



MESA VERDE COUNTRY PRESS KIT

About Mesa Verde Country (www.mesaverdecountry.com)

Mesa Verde Country in Southwest Colorado is the gateway to the magnificent Mesa Verde National Park. Named the “Number One Historic Monument in the World” by *Conde Nast Traveler* and one of the “50 Places of a Lifetime-The World's Greatest Destinations” by *National Geographic*, the park is one of the nation’s first World Heritage sites and the largest archaeological preserve in the country. In addition to the national park, Mesa Verde Country is loaded with other archaeological attractions: Hovenweep National Monument, Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, Ute Mountain Tribal Park, Crow Canyon Archaeological Center, the Anasazi Heritage Center and the Cortez Cultural Center. Mountain biking enthusiasts have recognized Mesa Verde Country as one of the next great mountain biking destinations, and two national byways pass through the area.

Mesa Verde Country on Social Media

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/mesaverdecountry>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/visitmesaverde>

YouTube:

www.youtube.com/channel/UC5nJsYGhLELS79b5t0J2IRg

Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/mesa_verde/

Instagram: www.instagram.com/mesa_verde_country/

Location

Located in beautiful Southwest Colorado, Mesa Verde Country is within easy driving distance of several gateway cities, including Denver, Albuquerque, Salt Lake, Phoenix and Las Vegas. Daily flights also connect Cortez to Denver International Airport.

Communities

The communities of Mesa Verde Country include: [Cortez](#), [Dolores](#), and [Mancos](#). Each has its own special character.

Cortez, the archaeological center of America, is the largest community near Mesa Verde National Park and offers the most services. The town is nestled between the majestic La Plata Mountains, the brooding Sleeping Ute Mountain, and the sharp-hewn silhouette of Mesa Verde.

Dolores is located halfway between Durango and Telluride, where the Dolores River forms McPhee Lake, the second largest body of water in Colorado. With the Dolores River running through town and mountains on both sides of the valley, Dolores is Mesa Verde Country's outdoor recreation Mecca.

Mancos sits in the heart of the lush Mancos Valley and traces its roots back to the ranching, farming, and timber industries that started in the 1870s. Ranching is still a mainstay, and the Western spirit is alive and well.

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MESA VERDE COUNTRY STORY IDEAS – SUMMER

ARCHAEOLOGY & ADVENTURE

Mesa Verde Country is a paradise for outdoor enthusiasts. The geographic diversity of mountains, mesas, and canyons provides the perfect environment for recreational activities. Mix in the archaeological wonders one can experience while adventuring, and you have a nearly perfect combination! [Hiking](#), [biking](#), [fishing](#), boating, rafting, [golf](#) and horseback riding are just the beginning. The temperate climate in Southwest Colorado makes year-round outdoor adventure possible. Mesa Verde Country enjoys a longer season for golf, hiking and mountain biking than most destinations in Colorado because of the warmer temperatures during the spring and fall seasons. Fishing is possible any time of year, and without the crowds!

NEW MOUNTAIN BIKING REGION

From single tracks to challenging climbs in the San Juan Mountains, Mesa Verde Country offers more than 600 miles of trails in a location that is a breath of fresh air. The higher elevations of the mesas and mountain trails offer incredible views, as well as relief from mid-summer heat. Sand Canyon Trail in Canyons of the Ancients National Monument may be the only place in the world to ride single track and slick rock past ancient cliff dwellings. The renowned Phil's World Trail System starts just six miles from Cortez. It's a mix of beginner, intermediate and advanced trails that attract riders of all levels. Boggy Drawn near Dolores offers more than 30 miles of trails in the shade of old-growth forest.

SIGNATURE SUMMER EVENTS

The summer events in Mesa Verde Country put the area's archaeology, natural beauty and good old fashion hospitality on display. Here are some of the festival highlights that await summer visitors.

- 12-Hours of Mesa Verde Mountain Bike Race (May)
- Ute Mountain/Mesa Verde Birding Festival (May)
- Indian Arts & Culture Festival (May)
- The Dolores River Festival (June)
- Ute Mountain Round-up Rodeo (June)
- Hopi Native American Dances (July)
- Ute Mountain Casino Fireworks Display (July)
- Cortez Burst Triathlon & Rotary Fireworks Display (July)
- Mancos Days (July)
- Montezuma County Fair (July/August)
- Cortez Rendezvous Hot Air Balloon Rally (August)
- Escalante Days (August)
- Mancos Beer Festival (August)
- Ute Mountain Casino Pow-Wow (August)

AGRICULTURE EXPLORATION

Mesa Verde Country has a strong agricultural tradition. The Ancestral Puebloans were the first agriculturalists in the area. They farmed the valleys and the mesas of Montezuma County, including Mesa Verde National Park, until around 1300 A.D. A visit to the area is not complete without experiencing its bounty. Farmers markets are an excellent way to savor local flavors and purchase grass-fed beef or fresh lamb. Depending on the season, opportunities abound to pick apples, peaches or pears. Visit the two wineries in Mesa Verde to sample – and possibly purchase – some delicious wine. Or stop by one of the many microbreweries or even the distillery in Mancos. Several restaurants specialize in serving local, sustainable cuisine.

MESA VERDE STORY IDEAS – WINTER

TOP WAYS TO PLAY IN MESA VERDE IN THE WINTERTIME

Mesa Verde Country serves as the perfect home base for a snow trip. Three ski areas are located within drive-distance – Telluride, Purgatory and Hesperus. Also nearby, visitors can find cross-country skiing and snowshoe trails, as well as snowmobiling and ice climbing outfitters. In Cortez downhill and cross-country skis and snowshoes rentals are available at Slavens. Kokopelli Bike & Board rents out snowboards, as well as fat bikes. An area growing in popularity for its mountain biking, fat biking is a local favorite and must-try wintertime activity in Mesa Verde Country. Boasting warmer temperatures than most mountain towns, many of area's trails are free of snow after a little sunshine – perfect for hiking, biking and exploring the countless ancient sites located around the region.

MESA VERDE COUNTRY'S WINTER EVENTS

Mesa Verde Country features a number of events that celebrate the winter season. Chill out and warm up at these fun-filled festivals.

- Southwest Colorado Concert Series (fall/winter)
- Free admission to Mesa Verde National Park (November – Veteran's Day)
- Parade of Lights & Tree Lighting (December)
- Mesa Verde National Park Luminaria Display Open House (December)
- Holiday Hay Rides (December)

HOLIDAY GIFT GIVING, MESA VERDE STYLE

Mesa Verde Country is not only a cultural gift to the United States, it is also chock-full of unique artisan gift ideas that will make recipients feel incredibly special at the holidays, or any time of the year.

- **Notah-Dineh Trading Company & Museum (345 W. Main, Cortez – www.notahdineh.com)**
Established in 1961, this trading post has a time-honored tradition of dealing one-on-one with Native American artists. It features Navajo rugs, Native American pottery and jewelry from Navajo, Zuni, Hopi and Santo Domingo Pueblo artisans.
- **Ute Mountain Indian Trading Company & Gallery (27601 E Highway 160, Cortez – www.utemountaintrading.com)**
This is the place to come for Mesa Verde pottery and Native American jewelry, art and crafts. There is also a wine tasting room that sells the products from the local Guy Drew Vineyards.
- **Goodnight Trail (100 W. Main, Mancos – www.goodnighttrailgallery.com)**
This gallery of Western art features paintings, sculptures and photography by artists of distinction. It also carries vintage Navajo rugs, custom Western saddles and jewelry.
- **Sutcliffe Vineyards (12174 Road G, Cortez – www.sutcliffewines.com)**
The tasting room is open daily from 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. at this winery that sits at an elevation of 5,340 feet. Even the hard-to-shop-for person will appreciate this gift!
- **Guy Drew Vineyards (19891 Road G, Cortez – www.guydrewvineyards.com)**
Located at 5,700 feet above sea level, this winery has become one of the most acclaimed in Colorado. The tasting room is open every day from 12 – 5 p.m.