

Tour 11: The Cowboy Tour 2060 miles

by Church Village Travel



Day 1 Fly from Heathrow to Denver. Airport. Overnight: Denver Airport.

Day 2 Drive from Denver Airport to Estes Park for 2 nights (77 miles) Visit Rocky Mountain National Park. A living showcase of the grandeur of the Rocky Mountains, with elevations ranging from 8,000 feet in the wet, grassy valleys to 14,259 feet at the weather-ravaged top of Longs Peak, provides visitors with opportunities for countless breathtaking experiences and adventures. One of the most beautiful walks is from Bear Lake, passing Nymph Lake and Dream Lake on the way to Emerald Lake.

Day 3 Spend the day driving through the park on the Falls River Road to the Alpine Visitors Centre at 11796 feet straddling the Continental Divide. The divide runs northwest to southeast through the center of the park atop the high peaks. This accounts for two distinct climate patterns - one arid on the east side near Estes Park and the other more humid with almost twice the annual precipitation in the Grand Lake area on the park's west side.

Day 4 Drive to Douglas in Wyoming for an overnight stop. En route visit Fort Laramie (270 miles). This "grand old post," established as a private fur trading fort in 1834, witnessed the entire sweeping saga of America's western expansion and Indian resistance to encroachment on their territories. Indians, trappers, traders, missionaries, emigrants, gold seekers, soldiers, cowboys and homesteaders would leave their mark on a place that would become famous in the American west.

Day 5 Drive to Hill City for 2 nights (194 miles). On the way, first stop off at Mount Rushmore and then the Monument to Crazy Horse. Later visit the Mammoth Burial site at Hot Springs.

Crazy Horse Monument: The mission of the Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation is to protect and preserve the culture, tradition, and living heritage of the North American Indians. The Foundation demonstrates its commitment to this endeavor by continuing the progress on the world's largest sculptural undertaking by carving a memorial to the Lakota leader Crazy Horse to represent all North American Indians, by providing educational and cultural programming; by acting as a repository for Native American artifacts, arts and crafts through the Indian Museum of North America and the Native American Educational and Cultural Center, and by establishing and operating, when practical, a university and medical training center for Native Americans.

The Mammoth Site. For centuries, the bones of the mammoths laid buried until discovered by chance in 1971 while excavating for a housing development, earth moving equipment exposed South Dakota's greatest fossil treasure. Fortunately, through the work of local citizens the Mammoth Site was preserved. Today it is the world's largest Columbian Mammoth Exhibit, and a world renowned research centre for Pleistocene studies.

Day 6



Custer State Park and Badlands National Park

Custer State Park. A herd of 1,300 bison roams freely throughout the Custer State Park, often stopping traffic along the 18-mile Wildlife Loop Road. The herd is one of the largest publically-owned herds in the world. Bison can weigh as much as 2,000 pounds. Historically, the animal played an essential role in the lives of the Lakota (Sioux), who relied on the "tatanka" for food, clothing and shelter. Besides bison, the park is home to wildlife such as pronghorn antelope, mountain goats, bighorn sheep, deer, elk, wild turkeys, and a band of friendly burros.

Badlands National Park. People are drawn to the rugged beauty of the Badlands. These geologic deposits contain one of the world's richest fossil beds. Ancient mammals such as the rhino, horse, and saber-toothed cat once roamed here. The park's 244,000 acres protect an expanse of mixed-grass prairie where bison, bighorn sheep, deer, pronghorn, prairie dogs, and black-footed ferrets live today.

Day 7

Drive to Buffalo in Wyoming for 1 night.

Take a detour to visit Devils Tower (254 miles) a core of a volcano exposed by erosion which was the landing site of the spaceship in the film Close Encounters of a Third Kind.

Day 8

Drive to Cody for 1 night passing on the way via the battlefield of the Little Bighorn (274 miles)

The Battle of the Little Bighorn River on 25th and 26th June 1876 was one of the last important instances of courageous resistance by Native American people to the advance of white occupation. This fight was the principal one in the war where the Northern Cheyenne and several tribes of the Sioux were suppressed by the occupying force. The battle consisted of two entirely separate aggressive actions. The first in the valley was conducted under the leadership of US Major Reno, whose troops retreated before an overwhelming number of Native American warriors and took refuge on the bluffs across the river where they were joined by Captain Benteen's force, they defended themselves until the Native Americans withdrew. In the other action which was fought nearly 5 miles away, in the vicinity in what is now the monument headquarters, five troops of the 7th Cavalry under Custer's personal command were overwhelmed by Native American warriors fighting for their homelands. This was Custer's Last Stand.

Day 9

Drive to West Yellowstone for 1 night (166 miles)

Established 1872, Yellowstone National Park is America's first national park. Located in Wyoming, Montana and Idaho, it is home to a large variety of wildlife including grizzly bears, wolves, bison, and elk. Preserved within Yellowstone National Park are Old Faithful and a collection of the world's most extraordinary geysers and hot springs, and the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone.

Yellowstone's climate is one of cold winters and moderate summers. Most of the park is above 7,500 feet and the weather is unpredictable. Be prepared for changing temperatures, storms and emergencies.

Day 10

Drive to Jackson Hole for 1 night (125 miles) via Teton Village and the Grand Tetons

Located in northwestern Wyoming, Grand Teton National Park preserves a spectacular landscape rich with majestic mountains, pristine lakes and extraordinary wildlife. The abrupt vertical rise of the jagged Teton Range contrasts with the horizontal sage-covered valley and glacial lakes at their base, creating world-renowned scenery that attracts nearly four million visitors per year.

Day 11

Drive to Vernal for 1 night (290 miles) visiting Dinosaur National Monument, discovering fragments of a long ago world where the largest land creatures of all time once roamed.

Day 12

Drive to Grand Junction for 2 nights (142 miles) Visit Colorado National Monument.

The monument preserves one of the grand landscapes of the American West. But this treasure is much more than a monument. Towering monoliths exist within a vast plateau-and-canyon panorama. You can experience sheer-walled, red rock canyon along the twists and turns of Rim Rock Drive, where you may spy bighorn sheep and soaring eagles.

Day 13

After all the driving over the past 2 weeks a day of rest is required before heading back to Denver for the flight to Heathrow

Day 14

Drive to Denver international for return flight back to United Kingdom (267 miles).

