

Colorado by Rail



12 Days: August 23 September 3, 2010

This travel package planned and escorted by Clara Hill

When it comes to scenery, Colorado is one of the most beautiful states in the Nation. From the rugged summit of Pikes Peak to the soaring skyscrapers of Denver, come see why the "Centennial State" is often the first choice of vacationers from around the world. This is a most unique journey as we'll enjoy much of this beauty by rail. Come join the fun!



August 23 relax and get to know your fellow travelers as we pick up in our guaranteed departure cities. We will break for lunch near Kansas City and stop for the evening in Abilene, KS.



August 24 after **breakfast**, we cross into **Colorado**. This afternoon we meet our **step-on guide** for a tour of Colorado Springs, including the **U.S. Air Force Academy** and the beautiful **Garden of the Gods**. We settle into our luxurious hotel, where we will stay 3 nights and enjoy a reception each evening. We have a restaurant right in our hotel for your convenience.



August 25 after enjoying a **cooked-to-order breakfast** (each morning of our stay in the Springs) we travel to a quaint little town named for the curative power of the mineral waters, **Manitou Springs**.

"Manitou," a Native American word for "spirit," describes this beautiful mountain community. Eleven named mineral springs throughout town are fed by the snows of Pikes Peak. We board the **Pike's Peak Cog Railway** for a spectacular ride to the top of **Pikes Peak**. Conventional railroads use the friction of wheels on the rails. A cog railroad uses a cog wheel, meshing into a special rack rail to climb much steeper grades than those possible with a standard adhesion railroad. A conventional railroad can only climb grades of 4 to 6%,



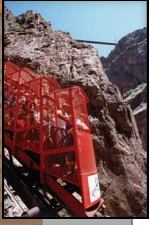
with very short sections of up to 9%. A "rack" railroad can climb grades of up to 48%. Take in the view that inspired Katherine Lee Bates to write "America the Beautiful." You will have time to browse **Old Colorado City** and have lunch in one of the many restaurants. Tonight we'll enjoy **dinner** and entertainment at the **Flying "W" Ranch**, entertaining guests since 1953. It will be a great evening in a picturesque setting with hearty grub, a foot stompin' stage show and lots of cowboy fun.

August 26 following **breakfast** we will meet our **step-on guide** as we start another great day in the mountains. We will stop at the **United States Olympic Training Complex**.

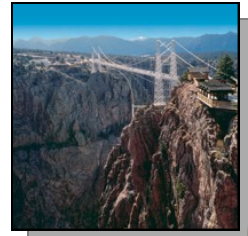
The \$8 million Olympic Visitor Center hosts approximately 140,000 visitors each year and is the primary facility providing the general public with information about the U.S. Olympic Committee, U.S. Olympic Training Centers and the Olympic Movement. The Center includes the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame Rotunda, the U.S. Olympic Store, indoor/outdoor patio eating facilities, a 225-seat auditorium and meeting facilities. It also features numerous changing art exhibitions and other Olympic memorabilia. We will continue with a scenic drive to **Cripple Creek**, an old gold mining town, which once had a population of over 18,000. Today Cripple Creek's 680 residents depend primarily on the tourist dollars to survive. We will help their cause by enjoying a ride through an area of abandoned mines on the **Cripple Creek & Victor Narrow Gauge Railroad**. We'll take time for lunch in Cripple Creek and then enjoy some free time to look around this old mining town. (If you want to try your luck, you'll find opportunities here.) Later we arrive back at our hotel in Colorado Springs for a free evening.



Reservations & Information: 1-877-694-8687 or www.northlandtravel.com



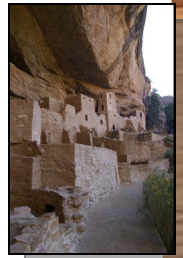
August 27 after **breakfast** and checkout, we travel to the **Royal Gorge**. Enjoy a ride on the **incline railway** to the bottom of the gorge. Construction began in 1930 on this 1,550-foot, 100% grade (a 45-degree angle) railway. We'll also ride the **aerial tram**, 1,178 feet above the Arkansas River. The 35-passenger cabin is suspended on track cables weighing over 7 tons each. We'll also have a chance to walk across the gorge on the "**world's highest suspension bridge**" and take a ride on the **miniature train**. Royal Gorge is a fun stop, not to mention the grandeur of the area. Settle back on your motor coach and enjoy more incredible beauty as we travel through **Poncha Pass** on our way to Alamosa, CO, to spend the night.



August 28 enjoy **breakfast** before departing for another railroading experience as we board the **Cumbres & Toltec Railway** near Antonito, CO. The railroad was originally constructed in 1880 as part of the Rio Grande's San Juan Extension, which served the silver mining district of the San Juan Mountains. The old narrow-gauge coal-burning train takes us through a tunnel, over trestles and provides spectacular views of the rugged **San Juan Mountains**. We will enjoy **lunch** during our train ride, on our way to Chama, NM. Our motor coach will catch up with us there and give us a ride across the **Continental Divide** to Durango, CO, where we stay the next two nights.



August 29 another adventure awaits after **breakfast** as we travel to **Mesa Verde National Park**. Ancestral Puebloans made Mesa Verde their home from about A.D. 550 to 1300. For more than 700 years they and their descendants lived and flourished here. Today, the park contains over 4,000 known archeological sites including cliff dwellings and the mesa top sites of pithouses, pueblos, masonry towers, and farming structures. A **park guide** will take us on an interesting **tour** to experience some of these well preserved sites. Later we return to Durango for our second night in this neat town.



August 30 following **breakfast** our next railroading experience probably conjures up the most romantic images among railroad enthusiasts. We ride through the **San Juan National Forest** aboard the **Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad**. The railroad arrived in Durango in 1881. From its beginning, the railroad was promoted as a scenic route for passenger service although the line was constructed primarily to haul gold and silver mine ores from the San Juan Mountains. It is estimated over \$300 million in precious metals has been transported over this route. **Lunch** will be fun at the old **Bent Elbow in Silverton, CO**. We board our motor coach and travel to Ouray, CO. This little-known community produced a fortune in gold for the Tom Walsh family and allowed daughter Evalyn to purchase the Hope Diamond. Browsing here will be fun before we continue to nearby Montrose, CO, for the night.

August 31 after **breakfast** we travel to Grand Junction for what could very well be the highlight of your railroading experience. We board Amtrak's **California Zephyr** for scenic, 8-hour ride through more of the beautiful **Rocky Mountains**. Amtrak should have us into **Denver** by late evening. Our motor coach will be waiting for us to take us to our hotel just outside of Denver where we stay the next two nights.



September 1 following **breakfast** we tour the "**Mile High City**." Though Denver's roots began as early in 1850, it wasn't until the railroad linked it to the rest of the country that Denver saw its greatest growth. Highlights will include the **State Capitol Building**, **U.S. Mint**, and the **Colorado Railroad Museum**. In the afternoon we head back to the mountains. We check out **Buffalo Bill's Grave** at **Lookout Mountain** and then take a ride on a 1920's steam-powered train – the **Georgetown Loop Railroad**. This is our last train ride on this wonderful "Colorado by Rail" experience. We return to our Denver area hotel for the night.



September 2 after **breakfast** we bid farewell to Colorado as we travel east and into Nebraska. This afternoon we arrive in North Platte, NE, and make a stop at **Bailey Yard**, the Union Pacific's enormous switching station. This massive yard covers 2,850 acres, reaching well beyond the borders of North Platte. Every 24 hours, Bailey Yard handles 10,000 railroad cars. Of those, 3,000 are sorted in the yard's eastward and westward yards. We



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will view the action from a platform with a **guide** giving us history and information. We then continue into the city and experience our "farewell" evening with a **Ride with the Wild Bunch**. Enjoy **dinner and rollicking entertainment**. We stay in North Platte at a new hotel.

September 3 enjoy **breakfast** before departure. Our final day together should be relaxing, with time to reflect on all our wonderful experiences. We cross the Missouri River, enter Iowa and return to our guaranteed departure cities. **Thanks for joining us!**

Your 12-day Colorado by Rail trip includes: Luxury motor coach transportation, lodging for 11 nights, luggage handling, tickets/admissions to bolded attractions, gratuities to step-on guides, 11 breakfasts, 2 lunches and 2 dinners (meals inclusive of tax and gratuities).

\$2,199 per person, double occupancy

\$2,119 per person with 3 or 4 persons sharing a room with 2 beds

\$2,824 single room accommodations

Reservations: Anytime as long as space is available

Deposit: \$210 per person, due with reservation

Balance due: July 23

Cancel by: July 23 for penalty-free cancellation

Early Booking Discount: \$50 discount per person applied toward final payment if deposit is received by Feb. 8

Peace of Mind protection: 5% of trip cost, due with deposit or **Travel Insurance** is available at a group rate for this travel package. Please contact our office for details.

Guaranteed Departure Cities: Fort Dodge, Webster City, Williams, Ames, Des Moines, Decorah, New Hampton, Waterloo, Marshalltown, Cedar Rapids, Coralville, Newton