

6 Kodachrome Basin State Park



Located nine miles south of Cannonville along paved roads, Kodachrome Basin State Park is a vividly colored geological area made up of numerous spectacular sand pipes or “petrified” geysers. This picturesque park has hiking trails, mountain biking, horseback riding, a small store, and a modern campground. Named by the National Geographic Society, Kodachrome Basin is also a photographer’s dream.

The northwest section of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument starts near the entrance to Kodachrome Basin via Cottonwood Canyon Scenic Backway. The road travels south for 8 miles to Grosvenor Arch, then continues through Cottonwood Canyon and follows the Paria River. **The unpaved section of the scenic backway is recommended for dry weather conditions.**



Olinda Reynolds/Drawing

Many of the Scenic Backways throughout the area have historical significance. The Hole-in-the-Rock Road played a major role in the settlement of the San Juan area east of the Colorado River. The Burr Trail, linking Boulder with Lake Powell, was used by cattlemen during the early 1900s.

HENRIEVILLE



Three miles east of Cannonville on Scenic Byway 12, Henrieville offers splendid, uncluttered scenery with nearby fossil beds and a pioneer hiking trail to Kodachrome Basin. Henrieville was settled in 1878; farming, stock raising, and fruit orchards were the principal industries. This rustic little town has retained its proud heritage throughout the years.

7 The Blues / Upper Valley



Powell Point and Table Cliffs Plateau are visible as travelers drive east from Henrieville on Scenic Byway 12. The route climbs past a rocky section with unusual colored clay hills, called “The Blues.” Be sure to stop at the scenic overlook at the top of The Blues.

Continue through Upper Valley—a primary elk herd migration corridor. Watch for wildlife, especially in the fall and winter.

About 20 miles east of Henrieville, Forest Service Road 17 starts north of Scenic Byway 12 and continues northwest through Main Canyon. The dirt road accesses Table Cliffs Plateau and the Pine Lake area to the west, and Griffin Top to the north along the Griffin Top Scenic Backway. From the same Scenic Byway 12 turnoff, North Creek Canyon road leads to excellent fishing at Barker Reservoir. Many of the Forest Service roads in this area connect. A Dixie National Forest Travel Map should be consulted before traveling these routes. Public and private campgrounds are available in the area.

When snow falls, snowmobilers can ride 40 miles of signed trails that start in Widtsoe, at Bryce, and near Escalante. Cross country skiers should stop in Escalante and ask about the area’s trails.

8 Escalante Petrified Forest State Park



Escalante Petrified Forest State Park is located one mile west of Escalante along Scenic Byway 12. Visitors to the park may want to fish for trout, boat or swim at Wide Hollow Reservoir, or examine petrified wood dating back 160 million years. An interpretive trail that winds through the park’s foothills provides information about the colorful mineralized wood and dinosaur bones. The park’s campground is open year round. All services including public and private campgrounds are available in Escalante.

ESCALANTE



Escalante is called the “Heart of Highway 12” because it is geographically located near the midpoint of Scenic Byway 12. The Anasazi and Fremont lived in the area hundreds of years before the first explorers appeared. The town was originally called Potato Valley for a wild species of potato that grew there when settled in 1875. It was later renamed Escalante to honor early explorer Silvestre Velez de Escalante. In 1776, Franciscan priests Escalante and Dominguez led the first recorded exploration party through parts of what is now southern Utah, looking for a route from Santa Fe to California.

Travelers can access Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Dixie National Forest, and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area from Scenic Byway 12 via backways in the Escalante area.

Stop at Escalante Interagency Visitor Center at the west end of town for information on the monument, national forests as well as area information. All services including public and private campgrounds are available in Escalante.

9 Smoky Mountain Road*



From Escalante, Smoky Mountain Scenic Backway heads south for 78 miles and ends at Big Water near Lake Powell on US 89. Sections of the dirt road can be impassable when wet and high clearance vehicles are required. **Smoky Mountain Road is recommended for dry weather conditions only. Check locally for road and weather conditions.** Spectacular views of Navajo Mountain and Lake Powell can be seen along the route. Smoke is sometimes visible from the underground coal fires that have been smoldering for over 100 years — giving Smoky Mountain its name. Sections of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area were the filming sites for the movies “The Planet of the Apes” and “The Greatest Story Ever Told.” Closest services including public and private campgrounds are in Escalante; no services are available along the backway.