

Chaco to Mesa Verde

May 21–26, 2018



ITINERARY

DAY 1

Monday, May 21

Arrive in Durango, Colorado, by 4:00 p.m. Meet the group and scholars for introductions, dinner, and a program orientation. Overnight, Durango. **D**

DAY 2

Tuesday, May 22

We rise early to drive to Chaco Culture National Historical Park. In the 12th century, this area was the center of the region's most complex culture. Chaco influenced trade, ceremonial life, and politics throughout the region. We learn about Chaco's great kivas and multistory great houses, as well as the roads that linked Chaco physically and symbolically to other regional centers. In the afternoon, we drive north to one of those centers, Aztec Ruins National Monument, where we step into a beautifully reconstructed great kiva. Along the way you will gain an understanding of what archaeologists call "the Chaco Phenomenon." Overnight, Farmington, New Mexico. **B L D**

DAY 3

Wednesday, May 23

Returning to Colorado, we explore the remote side of Mesa Verde, the area that lies within the Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Park. A hundred years after construction ceased in Chaco Canyon, Mesa Verde and the surrounding area teemed with activity as Pueblo people built cliff dwellings. Expect a morning of adventure as a Ute tribal member leads us on a hike to spectacular cliff dwellings and rock art panels. Later, we drive to Cortez and check in to our hotel where you enjoy free time and dinner on your own. Overnight, Cortez. **B L**

DAY 4

Thursday, May 24

We spend a full day at Mesa Verde National Park, a



Aerial view of Pueblo Bonito



Exploring Chaco Culture National Historical Park



Cliff dwellings at Mesa Verde National Park

UNESCO World Heritage site. After an orientation at the visitor center, we drive to the mesa top for a private hiking tour of Mug House, located on Wetherill Mesa. Afterward, we tour mesa-top ruins dating to the earliest Pueblo occupation, and cliff dwellings that were inhabited just before Pueblo people migrated from the region. We close the day with a sunset view from the patio at Far View Lodge, as we enjoy drinks and appetizers. We return to the hotel where you can enjoy free time and dinner on your own. Overnight, Cortez. **B L**

DAY 5

Friday, May 25

Exploring Canyons of the Ancients National Monument—a vast area south and west of Cortez—we visit Castle Rock, where Crow Canyon archaeologists conducted research on the final years of Pueblo occupation in the Mesa Verde region. Back in Cortez, we enjoy a delicious lunch at Crow Canyon, followed by a look at the Center's archaeological research. We visit an archaeology lab and tour the Center's new excavation site, a Chaco outlier, located a short distance from Cortez. Here, citizen scientists—members of the public—work alongside archaeologists. Time allowing, we visit Notah Dineh Trading Company. In the evening we meet for a closing dinner and celebration in Cortez. Overnight, Cortez. **B L D**

DAY 6

Saturday, May 26

Transfer to Durango. Plan departure from Durango any time after 10 a.m. **B**

Optional 2-hour fly-over: Enjoy a “birds eye” view of the Chaco-Mesa Verde landscape. Fly above Ute Mountain Tribal Park, Chimney Rock and Salmon Ruins. After the fly-over, you will have a spatial awareness and appreciation of the Chaco world like no other. *Cost:* \$270/person. If you choose the fly-over, plan your departure from Durango for after 2:00 p.m.



Cliff Palace, Mesa Verde



Taking a closer look



Anthony Lovato at the Haynie site, a Chaco outlier near Cortez

B = breakfast, **L** = lunch, **D** = dinner
Itinerary subject to change

Program includes sites that require special permission from the National Park Service, the Ute Mountain Tribal Park, and the Bureau of Land Management.

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