



COLORADO RIVER VALLEY

Room to Roam



About the Region



The Colorado River Valley is a place to stretch the boundaries of adventure, lean deeper into relaxation, and view history from a new angle. Connected by the majestic Colorado River—New Castle, Silt, Rifle, and Parachute—are four Colorado towns overflowing with western-style hospitality and brimming with opportunities for off-the-beaten-path exploration.

Getting away from it all takes on new meaning in the Colorado River Valley. With boat ramps in every town, the river between Parachute and New Castle is ideal for everything from paddling to jet boating! Edged by mountains, the region is also a haven for backcountry recreation. The Flat Tops, Roan Plateau, and Bookcliffs are stunning landscapes for hiking, biking, fishing, boating, hunting, and motorsports. Closer to town is premier golfing at three 18-hole courses.

Annual events channel a western vibe as well. New Castle's Burning Mountain Days recalls its coal mining past; Silt Heydays its ranching roots. The Garfield County Fair & Rodeo in Rifle is a modern-day wild west festival, while Rockmageddon in Parachute is all out high-octane fun!



NEW CASTLE

A historic coal mining town now verdant countryside for recreation, New Castle is a quaint travel destination surrounded by spectacular natural environments. Home to several parks, a new hiking and biking trail system and easy access to the Flat Tops Wilderness, New Castle is a vacation destination that's a breath of fresh air.

SILT

Settled by hearty pioneers, the ranching life lives on in this quiet community on the Colorado River. Take a tour of country roads for postcard-pretty views of working farms complete with historic barns and buildings. With abundant public lands that include the Flat Tops, Silt is an eco-tourism paradise!

RIFLE

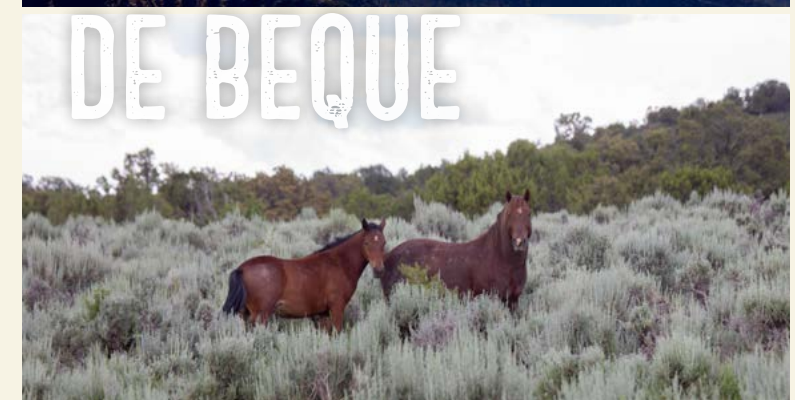
The Old West meets the New West in Rifle where visitors can bump into historic sites on nearly every corner! A favorite outpost with sportsmen and campers—nearby public lands are home to big game herds and well-stocked lakes. The town also boasts waterfalls and outstanding rock and ice climbing.

PARACHUTE

Famous for its abundant reserves of oil shale and natural gas, Parachute is a rugged, hard-working American town that has always welcomed visitors to stop for a spell. The two iconic mesas overlooking the area provide the backdrop for boundless adventures on the Colorado River and in the backcountry of the Roan Plateau and Bookcliffs.

DE BEQUE

A quiet country town lying in a beautiful valley at the confluence of Roan Creek and the Colorado River. I-70 provides convenient access for travelers to enjoy the beauty of the area and view wild horses at their protected range. Bike, ride or hike the many BLM trails over hundreds of acres of the rugged countryside. Residents are proud of their heritage from historic cattle drives to the rail spur, as well as the days of wrangling wild horses off the range.



Lodging Experiences

UNIQUE AND BOUTIQUE

Anything but ordinary, choose memorable accommodations that include guest ranches, quirky apartments, and cozy cabins.

- Ore House Inn
- Red Barn Guest Ranch
- Alpaca Farm
- Eagle Colorado River Cabin
- Garage Lodge
- Silver Spruce Guest Lodge
- Creekside Retreat



Red Barn Guest Ranch

CAMPING AND GLAMPING

Connect with nature by staying at one of several area campgrounds and state parks.

- Glenwood Springs West/Colorado River KOA
- Elk Creek Campground
- Rifle Gap State Park
- White River National Forest
- Rifle Mountain State Park



Camping in the Flat Tops Wilderness

GUEST RANCHES

Live the country life with a stay at guest ranches and unique mountain properties.

- High Lonesome Ranch
- Branded Rock Canyon
- Our Dream Ranch Guest Home



Branded Rock Canyon



Itineraries

WITH SO MUCH TO DO AND SEE IN THE COLORADO RIVER VALLEY, THE CHOICES MAY FEEL OVERWHELMING. USE THESE THEMED ITINERARIES AS GUIDES TO START PLANNING YOUR TRIP.

BONUS TIP

Click on the name of each restaurant and activity to find out more information.



Rifle Gap



Rifle Falls



Colorado River



Harvey Gap

WATER

Splash and Relax

TO COOL OFF ON HOT-WEATHER DAYS, SPLASHDOWN IN THE COLORADO RIVER VALLEY!

DAY 1 BEGIN IN PARACHUTE

Breakfast

Running Burrito Food Truck

There's a reason this spot is a take-out hit with locals. Authentic Mexican flavors and generous servings are guaranteed to satisfy appetites and provide fuel for the day's activities. Try the breakfast burritos; kids will love the 2-2-2—two pancakes, two eggs, and two pieces of bacon.

Activity

Water sports on the Colorado River & riverside hike

With boat ramps for easy river access, break out the water toys on this flatwater section of the river. Bring equipment or rent paddleboards, inflatable kayaks, rafts, and tubes from [Top Adventures](#). Float for six miles, then catch the [shuttle](#) back to town. For an easy nature walk, take a stroll at [Parachute Ponds Wildlife Area](#).

Lunch

Tee'd Off Bar & Grill

Get lunch to-go at the Battlement Mesa Golf Course restaurant. The ever-changing daily specials keep locals and visitors coming back for more. Try the Double Bacon Burger or Grilled Chicken Jalapeno Popper Salad.

Activity

Hike to Rifle Arch

Just over 2.5 miles round trip this trail, located off Highway 13 north of Rifle, is fun for the whole family. With minimal elevation gain, the trail meanders through high desert terrain before revealing its prize—a view of the arch set against a backdrop of craggy stone.

Dinner

Wild Horse Roadhouse in De Beque

Keep the wild horse theme going with dinner at this roadhouse restaurant specializing in barbeque including pulled pork and baby back ribs with all the fixings. Weekends feature live music with karaoke on Fridays.

DAY 2 BEGIN IN RIFLE

Breakfast

Whistle Pig Coffee Stop

This independent coffee shop in Rifle boasts a full espresso bar and a menu of healthy options; try the namesake breakfast wrap. In addition to good eats, the Whistle Pig sells local products including salt, honey, and coffee beans.

Activity

Paddle & Play at Harvey Gap

A sweet little reservoir with a boat ramp, swim beach, and shade trees. Plan a leisurely paddle around the perimeter and soak in the quiet calm that pervades this beautiful setting. If needed, rent equipment from [Defiance Cyclery](#). Tip: Harvey Gap is also a fun place to catch crawdads at dusk!

Lunch

Capitol Deli

The Capitol Deli opens for lunch at 11, stay and eat or take it to-go. Their East Coast deli-style sandwiches and salads are a cut above with slow-roasted meats, fresh produce, and home-baked breads. Try the Veggie Momma, Capitol Hoagie, or build a custom deli sandwich.

Activity

Watersports at Rifle Gap State Park

A 350-acre reservoir, Rifle Gap Reservoir's size makes it a destination for boaters of all kinds. Fishermen like to plumb its depths year-round for rainbow trout, walleye, pike, bass, and perch. For hunters, the draw is the park's abundant campsites and hot showers. Eat lunch at one of the picnic areas, cool off at the swim beach and pay a visit to the Rifle Gap Visitor Center.

Dinner

88 Grill

Located in a historic building in downtown New Castle, grab a bite to eat at this quirky, 80s-themed restaurant which features delicious weekday specials. From the menu, try the Tequila-lime Shrimp Salad, the Oh Brother Where Art Thou sandwich and the signature burgers.

MAKE IT A WINTER TRIP

Bundle up, pitch a shelter on the frozen reservoir and go ice fishing at Rifle Gap.

Visit nearby [Rifle Mountain Park](#) to hike to the ice caves and watch climbers scale frozen monoliths of water!

DAY 3 BEGIN IN NEW CASTLE

Breakfast

Lazy Bear Restaurant

Fuel up for a day of high-energy activity with a hearty breakfast at the Lazy Bear. This charming café in the heart of New Castle has a huge menu of breakfast favorites that includes everything from smothered pork tamales and croissant sandwiches to eggs Benedict and omelets.

Activity

Fly Fishing

Nothing embodies vacation relaxation like fly-fishing on the Colorado River or area lakes. Cast away with the expert guides at [Harcourt Fly Fishing 3G](#) in New Castle. Run by three-generations of family, the outfitter offers both float or wade trips, as well as lessons. For self-guided trips, numerous boat ramps provide accessibility.

Lunch

Burning Mountain Pizza & Subs in Silt

The place to go for a packable lunch, Burning Mountain opens at 8 a.m. Not only is it one of the best pizza joints in the Colorado River Valley, the sisters and owners are also famous for their house-made bagels, cinnamon buns, scones, quiche, fresh bread, and cream puffs.

Activity

Rifle Falls State Park & Fish Hatchery

The 48-acre park is a remote treasure worth seeking out. Its triple waterfalls are the main attraction, but there are also caves to explore and a hiking trail that leads to a viewing platform above the falls. At the Rifle Falls State Fish Hatchery learn all about aquaculture and feed young fingerling rainbow trout.

Dinner

Black Dog Saloon

For dinner, drinks, and live music, head straight to the Black Dog Saloon in New Castle. Its friendly atmosphere, yummy burgers, extensive whiskey menu, and talented bands are something of a local legend. The owner is an expert welder, so be sure to check out his custom bar top handiwork!

WHEELS

Wield your wild side

HIT THE TRAILS IN THE COLORADO RIVER VALLEY, HOME TO MILES OF SECLUDED ROUTES FOR BIKING, HIKING, AND MOTORIZED RECREATION OF ALL SORTS.

DAY 1

BEGIN IN SILT OR NEW CASTLE

Breakfast

Misty's Coffee or Lazy Bear

Today is all about exploring options. In Silt, greet the day at Misty's Coffee Shop with a barista-made cup of coffee, a breakfast burrito or a pastry treat. Alternatively, hit replay and enjoy another great morning meal at the Lazy Bear.

Activity

Mountain Biking

Start the day with an early morning cardio workout Colorado-style. New Castle is gaining traction as a mountain biking destination. With 42 miles of mostly intermediate singletrack, [top rides](#) include the Stairway to Heaven and Cherry Creek #256. In Rifle, get above it all with gorgeous views at the [Hubbard's Mesa Recreation Area Trails](#). Closer to town, check out the [Highland Trails](#) and [Three Forks Trail](#), as well as other in-town loop rides.

Lunch

Brickhouse Pizza

Take a break in between activities at Brickhouse Pizza with two convenient locations in Rifle and Silt; these pizzerias are known for their specialty pies. The menu features 14 varieties, as well as the option to build-your-own. For crust lovers, try the calzones.

Activity

Climb at Rifle Mountain Park

Go vertical! This narrow canyon with steep limestone walls is one of the top-rated rock-climbing locales in the country. Thrilling to either participate or watch, the park boasts over 250 sport climbing routes with permanent pitons bolted in place for technical climbers to use.

Dinner

Lakota Lookout

For a night of fun with friends, play a round of [virtual golf](#) at [Lakota Canyon Ranch Golf Club](#), then stay for dinner at the restaurant. Lots of laughs and delicious food are a perfect pairing. The atmosphere is as approachable as the food. Try the Buffalo Wings, Crispy Pickle Chips, and Parmesan Truffle Fries for starters.

DAY 2

BEGIN IN RIFLE

Breakfast

Be Healthy Stay Fit Bistro

The name says it all. From omelets and smoothies to breakfast combos and eggs Benedict, only the freshest ingredients are ever used. For additional health-boosting nourishment, try the shakes and juice combos. Plan ahead and grab a lunch to-go while here.

Activity

OHV near Rifle

When it's time to let the throttle out, steer a course to the Flat Tops and Triangle Park via the Buford or Cline Top Roads. From here explore the rugged high plateau including Blair Mountain Road, Meadow Lake and the ghost town of Carbonate. The Bookcliffs' JQS Trail is more technical with steep, rocky terrain, hairpin turns, and significant exposure. At the top, take in views from Anvil Points. Rent Polaris RZR's from [Top Adventures](#).

Lunch

WingNutz Bar & Grill

Boasting a menu that features the "bird, brew and beyond," it's no surprise that wings and burgers are the hot ticket here, but salads and sandwiches are just as mouthwatering. For OHV riders, WingNutz will also pack up meals to-go.

Activity

OHV at Hubbard Mesa on the Roan Plateau

A motorized dream come true for off-road exploration. Hubbard Mesa Open Area on the Roan Plateau features nearly 2,500 acres with 50 miles of singletrack, ATV, and jeep trails. Only a few miles north of Rifle on the west side of Highway 13, it offers a range of terrain to build confidence and technical skills. Gear rentals available from [Top Adventures](#).

Dinner

Jalisco Grill in Rifle

House specialties, fajitas, steak, seafood and premium margaritas are just a small sampling of what's on the menu at this Mexican hot spot. Vegetarians will also find plenty to choose and so will kids who shy might away from spicy dishes.

MAKE IT A WINTER TRIP.

A hike along Koper's Trail at Rifle Mountain Park is beautiful any time of year, but winter is an especially magical time. As snow melts, it freezes and forms visually spectacular ice caves.

DAY 3

BEGIN IN DE BEQUE

Breakfast

De Beque Country Store

This little grocery and food stop radiates small-town charm and has everything you could want to fuel your day. Coffee is always available, and breakfasts are made to order. Try the egg sandwiches, chicken fried steak burritos or loaded biscuits and gravy.

Activity

Jet Boat USA tour of the Colorado River

Who says motorsports must be landlocked? See the breathtaking scenery of De Beque Canyon along the Colorado River aboard state-of-the-art New Zealand-style jet boats. Choose from wet-and-wild tours or stay-dry scenic excursions. Jet boat tours are a great way to connect with locals and learn about history and geology from a unique perspective!

Lunch

Running Burrito Food Truck

A lucky break for a second chance to stop at this culinary pit stop in Parachute.

Activity

Health & Wellness Treatments in Parachute or Battlement Reservoirs

Time for relaxation with a Colorado twist! Recharge and replenish with massage and body treatments. Try the Perfect Blend Massage at the [Healthy Mantra](#) which combines CBD oil with touch therapy techniques. If spas are not your thing, kick back in the great outdoors at [Battlement Mesa Reservoirs](#). Practice mindfulness, the old-fashioned way by fly-fishing, camping or riding the area's OHV trails.

Dinner

El Tapatio in Parachute

With a friendly staff and a huge menu, this family-owned restaurant is a must-stop for anyone in the area. Classic Mexican cuisine, entrees topped with mole sauce and generously sized margaritas are the perfect way to gear down at the end of the day.



Little Box Canyon





Sopris Alpaca Farm



East Elk Creek



Silt Historical Park



Battlement Mesa Schoolhouse

WESTERN HERITAGE

Explore a living history

GET ACQUAINTED WITH THE AUTHENTIC AMERICAN WEST IN THE COLORADO RIVER VALLEY. FROM PIONEER SETTLERS TO PRESIDENTS AND WILD MUSTANGS TO LIVESTOCK RANCHING, HISTORY IS HAPPENING HERE!

DAY 1 BEGIN IN NEW CASTLE

Breakfast

New Castle Coffee

Kickstart your morning with a premium coffee and locally made light bites to eat. For on-the-go energy, try the shop's protein bites. Bonus, all coffees and teas are organic and fair-trade too.

Activity

Country Drive

For an up-close look at the Colorado River Valley's thriving ranching culture, go for a drive in the country. Take two-lane county roads (Buford 245, Grass Valley 226, and Harvey Gap 237 Roads) along the back side of the Grand Hogback for picture-worthy pastoral scenes—big red barns, herds of sheep and cattle, and fields strewn with hay bales in fall.

Lunch

El Tapatios in New Castle

Latino influences are part of the Colorado River Valley's rich history. Experience authentic Mexican cooking at El Tapatios. Try the Tacos al Pastor or the Enchiladas de Mole.

Activity

Hike East Elk Creek

Walk in the footsteps of Colorado gold miners on this trail that passes by the Gray Eagle Gold Mine. See remnants of the gold rush days—an old steam engine and cables used to run an ore cart up and down the mountain. Other highlights include cascading waterfalls and a stream where fishermen can try their luck.

Dinner

Eat Bistro & Drinks

From bread to desserts, everything at Eat Bistro is made from scratch. This wholesome, fresh approach to cooking is simultaneously old-fashioned and innovatively modern. Recipes are often family favorites passed down through the generations. The menu changes daily, so check in to see what's cookin'.

DAY 2 BEGIN IN SILT

Breakfast

Misty's Coffee Shop

Tuck into Misty's Coffee Shop for delicious, organic, fair-trade coffees, teas, and Italian sodas. Morning nibbles include fresh, locally-made donuts and pastries, bagels and cream cheese, and breakfast burritos.

Activity

Sopris Alpaca Farm

Hands-down winners in the cuteness category, the herd of alpacas at the Wesson's farm in Silt, are a treat to visit, pet and feed. Learn all about these furry animals and the warm wool they produce. Don't miss the well-stocked boutique that features alpaca-themed gifts and products.

Lunch

Hogback Pizza

For a slice with a side of humor, Hogback Pizza in New Castle is the place for a low-key lunch. With playful pizza names like the Triple Bypass, Boots Electronic, and Fat Lenny, visitors will be tempted to try them all.

Activity

Silt Historical Park

A portal back in time, at the Silt Historical Park visitors can wander through a pioneer town on a miniature scale—a schoolhouse, a working blacksmith's shop, a cowboy camp, and an old west saloon—all authentic structures. Inside the buildings, artifacts continue telling the story of the pioneer settlers in the Colorado River Valley.

Dinner

Miner's Claim

Enjoy an elevated menu in a casual setting in downtown Silt. Along with an outstanding selection of steak and seafood, the Miner's Claim boasts a surprisingly robust wine list, along with a 24-page cocktail menu—the most extensive in the state!

BONUS ACTIVITY

Ute Theater & Events Center

This historic theater in downtown Rifle has been entertaining audiences since it opened in 1947. The interior is decorated with mid-century artwork of fishing, hunting, and ranching life in the region. Check the Ute's schedule for special events.

DAY 3 BEGIN IN RIFLE

Breakfast

Stay Fit Be Healthy Bistro

Take advantage of another opportunity to taste fresh local ingredients at this niche bistro open for breakfast in Rifle.

Activity

Historical Walking Tours

To experience historical Rifle, start at the [Rifle Heritage Center & Museum](#). The largest museum in Garfield County houses an exceptional collection of Native American artifacts, as well as exhibits on pioneer life. Stop by the Rifle Branch Library to see the exquisite [Roosevelt Window](#). Add in exercise at [Centennial Park](#), a gorgeous city park with trails dedicated to remembering Rifle's past in the context of world events.

Lunch

Tee'd Off Bar & Grill

Get lunch to-go at the Battlement Mesa Golf Course restaurant. The ever-changing daily specials keep locals and visitors coming back for more. Try the Double Bacon Burger or Grilled Chicken Jalapeno Popper Salad.

Activity

Battlement Mesa Schoolhouse/Tom Glover Cabin/Wild Horse Hike

The perfectly preserved two-room schoolhouse was not only a place of learning, it was also a gathering spot for community dances, meetings, and more. The nearby Tom Glover Cabin is charmingly furnished in pioneer-style. For a glimpse of the still-wild west, go see the wild mustangs that make their home in De Beque Canyon.

Dinner

El Tapatio in Parachute

Muy delicioso! Mexican food is a staple cuisine with a long tradition in the Colorado River Valley. Enjoy some of the best available at this family-owned restaurant that serves authentic, home-cooked meals.

Events Calendar

- NEW CASTLE**

 - Hogback Hustle
 - July
 - Dirty Hog Dash
 - July
 - Rides and Reggae
 - August
 - Burning Mountain Days
 - September
 - Tree Lighting, Craft Fair and Chili Cook-off
 - December
- SILT**

 - Heydays
 - August
 - Family Fall Fest
 - September
 - Polar Express - includes sitting with Santa
 - December
- RIFLE**

 - Western Adventure Weekend
 - September
 - Rifle Rendezvous
 - May
 - Garfield County Fair
 - July - August
 - Chili Cook-off
 - October
 - Hometown Holidays
 - December
- PARACHUTE**

 - Rockmaggidon
 - June
 - Annual Craft Fair
 - November
 - Grand Valley Days
 - August
- DE BEQUE**

 - Wild Horse Days
 - August

