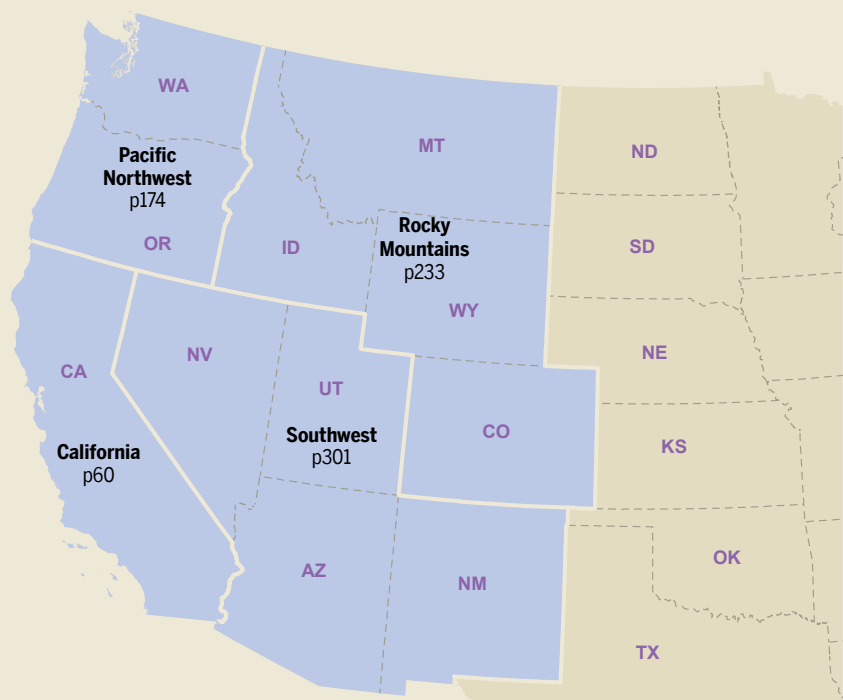




Western USA



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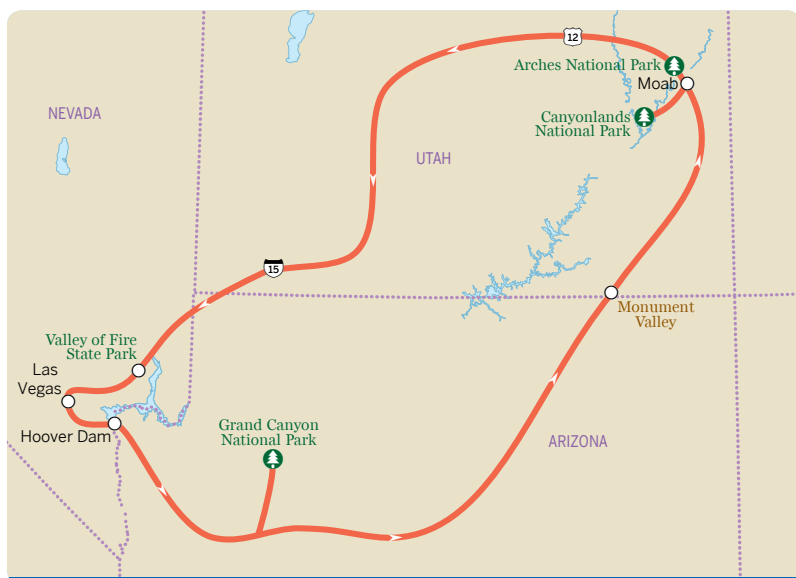
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Itineraries



2
WEEKS

Rolling Through Red Rocks

Cameras get a workout on this tour, which spotlights the most iconic sites in the Southwest. You'll loop past the region's most famous city, its biggest canyon and its most breathtaking red-rock scenery.

Start in **Las Vegas** and spend a few days traveling the world on the Strip. Partied out? Head east to swoop past the **Hoover Dam**, then say hello to the **Grand Canyon National Park**. You'll want a couple of days to explore America's most famous park. For a once-in-a-lifetime experience, descend from the South Rim into the chasm on a mule and spend the night at Phantom Ranch on the canyon floor. From the Grand Canyon head northeast to **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**, mountain bike slickrock outside **Moab** or take a photo of Balanced Rock in **Arches National Park**. Drive west on one of the most spectacular stretches of pavement, Hwy 12, until it hooks up with I-15. Swing south to for a sunset meditation at **Valley of Fire State Park**, before heading back to Las Vegas.



4

WEEKS

Wandering along the West Coast

Hug a tree, surf a wave and taste the fresh deliciousness of west coast fare on this nature lover's trip which ribbons from Seattle to San Diego.

Kick off with fresh-roasted coffee in java-loving **Seattle** and check out the city's sprawling food markets, microbreweries and waterfront. Heading south, visit **Mt Rainier National Park**, where superb hiking trails and relaxing inns nestle beneath the snow-covered peak. Continue to the cutting-edge city of **Portland**, known for its sprawling parks, eco-minded residents and progressive urbanism – plus food carts, coffeehouse culture and great nightlife. Wonder at waterfalls and indulge in fresh roadside produce with a scenic drive east along the **Columbia River Gorge**, then turn south and make for **Mt Hood** for winter skiing or summer hiking. Further adventures await at the **Sisters**, a trio of 10,000ft peaks, and the striking blue waters of **Crater Lake**. Catch a Shakespearian play in sunny **Ashland**, then trade the mountains for the foggy coast. Enter California via Hwy 199 and stroll through the magnificent old-growth forests in **Redwood National & State Parks**.

Hug the coast as it meanders south through funky **Arcata** and seaside **Eureka**, lose yourself on the **Lost Coast**, and catch Hwy 1 through quaint **Mendocino**, where the scenic headlands and rugged shoreline make for a requisite wander. For wine tasting with a photogenic backdrop, travel inland to the rolling vineyards of the **Napa & Sonoma Valleys**, then continue south to romantically hilly, ever free-spirited **San Francisco**. Return to scenic Hwy 1 through surf-loving **Santa Cruz**, stately bayfront **Monterey** and beatnik-flavored **Big Sur**. In no time, you'll reach the surreal **Hearst Castle** and laid-back, collegiate **San Luis Obispo**. Roll into Mediterranean-esque **Santa Barbara** for shopping and wine tasting then hop aboard a ferry in Ventura to the wildlife-rich **Channel Islands**. The pull from **Los Angeles** is strong. Go ahead – indulge your fantasies of Hollywood then stroll the rugged hills of Griffith Park, followed by cruise through LA's palm-lined neighborhoods. After racking up a few sins in the City of Angels, move south to wander the bluffs of **Laguna Beach** then cruise into picture-perfect **San Diego**.



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ALAN COBSON / GETTY IMAGES ©

Top: Grand Teton
National Park (p284),
Wyoming

Bottom: Silverton
(p267), Colorado



3 WEEKS Rocky Mountain High

Pack your bathing suit, mountain bike and hiking boots for this high-altitude cruise atop the Continental Divide; from here, rivers flow toward the west on one side and toward the east on the other.

Spend your first two days enjoying craft beers and single-track mountain-biking trails in **Durango**, a fine mountain town. From here, take the Million Dollar Hwy (Hwy 550) north through the San Juan Mountain range, sightseeing in **Silverton** and dipping into hot springs in **Ouray**. Take a side trip to **Telluride** for a festival – there's one almost every weekend in summer. From Montrose, drive east on Hwy 50 before continuing to Hwy 24 north. Finish your first week in style with an overnight stay in ritzy **Vail**.

Enjoy kayaking, rock climbing and people-watching in high-energy **Boulder** then twist up to **Rocky Mountain National Park** to hike and horseback ride. While here, drive the thrilling Trail Ridge Rd through alpine vistas. Continue north on I-25. In Wyoming, take I-80 west to Hwy 287; follow this highway to **Lander** for rock climbing.

Continue north to **Jackson Hole**, another fun gateway town. Anchored by a central park surrounded by chic stores and cowboy bars, it's a good place to relax, catch a rodeo or spend the night before rafting the Snake River. From here, it's an easy glide north into **Grand Teton National Park**, a scenic spot for a lazy lake day and a mountain stroll. Next up is mighty **Yellowstone National Park**, where geysers, bison and hiking are highlights.

Start your last week with a drive on the gorgeous Beartooth Hwy, following it into Montana then hooking onto I-90 west to **Bozeman** and **Missoula**; both are good places to stock up before the final push. Serious nature awaits in the **Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex**, while **Glacier National Park** is a place to visit now – there are still some 25 glaciers hanging tight, but they may not be there for long. Scan for wildlife on a hike, then end with a drive on the stunning Going-to-the-Sun Road.



4
WEEKS

Western US Grand Tour

This lasso loop corrals the best of the west as it rolls north along the California coast, cruises through the lush landscapes of the Pacific Northwest, the alpine villages of the Rockies and the glowing red-rock beauty of the Southwest, with a final swing back into California for a hit-parade tour of the state's national parks.

From sunny **San Diego**, follow Hwy 1 north through the surf-loving coastal villages of **Orange County**, detouring to **Disneyland** before driving into shiny **Los Angeles**. Continue up the coast on scenic Hwy 1, stopping to shop and sample wine in glossy **Santa Barbara**. Gawk at gawdy **Hearst Castle** then continue north through woody **Big Sur**. Dine and shop then wander through Alcatraz in bohemian **San Francisco**. Return to Hwy 1 for the quirky towns dotting the northern California coast.

View the big trees in **Redwood National & State Parks** and continue into Oregon, taking time for outdoor fun in **Bend**. Soak in the greenery traveling west along the **Columbia River Gorge**, then spend a few days savoring brews and views in **Portland**. Zip up the Space Needle in **Seattle** and drive east into wide-open Montana, heading for the outdoor wonders of **Glacier National Park**. Continue south into **Yellowstone National Park** where Old Faithful blasts regularly beside its namesake lodge, and sightseers brake for buffalo. Swoosh below majestic peaks in **Grand Teton National Park** before swinging southeast through Wyoming's vast cowboy plains.

In Colorado, breathe deep in outdoorsy **Boulder** then embrace the charms of city life in bustling **Denver**. The mining towns of the San Juan Mountains are next, followed by **Mesa Verde National Park**. Just south in New Mexico, artist meccas **Taos** and **Santa Fe** are fab stops for one-of-a-kind gifts. Slurp green chile stew in **Albuquerque** and follow Route 66 west into Arizona, stopping at **Meteor Crater** before detouring north for **Grand Canyon National Park**. Continue west to **Las Vegas**, then drive into central California for **Death Valley National Park**, and **Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks**, concluding with **Yosemite National Park**. Complete the loop with a glass of California wine in San Francisco.

Map Legend

Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

Activities, Courses & Tours

- Body surfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkeling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping

Eating

- Eating

Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

Entertainment

- Entertainment

Shopping

- Shopping

Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

Geographic

- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

Population

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

Transport

- Airport
- BART station
- Border crossing
- Boston T station
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro/Muni station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- Subway/SkyTrain station
- Taxi
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- Underground station
- Other Transport

Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

Boundaries

- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

Hydrography

- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

Areas

- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book



Becky Ohlsen

Rocky Mountains Becky Ohlsen grew up in the Rockies and seizes every chance she gets to explore the region. She has a huge crush on the Tetons, believes that jackalopes are real and likes to watch a storm roll in across a far-away horizon.

Read more about Becky at:

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Greg Ward

Southwest Greg Ward has been exploring the deserts of the Southwest for more than 20 years and has written several guidebooks to the region. He also writes extensively about history, music and European destinations. He lives in London, and his website is gregward.info.

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<http://auth.lonelyplanet.com/profiles/gregward>



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, Plan Your Trip, Understand, Survival Guide Amy has hiked, biked and paddled her way across California and the Southwest. She has authored or co-authored 28 guidebooks for Lonely Planet and has written for *Backpacker*, *Redbook*, *Southern Living*, *Women's Health*, *the Los Angeles Times* and the *Washington Post*.

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Sandra Bao

Pacific Northwest Sandra has lived in Buenos Aires, New York and California, but the glorious Pacific Northwest has become her final stop. Researching this region has been a highlight of Sandra's 15-year-long authoring career with Lonely Planet, which has covered four continents and dozens of guidebooks. She's come to appreciate the beauty of this region, how much it has to offer and how friendly people can be in those tiny towns in the middle of nowhere.

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Sara Benson

California After graduating from college, Sara jumped on a plane to California with just one suitcase and \$100 in her pocket. After driving tens of thousands of miles to every corner of the state, she settled on the sunny side of San Francisco Bay in Oakland. The author of more than 65 travel and nonfiction books, Sara's latest adventures are online at www.indietraveler.blogspot.com, www.indietraveler.net, @indie_traveler on Twitter and indietraveler on Instagram.

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