

# WESTERN SPIRIT

Cycling Adventures



## Gooseberry Mesa Singletrack

5 days/4 nights

### DAY 1



After our meeting in St. George, we will load into the van for a short shuttle to the goods. Who would think such a quick drive would take you out of the city and onto some of the best desert singletrack around? We are headed for the Santa Clara River Reserve—an incredibly fun network of trails. This area was set aside to preserve open space and protect prehistoric cultural resources, riparian areas and incredible scenic vistas. After lunch we have some rolling terrain and a few short climbs and then begin our fun ride back to the trail-head. A quick shuttle will take us to our camp where will have great views of the surrounding geology.

**TOTAL MILEAGE:** 12 - 17 miles

### DAY 2



We will have a hearty breakfast and shuttle out of camp to our ride for the day, the JEM trail. Named after John (known to us as Johnny Concrete, per his formal occupation vs. his love of trail building), Ellen and Mike, this trail offers high speed desert cruising and a cliffside ride along the Virgin River. We will pedal our way along the edge of the Virgin River Canyon and head toward the colorful bluff of Gooseberry Mesa. The climbing continues up a wash and onto some technical singletrack before we top out to have a lunch stop towering over the Virgin River drainage. We climb a couple miles on dirt road to be rewarded by more rolling singletrack and then the fun really begins! Swooping through the desert on unbelievable singletrack, you might just laugh out loud carving eight miles all the way back to the start. All

smiles, we will load up and shuttle to our camp on Gooseberry Mesa.

**TOTAL MILEAGE:** 24 miles

### DAY 3



This morning we will begin with a shuttle to Little Creek Mesa, a trail system that has been a long time coming. Although trails existed here for numerous years, it was discovered that they traveled right over, around and through Ancient Puebloan routes, so it was closed to mountain biking. The BLM, along with IMBA, has worked tirelessly to reroute the trails and our patience has paid off! Riding these trails is a technicolor experience as the rock colors change every time you look down. This is our first day of riding on rock, and a good introduction for the days to come on Gooseberry Mesa. We will shuttle back to our camp on the mesa.

**TOTAL MILEAGE:** 12 - 18 miles

### DAY 4



We will awaken to sunlight pouring across the mesa top before enjoying our hot coffee and freshly prepared breakfast. The mesa top is a hard layer of Shinarump Conglomerate which forms a cap over the underlying red and white striped Moenkopi Formation. Moenkopi is a mudstone so it is deeply eroded along flanks of the mesa. The Shinarump is a prime surface for a tight technical mountain bike trail. The smooth slickrock sections are intermingled with clusters of junipers to dodge and little rock

canyons to squeeze through. There is barely a 30 foot section of the trail where you can see exactly where your bike needs to go next. Couple the fun riding with the incredible views off the edge into Zion Canyon and you have the recipe for a memorable day on the bike. We will return to the same camp for the night.

**TOTAL MILEAGE:** 10 - 15 miles

## DAY 5



We will head out this morning to pedal more of the trails that the mesa has to offer. This time the loop is a little more technical, with steep short climbs onto slickrock knobs and tight switchbacks down the other side. A little off camber riding adds to the fun and some singletrack through the firm sand lets you relax a little! There is so much to ride on the mesa, we never seem to run out of options. Plus the rides are so amazing you will want to ride some of them again! When it is time, we will head back to St. George.

**TOTAL MILEAGE:** 8 - 10 big miles

## RIDE NOTES

We will be without vehicle support during many sections of the ride. 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:** Slickrock, singletrack trails and some dirt roads.

**Overall Rating:** Intermediate/Advanced

**Technical Difficulty:** Strong Intermediate with some more difficult sections; slickrock singletrack is tight, and the dirt sections can be loose and rocky.

**Physical Difficulty:** Moderate; singletrack is unsupported.

**Altitude:** 3,000 - 5,700 feet

## Travel Logistics

### MEETING PLACE AND TIME

#### St. George, UT

This tour will begin at 8:30 AM MST at the Desert Garden Inn, 1450 South Hilton Drive, St. George, Utah, 435-688-7477. After loading up we will drive to the start of the ride. You will need to spend the night in St. George because none of the shuttle services from Las Vegas or Salt Lake run early enough. See more details in "Lodging Before Your Trip".

### ENDING TIME

We will return to St. George between 3:00-4:00 PM on the last day. You will have time to catch a shuttle back to Las Vegas, but not to Salt Lake.

### GETTING TO ST. GEORGE, UT

#### Driving

St. George is located 120 miles north of Las Vegas on Interstate 15. If you need to leave a car behind while you are on your trip, there is parking available at the hotel where we will be meeting.

#### Flying into St. George (WILL BE CLOSED FOR UPDATING 5/29/19 to 9/26/19)

Airport Code: SGU

The airport is far from town. Be sure to book your taxi ahead of time.

#### Flying into Las Vegas, NV

Airport Code: LAS

There are two options for getting from Las Vegas to St. George:

1) Take a shuttle with St. George Express. When you reserve, it is very important that you tell them the following things:

1. You're a Western Spirit guest staying at the Desert Garden Inn, where you will need to be dropped off and picked up,
2. If you are flying with your bike, you will need to reserve a spot on the shuttle for your bike,

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which will need to be boxed up. There is a surcharge each way.

Shuttles depart from the Las Vegas Airport and St. George eight times daily. Keep in mind that St. George is one hour ahead of Las Vegas. Call 435-652-1100 or visit [stgeorgeexpress1@gmail.com](mailto:stgeorgeexpress1@gmail.com) for times and to make a reservation.

2) Rent a car in Las Vegas and park it at the hotel.

## Flying into Salt Lake City, UT

Airport Code: SLC

There are two options for getting from Salt Lake City to St. George:

1) Take a shuttle with St. George Express; shuttle time is about 5 hours. When you reserve, it is very important that you tell them the following things:

1. You're a Western Spirit guest staying at the Desert Garden Inn, where you will need to be dropped off and picked up,
2. If you are flying with your bike, you will need to reserve a spot on the shuttle for your bike, which will need to be boxed up. There is a surcharge each way.

Call 435-652-1100 or visit <http://www.stgeorge-express.com/> for times and to make a reservation.

2) Rent a car in Salt Lake; it is a 5 hour drive.

## LODGING BEFORE YOUR TRIP

Western Spirit has partnered with Desert Garden Inn to provide cyclist accommodations and support. The rooms are over-sized, bike friendly, with walk out sliding doors to the parking lot. This is also where the trip starts and finishes.

Even better, the Desert Garden Inn is offering Western Spirit guests the best rates we know of: \$75+ tax Sunday-Saturday for double occupancy (2 queen beds per room). Just pick up the phone, call them directly at 877-688-7177, They can book your room reservations and also help you out with any special

request you might have.

It will be hard to find a better room rate online for this quality and you'll be supporting this local business.

## Desert Garden Inn (formerly Crystal Inn)

1450 South Hilton Drive  
St. George, UT 84770  
435-688-7477 or 877-688-7177

Bonus: you can leave your car at Desert Garden Inn while you're on the trip.

It is a good idea to book your rooms in advance.

## TAXI SERVICE

**Quality Cab:** 435-656-5222

**Taxi USA:** 435-656-1500

## SHIPPING YOUR BIKE

If you are shipping your bike, send it to:

Red Rock Bicycle  
446 W. 100 South  
St George, UT 84770  
435-674-3185

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.

## 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

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and a weather barrier for wind and rain. This list reflects that philosophy. Weather can be unpredictable so be sure to bring all the warm clothing and rain gear listed!

**HOW TO PACK:** The bulk of your gear and clothing will ride in the Western Spirit support vehicle (preferably in a large duffle bag) 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
- ✓ solar showers
- ✓ sunscreen & bug spray
- ✓ bike stand and lube
- ✓ guides bring their own tools
- ✓ 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.
- tall socks (knee socks, soccer socks). Highly recommended for protection from cactus and potential falls.
- knee & elbow pads. Highly recommended for protection from cactus and potential falls.
- 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

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C y c l i n g   A d v e n t u r e s

H.A.W.G. are good choices)

- optional day 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.

