on the Oregon Trail.
- The peak use of the Oregon trail was during the 1840s and 1850s, and many of the inscriptions date from that era.
 - One inscription is dated 1829.



continued.....

Guernsey (continued)

- **Register Cliff State Historic Site** (continued)
 - About 250,000 used the Oregon trail, and about 10,000 died - mostly from disease.
 - Hundreds of travellers inscribed their names, dates and places or origin on the rock, to let later travellers know that they were still alive at this point. Some also added their intended destinations.
 - Below the cliffs was a campsite for those on the Oregon trail, one day from Fort Laramie, only 11 miles away.

Return to Route 26, at Guernsey and turn right (east).

After about 13 miles, the town of Fort Laramie will be entered.

At the town of Fort Laramie, turn right (west and south) along Route 160.

North Platte River Bridge

- This is beside Route 160, about 0.75 mile west and south of the town of Fort Laramie.
- As Fort Laramie became more important, it became vital to be able to dispatch the U.S. Army quickly. This bridge was constructed in 1875, to help the crossing of this river.



- The confluence of the Laramie River with the North Platte River, is upstream, about 0.5 mile south of this bridge.
- It is still open to pedestrians.

Fort Laramie National Historic Site

- This is further along Route 160, about 1.75 miles on the left (east), after the North Platte River Bridge.
- In 1834, the original fort was started by fur traders, and was known as Fort William - named after William Sublette.



- It is in a beautiful location, in a natural bend of the Laramie River.
- Ownership changed, as well as the fort's name, for a few years, but eventually settled as Fort Laramie - named after a French fur trapper, Jacques La Ramie, who worked in the area.
 - Between the 1820s and 1840s, beaver fur was fashionable for men's hats. As the beaver population declined, it went out of fashion.
- In 1849, the USA Army purchased it, to become the first garrisoned post in Wyoming. It was not a fortified fort, but a trading post with soldiers assigned to it. It was the first army post in the area, which later became Wyoming.

continued.....

Fort Laramie National Historic Site (continued)

- It is on the Oregon Trail and was visited by trappers, traders and emigrants.
- In 1868, the Treaty of Fort Laramie was signed here by William Tecumseh Sherman, and Chief Red Cloud of the Lakota Sioux. It gave settlement rights in the Black Hills to the Sioux, and hunting rights and land in Montana, Wyoming and South Dakota.
- It remained an important military outpost until the 1880s.
- It was eventually closed as a fort in 1890, with some of its buildings being sold at auction.
- Many of the remaining buildings have been restored, including barracks, various officers' houses, storehouse, magazine and guardhouses, all set around a large, rectangular parade ground.



Return about 3 miles to the town of Fort Laramie, and turn right (east) along Route 26. After about 10 miles, turn left (north) along Route 85, at Lingle.

Rawhide Buttes ("be-yoot")

- These are on the left (west) about 35 miles north along Route 85.
 - They are about 2 miles on the left, and are wooded hills, unlike the usual small, vertically-sided, flat-topped buttes.
- There are at least three stories about why these hills were so-named.
 - In June 1849, according to legend, a wagon train camped at the area, on the way to the Californian goldfields.
 - A young man had claimed that he would kill the first Indian he saw, and so shot and killed an Indian squaw.
 - In order to avoid an attack from the Indian braves, the young man gave himself up, and the Indians then skinned him alive.
 - Another story is that Indians had killed and removed the hides of buffalo in the area.
 - They had piled the hides up at the foot of the buttes, to be collected later.
 - On their return, they found that the hides had been stolen by white trappers.
 - Another story is that beaver trappers initially named beaver pelts as rawhides.
 - The first of the three stories is the most favoured by locals, and has given rise to annual festivities in nearby Lusk (see below).

continued.....

Lusk

- This is about 12 miles north of Rawhide Buttes, along Route 85.
- Established in 1886, this ranching town was named after local rancher, Frank Lusk, who donated some land for the railroad station.
 - In 1918, there was a brief oil boom, when 10,000 people lived here, but now there are about 1,500.
- It has an annual 'The Legend of Rawhide' pageant, on the second weekend in July, to celebrate the tragic 1849 story of Rawhide Buttes.
 - The script for the pageant was written in 1946, and includes a cast and crew of over 400. The story is re-enacted twice over the weekend.
 - On the Saturday afternoon, 'The Legend of Rawhide' parade has vintage vehicles, wagons, cowboys and Indians. It processes along Main Street and Cedar Street (Route 85), which is closed to traffic for about 20 minutes.
- The story of Rawhide Buttes is a powerful influence on the town. In the early-1960s, there were moves to change the town's name to Rawhide.



Continue through Lusk - now on Route 85/18.

After about another 47 miles, turn right at Mule Creek Junction, continuing along Route 18.

After about 10 miles, cross the border into South Dakota.

After about 13 miles, go past Edgemont, continuing along Route 18.

Hot Springs

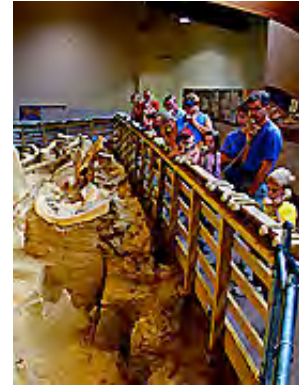
- This is about 27 miles past Edgemont, along Route 18.
- During the 1500s, Native Indians were reported to have suffered with the so-called 'fell disease', usually accepted as tuberculosis, which threatened to wipe out the tribes. Warm, natural waters here were claimed to cure the disease, and the area became a shrine for the sick.
- At least 200 years later, the Cheyenne ("shy-ann") Indians settled here. However, as time passed, the Lakota Sioux ("la-koh-ta" "soo") Indians also wanted to live here.
- In 1869, there was a battle between the Cheyenne and Sioux to own the water.
 - This battle was fought on Battle Mountain, which is now part of the northern section of Hot Springs.
 - The battle was won by the Sioux, who named the area Minnekahta, meaning 'hot water'.
 - After the battle, the Sioux allowed the Cheyenne access to the healing waters.
- In about 1879-1880, white settlers arrived here, as the land and water supply were good for ranching.
- In 1890, after the springs had been in ownership of various settlers, Fred Evans bought the spring source and built mineral baths on the site.
 - The 'Evans Plunge' is still open to the public as a commercial enterprise, with the water naturally arriving at 87°F (30.5°C), although there is no longer any claim for cures.

continued.....

Hot Springs (continued)

- **Mammoth Site**

- This is at 1800 Highway 18 Bypass.
 - Highway 18 Bypass (also named Indianapolis Avenue) leaves Highway 18 to the right, before Hot Springs centre. It is then about 0.75 mile on the left (north).



- Over 26,000 years ago, mammoths and other creatures visited a sinkhole - a pond in a collapsed limestone cavern. They became trapped and died in the sinkhole, sinking into the mud, and were consequently preserved.
- Since that time, the area around the sinkhole has been eroded, leaving the sinkhole as a slight hill, measuring about 100 x 200 feet.
- In 1974, whilst excavating for new housing on the hill, the bones were discovered, and all building plans stopped.
- The sinkhole is now enclosed with a purpose-built museum, where visitors walk around the excavations.
 - The fossils of mammoths and other creatures are exhibited exactly where they have been found.
- It is the largest facility in the world for researching mammoths.
- It is open 8.00am to 8.00pm, and consequently a visit could be either today, or on Day 7.

Overnight at Hot Springs (South Dakota)

Date.....

Below and above ground, there's plenty of interest. Custer State Park has marvellous variety. Don't forget Mount Rushmore.

Approximate miles = 100

Leave Hot Springs (South Dakota) north on Route 385, towards the Black Hills.

Black Hills of Dakota

- These are sacred to the Sioux Indians, and are so-named as the green pine trees have a dark sheen when seen from a distance.

Wind Cave National Park

- The entrance road to this is about 10 miles north of Hot Springs on the left (west), just off Route 385. The Visitor Center is then about 0.5 mile along the entrance road.
- There are two aspects to this National Park - below ground and above ground.



- Below ground, there are cave tours. The Interagency Pass provides a reduction in the cave tour fees - it does not provide free admission, as with other Federal sites.
- Above ground, where there are many trails, there are no fees to enter. The wildlife is similar to that in Custer State Park (see below).
- **Below ground caves**
 - The name is derived from the first discovery - in 1881 - of the cave by white man, when wind was noticed blowing from a small hole in the ground - the cave's entrance.
 - The cave was already known to the Lakota Indians, who regarded it as sacred.
 - In addition to a few stalactites and stalagmites, the cave is famous for its calcite formations of boxwork, frostwork and popcorn.
 - Boxwork is thin blades of calcite in a honeycomb formation. 95% of the known boxwork in the world is here.
 - Frostwork is very thin spikes of calcite, which look more like snow crystals. It is very rare.
 - Popcorn is small rounded calcite lumps in a bunch - more like grapes than popcorn.
 - There are about 120 miles of passageways, making it the world's fourth longest cave system.
 - *Three cave tours are generally available, with others on occasions. The Garden of Eden Tour provides a good overview.*

continued.....

Wind Cave National Park (continued)

- **Garden of Eden Tour (green)**
 - *This lasts for about 1 hour, and involves 150 steps.*
 - *Entrance and return is by elevator.*
 - *There is a good selection of the main Wind Cave features.*
- **Natural Entrance Tour (red)**
 - *This lasts for about 1¼ hours, and involves 300 steps - mainly down.*
 - *Returning to the surface is by elevator.*
 - *There is a great deal of boxwork on this tour.*
- **Fairgrounds Tour (gold)**
 - *This lasts for about 1½ hours, and involves 450 steps.*
 - *Entrance and return is by elevator.*
 - *There is boxwork, and other formations and it visits larger caverns.*
- **Above ground**
 - *There are 30 miles of trails. With the exception of Rankin Ridge Trail (see below), it is considered better to walk trails in Custer State Park (see below).*

Continue north along Route 385.

About 3 miles after the Wind Cave National Park entrance road, turn right (north) along Route 87.

Note: If the Wind Cave National Park Visitor Center has been visited and the entrance road continuation has been taken, then the turning right for Route 87 will be about 0.5 mile after rejoining Route 385.

- **Rankin Ridge Trail**
 - *This starts 5 miles north of the junction of Route 385 and Route 87. There is a 400-yard dirt road on the right (east) to a parking area.*



- *It is a reasonably easy 1 mile loop trail through woodland, with views of the Black Hills to the west and prairie land to the east. It ascends about 175 feet.*
- *There are interpretive signs, which explain about the wildlife and ecology of the area - particularly about fire.*
- *There is an excellent view from the top of the fire lookout tower - there are 72 steps.*

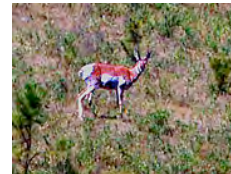
continued.....

Custer State Park and area - south, centre and northern sections

- **How to visit the area**
 - There are many facets of Custer State Park and its vicinity, including Mount Rushmore National Memorial, Crazy Horse Memorial and scenic highways with tunnels and bridges.
 - Section of roads have been named, as they are particularly scenic, such as 'Needles Highway Scenic Drive', 'Iron Mountain Road', 'Wildlife Loop Road' and 'Peter Norbeck Scenic Byway', the last of which includes parts of the others. Much of these scenic roads will be covered over the next two days.
 - This part of the itinerary has been divided into two sections, staying overnight at Custer, which is very close to Custer State Park, and only 20 miles from Mount Rushmore National Memorial.
 - Day 7 (today) is generally exploring the south, centre and northern sections.
 - Day 8 (tomorrow) is generally exploring the western section.
 - There are six tunnels in the northern section. If driving a vehicle over 10 feet high and/or 8 feet wide, advice should be obtained.
- Custer State Park starts about 7 miles along Route 87.
- It is the second largest USA State Park, with 71,000 acres of wild land, with much wildlife.
 - There are around 1,500 bison, together with elk, deer, antelope, sheep, goats, coyotes, prairie dogs, burros and many other animals.
- The landscape is of two types, with sweeping prairies to the south and east, and valleys with beautiful mountain meadows to the northwest.
 - The 'Needles' are soaring, slim, white granite formations, which can be seen from many locations in the northwest area.
 - There are many clear lakes and cascading streams.
- *There are many good trails. Suggested trails (below) are a selection of the shorter ones to provide an overview of the main areas.*
 - *Although there are many designated trails, it is permitted to hike anywhere within Custer State Park.*

- **Prairie Trail**

- *This starts on the Wildlife Loop Road, which is Custer State Park Road 1, in the south of Custer State Park.*



- *From the south boundary into Custer State Park on Route 87 from Wind Cave National Park, continue north along Route 87.*
- *After about 9 miles, turn right (east) along Wildlife Loop Road. Immediately, there is an entrance station.*
- *Continue for 5.2 miles to the trailhead on the right (south), at a small parking area.*
- *It is a 3 mile loop trail, ascending about 270 feet. It is easy to follow, with brown signs and cairns of rocks.*
 - *There are a few streams to cross, but these are usually dry in summer.*
- *It goes across land, which is a favourite for deer, bison and pronghorn antelope, being prairie grassland, with good views across the Black Hills.*
- *It is exceptionally good for wild flowers in early summer.*
- *The end of the walk returns through small groups of trees.*

continued.....

Custer State Park and area (continued)

• **Mount Coolidge Fire Tower**

- This is off Route 87, along a 1.7 mile dirt road (3.4 miles return).
 - The left (west) turning for this is about 4 miles north of the turning along Wildlife Loop Road from Route 87.
 - Alternatively, it is on the right (west), about 2 miles south of the junction with Route 16A.
- At 6,023 feet, this has wonderful views across Custer State Park and its Needles, Mount Rushmore, and to the Crazy Horse Memorial.
 - If the visibility is good, Badlands National Park may be seen in the east.
- Built in 1940, it is used as a fire lookout, and also for communications.



• **The Badger Hole**

- This is just off Badger Clark Road, in the centre of Custer State Park.
 - From Mount Coolidge Fire Tower, return to Route 87, and turn left (north).
 - After about 1.5 miles, turn right (west) along Route 16A.
 - After about 2 miles, turn right (south) along Badger Clark Road - Custer State Park Road 8 (this turning is about 200 yards after the junction with Route 87 turning north).
 - After about 0.75 mile, turn right (northwest) along a dirt road.
 - It is then about 300 yards.
- It is the timber cabin of Charles Badger Clark (1863-1957), who was the first Poet Laureate of South Dakota, writing many poems about his love of cowboys and the West, especially around the Black Hills.
 - Although he was engaged to the same girl twice, he never married.
- He built his cabin with the help of a carpenter, and lived alone here for about 30 years without electricity or piped water. He also laid out some of the trail.
- The cabin is usually open to visit, and has on view his living room, two bedrooms and kitchen.
- **Badger Clark Historic Trail**
 - *This is a reasonably easy 1 mile loop trail, ascending about 220 feet.*
 - *It starts at the side of the cabin porch, and goes around the hillside amongst rocks and trees.*
 - *It is a beautiful, easy-to-follow trail, and the scenery was the motivation for some of Charles Badger Clark's poetry.*



continued.....

Custer State Park and area (continued)

• **Needles Highway Scenic Drive and Iron Mountain Road**

- From Badger Clark Historic Trail, return north to Route 16A, and turn left (west).
- After about 200 yards, turn right (north) along Route 87 - the Needles Highway Scenic Drive.
- After about 3 miles, turn right (west) along South Playhouse Road.
- After about 4 miles, turn left (north) along Iron Mountain Road - Route 16A.
 - Completed in 1922, this exciting road winds through the forest. It has three pigtail bridges and three tunnels, with views of Mount Rushmore National Memorial.
 - Each of the tunnels was purposely created to provide a view directly towards Mount Rushmore.
 - The pigtail bridges were designed to provide a change in elevation in the shortest distance, causing as little harm to the environment. They curve round over 360°, going through bridges made from local timber.
 - **Norbeck Overlook**
 - There is a parking area on the right (west), about 1.7 miles after the first tunnel (actually named 'Tunnel 3').
 - There is a very short, level trail to view Mount Rushmore through the trees.
- After about 9 miles, turn left (west) along Route 244.



Mount Rushmore National Memorial

- This is about 1.5 miles along Route 244.
- **Note:** Although this is free to enter, there is a parking fee, which is valid for the remainder of the year. The Interagency Annual Pass is not accepted.
- It is a 'Shrine to Democracy' of the first 150 years of the USA.
- The heads of four Presidents were created by sculptor, Gutzon Borglum, to represent the ideals of the American nation.
 - George Washington signifies the struggle for independence, and the birth of the republic.
 - Thomas Jefferson signifies the idea of representative government and expansion across the continent.
 - Theodore Roosevelt signifies the 20th century role of the USA in world affairs.
 - Abraham Lincoln signifies the permanent union of the states, and equality for all citizens.
- The sculptures of the 60-foot-high faces were completed in 1941, after 6.5 years' work, spread over 14 years, with about 400 workers.
 - The total cost was just under \$1million, and more than 450,000 tons of rock were removed - 90% with dynamite.
 - Originally, it was intended to carve more of the mountain down to the presidents' waists, but funding was insufficient.



continued.....

Mount Rushmore National Memorial (continued)

- Mount Rushmore was named after Charles E Rushmore, a New York lawyer, who was visiting the area in 1885.
 - A story relates that he asked the name of the mountain, and as it had no name, the joking response was "Mount Rushmore", and the name stuck.
 - When the mountain was selected for the sculptures, he donated \$5,000 to the project - the largest individual donation.

- **Avenue of Flags**

- This is a very short avenue between the gift area of the shop/restaurant/information and Grand View Terrace.
- It has columns each side - each column bearing flags.



- There are 56 flags in total, in alphabetical order, representing the 50 states, 3 territories, 2 commonwealths and 1 district.

- **Grand View Terrace**

- This provides a good overall view of the four faces, and also provides access to the amphitheatre, Sculptor's Studio and Presidential Trail.

- **Sculptor's Studio**

- This is at the foot of the steps to the right of Grandview Terrace, when facing the four Presidents.
- It has plaster models, some tools and information about the sculptures.

- **Presidential Trail**

- This easy 0.5 mile loop trail starts and finishes on each side of Grand View Terrace.
- It goes to the base of Mount Rushmore, and provides the closest view of the faces from below.

- **Evening Ceremony**

- Each evening (at 9:00pm in the summer), there is a ceremony in the amphitheatre. It consists of a 10-minute Park Ranger Talk, a 20-minute Patriotic Video, and finally a 'Veterans Invitation' to help lower the flag.



Leave Mount Rushmore National Memorial, turning right (west) along Route 244. After about 9 miles, turn left (south) along Route 16/385. Custer is then about 11 miles.

continued.....

Custer

- In 1874, gold was discovered in the area (see Gordon Stockade on Day 8), and the US Cavalry camped here when escorting away the illegal gold prospectors.
 - At the time, the town was known as Stonewall, after Stonewall Jackson, but it was soon changed to Custer.
 - Stonewall Jackson was a Confederate General in the American Civil War (1861-1865).
 - In 1875, it was established, and is the oldest town within the Black Hills area.
 - In 1876, it was nearly abandoned for the richer gold strikes further north.
 - In 1880, the town was laid out with the main street (Route 16/385) being wide enough for a team of eight oxen pulling a wagon to make a u-turn. It is claimed to be the widest main street in the USA.
- Its main industry is now tourism and timber, but there is still some mining of precious metals.

Overnight at Custer (South Dakota)

Date.....

Visiting another area of Custer State Park today, and also the massive Crazy Horse Memorial.

Approximate miles = 80

Leave Custer (South Dakota) west on Route 16A.

Note: In order to visit parts of the area, there will be a small overlapping of the roads travelled on Day 7.

Custer State Park - western section

• **Gordon Stockade**

- This is about 3.5 miles east of Custer, on the right (south) of Route 16A.
- In 1874, a party of gold seekers arrived in the area, as there had been reports of gold in French Creek. The party was led by John Gordon.
 - In December 1874, they illegally built a stockade as protection from Native Indians.
 - Many more gold prospectors arrived in early 1875, but they were all escorted from the area in April 1875 by the US Cavalry.
 - They were in violation of the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie, which had given the land solely to the Lakota Sioux Indians (see Day 6).
- The stockade has been completely rebuilt, and reopened in late-2005. Previous replicas had been built in 1925 and 1941.
- It has interpretive signs, which explain about Gordon's gold-prospecting party, and the events which led to it arriving.



• **Needles Highway Scenic Drive**

- From Gordon Stockade, continue east along Route 16A.
- After 4.5 miles, turn left (north) along Route 87 - the Needles Highway Scenic Drive.
- This is a 13.5-mile section of Route 87, and includes two tunnels.
- It travels through beautiful forest scenery with mountain meadows, views of Cathedral Spires, Little Devil's Tower, the Eye of the Needle and ending at Sylvan Lake.



continued.....

Custer State Park (continued)

• **Sylvan Lake**

- This is a beautiful lake with massive white granite outcrops around the perimeter. It is considered one of the most scenic and beautiful lakes in the Black Hills.
- There is a beach for swimming, a dam and the opportunity to hire boats.

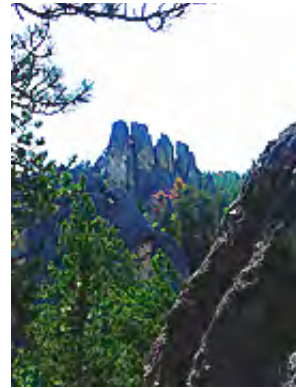


• **Sylvan Lake Shore Trail**

- *It is an easy 1 mile, almost level, loop trail, except at the dam, where it is necessary to descend about 40 feet around and through the rocks.*

• **Sunday Gulch Trail**

- *This starts about half-way round Sylvan Lake Shore Trail (see above), leaving at the lake dam.*
- *It is a 2.8 mile loop trail, and reasonably strenuous, rapidly descending about 720 feet.*



- *It is a very attractive trail down through a narrow canyon to a creek, and then passing through woodland areas. It has some excellent views of the northern section of Custer State Park.*
- *In one area, the trail is close to Route 87, but then changes direction back towards Sylvan Lake.*

Crazy Horse Memorial

- This is off Route 16/385, only about 2 miles due west of Sylvan Lake, but about 12 miles by road.
 - From Sylvan lake, continue along Route 87 for about 200 yards, and turn right (north) - continuing along Route 87.



- After about 6 miles, turn left (south) along Route 16/385.
- After about 6 miles, turn left (east) for Crazy Horse Memorial.
- It is the largest mountain sculpture in the world.
- The face of Chief Crazy Horse was sculpted first, and now work is being concentrated on the horse.

continued.....

Crazy Horse Memorial (continued)

- In 1948, the sculptor, Korczak Ziolkowski, started the project to honour the Oglala Lakota Indian Chief Crazy Horse (about 1840-1877).
 - Chief Crazy Horse fought against the USA government, to try to preserve the traditional Native Indian way of life.
 - Korczak Ziolkowski died in 1982, but his family has continued with the project.
- It is dedicated to the heritage and culture of all North American Indians.
- The sculpture is being created with Chief Crazy Horse pointing to "My lands are where my dead lie buried."
- It will eventually be 563 feet high, including the face of Chief Crazy Horse at 87.5 feet high.
 - The Presidential faces at Mount Rushmore are about 60 feet high.
- The visitor complex includes the 'Indian Museum of North America', the sculptor's log home and studio, many other sculptures in stone and bronze, and two theatres.
- It is open daily from 7:00am until after a laser-light show in the evening.
 - The admission price includes the laser show. If you wish to leave, and re-enter later for the laser show, a special voucher should be obtained in the Information Center.

Rapid City

- This is about 36 miles northeast of Crazy Horse Memorial.
 - From Crazy Horse Memorial, return north along Route 16/385, and continue to follow Route 16 all the way to Rapid City.
 - **Note:** After about 13 miles, Route 385 goes in a different direction, and should be ignored.
- In 1876, some disappointed gold prospectors from the Black Hills set up home in the area, naming it after Rapid Creek.
 - By 1900, it was an important trading centre for the area.
 - In the 1950s, it expanded as a trade centre with a large building boom.
 - In 1972, heavy rains caused flooding of Rapid Creek and other local water courses, and over 200 lives were lost, together with damage to 1,335 homes.
 - The floodplain area was re-designated for sports, arboretums and parks. The homes and commercial districts were moved away from potential flooding areas.
- The city's official nickname is 'Star of the West', but in recent years it has become known as the 'City of Presidents'.
 - Life-size bronze statues of all the USA's presidents are installed at street corners in the downtown business area.
 - The project to install all the USA's presidents commenced in 2001, with completion due by 2010.
- Because of its good trading facilities, sports amenities, and excellent climate, sheltered from extremes of temperature by the Black Hills, it has become a popular area to live.

Overnight at Rapid City (South Dakota)

Date.....

Air and space, missiles and the fascinating Badlands National Park - an intriguing variety.

Approximate miles = 200

Leave Rapid City (South Dakota) east on Interstate 90.

South Dakota Air and Space Museum

- This is at 2890 Davis Drive, at Ellsworth Air Force Base.
 - Leave Interstate 90 about 7 miles east of Rapid City, at Exit 67, and travel north along Liberty Boulevard.
 - It is about 1.25 mile along Liberty Boulevard, next to the main gate to Ellsworth Air Force Base.
- It has aircraft from the World War II era. Other large aircraft include a Boeing B-52D Stratofortress and Rockwell B-1B Lancer.
- It has four different missiles, including a Minuteman II.
- Amongst various exhibits, there is a display about training for missile procedures, an interactive cockpit for an F-106 Delta Dart, and a simulator for a B-1B Lancer.
- A 45-50 minute bus tour can be taken of the Air Force Base, including a Minuteman Missile Training Launch facility.
- It is open daily from 8:30am to 6:00pm, has free entry, although there is a fee for the bus tour.



Return to Interstate 90, and continue east for about 49 miles.

Minuteman Missile National Historic Site - Launch Facility Delta-09

- **Notes:** There are three locations relating to the Minuteman Missile National Historic Site - Launch Facility Delta-09, Launch Control Facility Delta-01, and the Headquarters.
 - This 'Launch Facility Delta-09' site is usually visited as part of a tour (see below), but is open for visitors during each weekday at around 11:30am and 3:00pm - although these times may vary, as they relate to the booked tours.
 - It is not recommended to visit the site outside a tour, or outside the above hours, as it is a high security area.
- This is about 0.75 mile south and west of Interstate 90, along a country road.
 - Leave Interstate 90 at Exit 116, and turn right (west).
 - After 0.25 mile, the road becomes a dirt road.
 - Continue for about 0.5 mile, and it is on the right (west) of the road.
- It is an underground missile silo, now with a glass roof, so that visitors can look down into the 80-foot-deep, concrete tube.
 - Originally, there was 90-ton door over the tube, which would have been blown off before the launch of a missile.
- Inside the tube, there is a dummy missile, known as a 'Minuteman II training missile'.

continued.....

Return to Interstate 90, and continue east.

After about 16 miles, leave Interstate 90 at Exit 131, at Cactus Flat.

Turn right (south) along Route 240 (although the signpost states it is west).

Minuteman Missile National Historic Site - Headquarters

- This is about 0.25 mile south of Interstate 90, along Route 240 - next to a fuel station.
- It is the site of the Headquarters (also called the 'Visitor Contact Station') for tours to see the Minuteman Launch Facility Delta-09, the Launch Control Facility Delta-01, and various exhibits.
 - The Launch Facility Delta-09 can be visited by going at restricted times (see above). It is about 17 miles away.
 - The Launch Control Facility Delta-01 can only be visited by going on a tour (see below). It is about 4 miles away.
 - This facility has an above ground area, and a below ground launch control centre - both of which are visited on a tour.
 - The above ground building, looking like a ranch, has living quarters for staff, including a dining area, rest area and sleeping accommodation.
- The Headquarters has a short film, which can usually be seen without the need for booking.
- The Minuteman Missile was part of the defences of the Cold War.
 - The Cold War was from the mid-1940s to the early-1990s, and was a term to represent the tension, conflict, misunderstanding and general hostility between the two superpowers of the Soviet Union and the USA.
- The Minuteman Missile was named after the Minute Men of the American Revolutionary War for Independence in the late-1700s. Minute Men were appointed by the local Militia, and were so-called because of their ability to be ready for action at a minute's notice.
- The Headquarters is open from 8:00am to 4:30pm each weekday.
- Tours of about 2 hours are available. Each tour has only 6 visitors.
 - It is advisable to book a tour in advance. There are only two tours per day, at 9:00am and 1:30pm.
 - To book, telephone 605-433-5552 on a weekday.

Badlands National Park

- This is about 9 miles south of Interstate 90 along Route 240.
- Badlands National Park is divided into three separate units.



- **North Unit**
 - This is the main unit, being visited today via the Northeast Entrance. It is about 3.5 miles south of Interstate 90.
- **Stronghold Unit and Palmer Creek Unit**
 - Both of these units are within the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.
 - Both are less-visited areas, with some parts being accessible only with 4-wheel-drive vehicles or on foot. Neither unit is part of the itinerary.
 - Stronghold Unit includes White River Visitor Center, which is run by Sioux Indians.

continued.....

Badlands National Park (continued)

- The name comes from the Sioux name of 'Mako Sica', meaning 'Land Bad'.
 - The same term is used in various locations in the USA, meaning that a lack of water has created a harsh environment, with little vegetation, and being difficult to pass through - on foot, in a wagon or in a modern-day vehicle.

- **The landscape**

- This is a sedimentary formation dating from between 23 million and 37 million years ago. It is mostly made up of clay, but is also mixed with soil and ash.
- It is being eroded rapidly at about 1 inch each year, and so the landscape is changing all the time. The sediment is being washed onto the lower prairie and into its water courses.
- The erosion allows the sedimentary layers to be seen in often vividly multi-coloured horizontal bands.
- There are particularly famous fossil beds here. As the erosion is so rapid, it makes fossil-hunting comparatively easy.
 - Evolutionary study, predominantly of mammals, is common in the Badlands, having first started in the 1840s.
 - During the late-1800s, there was severe bitterness and aggression between rival palaeontologists. This was named the 'Bone Wars', and drove exploration faster.
- Because the hills are mainly mud, made of clay, and the area receives only a small amount of precipitation, there is only a small amount of vegetation. It is restricted to the plants which can tolerate such poor soil in arid conditions.
- Despite the immediate impression of a barren wilderness, there is much mysterious, almost supernatural beauty.

- **Badlands Wall**

- This is a high ridge of rock pinnacles and spires, in an almost unbroken stretch of nearly 60 miles from east to west of the region.



- **Trails**

- *Most short trails start in the east of the area, within 5 miles of the Ben Reifel Visitor Center (see below).*
- *Because of the rapid erosion of the landscape, all recognised trails have metal markers with numbers. These are invaluable on the longer trails.*
- *The composition of the landscape makes the terrain difficult, particularly after rain, and care should be taken.*

- **Badlands Loop Road**

- Route 240 is also named the 'Badlands Loop Road', and winds its way through many of the scenic parts of Badlands National Park, close to the Badlands Wall.
 - It eventually leads back to Interstate 90 at Exit 110 at the town of Wall - which is about 50 miles east of Rapid City.
- From Exit 131 of Interstate 90 to Exit 110, the Badlands Loop Road is about 40 miles.
- The major points of interest are in order along Badlands Loop Road from the Northeast Entrance.

continued.....

Badlands National Park (continued)

- **Badlands Loop Road** (continued)

- **Big Badlands Overlook**

- This is about 200 yards south of the Northeast Entrance.



- It provides a good vantage point to see the general terrain of the unusual and fascinating environment of this National Park.

- **Parking area**

- A main parking area is about 1.5 miles south of Big Badlands Overlook, on the left (east) side of the road.

- **Door Trail**

- *This starts at the north end of the parking area.*
 - *It is a 0.25 mile, level, return trail, starting on a boardwalk, and then going through a 'door' in the Badlands Wall onto a more uneven area of the badlands.*
 - *It tries to show the geological history of the badlands.*

- **Window Trail**

- *This starts near the south end of the parking area.*
 - *It is a 0.25 mile, level, return trail to see a view of a canyon, which has been eroded in complex shapes. The trail goes to a natural viewing point in the Badlands Wall.*

- **Notch Trail**

- *This starts at the south end of the parking area.*
 - *It is a 1.5 mile return trail, ascending about 120 feet.*

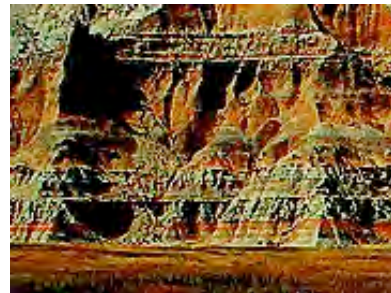


- *The trail starts along the floor of a canyon. It then climbs a ladder, travels along a narrow area and along higher canyon floor to the 'Notch'.*
 - *The notch looks over the Cliff Shelf area (see below), and has one of the best views of the Pine Ridge Reservation of the Oglala Sioux Indians, and of the White River Valley to the south.*

continued.....

Badlands National Park (continued)

- **Badlands Loop Road** (continued)
 - **Parking area** (continued)
 - **Castle Trail**
 - *This can also be accessed from the same parking area as above, but iforit suggests that access is best from further along Badlands Loop Road (see below).*
 - **Cliff Shelf Nature Trail**
 - *This starts at a parking area about 1.5 mile south of the parking area for Door, Window and Notch Trails.*
 - *It is an easy 0.5 mile loop trail, ascending about 90 feet.*
 - *It weaves through an area of vegetation with patches of trees, and provides one of the best views of the White River Valley to the south.*
 - *Millard Ridge rises behind the cliff shelf area, and has the 'notch' of Notch Trail (see above). It is named after Ben Millard, who homesteaded in the area in the 1920s and built the Cedar Pass Lodge.*
 - *Note: If the Notch Trail (see above) has been undertaken, the views from this trail may seem inferior.*
 - **Ben Reifel Visitor Center**
 - *This is about 0.75 mile after the Cliff Shelf Nature Trail.*
 - *It has exhibits about the geology, wildlife and ancient cultures of the area.*
 - *An excellent film describes the Badlands.*
 - **Saddle Pass Trail**
 - *This starts about 2 miles west of the Ben Reifel Visitor Center, at a small parking area.*
- *It is a return trail of 0.75 mile, but ascending about 220 feet steeply to a reasonably level area.*
- *Its main purpose is to connect with Castle Trail and Medicine Root Trail (see below).*
- *The colours in Saddle Pass are particularly good, with bands of purple, pink and red.*
- *The pass was used by Indians for centuries, and later by the Pony Express, although unauthorized.*
- **Castle Trail & Medicine Root Trail**
 - *Castle Trail can be accessed from three different places: at the first large parking area along Badlands Loop Road, here, and opposite the Fossil Exhibit Trail (see below). From one end to the other, it is 5 miles long (10 miles return).*
 - *A good, reasonably level, 3.75 mile loop trail can be created by joining one section of Castle Trail with Medicine Root Trail. (Including Saddle Pass trail, this is a total of about 4.5 miles.)*



continued.....

Badlands National Park (continued)

- **Badlands Loop Road** (continued)
 - **Castle Trail & Medicine Root Trail** (continued)
 - *About 600 yards from the start of Saddle Pass Trail, it ends at a crossing with Castle Trail. Turn right (east) at the crossing, along Castle Trail.*
 - *After about 1.75 miles, and about 60 yards before meeting the Old National Park Road, turn left (west and north) along Medicine Root Trail.*
 - *After about 2 miles, the trail returns to the same crossing with Castle Trail.*
 - *Go straight forward (south), back along Saddle Pass Trail to the parking area.*
 - *The landscape varies from open prairie, with a backdrop of Badlands formations, to pinnacle, buttes, spires, ridges and gullies - with wonderful colours in all directions.*
 - *The real benefit of these trails is the tranquillity, solitude and wildlife of the area.*
 - **Fossil Exhibit Trail**
 - *This starts about 3 miles northwest of Saddle Pass Trail, at a parking area.*
 - *It is a 0.25 mile, level, loop boardwalk trail, which explains about the pre-historic and extinct creatures, which once lived in the area. Fossils of the creatures are displayed along the sides of the boardwalk.*
 - **White River Overlook**
 - This provides a description of the White River to the south, which gets its name from white clay particles held in suspension.
 - The particles repel each other, and consequently do not settle to the bottom.
 - The river is slowly eroding its banks, and moving northwards.
 - **Bigfoot Pass and Overlook**
 - This overlook reminds visitors of the tragedy of the Wounded Knee Massacre, which took place about 65 miles to the south.
 - In December 1890, the Lakota Sioux Indians had travelled through this pass and encountered the US 7th Cavalry at Wounded Knee Creek, South Dakota.
 - A shot was fired, and the Cavalry opened fire. 153 Sioux were killed, 50 were wounded, and 150 fled - and were thought to have subsequently died of exposure. The majority were women, children and the old. 25 Cavalry were killed - thought to be mostly by 'friendly fire'.



continued.....

Badlands National Park (continued)

• **Badlands Loop Road** (continued)

• **Panorama Point**

- This overlook has wonderful views to east, south and west, across the plain of the White River.



- The colourful striations in the landscape are particularly good here, especially when the land is wet, and looking away from the sun.
- **Prairie Wind Overlook and Trail**
 - This very short, easy trail goes into the prairie, which has federal protection, as the largest prairie of mixed grass in the USA.
 - Many people find this to be a place for quiet contemplation, set in the vast prairies, which surmount some of the badland areas.
- **Burns Basin Overlook**
 - At one time, the basin below had a reasonable water supply, and Wilson Burns ran a sheep ranch here in the early 1900s.
 - Other homesteads were also here, but the water springs dried up, forcing them all to leave.
- **Homestead Overlook**
 - This overlook is to the southwest across the Contata Basin, which is part of the Buffalo Gap National Grassland.
 - During the 1910-1930s it was home to many homesteaders, who tried to earn a living from cattle, hay and wheat.
- **Conata Basin Overlook**
 - This indicates how the landscape has changed at the same time as the climate.
 - The time-scale is between 23 million and 37 million years ago, with 87 different fossil soils being discovered here.
 - Not only has the landscape changed, but also the animals, wildlife and vegetation.
 - The landscape has eroded from the high buttes with near-vertical sides to the lower rounded hills.
- **Yellow Mounds Overlook**
 - This shows how different fossil soils have developed over millions of years.



- At one time, there was a vast sea covering much of what is now north America - indicated by fossils of sea creatures here, and at many other locations.
- The yellow colour is from a substance called limonite, which is a general term used to describe various oxides of iron.

continued.....

Badlands National Park (continued)

- **Badlands Loop Road** (continued)

- **Big Pig Dig**

- This is just off the Badlands Loop Road.

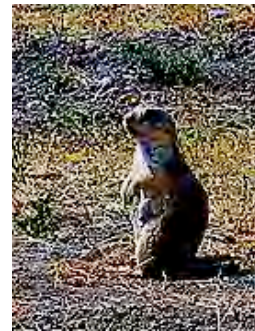


- About 0.25 mile after Yellow Mounds Overlook, turn left (south) along Route 509 - Conata Road.
 - It is then about 0.75 mile to a picnic area on the right (west). It is necessary to park here, and then walk 200 yards to the dig on the opposite side of the road.
 - In 1993, a large jawbone, femur and vertebrae were discovered. There is debate about which particular bone was found first. They were originally thought to be that of an animal like a pig, but have since been identified as being from a hornless rhinoceros.
 - A dig was started, which continued each year from 1993, until funding was discontinued at the end of 2008. Summer visitors saw palaeontologists at their meticulous work in recovering the fossils.
 - Over 10,000 bones have been excavated from the site, including those from horses, turtles, cats - but all being predecessors of present-day creatures.
 - It is thought the area was once a watering hole, which then started to dry up, trapping the animals in the mud. Scavengers then fed on the carcasses, breaking the bones.
 - Wayside exhibits and a mural now explain the area's significance, depicting it 33 million years ago.
- Return 0.75 mile north to the Badlands Loop Road and turn left (west).
- **Ancient Hunters Overlook**
 - Below this overlook, many bison bones have been discovered.
 - Archaeologists consider that ancient Indians may have used the cliff as a bison jump - where bison were chased across the plateau, and then over the edge, as a safer method of killing them.
- **Pinnacles Overlook**
 - This is a general view of the Badlands landscape for those entering via the Pinnacle Entrance.
 - It is the highest point on the Badlands Loop Road, and with good visibility, it is possible to see the Black Hills, 75 miles to the west.

continued.....

Badlands National Park (continued)

- **Sage Creek Rim Road**
 - This dirt road leads off the Badlands Loop Road, and has more scenic sections.
 - The section from Pinnacles Overlook to Sage Creek Basin Overlook is about 6 miles (12 miles return).
 - The points of interest are in order along Sage Creek Rim Road from the junction with Badlands Loop Road to Sage Creek Basin Overlook.
- **Hay Butte Overlook**
 - This is a good view across many buttes, the hay from which was once used by ranchers for their cattle, particularly Hay Butte.
- **Badlands Wilderness Overlook**
 - This view over the Badlands Wilderness Area gives a good perception of one example of how the US Government considers a 'wilderness' should be.
 - In 1964, the 'Wilderness Act' stated that a wilderness should be, "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."
- **Roberts Prairie Dog Town**
 - This large area is not only home to about 6,000 prairie dogs, but also to the black-footed ferret, which has been recently reintroduced to the area, after some were discovered in 1981 in Wyoming.
 - This type of ferret was thought to have been extinct since 1979.
 - With such a large number of small animals, predators also enjoy the area - such as rattlesnake, eagle and owl.
 - The black-footed weasel's primary food source is the prairie dog.
 - Bison are also frequently seen in this area, as there is a free-ranging herd living in the Badlands region.
- **Sage Creek Basin Overlook**
 - This is another example of the variety of natural life in the vast wilderness area - a sanctuary for us from our everyday lives.



Return along Sage Creek Rim Road to Badlands Loop Road, and then turn left (north).

Wall

- This is at Exit 110 of Interstate 90.
- It is well-known for its world-famous 'Wall Drug' tourist attraction, which has a shopping mall consisting of a drug store, eating facilities, and opportunities for purchasing gifts. Although it has free entry and free 'ice water', it is not part of this *itforit* itinerary.

Overnight at Rapid City (South Dakota)

Date.....

Pioneering gold-miners, Calamity Jane and the Devils Tower all bring back reminders of a bygone age and a sinister film.

Approximate miles = 220

Leave Rapid City (South Dakota) northwest on Interstate 90.

After about 30 miles, at Exit 30, near Sturgis, travel southwest on Route 14A/85.

Sturgis

- This is a motorcycle devotee's Mecca for about one week every year.
- The Sturgis Motorcycle Rally is held during each first week of August, with fanatics arriving from all over the world. In recent years, the rally has continued for more than one week.
- The event was started in 1938 by a group of local enthusiasts, and now has now world status, with around 500,000 people attending.
- Otherwise, the town is normally very quiet.

Deadwood

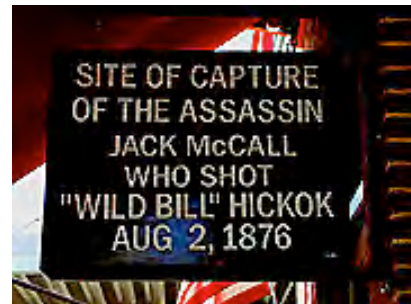
- This is about 12 miles southwest of Sturgis, along Route 14A/85.
- In late-1875, gold was found in Deadwood Gulch by a pioneer, Frank Bryant, who was deer-hunting with four friends.
- In 1876, it became a gold-rush town in the Black Hills.
- In 1879, it had a disastrous fire, which destroyed 300 wooden buildings, but killed only one person - a deaf Englishman, named 'Casino Jack'.
 - After that fire, the town was rebuilt in brick and stone.
 - Three further fires have taken their toll on Deadwood, in 1894, 1982 and 1987.
- In 1961, the entire town was registered as a National Historic Landmark.
- In 1989, gambling was legalised in the town, and this has changed its fortunes, also cashing in on the 'Western' atmosphere.
- It is particularly famous for Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane (see below).

• **Saloon No. 10**

- This is at 657 Main Street, on the east side, between Gold Street and Lee Street.
- It is where Wild Bill Hickok was killed by Jack McCall on the 2nd August 1876. He was shot in the back of the head, whilst holding 2 aces and 2 eights in a poker game. That hand is still called 'Dead man's hand'.

• **Goldberg's**

- This is at 670 Main Street - on the opposite side to Saloon No 10, and about 700 yards uphill.
- Jack McCall was arrested at a barber's shop, since changed to Goldberg's poker room, and was later hanged.



continued.....

Deadwood (continued)

- **Deadwood History and Information Center**
 - This is at 3 Siever Street - about 150 yards east of Goldberg's, housed within the old railroad station.
 - From Goldberg's, continue south along Main Street.
 - After about 70 yards, and turn left along Deadwood Street, and it is in the square ahead.
 - It has a small, but interesting collection of photographs and artefacts about Deadwood.
- **Adams Museum**
 - This is in Sherman Street, and is the building immediately behind and east of the History and Information Center.
 - It has collections of photographs, guns, 1800's clothing, art and minerals.
- **Mount Moriah Cemetery** ("mor-iy-ah")
 - This is about 0.5 mile south and east of the Adams Museum.
 - It is a steep climb, and it is recommended to go in a vehicle.
 - From the Adams Museum, travel south along Sherman Street.
 - After about 0.25 mile, turn left (east) along Cemetery Street, followed immediately by turning right and then left along Lincoln Street, which is the steep hill.
 - The graves of Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane are next to each other.
 - A new monument has been erected for Wild Bill Hickok recently, together with a restoration of his grave and of the cemetery in general.
 - The graves of almost all of Deadwood's past characters are here, other than those in the Catholic cemetery, and a small number in the earlier Ingleside Cemetery, lower down the hill.
- **Notes about Wild Bill Hickok (1837-1876)**
 - He was born as James Butler Hickok in Illinois, and became involved with anti-slavery operations with his father, learning how to shoot well.
 - In 1855, he became a stagecoach driver on the Oregon Trail and Santa Fe Trail.
 - In 1857, he claimed 160 acres of land in Kansas, as a homesteader. He became the first constable of his town, and was involved in the shooting of numerous men.
 - In 1861, he joined the Union forces in the Civil War (1861-1865) as a scout. Afterwards, he continued as a scout for the US Army.
 - He became a Sheriff and Marshall in Hays, Kansas. Later, he was a US Marshall, cleaning up the town of Abilene, Kansas. In 1871, he accidentally shot and killed a deputy in Abilene, and had to leave.
 - He travelled for a while, and then settled in Deadwood as a professional gambler.
 - There is no evidence that he was ever romantically involved with Calamity Jane.
 - In March 1876, he married a Mrs Agnes Lake Thatcher, only to live another five months.
 - Aged 39, he was shot at Saloon No. 10 (see above), by Jack McCall.



continued.....

Deadwood (continued)

- **Notes about Calamity Jane (1852?-1903)**
 - She was born as Martha Jane Canary (or Cannary) in Missouri. Her date of birth is variously quoted as 1848, 1850, 1852, 1853 and 1857, but was likely to be around 1850 to 1852.
 - In 1866, her mother died, followed by her father in 1867.
 - In 1868, aged 16, she assumed the rôle of head of the family and moved to Wyoming, where she found homes for her five siblings. At that time, she was regarded as being attractive. From then on, she generally lost touch with her siblings.
 - In 1870, she became a scout and wore a soldier's uniform, but there is uncertainty about her enlisting in the US Army. She was certainly involved with army manoeuvres, and had a reputation for being a tough woman.
 - In 1876, she settled in Deadwood and became infatuated with Wild Bill Hickok. After his murder, she claimed that she had given birth to his baby girl, but there was no evidence of a baby or her claimed adoption of the baby.
 - In 1941, there was a successful claim by a woman for state assistance, because she had evidence of being the daughter of Calamity Jane and Wild Bill Hickock.
 - She led a colourful life, but was known for enhancing her stories, and frequently claimed she had known famous people - but only after they had died.
 - She chewed tobacco, wore men's clothes, used a gun, was a prostitute at times, used bad language, drank heavily and generally behaved in a unseemly way for a woman.
 - After Wild Bill's death, she stayed in Deadwood, where she rescued a runaway stagecoach during an Indian attack.
 - In late-1876, she nursed smallpox victims, and became known as the 'White Devil of the Yellowstone'.
 - In 1884, she moved to El Paso, Texas, where she married Clinton Burke in 1885. A daughter was born in 1887, but she and Clinton had separated by 1895.
 - There are stories of her being married on unknown previous occasions.
 - In 1896, she started to tour with Buffalo Bill's 'Wild West' show.
 - She eventually returned to the Deadwood area, a poor woman.
 - In 1903, aged about 51-53, she was at Terry, a mining camp about 6 miles to the southwest, where she died of pneumonia and alcoholic poisoning. Her dying wish was, "Bury me beside Wild Bill".

Return to the centre of Deadwood, and travel south along Route 14A/85.

Lead ("leed")

- This is about 4 miles southwest of Deadwood, along Route 14A/85.
- It was a major gold-mining town of the 1876 gold-rush.
 - It was named after a seam of gold-laden rock was found to 'lead' prospectors to more gold.



continued.....

Lead (continued)

- Homestake Gold Mine
 - The Visitor Center for this is in West Main Street.
 - From Route 14A/85, follow the signs for 'Historic Downtown', turning left (east) down Glendale Drive, which becomes West Main Street.
 - The Visitor Center is about 0.5 mile on the left (north).
 - There is a free, 14-minute film about the Homestake Gold Mine, and a small number of historical artefacts.
 - Outside, there is a good view down into the 'Open Cut' gold mine, which is 0.25 mile deep and 0.5 mile wide.
 - The 'Open Cut' ceased to be worked in 1998.
 - The Homestake Gold Mine finally closed in 2001, after mining about 1,250 tons of gold during its life.
 - A 1-hour surface tour is available in a coach, which goes to the old buildings, and also takes in the town and its history. No booking is necessary.

Return up the hill in Lead, and then turn left, continuing southwest along Route 14A/85. After about 7 miles, turn right, and still continue along Route 14A.

Spearfish Canyon Scenic Byway

- Route 14A along this canyon is a National Scenic Byway.
- It winds its way through Spearfish Canyon following Iron Creek, along an 18-mile road.
- After about 5 miles, there is a left turn along Roughlock Falls Road (Forest Road 222), along which there was a location for the epic 1990 film *Dances with Wolves*. The location was used for a scene, near the end of the film, of a snowy, winter encampment.
 - The film location is about 3 miles along Forest Road 222, which is a dirt road.
- After about 7 miles, Bridal Veil Falls can be seen on the right (east), at the side of the road.
- It ends near the town of Spearfish.

At the junction, at the northern end of Spearfish Canyon Scenic Byway, turn left (west) along East Colorado Boulevard.

After about 1 mile, turn right (east) along East Jackson Boulevard.

After about 0.5 mile, turn left (north) to join Interstate 90 and travel north and westwards.

After about 15 miles, cross into Wyoming.

After about 18 miles, leave Interstate 90 at Exit 189, and travel west along Route 14 - Cleveland Street into Sundance.

Sundance

- It was in Sundance that Harry Alonzo Longabaugh spent 18 months in jail for stealing horses.
 - In 1889, he was pardoned, and then became known as 'The Sundance Kid'.

continued.....

Sundance (continued)

- **Crook County Museum**
 - This is about 2 miles along Cleveland Street, between 4th Street and 3rd Street, on the right (north), at 309 Cleveland Street.
 - It contains a wide variety of artefacts, within its 20,000 items.
 - The main exhibits are from the pioneer and cowboy days of 1875, together with Indian items.
 - It is housed within a modern building, but contains furniture from the old Courthouse of 1888, where Harry Longabaugh was on trial.
 - An important display is a diorama of the Vore Buffalo Jump, together with associated exhibits.
 - The actual buffalo jump is about 15 miles east of Sundance.
 - It has free entry, and is generally open, except on Sundays.

Continue through Sundance along Route 14 for 4 miles, going underneath Interstate 90 twice. After about 19 miles, turn right (north) along Route 24.

Devils Tower National Monument

- This is about 6 miles along Route 24, on the left. The Visitor Center is then about 3 miles from the entrance station.
- Formed 65 million years ago, this was molten magma, which forced its way up through the overlying sedimentary rocks and then solidified. The sedimentary rock then eroded to expose the tower.
- There are different theories about the exact formation.
- It is thought the external 'columns' were formed during the time the magma was being forced up through the overlying rock.
- The rock is phonolite porphyry, which is like granite, but does not contain quartz.
- It is 867 feet high from the ground at the Visitor Center, and roughly an oval shape. Its highest point is 5,112 feet above sea-level.
- It is a popular ascent for rock-climbers, normally taking about 4 to 6 hours.
 - About 5,000 climbers ascend each year, with over 220 different routes being used.
 - The first ascent was in 1893, with the help of a ladder.
- There is a town of prairie dogs along the road into the National Monument.
- *There are various trails in the National Monument.*
- **Tower Trail**
 - *This is an easy, undulating 1-3 mile loop trail around the tower, although the first section is up a steel incline.*
 - *It goes through some woodland, but has good views of the tower, and also of the nearby Missouri Buttes and Belle Fourche River ("foosh").*
 - *The Missouri Buttes are composed of the same rock as the Devils Tower, and the Belle Fourche River is responsible for at least some of the erosion of the surrounding sedimentary rocks.*
- It featured in the 1977 Steven Spielberg film *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* - a science fiction film about extraterrestrials and UFOs.



continued.....

Return south along Route 24 for about 6 miles, and turn right (west and then south) along Route 14.

After about 26 miles, at Moorcroft, turn right (west) along Route 14/16.

After about 1 mile, re-join Interstate 90 to travel westwards.

Gillette

- This is about 30 miles west of Moorcroft, just off Interstate 90, at Exit 128.
- It was originally an area of homesteads, with cattle ranching on the good grazing land. It was then called Donkey Town.



- In 1891, the railroad arrived. Edward Gillette, a surveyor and civil engineer, had found the best route across the area, saving the railroad company from constructing about 30 bridges, and a vast amount of money.
 - As the land for the railroad was across the homesteads, the railroad company purchased it and renamed the town as Gillette, in honour of Edward Gillette.
- It now calls itself 'The energy capital of nation', as it is in Campbell County, which provides 30% of the USA's coal.
 - There are enormous surface coal mines, and oil was also discovered in 1956.
 - More recently, methane is being captured from the coal beds.
- The coal has brought prosperity to the area, and it has become a pleasant place to live with good amenities.
 - Although Campbell County is a very wealthy area, with many millionaires, the wealth is not so obvious to the casual observer - there are not many clearly expensive houses.
- **Campbell County Rockpile Museum**
 - This is at 900 West 2nd Street - Route 14 / 16.
 - It centres on the area's cowboy days, and has an array of wagons, arrowheads, spurs, kerosene lamps, saddles, rifles and much other pioneering memorabilia.
 - There is also a large display of flints, changing temporary exhibits and a caboose.
 - A caboose is the railroad car with accommodation for the crew - also known as a guard's van.
 - It has free entry, and is generally open most days, except Sundays, until 7:00pm.

Overnight at Gillette (Wyoming)

Date.....

Pioneer trails, an 1860s fort, and maybe an exciting journey through wonderful mountains.

Approximate miles = 260

Leave Gillette (Wyoming) south on Route 50.

This journey continues through Campbell County, with the vast rolling countryside showing much evidence of oil and methane extraction.



After about 51 miles, turn right (west) at Pine Tree Junction, along Route 387.

Bozeman Trail Crossing

- This crosses Route 387 about 8 miles west of Pine Tree Junction.
- In 1863, John Bozeman and John Jacobs found a new, more direct route from the Oregon Trail in Wyoming to Virginia City, Montana - the centre of the Montana gold-rush.



- As with many of the pioneer trails, this was more of a wide corridor, through which many trails ran. Sometimes the trails came together, sometimes they were miles apart.
- It had better water supplies, but it had a major drawback of going through Indian territory - particularly across the Powder River Basin, which was a major hunting area for Indians.
- In 1864, John Bozeman led about 2,000 settlers along his new trail.
- Indian raids on the settlers grew in the first few years, and there were military campaigns to try to make the new trail safe.
- In 1867, after a disagreement with Red Cloud of the Lakota Sioux Indians, John Bozeman was killed along his trail.
- In 1868, a treaty was signed at Fort Laramie with Red Cloud, but by that time the trail was being used less frequently by settlers.
- In the 1870s and 1880s, the trail was used again by settlers, and the route was followed by stagecoaches and telegraph wires. Roads now follow the same route.

About 24 miles after the Bozeman Trail crossing, just after Edgerton, turn left (south) along Route 259.

continued.....

Teapot Rock

- This is about 13 miles south of the turning south along Route 259 (just after Edgerton), and can be seen on the left (east) of Route 259.
 - It is about 0.5 mile after Teapot Creek, and is on a hill above Teapot Ranch.
- It is a teapot-shaped rock rising from a butte, although the teapot shape cannot be easily distinguished from the road.
- In the 1920s, a major government scandal occurred, arising from the underground oilfield below Teapot Rock, known as 'Salt Creek Naval Oil Reserve Number 3', or 'Teapot Dome'.
 - The scandal took place in the corruption of the administration under President Warren Harding (1921-1923).
 - President Harding died in office, aged 57, from a heart attack.
 - The oil reserves under Teapot Dome were leased in 1921 without competitive bidding, and the Secretary of the Interior, Albert B Fall, took bribes.
 - Albert B Fall was imprisoned in 1929 for one year, and fined \$100,000.

About 10 miles after Teapot Rock, travel south along Interstate 25.

Casper

- This is about 21 miles along Interstate 25.
- It is situated on the North Platte River, and to the north of the Laramie Mountain Range.
- It has developed as a regional centre for commerce and banking, and was built just to the east of Fort Caspar, after which it was named.
 - The spelling of Casper was an error, but was continued when the town was founded in 1888.
- **National Historic Trails Interpretive Center**
 - This is at 1501 North Poplar Street.
 - Leave Interstate 25 at Exit 189, and turn left (east) along Route 20/26 - Events Drive.
 - After about 600 yards, turn right (south) along North Poplar Street. It is then about 100 yards on the left (east).
 - It is devoted to explaining the westward expansion across the USA between the 1840s and 1870s.
 - Opened in 2002, it is a combination of original materials and modern technology, using multi-media presentations and interactive exhibits.
 - Various interactive exhibits and clever technology make the visitor feel part of the emigrant trail - coping with the disasters and pleasures.
 - One exhibit provides a realistic ride across a river in a wagon, with all its problems. Another exhibit gives a ride in a Wells Fargo stagecoach.
 - There are displays about the signatures left by travellers on the trails, and the ruts formed in the landscape.
 - There is an excellent 18-minute multimedia presentation, and also various life-size dioramas.



continued.....

Casper (continued)

- **Fort Caspar**

- This is south of Exit 188B of Interstate 25, just off Route 220.
- **Note:** There are two sets of travel directions - the first is from Interstate 25, and the second is from the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center (above).



- From Exit 188B of Interstate 25, turn right (southwest) along North Poplar Street - Route 220.
 - After about 1 mile, turn right along West Collins Drive, becoming West 13th Street.
 - After about 1.75 miles, continue across the crossroads into Fort Caspar Road.
- From the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center, continue south along North Poplar Street (downhill).
 - After about 1 mile, travel underneath Interstate 25, at Exit 188B.
 - Continue with the directions, as above.
- In 1859, Louis Guinard built a trading post and a bridge over the North Platte River.
 - Until then, Mormons and others had travelled this way, and there had been few conflicts with Indians.
 - The trading post was also a telegraph station, overnight stop, and Pony Express relay station.
- In 1862, the fort was built to protect emigrants on the Oregon, Mormon and California Trails, and also to protect the Overland Mail Service and telegraph lines.
 - When it was built, it was named the Platte Bridge Station, but during an attack on the 26th July 1865 by some Lakota Sioux Indians, a young Lieutenant Caspar Collins was killed, together with four other men.
 - Later in 1865, it was renamed as Fort Caspar. However, the spelling was written inaccurately as Casper, and it was not corrected.
 - In 1936, when the museum was created on the site, it was decided to revert to the correct name.
- From about 1864, attacks from Indians became more frequent.
- In 1867, Fort Fetterman became the centre of operations, and this fort was closed. Fort Fetterman is about 50 miles east of Casper.
- Some of the fort has been reconstructed to show the fort as in 1865.
- The museum has exhibits about pre-Indian times, Indians, emigrant trails, fort military life, ranching and the city of Casper.
- The buildings include barracks, mess hall, commissary, laundry, various quarters, trading store, day room, telegraph office, stables and a bridge.
- There is also a small memorial cemetery, with headstones of those who died whilst serving at the fort.

continued.....

From Casper, travel west along Route 220.

From Fort Caspar, turn right (south) along Route 258 (South West Wyoming Boulevard), and after about 1 mile, turn right (west) along Route 220.

After about 30 miles, at Alcova, there is a choice of routes:

Option A

- Travel along Route 407, a 'National Back Country Byway', which has excellent scenery. About 35 miles are on an improved gravel road, and it winds round the Pedro Mountains and through the Seminoe Mountains.
- It is 74 miles long, and ends about 6 miles from Rawlins - a total of about 80 miles.

Option B

- Continue along Route 220 and then Route 287.
- This is a total of about 87 miles along good roads.

If Option A is chosen:

- Turn left, and travel along Route 407 - Kortess Road, which ends at Sinclair.
- Alcova Reservoir is southwest of Alcova, and Alcova Dam was completed in 1938 to provide storage and control of water for irrigation.
- After about 8 miles, where there is a division in the road, keep left to follow Route 407.
- After about 5 miles, the gravel road starts.
- The road continues round the barren granite Pedro Mountains.
- About half-way, the road starts to wind its way through the Seminoe Mountains, with good views over the Seminoe Reservoir.
- At another division in the road, keep left to follow signs for Sinclair, and then later following signs for Seminoe State Park.
- At Sinclair, turn right (west), and join Interstate 80 immediately.
- After about 4 miles, leave Interstate 80 at Exit 215, for Rawlins.



If Option B is chosen:

Independence Rock State Historic Site

- This is about 24 miles west of Alcova, about 200 yards to the left (southeast) of Route 220.
- It is roughly oval-shaped, and rounded, being 136 feet higher than the surrounding land. It is about 1 mile around its circumference.
- It is made of granite, and has been worn smooth by erosion and by a process of 'exfoliation'.
 - Exfoliation has occurred, as the igneous rock slowly became above the surrounding land, as the softer land eroded. The granite was also allowed to expand slightly, as the pressure of the land diminished, and so the outer layers broke off, leaving it smooth.



continued.....

Independence Rock State Historic Site (continued)

- It was a famous landmark on the Oregon Trail, and hundreds of emigrants inscribed their names into the granite. Prior to the Oregon Trail being established, Indians, trappers and traders also passed by, and used it as a landmark.
 - One of the earliest signatures is from 1824.
- Although it was noted by Robert Stuart's expedition in 1812, it was not named until the 4th of July 1830, when a celebration of Independence Day took place here, hence its name.
- It is free to visit, and there is no restriction in walking over the top.

About 20 miles after Independence Rock State Historic Site, at Muddy Gap, continue in the same direction along Route 287. Route 287 ends at Rawlins.

Rawlins

- This is about 44 miles south of Muddy Gap.
- In the mid-1860s, Civil War veteran General John Aaron Rawlins (1831-1869), was working for the Union Pacific Railroad, when a spring of water was found. The area was named Rawlins Springs.
 - By 1886, a small town had grown around the spring, and the city of Rawlins was incorporated.
- In 1901, the Wyoming Territorial Prison was opened, after 13 years of building. In 1981, it closed because the new Wyoming State Penitentiary was opened 2 miles south of Rawlins.
- The main business is now oil and gas, together with the town of Sinclair, about 7 miles to the east. There is also a thriving sheep and cattle industry, centred around the railroad.
- **Wyoming Frontier Prison Museum ('The Old Pen')**
 - This is at 500 West Walnut Street, in the centre of Rawlins.
 - It houses two free museums.
 - **Frontier Prison Museum**
 - This State Penitentiary operated from 1901 to 1981, and was intended to send a message to all outlaws, and other law-breakers, that Wyoming would not tolerate such people.
 - Although the museum is free to enter, there is a charge for guided tours.
 - It is possible to visit 3 cell blocks, the Death House, cafeteria and grounds.
 - **Wyoming Peace Officers' Museum**
 - This has photographs and descriptions of various inmates of the prison.
 - There are also artefacts of law enforcement.

Overnight at Rawlins (Wyoming)

Date.....

Pioneers, outlaws and dinosaurs today. Also, another exciting journey through the mountains, if you wish.

Approximate miles = 310

Leave Rawlins (Wyoming) west on Interstate 80.

Between Exit 165 and Exit 150 on Interstate 80, the Continental Divide is crossed again (see Day 3).

About 114 miles west of Rawlins, leave Interstate 80 at Exit 99, shortly after passing Rock Springs.

Travel south along Route 191/373.

Brown's Park

- This is in a remote area of Utah, about 3 miles south of Wyoming, and about 3 miles west of Colorado.
- Most access roads are currently dirt roads, but there is discussion about paving some of the roads, particularly in the Utah areas.



- **John Jarvie Ranch Historic Site**
 - This is accessed by turning left (east) from Route 191 about 51 miles south of Interstate 80 along Brown's Park Road - Route 70. (This turning is also about 0.25 mile before the Wyoming/Utah border.)
 - After about 3 miles along Brown's Park Road, it crosses into Utah - onto Route 1364.
 - After about 8 miles, keep right (south), then following signposts to Brown's Park.
 - After about 9 miles through Jesse Ewing Canyon, turn right (west), just north of Green River.
 - It is then about 1.8 miles on the left (south).
- **John Jarvie (1844-1909)**
 - In 1880, John married 26-year-old Nellie Barr in Rock Springs, Wyoming. They had four sons. Nellie died from tuberculosis, when the youngest son was 8.
 - Later in 1880, John and Nellie settled here. He was an educated Scot and a good businessman. He was trusted by many, including the local Indians.
 - In July 1909, he was murdered by two passing workers, who were never apprehended.
- The site had a natural river-crossing, and had been used peacefully by Indians, trappers and travellers for many years, before John Jarvie settled here.
- It was a thriving ranching community in the Green River valley. Cattle had good grazing here to over-winter, before continuing north.
- The ranch is a 35-acre site, which includes a 2-room dugout, which was John and Nellie Jarvie's first home here, a general store, a stone house, a blacksmith's shop and other outbuildings.
- The general store is a replica of the original, which had been built in 1881.

continued.....

Brown's Park (continued)

- **John Jarvie Ranch Historic Site** (continued)

- The original stone house was built for John Jarvie by Jack 'Judge' Bennett, an outlaw.
 - On the 1st March 1898, Jack Bennett was involved with the shooting of a young cowboy. Early next morning, seven self-appointed vigilantes took Bennett from the Deputy's custody and hanged him from the crossbar of a tall archway gate.
 - That crossbar is now in the stone house.

- Butch Cassidy and the Wild Bunch hid out here, particularly in the dugout. Other outlaws also lived in the area.
- The area was popular with outlaws and cattle thieves, as it was remote from authority.



- If any authority did arrive, it was easy to hide in canyons, or move across a border.
- The community here had its own laws, which allowed almost anything, except murder.
- Free tours are available from 10.00am to 4.00pm.

- **Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid**

- Butch Cassidy was born as Robert Leroy Parker, to Mormon parents in 1866. He was a local boy in this area of Utah. He took his surname from another outlaw, Mike Cassidy. His nickname, Butch, came from his short time working in a butcher's shop. In 1894, he was imprisoned for rustling. Two years later, on his release, he formed 'The Wild Bunch', sometimes called 'The Hole-in-the-Wall Gang', after a hide-out in northern Wyoming.
- The Sundance Kid was born as Harry Alonzo Longabaugh, in 1861, in Atlantic City, New Jersey. His nickname, Sundance, came from a time in jail in Sundance, Wyoming (see Day 10).
- They became cattle rustlers together in the 1890s, but moved to train robberies later. They disappeared to South America about 1901, possibly dying in a shoot-out in 1909 near La Paz, Bolivia.
 - There is an opinion that The Sundance Kid did die near La Paz, but that Butch Cassidy returned to the USA, and may have died there as late as the 1940s.
- Etta Place, the Sundance Kid's girlfriend, almost certainly took part in robberies with him and Butch Cassidy - notably, in the hold-up of Union Pacific Train No 3 in August 1890, dressed as a man. She did not die, however, in the La Paz shoot-out, as she was undergoing surgery on her appendix at the time, in New York.
- Butch Cassidy's one time sweetheart, Ann Bassett Willis (1878-1956), lived at Bassett Ranch, Brown's Park.

continued.....

Brown's Park (continued)

- Brown's Park National Wildlife Refuge
 - It is an area abounding in wildlife, including elk, deer, moose, beaver, otter, beaver, rabbits, waterfowl, osprey and snakes.
 - **Note:** If the optional route through Brown's Park to Vernal (see below) is taken, then a very small section of the refuge is travelled through - just in Colorado - but the majority is not seen on this itinerary.

Route from Brown's Park to Vernal

- **Either:** Return along the same dirt roads, back to Route 191, and then turn left (south). This is about 75 miles.
- **Or:** Continue through the Brown's Park along some dirt roads, and on a suspension bridge over the Green River. This is about 62 miles.



- **Note:** A high clearance vehicle is recommended for this route, but it is possible with a normal two-wheel-drive car - this has been done twice during *itforit* research. A bridge has width and load restrictions, which would not affect a normal car.
- From John Jarvie Ranch Historic Site, return about 1.8 miles east along the dirt road.
- After about 1.5 miles, turn right (south) along Brown's Park Road, which slowly changes to heading west.
- After about 7 miles (ignoring all side turnings), the road suddenly has a paved surface - on entering Colorado.
- After about 1.75 miles, turn right (south), off the paved road, and along a dirt road - 'Country Road 83'.
- After about 2.75 miles (ignoring all side turnings), cross the Green River on a suspension bridge.
 - This 300-foot bridge is locally named 'Swinging Bridge'.
- About 50 yards after Swinging Bridge, bear right (west) continuing along 'Country Road 83'.
- After about 1 mile, the road crosses back into Utah. It then continues in the same direction before turning south along the floor of the dramatic steep-sided Crouse Canyon with its Crouse Creek.
 - Crouse Canyon was named after Charlie and Mary Crouse, who homesteaded in Brown's Park in the late-1800s.



- Crouse Canyon was an escape route for outlaws, who also could use it to watch, from above, for any authority arriving.
- The road improves greatly after Crouse Canyon.

continued.....

Brown's Park (continued)

Route from Brown's Park to Vernal (continuing through Brown's Park)

- After 17.3 miles, at a crossroads, go straight ahead onto a paved road for only 0.25 mile, and then return to a dirt road.
- After 2.1 miles, turn right onto a paved road.
 - This road slowly heads southwest into Vernal.
- After about 22 miles (ignoring all side turnings), continue in the same direction along 500 North Street towards Vernal.
 - **Note:** If it is intended to go directly to Dinosaur National Monument (see below), it is recommended to turn left (east) at this junction.
 - After 3.8 miles, fork right.
 - After 4.2 miles, turn left (north) along Route 149, which is also Quarry Entrance Road.
 - After about 3 miles, the Visitor Center is along a side road on the left (north), just after the Entrance Station.
- After about 3 miles, turn left(south) along Route 191.
- The centre of Vernal is then about 0.5 mile.

Vernal

- This is about 110 miles south of Rock springs, on Route 191.
 - This distance will vary greatly, depending on whether Brown's Park has been visited, and the route taken.
- In 1873, the first settlers arrived in the area, about 4 miles north of the present town. In 1878, the first family moved to the present site - a very inhospitable area.
- In 1879, a fort was built here, called Ashley Center, to provide protection from Indians.
 - As the name of Ashley was already in use in Utah, the Postal Department assigned the name of Vernal, when residents applied for a Post Office.
- In 1887, it was incorporated as a city.
- In 1948, oil was discovered, but is not a major factor in its economy.
- In 1962, 1964 and 1980, three dams were built, which provided good irrigation for the fertile plain on which Vernal stands.
 - The reservoirs behind the dams also provide recreation.
- Today, tourism and agriculture are its main economies.
- ***Utah Field House Of Natural History State Park Museum***
 - This is at 496 East Main Street - about 0.5 mile east of the town centre along Route 40.
 - It is open daily from 9.00am to 5.00pm.
 - The indoor museum has excellent natural history and geological exhibits about the region.
 - The Dinosaur Garden has 17 full-size, replica, prehistoric animals.



continued.....

Dinosaur National Monument - Quarry Area

- There are two separate areas of interest in Dinosaur National Monument - the Quarry Area and the Canyon Area.
 - The Quarry Area is where the dinosaur fossils are.
 - The Canyon Area houses the Park Headquarters, and also excellent scenery - there are no fossils in this area.
 - **Note:** This itinerary has been compiled to visit the Quarry Area today, and the Canyon Area on Day 13.
- Quarry
 - The turning for this is southeast of Vernal, about 13 miles along Route 40, at Jensen.
 - Turn left (north) along Route 149, which is also Quarry Entrance Road.
 - The Entrance Station is about 7 miles along the road.
 - Quarry Visitor Center
 - This is immediately on the left, after the Entrance Station.
 - It has a display of fossils, and members of staff help with enquiries.
 - There is also a 12-minute film, which explains about Dinosaur National Monument.
 - The free shuttle bus frequently goes up the hill to the Quarry Exhibit Hall and the start of the Fossil Discovery Trail (see below).
 - Quarry Exhibit Hall
 - This hall is built over the Carnegie Dinosaur Quarry.
 - The new Exhibit Hall was opened in October 2011, replacing an older one, which had problems with its foundations, and had been closed from July 2006.
 - The museum has about 1,500 fossilised bones on view, which are still in place in the side of a mountain. The quarry wall is about 50 feet high and 150 feet long.
 - 145 million years ago, dinosaurs died on a sandbar, and were covered with sand and silt, preserving the bones. That sandbar is now the side of the mountain within the Quarry Exhibit Hall.
 - Fossil Discovery Trail (Geology Trail)
 - *This is a relatively easy 0.75 mile trail, which starts where the shuttle bus stops. It slowly descends about 250 feet, and ends at the Quarry Visitor Center.*
 - *It goes through six different formations of rocks, covering 75-163 million years. There are different types of mudstone, sandstone and shale.*




(The bottle gives an idea of scale - it is about 9 inches tall.)

- *Along the side trail to the Morrison Formation, large fossilised bones of dinosaurs can be seen in the mountainside. These fossils are thought to be from 10 different species of dinosaur.*
- *Along two other side trails - the Stump Formation and Mowry Shale - there are smaller fossils of parts of sea creatures.*

continued.....

Dinosaur National Monument - Quarry Area (continued)

- **Petroglyphs**
 - From the Quarry Visitor Center, return to Route 149, and turn left (east). The petroglyphs are about 1 mile on the left (north) of the road
 - These petroglyphs are estimated to be about 800-1,000 years old.
 - Petroglyphs are the incised - scratched or chiselled - rock art of prehistoric Indians.
 - **Desert Voices Nature Trail**
 - *From the petroglyphs, continue along Route 149.*
 - *After about 1.7 miles, turn left (north), and travel about 1 mile to the end of the road.*
 - *This is a moderate 1.5 miles loop trail.*
 - *Interpretive signs, made by children, encourage thought about our way of life.*
 - *There are also excellent views of Split Mountain to the north.*
 - **Petroglyphs**
 - From the turning for Desert Voices Nature Trail, continue along Route 149, heading eastwards.
 - After about 2.7 miles, the road crosses the Green River.
 - After about 2.6 miles, bear left (northeast) along a dirt road.
 - After about 0.75 mile and also 0.25 mile further, there are small parking areas.
 - The petroglyphs are also from about 800-1,000 years ago.
 - **Josie Morris Cabin**
 - This is about 0.75 mile further along the dirt road - at the end.
 - It is the restored cabin of Josie Bassett Morris (1874-1964), of Bassett Ranch, Brown's Park, and was her home for 60 years.
- 
- She was romantically involved with various outlaws, including Butch Cassidy. She had five husbands during her life, divorcing four.
 - **Box Canyon Trail**
 - *This easy 0.5 mile return trail starts at the parking area, and goes to a steep-sided box canyon. It is almost level.*
 - *The sandstone box canyon is part of Split Mountain, and Josie Morris used it as a natural corral.*
 - **Hog Canyon Trail**
 - *This easy 1.5 mile return trail starts at the Josie Morris Cabin, and goes across a prairie area to another box canyon. It is reasonably level.*
 - *There are springs along the trail, near which trees have grown, and provide shade.*

For Vernal, return about 10 miles along the dirt road, Route 149, and past the Entrance Station. Continue for about 6 miles to Jensen.

Turn right (west) along Route 40, and travel about 13 miles to Vernal.

Overnight at Vernal (Utah)

Date.....

Amazing canyon scenery in two completely different places today. There are good opportunities for hiking.

Approximate miles = 300

Leave Vernal (Utah) southeast on Route 40, entering Colorado after about 30 miles.

Dinosaur National Monument - Canyon Area

- **Visitor Center**
 - This is about 37 miles along Route 40, east from Vernal - about 2 miles east of the town of Dinosaur
 - It has a 12-minute video about Dinosaur National Monument.
- **Harpers Corner Drive**
 - This 31.5-mile (63 miles return) road goes from the Visitor Center to Harpers Corner.
 - It shows the beauty and varied ecosystem in Dinosaur National Monument.
- **Overlooks**
 - There are magnificent overlooks of canyons and distant views of mountains.
 - The landscape has been created mainly by the Green River and Yampa River.
 - The overlooks from the northern half of Harpers Corner Drive are across this really impressive valley scenery.
- **Plug Hat Trail**
 - *This is an easy, level 0.5 mile return trail, starting about 4.3 miles north of the Visitor Center.*
 - *The start of the trail is on the right (south), opposite the entrance to a picnic area.*
 - *It shows the flora and fauna of the forest area.*
 - *It also has magnificent views.*
- **Echo Park Overlook**
 - This is about 26 miles north of the Plug Hat Trail - about 1.2 miles from Harpers Corner. It is on the right (southeast) of the road.
 - It is a particularly magnificent view down into Echo Park, with the narrow fin of Steamboat Rock rising about 500 feet from river level.
 - During the 1940s-1950s, there were plans to build a dam across the Green River here. However, after a public outcry, the plans were dropped and the dam was built at Flaming Gorge, further north.



continued.....

Dinosaur National Monument - Canyon Area (continued)

- **Harpers Corner Drive** (continued)
 - **Harpers Corner Trail**

- *This is a moderate 2 mile return trail, starting at the end of Harpers Corner Drive.*
- *It descends about 50 feet overall, but is undulating.*



- *At the end of the trail, at 7,510 feet, there is a spectacular view from 2,300 feet above the Green River and Yampa River, with Steamboat Rock.*
- *There are also views over other vast canyons - some say these equal the most excellent in the West.*

From Dinosaur National Monument - Canyon Area, turn right (west).
After about 2 miles, at Dinosaur, turn left (south) along Route 64.

Rangely

- This is about 18 miles southeast of Dinosaur, along Route 64.
- Tradition claims that it was named after Rangeley in Maine, which had been named after James Rangeley, an Englishman, who had arrived in that area in 1825.
 - A settler in the early 1880s had come from Rangeley, Maine, and named Rangely, Colorado in its honour.
- It started as a trading post for the local Ute Indians, and developed into a ranching area.
- About 1900, oil was noticed on the surface of the White River, which flows just to the north of the town - Route 64 crosses it just before entering the town.
- Oil exploration started in a small way, but by the end of the 1940s it had become the major industry in the area.
- The whole area has become very important to the USA, as it now produces about 15% of the nation's oil.
- In addition to oil, there are subterranean natural gas reservoirs, and high-quality coal reserves.

Continue through Rangely along Route 64 for about 1.5 miles, and then turn right (south) along Route 139, which is part of the Dinosaur Diamond Scenic Byway.

After about 37 miles along Route 139, go over Douglas Pass, at 8,240 feet.

After about 33 miles, at Loma, turn left (east) along Route 6.


After about 5 miles, at Fruita, turn left (north) along South Coulson Street, just before going underneath a bridge.

After about 70 yards, turn right (east) along West Aspen Avenue.

After about 200 yards, turn right along Route 340 (Cherry Street), going over Interstate 70, and then following signs for Colorado National Monument.

continued.....

Colorado National Monument

- The West Entrance of this is about 2.5 miles south of Fruita along Route 340.
 - This is a dramatic landscape of sandstone canyons, many with towering monoliths. The sandstone contains various minerals, which produce striking vibrant colours - often as horizontal bands.
- 
- The 32 square miles of terrain is in Colorado Plateau, and about 2,000 feet higher than the Colorado River in Grand Valley, which is just to the north.
 - The landscape has been created over millions of years by erosion, mainly by water, but also by wind and ice.
 - **Rim Rock Drive**
 - This is a 23-mile road, which provides dramatic views into canyons about 1,000 feet deep, and across the valley of the Colorado River.
 - It has many overlooks, all of which are excellent.
 - *There are various trails. The best, shorter trails are listed.*
 - **Window Rock Trail**
 - *Note: This trail can easily be added to Canyon Rim Trail (see below), with convenient parking at the Visitor Center.*
 - *It is an easy 0.5 mile, loop trail, slowly descending about 50 feet.*
 - *It starts very close to the Book Cliffs View, which is on a side loop road for the Saddlehorn Campground - just before the Visitor Center.*
 - *It goes through trees, and gives good views of Monument Canyon, Wedding Canyon and the Independence Monument, which rises 450 feet from the canyon floor.*
 - *It provides a good view through a natural hole in the rock.*
 - **Visitor Center**
 - This is about 4 miles along Rim Rock Drive.
 - It has an introductory slide show, together with various exhibits about the geology, flora and fauna of the area.
 - **Canyon Rim Trail**
 - *This is an easy 1 mile, level, return trail.*
 - *It starts at the Visitor Center.*
 - *It gives excellent views along and into the colourful Wedding Canyon.*
 - **Alcove Nature Trail**
 - *This is an easy 1 mile trail, ascending about 50 feet.*
 - *It starts across the Rim Rock Drive from the Visitor Center.*
 - *It has many interpretive signs, which explain much about the flora, fauna, and landscape of Colorado National Monument.*
 - *It goes through forest, and ends in an impressive box canyon with 100-foot-high sandstone walls.*
 - **Ottos Trail**
 - *This is an easy 1 mile, gradually descending, return trail.*
 - *It starts about 0.75 mile after the Visitor Center.*
 - *It gives impressive views of dramatic monoliths.*
 - *It was named after John Otto, who worked tirelessly to have the area established as a National Monument in 1911.*

continued.....

Colorado National Monument (continued)

- **Coke Ovens Trail**
 - *This is an easy 1 mile, return trail, gradually descending about 100 feet.*
 - *It starts about 3 miles after Ottos Trail.*
 - *It overlooks the unusual, rounded domes of rock, called 'Coke Ovens'.*
- **Devils Kitchen Trail**
 - *This is an easy 1.5 mile, return trail, gradually descending and ascending about 50 feet.*
 - *It starts about 15 miles after the Coke Ovens Trail - very close to the East Entrance at Grand Junction.*
 - *It goes to a natural amphitheatre with vertical boulders.*



From the end of the Rim Rock Drive, at the East Entrance of Colorado National Monument, continue along the same road, which becomes Monument Road leading to Grand Junction. After about 3 miles, turn right (east) along Broadway, then following signs for Route 50. After about 0.75 mile, turn right (south), following signs for Route 50 (east) for Delta and Montrose (the road starts by heading south, and then goes east).

Delta

- This is about 38 miles southeast of Grand Junction, along Route 50.
- In the 1830s, a trading post was established by a Frenchman about 5 miles away and, when soldiers camped there, it was called Fort Uncompahgre ("un-kum-pah-gray").
- In 1882, the present town was laid out and, at first, it was called Uncompahgre, but the name was later changed, as it was at the delta of the confluence of the Gunnison River and the Uncompahgre River.
- Its main industry has always been based on agriculture and ranching.
- In recent years, it has started to call itself the 'City of Murals', as various walls have been painted with extravagant murals.

Continue southeast along Route 50.

Montrose

- This is about 22 miles southeast of Delta, along Route 50.
- Founded in 1882, one of the founders, Joseph Selig, thought the area reminded him of Scottish lake scenery, and so named the town after the character in Sir Walter Scott's 1819 novel *The Legend of Montrose*.
- It started as a supply town for mining camps, and also for ranching.
- In 1882, the railroad arrived, which furthered its importance.
- In 1909, irrigation from the Gunnison River created a large agricultural area, of which Montrose became the centre.
- Agriculture is still important, but tourism is also significant, because of its proximity to the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and for winter ski areas.

Overnight at Montrose (Colorado)

Date.....

A deep, black canyon, pioneers, fossils and gold mining - there's great variety today.

Approximate miles = 290

Leave Montrose (Colorado) east on Route 50.

Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park (South Rim)

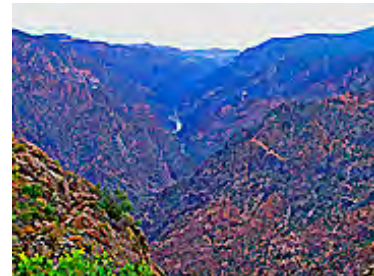
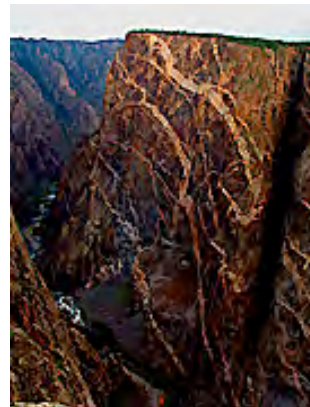
- From Montrose, travel along Route 50 for about 7.5 miles, and turn left (north) along Route 347. The entrance is then about 5.5 miles.
- The canyon is very narrow, and up to 2,772 feet deep - 0.525 mile.
 - Direct sunlight generally only reaches the canyon floor at noon.
- The Gunnison River is a raging torrent, dropping an average of 96 feet per mile, and can be heard from the rim of the canyon.
 - Along one 2-mile length, it drops 482 feet.
 - Because of the steep gradient, the water travels very fast, and carries large amounts of debris. The debris is then very efficient at cutting through the hard rock, and the canyon depth is increased even more.
 - Upstream dams on the Gunnison River have reduced seasonal flooding, and so the erosion of the canyon has been reduced.
- **South Rim Road**
 - This is about 7 miles long (14 miles return).
 - There are 10 overlooks, some with short trails from the road to the rim. The recommended overlooks are noted.
 - *There are various short trails. Three are listed, with differing types of view.*
 - **East Portal Road**
 - This starts almost opposite the entrance station.
 - It is a winding road, down to the Gunnison River, where there is the Gunnison Diversion Dam.
 - It is steep in places, and 5 miles each way (10 miles return).
 - The main interest is seeing a section of the canyon from river level.
 - It is also, on average, 8°F warmer than on the rim.
 - **Visitor Center**
 - This is about 1.3 miles after the entrance station.
 - **Gunnison Point**
 - This is the first good view down into the canyon.
 - **Rim Rock Nature Trail**
 - *This is an easy, level, 1 mile return trail, starting from the Visitor Center.*
 - *It provides good views down into the canyon, and of the canyon walls.*



continued.....

Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park (continued)

- **South Rim Road** (continued)
 - **Visitor Center** (continued)
 - **Oak Flat Trail**
 - *Starting from the Visitor Center, this is a moderate, 2 mile loop trail, descending rapidly about 400 feet, but is then reasonably level.*
 - *It goes through a forested area, and then opens out to a magnificent view, looking north along a downstream river section.*
 - **Chasm View**
 - This is about 3-6 miles after the Visitor Center.
 - It gives a good view directly down into the chasm, with the River Gunnison at the bottom.
 - **Painted Wall**
 - This is about 100 yards after Chasm View.
 - It looks across the canyon to the impressive and massive Painted Wall, with its wonderful pink veins - looking more like marble.
 - At 2,250 feet high, Painted Wall is the tallest cliff in Colorado.
 - **Sunset View**
 - This is about 1-4 miles after Painted Wall.
 - As its name implies, this view is best at sunset, when an orange glow may be reflected from the river.
 - It is still an excellent view, looking northwest, at any time of the day.
 - **Warner Point Nature Trail**
 - *This starts from High Point, at the end of the road, which is about 0.75 mile after Sunset View.*
 - *It is an easy, reasonably level, 1.5 mile return trail.*
 - *Not only does this provide excellent views into the canyon, but also has good mountain views.*



Return along Route 347 to Route 50, and turn left (east).

continued.....

Gunnison

- This is 57 miles along Route 50 from the turning for the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park.
- In 1874, a small silver-mining camp was the first settlement here on the banks of the Gunnison River. It was then called Richardson's Colony.
 - In 1876, a post office was established, but the silver deposits were short-lived, and the camp was abandoned.
 - In 1879, a new town was established, named Gunnison.
 - In 1880, the town was laid out. It became the county seat of Gunnison County, and the courthouse was built.
- Its economy is now centred around farming, ranching and tourism.
- John Williams Gunnison
 - In October 1853, John Williams Gunnison was working on a survey for the transcontinental railroad near to present-day Delta, Utah - about 400 miles west of Gunnison.
 - He and seven others in the survey group were killed by Indians. Although four of the group escaped, this has since been remembered as the Gunnison Massacre.
 - In 1855, three Indian warriors were convicted of manslaughter, and sentenced to three years in jail - with much public dissent.
 - The Gunnison River and Gunnison, Colorado were named in his honour.

Continue east along Route 50.

This part of the journey travels through vast changes in landscape, forestation and flora, from narrow, wooded canyons to wide open treeless plains. There is stunning alpine scenery, along lush valleys, with mountain views, rivers and over mountain passes.

After about 42 miles, at Monarch Pass (11,312 feet), cross the Continental Divide (see Day 3).

After about 17 miles, at Poncha Springs, turn left (north) along Route 285.

After about 21 miles, at Johnson Village, turn right (east) along Route 24/285.

After about 13.5 miles, bear right, continuing along Route 24.

After about 43 miles, at Florissant, turn right (south) along Route 1.

Hornbek Homestead

- This is about 1.5 miles south of Florissant, along Route 1.
- *Note: This can also be visited on the Hornbek Wildlife Loop walk (see below).*
- It is the restored 1878 homestead of the Hornbek family. There is the two-storey home and a small group of farm buildings.
- The story of Adeline Hornbek is one of pioneering determination, courage, and wise choices of land and its management.
- Adeline Hornbek (1833-1905)
 - In 1858, Adeline Warfield married Simon A Harker - her brother's business partner.
 - In 1861, because of Simon's poor health, Adeline, Simon and their two children moved to the newly developing town of Denver. They started a homestead, and another child was born.
 - In 1864, Simon Harker died.



continued.....

Hornbek Homestead (continued)

- **Adeline Hornbek** (continued)
 - In 1866, Adeline Harker used a clause in the 1862 Homestead Act to buy the Denver homestead as a widow and head of the family.
 - Two months later, Adeline married Elliot Hornbek and, in 1868, they had a son.
 - By 1875, Elliott Hornbek had disappeared, and Adeline moved away from the Denver homestead. The next three years are unclear.
 - In 1878, Adeline Hornbek arrived at Florissant and spent a large sum on building the two-storey homestead to a high standard - most unlike the usual one-storey, one-room homesteads.
 - In 1885, she filed the final papers as owner of the homestead.
 - She also worked in the local general store, and became an important member of the local community.
 - In 1899, she was married again, aged 66, to Frederick Sticksel, aged 45. He is believed to have been a German immigrant, who had worked for her.
 - In 1905, aged 71, she died from 'paralysis' - a stroke.

Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument

- This is 1 mile south of Hornbeck Homestead, along Route 1.
- This has fossils of tree stumps, insects, fish and plants - all from about 35 million years ago.
 - The area was once covered by Lake Florissant, and consequently many fossils are of life in and around water.
- Around 35 million years ago, there were large volcanic eruptions. The ash fell into Lake Florissant, and the rest of the large, lush valley.
- The organisms, which lived there at the time, were engulfed in ash, and fell to the bottom of the lake. The sediment then became compacted into shale, with many of the fossilised creatures intact.
- It is an internationally famous site for plant and insect fossils.
- Some very large fossilised tree trunks - up to 14 feet in diameter - are of giant sequoias.
 - They are all cut off at the same height - which indicates the depth of the layer of ash.
 - The sections of trunk above the ash layer have decayed away.
 - The sections of trunk within the ash have become fossilised.
- Other than the large fossilised tree trunks, the only fossils to be seen are on display in the Visitor Center.
- *There are over 15 miles of trails through the attractive scenery, and with a possibility of seeing local wildlife.*
- **Ponderosa Loop walk**
 - *This is a very easy 0.5 mile loop walk, starting at the Visitor Center.*
 - *It goes through Ponderosa woods, and shows the differences in woodland habitat.*
 - *It goes past an area of shale where fossils have been excavated.*

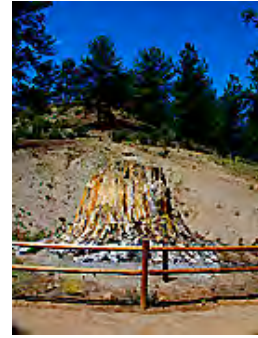


continued.....

Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument (continued)

• **Petrified Forest Loop walk**

- *This is an easy 1 mile loop walk, starting at the parking area.*
- *It goes across wild flower meadows, and visits more large fossilised/petrified tree stumps.*
- *Big Stump is 38 feet in circumference - about 12 feet in diameter - and has many colours.*
- *It also goes to the 'Scudder' pit, which was where the palaeontologist, Samuel Scudder, made many of his fossil discoveries in the late-1800s.*



• **Hornbek Wildlife Loop walk**

- *This is a moderate 4 mile loop walk, ascending about 160 feet, starting at the Visitor Center.*
- *It goes across meadows, and has good views of mountains.*
- *The level meadows were once the bed of Lake Florissant.*
- *Wildlife, including elk and deer, is frequently seen.*
- *It particularly goes to the 1878 Hornbek Homestead (see above), and there are descriptions along the trail about homesteading and ranching in the area.*

Cripple Creek

- This is about 16 miles south of Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument, along Route 1.
- Now a gambling town, it was a major gold-mining town around 1900, with about 500 mines.
 - Gold was first discovered in 1891.
 - It grew to have a population of 60,000, together with 2 opera houses, 75 saloons, 8 newspapers and a stock exchange.
 - Below 24 square miles of land, there are 2,400 miles of shafts.
 - The bell system, still used in mines, was invented here.
 - In its heyday, there were more millionaires in Cripple Creek than the rest of America.
 - It is claimed that there was more gold here than at any other single site in the world. It is thought that only 20% has been mined.
- **Pikes Peak Heritage Center**
 - This is about 1.5 miles along Route 67, just north of Cripple Creek - leaving Cripple Creek from the higher end of the town.
 - It is opposite the Mollie Kathleen Mine attraction.
 - It is more of an interpretive centre than a museum, and concentrates on how Cripple Creek started and developed.
 - Completed in 2007, it is free to enter, and celebrates the USA's last large gold rush area.
 - It has an excellent view over Cripple Creek and south to the Sangre de Cristo Mountains.
 - It has many interactive, hands-on displays, together with exhibits about the area's geology, gold-mining, human history, and its flora and fauna.



continued.....

From Cripple Creek, travel north along Route 67.

After about 18 miles, at Divide, turn right (east) along Route 24/67.

After about 7 miles, at Woodland Park, continue along Route 24 (east) - but now going southeast.

Manitou Springs ("man-ee-toh" or "man-ee-too")

- This is about 13 miles southeast of Woodland Park, just off Route 24.
- The natural mineral springs here have been known to the Indians for generations, and white settlers first arrived around the 1860s.
- There are about 25 mineral springs, all varying slightly in their chemical composition, but all are carbonated.
 - They produce naturally occurring effervescent water - long in advance of man's artificial method.
- In about 1870, the mineral springs was recognised for their money-making health potential, and the first hotel was opened in 1872.
- In the early-1900s, it prospered as a health resort, particularly for those with tuberculosis. Not only was the spring water claimed to be a remedy, but the clean, dry climate was especially beneficial.
- During the 1970s, the town of Woodland Park had a sewage system installed, which later contaminated the water at Manitou Springs. Apparently, this has since been rectified.
- Coupled with the beautiful scenery, the area has become a desirable place to live, and as a tourist resort.

Overnight at Manitou Springs (Colorado)

Date.....

Feel on top of the world, visit a beautiful 'garden' and also the US Air Force Academy on this, the last travelling day.

Approximate miles = 140

Leave Manitou Springs (Colorado) northwest along Route 24 - retracing your route from Day 14 by 5 miles.

Pikes Peak

- The toll road to this is accessed at Cascade, which is about 5 miles northwest of Manitou Springs.
- It claims to be "the most visited mountain in North America, and the second most visited mountain in the world behind Japan's Mount Fuji".
- At 14,110 feet, it is the most eastern of the high peaks in the Rocky Mountains.
- The 19-mile (38 miles return) Pikes Peak Highway is paved part of the way, and is always open if the weather permits.
 - It climbs about 7,450 feet from the base to the summit.
 - It goes well above the tree-line at about 11,000 feet.
- It is named after Zebulon Montgomery Pike, who attempted to climb the mountain in 1806, but failed because of a blizzard. He was checking the Louisiana Territory - a vast tract of land purchased by the USA.
 - Prior to 1803, the French owned the Louisiana Territory, and other parts of North America, which amounted to about 1/3 of the present USA. The 'Louisiana Purchase' of 1803, acquired the land at 3 cents per acre.
- In 1888, a carriage road was completed.
- In 1901, the first automobile reached the summit.
- The views from the summit are excellent - across the Rocky Mountains, Colorado and Colorado Springs.
- The wildlife is abundant, varying with the elevation.



From Cascade, travel right (east), along Route 24 - retracing your route again by 5 miles.

Colorado Springs

- This is a large city about 10 miles southeast of Cascade and Pikes Peak.
- In 1871, it was founded by General William Jackson Palmer as a resort for the affluent of the East Coast.
 - **William Jackson Palmer (1836-1909)**
 - He was a civil engineer, who had become wealthy from building railroads in Pennsylvania.
 - He fought for the Union in the American Civil War (1861-1865) and then returned to building railroads - this time the 'Denver and Rio Grande Railroad'. He became even more wealthy.
 - He had been born into a Quaker family, and was a great philanthropist through his life.
 - His wife, Mary (1850-1894), called 'Queen' by her husband, was also a philanthropist.

continued.....

Colorado Springs (continued)

- In 1873, the Antlers Hotel was opened and this drew the rich from the East Coast and from Europe. It was such a success with the British, that it was nicknamed 'Little London'.
- Because of William Palmer's aversion to alcohol, Colorado Springs was alcohol-free until Prohibition ended in the United States.
 - Prohibition in the United States was from 1920 to 1933, when the making, transporting and sale of alcohol was outlawed.
- The economy of Colorado Springs was further enhanced when gold was found in nearby Cripple Creek (see above).
- It is now a large, sprawling city, with many tourist attractions - although these are not recommended by *itforit*.

- **Garden of the Gods**

- This is at 1805 North 30th Street.
 - From Cascade, after travelling southeast along Route 24 for about 3 miles, leave Route 24, and travel along Manitou Avenue (at Manitou Springs).
 - Continue for about 1.5 miles along Manitou Avenue, through Manitou Springs and underneath Route 24.
 - After about 0.25 mile, Manitou Avenue becomes West Colorado Avenue.
 - After about 0.75 mile, turn left (north) along South 30th Street (which becomes North 30th Street).
 - The Visitor Center is about 2 miles on the right (east).
- In 1909, the park was given to Colorado Springs. It had been owned by Charles Elliot Perkins (1840-1907), who was head of the Burlington Railroad. He was a friend of William J Palmer.
- It has since become a 'National Natural Landmark'.
- There are stunning red rock formations rising from the valley floor, with roads and trails weaving around them.
- The views are best either early or late in the day, but good at any time, as the colours of the rock formations change with the sun's direction.
- **Visitor Center**
 - This has an excellent balcony view of the Garden of the Gods. It is free to enter.
 - *It provides free colour trail guides.*
- The 480 acres of park are free to enter, having towering red sandstone formations, and is a paradise for photographers and walkers. There are excellent views from the various trails, including towards Pikes Peak.
- *There are 15 miles of trails to walk. Two are suggested for an overview.*
- **Perkins Central Garden Trail**
 - *This is almost level, and easily accessed from North or South parking areas. It is about 0.75 mile long (1.5 miles return) and goes to the foot of the highest rock formations.*
 - *It is a wide, concrete, central path, and is popular with locals to walk in the early morning and evenings.*



continued.....

Colorado Springs (continued)

- **Garden of the Gods** (continued)

- **Siamese Twins Trail**

- *This is a reasonably easy loop trail, which is not paved, and ascends about 150 feet.*



- *It starts from the parking area for the Spring Canyon Trail, which is at 'Pulloff 14' along Garden Drive, in the southwest of the area.*
 - *It is a 1 mile trail to two rocks, shaped like Siamese twins. The hole between the twin rocks provides an unusual natural frame for a view of Pikes Peak.*

- **Glen Eyrie**

- This is at 3820 North 30th Street.
 - From Garden of the Gods, it is about 1 mile north along the same road.



- William Jackson Palmer purchased land here in 1870, and built a house where he lived with his wife and children.
 - After the death of his wife, Palmer planned to construct a castle in the Scottish style. Building commenced in 1904 and was completed in 1906.
 - It is now owned by a Christian organisation, which allows free entry to the grounds after completion of a form. 'English Teas' and tours are also available, but should be booked on 1-800-944-4536.
 - Opening times are variable.


From the Garden of the Gods area, continue travelling north along North 30th Street. After about 600 yards, turn right (southeast) along West Garden of the Gods Road. After about 2.5 miles, turn left (north) along Interstate 25.

US Air Force Academy

- Entry is recommended via the North Gate, which is about 10 miles north of Colorado Springs, leaving Interstate 25 at Exit 156B.
- There is no entrance fee, but identification is necessary.
- The items of interest are generally open to visitors daily from 9:00am to 5:00pm.

continued.....

US Air Force Academy (continued)

- **B-52 bomber**
 - This can be seen on the left of Northgate Boulevard, about 1 mile west of Interstate 25.
 - There is a small parking area, accessed by turning left (south), just after the B-52, along Stadium Boulevard.
 - After about 150 yards, turn left again (east), to the parking area at the rear of the B-52.
 - It has been the mainstay of the USA's manned bombers for over 25 years.
 - **Cadet Field House**
 - This is about 2 miles west of the B-52 bomber, within the Falcon Athletic Center.
 - Continue west along Northgate Boulevard.
 - After about 1 mile, turn left (south) along Parade Loop.
 - After about 0.5 mile, turn right (west) along Field House Drive.
 - It is then about 0.5 mile, at the end of Field House Drive.
 - It has the Clune Arena basketball court, the Cadet Ice Arena and an indoor athletics field.
 - **Visitor Center**
 - This is along Academy Drive, which is the continuation of Northgate Boulevard.
 - From Cadet Field House, return 1 mile along Field House Drive and Parade Loop, and turn left (west). It is then about 2.5 miles on the left (east).
 - It has many displays about the Air Force and training, together with a theatre and opportunities to purchase memorabilia.
 - **Cadet Chapel**
 - This is accessed by walking down a 0.25 mile (0.5 mile return) path from the Visitor Center.
- 
- It is a stunning building with 17 spires, and houses 3 chapels - Protestant, Catholic and Jewish.
 - The latter two are on the lower floor, and all are completely sound-insulated from each other.
 - It is generally not open to visitors on Sundays, or at any time when services are being held.
 - Unusually, the altar is at the north end of the Chapel, and not to the east.
- **Parade Ground**
 - This is to the east of the Cadet Chapel.
 - It can be viewed, sometimes with platoons marching and chanting songs - just as portrayed in films.

continued.....

US Air Force Academy (continued)

- **Honor Court**

- This is just north (the altar end) of the Cadet Chapel.
- It has various memorials, bronze statues and bronze aeroplanes.
- The outer wall of Honor Court, which faces the Parade Ground, is named the Honor Portal, having the inscription, "We will not lie, steal, or cheat, nor tolerate among us anyone who does". This is the pivot around which cadets' training is based.

- **Thunderbird Airmanship Overlook**

- This is 6.5 miles south east of the Visitor Center.
- From the Visitor Center, turn left (south) along Academy Drive.



- After about 4 miles, turn right (south) along Stadium Boulevard, which becomes Southgate Boulevard.
- It is about 2.5 miles on the left (east).
- It is a good vantage point to watch displays of airmanship, including parachute landings.

Continue about 2 miles south along Southgate Boulevard, leaving the US Air Force Academy by the South Gate, and travel north about 60 miles to Denver.

Overnight at Denver (Colorado)

Date.....

Travelling day

- This page may be used to make notes about your travelling arrangements for your onward journey.
- At *itforit*, we hope you have enjoyed your itinerary, and that you will try another.
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