



## Backcountry Archaeology in the Bears Ears

### Program Details

*Registration limited to 8 participants. Lodging, meals, and transportation provided. Itinerary subject to change.*

#### **Sunday, September 15: Arrive in Cortez**

Gather at the Holiday Inn Express in Cortez for introductions, dinner, and a look ahead at the week. *Overnight: Holiday Inn Express, Cortez, CO (D)*

#### **Monday, September 16: Sacred Mesa and Wolfman Panel**

We'll travel to an ancestral place near Bluff, UT for a unique experience as we climb an isolated mesa above the San Juan River. This is a short steep hike and the view is worth it! After lunch, we travel to Comb Ridge for a short hike to see the Wolfman petroglyphs. Late afternoon we'll continue up the iconic switchbacks of the Moki Dugway to Cedar Mesa where we'll set up base camp and enjoy our first evening camping on the land. *Approximately 3-miles of hiking. Overnight: Camping in Bears Ears National Monument (B, L, D)*

#### **Tuesday, September 17: Moon House**

Moon House is one the quintessential sites in the Bears Ears National Monument for good reason. Its well-preserved rooms and painted murals stir the imagination. *Approximately 4-miles of hiking. Overnight: Camping in Bears Ears National Monument (B, L, D)*

#### **Wednesday, September 18: Slickhorn Canyon**

The Slickhorn Canyon complex is a rugged and beautiful series of canyons that have served as access points for travelers for thousands of years. We'll spend the day exploring, meandering, and watching for ancestral footprints, tracks of animals, and learning plants of the region as a way to begin to comprehend how people made a living on this land. *Approximately 5-miles of hiking. Overnight: Camping in Bears Ears National Monument (B, L, D)*

#### **Thursday, September 19: Fish Canyon**

At the upper reaches of Cedar Mesa, we'll cross the top of Fish Canyon and walk through thousands of years of occupation. In one small area, we can see sites that range from the Basketmaker eras to the late Pueblo times (approximately 450 BCE–1300 CE). This is an easy hike through rolling pinyon and juniper hills. *Approximately 6-miles of hiking. Overnight: Camping in Bears Ears National Monument (B, L, D)*

#### **Friday, September 20: The Citadel**

Road Canyon cuts dramatically into Cedar Mesa and winds eastward towards Comb Ridge. We venture out on a large sandstone fin, see remnants of a protective wall, and finally to an impressive fortress-like complex known as the Citadel. We'll make our way back to Cortez, CO for a celebratory group dinner and well-earned hot showers! *Approximately 4-miles of hiking. Overnight: Holiday Inn Express, Cortez, CO (B, L, D)*

#### **Saturday, September 21: Departures**

Transfer to the Crow Canyon campus for vehicles and Durango for airport shuttles as needed. (B)

*\*(B, L, D) indicates meals provided: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

# Is This Trip For You?

## WHAT TO EXPECT

The itinerary is designed for energetic people in good health who like to be active and have a spirit of adventure. Team spirit and a good sense of humor are vital! This is a hiking intensive program consisting of day hikes across rugged and remote canyonlands. There is no overnight backpacking. We will come and go from a base camp. The hikes are between three and seven miles a day on uneven, rocky trails. Many routes are steep, have some exposure, require scrambling up ledges, have loose rock, and have no shade. While staff members are available for assistance, you should be comfortable using your hands to steady yourself and be able to take steps higher than a standard staircase step to navigate around boulders and bedrock. Area elevations range from 4,000 to 7,000-feet.

This program involves van travel and hiking to access both front country and backcountry sites. Some days will include van rides of one hour each way. Some days van rides will last less than 30-minutes with multiple stops.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

Lodging at the beginning and end of the program will be in Cortez, CO at the Holiday Inn Express. We'll transfer to a remote backcountry camp on Cedar Mesa for four nights.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**How strenuous is the program?** This program is strenuous! Hikes on this excursion are relatively short but intense. Expect steep, loose slopes up and down, where you will carry a pack with water, layers, and food for the day.

**How long are the hikes on the trip?** Our longest planned hike is approximately seven miles, and we often look for serendipitous opportunities to change directions or go further. The shortest hike is three miles. The terrain is rugged, steep, rocky, and has little or no shade.

**How much elevation gain do the hikes have?** Some hikes will involve an elevation gain of 200-feet, others up to 1,000-feet.

**Will we be backpacking?** No, we will have a base camp where we depart and return each day.

**What camping gear is provided?** Crow Canyon will provide tents, air mattresses, camp chairs, all dining ware, and a camp toilet. You may bring your own gear (tent, sleeping pad, and sleeping bag) if you wish. You may rent sleeping bags if you do not have your own.

**What time does the program start on the first day?** We will gather at 5:00 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Express in Cortez, CO on the first day.

**What time does the program end on the last day?** The last day of the program is a travel day, there are no planned events. Travelers may leave at their leisure. A shuttle to the Durango airport will be available depending on travelers' needs.

**Will airport transfers be provided?** Crow Canyon provides transport to/from both Durango and Cortez airports.

**Can I drive myself?** No, we will travel as a group in Crow Canyon vehicles each day. No personal vehicles will be allowed at our camp/site visits.

**What if I have a dietary restriction?** Please fill out your medical form and check with your Program Manager. We will do our best to accommodate dietary restrictions to your satisfaction.

## WHAT NEXT?

Register online or contact Tayler Hasbrouck at [travel@crowcanyon.org](mailto:travel@crowcanyon.org). Prior to the program start date, we will provide trip details, a packing list, and forms for you to complete. Please direct specific questions and concerns to the Program Manager, David Boyle at [dboyle@crowcanyon.org](mailto:dboyle@crowcanyon.org).