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United States Department of Agriculture



DAY TRIPS BY CAR

ASHCROFT: Ashcroft is a ghost town about 13 miles from Aspen on Castle Creek Road. A National Historic Site, built in the 1880's, was the site of a mining camp with a population of over 2,000 people. There are still several buildings standing that one may visit. To reach Ashcroft, drive west from Aspen on Highway 82, at the Roundabout turn right onto Castle Creek Road. Ashcroft is approximately 11 miles up Castle Creek Road on the left. Ashcroft is maintained by the Aspen Historical Society under a Special Use Permit with the USDA, Forest Service.

MAROON BELLS: The Maroon Bells are among the most photographed mountains in the country. Since 1977, a shuttle bus system to Maroon Valley has been in operation to reduce traffic congestion and associated problems. From mid-June through Labor Day, and weekends in September, people visiting Maroon Valley between 8:30a.m. and 5:00 p.m. are required to ride the shuttle buses (Campground users are issued passes and are allowed to use the road at all times). The Maroon Bells Bus Tour is not just a bus ride, it's an education in local history and geology of the area offering a hassle-free way of viewing some of the most spectacular scenery in the world. Bus service for Maroon Valley originates at Aspen Highlands Ski Area. Visitors may purchase tickets (\$5.50 adults, \$3.50 children and seniors) and board the Maroon Valley Bus Shuttle here. The Aspen Highlands Ski Area is located on Maroon Creek Road.

Prior to 8:30 a.m. and after 5:00 p.m., you may drive up by car. This road is used by bicyclists, skaters and hikers- please be careful!

Drive west from town to the Roundabout. Turn right onto Maroon Creek Road. The road ends at Maroon Lake, approximately 11 miles from Highway 82, with the Maroon Bells in the background. This is a great place for a picnic or short day hike.

INDEPENDENCE & INDEPENDENCE PASS: The ghost town of Independence is located 16 miles east of Aspen on Independence Pass (Highway 82). Independence was established by miners from Leadville a year before Aspen came into existence. This gold mining town reached a peak population of 1,000 people in 1882, and was the main stop for 3 stagecoach lines operating between Leadville and Aspen. Continuing east on Highway 82 for another 4 miles will bring you to the summit of Independence Pass. There is a paved parking lot where you can leave your car and hike, or just enjoy the view. Highway 82 is a paved, winding road that has three narrow sections that require caution. The first heavy snowfall (usually in October) closes the road for the winter until Memorial Day weekend. The Independence Town Site is maintained by the Aspen Historical Society under a Special Use Permit with the USDA, Forest Service.

GRIZZLY RESERVOIR: Drive east from Aspen on Highway 82 about 11 miles and turn onto Lincoln Creek Road. Grizzly Reservoir is approximately 6 miles up this dirt road. High clearance 2-wheel drive vehicles are recommended. The reservoir provides good fishing and there are several hiking trails in the area. With a 4-wheel drive vehicle, you can continue 5 miles past the reservoir to the ghost town of Ruby.

LENADO: This is a semi-ghost town located in a historic logging area. Drive west from Aspen on Highway 82 and turn right onto the Woody Creek turn-off. At the bottom of the hill cross the bridge and turn left about ¼ mile past Woody Creek Tavern. Make a sharp right onto Woody Creek Road and drive about 10 miles to Lenado. With a 4-wheel drive vehicle you can continue on Road 103 to the top of Kobey Park. This is a popular jeeping area in the fall when the leaves change color. In early summer, Kobey Park roads can be very muddy and should be avoided.

RUEDI RESERVOIR: Drive west on Highway 82 from Aspen to Basalt (about 18 miles). Turn right at the traffic light and drive 12 miles up the Fryingpan River Road to Ruedi Reservoir. About 5 miles up Fryingpan River Road you will pass Seven Castles- a spectacular red rock formation on your left. The reservoir is a good area for picnics and fishing.

REDSTONE: Drive northwest on Highway 82 to Carbondale (about 30 miles) and turn southwest on Highway 133. Follow the signs to Redstone (about 18 miles). This is a charming Coal Mining town of the 1800's. The Redstone Inn has been restored to its original beauty. You will find several shops lining the main street for shopping. The historical Redstone Castle (Mansion of the "Coal King") is open for scheduled tours by calling 963-3408 for information and reservations. The castle can be seen from Highway 133 just 1 ½ miles southwest of the Redstone town entrance.

MARBLE: Continue southwest on Highway 133 from Redstone to the Marble turn-off on your left (about 6 miles). Follow this road approximately 5 miles to Marble. The old Marble Quarry provided the marble for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and Lincoln Memorial. The old quarry can still be visited. The old Crystal Mill lies approximately 4 miles beyond the town of Marble. To reach Crystal and the Crystal Mill, a 4WD vehicle is required.