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 TRAVEL USA

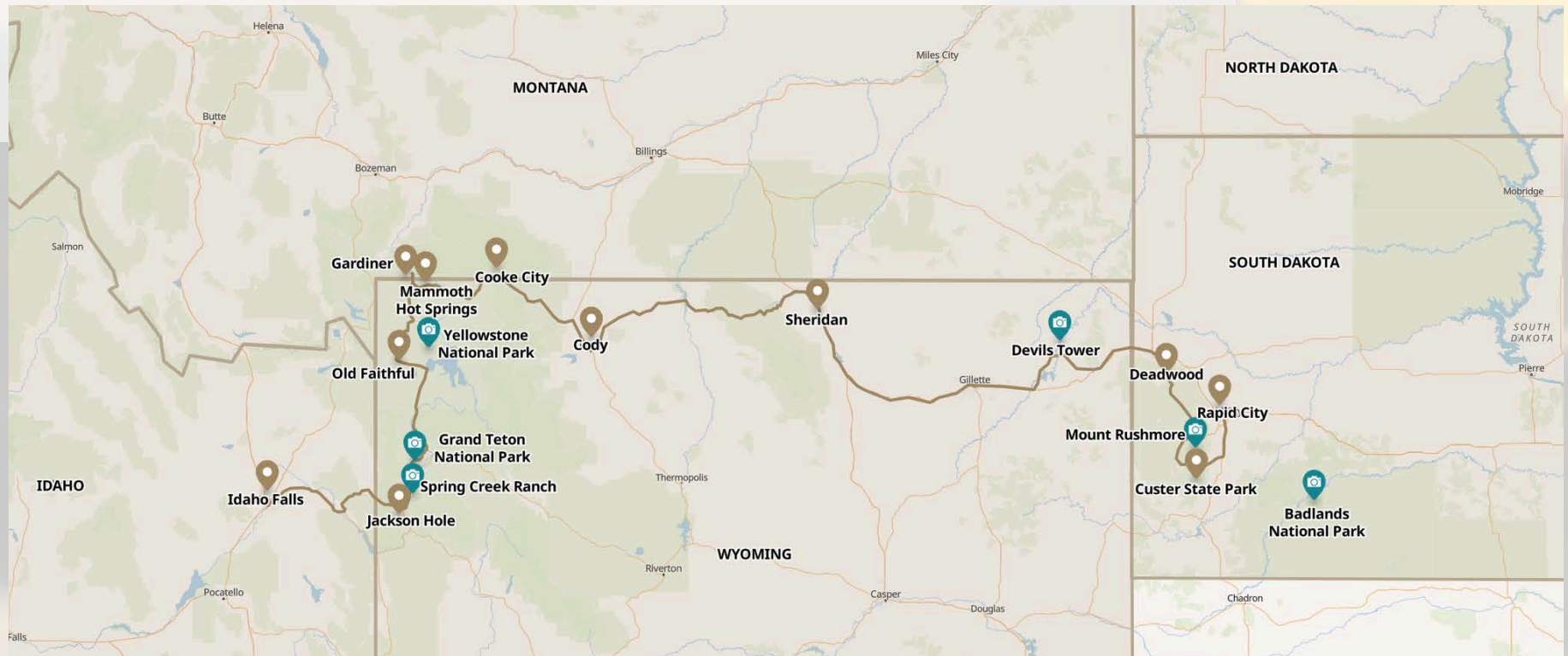


America's Great Frontier

16 days / 15 nights from NZ \$6,725 pp

America's Great Frontier

Journey into the heart of America's Great Frontier on an unforgettable self-drive through South Dakota and Wyoming, where wide-open landscapes, legendary roads and the spirit of the Old West come together. Begin in Rapid City and discover the extraordinary formations of Badlands National Park before exploring the Black Hills, home to Mount Rushmore, Crazy Horse Memorial, Custer State Park and the spectacular Iron Mountain Road and Needles Highway. Step back into the Wild West in historic Deadwood, cross into Wyoming beneath Devils Tower and journey over the Bighorn Mountains to Cody, where Buffalo Bill and rodeo culture keep the West alive. Then follow the breathtaking Chief Joseph Scenic Byway into the extraordinary wilderness of Yellowstone National Park for four nights amongst erupting geysers, colourful hot springs, thundering waterfalls, dramatic canyons and valleys alive with bison and other wildlife. Finally, journey south to magnificent Grand Teton National Park, where jagged mountain peaks rise above pristine lakes, the Snake River and some of the West's most beautiful scenery, finishing with three nights in Jackson Hole. This is America on a grand scale - wild, spectacular and made for the open road.



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SOUTH DAKOTA - Rapid City / Badlands National Park / Wall Drug / City of Presidents / Mount Rushmore National Memorial / Crazy Horse Memorial / Sylvan Lake / Needles Highway / Custer State Park / Buffalo Safari Jeep Tour / Deadwood / Spearfish Canyon
WYOMING - Devils Tower / Bighorn Scenic Byway / Cody / Buffalo Bill Center of the West / Cody Nite Rodeo / Chief Joseph Scenic Byway / Yellowstone National Park / Lamar Valley / Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone / Old Faithful / Grand Prismatic Spring / Grand Teton National Park / Jackson Hole



Rapid City, South Dakota

Day 1: Welcome to South Dakota

Welcome to South Dakota and the beginning of your America's Great Frontier adventure. After the journey from New Zealand, arrive at Rapid City Regional Airport, collect your rental car and make the short drive into downtown Rapid City. There is deliberately nothing planned for the remainder of today, giving you time to settle in, recover from the journey and ease into your first evening in the American West. If you still have some energy, take a gentle walk through downtown or find somewhere nearby for dinner, but there will be plenty of time to explore properly over the next two days. Rapid City makes an ideal starting point, placing you within easy reach of the Badlands and Black Hills while allowing three nights in the same hotel before the road trip begins in earnest.

Overnight: Rapid City - Hotel Alex Johnson or similar



Minuteman Missile National Historic Site



Badlands National Park

Day 2: Explore Badlands National Park (approx. 250 km)

Today discover one of South Dakota's most extraordinary landscapes on a full-day self-drive through **Badlands National Park**. Follow the Badlands Loop Road through jagged pinnacles, eroded buttes, deep canyons and colourful rock layers, stopping at viewpoints and taking one of the shorter trails for a closer look. Keep watch for bison, bighorn sheep and prairie dogs along the way. History enthusiasts could also visit nearby **Minuteman Missile National Historic Site** to discover South Dakota's fascinating role in America's Cold War nuclear defence. Continue to legendary **Wall Drug**, a quirky roadside institution packed with Western-themed stores, souvenirs and its famous café, where the coffee still costs just 5 cents a cup, before returning to Rapid City later this afternoon. The day is deliberately kept flexible, allowing plenty of time to stop whenever the scenery catches your eye rather than racing through one of America's most distinctive national parks.

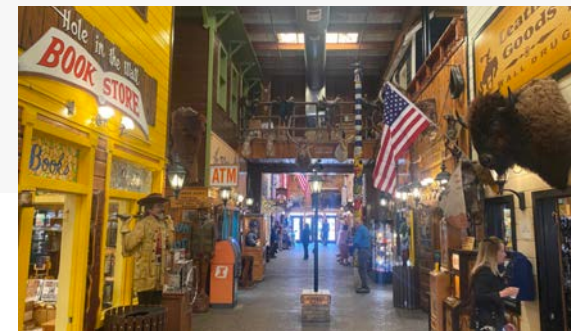
Overnight: Rapid City - Hotel Alex Johnson or similar

Key Highlights:

Badlands National Park / Badlands Loop Road / Minuteman Missile National Historic Site / Wall Drug



Badlands National Park



Wall Drug

Day 3: Rapid City & Mount Rushmore (approx. 80 km)

Enjoy a relaxed morning exploring Rapid City and the City of Presidents - life-sized bronze statues honouring every former U.S. president on street corners throughout downtown. Later, head into the Black Hills along Highway 16, where several popular attractions provide the opportunity for an additional stop, including Reptile Gardens, home to a collection of reptiles and tropical gardens, and Bear Country USA, a drive-through wildlife park where black bears, bison, elk and other North American wildlife roam through large natural enclosures. Continue through Keystone, a lively mountain town with shops, cafés and Old West character, before reaching one of America's great icons - Mount Rushmore National Memorial. Few things quite prepare you for that first glimpse of the enormous faces of Washington, Jefferson, Roosevelt and Lincoln emerging from the granite mountainside. Walk the Presidential Trail, explore the visitor exhibits and, if timing allows, stay on for the memorable Evening Lighting Program.

Overnight: Rapid City - Hotel Alex Johnson or similar

Key Highlights:

Rapid City / City of Presidents / Bear Country USA / Keystone / Mount Rushmore National Memorial / Presidential Trail / Evening Lighting Program



Bear Country USA



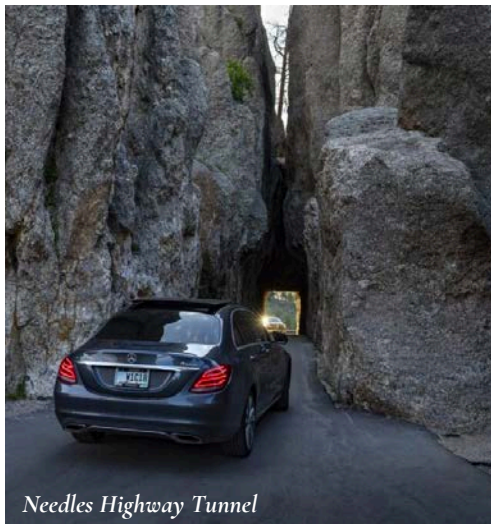
City of Presidents, George W. Bush



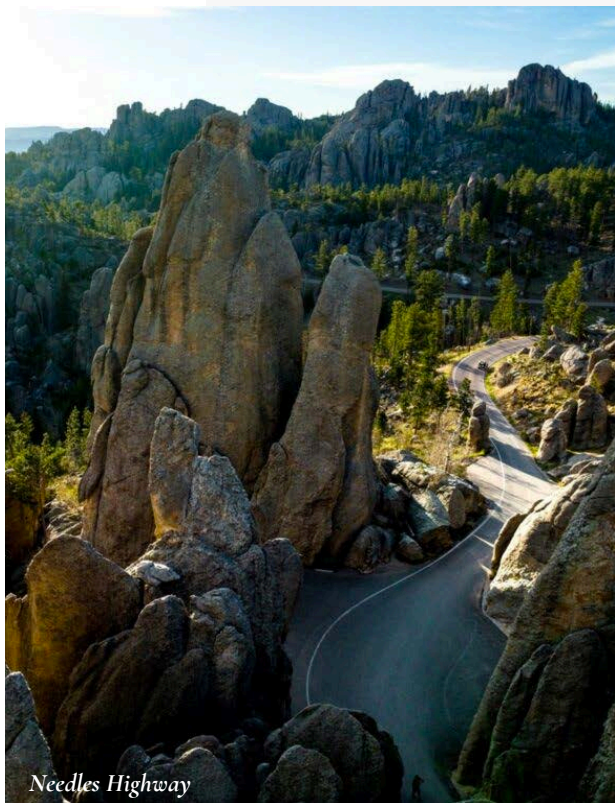
Mt Rushmore



Mt Rushmore



Needles Highway Tunnel



Needles Highway

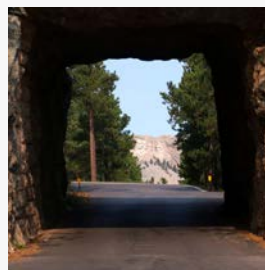
Day 4: Crazy Horse, Sylvan Lake & Needles Highway (approx. 105 km)

Check out of Rapid City this morning and travel deeper into the Black Hills to the extraordinary Crazy Horse Memorial. Explore the visitor complex and depending on availability, consider the Bus to Base or remarkable Face-to-Face experience for a much closer perspective of the mountain carving. Continue to beautiful Sylvan Lake, surrounded by towering granite formations and forest. Here you will enter Custer State Park and purchase your 7-day entrance licence, currently US\$25 per vehicle, before driving the spectacular Needles Highway. Follow this remarkable road between soaring granite spires and through its famously narrow rock tunnels, including the Needle's Eye Tunnel, taking your time to enjoy the scenery along the way. Continue through Custer State Park to historic State Game Lodge, your home for tonight. Park the car, settle in and enjoy dinner at the lodge, making the most of your evening surrounded by the beautiful Black Hills scenery.

Overnight: Custer State Park - State Game Lodge



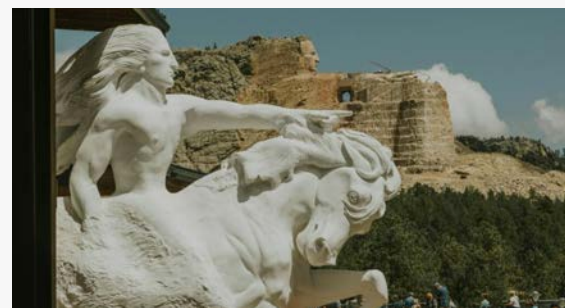
Sylvan Lake in Custer Park



Needles Highway tunnel showing Mt Rushmore in the distance

Key Highlights:

Crazy Horse Memorial / Face-to-Face Mountain Experience / Sylvan Lake / Needles Highway / Needle's Eye Tunnel / Custer State Park



Crazy Horse Memorial

Day 5: Custer State Park & Wild West Deadwood (approx. 115 km)

Wake up in the heart of Custer State Park and join a Buffalo Safari Jeep Tour, heading off-road with a guide in search of the park's famous bison, pronghorn and other wildlife. Afterwards, travel north through the Black Hills, passing through Hill City before continuing towards historic Deadwood. Arrive with time to explore Main Street and visit Mount Moriah Cemetery, the final resting place of Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane. If time allows, visit the Adams Museum for more of Deadwood's colourful gold-rush and frontier story. Tonight, enjoy the town after many of the day visitors have departed - perhaps dinner at Legends Steakhouse followed by a drink at historic Saloon No. 10. Staying overnight gives you time to experience Deadwood's Old West atmosphere rather than simply making it another sightseeing stop.

Overnight: Deadwood - Holiday Inn Resort Deadwood Mountain Grand or similar

Key Highlights:

Custer State Park / Buffalo Safari Jeep Tour // Hill City / Deadwood / Mount Moriah Cemetery



Deadwood



Saloon No 10



Deadwood Aerial



Buffalo Safari Jeep Tour

Day 6: Spearfish Canyon, Devils Tower & Into Wyoming (approx. 410 km)

Today is the longest driving day of your journey, but also one filled with some memorable scenery and stops. Leave Deadwood this morning and travel into beautiful **Spearfish Canyon**, following the scenic byway between towering limestone cliffs and forest. Stop at **Bridal Veil Falls** before continuing through Spearfish and crossing into Wyoming. Your next stop is **Devils Tower National Monument**; the extraordinary rock formation famously featured in Steven Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. Rising dramatically from the surrounding prairie, it is one of the West's most recognisable natural landmarks. Explore the visitor area or walk part of the trail around its base before continuing west to **Sheridan**. Arrive with time to wander historic Main Street and visit **King's Saddlery & Museum**, celebrating Sheridan's cowboy heritage. Tonight, enjoy dinner downtown before perhaps calling into the legendary **Mint Bar**, a Sheridan institution since 1907.

Overnight: Sheridan - Sheridan Inn, BW Signature Collection or similar



Spearfish Canyon

Key Highlights:

Spearfish Canyon / Bridal Veil Falls / Spearfish / Devils Tower / Sheridan / King's Saddlery & Museum / Mint Bar



Devil's Tower National Monument



Bridal Veil Falls

Day 7: Cross the Bighorn Mountains to Cody (approx. 245 km)

Today the road itself becomes one of the highlights as you cross the spectacular **Bighorn Mountains** towards Cody. Follow the **Bighorn Scenic Byway** through forests, alpine meadows and magnificent mountain scenery, stopping at viewpoints as the road climbs across the range. Continue through **Shell Canyon** and stop at **Shell Falls** before descending towards the wide-open landscapes of the **Bighorn Basin**. Arrive in Cody this afternoon, the town founded by legendary showman William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody and one of Wyoming’s great centres of Western heritage. After checking in to hotel, wander through downtown and get your first taste of the town’s unmistakable cowboy character. Enjoy dinner at a Western-style restaurant or saloon before settling in for the evening. Tomorrow is devoted entirely to Cody, allowing plenty of time to explore its museums, fascinating frontier history and living rodeo traditions.

Overnight: Cody - The Cody Hotel or similar

Key Highlights:

Bighorn Mountains / Bighorn Scenic Byway / Shell Canyon / Shell Falls / Bighorn Basin / Cody



Shell Canyon & Shell Falls



Bighorn Mountains



Buffalo Bill Center of the West

Day 8: Buffalo Bill & The Old West

Spend today discovering Cody and the colourful characters and stories of the American West. Begin at the outstanding **Buffalo Bill Center of the West**, a complex of five museums exploring Buffalo Bill Cody, Plains Indian culture, Western art, natural history and the wider Yellowstone region. Allow plenty of time here before visiting **Old Trail Town**, where historic frontier buildings have been relocated and preserved to recreate a settlement from the Old West. Later, enjoy some free time exploring downtown Cody, browsing its shops and galleries or simply soaking up the town's Western atmosphere. If travelling between June and August, tonight experience the Cody Nite Rodeo, where barrel racing, bronc riding, bull riding and other traditional rodeo events provide a fitting finale to your day in one of America's great cowboy towns. Not available during Cody Stampede Week - check with Travel USA for dates.

Overnight: Cody - The Cody Hotel or similar

Key Highlights:

Buffalo Bill Center of the West / Old Trail Town / Downtown Cody / Cody Nite

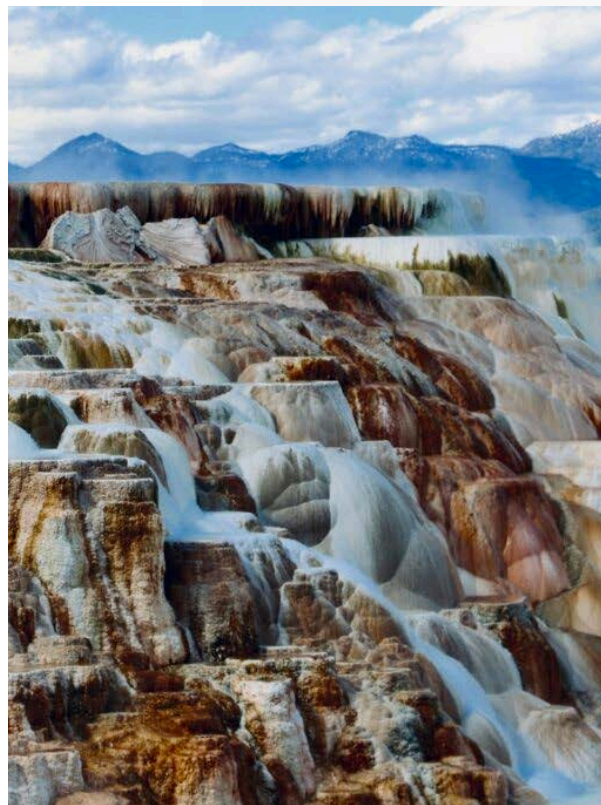
Rodeo - June to August



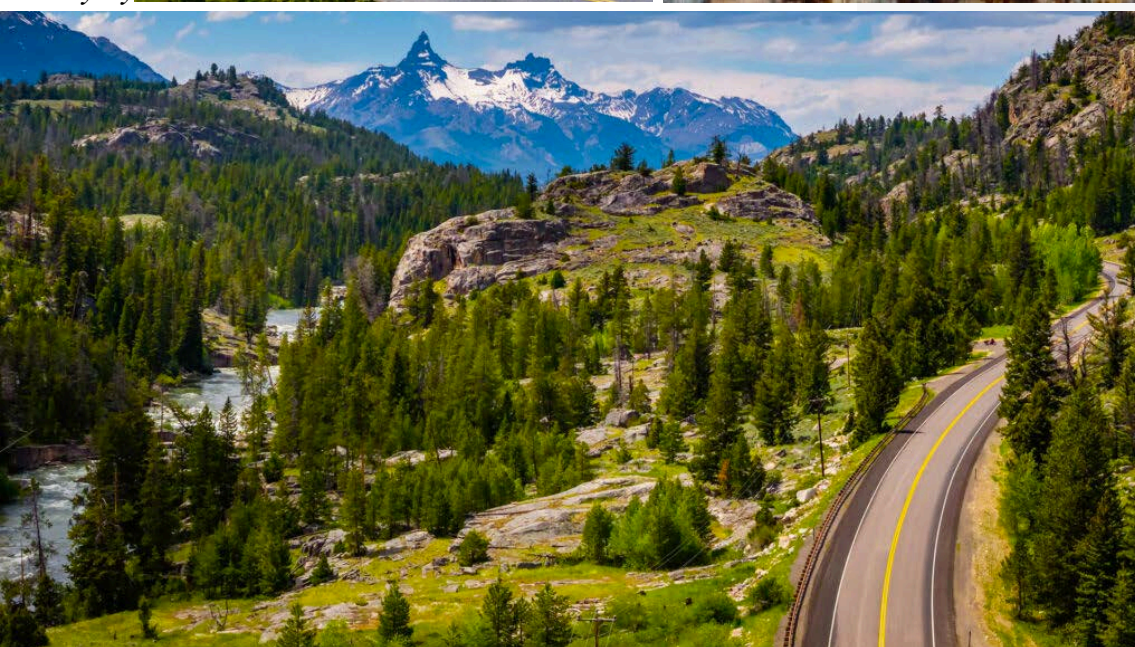
Old Trail Town, Cody



Chief Joseph Scenic Byway



Mammoth Hot Springs



Chief Joseph Scenic Byway

Day 9: Chief Joseph Scenic Byway to Yellowstone (approx. 215 km)

Leave Cody behind for one of the most memorable driving days of your journey. Follow the spectacular Chief Joseph Scenic Byway through the Absaroka Mountains and Shoshone National Forest, climbing through mountain passes and stopping at sweeping viewpoints along the way. Continue towards Cooke City before entering the extraordinary wilderness of Yellowstone National Park through its quieter Northeast Entrance. From here, follow Soda Butte Creek towards the vast Lamar Valley, one of Yellowstone's great wildlife landscapes. Slow down, use the roadside pullouts and keep watch for bison, elk, pronghorn and other wildlife as you travel deeper into America's first national park. Continue through Yellowstone's magnificent Northern Range and past Mammoth Hot Springs before exiting through the North Entrance to Gardiner, Montana, a small gateway town immediately outside the park and your comfortable base for the next two nights.

Overnight: Gardiner - Roosevelt Hotel Yellowstone or similar

Key Highlights:

Chief Joseph Scenic Byway / Cooke City / Yellowstone Northeast Entrance / Lamar Valley / Gardiner



Lamar Valley

Day 10: Explore Lamar Valley & Northern Yellowstone (approx. 150 km)

Head out early and return to Lamar Valley, when wildlife can be particularly active. Take your time at roadside pullouts and enjoy Yellowstone's vast Northern Range. Continue through the Tower-Roosevelt area before heading west towards Mammoth Hot Springs, where steaming thermal water has created extraordinary terraces of white, cream and orange mineral deposits. Explore the boardwalks before discovering the historic Mammoth district and nearby Fort Yellowstone. Northern Yellowstone provides a completely different experience from the geyser country you will encounter later, with wide valleys, mountain scenery and wildlife very much at the centre of the day. Return to Gardiner later this afternoon, where you can park the car, relax and enjoy dinner in town.

N.B. For wildlife enthusiasts, an optional guided Lamar Valley wildlife tour can be arranged, with an expert guide and spotting scopes providing the opportunity to discover more of Yellowstone's remarkable wildlife. Please check with Travel USA for more details ...

Gardiner - Roosevelt Hotel Yellowstone or similar



Elk in Lamar Valley

Key Highlights:

Lamar Valley / Wildlife Viewing / Mammoth Hot Springs / Fort Yellowstone / Gardiner



Mammoth Springs



Bison a common sight in Yellowstone

Day 11: Through the Heart of Yellowstone (approx. 185 km)

Leave Gardiner this morning and journey south through the heart of Yellowstone. Your major destination is the spectacular **Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone**, where the Yellowstone River plunges through a colourful canyon in a succession of waterfalls. Stop at several viewpoints, including the classic panorama from **Artist Point** towards Lower Falls. Continue through wildlife-rich **Hayden Valley**, watching for bison and other animals along the way, before reaching **Yellowstone Lake**, one of North America's largest high-elevation lakes. There is no need to rush - Yellowstone's distances are considerable and unexpected wildlife sightings provide the best reasons to stop. Continue to **Old Faithful**, where you'll spend the next two nights in a rustic Frontier Cabin with private facilities, trading some hotel luxuries for the unforgettable experience of staying right in the heart of Yellowstone. Tonight, choose from several dining options in the Old Faithful area, all within easy reach.

Overnight: Yellowstone National Park - Old Faithful Lodge, Frontier Cabin

Key Highlights:

Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone / Lower Falls / Artist Point / Hayden Valley / Yellowstone Lake / Old Faithful



Old Faithful



*Yellowstone
Lower Falls*



Yellowstone Lake



The Grand Canyon of Yellowstone & Artist Point



Geyser Basin



Old Faithful



Grand Prismatic Spring Overlook

Day 12: Geysers, Hot Springs & Grand Prismatic

Today is focused on the geothermal wonders that make Yellowstone unlike anywhere else on Earth. With your cabin in the Old Faithful area, begin at the Upper Geyser Basin, watching Old Faithful erupt before following boardwalks past steaming vents, colourful hot springs and active geysers, including Castle Geyser and Grand Geyser. Continue to Midway Geyser Basin and Grand Prismatic Spring, Yellowstone's largest hot spring and one of the park's most recognisable sights. Walk to the Grand Prismatic overlook for a perspective from above and depending on timing, explore other geothermal areas nearby. Return to Old Faithful later, perhaps catching another eruption after day visitors have departed. Tonight, choose from several dining options nearby, perhaps enjoying dinner at the historic Old Faithful Inn Dining Room before settling into your Frontier Cabin for a second night inside the park. Tomorrow, you'll continue south towards Grand Teton National Park.

Yellowstone National Park - Old Faithful Lodge, Frontier Cabin

Key Highlights:

Old Faithful / Upper Geyser Basin / Grand Prismatic Spring / Midway Geyser Basin / Yellowstone Geothermal Features



Castle Geyser

Day 13: Yellowstone to Grand Teton & Jackson Hole (approx. 160 km)

Leave Yellowstone this morning and travel south towards magnificent Grand Teton National Park, where the landscape changes dramatically as the jagged Teton Range rises almost directly from the valley floor. Stop around West Thumb or Yellowstone Lake if there is anything you missed yesterday before continuing through Yellowstone's South Entrance. Enter the Grand Tetons and make the journey to Jackson part of the sightseeing, stopping around Jackson Lake and other viewpoints as the mountains increasingly dominate the horizon. There is no need to rush today - you have two full days ahead to explore the park properly. Continue south to Jackson, in the heart of Jackson Hole, check into your hotel for three nights. Spend the remainder of the afternoon exploring the Town Square, its famous antler arches, galleries, shops and unmistakable Western atmosphere before enjoying dinner at either Snake River Grill or the Silver Dollar Bar & Grill..".

Overnight: Jackson Hole - Cowboy Village Resort or similar

Key Highlights:

Yellowstone South Entrance / Grand Teton National Park / Jackson Lake / Teton Range / Jackson Hole / Town Square



Famous Jackson Cowboy Bar



Jackson Township



Grand Teton National Park



Jackson Hole Lake



Snake River Overlook

Key Highlights:

*Craig Thomas Discovery & Visitor Center / Teton Park Road /
Oxbow Bend / Snake River Overlook / Mormon Row / T.A.
Moulton Barn / Wildlife*

Day 14: The Grand Teton Scenic Loop (approx. 150 km)

Devote today to the classic landscapes and viewpoints of Grand Teton National Park. Begin at the Craig Thomas Discovery & Visitor Center for an introduction to the park before following Teton Park Road beneath the soaring mountain range. Stop at Oxbow Bend, where Mount Moran rises beyond a broad bend in the Snake River, and continue to famous Snake River Overlook. Visit Mormon Row Historic District and the much-photographed T.A. Moulton Barn, where historic homesteads sit beneath the Tetons. Take your time at other viewpoints and keep watch for moose, elk, bison and pronghorn throughout the day. With another full day available tomorrow, there is no need to rush between stops. Return to Jackson later this afternoon with the evening free to enjoy the town's restaurants, bars and relaxed Western atmosphere.

Overnight: Jackson Hole - Cowboy Village Resort or similar



Craig Thomas Discovery & Visitor Center



Oxbow Bend Grand Tetons

T.A. Moulton Barn



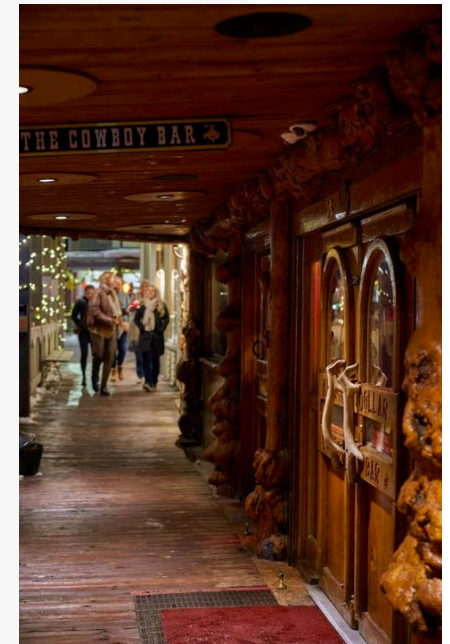
Day 15: Jenny Lake & Jackson Hole (approx. 65 km)

Your second full day in Grand Teton is deliberately more relaxed. Head into the park this morning and spend time around beautiful **Jenny Lake**, surrounded by forest and some of the most dramatic peaks in the Teton Range. Walk a section of the lakeshore trail or take the seasonal shuttle boat across the lake, with the option to continue on foot to **Hidden Falls** and **Inspiration Point**. Alternatively, experience another side of the Tetons with horse riding, kayaking or a guided Snake River whitewater rafting adventure. Return to Jackson later with plenty of time for a final wander through its galleries and shops. Tonight, celebrate your last evening in Jackson Hole with dinner downtown and perhaps a drink at the famous **Million Dollar Cowboy Bar**, complete with saddle bar stools, live music and plenty of Western character.

Overnight: Jackson Hole - Cowboy Village Resort or similar

Key Highlights:

*Jenny Lake / Hidden Falls / Inspiration Point /
Optional - Horse Riding, Kayaking & Snake River
Rafting / Jackson / Million Dollar Cowboy Bar*



Million Dollar Cowboy Bar



Day 16: Jackson Hole to Idaho Falls (approx. 145 km)

Enjoy an early breakfast before setting off on one final scenic drive through the American West. Cross spectacular **Teton Pass** before descending into Idaho's beautiful **Teton Valley**, with the Teton Range providing a magnificent backdrop. Continue through eastern Idaho as the landscape gradually opens out towards Idaho Falls. Arrive at **Idaho Falls Regional Airport** around midday, allowing plenty of time to return your rental car and check in for your onward flight. It's a fitting finale – one last mountain pass, one last stretch of open road and a final glimpse of the Tetons before your **America's Great Frontier** adventure comes to an end.

Extend Your Stay – Spring Creek Ranch

Not ready to leave Wyoming? Extend your journey at Spring Creek Ranch, spectacularly positioned above Jackson with magnificent views towards the Teton Range. Slow the pace, enjoy the ranch-resort atmosphere and choose from seasonal experiences including horse riding, while remaining close to Jackson and Grand Teton National Park. Ask Travel USA about adding **Spring Creek Ranch** to your journey ...



Spring Creek Ranch



Your Journey, Your Way

This itinerary is a suggested journey through South Dakota and Wyoming, combining spectacular national parks, legendary scenic roads, wildlife and the history and culture of the American West. It is fully customisable to suit your travel style, interests and pace - whether spending longer exploring Yellowstone and Grand Teton, adding more time in the Black Hills or including additional experiences along the way. With Travel USA, every journey can be tailored from scratch, with flexibility around accommodation, sightseeing, length of stay and travel arrangements to suit individual preferences, budgets and travel goals throughout.

Best Time to Travel

America's Great Frontier has been specifically designed for travel from **June to September**, when the scenic roads, national parks and mountain landscapes of South Dakota and Wyoming are at their most accessible. June brings longer days and greener landscapes, while July and August offer warmer weather and the full summer atmosphere, including Cody's famous nightly rodeo. September brings cooler temperatures, fewer visitors and the beginnings of autumn colour. If you are considering travelling outside these months, contact Travel USA and we can advise on seasonal conditions and suitable itinerary options.

Accommodation

Travel USA has carefully selected quality, well-located accommodation throughout your journey, combining comfort, character and locations that work particularly well with the itinerary. From historic hotels in Rapid City and Sheridan to a lodge in Custer State Park and comfortable bases in Cody, Gardiner and Jackson Hole, each has been chosen to complement the places you are visiting. As with every Travel USA itinerary, accommodation can be customised to suit individual preferences, travel style and budget.

***N.B.** For your two nights at Old Faithful, we have selected a rustic Frontier Cabin with private bathroom facilities, allowing you to stay in the heart of Yellowstone National Park with its famous geysers and geothermal landscapes virtually on your doorstep. If you prefer a higher standard of accommodation for these two nights, upgraded lodge and hotel options at Old Faithful can also be quoted.*

What's Included?

- 16-day Alamo SUV rental
- 3 nights' accommodation in Rapid City
- America the Beautiful Non-Resident Annual Pass - covering entrance fees to Badlands, Devils Tower, Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks
- Admission to Crazy Horse Memorial
- 1 night's accommodation at State Game Lodge, Custer State Park
- Buffalo Safari Jeep Tour in Custer State Park
- 1 night's accommodation in Deadwood
- 1 night's accommodation in Sheridan
- 2 nights' accommodation in Cody
- Admission to the Buffalo Bill Center of the West
- Cody Nite Rodeo admission during the summer rodeo season (Jun - Aug)
- 2 nights' accommodation in Gardiner, immediately outside Yellowstone's North Entrance
- 2 nights' accommodation in a Frontier Cabin with private facilities at Old Faithful Lodge, Yellowstone National Park
- 3 nights' accommodation in Jackson Hole
- Travel USA Planning Assistance

Pricing:

All of our pricing is based on dynamic rates meaning we will provide you with the best of the day at the time of booking. Our suggested itinerary has been created using fully refundable rates. Final pricing will depend on factors like month of travel, how early you book, availability and whether you choose non-refundable or fully refundable rates.

NZ\$ pricing for our 16 day / 15 night package

- From \$6,725 - \$7,325 pp depending on the month of travel

Terms & Conditions apply - [CLICK HERE](#) or go to www.travelusa.co.nz for more details

N.B. This package has been designed and priced for **travel from June to September**. If you are interested in travelling outside of these months, please contact Travel USA and we can advise on seasonal conditions, road access and the best itinerary options for your preferred travel dates.

This is a suggested itinerary based on our recommendations. There are no fixed departure dates or schedules so you can customise the itinerary to suit your personal preferences and needs. Contact us with your proposed dates and we will create a personalised travel package just for you.

