



Western Colorado Tour

SEPTEMBER 6 – 15, 2019

Total cost: \$TBD if 18-24 Paid Participants

Total Cost: TBD if 25 or more Paid Participants

Single supplement: TBD (paid at time of registration)

Deposit: TBD (paid at time of registration)

Final Payment: TBD due by TBD

Rider limit: 30

Tour Leaders: Ralph & Carol Nussbaum

Tour Rating: Intermediate/Advanced (Read Level of Difficulty below.)

OVERVIEW

This tour begins in Grand Junction, Colorado. The first day is a tour of the stunning Colorado National Monument, a loop out of Grand Junction. Then the tour passes through several valleys, each as gorgeous as the one before, on a three-day ride to Ouray, Colorado, for a day off. The tour then turns north to ride through the Black Canyon of the Gunnison, and over Grand Mesa back to Grand Junction. [See overview route map below.](#)

WHAT TO EXPECT:

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY:

The ride is intended for riders with advanced biking skill levels or better. Everyone can ride at their own comfortable pace. We will be climbing 3,000' – 5,000' most days with one day at 6,000' all at altitudes of 5,000 feet or more. There will be a day off in Ouray with opportunities to hike, shop or take a tour. Although the route generally traverses lightly travelled rural roads, there are some short stretches with no shoulder and/or routes with heavy traffic.

WEATHER:

The weather in Colorado in the September is usually pleasant, but can still be very hot, thunderstorms are possible as are days of cold rain in the high country. So, bring electrolyte replacements and rain gear!

MEALS:

This tour will provide both snacks and lunch on riding days. Breakfast and dinner are your responsibility; however, many of our accommodations provide a complimentary warm breakfast.

LODGING:

Our lodging will vary from very nice Best Western and resort type lodging to mountain lodges to basic small-town motels.

DAY BY DAY ITINERARY: (Mileages & Elevation gains are approximate – route may vary slightly due to unforeseen circumstances.)

Day 0 - Friday, September 6 – Orientation Meeting in Grand Junction

We meet the first night at the Holiday Inn in Grand Junction—for an 8:00 PM briefing meeting. Folks may wish to get together for dinner informally beforehand.

Day 1 - Saturday, September 7 – Monument Loop, 43 miles, 3150 ft. of climbing

We start out on a flat trail and quiet roads to get to the north entrance to Colorado National Monument. From there, it is a steep climb up to the ridge from which the stunning views of the cliffs of the monument below. After a ride along the cliff edge, it is a fast descent to the south entrance and a return to Grand Junction.

Day 2 - Sunday, September 8 – Grand Junction-Gateway, 60 miles, 3225 ft. climbing

We leave Grand Junction and head up the East Creek Canyon to the Unaweep Divide to the West Creek Canyon. Both sides of the Divide provide further beautiful views of rock formations as we travel to the resort at Gateway, surprising luxury in the high desert. You may wish to visit the famous car museum there.

Day 3 - Monday, September 9 – Gateway to Naturita, 51 miles, 2411 ft. climbing

From Gateway we continue along the massive red rock canyon walls of the Dolores and San Miguel Rivers to the town of Naturita

Day 4 - Tuesday, September 10 – Naturita - Ouray, 71 miles, 5493 ft. of climbing

From Naturita, we leave the San Miguel River Valley, only to climb over a 1,000 ft and then promptly dropping over 500 ft to get back to it. Later we leave the valley to climb to 9,000ft over the Dallas Divide and descend into Ridgeway. A short ride and another climb brings us to the old mining town of Ouray with its historical buildings and multiple modern-day sports opportunities.

Day 5 - Wednesday, September 11 - Day off at Ouray

In Ouray you can take the day off to relax drink coffee, and explore the town, or you can hike, or take a jeep tour into the mountains, or a ride the million-dollar highway up to Silverton (46 mi roundtrip 4,400’).

Day 6 - Thursday, September 12 – Ouray-Montrose, 77 miles, 4400 ft. climbing

This day begins with a descent and a pleasant ride from Ridgeway along a bike trail to Ridgeway State Park. From there, it's a gradual descent to the town of Montrose which we pass through on the way to the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park. This is another stunning canyon in Western Colorado. After a tour of this park, it is a quick descent back to Montrose for the evening.

Day 7 - Friday, September 13 – Montrose-Grand Mesa, 68 miles, 6100 ft. climbing

This day is the biggest climbing day of the tour with a flat start followed by a climb up a beautiful forested slope to the top of the 10,000-foot Grand Mesa, which rises high above the Colorado River floor. Our destination is some rustic cabins set by beautiful alpine lakes on top of the Grand Mesa.

Day 8 - Saturday, September 14 - Grand Mesa – Grand Junction, 69 miles, 1825 ft. climbing

On the last day we descend off the Grand Mesa, through wine fields and fruit orchards back to Grand Junction. The last night here is paid for so take it easy today and enjoy one more evening with newly made friends before heading home on Sunday, September 15.

For more information contact Ralph and Carol at: RENussbaum@outlook.com



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