

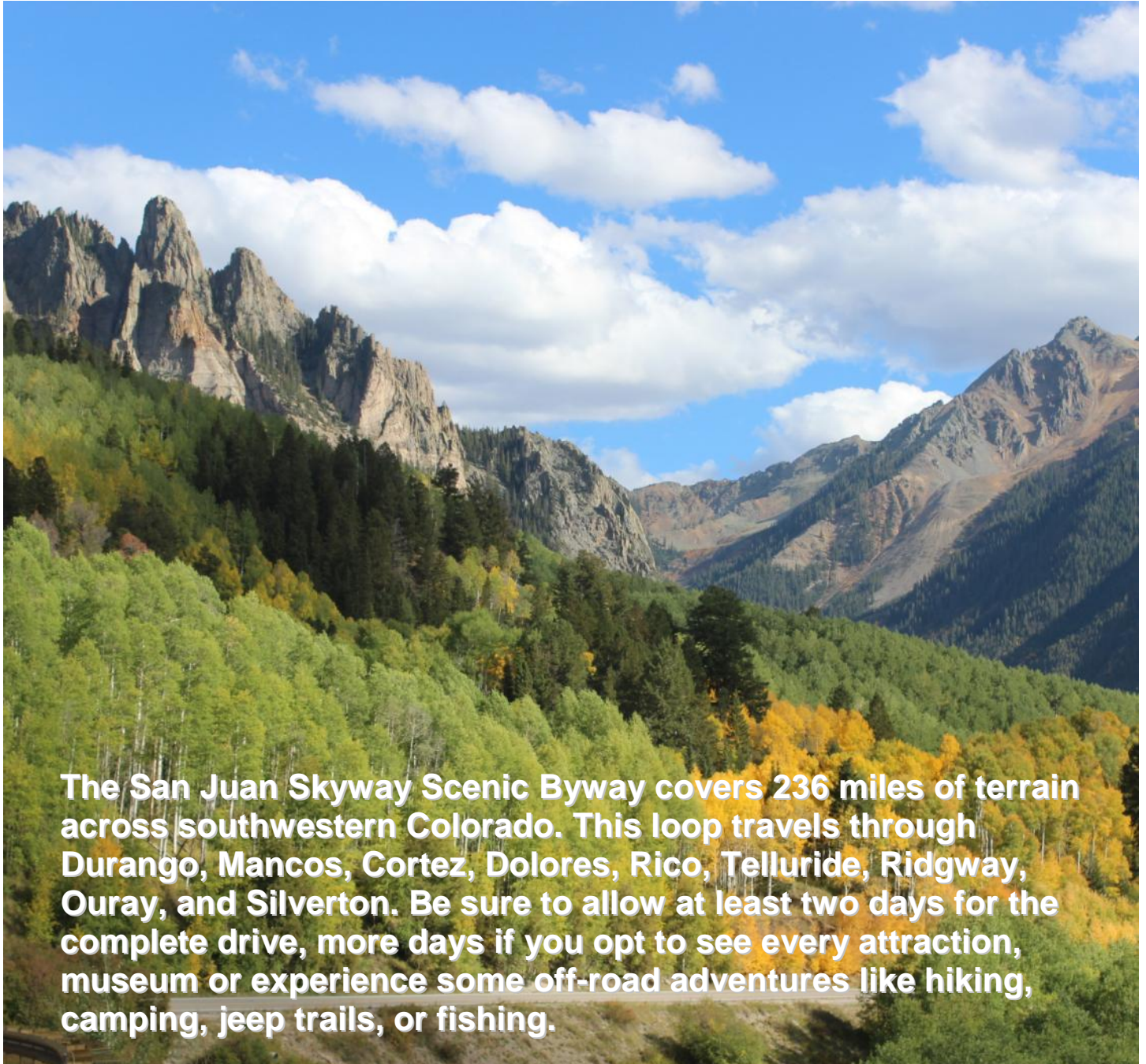


[www.aztecnm.com](http://www.aztecnm.com)

New Mexico, USA

  @CityofAztec

## San Juan Skyway Scenic Byway



The San Juan Skyway Scenic Byway covers 236 miles of terrain across southwestern Colorado. This loop travels through Durango, Mancos, Cortez, Dolores, Rico, Telluride, Ridgway, Ouray, and Silverton. Be sure to allow at least two days for the complete drive, more days if you opt to see every attraction, museum or experience some off-road adventures like hiking, camping, jeep trails, or fishing.

## Great Road Trips Series

110 N. Ash Ave ~ Aztec, NM 87410 ~ (505) 334-9551

## Durango

Durango has endless recreational opportunities, a rich history, and countless stories to tell. From mountain biking, hiking, rafting the Animas River, scenic train ride, skiing, and awe-inspiring scenery there are endless ways to reinvigorate, rejuvenate, or just plain relax.

### 1. La Plata Canyon

On your drive between Durango and Mancos, there is La Plata Canyon Recreation Area. This canyon is a popular destination for locals. Several campgrounds, numerous hikes and great opportunities for photography abound. The gravel/dirt road takes one up to Kennebec Pass whereby several trail systems converge and an opportunity to hike to Taylor Lake is a must during the summer when flowers are blooming. Four wheel drive with high clearance is recommended if one intends to make it to the Kennebec Pass. The drive is approximately 14 miles (45-60 minutes) from U.S. 160 to Kennebec Pass parking lot, allow 4-6 hours if hiking is involved.



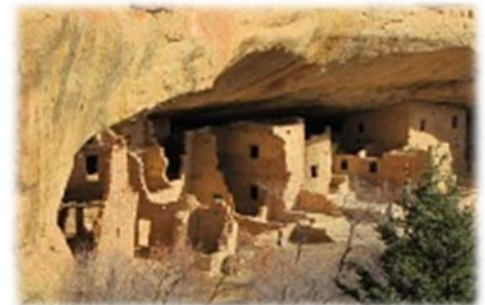
## Mancos

Mancos is where the west still lives. This is Louis L'Amour country, King of the Western Novel, where you can head out with one of the local outfitters and ride the trails to see the backcountry. Explore the mysteries of the people who lived here, farmed here, and built the magnificent sandstone structures of Mesa Verde and Hovenweep.

### 2. Mesa Verde National Park

Between Mancos and Cortez is Mesa Verde National Park, a World Heritage Site. This is a must see destination if you want to see how Ancestral Pueblo peoples lived among the cliff dwellings from 600-1300 A.D. These sites are some of the most notable and best preserved in the United States. Amenities include ranger-led tours, numerous trails for the avid hiker, lodging, camping, restaurants, museum, and a recently opened Visitor and Research Center.

[www.nps.gov/meve](http://www.nps.gov/meve)



## Cortez

Many consider Cortez the cultural center of Mesa Verde Country. Strong agricultural traditions and Native American heritage characterize this town, located in the valley that is shadowed by Mesa Verde. Ancient cliff dwellings, cowboys and farms mingle harmoniously below the surrounding mountains.

### Cortez Cultural Center

25 N. Market St

(970) 565-1151

[cortezculturalcenter.org](http://cortezculturalcenter.org)

### Crow Canyon Archaeological Center

23390 Road K

(800) 422-8975

[www.crowcanyon.org](http://www.crowcanyon.org)



## Dolores

Dolores is a must-stop for anyone who is nearby. A wonderful small town located in a canyon with the beautiful Dolores River cutting along one side and rock cliffs on the other. There are countless opportunities for biking, hiking, fishing, hunting, exploring ancient ruins, white water rafting and much more.

### Canyons of the Ancients Visitor Center and Museum

Just northwest of Dolores is the Canyons of the Ancients Visitor Center and Museum (formerly known as the Anasazi Heritage Center). It is a museum that features permanent and special exhibits, archaeological site information, educational resources for teachers and a large research collection from various archaeological projects in southwest Colorado. It is also an ideal starting point for planning visits to the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument. They have maps, guidebooks, and current information about trail and road conditions within the National Monument.

[www.blm.gov/learn/interpretive-centers/CANM-visitor-center-museum](http://www.blm.gov/learn/interpretive-centers/CANM-visitor-center-museum)



## Rico

Rico has endless opportunities to enjoy mother nature. Backpack in the Lizard Head Wilderness, ride mountain bikes on the numerous Forest Service roads, fish the Dolores River or any of its tributaries. Ski cross-country along the river, snowboard in the endless backcountry, or snowshoe anywhere your heart desires. Rico is a prime home-base for hunting elk, deer, and bear.

### Rico Historical Museum

15 S. Glasgow Ave.



## CO 145

In between Rico and Telluride are a number of locations to pull off of Colorado Highway 145 for photo opportunities. Popular photographs include Lizard Head, Ophir Needles, and Yellow Mountain. In addition, there are numerous Forest Service Roads to access hiking and off-road adventures into the San Juan Mountains.



Trout Lake with Yellow Mountain and Bald Mountain in background.

## Telluride / Mountain Village

A visit to Telluride and neighboring Mountain Village will be unforgettable whether you were drawn there by the intellectual allure of its arts community or boundless summer or winter recreation. Telluride and Mountain Village offer a mega outdoor playground for camping, biking, hiking, fishing, jeeping, skiing, climbing, snowmobiling, and many other outdoor recreations.

### Telluride Historical Museum

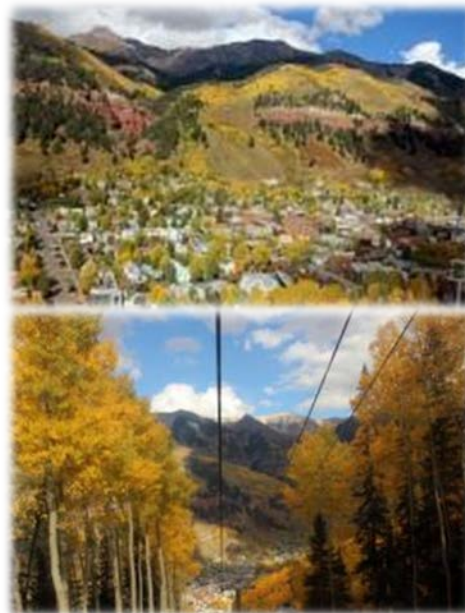
201 W. Gregory Ave.

(970) 728-3344

[www.telluridemuseum.org](http://www.telluridemuseum.org)

### Other Key Attractions

- Bridal Falls
- Historic Downtown
- Hiking & Mountain Bike Trails (over 2 dozen of various difficulty)
- The Gondola (Free to all)



## Ridgway

Ridgway is nestled in the picturesque Uncompaghre Valley and surrounded by the majestic snow capped peaks of the Cimarron and San Juan mountains. The town was founded in 1890 as the headquarters of the world famous Rio Grande Southern narrow gauge railroad serving the area's rich silver and gold mines, ranches and farms. Ridgway is the perfect town to enjoy and explore a broad spectrum of outdoor activities and year-round cultural events or museums.

### Ouray County Ranch History Museum

321 Sherman Street

(970) 316-1085

<http://ocrhm.org>

### Ridgway Railroad Museum

[www.ridgwayrailroadmuseum.org](http://www.ridgwayrailroadmuseum.org)



## Ouray

Ouray nicknamed the "Switzerland of America," has been a world-famous destination for more than 100 years. Ouray features a heavenly hot springs, Box Canyon Falls, and a super-popular July 4th celebration.

### Other Key Attractions

- Box Canyon Falls  
(970) 325-7080
- Hot Springs (Five Local Pools)
- Ouray Alchemist Pharmaceutical Museum  
533 Main Street  
(970) 325-4003  
<http://ourayalchemist.com>
- Ouray County Historical Society Museum  
420 6<sup>th</sup> Ave  
(970) 325-4576  
[www.ouraycountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.ouraycountyhistoricalsociety.org)



### Summer Activities

Explore the mountains on foot, mountain biking, horseback, four-wheel drive, or climb the cliffs. Fly fishing in the local rivers, creeks, and mountain lakes.

### Winter Activities

Back-country skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling.

## Silverton

Silverton is a National Historic Landmark, home to Animas Forks and the Alpine Loop Scenic Byway, and the summer destination for the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad train ride.

Silverton is a recreational paradise in winter for snowmobiling, skiing, sledding, ice skating, ice climbing, and ice fishing, and in the summer for rafting, ATV and OHV riding, backcountry touring, fishing, hiking, biking, rafting, horseback riding, hunting, and camping.

### Historical Heritage

- San Juan County Historical Society  
1557 Greene St  
(970) 387-5838  
[www.sanjuancountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.sanjuancountyhistoricalsociety.org)
- Old Hundred Gold Mine Tour  
721 CR 4A  
(800) 872-3009  
[www.minetour.com](http://www.minetour.com)
- Animas Forks Ghost Town  
(Four-wheel drive & high clearance recommended)



## U.S. 550

Along the drive from Ouray to Durango are numerous opportunities for the outdoor enthusiast to hike, bike, or four-wheel in the San Juan Mountains. Many opportunities for photography as well, especially during the fall season with the changing of the Aspen colors.



Look for this symbol as you travel the San Juan Skyway Scenic Byway

### **Road Conditions**

Colorado Department of Transportation

(303) 639-1111

[www.cotrip.org](http://www.cotrip.org)

