



Native America

11 Days/10 Nights

The Plains Indians - the proud first residents of the Rocky Mountain West - still make the region their home. In recent years, a new sense of vision and cultural awareness has grown between among local communities and Native American nations.

Days 1/2: Denver

The Denver Art Museum has what is often acknowledged as the world's greatest collections of American Indian artwork, representing all of North America's tribes. There are many traders in the city who deal in Indian artwork, jewelry and blankets. The Denver Pow Wow is held every March. Overnight Denver.

Days 3/4: Wyoming

Both the Shoshone and Arapaho tribes share the Wind River Indian Reservation near Lander, Wyoming. Cultural tours of the reservation are available. Guide and outfitting services are available from Native American guides to explore the spectacular Wind River Mountain Range. Fishing, camping and horseback riding are offered during an authentic Indian cultural experience.

Days 5/6: Montana

The Assiniboine, Sioux, Blackfeet, Chippewa, Cree, Confederated Salish & Kootenai, Crow, Gros Ventre, Northern Cheyenne and Little Shell Indians all reside in Montana. State parks, historic trails, and national monuments, as well as various museums and events, across Montana honor Montana's first residents. In early July, the Blackfeet host the Northern American Indian Days in Browning. The eight-day Crow Fair is hosted each August at the Crow Agency near Hardin. This event includes rodeos, dances, parades, games, food and craft displays.

Days 7/8: North Dakota

Native American people of North Dakota - They are the Mandan, Hidatso, Arikara, the Yanktonai, Sisseton, Wahpeton, Hunkpapa, and other Dakotah/Lakotah tribes, along with the Pembina Chippewa, Cree and Metis. The Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara tribes farmed the area along the Missouri River. Today there are reconstructed earthlodges, near Mandan, New Town and Stanton, that showcase the some of the oldest settled cities in America. Throughout the year, Powwows are held around the state, with the United Tribes Technical College's International Powwow finishing the season on the second weekend in September each year. This "Contest Powwow" attracts hundreds of American Indian dancers, drum groups, showcase of American Indian culture, and is home of the champions. It is a celebration showcasing "champion" dancers and drums from across the U.S. and Canada, competing for top honors.

Days 9/10: South Dakota

There are nine Sioux Indian tribal governments, six of which have reservations in South Dakota. This is the land of Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, Red Cloud and Black Elk. Authentic Indian beadwork, quillwork, fine arts and pottery can be found at over a hundred museums and art galleries. Visitors can attend pow wows and tour museums/art galleries such as the Akta Lakota Museum in Chamberlain, the Red Cloud Heritage Center in Pine

Ridge and the Tekakwitha Ah Arts Center in Sisseton. Tipi stays and unique cultural experiences are also available. The Pine Ridge Reservation is the site where the infamous Wounded Knee Massacre took place.

Day 11: Minneapolis/St. Paul/Bloomington

Depart from MSP on any number airlines that have direct international connections.

Note on Etiquette:

In the Real America, our focus on the great states of Montana, South Dakota, North Dakota and Wyoming has always been centered on their natural beauty, their thriving tourism industries and the part each played in shaping America's west into the diverse and vibrant enclave it is today. One central aspect of each state's history and modern culture is the fascinating role Native Americans played - and continue to play - in America's West.

As a visitor to the Real America Region, you have the opportunity to learn and experience firsthand how Native American tribes continue to provide valuable economic and cultural contributions to the American Rockies region. As you begin to explore, however, it is very important to keep in mind that customs and Native American laws should at all times be heeded in order to make this experience as productive and meaningful as possible for all parties. Below are several points that should be considered as you venture into Native American territory:

- If you are witnessing a tribal ceremony, discretion is always the best route - at least initially. Always assume the role of "fly on the wall" spectator during a ritual, making certain to never get in the way of those conducting or participating in the ceremony. There are instances, of course, when outside participation is welcomed by the emcee, at which point you should feel free to volunteer and join in!
- Please refrain from touching or handling any of the feather or buckskin outfits of dancers or those in regalia, unless expressly invited to. These items often have ceremonial and personal meaning to the owner, and many of these outfits may be identified as family heirlooms.
- While photographs and video recording is a great way to capture the authentic beauty of Native American customs and regalia, it is never a good idea to do so without first having express permission. Furthermore, certain rituals that require intense concentration from the participants (such as dance and drum ceremonies) can be disrupted by flash photography. Always use your best judgment and be certain to have permission before shooting or filming.
- Respect and obey all tribal laws. Tribes are sovereign nations on American soil and have jurisdictional rights.
- It is unlawful to harvest, gather or remove plants, medicines or trees from tribal grounds without express permission from a tribal representative.
- It is highly illegal to pick up or loot artifacts from sacred sites, burial, traditional and cultural properties. It is equally forbidden to trespass on any of these sites without proper escort.
- It can be construed as a sign of disrespect to openly discuss burials, burial sites, and those who have passed on.
- As a sign of deference (and a sign of common sense!) do not ever bring drugs or alcohol on any reservation or tribal territory. Alcohol and drugs are forbidden at all ceremonies, powwows and tribal events.
- Remember: When in doubt, ask first!

Part of the exceptional culture and history in the featured states of Montana, South Dakota, North Dakota and Wyoming are firmly rooted in Native American tradition. As you explore everything these states have to offer, simply keep in mind these few guidelines. As you immerse yourself in the Real America region's Native American history, please keep in mind the few guidelines above and respectfully enjoy all they have to offer!

