

BEST OF THE WILD WEST

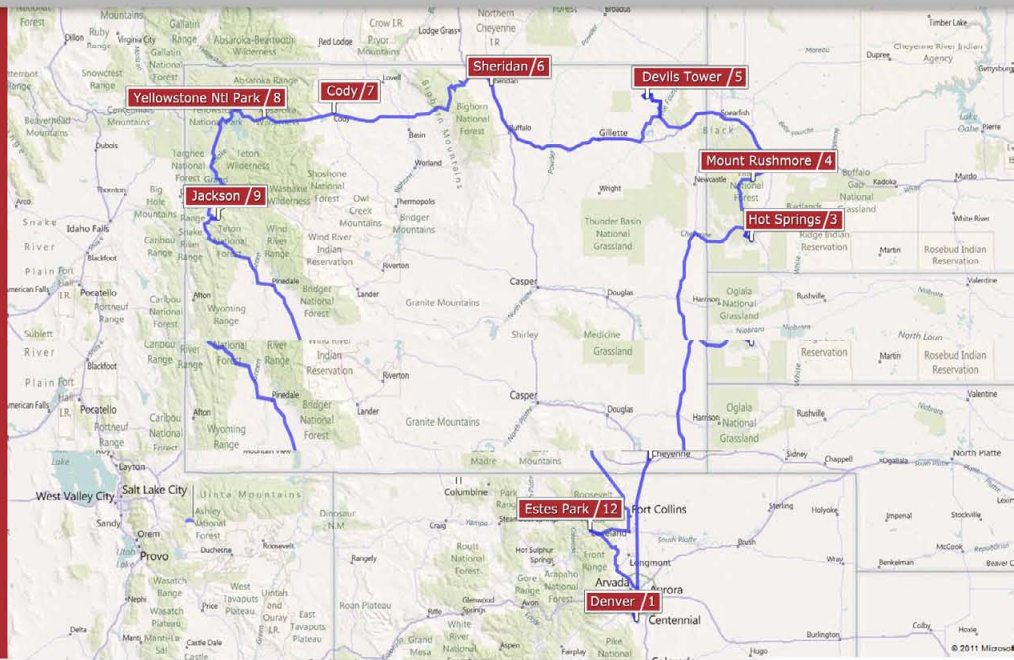
Summary

- 🕒 Timescale: 12 DAYS
- 🚐 Total Distance: 1850 miles
- 🚩 Start: Denver
- 🚩 End: Denver

The best of the wild-west! You will

- 🚩 End: Denver

The best of the wild-west! You will made. Meet heroes and heroines such as Calamity Jane, Buffalo Bill Cody, Indian Chief, Crazy Horse and visit breathtaking Mount Rushmore.



Day 1 DENVER TO CHEYENNE, WYOMING

127 miles – 2-3 hours

Head north out of the city and gradually realise you are heading into different territory. Approaching Cheyenne, you will find it very much a Victorian town with red brick buildings along a wide main street. (www.cheyenne.org) Your home tonight, we suggest, is the Cheyenne KOA (www.koa.com).

Day 2 CHEYENNE TO HOT SPRINGS

278 miles – 4 hours 30 mins

Travel into Nebraska via Scott's Bluff National Monument (www.nps.gov/scbl) and Chimney Rock (www.nps.gov/chro/) on the way to Hot Springs, South Dakota. Both were welcoming navigation landmarks along the wagon trails to the West. As you come into Hot Springs, do look out for 'Evans Plunge' or one of the other freshwater, naturally heated, swimming pools that give the town its name. We suggest KOA Hot Springs tonight (www.koa.com)



Day 3 HOT SPRINGS TO MOUNT RUSHMORE

66 miles – 1 hour 30 minutes plus stopping time

Quite soon you will enter Wind Cave National Park (www.nps.gov/wica) by the south entrance and, as you leave through the north entrance, you come straight upon Custer State Park (www.gfp.sd.gov/state-parks). A highlight may well be a herd of buffalo in the road! In both parks you'll want to stop along the way. Exit to the town of Custer then go north to the highlight of your day: Crazy Horse Memorial – the world's biggest sculpture which is over 60 years in the making (www.crazyhorsememorial.org). Sculptor Korczak Ziolkowski and Lakota Chief Henry Standing Bear launched the Crazy Horse Memorial in 1948. The Memorial's mission is to honour the culture, tradition and living heritage of North American Indians. Spend time there and, 20 miles further on, you will reach the Hill City/Mount Rushmore KOA, where we suggest you overnight (www.koa.com).

Day 4 MOUNT RUSHMORE TO DEVILS TOWERS

128 miles – 2 hours 20 minutes plus stopping time

First point of call today is 6 miles away, the Mount Rushmore National Memorial (www.nps.gov/moru/). Linger for a while before moving on to Deadwood, the whole town is protected National

Historic Landmark. Look out for the Old Franklin Hotel and, if you walk the back streets, some lovely original Victorian houses. Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane lie close in the town cemetery. Next on your route should be the breathtaking falls of Spearfish Canyon (www.visitspearfish.com) before crossing back into Wyoming and advancing toward Devils Tower (www.nps.gov/deto) 59 miles further on. It has a mighty status: President Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed Devils Tower the first national monument in 1906. We suggest you stay at the Devils Tower KOA (www.koa.com).



Day 5 DEVILS TOWER TO SHERIDAN

168 miles – 3 hours

Stop at Keyhole State Park (www.wyomingtourism.org) and then continue northwest to Sheridan Big Horn KOA (www.koa.com), your suggested home for tonight. You may want to get there quite early for you are only one hour's drive from the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument. You'll find other relics of the Indian wars near Sheridan, including the Fort Phil Kearny State Historic Site and the Fetterman Battlefield. There's plenty to do at the campground too.

Day 6 SHERIDAN TO CODY

144 miles – 2 hours 10 minutes

Drive through the Big Horn National Forest to the town of Cody. Try to arrive by lunchtime at the Cody KOA (www.codykoa.com) then spend a pleasant afternoon at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center (www.bbhc.org). Before he was 30, Buffalo Bill Cody rode for the Pony Express, scouted for the US Army, hunted buffalo, guided royalty on big game hunting trips, fought in the Civil War and starred on the American stage! The Buffalo Bill Center houses five unique museums including the Buffalo Bill Museum, the world class Whitney Gallery of Western Art, the Plains Indian Museum, Cody Firearms Museum and the Draper Museum of Natural History. Every day in June through August, the best cowboys and cowgirls from across the nation come to Cody to win big money and compete amongst the best. This is a great rodeo to watch, full of fun and excitement and tough competition in bull riding, bareback, calf roping, and steer wrestling. Tickets can be bought at your campground.

Day 7 CODY TO YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

54 miles – 65 minutes

It's a memorable drive to the East Entrance of Yellowstone National Park (www.nps.gov/yell). Established in 1872, this is America's first National Park. You could spend days here and we suggest you look at this and other websites to find out everything there is to see and do. You might drive through the park to the West Yellowstone entrance where just outside you will find the West Yellowstone KOA (www.yellowstonecamping.com). Here you will have full hook ups and can drive into the park at leisure.



Day 8 YELLOWSTONE TO VIRGINIAN RV RESORT, JACKSON

65 miles from Yellowstone's South Entrance – 1 hour 30 minutes plus stopping time

Shortly after leaving Yellowstone you will enter Grand Teton National Park, (www.nps.gov/grte/), drive alongside Jackson Lake with the splendour of the Grand Tetons to your right. Get on the road early because you'll want to stop along the way and also spend time in Jackson Hole before arriving at our suggested campground (www.virginianlodge.com). The Virginian RV Resort is open May 1st through October 15th depending upon weather – so this really is a summer trip. You will be close to the National Elk Refuge and the town of Jackson.

Day 9 JACKSON TO ROCK SPRINGS

179 miles – 4 hours

Drive several miles through Teton National Forest, then across the Wyoming Range past the Great Divide Basin to your left before arriving at Rock Springs. Turn on Route 80 towards Green River and the Rock Springs KOA (www.koa.com) which is situated between the 2 towns. Just beyond the campground is the spectacular Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area.

Day 10 ROCK SPRINGS TO RAWLINS

114 miles – 1 hour 50 minutes

You'll be heading east back towards Denver, with Rawlins as a rest stop to break what would otherwise be a long

journey across Southern Wyoming's 'Red Desert' (www.nwf.org/Wildlife/). Rawlins KOA website (www.koa.com) tells you a lot about local attractions in this area.

DAY 11 RAWLINS TO ESTES PARK

202 miles – 3 hours 30 minutes

Continue driving west and, after about 100 miles, stop at the old western town of Laramie. There are towns, village and ranches along the route. Estes Park KOA (www.koa.com) is 5 miles from Rocky Mountain National Park, a 400 square mile preserve of forests, meadows, tundra and mountains. Take a quick drive through or spend the day exploring the many mountain lakes and ponds. There are Elk, Deer, Big Horn Sheep, Moose and the occasional bald eagle to watch out for, so well worth a visit.



DAY 12 ESTES PARK TO DENVER

DROP OFF

104 miles – 2 hours

Return your motorhome back by 11am, filled with petrol.