ROAD TRIP · UNITED STATES

The Colorado Rockies

High passes, mountain towns and the cliff dwellings of Mesa Verde.

Length	13 days, 12 nights
Distance	1,520 km, 8 driving days
Behind the wheel	20 h 10 min
Travellers	2, 1 room, 1 car
Hotels	Comfort: a good hotel (3 stars)
Flights	Amsterdam – Denver (DEN), Denver (DEN) – Amsterdam

CONTENTS

Denver	Days 1–2	**8**
Estes Park	Days 3–4	**10**
Glenwood Springs	Day 5	**12**
Ouray	Days 6–7	**14**
Durango	Days 8–9	**16**
Alamosa	Day 10	**18**
Colorado Springs	Days 11–12	**20**

Day by day

DAY	DATE	NIGHT	KM	DRIVE	°C
1		Denver	40	40 min	
2		Denver			
3		Estes Park	100	1 h 40 min	
4		Estes Park			
5		Glenwood Springs	330	4 h 20 min	
6		Ouray	280	3 h 30 min	
7		Ouray			
8		Durango	110	1 h 50 min	
9		Durango			
10		Alamosa	240	3 h 30 min	
11		Colorado Springs	260	3 h 10 min	
12		Colorado Springs			
13		Flight home from DEN	140	1 h 40 min	

1,520 km · 20 h 10 min behind the wheel · on average 190 km a driving day

Kilometres and drive times by road (OSRM, OpenStreetMap), without stops: plan generously.

The route



Map: US Census Bureau (public domain) · roads © OpenStreetMap contributors

ON THE ROAD

Day 1	Land at Denver (DEN), drive to Denver · About 40 km (30 mi), 40 min
Day 3	Denver, drive to Estes Park · About 100 km (70 mi), 1 h 40 min
Day 5	Estes Park, drive to Glenwood Springs · About 330 km (200 mi), 4 h 20 min
Day 6	Glenwood Springs, drive to Ouray · About 280 km (180 mi), 3 h 30 min
Day 8	Ouray, drive to Durango · About 110 km (70 mi), 1 h 50 min
Day 10	Durango, drive to Alamosa · About 240 km (150 mi), 3 h 30 min

Well prepared

ESTA

Dutch and Belgian travellers need no visa for a holiday of up to 90 days, but do need an approved ESTA before boarding. It costs about $40, is valid for two years (or until your passport expires) and is applied for online. Apply at least 72 hours before you fly, and only on the official site.

esta.cbp.dhs.gov

Passport

An electronic passport (with the chip symbol), valid for the whole stay. Children need their own passport and ESTA.

nl.usembassy.gov

Driving licence

Your Dutch driving licence is accepted for renting and driving a car as a visitor. An international driving permit next to it helps with police and some rental desks.

anwb.nl

Renting a car

The renter is the main driver and pays with a credit card in their own name (no debit or prepaid card); the deposit is held on it. Usually from 21, and from 21 to 24 you pay a young-driver fee of about $25 a day. Book from home with insurance included (CDW/LDW and extra liability, SLI) and an extra driver if you want to take turns. Returning the car elsewhere (a one-way trip) costs extra. Fuel is sold by the gallon (3.8 litres); fill it up yourself before you bring it back.

Driving in the USA

Keep right; speeds are in miles an hour (65 mph is 105 km/h). Turning right on red is allowed after stopping, unless a sign says no. At a 4-way stop, whoever stopped first goes first. For a stopped yellow school bus with flashing lights you stop in both directions. Toll roads are often electronic only: ask your rental company about its toll pass. On remote stretches (parks, desert) there's little signal and a long way to the next pump: fill up at half and download the map.

Renting an RV

You can rent an RV from about 21 with an ordinary car licence. On top of the rent, count on mileage (often per mile), a kit with bedding and kitchen things, cleaning and the campsite: in the popular parks you book those months ahead on recreation.gov. Big RVs aren't allowed on every park road. Take photos of the RV when you pick it up: damage and missing items are the most heard complaint.

recreation.gov

National parks

Most big parks charge per car. Visitors from abroad pay $100 a person extra at 11 popular parks; the annual pass for non-residents is $250. Some parks need a timed-entry reservation in high season.

nps.gov

Money and tipping

Prices are without sales tax, which is added at the till. In restaurants a tip of 15 to 20% is usual. Cards are accepted almost everywhere; at the pump you may be asked for a ZIP code, so pay inside.

Travel insurance and health

Care in the USA is very expensive: take travel insurance with worldwide medical cover, and check whether your health insurance covers the USA. Cancellation insurance covers the trip if you can't go; insure the rental car with the rental company (see Renting a car). Take medicines in their original packaging, with a prescription in English. Emergency number: 911.

Power, phone and time

110 volt with flat two-pin plugs (type A/B): bring an adapter. A US eSIM is cheaper than roaming. The mainland has four time zones, Arizona mostly without daylight saving time.

Customs

Fresh food, meat and fruit may not be brought in. Declare food you carry.

Packing list

- [ ] Passport (valid for the whole trip)
- [ ] ESTA, printed
- [ ] Driving licence (and an international one)
- [ ] Credit card in the driver's name
- [ ] Travel and cancellation insurance
- [ ] Confirmations: flights, car, hotels
- [ ] America the Beautiful pass for the parks
- [ ] Plug adapter for type A/B (110 volt)
- [ ] Car charger and phone holder
- [ ] eSIM or offline maps
- [ ] Sunscreen, sunglasses and a cap
- [ ] Water bottles for the desert
- [ ] Hiking shoes
- [ ] Layers: the coast and the nights get cold
- [ ] Medicines, in your hand luggage
- [ ] A pen, for this booklet

DON'T FORGET

Notes



DAYS 1–2

Denver CO

Red Rocks and the Mile High City

Land at Denver (DEN), drive to Denver: about 40 km (30 mi), 40 min

2 nights

DENVER · DAYS 1–2

HOTEL

- [ ] SpringHill Suites by Marriott Denver Downtown · 3★ — roughly €140
  1190 Auraria Pkwy Ste A
- [ ] Fairfield by Marriott Inn & Suites Denver West - Federal Center · 3★ — roughly €100
  140 S UNION BLVD
- [ ] Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott Denver Downtown · 3★ — roughly €120
  2747 Wyandot St
- [ ] Hampton Inn & Suites Denver-Speer Boulevard · 3★ — roughly €130
  2728 Zuni St
- [ ] Hyatt House Denver Lakewood Belmar · 3★ — roughly €130
  7310 W Alaska Drive

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DAYS 3–4

Estes Park CO

Rocky Mountain National Park

Denver, drive to Estes Park: about 100 km (70 mi), 1 h 40 min

2 nights

ESTES PARK · DAYS 3–4

HOTEL

- [ ] Lazy Elk Retreat - 3 Br Cabin · 3★
  1335 Strong Avenue
- [ ] Murphy's Resort · 3★
  1650 Big Thompson Avenue
- [ ] River Stone Resorts & Bear Paw Suites · 3★
  2120 Fall River Rd
- [ ] Aspen Winds on Fall River · 3★
  1051 Fall River Court
- [ ] Riverwood on Fall River · 3★
  525 Fall River Ln

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DAY 5

Glenwood Springs CO

The hot springs pool

Estes Park, drive to Glenwood Springs: about 330 km (200 mi), 4 h 20 min

1 night

GLENWOOD SPRINGS · DAY 5

HOTEL

- [ ] Downtown BnB King Bed Clawfoot Tub & Hot Tub · 3★
  1025 Colorado Ave
- [ ] Downtown B&B with Jacuzzi · 3★
  1025 Colorado Avenue
- [ ] Hotel Colorado · 3★ — roughly €270
  526 Pine St
- [ ] Hampton Inn Glenwood Springs · 3★ — roughly €200
  401 W 1st Street
- [ ] Wanderer Studio, AN OFF GRID MOUNTAIN Guest Studio With Fantastic Views · 3★
  648 County Road 126

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DAYS 6–7

Ouray CO

The Million Dollar Highway

Glenwood Springs, drive to Ouray: about 280 km (180 mi), 3 h 30 min

2 nights

OURAY · DAYS 6–7

HOTEL

- [ ] 225 6th Avenue Unit 3 · 3★
  225 6th Avenue Unit #3
- [ ] Cozy Home w/ Mountain Views Near Ouray Hot Springs · 3★
  418 Whispering Pines Dr
- [ ] Hotel Ouray - Adults Only · 3★
  303 6th Avenue
- [ ] Scenic Mountain Retreat < 3 Mi to Dtwn Ouray! · 3★
  93 Whispering Pines Dr
- [ ] Updated Rustic-chic Condo on Ouray's Main Street! · 3★
  708 Main Street

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DAYS 8–9

Durango CO

Mesa Verde and the old steam train

Ouray, drive to Durango: about 110 km (70 mi), 1 h 50 min

2 nights

DURANGO · DAYS 8–9

HOTEL

- [ ] Darling Dwelling: 2 Mi to Dtwn Durango! · 3★
  6 Ferringway Cir
- [ ] Durango Lofted Studio ~ 9 Mi to Purgatory Resort! · 3★
  314 Tamarron Dr
- [ ] Durango Resort Condo w/ Balcony & Mtn Views! · 3★
  455 Sheol St
- [ ] Durango Woodland Cabin < 2 Mi to Purgatory Skiing! · 3★
  94 Ponderosa Way
- [ ] Flawless Durango Home w/ Theater + Pool Table · 3★
  8550 US-550

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DAY 10

Alamosa CO

Great Sand Dunes

Durango, drive to Alamosa: about 240 km (150 mi), 3 h 30 min

1 night

ALAMOSA · DAY 10

HOTEL

- [ ] Hampton Inn Alamosa · 3★ — roughly €110
  710 Mariposa Street
- [ ] Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott Alamosa · 3★ — roughly €130
  721 Mariposa St
- [ ] Best Western Alamosa Inn · 3★ — roughly €80
  2005 Main Street
- [ ] Quality Inn Alamosa · 3★ — roughly €60
  333 Santa Fe Avenue
- [ ] < 1 Mi to Rio Grande Trails: Quiet Alamosa Escape · 3★

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DAYS 11–12

Colorado Springs CO

Garden of the Gods and Pikes Peak

Alamosa, drive to Colorado Springs: about 260 km (160 mi), 3 h 10 min

2 nights

COLORADO SPRINGS · DAYS 11–12

HOTEL

- ☐ Hampton Inn Colorado Springs Northeast · 3★ — roughly €100
  4380 Integrity Centerpoint Drive
- ☐ Residence Inn by Marriott Colorado Springs First & Main · 3★ — roughly €110
  6020 SOUTH CAREFREE CIRCLE
- ☐ Holiday Inn Express & Suites - Colorado Springs South I-25 by IHG · 3★ — roughly €100
  4435 Venetucci Boulevard
- ☐ Hampton Inn Colorado Springs I-25 Central · 3★ — roughly €70
  1060 Kelly Johnson Blvd
- ☐ Home2 Suites by Hilton Colorado Springs South · 3★ — roughly €100
  1235 Tenderfoot Hill Rd

NOTES

What it costs

DAY	PLACE	HOTEL	TOURS	CAR	TOTAL
1	Denver	€160	–	€60	**€220**
2	Denver	€160	–	€60	**€220**
3	Estes Park	€160	–	€60	**€220**
4	Estes Park	€160	–	€60	**€220**
5	Glenwood Springs	€160	–	€60	**€220**
6	Ouray	€160	–	€60	**€220**
7	Ouray	€160	–	€60	**€220**
8	Durango	€160	–	€60	**€220**
9	Durango	€160	–	€60	**€220**
10	Alamosa	€160	–	€60	**€220**
11	Colorado Springs	€160	–	€60	**€220**
12	Colorado Springs	€160	–	€60	**€220**
13	Flight home from DEN	–	–	€60	**€60**

Flights	€1,700
Hotels	€1,920
Excursions	€0
Car hire	€780
Total	**€4,400**
	€2,200 a person

An estimate to plan with (prices of 2026-10): hotels, the ticked excursions, car hire and flights. No fuel or meals.

Notes

About this booklet

Made on rondreis.expert. Your trip is still there, to change and print again: usa.rondreis.expert/en/tours/colorado-rockies/

PHOTOS

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Denver	Aerial view of Denver, Colorado LCCN2017689055.tiff · Carol M. Highsmith, Public domain
Estes Park	Estes Park from Gem Lake.jpg · Nyttend, Public domain
Glenwood Springs	Rafters enjoy the Colorado River rapids near Glenwood Springs, Colorado LCCN2015633551.tif · Carol M. Highsmith, Public domain
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Durango	The Dalton Ranch Golf Club in Durango, Colorado LCCN2015632940.tif · Carol M. Highsmith, Public domain
Alamosa	A small adobe house in Alamosa, Colorado LCCN2015632585.tif · Carol M. Highsmith, Public domain
Colorado Springs	One of several 1950s-vintage motels along North Nevada Avenue in Colorado Springs, Colorado LCCN2015633394.tif · Carol M. Highsmith, Public domain

MAP AND TYPE

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