

WESTERN SPIRIT

Cycling Adventures



Colorado Singletrack

5 days/4 nights

DAY 1



After meeting in Durango, we'll load up and shuttle to our first day's ride, the Hermosa Creek Trail. This singletrack trail is considered one of the best in the Rockies and is a great warm up for the rest of our trip. Although we are almost always losing elevation on this 18 mile trail, it is a challenging workout. Beginning in the open meadows of Hermosa Park, we ride beside Hermosa Creek for a few miles before the creek drops away from the trail. The single-track threads through large stands of aspens and conifers. After intersecting Dutch Creek we will begin a short, but strenuous climb. Some of the best riding of the day occurs after the climb, as we roll along at a fairly steady elevation, high above the roaring creek. Once we reach the trailhead, we'll shuttle further up into the mountains to our camp at Little Molas Lake.

TOTAL MILEAGE: 19 miles

DAY 2



Today we will start riding on the Colorado Trail, which ultimately runs 500 miles from Denver to Durango and provides amazing wilderness scenery along its entire course. The theme for the day is 25 miles of alpine riding, most of it at or near tree line. From our camp, we climb to Rolling Pass which sits at 12,500 feet. The views from the top are stunning and along our route we will see Engineer Peak, Twin Sisters and the peaks of the Grenadier Range. After we take it all in, we will begin a big descent to Cascade Creek, riding through wildflowers which can be handlebar height at their peak! From the creek, we begin our final ascent of the day to Sliderock Pass and

then, you guessed it, we go downhill again to our camp at Bolam Pass, 11,000 feet.

TOTAL MILEAGE: 25 miles

DAY 3



Today we'll continue along the Colorado Trail. From camp the trail begins by winding around the slopes of Hermosa Peak before ascending 12,000-foot Blackhawk Pass. There will be some short hike-a-bikes on this section, which give us a chance to stretch our legs and enjoy the far reaching views from this high elevation trail. From the pass we descend some technical switchbacks carved into the granite hillside. After a quick stop at a spring we will ride downhill on the forested ridges high above Straight Creek. The trail swoops into Hotel Draw where we'll pick up the Highline section of the Colorado Trail. This ridgeline provides expansive views of the mysterious Weminuch Wilderness and the peaks of the La Platas, which draw nearer daily. Tonight's "Orphan Butte" camp is on Highline Ridge at approximately 10,800 feet.

TOTAL MILEAGE: 15 miles

DAY 4



"The Big Day." Today's Indian Trail Ridge section of the Colorado Trail presents the most challenging terrain we've seen so far. The ridge itself is a section of trail that runs above treeline at 12,000 feet for nearly four miles. It is an outstanding alpine trail, truly unique in the world of mountain biking. The entire day is alpine in character with both smooth and rocky descents, long climbs,

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short hike-a-bikes and outstanding 360-degree views of mountains stretching to the horizons. This is an unforgettable day spent on your bike. Our camp tonight is on Kennebec Pass in the La Plata Mountains at 11,600 feet.

TOTAL MILEAGE: 17 miles

DAY 5



Today is the reward for all the climbing of the past four days. We'll follow the Colorado Trail 26 miles to Durango. Although we have a 1200 foot climb midday, our cumulative vertical descent is 6000 feet total! The day starts with a stellar descent of 3,500 feet, which winds back and forth in the creek drainages of the La Plata Mountains. At the base we'll cross Junction Creek and begin our climb that takes about 1-1/2 hours before topping out on Wild Oat Mesa. Continuing down another 2,500 feet the Colorado Trail eventually ends our journey as we ride triumphantly into Durango.

TOTAL MILEAGE: 26 miles

RIDE NOTES

This tour contains some very difficult riding on narrow, steep mountain trails. A high level of skill and fitness is required to enjoyably navigate much of the route. There will be riding along steep mountain ridges with exposure to falls on the downhill side.

We will be without vehicle support during all of the singletrack sections of the ride and medical help is far away. Please call us and we can help you determine whether this trip is appropriate for you.

Itineraries are subject to change due to weather, road conditions, rider safety, and other factors which may affect the logistics of the adventure.

Road Surface: Singletrack on clay, packed sediment, some rocky sections, pine needles, smooth dirt and short sections of county roads and asphalt.

Overall Rating: Advanced

Technical Difficulty: Difficult. Technical singletrack.

Physical Difficulty: Difficult. High altitudes (over 10,000 feet), steep climbs and long unsupported sections.

Altitude: 8,000 - 12,000 feet

Travel Logistics

MEETING PLACE AND TIME

Durango, CO

This trip will meet at 7:30 AM MST at 2nd Ave Sports, 640 East 2nd Avenue, Durango, CO, 970-247-4511. After loading up, we will shuttle all guest vehicles to the Durango Transit Center.

Please notify Western Spirit if you need to park your car during the trip and Western Spirit will make arrangements.

ENDING TIME

We will return to Durango between 3:00-4:00 PM on the last day.

SHIPPING YOUR BIKE

If you are shipping your bike, send it to:

2nd Ave Sports
640 East 2nd Avenue
Durango, CO 81301
970-247-4511

It is critical that you include your name, "Western Spirit Cycling" and tour date on the outside of the box. If you choose this service, you must get this organized through our office.

It is imperative to have your bike finely tuned and cleaned before your tour so you know it is in top running condition.

GETTING TO DURANGO, CO

Driving

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Durango is located in southwestern Colorado. It is a 6-hour drive from Denver via Interstate 25 to US 160. From Grand Junction, Colorado it is a 4-hour drive via US 50 and 550. Please notify Western Spirit if you need to park your car during the trip and Western Spirit will make arrangements.

Flying into Durango, CO

Airport Code: DRO

LODGING BEFORE YOUR TRIP

Durango is a popular summer vacation spot. It is a good idea to book your rooms several months in advance if possible; here are a few recommendations:

Lightner Creek Inn B & B

970-259-1226, 800-268-9804

Comfort Inn

970-259-7900, 800-228-5150

Best Western Durango Inn

970-247-3251, 800-547-9090

Best Western Mountain Shadows

970-247-5200, 800-780-7234

Budget Inn

970-247-5222, 800-257-5222

Super 8

970-259-0590

TAXI SERVICE

Durango Transportation:

970-259-4818 or 800-626-2066

Airport Shuttles are available and you need to reserve your seat at least 2 hours in advance. They also have a taxi service which will help you get to Hassle Free Sports in the morning, please call ahead.

Packing for your trip

Be sure to bring everything on this list. We have carefully developed this list to ensure your comfort on the tour regardless of the weather. If you are prepared

for extreme weather, it is an adventure. If you are not prepared it can be a serious problem.

We recommend the layering system, including a wicking or long underwear layer, an insulating layer and a weather barrier for wind and rain. This list reflects that philosophy. Weather in the mountains can be unpredictable so be sure to bring all the warm clothing and rain gear listed!

HOW TO PACK: When you arrive for your tour, you will be given a dry bag in which to pack your gear for the trip. Smaller bags may fit, but very large duffels will not.

To pack efficiently in a dry bag, we highly recommend you compartmentalize your clothing and gear into separate bags. Stuff sacks, reusable grocery bags, etc. in different colors work great for this (example: cycling gear in blue stuff sack, camp clothes in red stuff sack, etc.).

Your dry bag will ride on the Western Spirit support vehicle and will **not** be accessible during the day.

For this trip, you will need a riding pack and optional day bag:

- Your riding pack may be a hydration pack, but needs to carry 2-3 liters of water, rain gear, other warm clothing, and food for the day. You may be away from camp and the support vehicle all day and need to be self-sufficient.
- A small day bag is optional and may be used to store things you'd rather not ride with, but would like to have access to during the day. This day-pack will remain with the support vehicle and may not be accessible, depending on the day.

WHAT WE PROVIDE:

- ✓ meals, snacks, water, electrolyte drinks, non-alcoholic drinks
- ✓ camp mugs, all kitchen and dining ware
- ✓ 2 large cycling water bottles
- ✓ camp chairs
- ✓ dry bags to pack your gear
- ✓ solar showers
- ✓ sunscreen & bug spray
- ✓ bike stand and lube
- ✓ guides bring their own tools

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C y c l i n g A d v e n t u r e s

- ✓ first aid kit with basic medications

BRINGING OR RENTING

- mountain bike (Our rentals come with flat pedals. You are welcome to bring your own if you prefer.)
- helmet (gratis w/rental bike)
- tent
- sleeping bag
- sleeping pad

CYCLING CLOTHING

- cycling shoes
- 3 - 5 pair cycling shorts
- 3 - 5 cycling shirts
- long sleeve cycling shirt
- long sleeve cotton shirt or solar sleeves
- knee & elbow pads - optional
- cycling socks
- windbreaker
- tights or leg warmers
- 2 pair cycling gloves (1 pair full length for warmth)
- rain jacket (Gore-Tex or similar)
- rain pants (Gore-Tex or similar)
- warm layer (lightweight synthetic puffy jacket or long sleeve fleece shirt)
- sunglasses or other eye protection

CAMP CLOTHING

- camp shorts
- shirts
- warm socks
- long underwear, top and bottom (wicking layer, not cotton)
- 2 pair warm long pants
- long sleeve fleece or sweater
- pile or down jacket (insulating layer)
- warm gloves and hat
- brimmed hat or visor
- bathing suit (for solar showers on the trip and at the hotel before/after your trip)
- hiking shoes
- sandals
- cheap PVC rain gear (to wear in camp)

PERSONAL

- toiletries
- medication (daily and emergency)
- towel
- biodegradable soap
- wet-wipes
- flashlight or headlamp (with extra batteries)
- sunglasses
- riding pack: 10-15L gear capacity with 2-3L water storage (Camelbak Mule or Camelbak H.A.W.G. are good choices)
- optional day bag
- stuff sacks or reusable grocery bags (or separate compartments for your dry bag)
- cash for tipping guides: your guides work as a team and share all of their gratuities. A tip of 10-20% of the price of your trip given to either one of your guides when you return to civilization is a great way to say thanks for a job well done.

OPTIONAL

- camera, extra batteries
- binoculars
- alcoholic or any of your favorite beverages (your guides will pack these)
- books or maps
- we encourage you to turn your devices off, but if you cannot, please bring a way to charge them. We recommend a portable USB charger with 1-2 charges. Also, putting your phone on airplane mode to save power is recommended.

