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Introduction

In search of history? Looking for that scenic view that you can't get from the highway or from an airplane? If so, you've found it. Scores of railroad museums and scenic railroads are ready to transport you back in time or into the rugged wilderness. And they're all found within the pages of this guide.

The *Tourist Trains Guidebook* is a passport into the exciting world of heritage railroading. If you want to view spectacular sights, enjoy a meal while passing through incredible vistas, or marvel at some of the magnificent machines that made America and Canada great, we'll put you on the right track.

You'll learn where to find real operating steam locomotives. You'll discover trains that run within sight of, or right through, some of our land's greatest national parks. You'll find trains that take you to see wildlife up close, relive history, or provide rafting or biking adventures.

We'll also put you in touch with the places that preserve railroading's most treasured artifacts, as well as its most common items, to keep the heritage alive. You'll find out where you can step inside a genuine roundhouse, learn about narrow gauge trains that once climbed the Rockies, and discover places that tell the story of man and machine vs. the mountains. Some museums even have programs that allow you to run a locomotive.

Here's a bit of advice about how to use this guidebook. Do not sit back and relax with it. Pick out a destination, flip through the pages, and see what awaits. I encourage you to do as I do: let it steer you to the nearest set of railroad tracks, where adventure and excitement are just around the next bend.



Jim Wrinn, Editor
Trains

Using the guidebook

Tourist Trains Guidebook describes 453 excursion trains, trolley rides, rail museums, and historical depots across the United States and Canada. Of those, 179 of the top attractions were reviewed by *Trains* magazine staff and contributors. In this second edition, 25 additional sites have been reviewed. New sites have also been added as directory listings.

The reviews provide an in-depth look at each attraction. They give you an idea of when to go for the best experience and what each site offers. They point out activities that are worth doing and what you shouldn't miss to make your visit enjoyable.

We have used the most up-to-date details possible for every attraction. However, due to the nature of the tourist train industry, we recommend that you contact any site before planning your visit. Steam engines may not be running, hours and prices may change, and museums may be under renovation.

At the front of the book, there is a Railroad Discount Card. You can use this card to receive a discount offer at 43 different attractions found in the book. Each site's specific offer is found in its listing.

Maps

The second edition of the guidebook has also been made easier to use. The continental United States has been divided into seven regions, and states are color coded according to their region. (Canada is one region and one color.)

Under each state, the directory entries are listed first and then followed by the full-page reviews. Each group is in alphabetical order. After each attraction's name, there is a number in a circle or a square. Squares represent train and trolley rides, and circles represent museums, depots, and other sites. (Some train sites have museums, and some museums offer train rides, so the symbols are keyed to the site's name.) You can turn to the regional maps, beginning on page 290, and find a site's location using its number.

Colorado Railroad Museum 10

SITE LOCATION: 17155 W. 44th Avenue, Golden

PHONE: 800-365-6263 or 303-279-4591

WEB SITE: www.crrm.org

E-MAIL: info@crrm.org



Jim Wrinn

When you think of Colorado railroading, you think of mountain-climbing, narrow gauge trains of the Denver & Rio Grande Western. And that is exactly what you'll see at this museum just outside Denver in Golden. But that's not all – the museum features 100 pieces of equipment from many other Colorado railroads.

CHOICES: The museum features narrow gauge and standard equipment, from a steam locomotive once used on the Pikes Peak Cog Railway to a 317-ton Burlington Route steam locomotive and even a set of streamlined 1950s passenger diesels from the Rio Grande. You'll see examples of the famous Galloping Goose self-propelled rail buses that ran on the narrow gauge Rio Grande Southern in southwestern Colorado and the only preserved standard gauge Rio Grande steam locomotive, no. 687, a 2-8-0 built in 1890 and retired in 1955.

WHEN TO GO: The museum is open year-round, except for several holidays. Go during one of the special events when a vintage steam or diesel locomotive powers passenger trains on a short ride around the 15-acre property.

GOOD TO KNOW: Be sure to see the monument that once stood along the Rio Grande tracks to commemorate the creation of the dome car – a bubble-top passenger car that became famous in the 1950s and 1960s for its superb views.

WORTH DOING: The MillerCoors Brewery is adjacent to the museum and offers tours Thursday through Monday.

DON'T MISS: Visit the five-stall roundhouse that houses the museum's restoration shop and features an operating turntable. A viewing gallery gives you a peek at the work it takes to maintain the collection.

GETTING THERE: The Colorado Railroad Museum is located 12 miles west of downtown Denver and is easily reached from I-70. Take Exit 265 westbound or Exit 266 eastbound and it is just off Highway 58 between I-70 and Golden.

DISCOUNT: \$2 off adult passage; not valid for Day Out with Thomas.

Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad 11

SITE LOCATION: 479 Main Avenue, Durango

PHONE: 877-872-4607 or 970-247-2733

WEB SITE: www.durangotrain.com

E-MAIL: info@durangotrain.com



Mike Danneman

The Durango & Silverton is one of the most spectacular narrow gauge steam train rides in North America. Traveling through the Rockies, coal-fired locomotives pull trains through the rugged Animas River Gorge on a railroad built in the 1880s to reach southwest Colorado silver mines.

CHOICES: The Durango & Silverton offers several options for passengers. If you like the great outdoors, ride in an open car but come prepared with jackets. Coaches with windows are also available, but on the day-long trip, the seats may be uncomfortable for those taller than six feet. If you want to splurge, book space on one of the line's three private cars, which are available on at least two trains during the busy summer months – do so and you'll live like a robber baron for a few hours, complete with a glass of champagne. If you can, when outbound from Durango, ride the right side of the train. It provides the best view of the Animas River Gorge at 350 feet above the water.

WHEN TO GO: Winter provides incredible snowy vistas. Summer offers the excitement of up to four trains running each way, but it is also the busy season. September has the best nature show when Aspen trees turn a brilliant yellow and quiver in the autumn breeze. Unique special events, such as the Cowboy Poet Train, take place throughout the year.

GOOD TO KNOW: Durango is a well-developed city with every amenity available to tourists, including at least two historic hotels. Several restaurants in Silverton cater to passengers, providing a quick meal and a taste of the old West.

WORTH DOING: Take part in the other activities that abound near Durango, such as whitewater rafting, hiking, and fly fishing. A visit to Mesa Verde National Park is a must.

DON'T MISS: Take the shop tour to see how the locomotives are maintained and restored in a working roundhouse, a C-shaped structure whose form was once found in rail yards coast-to-coast but now only in a few spots. There is a two-hour layover in Silverton, which gives you time to visit the freight yard museum in the depot.

GETTING THERE: The station is located in downtown Durango. The drive to the Four Corners area on Highway 550 is a scenic delight, as long as you don't mind heights.

DISCOUNT: \$3 off adult ticket, up to four; new reservations only, excludes special events.

Nevada Southern Railway

SITE LOCATION: 600 Yucca Street, Boulder City

PHONE: 702-486-5933

WEB SITE: www.nevadasouthern.com



Nevada Southern Railway

The railway offers a train ride with a historical twist. This was part of the construction railroad from Las Vegas to Hoover Dam, with tracks having been laid in 1931. It's a nice ride in the desert and a break from the hustle of Las Vegas.

CHOICES: Located within former Union Pacific rail yards, the site includes a platform built to resemble a past structure. Along the 45-minute round trip, you get an up-close look at desert plant life, especially when riding in the train's open-air car. The other cars are air-conditioned, restored Pullman coaches dating back to 1911. A generator car behind the locomotive supplies power to the coaches. Operated by the Nevada State Railroad Museum, the railway's outdoor interpretative area displays a variety of equipment, including steam locomotive no. 264 and its unique Vanderbilt tender.

WHEN TO GO: The railway operates February through mid-December. Summer in Nevada can be hot, with temperatures hitting triple digits.

GOOD TO KNOW: You'll save money in Boulder City. It's the only community in Nevada where gambling is not legal.

WORTH DOING: Take a trip to nearby Boulder Dam and tour this technological wonder. Boating on Lake Mead is a popular activity any time of the year.

DON'T MISS: Ride a train pulled by a historic diesel. One of the locomotives used, UP no. 844, is one of the last GP30 diesel locomotives – the early 1960s type of diesel that replaced the first generation of diesel locomotives that had themselves replaced steam power.

GETTING THERE: Boulder City is a 30-minute drive from Las Vegas and McCarran International Airport. It is an easy drive from Las Vegas along Highway 93 into Boulder City. Once there, turn left on Yucca Street to the museum.

Nevada State Railroad Museum

SITE LOCATION: 2180 S. Carson Street, Carson City

PHONE: 775-687-6953

WEB SITE: www.nevadaculture.org

E-MAIL: form on Web site



Peter Hansen

Few states can claim as rich a railroading heritage as Nevada, and this museum does an admirable job of interpreting it. The first transcontinental railroad, the state's many mining railroads, and the historic Virginia & Truckee – which ran right past the museum property – are all represented here. The museum boasts a particularly fine collection of 19th century rolling stock, much of which originally came from the V&T and was used in dozens of Hollywood films and television shows.

CHOICES: Star of the museum's collection is *Inyo*, a wood-burning 4-4-0 built for the V&T in 1875, and the museum still steams it over the July 4th holiday. When *Inyo* isn't operating, it's on display along with other beautifully restored pre-1915 freight and passenger equipment. Other rolling stock can be seen in the restoration shop, including an ex-V&T McKeen motor car that is scheduled for completion in mid-2009.

WHEN TO GO: Steam trains or a 1926 motor car operate most weekends from May to October. Mid-summer highs are usually in the 80s, with little chance of precipitation.

GOOD TO KNOW: Carson City's downtown area is very walkable. The state capitol grounds and surrounding neighborhoods of historic homes are particularly pleasant. A wide variety of hotels, motels, and restaurants can be found nearby.

WORTH DOING: For those whose interests run toward scholarly pursuits, the museum has impressive static displays exploring such topics as the Central Pacific Railroad in Nevada railroading and the evolution of V&T motive power. Lectures by leading rail historians are offered several times a year, and the museum also hosts an annual symposium on Nevada railroad history.

DON'T MISS: For more insight on general Nevada history, the Nevada State Museum is located at 600 N. Carson Street, about a mile from the railroad museum.

GETTING THERE: The museum is on Highway 395 (Carson Street) on the south side of Carson City. Carson City is within a day's drive of most major cities on the West Coast. Amtrak's *California Zephyr* stops at Reno, about 35 miles away, and several major airlines also serve Reno.