

Beautiful Backroads of Colorado



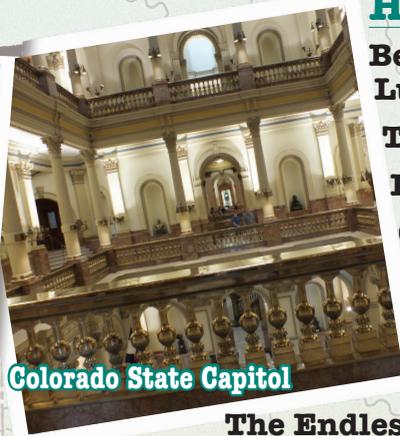
Colorado Springs - Durango - Palisade



July 9 - 20, 2017 (12 days)



Pikes Peak Cog Railway



Colorado State Capitol

HIGHLIGHTS



Beautiful, Unique, Historic, Relaxing, Luxurious and Comfortable Lodging

The Historic Strater Hotel 2 Nights!

Pikes Peak Cog Railway

Garden of the Gods

City Tour of Colorado Springs

The Royal Gorge by Vista Dome

Silver Thread Scenic Byway

The Endless, Awesome Scenic Beauty of the Rocky Mountains and Lush Valleys

Durango/Silverton Railroad

Historic Mining Town of Silverton

Historic Durango

Colorado National Monument

Vineyard and Orchard Country of Palisade

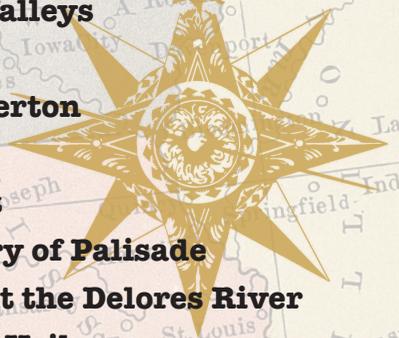
Amazing Red Rock Canyons at the Delores River

Betty Ford Alpine Gardens in Vail

Archway Museum in Kearney, NE

Off the Beaten Path Experiences, Incomparable Scenery & Western Hospitality

MAP AT A GLANCE



We are revisiting one of our most popular Backroads destinations: Colorado

Colorado is a state of **majestic** landscapes, startling panoramas, and amazing topographical diversity. A land of uncompromising beauty: dominated by lofty, snowcapped **peaks**; divided by deep **canyons** and broad **valleys** that were formed by cold clear **streams** and rushing **rivers**; rimmed by distant horizons, **mesas** and **buttes**. Colorado is a land of **extreme contrasts** – arid deserts, verdant meadows, rural solitude, aspen woodlands, granite cliffs and deep blue lakes. The **timeless landscape** beyond the highway's edge is filled with **hidden places** and **undiscovered wonders**. All this is connected by **quiet**, slow paced villages and folks who take the time to **savor** it.

Day 1 - Home to York, Nebraska

Depart Minnesota for beautiful Colorado! We will travel the highways and bi-ways of Minnesota & Iowa before arriving in York, Nebraska for our first night's stay at the Hampton Inn.

Hotel: Hampton Inn

Day 2 - York to Colorado Springs

After breakfast we continue to Colorado, passing through Denver and traveling south to Colorado Springs. This stretch of interstate is some of the last freeway you'll experience for the next week or so. This route itself is stunningly beautiful as we parallel the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains. Our welcome dinner is served at Mimi's Cafe, then we'll check into the Drury Inn, which offers panoramic views of the looming mountains to the west.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Hotel: Drury Inn (2 Nights)

Day 3 - Colorado Springs

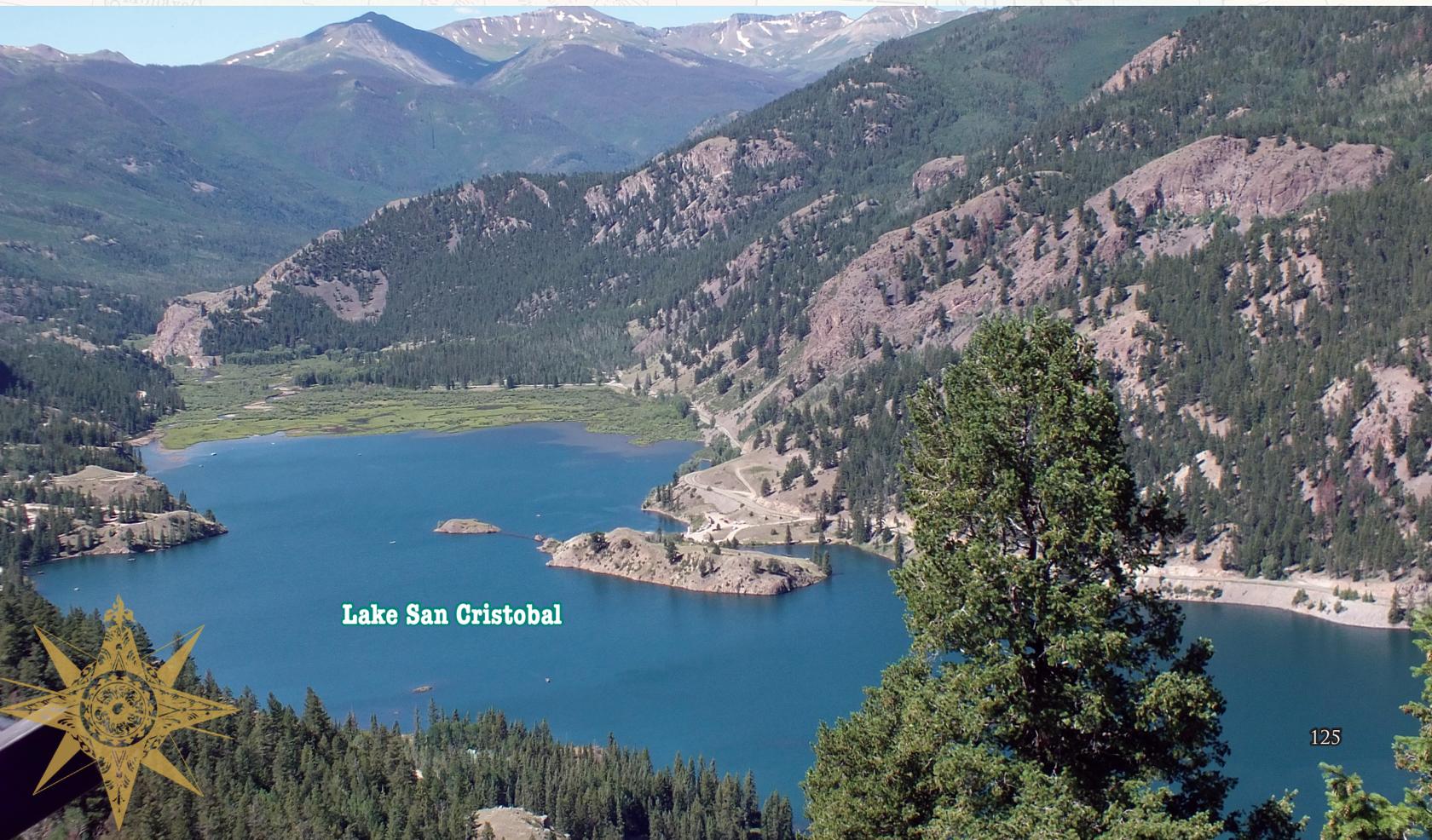
After our included breakfast at the hotel, we board the coach for an exciting day in Colorado Springs. A guided tour of the city will include Old Town, historic sites and a visit to The Penrose Heritage Museum. We will take a drive through the awesome Garden of the Gods with our local, expert step-on guide, learning the history of these magnificent red rocks as we find out how this natural wonder

came to be. You will enjoy your included lunch (and some shopping) at the charming Garden of the Gods Trading Post. Early afternoon finds us boarding the Cog Railway to the top of Pikes Peak for an exciting and adventurous trip to the top. The view is absolutely amazing! You wouldn't even need to leave the comfort of our hotel for dinner as the Drury's Managers Reception is sufficient for most, or there are restaurant choices near the hotel.

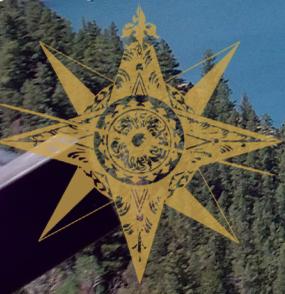
Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Manager's Reception

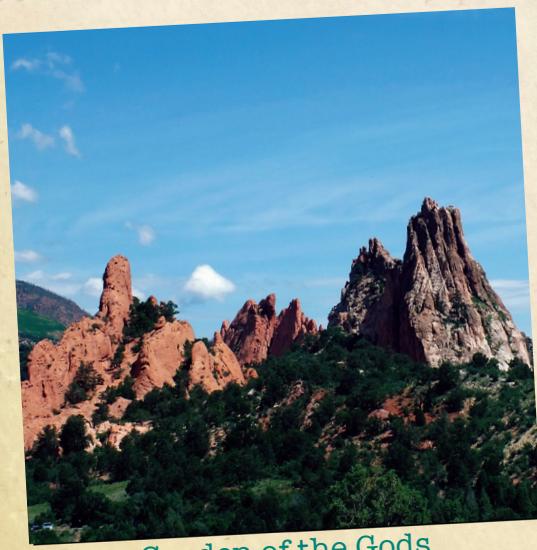
Day 4 - Colorado Springs to Gunnison

The early morning journey along the Front Range to Canon City is refreshing. Excitement builds as we board the Royal Gorge Route Railway and enter our Vista Dome car for a spectacular rail journey along the Arkansas River through this wonder of nature. Afterwards we stop at the unique Whitewater Bar & Grill for an included noon lunch. Continuing west, make note of the rafters navigating their way on the whitewaters of the Arkansas River and the Rocky Mountain vistas surrounding us. We're heading to Salida and an afternoon treat stop before making our way up Monarch Pass, providing us a spectacular view of Monarch Mountain on our right. Then more picture perfect scenery greets us as we descend into the lush, high mountain valley and the ranch country of Gunnison, Colorado. Soon we pull into our home for the night, the Holiday Inn Express. This beautiful hotel on the edge of town offers an unspoiled view



Lake San Cristobal





Garden of the Gods



The Historic Strater Hotel

"Great customer service; from the beginning when I called about some trips, to the day we returned from our bus trip. This was our third bus trip and it probably won't be our last. :)"

Mark & Dawn Braam

of the mountains that surround us. A great meal awaits at Palisades before we enjoy the crisp evening in the Rocky Mountains.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Holiday Inn Express

Day 5 – Gunnison to Durango

After breakfast at the hotel we head off for a scenic day. What a drive as we travel along the Blue Mesa Reservoir, then head south on Highway 149, designated as the Silver Thread Scenic Byway. We make our way through mountain hamlets such as Lake City, historic Creede, Wagon Wheel Gap, and South Fork. The route traverses a spectacular, off-the-beaten-track part of Colorado, climbing over lofty Spring Creek and Slumgullion Passes. Our drive parallels the Rio Grande River below cliffed palisades thru the heart of the San Juan Mountains, Colorado's largest mountain range, a tumble of peaks and canyons that cover an area the size of Vermont. Leaving South Fork we climb to famous Wolf Creek Pass and then descend to Durango, traveling Highway 160 through Pagosa Springs, Chimney Rock, and Bayfield. We are guests for the next two nights at The Historic Strater Hotel, built in 1887 as Durango's premier landmark hotel! Tonight we are treated to dinner and live theatre right here at the Strater Hotel.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Hotel: The Historic Strater Hotel (2 Nights)

Day 6 – Durango/Silverton

Prepare for adventure today as you enjoy breakfast at The Historic Strater Hotel. We'll soon be boarding the Durango & Silverton Railroad, whose station is conveniently located two blocks from our hotel, for a memorable journey. This spectacular train ride runs north 45 miles to Silverton, threading through the Animas River Gorge, taking us back in time to mining's heyday. The unspoiled scenery that unfolds around us can only be witnessed from this train. Silverton, at an elevation of 9,320 feet, is surrounded by a wall of mountains. It is one of Colorado's most isolated settlements. If you were going to farm here, you would need to find a crop that sprouts and is ready for harvest quickly. Its growing season is 12 days! Annual snowfall is over 300 inches! Silverton wears its colorful history well. It appears at first glance like a movie set, but in reality most of the town is preserved as a National Historic District, reflecting the mining heyday of more than a century ago. We will have ample time to explore and eat lunch on our own in a true "gold rush" setting. Then midafternoon our own motorcoach comes to return us to Durango for a free evening to relax and enjoy downtown Durango.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Day 7 – Durango to Palisade

After our delicious warm breakfast in style at our hotel, we depart for another amazing day of Colorado countryside. The journey to Cortez is awesome. After our coffee stop a whole new landscape unfolds. Driving through desolate Disappointment Valley, past

Stunning view from Durango/Silverton Railroad

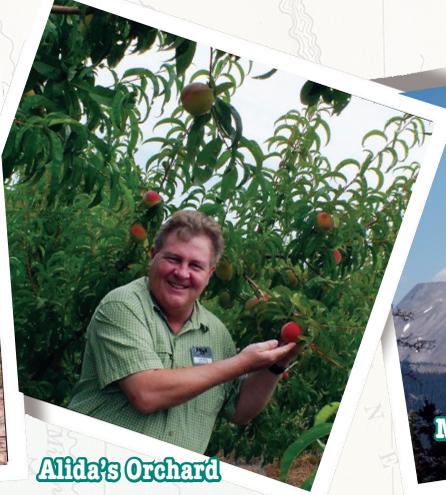




Wine Country Inn



Grand View!



Alida's Orchard



Monarch Pass

abandoned old uranium mines, which ceased operating in 1980, and into the unbelievable red rock canyonlands of the San Miguel & Delores Rivers. Lunch today is catered by wonderful ladies & gentlemen of the Rimrocker Historic Society in their Community Room, which is attached to the Rimrocker Museum. After lunch we'll have time to explore the museum and visit personally with former Uravan residents. Uravan was a company town established by U.S. Vanadium Corporation in 1936 to extract the rich vanadium ore in the region. Departing, a photo stop at the Hanging Flume, a National Engineering Landmark, will surely fascinate. As we approach the very western edge of Colorado, out of nowhere we come upon the spectacular "Gateway Canyons" - truly an awesome sight to behold. This world class resort is the brainchild of the producer of the Discovery Channel, who not only built it but owns it. After a coffee break at the Gateway Convenience Store, more spectacular scenery unfolds as we traverse through the cliff-lined Unaweep Canyon, a geologic mystery of West Creek, before arriving at our destination, Palisade. Our relaxing and charming home the next two nights is the Wine Country Inn. Tonight's dinner will be served at Rib City for "Real BBQ & Great Ribs."

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
Hotel: Wine Country Inn

Day 8 - Palisade

Breakfast is served at our charming hotel before we depart on our intriguing journey through the vineyards, orchards, and fruit stands of this garden valley. We'll stop at famous Alida's Orchard, where we are treated to a guided tour and have the opportunity to buy her delicious Western Colorado products. Did you know that Palisade is the peach and wine capitol of Colorado? Next we make our way to the quaint historic downtown of Grand Junction. Spend time browsing its charming shops and view the nation's largest sidewalk sculptures. After lunch on our own we have a truly unique Colorado experience: the Colorado National Monument. This 22 mile drive explores the sandstone rims and canyons bordering the Colorado River. Witness soaring cliffs, sharp spires, wildlife, and many photo opportunities from scenic overlooks. This rugged monument relates a spectacular lesson in geology. This evening enjoy a relaxing wine tasting evening and dinner at the Inn, surrounded by the peacefulness of the vineyards of the Palisade Valley.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 9 - Palisade to Denver

As we begin another day, we are leaving the backroads and taking Interstate 70 east to Denver. Along the interstate we will make a stop in Vail. Vail is to the U.S. what Gstaad is to Switzerland: paradise found for skiers. The town, which replicates a Tyrolean Alps village, was constructed in the early 1970s as a base camp for the massive Vail Mountain. Vail first achieved superstar status in that decade when President Gerald Ford vacationed here regularly with his family. We will have lunch at Betty Ford Alpine Gardens and take a tour of the gardens after lunch. The gardens boast waterfalls,

gorgeous views and a wide variety of Alpine plants, all with markers. After leaving Vail we will continue east, going past several ski areas before our arrival in Denver, our destination for the evening. You won't even need to leave the comfort of our hotel for dinner as the Drury's Manager's Reception is sufficient for most, or there are restaurant choices near the hotel.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Manager's Reception
Hotel: Drury Inn

Day 10 - Denver to Ogallala, NE

Our morning will begin with a Denver city tour with a knowledgeable step-on guide. After our tour, we will start our journey east towards Minnesota. Our hotel for the night will be in Ogallala, NE with an included dinner at Front Street Steakhouse where we will have a surprise guest!

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
Hotel: Holiday Inn Express

Day 11 - Ogallala to Lincoln, NE

After breakfast at the hotel, we will continue east with a stop in Kearney, NE at The Archway Museum. The Archway is a museum of and monument to Nebraska's and the Platte River Valley's role in westward expansion. The Archway is directly over Interstate 80 three miles east of Kearney. We will thoroughly enjoy a tour and lunch at the museum, before we continue towards home, stopping in Lincoln for the night.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
Hotel: Country Inn and Suites

Day 12 - Lincoln, NE to Home

After breakfast at the hotel, we will continue back to Minnesota, recalling grand memories of our Colorado Backroads journey!

Included Meals: Breakfast

2017 DATES & PRICES		
DATES:	July 9 - 20, 2017 (12 Days)	
PRICE PER PERSON:	\$2,799 Double \$2,649 Triple	\$3,599 Single \$2,499 Quad
PRICE INCLUDES:	21 Meals & 2 Manager's Reception, Activities & Hotels as stated, Luxury Motorcoach	
DEPOSIT DUE PER PERSON:	\$100 deposit per person at time of reservation. Full payment due 30 days prior to departure.	
OPTIONAL TRAVEL PROTECTION P/P:	\$170 Double p/p	\$226 Single
TRAVEL BUCKS:	\$40 per person on future travel with R&J	
TOUR PACE:	Moderate to Extensive Walking at your own pace.	

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