

# Southwest Colorado

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## Best Places to Eat

- » Timberline Restaurant (p261)
- » Brown Dog Pizza (p268)
- » The Butcher & The Baker (p267)
- » Secret Stash (p261)

## Best Places to Stay

- » Hotel Columbia (p266)
- » Jersey Jim Lookout Tower (p295)
- » Ruby of Crested Butte (p260)

## Why Go?

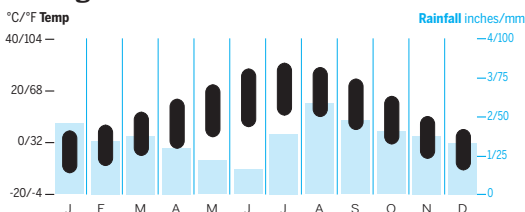
A landscape of shocking diversity, this corner of Colorado is interrupted by jagged canyons and mountain peaks, lush pine forests and barren desert terrain.

Jump in the car for a few hours and you'll feel as if you've traveled across an entire continent – this is a place where you can eat a breakfast burrito at the base of snowy slopes and have a plate of enchiladas for lunch in the bone-dry desert. The furthest regions of Colorado's southwest feel *wild* – wrinkled by arid canyons, punctuated by 14,000ft peaks and capped by gusty high-desert plateaus.

The geological and environmental drama of the area may have also contributed to some of the greatest archaeological sites in the US, with the mysteriously abandoned cliff dwellings of early Native Americans in Mesa Verde National Park.

## When to Go?

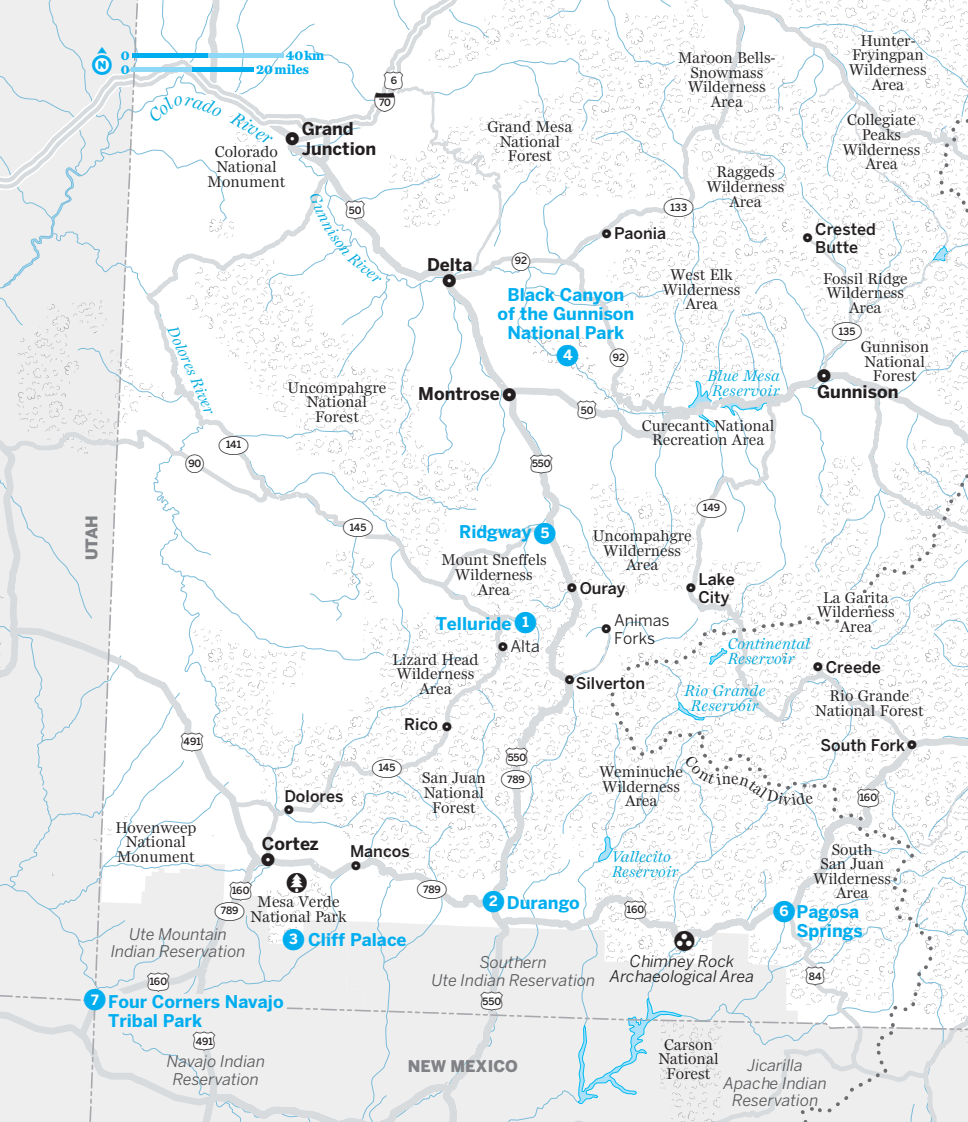
### Durango



**May–August**  
Ideal camping and hiking in the San Juans brings the people.

**September–November**  
Cool high-desert air allows uncrowded visits to two national parks.

**December–April**  
Snow bunnies from near and far make for the hills of Telluride.



## Southwest Colorado Highlights

- 1 Spend the day riding world-class slopes on Colorado's most pristine mountain at the **Telluride Ski Resort** (p264)
- 2 Board the **Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad** (p277) and cruise through jaw-dropping scenery
- 3 Retrace the steps of Ancestral Puebloans at **Cliff Palace** (p292)
- 4 Climb down to the floor of the dizzying **Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park** (p252)
- 5 Saunter up to the bar at the **True Grit Cafe** (p270) where John Wayne drank
- 6 Soak sore muscles after a day of hiking at Pagosa's swish **Springs Resort & Spa** (p281)
- 7 Drive to the point where four states (almost) meet: **Four Corners Navajo Tribal Park** (p300)