



## DAY 1

*At a glimpse:* Exploring downtown Durango

*Travel agenda:* **Durango** is an authentic Western heritage and culture town. The historic, walkable downtown is full of hip shops, unique eateries and a dynamic art scene, and is the starting point for this Colorado road trip! After arriving, walk the **Main Ave** of Durango taking in the quaint type of charm. From Main Street, walk 5 minutes west to the **Animas River Walk**, a paved bike path that follows the river.

*Tip:* The most popular experience in Durango is the **Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad**. Though it's a beautiful trip, it's a long full day excursion and tomorrow's road trip covers the same route. The exception is opting for the shorter 2-hour **Cascade Canyon ride** which is offered Monday through Wednesdays in the summer! Either way it's worth stopping at the original 1882 depot station in town.

Just one block from the railroad station, dinner should be at **East by Southwest** with vibrant fusion cuisine rooted in the flavors of Japan. After dinner, head just around the corner to **The Bookcase and Barber**, a speakeasy located through a barbershop!

## DAY 2

*At a glimpse:* Road trip from Durango to Telluride

*Travel Agenda:* Start the day at **Durango Diner**, a landmark eatery on Main Avenue with a scratch menu, from huevos rancheros to the “biggest and best in the West” hotcakes according to the *Food Network*...and every local.

Then pack your bags and get a cab just outside of town to the **Enterprise** office. Pick up your rental car and then drive north on the US-550.

*Tip:* Renting a 4-wheel vehicle is recommended to reach hiking trailheads and to handle the dirt roads leading to Dunton Hot Springs.

There are several hiking options along the way. If you're feeling feisty, the **Ice Lake Basin** trail is an 8 mile path that traverses forests, wildflower meadows leading to two bright blue lakes. Or for a shorter 1.5 hour hike that starts at a beaver dam, winds its way through aspens and leads to another secluded lake, **Potato Lake via Spud Lake Trail** is the way to go! The trailhead for this hike is 45 minutes into the drive. Follow the windy dirt road off the highway.

Back on the road, **Silverton** is the next “major” town. Stop here to browse the antique shops or boutiques in downtown. Since you're on vacation, might as well grab a sweet from the





infamous **Rocky Mountain Funnel Cake Factory**.

Now you're in for another treat! The **Million Dollar Highway** stretches for 25 miles between Silverton and Ouray. Cut from the side of the mountain between historic gold-mining camps in the 1880's, the jaw dropping scenery earned it one of the "most scenic drives" in the USA according to *Travel + Leisure*. With switchbacks and deep cliffs, it can be a perilous drive in the winter – more reason to take advantage of the views in other seasons. The 11,000-foot **Red Mountain Pass** just north of Silverton is my favorite!

Stop in to **Ouray** for lunch: **Goods Ouray** or **True Grit Cafe**. Then follow the signs and drive 5 minutes to the **Box Canyon Park**. From here, you can park (\$5 fee) and follow a short path to the **Box Canyon Waterfall**. To get a closer and more unique view, walk the series of steel bridges and tunnels around the falls.

From Canyon Park, it's an hour drive to **Telluride**, a charming town with more action than Silverton or Ouray. Check in to your accommodation and then walk to the free **Gondola** from **San Juan Ave**, just behind the main street. The gondola will go straight to **Station Saint Sophia**. Hop off here for trails and an overlook.

Also situated on the mountain is **Allred's**. Be there just after 5pm to get a seat at the bar. Enjoy apps and a glass of wine with a view while the scene heats up. Don't stay for their overpriced dinner and instead head back to town to **Siam**, a casual but admired Thai spot. Make a reservation in advance!

### DAY 3

*At a glimpse:* Telluride sights and a drive to Dunton Hot Springs

*Travel agenda:* Start the day with **Ghost Town Coffee** for a top-notch toast or granola bowl. From there, take a 10 minute drive east through town past the Pandora Mill site. This is the **Bridal Veil Falls** attraction. You can drive the switchbacks to the top of the waterfall, or park at the Valley View Area and continue on foot.

For lunch, take a vote and decide between mind-blowing Detroit style pizza at **Brown Dog Pizza** or a bomb burger at **Smuggler's**. Around 2:00PM, hop in the car and drive an hour and 15-minutes southwest.

Check in at **Dunton Hot Springs** is 3:00PM. Upon arrival, get a beverage at the Saloon and start exploring the camp! Dinner is around 7:30PM. Enjoy the campfire and roast s'mores. Take some time to appreciate the clear sky and bright stars.

### DAY 4





*At a glimpse:* Making the most of Dunton Hot Springs

*Travel Agenda:* In the morning before most people rise, don your Dunton bathrobe and enjoy some solitude in the hot springs in/outside the Bath House. The morning air and quiet solitude just after sunrise is magical! Then enjoy a quality breakfast with fresh fruit, juices and anything hot made to order.

To make the most of Dunton, book an activity in the morning and afternoon. Two of the most popular include **fly fishing** and **horseback riding**. Both offered in the setting of your dreams. If you're back in Dunton at lunchtime, the team will offer you a wonderful meal and if not, they'll pack a picnic lunch to go!

After a hot shower, head to the Saloon for a happy hour beverage and lawn games with your fellow Dunton campers. Enjoy dinner and drinks family style in the dancehall.

### DAY 5

*At a glimpse:* Dunton morning, and drive to Durango with Mesa Verde stop

*Travel agenda:* Savor a final fresh juice and dip in the hot springs. Check out is at 11:00AM and the faster route to Durango is two hours down **CO-145 South**.

An hour into the drive, stop at the **Mesa Verde** national park, rated the number one historic monument in the world by readers of *Condé Nast*. The park was established in 1906 to preserve and interpret the archeological heritage of the Ancestral Pueblo people who made it their home from 600 to 1300CE. Though there are thousands of archaeological sites to explore, highlights include guided tours through the Cliff Palace, Long House, and Balcony House.

From here, it's an hour drive to Durango. Before heading home, **Michael's Corner's Crepes** on Main Ave is off-the-charts good and notably better than airport food.

