

Ancient Civilizations of Power and Influence: Chaco



October 12–17, 2020

ITINERARY

DAY 1 MONDAY, OCTOBER 12

Durango, Colorado

Meet the group in Durango, CO, for dinner and program orientation. Our trio of scholars, Steve Lekson, Gerardo Gutiérrez, and Tim Pauketat, place Chaco Canyon in the global landscape a thousand years ago.

*Overnight, Best Western Rio Grande Inn, Durango, CO
Dinner Included*

DAY 2 TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13

Una Vida, Pueblo Bonito, Chetro Ketl

Drive south to Chaco Culture National Historical Park (2 hour drive), in northern New Mexico, at the edge of the expansive San Juan Basin. From about A.D. 900 to 1150, Chaco Canyon was the center of a vast regional system that integrated much of the Pueblo world. Our exploration begins with the archaeological site of Una Vida and a series of petroglyphs at the entrance to the canyon. We continue on to the great houses of “downtown” Chaco. At Chetro Ketl and Pueblo Bonito, we examine the architectural features that define great houses and compare them with other great community centers of the time. We meander along the cliffs on the north side of the canyon, searching for rock art. Tonight we camp under the stars.

*Overnight, Gallo Campground, Chaco Canyon
Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner Included*

DAY 3 WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14

Peñasco Blanco, Supernova Petroglyph

We spend the day hiking to the west end of Chaco Canyon proper. The hike to Peñasco Blanco has numerous petroglyphs along the way, including the supernova panel, which is often linked to the A.D. 1054 supernova event. We'll explore Casa Chiquita and Peñasco Blanco, which has an unusual oval layout and spectacular views. This is a rich landscape in which to discuss great centers and their influence on populations far and wide around them. This hike is relatively flat, only gaining 200 feet of elevation. [Hike is 7.2 miles round-trip.](#)

*Overnight, Gallo Campground, Chaco Canyon
Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner Included*



Chaco at Night



Chaco Bowl



Chaco Sunrise

DAY 4 THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

Pueblo Alto, Casa Rinconada

Spend the morning hiking to Pueblo Alto (Spanish for High Town), on the north plateau above Chaco wash. From this rise, one can make line-of-sight connections as far north as Chimney Rock and Mesa Verde. We'll view stairs carved into the sandstone and road segments that radiate in and out of Chaco for hundreds of miles, including the Great North Road. We'll have a spectacular viewpoint of Pueblo Bonito and across the canyon to Casa Rinconada. End the day with an easy walk to Casa Rinconada and the surrounding small sites, followed by one last stop at the visitor center. Hike is 3 miles round-trip.

*Overnight, Gallo Campground, Chaco Canyon
Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner Included*

DAY 5 FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

Pueblo Pintado, Aztec National Monument

Pack up camp and drive to the easternmost Chaco site, Pueblo Pintado, 16 miles to the east. We also stop at the Kutz Canyon overlook, where the Great North Road is thought to terminate. This impressive overlook gives us expansive views of badlands and the La Plata Mountains. Our next destination is Aztec Ruins National Monument, also in northern New Mexico. As power in Chaco Canyon began to wane in the late 1000s, activity at Aztec gained momentum. By the late 1100s, Aztec became the center of the Chaco world. Aztec's reconstructed great kiva gives us a sense of the monumental scale and sophisticated architecture of the era. We wrap up the day with a view and discussion of the Sacred Ridge site, which sits just south of the town of Durango, CO.

*Overnight, Best Western Rio Grande Inn, Durango, CO
Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner Included*

DAY 6 SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17

Departures

Please review arrival / departure instructions provided by Crow Canyon.

Breakfast Included



Chaco Hike



Pueblo Bonito



Casa Rinconada at Night

This program requires special permission from Chaco Culture National Historic Park, Bureau of Land Management - Farmington, and the Bureau of Land Management - Rio Puerco. The camping portion of this program is outfitted by El Camino Catering. Camping Gear available upon request for an additional fee.

© 2019 by Crow Canyon Archaeological Center. All rights reserved.

Crow Canyon Archaeological Center

crowcanyon.org

800.422.8975, ext. 457

travel@crowcanyon.org