



NDP



Xanterra Parks & Resorts®

## Mt. Rushmore to Yellowstone

### Frontier Adventures and Geologic Treasures in Big Sky Country

Marvel at wonders both natural and manmade in the wide frontierland extending from Wyoming to South Dakota. See the famed Mt. Rushmore. Watch the creation of the Crazy Horse Memorial now in progress. Walk in the footsteps of Wild Bill Hickok, Calamity Jane, Buffalo Bill...and grizzlies, mammoths and dinosaurs, to boot! View geysers and rock formations of Yellowstone, discover the moving history

of Heart Mountain Internment Camp, and more in this once-in-a-lifetime survey of some of America's most storied western settings and famous National Parks.

**9 Days • 8 Nights • 20 Meals**

Depart/Return: Rapid City, SD

[CountryTravelDiscoveries.com/MRY](http://CountryTravelDiscoveries.com/MRY)

**Day 1—Rapid City** Welcome to Rapid City. Join your fellow travelers for a welcome reception at the hotel. *Accommodations:* Best Western Ramkota, Rapid City, SD. Welcome Reception.

**Day 2—Badlands National Park/Wall Drug/Mt. Rushmore**

This morning, you'll head to Badlands National Park where you will see the spellbinding natural spires, buttes and pinnacles of this rugged land. Afterward, you'll make a fun side trip to Wall Drug, the world's most famous drugstore. You'll have time to relax at the hotel and enjoy a delicious dinner before the highlight of the evening, Mount Rushmore National Memorial in the Black Hills. Visitors from around the world draw inspiration from the colossal portraits of four outstanding presidents of the United States: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt. Gutzon Borglum carved his gigantic Shrine of Democracy Sculpture into ancient granite high on the southeast face of Mount Rushmore "in commemoration of the foundation, preservation, and continental expansion of the United States." You close the day watching the spectacular evening lighting ceremony at Mt. Rushmore. *Accommodations:* Best Western Ramkota, Rapid City, SD. *Meals:* B, L, D.

**Day 3—Gillette/Buffalo** Visit a working surface mine operation on a guided tour in Gillette, which spawned several small coal mines around 1909. Currently there are 14 mines in Campbell

County, and Wyoming coal is shipped to 36 states. You'll also learn about the discovery of oil in the Gillette area in 1948, and the boom that followed in the 1960s and 1970s. When you step through the front door of the Historic Occidental Hotel in Buffalo for lunch, you are truly stepping back into the Old West. In fact, you will walk in the footsteps of many famous people of the Old West—Butch Cassidy and the Hole-in-the-Wall Gang, Calamity Jane, Buffalo Bill, Tom Horn, the young Teddy Roosevelt...and many more. Even the bullet holes that you will see in the saloon are originals! Spend the evening in the heart of the Big Horns at Elk View Inn. *Accommodations:* Elk View Inn, Burgess Junction, WY. *Meals:* B, L, D.

**Day 4—Dinosaur Tracks/Bighorn Canyon** Today, you'll meet Cliff & Row Manuel, who were exploring the Big Horn Basin in May 1997 with research geologist Dr. Erik P. Kvale, when they came upon the Red Gulch dinosaur tracksite. This site contains literally thousands of rare Middle Jurassic age dinosaur tracks embedded in oolitic limestone. After a delightful lunch with the

townspeople of Shell, we'll continue on to the Bighorn Canyon for a spectacular boat ride on Bighorn Lake. You'll learn about this area from your boat captain while sitting back and taking in the steep canyon walls and beauty of this hidden treasure. Afterwards, we head to Cody. *Accommodations:* Comfort Inn, Cody, WY. *Meals:* B, L.

**Day 5—Yellowstone National Park** We'll spend the day in Yellowstone National Park—America's first national park. See snow-capped mountains, peaceful meadows, geysers, mud pots, hot springs and far-ranging forests. Feel the power of thundering Lower Falls. Marvel at the iconic Old Faithful geyser and the golden walls of Yellowstone's Grand Canyon. Elk and buffalo are common along the roads, and you might spot a bighorn sheep, a gray wolf or even a grizzly bear! An expert guide will be with us the whole day and a specially prepared picnic lunch will complete the experience. *Accommodations:* Comfort Inn, Cody, WY. *Meals:* B, L, D.

**Day 6—Buffalo Bill Center of the West/Heart Mountain/Dan Miller Revue**

Explore Buffalo Bill Center of the West, which houses a collection of museums celebrating the spirit of the American West. This afternoon, visit Heart Mountain just outside of Cody. Opened in August 2011, the 11,000-square-foot interpretive center includes permanent displays and exhibits showcasing how the U.S. government denied basic rights to people of Japanese ancestry following the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941. The exhibits are told from the perspective of the internees and highlight their pre-war lives on the West Coast, forced evacuation and travel to Heart Mountain, where they settled into their barracks and lives as prisoners. This evening enjoy a chuck wagon dinner before the group joins TV personality Dan Miller and his "Empty Saddles Band" at the historic Cody Theater for an evening of music, comedy and poetry featuring Wendy Corr, Ed Cook and Hannah Miller. *Dan's Cowboy Music Revue* has entertained thousands of people from all over the world. *Accommodations:* Comfort Inn, Cody, WY. *Meals:* B, D.



Dan Miller's Cowboy Music Revue

**Day 7—Worland/Ten Sleep/Wright** Travel to Worland and the Washakie Museum. Located in the Big Horn Basin, this area was one of the last settlements in the west. Learn about the challenges the pioneers faced including land conflicts, severe weather and geographic isolation. Next our route takes us

through some amazing geography changes from badlands to the mountains, between Worland and Ten Sleep and over Cloud Peak, the highest point in the Big Horns. Later this afternoon, visit and dine at Durham Ranch, one of the largest bison operations in North America. Owner John Flocchini will provide insight into the family-owned operation and history before we enjoy a tasty dinner of buffalo burgers and all the fixin's. *Accommodations:* Wright Hotel, Wright, WY. *Meals:* B, L, D.

**Day 8—Crazy Horse Memorial/1880's Train/Keystone** En route back to the beautiful Black Hills we stop at Crazy Horse Memorial, the sculptural work-in-progress begun in 1948, then to Hill City for some last-minute souvenir shopping and lunch on your own. Then it's all aboard the 1880 Train for a ride from Hill City to Keystone. Learn how the railroad was instrumental in the Black Hills and the vital role it played in the development of our country. Relax this evening at the K Bar S Lodge just outside of Keystone. You'll enjoy a delicious farewell dinner with your new friends and you'll want to be out on the balcony of the lodge at dusk to see the lighting of Mt. Rushmore one last time. *Accommodations:* K Bar S Lodge, Keystone, SD. *Meals:* B, D.

**Day 9—Black Hills Gold/Ave. Of Presidents/Rapid City** After a hearty breakfast, we'll make a visit to Mt. Rushmore Black Hills Gold. You'll tour the factory to see and learn how this iconic jewelry is made. Discover the ancient process of lost-wax casting and how diamonds are cast in molten gold! Before we say farewell, enjoy a delicious lunch at Botticelli's Ristorante. *Meals:* B, L.



ARS/Jack Dykinga

