

2022 Tour to the Rockies Mountains and More

I plan car tours around what I want to see. This project started the same way with Rocky Mountain National Park being the destination (I want to see how the US Rockies stack up to the Canadian Rockies!). However, as I researched the route, I discovered a number of other really interesting national parks and monuments, historical sites, museums and spectacular scenic highways that were “on the way.” In that a second road trip out here for me is unlikely, the result is a two-week drive planned for early September. Below is a summary of the draft itinerary with a few pictures of what we will see.

Paula and I are going (assuming Covid has not shut the country down) no matter what. However, how I organize the trip will vary depending on how many folks would like to join us. If only a few folks, then I will likely just pass on the lodging specifics and folks can make their own arrangements. If it is a larger group, then I will proceed as I have on past tours making group lodging and restaurant reservations, which can save some money via group rates and help insure we can all get into the preferred facilities, a few of which are smaller facilities or in towns with limited choices. As with past tours, I would need to ask for deposits to pay required contract installments or room deposits. This will not be a particularly expensive trip as we are staying in motel/hotels vs resorts with lodging costs ranging from as low as \$90 to \$250 (average around \$175) and eating in regular restaurants. There will be some admission fees at the museums. If you have or purchase a National Park Pass, it will cover most park fees.

Review the itinerary/pictures and *shoot me an e-mail if you are interested*. Tour date is planned for September 6-19. Tomsredalfa@gmail.com or 503-362-8597. Tour will have a limit of 20 couples and I will maintain an alternate list. I will start working on motel reservations at the more limited locations in mid-January so please get back to me if you are inclined to join us.

Day One: Salem to Baker City (Grand Geiser Hotel) via John Day/Painted Hills.



Blue Mountains East of Baker



Cathedral Rocks/Painted Hills

Day Two: Great roads from Baker City thru the Wallowa Mountains to Stanley Idaho and the spectacular Sawtooth Mountains. We will stay alongside the Salmon River.



Stanley Idaho

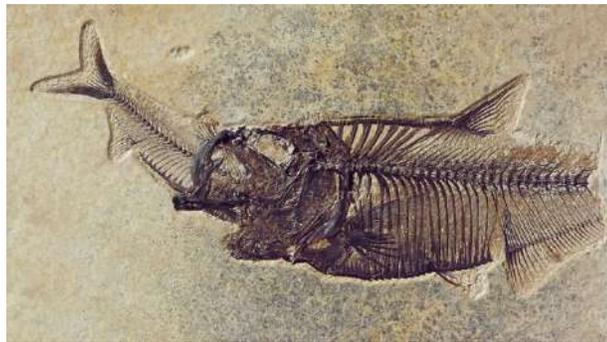


Craters of the Moon

Day Three: Stanley to Pocatello Idaho including Crater Of the Moon National Park and a stop at the Shoshone Bannock Tribal Museum.



Shoshone Bannock Museum



One of many exhibits at Fossil Butte NM

Day Four: The featured attraction today will be Fossil Butte National Monument in Wyoming. This place is referred to as ‘America’s Aquarium in Stone’ and features a wide variety of fossils of all kind. Thereafter, we drive through the scenic Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area to Vernal UT.



Flaming Gorge



Dinosaur National Monument

Day Five: The National Dinosaur National Monument features over 1500 fossils, many of them embedded in a huge indoor wall at the Quarry Exhibit. After a scenic drive through the eastern

side of the monument, we head to Avon CO in anticipation of the next days ‘Top of the Rockies’ scenic drive.



Grrrrr!



Top of the Rockies Scenic Hwy

Day Six: We drive one of the most scenic drives in the country. Top of the Rockies Scenic Hwy reaches a staggering 12,095 feet and is surrounded by multiple mountains over 13,000 feet! After lunch in Aspen, we drive another portion of the highway as head to Winter Park. We will cross three separate continental divides today!



Top of the Rockies Scenic Hwy



Trail Ridge Road-Rocky Mtn NP



Rocky Mtn NP



Rocky Mtn NP

Day Seven: Rocky Mountain National Park is primarily accessed by ‘Trail Ridge Road.’ It is the highest paved road in the US reaching nearly 12,200 feet! There are numerous pullouts from which to enjoy alpine views that are likely to challenge the Ice Highway in Jasper National Park. Cheyenne WY is our lodging destination.

Day Eight: Two major highlights today. Museum of the Fur Trade contains over 6000 items boasting to be the largest exhibit dedicated to the fur trade in the country. The museum also covers period native Indian culture. A club member who has visited here said it was “not to be missed.” Thereafter, we drive through Badlands National Park on yet another national scenic highway. This place is one of the most rugged and staggeringly beautiful places you will ever see. We end our day in Wall, SD.



Museum of the Fur Trade



Fur Trader Cabin at Museum Site

Day Nine: Mt Rushmore and the famed Needles Scenic Highway will be the highlights today. Needles Highway passes through the granite Black Hills of SD. In addition to a lot of great views, the 14 mile highway features “360 curves, 32 switchbacks, unmarked cliff hangings, kiddie sized lanes, three tiny tunnels and much more.”



Mt. Rushmore



One of Needles Hwy Tunnels



More Needles Highway

Day Ten: Big Horn Battlefield, Custer's Battlefield Museum, the Bighorn Scenic Highway through Shell Canyon including a stop at Shell Falls and hopefully, dinner at Lisa's in Greybull are on today's itinerary. Shell Canyon cuts through three distinct rock layers ranging back 500 million years! The area was once part of the ocean hence the vast number of shells found over the years. Lisa's? Paula and I have made this restaurant a destination whenever we are anywhere nearby...best steaks ever and observing the local cowboys and cowgirls in full costume is a real hoot!



Big Horn Scenic Byway



Big Horn Mountains



Big Horn Highway-Hold On!

The original chefs 'round here were of course, Native Americans. Cattle drive then brought South American influences and new aromas filled the air. At Lisa's, days-past come alive with the roasting of peppers, the simmering of chili-spiced pintos and the scent of fresh chopped cilantro, all accentuating the unmistakable aromas of succulent meats on the broil. Dining at Lisa's, truly is a culinary experience. Enjoy!

FAVORITES OF THE HOUSE

PECAN PRAWNS
4 Jumbo Roasted Pecan-Crusted Prawns, presented over Linguine, Scampi with Pineapple-Habanero Puree' for dipping. A seafood lovers favorite! \$29

OSSO BUCCO
Called Ossobuco in the city but round here we just call it a Park Shank. Either way, it's a real crowd pleaser! Glazed in a spicy plum sauce surrounded by Potato O'Brien. \$22

PORK CHOPS
Three thin cut Char'd Chops topped with warmed Apple Chutney sided with the best Mac-n-Cheese around. \$18

PORK DIANE
8oz Grilled Pork Sirloin topped w/ a mushroom-dijon sauce. Served on wild rice, sided with freshly steamed veggies. \$21

STUFFED CHICKEN BREAST
Ham, Herbs & Parmesan Stuffed Breast, lightly breaded and crowned with deliciously creamy wine-mushroom sauce served with wild rice & veggies. A house favorite for over 30 yrs. \$22

BEST IN THE WEST FRY
Choice of Sirloin or Chicken, this hearty meal is smothered in scrumptious gravy and served with butter-whipped mashies & freshly steamed veggies. If you are a Chicken Fry Lover, then it's time to have The Best In The West! \$19

CATTLE COUNTRY

CENTER CUT SIRLOIN
The leanest, most original steak the ranchers brought to the basin. Char'd 8oz center-cut topped with Garlic'd Onions. \$20

RANCH HOUSE RIB EYE
The tastiest most tender steak the ranchers brought to the basin. Char'd 14oz eye topped with Garlic'd Onions. \$29

PEPPERED EYE
14oz Rib Eye Rubbed with cracked pepper and crowned with brandied cream. This specialty has garnered The Signature Steak spotlight for 30 years now. \$33

BRAD'S SIRLOIN
8oz center cut Sirloin smothered in melted bleu cheese & topped with grilled mushrooms, garlic & onions. \$24

PEPPERCORN MEDALLIONS
8oz Char'd Sirloin Medallions crowned with brandied cream, served over almond wild rice and freshly steamed vegetables. \$28

SLOWLY ROASTED PRIME
Aromas of slowly roasted Certified Angus Prime fill the air Friday & Saturday nights. Served with au jus & a dollop of horseradish cream.
12oz \$28 - 14oz \$30

Steaks are served with choice of our freshly made butter-whipped mashies, baby reds, wild rice pilaf, baked potato or hand cut fries. Loaded baker \$2.

Lisa's (Yum!)

Day Eleven: A short drive takes us to Cody and the Buffalo Bill Museums. While there are five museums here, I plan on visiting the Buffalo Bill Museum, the Plains Indian Museum and Cody Firearms Museum. After lunch, we drive to Bozeman MT in preparation to visit the Museum of the Rockies in the morning.



Day Twelve: The Museum of the Rockies will be a repeat for us. The main exhibit is dinosaurs. We are taking all kinds of dinosaurs, including Mr. Rex! Both Paula and I believe this is one best museum we have been to, and that includes most of the Smithsonian's. You cannot leave this place without being impressed!

The afternoon drive will take us to the Big Hole Battlefield National Monument where the Nez Perce took on the 7th Cavalry in a failed attempt to escape to Canada.



Wallowa Mountains and Lodge

Day Thirteen: The Wallowa Mountains of Oregon are often referred to as the Oregon Swiss Alps. We will take the Loop Highway to Hells Canyon Overlook, which is an overlooked gem, then make our way to the rustic Wallowa Lake Lodge. Assuming the weather is good, a tram ride to the top of Mt. Howard is in the cards. The lodge has a limited number of rooms so we may overflow to another motel.

Day Fourteen: Homeward bound.

FINALLY, I will be sending out a flyer on the 2023 National Parks tour by early February. This tour heads to Bryce, Zion, N and S Grand Canyon as well as Arches National Park. The plan is to stay at the National Park lodges. They start taking reservations 13 months in advance of their respective seasons which usually start in May each year. The 2023 tour is also scheduled for early September after Labor Day.