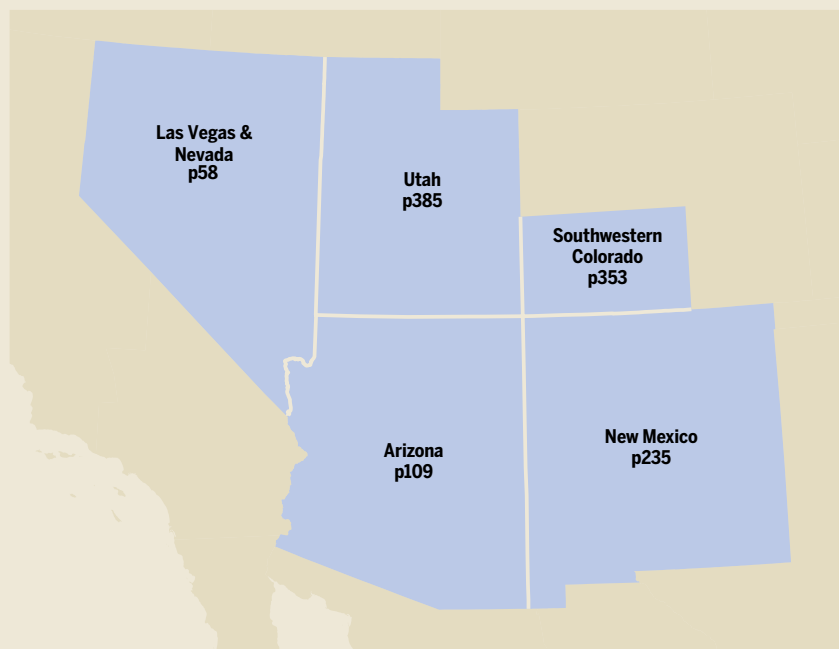




# Southwest USA



THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

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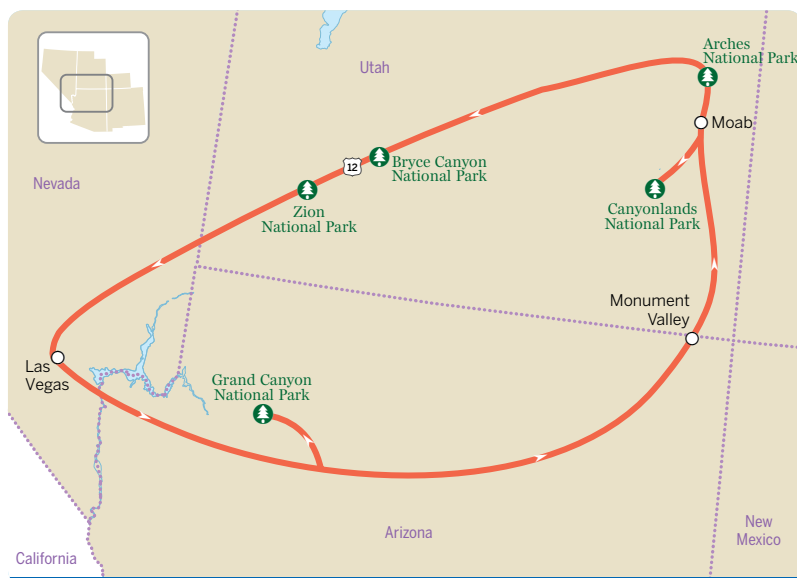
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# Itineraries



2  
WEEKS

## Vegas, Grand Canyon & Southern Utah Loop

Want the biggest bang for your buck, and for your two-week vacation? Drive this scenic loop, which swings past the Southwest's most famous city, canyon and scenery.

Start in **Las Vegas** and dedicate two days to traveling the world on the Strip. When you've soaked up enough decadence, head east to canyon country – **Grand Canyon** country, that is. Spend a couple of days exploring America's most famous park. For a once-in-a-lifetime experience, descend into the South Rim on a mule and spend the night at Phantom Ranch on the canyon floor.

From the Grand Canyon head northeast through **Monument Valley**, with scenery straight out of a Hollywood Western, to the national parks in Utah's southeast corner – they're some of the most visually stunning in the country. Hike the shape-shifting slot canyons of **Canyonlands National Park**, watch the sun set in **Arches National Park**, or mountain-bike sick slickrock outside **Moab**. Then drive Hwy 12, a spectacular stretch of pavement sweeping in **Bryce Canyon National Park**, followed by **Zion National Park** on Hwy 9. Continue west to I-15 and follow it south to Las Vegas.



4  
WEEKS

## Grand Tour

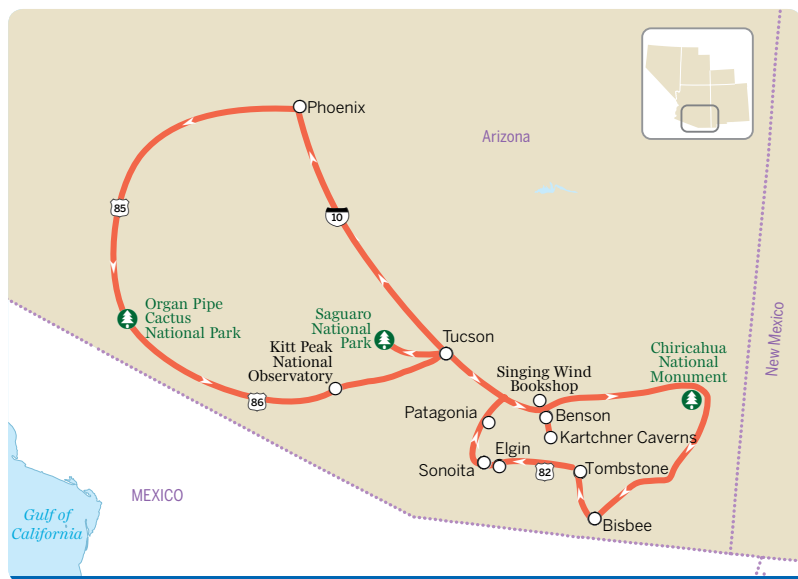
Grab cowboy boots or walking shoes and get ready to ride. This trip covers geographic, historic and scenic highlights. If you're curious and outdoorsy, this trip is for you.

Roll the dice for two days on the **Las Vegas Strip** then cross the new **Mike Callaghan-Pat Tillman Memorial Bridge**. Be sure to ogle **Hoover Dam** as you swoop into Arizona. Next is **Route 66**, which chases trains and Burma-Shave signs as it unfurls between **Kingman** and **Williams**. Regroup in funky **Flagstaff** before venturing into **Grand Canyon National Park**, where a hike is a must-do. After three days, end the week among the red rocks of **Sedona**.

Head south for shabby-chic in **Jerome**. Drive to **Phoenix** for two days of shopping and museums. Next mellow out on 4th Ave, **Tucson**, study cacti at **Saguaro National Park** and fancy yourself a gunslinger in **Tombstone**. End the week in charming **Bisbee**.

Next is New Mexico: sled down sand dunes in **White Sands National Monument**, spend a day exploring caves at **Carlsbad Caverns National Park**, then head to **Roswell** to ponder its UFO mysteries. Spend two days in **Santa Fe**, a foodie haven and art-fiend magnet. Atomic-age secrets are revealed at **Los Alamos**, followed by laid-back musings of hippies and ski bums just north in **Taos**. Drive the luscious **Enchanted Circle** then chill with a microbrew and bike ride in **Durango**. Ponder the past inside cliff dwellings at **Mesa Verde National Park**, then be equally amazed by the towering red buttes at **Monument Valley**.

For the most stunning wilderness in the US, spend your last week in Utah's national parks. Use **Moab** as a base to visit **Canyonlands National Park** and **Arches National Park**. From Moab follow Hwy 12 back to Las Vegas, stopping at **Capitol Reef National Park**, **Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument**, the spires of **Bryce Canyon National Park** and the sheer, red-rock walls at **Zion National Park**.



## Southern Arizona

Explore the Old West and the New West on this crazy-eight loop that swings past legendary mining towns, art galleries and pretty wineries. There's plenty of desert scenery too.

This adventure starts in **Phoenix**, where a multitude of posh spas, top museums and upscale dining and shopping options will have you primed for exploring. Escape the urban crush with a long drive south on Hwy 85 to the lonely but rejuvenating **Organ Pipe Cactus National Park**. Hike, explore and relax for two days. From there, head along Hwy 85 to Hwy 86. Follow this lonely two-lane road east to lofty **Kitt Peak National Observatory**, site of 24 optical telescopes – the largest collection in the world. Take a tour or reserve a spot for nighttime stargazing.

Just northeast, laid-back **Tucson** is a pleasant place to chill out for a day or two. Indie shops line 4th Ave, and Congress St is the place to catch live music. Stop and smell the cacti in **Saguaro National Park** before spending the night in **Benson**, a good launchpad for the pristine **Kartchner Caverns** and the gloriously eclectic **Singing Wind Bookshop**. Wander the odd rock formations at **Chiricahua National Monument** then loop south on Hwys 191 and 181 for eye-catching galleries, great restaurants and an interesting mine tour in **Bisbee**. And you can't drive this far south without swinging by **Tombstone** for a reenactment of the shootout at the OK Corral. From Tombstone, Hwy 82 unfurls across sweeping grasslands, the horizon interrupted by scenic mountain ranges (known in these parts as sky islands).

Enjoy a day of wine-tasting in the villages of **Elgin** and **Sonoita** capped off with a slice of Elvis-inspired pizza in **Patagonia**. Close the loop with a drive west on I-10, swinging back through Tucson to grab a Sonoran dog before the return to Phoenix.





## Four Corners – A Native American Journey

Native American culture and history are in the spotlight on this trip though the Four Corners region, where Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona and Utah meet. Climb into cliff dwellings, buy a kachina (Hopi spirit doll) and drive through the sunset glory of Monument Valley.

Start in **Durango** and spend a day exploring the historic mining town. The next day, ride the narrow-gauge railway to **Silverton** and quaff a beer at a Durango microbrewery on your return. Climb ladders into the haunting ruins at **Mesa Verde National Park** before heading to Arizona, stopping on the way at the revamped **Four Corners Monument** – check out that snazzy new plaza – to snap a cheesy picture with your hands and feet in four different states.

As you head into New Mexico, ogle **Shiprock**, a stunning, ragged red-rock formation. Spend the night at a motel in nearby **Farmington** or enjoy a snooze inside Kokopelli's Cave, a B&B room 70ft underground – complete with hot tub. A dusty, rutted drive leads to the isolated **Chaco Culture National Historical Park**, an amazing architectural sight. Stay near **Window Rock**, the capital of the Navajo Reservation, and be sure to check out the namesake rock. The old-world **Hubbell Trading Post** was the reservation's lifeline when it was established in the 1870s. Detour (65 miles each way) to **Second Mesa**, the heart of the **Hopi Reservation**, where you will find artisans and the Hopi Cultural Center.

Next up? The relatively verdant **Canyon de Chelly National Monument**, an inhabited, cultivated canyon with hogans (traditional home of the Navajo) and sheep herds. Remember to breathe as you approach the otherworldly **Monument Valley**. Drive the 17-mile loop around the towering buttes then spend the night at the View Hotel; you'll want to spend time – a lot of time – gazing at the monuments from your balcony. Finish the trip with a drive north to **Mexican Hat** in Utah – trust us, you can't miss it.



## OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

## OUR WRITERS



### Amy C Balfour

**Coordinating author, Arizona** Amy has hiked, biked, skied and gambled her way across the Southwest, and she can't stop hiking to the depths of the Grand Canyon. Maybe the beer just tastes better at Phantom Ranch. On this trip she enjoyed an inaugural hike to Fort Bowie and finally tackled the lush West Fork Trail in Oak Creek Canyon. Amy has authored or co-authored 25 books for Lonely Planet and has written for *Backpacker*, BBC.com, theknot.com, *Redbook*, *Southern Living*, *Women's Health*, and the *Los Angeles Times* and *Washington Post*.

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### Carolyn McCarthy

**Las Vegas & Nevada, Southwestern Colorado, Utah** Carolyn first reached Dead Horse Point one spring break in a vintage Volkswagen bus that barely made the trip. The Southwest remains a favorite destination. This time, she rafted the Grand Canyon, explored lost canyons of ancient ruins and wore her best gear to tatters. Carolyn has contributed to over 25 Lonely Planet titles, specializing in the American West and Latin America, and has written for National Geographic, Outside, Lonely Planet Magazine and other publications. Join her travels at [www.carolynswildblueyonder.blogspot.com](http://www.carolynswildblueyonder.blogspot.com).

Read more about Carolyn at:  
[lonelyplanet.com/members/carolynmcc](http://lonelyplanet.com/members/carolynmcc)



### Greg Ward

**New Mexico** Since first falling in love with Taos almost 25 years ago, Greg Ward has spent much of the last two decades exploring the deserts of the Southwest. Besides writing several guidebooks to the region, he has amassed copious research for a still-unwritten novel about the first encounters between New Mexico's Pueblo peoples and the earliest Spanish expeditions. His website is [gregward.info](http://gregward.info).

## Contributing Authors

**Jeff Campbell** has been a travel writer for Lonely Planet since 2000. He was the coordinating author of three editions of *USA*, as well as editions of *Southwest USA*, *Zion & Bryce National Parks*, *Hawaii*, *Florida*, and *Mid-Atlantic Trips*, and he's been a contributor on other titles. He wishes that he called the Southwest home, but next best is meeting and writing about those who do. Jeff wrote the Native American Southwest USA chapter.

**David Lukas** is a professional naturalist whose travels and writing take him around the American West and further afield. He has contributed environment and wildlife chapters to about 20 Lonely Planet guides. David's favorite Southwest moment was getting up to watch sunrise on the magnificent hoodoos at Bryce Canyon (don't miss it!). David wrote the Geology chapter.

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