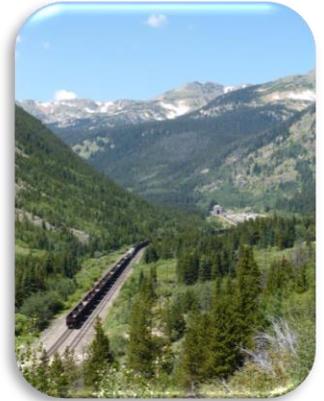


Fabulous scenery, wonderful main line trains, impressive narrow gauge steam lines, friendly people and really good food. This is as close as you'll get to the perfect holiday!

Tour Highlights

- Ride the Durango-Silverton and the Cumbres and Toltec
- See the best of the BIG trains – Union Pacific on Sherman Hill
- See the best of the BIG trains – BNSF on the Joint Line
- By rail to 14,000feet – Pikes Peak!
- Visit the National Park at the Black Canyon of the Gunnison
- Visit the Union Pacific Steam Centre at Cheyenne to see their 'Big Boy' restoration
- Plenty of attractions for non-railway enthusiasts
- All the scenic and retail attractions of Colorado – plus LOTS more!



The tour is being run using minibuses, which will allow flexibility. We have deliberately not included meals (except where shown) in this tour – there is such a wide variety of options, and meals are so cheap by British standards (with enormous portions), we feel it is better to deal with meals on an informal basis when you decide whether a full meal or a snack is appropriate!

Saturday 9 September

We can offer departures from many UK airports for your flight to Denver for an evening arrival at Denver's airport. We will be at the top of the escalator in the main terminal to meet you. There's a short journey to our home for the next two nights, the Super 8 at Westminster, Denver. If you're hungry after the flight, we can arrange a visit to one of the local diners.

Sunday 10 September



Today sees our first foray into the Rockies. We'll head up to Moffat tunnel, calling at Blue Mountain, Pinecliffe, Rollins (for the ice-fields and the world's smallest Tesco) and some wonderful views of the Moffat tunnel itself. We should be able to photograph the daily Amtrak 'California Zephyr' somewhere on this stretch. We'll go a little way up the old Rollins Pass route, which reached 11,160 ft and was a nightmare to work – hence the Moffat tunnel, completed in 1929. After a short break for a plinthed loco in Idaho Springs, we'll return to the Denver suburbs for the night – there should be time for a little light shopping for those who wish.

Monday 11 September

After breakfast, we visit the Colorado Railway Museum at Golden, with plenty of steam and diesel locomotives, both standard and narrow gauge to see. Then it's the Joint Line. This heads south from Denver is jointly owned by the two big rail companies in the West – Union Pacific and BNSF (as successors to the Denver and Rio Grande Western, and the Santa Fe). We can expect to see coal trains – 15,000 tons with three locomotives, all working flat out going south. There are some beautiful spots for photography and we'll head south to spend the night at Colorado Springs. Our favourite restaurant is the Front Range Barbecue, good food and a wide choice of drinks.

Tuesday 12 September

A short road journey takes us to Manitou Springs for a train trip to the summit of Pikes Peak at 14,100 feet – the views from here are fantastic. The line uses Swiss-built diesel units running on a rack line, much like the Snowdon Mountain Railway. The afternoon will bring a short excursion to the United States Air Force Academy. Just to the south is Cheyenne Mountain – the command bunker the United States maintains in case of nuclear attack. We'll finish with a visit to the interesting local tram (streetcar) museum, where we are usually given a ride in a vintage PCC streetcar: good fun!



Wednesday 13 September

A short journey west to Cripple Creek has us back a century or so, with this small line giving us a 45 minute ride through this old gold-mining district. We then head south and arrive at the Royal Gorge Railroad for a ride through the Gorge with its famous 'hanging bridge' behind an old GM diesel. In the late afternoon, we'll take the long drive towards Antonito ready for the next day's trip. We'll stop for the night (and dinner) in Alamosa.

Thursday 14 September

A full day out on the Cumbres and Toltec Railway, our steam-hauled train leaves Antonito at 10:00 and runs behind steam over the San Juan mountains to Chama via the fabulous Tanglefoot Curve and Windy Point, over the summit at 10,000 feet. We'll spend the night at the historic Station Inn

opposite the railway station in Chama. The pub next door offers really good 'home-style' meals as well as alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages (Breakfast and lunch included)

Friday 15 September

We'll spend the morning chasing the eastbound C&T train up the steep bit from Chama to Cumbres Pass – the grade is 1 in 25 most of the way, and the loco REALLY works hard! We will then head west via Pagosa Springs through beautiful Western countryside to Durango, our base for the night. We hope to have a private tour of the Durango & Silverton's locoshed and works with Neil Reich, who has now retired as the line's Chief Dispatcher. If you have questions, he will probably join us for dinner at the 'Old Tymer', a good Durango restaurant.



Saturday 16 September

Our day out on the most famous of Colorado's narrow gauge lines, the Durango and Silverton. We'll book in the rearmost gondola (an open car with a roof) and leave Durango at 08:45. This gives us the best views as the train traverses the 'High Line' way above the Animas River before following the river valley all the way up to Silverton. There's a couple of hours to explore this fascinating old mining town before the train returns to Durango.



Sunday 17 September

For those who wish, we'll chase the two morning trains up to Rockwood for some great photos. Then we will leave Durango and follow the course of the fabled Rio Grande Southern through Dolores (where we can stop to visit the 'Galloping Goose' museum – the Geese were the trademark of this remote line and we've been promised a very short ride p the 100 yards of track outside the restored station), Ophir, Rico and Lizard Head Pass. We'll continue to Montrose, calling at the Ridgway Railway Museum on the way.

Monday 18 September

We have a day of fabulous scenery. We head east, and will visit another of America's National Parks, the Black Canyon of the Gunnison, 2,000 feet deep and a worthy second only to the Grand Canyon. We will follow the South Rim to the best viewpoints. We then continue east, driving round the beautiful Blue Mesa Reservoir and into Gunnison, a true Western town. There should be time to visit the County Pioneer Museum, close to our motel, which contains the old Denver & Rio Grande locomotive 268 in the famous 'bumblebee' livery.

Tuesday 19 September

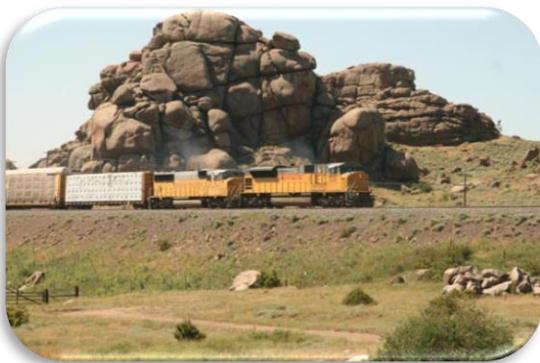
Railway interest and scenery. We'll drive over the old Marshall Pass, once on the Rio Grande's narrow gauge main line to Gunnison. Marshall Pass summit used to be in a complete wooden snowshed, remains of which still exist. After passing through Poncha Springs, we follow the course of the old Tennessee Pass railroad to Leadville, Colorado's best preserved mining town. If we make it in time, we can ride the Leadville Colorado & Southern up to Climax – it's an experience to remember. Dinner is at Quincy's where the only item on the menu is filet mignon of excellent quality! Choice? Yes, there's a choice: what size do you want?



Wednesday 20 September

We continue down to the Georgetown Loop, where we'll take a train trip over the spindly Devils Gate Bridge. We then continue, via the northern outskirts of Denver, and head north (with a compulsory stop at Johnson's Corner for cinnamon buns like you've never tasted before), into Wyoming to Cheyenne, the Union Pacific's base for its steam locomotives. As a priority, we'll visit the Union Pacific's steam centre in Cheyenne where we will be able to view progress on their mega-project to rebuild the 'Big Boy', one of the world's largest steam locomotives. Their Mallet 'Challenger' and the 844 (working steam) should be present too.

Thursday 21 September



We will head west to see the best spots on Sherman Hill – Borie, Otto Road, Granite, Buford, Tie Siding and Dale Creek to watch the big trains running between the West Coast and Chicago. Watching 15,000 horsepower pulling 15,000 tons up a 1 in 50 grade is awesome! Back in Cheyenne, the station is well worth visiting in its own right, and we will arrange a visit to the Museum there with its superb HO scale model railway. For dinner, there is a bistro at the station, where (weather permitting) it is possible to eat on the old platform one, within a few feet of transcontinental freight trains pausing for crew changes.

Friday 22 September

We'll take an early morning trip the five miles east to the top of Archer Hill, a great place to photograph eastbounds climbing round an enormous S-bend. In one of Cheyenne's parks, there is a plinthead "Big Boy", the twin of the one that Union Pacific are rebuilding. Mid-morning, we will drive back down the Interstate to Denver. We will call at the Forney museum with its collection of steam locomotives and many historic American cars and plenty else. Also, there is more conventional shopping in Denver's city centre 16th Street Mall, the local equivalent of Oxford Street.

Saturday 23 September

After breakfast and packing for departure, we'll do our best to get you out to the airport for your flight home to ...

Sunday 24 September

...Britain, arriving in the morning.

We will endeavour to provide airport transfers in Denver for those arranging their own flights, but it may be necessary to take a cab.

What's included

Flights, meals on flights and where shown, transfers, accommodation, minibus travel, train travel where indicated, excursions as shown. Not included: travel to/from your UK airport, meals, incidentals.

Fully inclusive price from London: £ 3,495 (based on two people sharing).

Ground only price: £2,845 (based on two people sharing)

Single supplement £685

Flights

If you would prefer to travel to Denver from a regional UK airport, we will do our best to find you something suitable. It usually works well from Manchester and Edinburgh, and can work from other airports too.



Please note that all carriers, train times and flight times are subject to change at any time.

