

Visitor Activities

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Mesa Verde National Park



April 6 to May 24, 2008

Welcome to Mesa Verde National Park. Tune your radio to AM1610 for park information.

Your first stop should be the Far View Visitor Center, open daily 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Rangers at the visitor center will help plan your visit to the park.

Tickets are required to enter Cliff Palace and Balcony House. **TICKETS CAN ONLY BE PURCHASED AT FAR VIEW VISITOR CENTER.**



Ranger-guided Tours

You must be accompanied by a park ranger to enter Cliff Palace or Balcony House. You can view Cliff Palace from Sun Point, Sun Temple, or Cliff Palace overlooks. *Tours are strenuous.* Tickets cost \$3.00 per person, all ages, for each tour.

CLIFF PALACE

Mesa Verde's Largest Cliff Dwelling

This one-hour tour involves climbing five 8 to 10ft (2.6 to 3m) ladders for a 100ft (30m) vertical climb. Total walking distance is about ¼-mile (400m). The tour begins at the Cliff Palace Overlook, an 8-mile (13km), 20-minute drive from the Far View Visitor Center.

- April 6 to May 10 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., every hour.
- May 11 to May 24 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., every half hour.

BALCONY HOUSE

Adventurous Cliff Dwelling Tour

The one-hour tour involves climbing a 32ft (10m) ladder to gain entrance to the site, crawling 12ft (4m) through a 1½ft-wide (46cm) tunnel, and then climbing stairs up a 60ft (20m) vertical rock face, including two 10ft (3m) ladders to exit the site. The tour begins at the Balcony House parking area, a 10-mile (16km), 25-minute drive from the visitor center.

- April 27 to May 10 9:30 a.m., 12:00 p.m., 2:00 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.
- May 11 to May 24 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., every hour.



Visit On Your Own

SPRUCE TREE HOUSE

Mesa Verde's Best-Preserved Cliff Dwelling

The paved trail begins outside the front entrance to the Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum, a 5-mile (8km), 15-minute drive from the Far View Visitor Center. The self-guided walk involves a 100ft (30m) descent and ascent on a winding, ½-mile (1km) trail. Rangers are available on-site to answer questions. Allow 45 minutes to one hour to visit. Open 9:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

CHAPIN MESA ARCHEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

Artifacts of the Ancestral Puebloans

The museum is a 5-mile (8km), 15-minute drive from Far View Visitor Center. It offers information, exhibits, bookstore, and a 25-minute orientation video shown every half hour. Restrooms, restaurant, gift shop, post office, and picnic area are nearby. Open 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.



Cliff Canyon Overlook

Added Attractions

MESA TOP LOOP ROAD

Auto Tour - 600 Years of Mesa Verde History

The Mesa Top Loop Road is a 6-mile (10km) driving tour with short, paved trails to views. Ten easily accessible stops include mesa top archeological sites and cliff dwelling overlooks. Highlights include Square Tower House, Sun Point Overlook, and Sun Temple. Overlooks are also found on the 6-mile (10km) **Cliff Palace Loop Road**. Allow 45-minutes to drive each loop road and see a variety of sites. Maximum speed limit is 25 mph. Open 8:00 a.m. to sunset.

FAR VIEW SITES

Five Mesa Top Villages and Far View Reservoir

Visit Far View House plus four other villages and a dry reservoir on a level, $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile (1.2km) unpaved trail. Located four miles (6.4km) north of the Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum. Open 8:00 a.m. to sunset.

Food, Lodging and Services

SPRUCE TREE TERRACE RESTAURANT AND GIFT SHOP

Located just north of the Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum. Open 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

FAR VIEW TERRACE RESTAURANT AND GIFT SHOP *(Opening mid-May)*

Open daily 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

FAR VIEW LODGE *(Opening April 17, 2008)*

The 150 rooms with private balconies provide panoramic views of the surrounding area. For *reservations* call ARAMARK, the park concessionaire, toll free at 1-800-449-2288.

MOREFIELD CAMPGROUND *(Opening May 5, 2008)*

Morefield Campground is four miles (6.4km) inside the park entrance. The campground has tent, RV, group sites, and base camping, all with picnic tables and barbecue grills. Register in the camp store. A grocery store, firewood, showers, laundromat, and *the only gas station in the park* are also available.

BUS TOURS *(Beginning April 17, 2008)*

ARAMARK offers half-day ranger-guided tours, combining motor coach transportation and walks to many of the sites open to the public. *Inquire at the Far View Visitor Center tour desk, Far View Lodge, and ARAMARK outlets throughout the park.* For reservations call ARAMARK toll free at 1-800-449-2288.

U.S. POST OFFICE

A full-service post office is located near the Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum. Open Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.

In case of emergency, call 911.

For Your Safety

- Consider your physical health BEFORE hiking or going on tours.
- Carry and DRINK plenty of water during your visit in the park.
- Hiking in Mesa Verde National Park is restricted and allowed only on designated trails. Trail and site guide booklets are on sale at Far View Visitor Center, Chapin Mesa Museum, and various trailheads.
- Please do not sit, climb, or walk on the fragile archeological structures.
- Pets cannot be left alone, must be physically restrained at all times, and are not allowed in public buildings or on trails.
- Feeding, capturing, or teasing wildlife is prohibited.
- Road Advisory: Please be alert for falling rocks and road construction.