

## White Peaks to Red Rocks | Grand Circle Fly Drive

Holiday Duration: 19 Nights



### Overview

#### White Peaks to Red Rocks

A Grand Circle flydrive holiday taking in many of the highlights of the Rocky Mountains and the Utah National Parks known for their astonishing red rocks and extraordinary shapes. Along the way, you will discover the culture of both the ancient Pueblo people and the Navajo American Indians.

**This itinerary is flexible and can be tailor-made to suit you; if you want to add extra days in one area, extend the holiday or maybe change the direction of travel. Talk to one of our experts about how to make this holiday the perfect one for you.**



Here's a day-by-day guide to your itinerary. Feel free to ask us to add other days or ideas and excursions by contacting us directly, so we can give you the best price.

### **Days 1-2**



### **Denver**

Arrive into Denver and have a full day in Denver to visit the sights of the Mile High City and Capital City of Colorado: Your choice of activities could include the vibrant, walkable downtown area; lunch at a sidewalk cafe or in Larimer Square; the Denver Art Museum or check out what is on at the Red Rocks Amphitheatre. Round off the day with dinner at one of Denver's acclaimed restaurants with its Farm to Table cuisine.

### **2 nights Denver**

### **Days 3-4**



## **Denver to Grand Junction**

Collect your car. Take I70 (considered one of the most scenic "interstate highway" drives in the USA) past Vail and Glenwood Canyon to Grand Junction, in the heart of the Colorado wine district which will be your home for two nights. It is a four-drive so you might consider stopping for a night or two in Breckenridge or Vail.

Explore over 20 wineries as well as the Colorado National Monument to give you a glimpse of the amazing red rock formations which will form the backdrop for the next few days. The 11,333-foot alpine summit of the Grand Mesa is probably the highlight but the dramatic Book Cliffs are amazing too. You can book a guided ride with Rimrock Adventures to see the Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse herd. If you prefer water sports to horseback ones, take to a raft or a paddleboard on the Colorado River or grab a fishing rod from one of the local outfitters and catch yourself a trout.

**TIP** – Take the 23mile long Colorado Riverfront Rimrock Drive to Fruita to take in all the views of the canyonlands and the Colorado National Monument.

## **2 nights Grand Junction**

### **Days 5-7**



## **Grand Junction to Moab**

Cross the State border into Utah, the Mormon State with probably more dramatic scenery than anywhere else. As well as the fabulous lakes, mountains and seascapes you will see the red rocks in all kinds of amazing shapes and colours. You will stay in or near Moab for a couple of nights to be able to appreciate Arches and Canyonlands National Park. Arches National Park contains about 2,000 windowed arches, towering spires, hoodoos and precarious pinnacles. Look for the Delicate Arch, perhaps Utah's most iconic feature and Landscape Arch which is the largest at 306 feet. For an arch to be an arch, it

must span a minimum of 3 feet. A paved 40-mile scenic drive from the park entrance provides numerous parking areas for trail access and scenic overlooks.

**TIP** – Drive the local's favourite Travel Dead Horse Mesa Scenic Byway to Dead Horse Point State. Park for a dizzying view some 2,000 feet above the Colorado River as it winds its way into Canyonlands National Park.

**TIP** – In summer it is very hot so it is worth getting up early to get both the cooler air and the best colours. Rest during the afternoon and sally out again to get the evening hues.

## **2 nights Moab**

### **Day 8**



### **Moab to Capitol Reef**

It is no wonder the Navajo called Capitol Reef the Land of the Sleeping Rainbow. The contrast of red Entrada and white Navajo sandstones create a magnificent rip in the crust of the earth and surreal landscapes. Rock art petroglyphs are abundant amid Capitol Reef's red rocks and tell the story of the early indigenous people, the Fremont Culture. Capitol Reef National Park radiates colour for 100 miles from its northern to southern boundaries. The central geologic feature, the Waterpocket Fold, is a bulging uplift of rainbow hued sandstone "reefs" and canyons. Much of the park is a wilderness of sandstone formations with evocative names such as the Temple of the Sun and Moon.

### **1 night Torrey**

## **Day 9**



### **Capitol Reef to Boulder**

Today you will be driving one of the All-American Roads: Utah's Scenic Byway 12 which climbs into the Dixie National Forest, before passing the Grand Staircase at Escalante into Bryce Canyon called Hoodoo Country. You will break the journey in Boulder which will give you the chance to relax by the lake, do some hiking or horse-riding as well as spending time in Escalante. If you would rather not move again, you could spend two nights in either Torrey or Boulder.

### **1 night Boulder**

## **Day 10**



### **Boulder to Bryce**

The early Pauite American Indians believed that the Bryce spires were people frozen in stone by the spirit Coyote. Hoodoo sounds like "voodoo" for reasons you'll have to see to understand. Named for a 19th century Mormon settler,

Ebenezer Bryce who apparently said "it was a hell of a place to lose a cow". Bryce Canyon's view from 9,000 feet (2,743 meters) is unlike any else in the world. The most brilliant colours of the park come alive with the rising and setting of the sun. There are a myriad of walking/hiking trails and a 37-mile scenic drive overlooking incredible views: you can stop along the way for photos and walks. The interest does not stop when the sun goes down. Stargazing under incredibly dark skies is pretty awe inspiring as well.

**TIP** – Book a guided ride by horse or mule to the floor of Bryce Canyon, passing a stunning series of rock formations along the way.

## **2 nights Bryce**

### **Day 11**



### **Bryce to Zion**

Just a two hour drive along the Mount Carmel Scenic Byway and a stretch of historic Highway 89, which is populated with a number of quaint towns originally established by Mormon pioneers brings you to Zion which translates to "The Promised Land". That means some of the most spectacular hiking and impossible landscapes you are ever likely to see. Carved by water and time Zion National Park's soaring towers and massive monoliths create a spectacular grandeur rising far above you as you walk along the canyons. There are numerous easy, self-guided trails and more adventurous or strenuous hikes can also be found. There are also over 200 species of birds that call Zion home.

**Canyoneering:** Zion National Park has become a favourite in this exciting sport. Dozens of canyons offer route finding, rappelling, swimming and hike challenges for beginners to advanced.

### **1 night Zion**

## Day 12



### Zion to Page

Cross another state line, this time into Arizona to Page for a brief stay. This will be your chance to visit Lake Powell and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. If you need a rest from all the red rock, relax by the waterfront or rent a boat for a couple of hours. If you have extra time, get Frontier America to book you a few days or at the luxurious Amangiri Resort.

**TIP** – If you have never been to the Grand Canyon, it is only 2.5 hours' drive from Page, so we can change the itinerary to include this icon if you wish.

### 1 night Page

## Day 13



## **Page to Monument Valley**

Back into Utah and one of the most iconic of all views: Monument Valley. Monument Valley is the sacred heart of the Navajo Nation in the warm high desert lands of southeastern Utah so beloved by the Hollywood film makers. You will have a chance to hike, take a jeep tour, ride but best of all you must take a tour escorted by a Navajo guide to really give you an insight as what this remarkable area means.

The Navajo do not allow any alcohol to be consumed on their lands.

## **1 night Monument Valley**

### **Day 14**



## **Monument Valley to Mesa Verde**

Four Corners is the only area in the USA where four states come together. Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Utah meet at the Four Corners Monument. However, of more interest will be the Mesa Verde National Park, the ancestral home of the Pueblo people. You will be able to see the ancient cliff dwellings which are amongst 5000 archaeological sites.

**TIP** – You will need a guide to get into some of the more spectacular dwellings such as Cliff House.

## **1 night Mesa Verde Park**

**Days 15-16****Mesa Verde to Durango**

A short drive into Durango, near the New Mexico border, and a chance to take the Durango/Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad. Built in 1881 to transport gold and silver out of the San Juan Mountains. Today it is more useful for passengers to enjoy the precious views; the train is still pulled by a steam engine using the historic cars and has been in continuous operation for over 130 years. You will need a full day as the train takes 3 ½ hours each way, plus spending two hours in the historic mining town of Silverton.

**2 nights Durango****Day 17****Durango to Crested Butte**

As you make your way towards Crested Butte which is a four and a half hour drive, do stop for a break at the very pretty mountain villages of Ouray and

Telluride, known locally as Little Switzerland. Another halt should be made at the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park to see some of the steepest cliffs and most craggy spires in North America. When you get to Crested Butte, a quaint 1880s mining town, set among splendid scenery and offering all sorts of outdoor activities, do visit the Heritage Museum which was the 1883 hardware and general store.

### **1 night Crested Butte**

### **Days 18-19**



### **Crested Butte to Colorado Springs**

Nearly four hours in the car today as you make your way along Highway 24 to Colorado Springs, where we suggest you spend at least 2 nights. There is so much to do in this resort town first established in the late 1800s. The Garden of the Gods will be your last glimpse of the red rocks that have dominated the last two weeks plus the pretty spa town of Manitou Springs and Pikes Peak, America's Mountain which dominates the area. At 14,115 feet, it is only the 31st highest in Colorado! You can take a cog railway to the top for some amazing views.

### **2 nights Colorado Springs**

## Day 20



### Colorado Springs to Denver

Just a 70 mile drive to the Denver International Airport will finish off a very memorable and varied fly drive holiday.



## **Rocky Mountaineer Add on**

### **Rockies To The Red Rocks**

Following the phenomenal success of the Rocky Mountaineer in Canada, the train has now landed in Colorado and can be added to any holiday starting or ending in Denver.

The Rocky Mountaineer is a luxury train service that offers passengers a unique way to experience the American Southwest. The train travels through some of the most stunning scenery in the region, including the Rocky Mountains, the Colorado River, and the red rock canyons of Utah.

The American Rocky Mountaineer travels between from Denver, Colorado, and Moab, Utah. The rail journey takes two days with an overnight in Glenwood Springs plus two in Moab where we have included a tour of the Arches, but if you want something more exciting, we can organise an excursion for you by air, mountain bike, 4x4, light aircraft or jetboat

SilverLeaf passengers sit in a single level dome car with panoramic windows where delicious meals and snacks will be delivered to your seat. You will be kept entertained and informed by three onboard hosts and you can access the Outdoor viewing area. For a small supplement, you can buy SilverLeaf Plus which will give you access to the lounge car, signature cocktails and premium alcoholic drinks, as well as an elevated dining experience with wine pairings and an additional host.

No matter which service level you choose, you are sure to enjoy the stunning scenery and the comfortable accommodations on the Rocky Mountaineer. The train hosts are friendly and attentive, and they are happy to answer any questions you may have about the journey.

**NB: GoldLeaf is not available as the two-level carriages will not fit through the US tunnels.**

**This memorable journey can be added on to any itinerary starting or ending in Denver. There are also some escorted Rocky Mountaineer holidays linking the train with a bus excursions starting in Salt Lake City or Las Vegas.**

**If you are interested in a holiday to America please contact us on 020 8776 8709 to discuss your plans with a USA expert, or send an email to [america@frontier-travel.co.uk](mailto:america@frontier-travel.co.uk) with your requirements and we will put together your ideal itinerary and quotation. Let us take you there.**