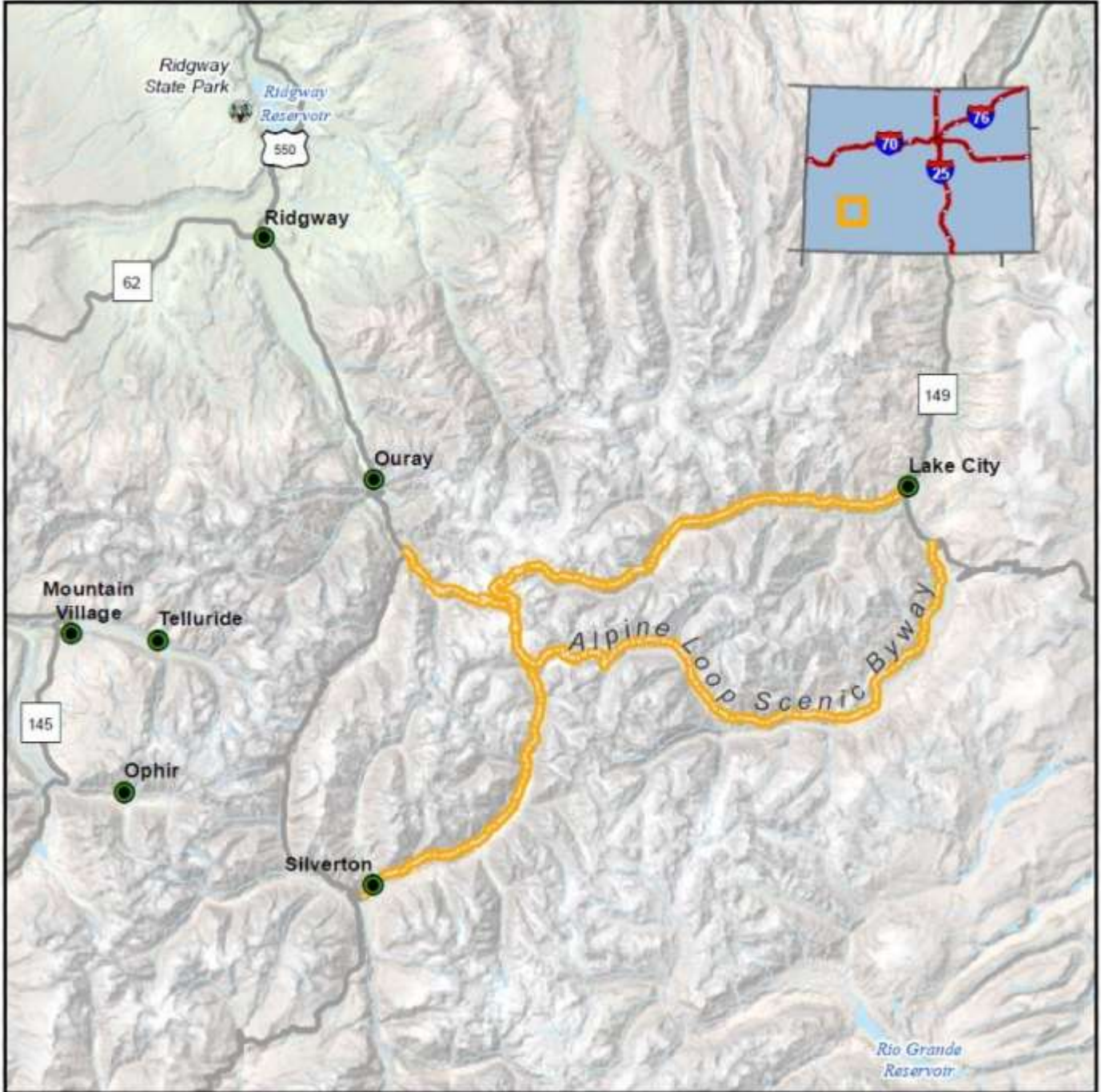




## Alpine Loop Scenic and Historic Byway

Using paths originally trod by Native Americans, hardy pioneers in search of silver, gold and zinc carved a network of roads through the rugged terrain high up in the Colorado mountains. Critical to transporting ore and supplies in mule-drawn wagons to Silverton, Ouray and Lake City, the route is still punctuated with the skeletons of yesterday's boomtowns, Animas Forks, Mineral Point and Capitol City. The pits and tunnels of Hidden Treasure, Ute-Ulay, Golden Fleece, Little Giant and Pride of the West mines are still also visible on the roadsides. This system of historic roads that connected the mines and the mining towns in the region is now the Alpine Loop Backcountry Byway. Unlike most scenic byways traveling on paved highways, this Bureau of Land Management Backcountry Byway is completely off the beaten path on rocky roads used by miners to cart off their ore. Plus, the Alpine Loop climbs through 12,000-foot Engineer and Cinnamon passes that deliver spectacular views. All told, this 63 miles of alpine terrain with stunning geography, seven mountain peaks, valleys, streams, lakes sculpted by volcanoes, glaciers, wind, rain and Mother Nature's artistry makes for a wonderful drive as well as an exploration of fascinating history just about lost to time. In between the thrilling views you'll discover history tucked away in timeless towns that take you back to gold rush days of the Wild West when riches flowed.





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## Alpine Loop Experience



### Driving the Byway

Your journey begins in Durango, Colorado's gateway to the Old West. After a day exploring and a ride on the Durango and Silverton Railroad, which brought ore down from the mountains, you'll be traveling to Silverton, Colorado's silver capital. The Alpine Loop takes off from Silverton, traveling first through the ghost towns of Howardsville, Eureka and finally, Animas Forks. From there, you're driving the rocky roads of the Byway, first through Cinnamon Pass, then Sherman Overlook and past Lake San Cristobal, before reaching Lake City. After Lake City, the Ute-Ulay Mine, Pike Snowden Cabin, Lee's Smelter Stack, Capitol City ghost town, Charcoal Kiln, Whitmore Falls, Rose Lime Kiln, Empire Chief Mine, Rose's Cabin and the Palmerton Powder House, all appear along the road, before passing through Engineer Pass and rejoining the road to Ouray.

*A note about the Alpine Loop: About two thirds of the route is dirt road suitable for 2-wheel drive passenger cars. You'll need a 4-wheel drive, high clearance vehicle to drive the entire route and cross Engineer Pass, Cinnamon Pass and Mineral Creek, where passenger cars, RV's, campers, and vans are not recommended. Semi-trucks with trailers are prohibited on the entire route. Rental services for off-highway vehicles are offered in surrounding towns. Uphill traffic has the right of way on all roads and the speed limit is 15 miles an hour.*

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## Day One



## Durango

Founded in 1880 by the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad, Durango is the gateway to Colorado's Old West. Today walking in the Victorian charm you'll notice architectural styles which changed during eras of boom and bust. A collection of outstanding historic buildings like the railroad depot, the Wetter Building, several historic hotels, and the "Saloon District" have been carefully preserved. Even though the "jeans and cowboy hat dress code" will be immediately obvious, the town has more award-winning restaurants per capita than San Francisco. In fact, the high quality of life is the main reason that folks leave the big city for a more casual mountain life, with a multitude of scenic walking trails, a thriving arts community, and great historical and cultural offerings.

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## Day One

### **Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad**



Riding the train that brought over \$300 million in gold and silver down from the San Juan mountains is a must do. You'll see completely different scenery than you will driving the San Juan Skyway Scenic Byway. Constructed in 1881, the line parallels the Million Dollar Highway completed in 1887. Hauling of precious metals continued until 1893, when the bottom dropped out of silver prices. After facing various challenges for nearly 40 years, Hollywood discovered Durango and the railroad, showcasing the train in movies including Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid.

479 Main Avenue, Durango, CO 81301 970-259-0274  
Departures at 9AM, 12:15PM, 3:15PM, Allow 3+ hours,  
Starting at \$70 per person

### **Historic Downtown Walking Tour and Durango Art Galleries**



One of the special things about Durango is the living heritage of the town on display along Main Avenue. The Historic Downtown Durango Walking Tour (pdf included with detailed itinerary) begins at the Railroad depot, where you can also visit the D&S Railroad Museum. As you enjoy the walking tour through town, you'll pass art galleries and alternative art spaces featuring contemporary to western to Native American art from local, regional and nationally recognized artists. The Durango Art Galleries Collective host events, workshops, shows and gallery walks throughout the year. Among others, members include Diane West Jewelry & Art, Durango Arts Center, Earthen Vessel Gallery, Sorrel Sky Gallery, Toh-Atin Gallery and Wildshots Gallery.

Tour starts at 479 Main Avenue, Allow 2 hours

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## Day One

### Animas Museum



Located in the North Main District, the Animas Museum, delivers an overview of the area's Native Americans, Old West, fires, railroads, transportation and lifeways. The Joy Family Cabin and Peterson House which contrasts life in 1876 with life in the 1930s are also part of the campus.

3065 West Second Avenue, Durango, CO 81301  
970-259-2402 Tuesday-Saturday 9AM- 4PM, Allow 1 hour,  
\$5.00 per person

### Optional Dining Experience



#### Bar D Old West Music Show and Chuckwagon Supper

8080 Country Road 250  
Durango, CO 81301  
970-247-5753

Eat on traditional tin plates, enjoying a choice of entrees, served with potatoes, baked beans, homemade biscuits with hone, applesauce, home baked cake, cowboy coffee or real lemonade.

Starting at \$29 per person, Dinner at 6:30PM

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## Durango Destination Distinctive Accommodations and Dining



### **Destination Distinctive Accommodations: General Palmer Hotel** **567 Main Avenue, Durango, CO 81301 970-247-4747**

The prestigious Victorian era General Palmer Hotel has operated continuously since it was built in 1898. Named after Civil War General Palmer, it is the only Historic Four Diamond Hotel in Southwest Colorado. Step back in time and experience the unique nostalgia of the hotel while enjoying all the comforts of modern living.



### **Grassburgers**

726 1/2 Main Avenue  
Durango, CO 81301  
970-247-1081

An award-winning farm to table restaurant featuring 100% grass fed burgers, with gluten free, vegan and allergy friendly options that is completely non-GMO.

### **Eolus**

919 Main Avenue  
Durango, CO 81301  
970-259-2898

Considered the best restaurant in Durango, with exquisite food and excellent service.

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## Day Two



## Silverton

The entire town of Silverton, which anchors one end of the Million Dollar Highway, is a National Historic Landmark. Even though precious metals were discovered here in 1860, miners did not return to stake their claims until the end of the Civil War a decade later. Laid out in 1874, the Silverton soon served as the center of numerous mining camps. The first train rolled in, in 1882, and within a year Silverton hosted 2,000 residents, 400 buildings, two banks, five laundries, 29 saloons, several hotels and a bawdy red-light district. When men began bringing their wives and families to town, Greene Street began serving as an invisible line between the law-abiding, church going residents and the gamblers, dance halls, saloons and other local characters resided on the other side. Mining did not completely close down in Silverton until the early 1990s – and its legend that there’s still gold and silver in the hills, waiting for mining to return. Durango—Silverton, 48 miles

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## Day Two

### Silverton Historic Walking Tour



Take a 16 block walking tour through the historic district (pdf included with detailed itinerary) that takes you past the San Juan County Jail, the old hospital, and a selection of the many dens of iniquity that existed during the mining heyday. Besides the town, the Durango and Silverton Railroad and the Mayflower Mill are National Historic Landmarks. The Old Hundred Boarding House is a Colorado Historic Place.

The tour begins at the San Juan County Courthouse, Greene Street and West 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Allow 2 hours

### San Juan County Historical Society



The same mining heritage that fueled the development of the beautiful historic towns in the region, also had an impact on San Juan County. You can discover more of the story at the San Juan Historical Society which operates the Mining Heritage Center, the 1902 County Jail Museum, the Mayflower Mill, the Allen Nossaman Memorial Archive, the Silverton Power Station and the Silverton Standard and the Miner Newspaper, (a National Historic Site in Journalism), and the Little Nation Mill in Howardsville. A three-story addition creating the Mining Heritage Center houses exhibit space, a new wood and metal shop, curating and restoration space for working on the collections.

1557 Greene Street, Silverton, CO 81433 970-387-5609  
7 Days, 10AM-5PM, Allow 2 hours, more time to visit all locations. \$10 per person. Purchase a Heritage Pass for discount to visit all locations

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## Silverton Destination Distinctive Accommodations and Dining



### **Destination Distinctive Accommodations: Grand Imperial Hotel** 1219 Greene Street, Silverton, CO 81433 970-387-5527

Built in just 10 months, the massive hotel was commissioned in 1882 by a perfume importer from New York. At the time, it was the largest single standing structure south of Denver. For 25 years, the second floor served as offices for Silverton and San Juan County. Businesses occupied the first floor. When mining production waned and it changed hands, after 135 years, the Grand Lady of San Juan fell into disrepair. The Harper family, owners of the Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad purchased the hotel and undertook an extensive restoration, bringing it back to an authentic 1882 experience.



### **Handlebars Restaurant and Saloon** 1323 Greene Street Silverton, CO 81433 970-387-5395

In the 30 years since it opened, Handlebars has developed a reputation for its exceptional food and unique western decor. Nestled in Silverton, famous for its mining history, bordellos, gamblers, and gunslingers, you can step back in time and savor the flavor of western fare, when roulette wheels shirred, bordello girls beckoned, and gold dust littered the bar as miners paid for their drinks with “a pinch of powder.”

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## Day Three

### Alpine Loop Scenic and Historic Byway



At this point, it is time to begin your journey on the Alpine Loop traveling through Howardsville, Eureka, and Animas Forks. From there, you can take the route to Lake City. Even though Howardsville now has only a few cabins, the town was the first county seat of LaPlata County. In fact, the 1874 courthouse was briefly the seat of government for the entire of southwestern Colorado. Howardsville went into decline when the railroad bypassed the town and the county seat moved to Silverton. Home of the Sunnyside Mine, Eureka still holds deposits of precious metals today. At one time, the ghost town of Animas Forks had 30 cabins, a hotel, general store, saloon and post office, along with 450 residents and a newspaper.

### Old Hundred Mine Tour Howardsville



It's time to suit up in a yellow rain suit and hard hat to travel 1500 feet underground to see how gold was mined. A mine train takes you one-third of a mile into a mountain to where old mining equipment is still in place. Live demonstrations include operating drills, a skip, a slusher, mucker operations and honey wagons, all original equipment from the famous Camp Bird, Idarado and Sunnyside mines in the area. Do your own mining in the sluice boxes outside.

721 County Road 4 A, Silverton, CO 81433 970-387-5444  
7 Days Tours on the hour from 10AM, \$24 per person. The Heritage Pass from the San Juan County Historical Society includes the mine tour.

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## Day Three



## Lake City

Somewhere high up in the Colorado mountains, in the back of the beyond, valuable ore was discovered in Lake City in 1871 creating the most isolated silver camp in the state. When the Ute Indians ceded the land in 1874, the Hotchkiss and Golden Fleece mines opened, along with a sawmill, stagecoach and post office. The rush was on and by end of 1876, Lake City boasted 14 general stores, seven saloons, three bakeries, two banks, two breweries, five blacksmiths, two brickyards, four Chinese laundries, and numerous other businesses for its booming population. Silverton to Lake City, 34 miles, allow 2+ hours.

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## Day Three

### Lake City Historic Walking Tour



Explore Lake City's more than 200 historic homes, outbuildings, barns, churches, public buildings and motor courts and the oldest operating courthouse in Colorado (pdf provided with detailed itinerary). A large portion of the buildings were constructed in the late 1800s during westward expansion, including rare wood-framed commercial buildings and the first church built on the Western slope. There are 34 interpretive plaques with detailed information, stories, and photographs of the historic structures in the Lake City Historic District. Numerous shops and restaurants line a 500-foot boardwalk. Proud of their role in history of the Old West, this remote mountain town have worked hard to preserve the timeless structures for the ages.

Tour starts at 115 South Gunnison Avenue, Allow 1 hour

### Hinsdale County Museum



Housed in the historic Finley Block, the Hinsdale County Museum celebrates Lake City's past, with a donated collection of photographs and other materials that relate to early history.

130 North Silver Street, Lake City, CO 81235  
970-944-2050 F, St and M 10AM—5PM, Tu– Th 10AM-5PM Allow 1 hour, \$5.00 per person

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## Day Three



### **Climb Elevated Eatery**

808 Gunnison Avenue

Lake City, CO 81235

970-944-5566

Located in the most remote county in the continental United States, enjoy lunch at Climb Elevated Eatery features consistently delicious comfort food made from scratch, that is as farm to table as possible in this remote location.

### **Capitol City Ghost Town**



Traveling the Alpine Loop, you'll be passing Capitol City nine miles from the junction at Animas Forks with the road to Ouray. Once named Galena City, the deserted mining town once featured the home of want to be Colorado Governor George Lee, built with brink hauled from Pueblo. At one point, the 200-acre town had several hotels, restaurants, saloons, smelters, a sawmill, post office, a schoolhouse and many homes, all thriving during the rich find of 1877. Down from a population of 800, all that is left is a post office and Lee's Smelter Stack.

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## Day Three



## Ouray

Local legend has it that Chief Ouray lived in a small cabin near the Amphitheater, soaked in the "sacred hot springs," conducted native rituals, and met with officials here as Ouray was being formed. Known to some as the Switzerland of America, the town is surrounded by some of the most rugged mountains in the country. When the railroad eliminated the need to ship ore out in wagons, Ouray became a boomtown. Ore shipments made it the most profitable railroad per mile in the U. S and the town a historical gem. Lake City to Ouray, 30 miles, allow 2+ hours.

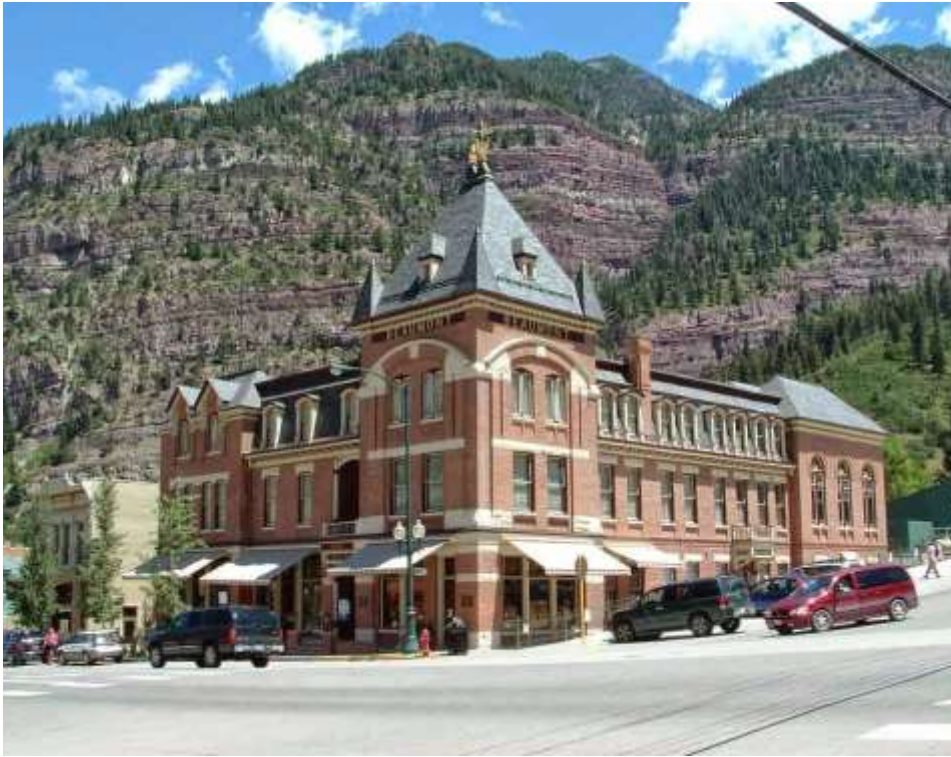
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## Ouray Destination Distinctive Accommodations and Dining



### **Destination Distinctive Accommodations: Beaumont Hotel and Spa** 505 Main Street, Ouray, CO 81427, 970-325-7000

Built in 1886 at the height of the “gold boom,” the Beaumont Hotel has long been known as the 'Flagship of the San Juans.' The graciously appointed structure has welcomed such famous guests as Theodore Roosevelt and Herbert Hoover, King Leopold of Belgium, Chipeta, widow Chief Ouray, Sarah Bernhardt, Angie Dickenson, Oprah Winfrey, and more. Recent restorations modernized the entire structure to meet the needs of today's traveler while preserving the property's historical grandeur.



### **Brickhouse 737** 737 Main Street Ouray, CO 81427 970-325-7236

The number one restaurant in Ouray, with unique choices and farm to table cuisine.

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## Day Four

### Ouray County Historical Society



When St. Joseph's Miners Hospital became the Historical Society headquarters, the Smithsonian called it "one of the best little museums in the West." Three floors with twenty-seven rooms of exhibits include original documents and thousands of photographs of historic Ouray, an impressive mineral collection, Ute Indian displays, Victorian era displays, mine exhibits, railroading and ranching exhibits, hospital operating rooms from the 1890s and the 1940s, and an original patient room. .

420 Sixth Avenue, Ouray, CO 81427 970-325-4576  
10AM-4:30PM, Days vary with seasons, Allow 2 hours,  
\$7.00 per person



### Ouray Historic District Walking Tour

The Ouray Historic District Walking Tour (pdf included with the detailed itinerary) which begins and end at the Ouray County Historical Museum, takes you past 24 locations which feature the finest Victorian architecture in the town.

Tour begins at 420 Sixth Avenue, allow 1 –1.5 hours

### Bachelor-Syracuse Mine Tour



A tour of the Bachelor-Syracuse mine will ultimately take you 1,500 feet into Gold Hill. Beginning at ground level, you'll discover rich ore veins, plus the work environment and equipment used to dig out the ore. After the underground mine tour, you'll receive gold panning instruction and a tour of the turn-of-the-century Blacksmith shop. If you have not yet had lunch, stop at the Outdoor Café.

95 Gold Mountain Trail, Ouray, CO 81427. 970-325-0220  
7 Days, 10AM-2PM, 1 hour tour. \$16.00 per person,

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