



## **Trains and Treasures of the USA An American fall colours rail adventure**

**26 September to 11 October 2018**

*Visit Colorado, California, New Mexico, Utah and Nevada. Add standard and narrow gauge railroads, articulated and geared steam locomotives, interesting railroad museums, stunning scenery and some great towns and cities for a varied railroad and scenic holiday that should satisfy the interests of railway, landscape and street photographers.*

*Trains and Travel, an American specialist tour operator that offers our tours to Africa and Europe and also runs their own successful trips in the States, will work with Geoff's Trains to make sure that this will be a truly memorable holiday.*

*The tour will undoubtedly appeal to rail-fans, particularly those with a special interest in narrow gauge. It is also a great way to see Colorado and San Francisco with an itinerary that offers a balanced programme of scenic train rides, national parks and general touring. Bookings on a similar tour in 2016 were mostly couples - partners are not forgotten with time for sightseeing and shopping in locations from old gold mining towns to fabulous cities. Fifteen seat air conditioned buses will accommodate no more than ten guests each, making it possible for photographers to chase trains whilst their partners seek out more leisurely or traditional options.*

*Colorado is one of the best states for steam railways, particularly narrow gauge. It is possible to join this tour for the first nine days only, ending on the morning of 31 July.*

*With a maximum of 20 guests, accompanied by Geoff as tour manager and an American guide, this will be an unforgettable, top quality tour.*

*All aboard!*

### **Day 1. Wednesday, 26 September 2018**

Arrive in Denver today. We will meet you at the airport this afternoon and transferred you to the downtown Crown Plaza hotel. Alternatively, take the commuter train to downtown Union Station - the hotel is a short cab ride from there. The rest of the day and evening on your own to relax. The hotel is within walking distance of many shops and other attractions. For rail-fans, Denver has a 47 mile standard gauge light rail system to explore. Opened in 1994, it has 172 vehicles serving 6 lines and 46 stations.  
Overnight: Crown Plaza Hotel. Denver, Colorado.

### **Day 2. Thursday. 27 September 2018**

This morning, visit the Colorado Railroad Museum in nearby Golden. This museum is full of wonderful Colorado Narrow Gauge history and rolling stock, the best railroad museum in Colorado. We will leave the museum around mid-day and head to the Georgetown Loop Railroad up in the Rocky Mountains located at Georgetown. Most trains on this railway between Silver Plume and Georgetown are pulled by a shay steam locomotive. After your train ride, visit the old wild-west mining town of Georgetown for our welcome to North America dinner before we return to Denver.

Overnight: Crown Plaza Hotel, Denver, Colorado. Lunch and dinner included.

### **Day 3. Friday, 28 September 2018**

We have an early start today as we travel south to Colorado Springs, where we will visit the Garden of the Gods rock formations on the way to the railway station. The Garden of the Gods Park features dramatic rock formations that have a long history of Native American occupation and morning photography is spectacular. Continue to the Manitou and Pike's Peak Cog Railway, where you will ride the rack railway through spectacular scenery to the top of Pike's Peak and back down to Manitou Springs, arriving at lunch time. There will be free time in downtown Manitou Springs for lunch and a little window shopping at the many unique shops. Leave Manitou Springs after lunch for the one hour ride by highway to Canon City where you will board the Royal Gorge Scenic Railroad train for a journey through the spectacular Royal Gorge. Since 1879, these tracks have followed the winding, tumbling Arkansas River deep within the soaring, 1,000-foot granite cliffs of Colorado's Royal Gorge. After our train ride, we continue to Alamosa and hotel check-in at The Best Western Alamosa Inn at about 21h00.

Overnight: Best Western Alamosa Inn, Alamosa, Colorado. Dinner included.

### **Day 4. Saturday, 29 September 2018**

Morning departure by highway to visit near-by Great Sand Dunes National Park, the park that protects the tallest sand dunes in North America. From the valley floor to the crest of 13,000 foot peaks in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains the park and preserve contain ecosystems ranging from sand sheet to dunes to tundra. The morning shadows on the sand dunes are breathtaking and perfect for photography. We then travel to near-by Fort Garland to board the Fall Colors excursion train on the Rio Grande Scenic Railroad which will stop to pick up passengers here at 10h15 for the scenic La Veta Pass Route. Autumn in Colorado brings the rich golden tones of the Aspen leaves contrasted against the green pines, rugged rocks and the wide open blue skies. During the trip the railroad offers passengers two staged photo locations high in the Rockies to capture nature, leaves, mountains, and the train as it runs by. Everyone will have a great seat in the comfort of the dome cars where the freshly prepared lunch will be served with a fall themed menu. Tucked away in the La Cuchara Valley below the twin Spanish Peaks, the quaint art town of La Veta may be one of the last, best undiscovered spots in Colorado. The marriage of scenic beauty, rich history and a charming town center with shopping, galleries and dining make it easy to see how this area became a haven for artists over the years. You can explore La Veta while the train is being turned around for the journey back to Fort Garland and on to Alamosa. We will ride all the way to Alamosa arriving at 17h30. We then motor by highway to Chama, New Mexico for hotel check-in at the Branding Iron Motel. Before checking in we will make a short stop at the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad yards and workshop where the narrow-gauge steam locomotives will be waiting for the next day's run up into the Rockies to Cumbres Pass and beyond.

Overnight: Branding iron Motel, Chama New Mexico. Breakfast and lunch included.

### **Day 5. Sunday, 30 September 2018**

After breakfast, visit to the railroad yards and workshops to watch the crew prepare the steam locomotive for a 10h00 departure. This morning you will have a choice to either ride the steam train up the steep grades Chama, New Mexico to Cumbres Summit or you can follow the train by highway and get some great action shots then board the train at Cumbres Summit and ride the rest of the way to Antonito, Colorado arriving at 16h05. Once the train arrives at Antonito we head for Durango, Colorado by highway.

Overnight: Best Western Rio Grande Hotel, Durango, Colorado. Breakfast and lunch included.

### **Day 6. Monday, 01 October 2018**

Before boarding our train in Durango we will visit the Durango & Silverton museum which is attached to the workshops and give you a view into the roundhouse from the museum. We then will board the first steam train of the day on the famous Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad with an upgrade option to ride on the open observation car Cinco Animas at the rear of the train. This train leaves Durango at 08h00 and arrives in Silverton before lunch having passed through the dramatic Animas Canyon. Being on the first train gives us the opportunity to photograph the second train which arrives 45 minutes later. The Durango & Silverton Railroad shares a special place with the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad as the iconic narrow gauge steam railways of the American west. You will ride both and have opportunities for line-siding and photography. There is a railway museum in the old Silverton station. Your train will depart Silverton at 13h45 and you will have the option to get off this train at the Rockwood Station and follow by highway for photos on into Durango. After returning to Durango the rest of the evening is yours to explore this colorful town and have dinner.

Overnight: Best Western Rio Grande Hotel, Durango, Colorado. Breakfast included.

*There is an option to will leave the tour on the morning of 02 October and fly out of Durango.  
It is also possible to fly to Durango on 30 September and join the second part of the tour.*

### **Day 7. Tuesday, 02 October 2018**

We say good-bye to Durango and head west towards Arizona and Utah first paying a visit to Mesa Verde National Park. Mesa Verde, Spanish for green table, offers a spectacular insight to the lives of the Ancestral Pueblo people who made it their home for over 700 years, from AD 600 to 1300. Today the park protects nearly 5,000 known archeological sites, including 600 cliff dwellings. These sites are some of the most notable and best preserved in the United States. Departing here we continue westbound to the Navajo Nation's Monument Valley Park which is within the Navajo Nation which is part in Arizona and Utah and controlled by Navajo laws and customs. This is a nation within the boundaries of the United States. You will be experiencing one of the most majestic - and most photographed - points on earth. Monument Valley boasts sandstone masterpieces that tower at heights of 400 to 1,000 feet, framed by scenic clouds casting shadows that graciously roam the desert floor. The angle of the sun accents these graceful formations, providing scenery that is simply spellbinding. The landscape overwhelms, not just by its beauty but also by its size. The fragile pinnacles of rock are surrounded by miles of mesas and buttes, shrubs, trees and windblown sand, all comprising the magnificent colors of the valley. All of this harmoniously combines to make Monument Valley a truly wondrous experience. We plan to arrive here and first check into The View Hotel. This Hotel is a Navajo owned business located within the Navajo Nation and the Navajo Tribal Park at Monument Valley. All rooms face east with a private balcony with views unlike anywhere else in world. You can enjoy the sunset as the shadows of late afternoon move across the valley and onto the massive rock formations right from your balcony. After the sun sets you can head for the hotel restaurant for dinner.

Overnight: View Hotel, Monument Valley. Breakfast and lunch included.

### **Day 8. Wednesday, 03 October 2018**

Today, we will use the morning hours to explore Monument Valley. Travel the 17 Mile Drive through the valley to view some of the rock formations with Navajo names like East & West Mitten, Merrick Butte, Elephant Butte, The Three Sisters, Camel Butte, The Hub, Rain God Mesa, and Totem Pole. We then head north into Utah but still within the vast Navajo Nation. Just a hand full of miles into Utah we stop to visit Goosenecks State Park. On the edge of a deep canyon above the San Juan River, Gooseneck is a small park that affords impressive views of one of the most striking examples of an entrenched river meander on the North American continent. The San Juan River twists and turns through the meander, flowing six miles while advancing one and half miles west on its way to Lake Powell. Gaze at the results of 300 million years of geological activity, where the San Juan River winds and carves its way through the desert 1,000 feet below. Continue to a remote area called Valley of the Gods, still within the Navajo Nation. This is a scenic back-country area in south eastern Utah, near Mexican Hat. It is a hidden gem with scenery similar to that of nearby Monument Valley. Valley of the Gods offers isolated buttes, towering pinnacles and wide open spaces that seem to go on forever, it is not well known and fewer tourists visit. We will have a picnic lunch here before continuing northbound.

Later this afternoon we will enjoy the vast vistas at Canyonlands National Park. This national park invites you to explore a wilderness of countless canyons and fantastically formed buttes carved by the Colorado River and its tributaries. Our hotel tonight is in the heart of canyon country.

Overnight: Moab, Utah. Breakfast and lunch included.

### **Day 9. Thursday, 04 October 2018**

This morning, visit the Arches National Park. You will discover a landscape of contrasting colors, landforms and textures unlike any other in the world. The park has over 2,000 natural stone arches, in addition to hundreds of

soaring pinnacles, massive fins and giant balanced rocks. We continue our trek westward towards Bryce Bryce National Park, but first we will pass through Capitol Reef National Park. Located in south-central Utah in the heart of red rock country, Capitol Reef National Park is a hidden treasure filled with cliffs, canyons, domes and bridges in the Water-pocket Fold, a geologic monocline (a wrinkle on the earth) extending almost 100 miles. We plan to have a picnic lunch here. Late afternoon or early evening we arrive at Bryce National Park. Hoodoos (odd-shaped pillars of rock left standing from the forces of erosion) can be found on every continent, but here is the largest collection of hoodoos in the world! Descriptions fail. Photographs do not do it justice. Bring your sense of wonder and imagination as the sun sets.

Overnight: Best Western Plus Bryce Canyon Grand Hotel. Breakfast and lunch included.

### **Day 10. Friday, 05 October 2018**

Visit the Bryce National Park again this morning before resuming our westbound trip. We soon pass by Great Basin National Park on our way to Ely, Nevada and so a short stop is in order. From the 13,000-foot summit of Wheeler Peak to the sage-covered foothills, Great Basin National Park is a place to sample the stunning diversity of the larger Great Basin region. It is then on to Ely, Nevada and hotel check-in at the La Quinta Hotel. For those interested the afternoon steam excursion train is due back in town at 18h00 and you have the option to get some track-side photos along the line including a great shot of this train coming out of the one tunnel on this railway.

Overnight: La Quinta Hotel, Ely, Nevada. Lunch and dinner included.

### **Day 11. Saturday, 06 October 2018**

The Nevada Northern Railway yards and workshops in East Ely, Nevada is the best-preserved, least altered, and most complete complex remaining from the steam railroad era in the US. Established in 1905 to support the area's booming copper mining industry, the East Ely yard escaped modernization because of its geographical remoteness and the decline of the mining industry it once served. We will explore the yards and workshops this morning. Today's excursion train pulled by steam departs at 13h00 for the journey up to a point near the Ruth Copper Mine and returns at 14h30. You have the choice to ride this train or follow on the highway for some great action shots. Once back in East Ely it will be time to yet again head west across the Nevada desert over what is considered the "Loneliest Road" in America. Make stops in Eureka and Austin on our 287-mile stretch between Ely and Fernley.

Eureka is one of the best-preserved mining cities in the American West. Silver strikes made here in 1864 by prospectors from Austin proved uneconomical to work because of the high lead content of the ores. Ore was shipped to England and Wales for reduction until 1869, when the first of sixteen successful smelters was constructed. Within a decade three mines alone had paid out in dividends more money than had ever been invested in all Eureka County enterprises combined, and Eureka was famous as the "Pittsburgh of the West." Eureka overtook Austin in size and mining productivity during the middle 1870s when the Eureka & Palisade Railroad was extended south from the Central Pacific. By 1878, when Austin had already begun its decline, Eureka had a population of about 9,000 and had taken second place among Nevada cities. There were dozens of saloons, gambling houses and bawdy houses, three opera houses, two breweries, five volunteer firefighting companies, and two companies of militia as well as the usual complement of doctors, lawyers, merchants, bankers, hotels, newspapers, and other businesses. Fifty mines produced lead, silver, gold, and zinc for the smelters, which could process more than 700 tons of ore a day. Many of its buildings are impressive. Eureka's breweries were located on opposite ends of town, the heavy winters prompted the business people to drive tunnels underground from one end of town to the other to ensure the prompt delivery of beer to the saloons along Main Street. Much of the old tunneling has collapsed or is unsafe, but in its heyday it was quite comfortable to use, fancy even, with bricked walls, and arched brick chambers reminiscent of medieval dungeons.

Next we stop at the town of Austin which discovered in 1862 by a horse which by accident kicked up a piece of quartz containing gold and silver. The ore was sent to Virginia City for assay and once word got out, the silver rush was on.

One year later, 10,000 people occupied the town. A lumber mill had been built and four hundred homes had been constructed. There were schools, churches, hotels, stores and, of course, the required number of saloons and pleasure houses. By 1880, the mines began to show signs of exhaustion and its total of \$50 million in ore production was history. We continue westward and should arrive in Virginia City, Nevada, by sunset.

Overnight: Silverland Inn, Virginia City, Nevada. Breakfast and lunch included.

### **Day 12. Sunday, 07 October 2018**

On Sunday, the Virginia & Truckee runs a train from the Eastgate Station near Carson City up the steep hill to Virginia City and return. You will have the option to ride this train or follow by highway for some spectacular photography of the steam locomotive working hard up the grade. This train departs from the Eastgate Station at 10h00. Once the train arrives in Virginia City you will have the opportunity to visit the workshops. Nevada's most famous short line connected Reno with Carson City, Virginia City, and Minden. Operating for 80 years, the V&T was Nevada's Bonanza Railroad as it hauled valuable Comstock ore to quartz reduction mills located at Silver City and along the Carson River. The name "Virginia & Truckee" is recognized the world over, V&T locomotives and cars have appeared in scores of feature-length motion pictures and the historic equipment is preserved and exhibited in

museums in Nevada, California and as far away as Strasburg, Pennsylvania. The Railroad was organized in 1868 to connect Comstock ore producing mines with quartz reduction mills and, on the return trip, to bring in needed lumber, mining timbers and cord wood for fuel. For nearly twenty years the V&T was a major political and economic factor in the growth and development of Western Nevada and Eastern California. During the late 1870s, V&T stockholders paid handsome dividends of over \$100,000 monthly. After 80 years of continuous operation the railway finally succumbed to increasing competition from highway competition and the Bonanza short line's last revenue train operated in 1950. Following the sale of the railway's structures and properties, the rails between Reno and Minden were removed and the famous V&T became but a legend. Now a section between Virginia City and Eastgate, just outside of Carson City, has been rebuilt and is in operation.

Later this morning we travel to Carson City to visit the Nevada State Railroad Museum. This museum is dedicated to educating visitors and the community about Nevada railroad history. This mission is accomplished through the collection, preservation and interpretation on significant locomotives, rolling stock, artifacts, photographs and memorabilia directly related to railroads and railroading in Nevada. In addition to static exhibits, select pieces of equipment in the collection are restored and operated throughout the year to demonstrate steam and early gasoline technology and provide visitors with a first-hand experience with railroad history through the sights, sounds and sensations of a train ride. After our visit to the museum we travel north through Reno and on to Portola, home to the Western Pacific Railroad Museum which has the largest collection of diesel engines in North America. Upon arrival we check-in at the Sierra Motel. This evening we are invited to Chris Skow's home for a Mexican Buffet all you can eat dinner out on the deck. Chris will have his garden scale model trains running in the gardens and you can inspect his massive collection of railroad artifacts.

Overnight: Sierra Motel, Portola, California. Lunch and dinner included.

### **Day 13. Monday, 08 October 2018**

Visit the Western Pacific Railroad Museum in Portola this morning. Around mid-day we will motor to Sacramento, taking in some modern rail photography en-route. There should be a Union Pacific freight train headed westbound down the Feather River Canyon, we plan to follow it and photograph it at such famous locations as the massive Clio Viaduct, Williams Loop and the Keddie Wye Bridge. West of Keddie we should see and photograph one or two BNSF freight trains as we make our way down the canyon all the way to Oroville. We will then continue to Sacramento and hotel check-in at the Vagabond Inn in downtown Sacramento which is next to the California State Railroad Museum and the old historic section of the city. After hotel check in you can explore "Old Town" Sacramento and enjoy dinner at one of the many restaurants.

Overnight: Vagabond Inn, Sacramento, California. Lunch included.

### **Day 14. Tuesday, 09 October 2018**

For those that are interested we will take a ride on the Sacramento Regional Transit light rail line, the alternative is free time at the hotel. Upon our return, check-out of our hotel and visit the California State Railroad Museum before boarding Amtrak's Capitol Corridor Train 541 which departs Sacramento at 14h10 and arrives at Richmond at 15h35. Richmond has an across the platform connection to the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), we will catch a Bart train here for the ride into San Francisco. Our hotel is a short walk from Union Square and the Bart train station. Later in the evening, after dinner and the rush hour, we will take a night time tour of San Francisco using the street car, cable car and trams.

Overnight: Hotel Nikko. San Francisco, California. Breakfast included.

### **Day 15. Wednesday, 10 October 2018**

Your tour ends this morning. Travel to San Francisco's airport is easy by Bart train.

#### **Alternatively, stay an extra day in San Francisco.**

Free day in San Francisco to explore the city on your own. Mid-afternoon, transfer to Napa to board the Napa Valley Wine Train where we will have Dinner. We then return to the hotel in San Francisco.

Overnight: Hotel Nikko. San Francisco. Dinner included.

### **Day 16. Thursday, 11 October 2018**

Transfer to the San Francisco International Airport for flights home. If you have sometime prior to your flight you may prefer to take a Bart train to the airport later in the day.

#### **Prices:**

**This tour has been priced in US Dollars.**

Payments can be made in Sterling at the prevailing exchange rate, or in US Dollars as a bank transfer to the Geoff's Trains US Dollar bank account.

**Full tour from 26 September to 10 October 2018**

\$5,995 per person sharing a twin or double room.  
\$995 single room supplement

**First half of tour. Colorado only from 26 September to 02 October 2018**

\$3,095 per person sharing a twin or double room.  
\$550 single room supplement

**Second half of tour. Colorado to California from 02 to 10 October 2018**

\$3,195 per person sharing a twin or double room.  
\$650 single room supplement

**Extra night in San Francisco hotel from 10 to 11 October 2018**

\$250 per person sharing a twin or double room.

**Dinner on Nappa Valley Wine Train on 11 October. Includes transfers from San Francisco hotel.**

\$350 per person.

**Upgrade on Durango and Silverton trains to Parlour Car on the Cumbres and Toltec and to Presidential Class on the Durango and Silverton**

\$300 per person

**Your tour includes:**

- Fourteen night's accommodation. (Six on the Colorado only option)
- Meals as described in the programme.
- All road transfers, in 15 seat minivans.
- All train tickets, attraction and museum entry as described in the programme.
- An American tour driver/guide.
- Geoff Cooke as your tour manager.

**Your tour does not include:**

- Air travel.
- Meals not mentioned or any drinks with meals.
- Gratuities.
- Items of a personal nature such as phone calls, internet access (except where complimentary) and laundry.

**Extend your stay in San Fransisco:**

We can book an hotel for you in San Fransisco after the tour, subject to availability.  
Prices on application for bed and buffet breakfast

**Important information:**

**Disabilities:** When you book this tour it is accepted that you are able to walk at a reasonable pace between hotels and railway stations, this may take 10 minutes. If you are uncertain about the suitability of the tour, please discuss this with us when you book.

Dress: Smart casual dress is appropriate.

**Meals:** Breakfast is included where the hotels offer it either inclusively, or at reasonable rates. Other included meals are detailed in the programme.

**Hotels:** All of our hotels are 3 and 4 star standard with en-suite rooms. All hotels are subject to change for an equivalent or better one.

Maximum number of participants: 20.

Minimum number of participants: 8