

# South Dakota – Black Hills & Mount Rushmore



## Trip Summary

Mention the Black Hills of South Dakota and most of us remember an old Beatles song about one very special raccoon who resided there. For others, visions of Sturgis, the world's largest motorcycle rally, come to mind. What many *don't* imagine is an oasis of pine-clad mountains and prairie land, abundant wildlife, world-class National Parks and forests and a host of dedicated Rails to Trails bike routes.

The legendary Great Plains and Black Hills of South Dakota are the perfect backdrop for your 6-day biking adventure. Follow an abandoned railroad along the Mickelson Trail, traversing countless bridges and rock tunnels. Hike the base of Mount Rushmore, walk around the Native American cultural center at Crazy Horse Memorial and explore the depths of Wind Cave. At the end of the day, curl up somewhere with a good book and enjoy a delectable meal before calling it a night in the comfort of your comfortable hotel or lodge.

## Itinerary

### Day 1: Rapid City / Sturgis / Spearfish / Deadwood

Begin your vacation by exploring Bear Butte State Park and summit the mountain trail yielding sweeping panoramic views for miles and miles • Experience the Old West and learn why Bear Butte is considered one of the most sacred lands by the Plains Indians • After a short tour of the visitor's center, we head over to the famous biker town of Sturgis for lunch at a local spot • Load up in the van to travel a short distance away to the town of Spearfish for a bike ride through a neat canyon • This evening, we arrive at Deadwood, our home for the night • We'll walk the same sidewalks as the likes of Wild Bill Hickok, Calamity Jane, Wyatt Earp and Buffalo Bill, to name just a few • Tonight we enjoy dinner in downtown Deadwood, a short walk from our hotel • *Overnight Mineral Palace (L, D)*

### Day 2: Mickelson Trail / Deadwood

After a hearty breakfast we head up to the old gold town of Rochford to begin our first leg of the Mickelson Trail • The trail follows the historic Deadwood to Edgemont Burlington northern rail line, which serviced gold country for nearly a century • We ride the trail "backwards" as we make our way back towards Deadwood • Enjoy lunch and some downtime before we head out on the Original Deadwood Trolley tour late afternoon • This fast and furious tour will get you up-to-speed on Deadwood's fascinating history, and you'll also visit Mount Moriah Cemetery where Wild Bill and Calamity Jane were laid to rest • Dinner is on your own tonight in Deadwood • *Overnight Mineral Palace (B, L)*

### Day 3: Mickelson Trail / Keystone / Mount Rushmore

Today, eat a big breakfast because we have a big and exciting day ahead of us! • We'll first transfer by van to Rochford where our continuing ride up and down the Mickelson Trail begins • Pass by the Mystic Trailhead as you make your way on to Hill City, the second oldest town in the Black Hills • Near here, we'll do lunch and perhaps even a bit of swimming • We'll check into our accommodation for the next three nights, Sylvan Lake Lodge, before we depart for a scenic tour of the Needles Highway and Iron Mountain Road • Explore Mount Rushmore, America's Shrine of Democracy before dinner at a local restaurant • *Overnight Sylvan Lake Lodge (B, L, D)*



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## **Day 4: Mickelson Trail / Crazy Horse / Pringle / Wildlife Loop**

Another amazing day awaits you! • Heading back to Hill City this morning, we'll resume our Mickelson Trail bike ride, pedaling up towards Crazy Horse • Still in progress, the Memorial is destined to be some 10 times the size of Mt Rushmore • This is more than just carvings in stone; it is a compound that will eventually pay tribute to the American Indians and the great Indian Chief, Crazy Horse, housing the Indian Museum of North America, Indian University of North America and a host of other properties • After your tour, pedal back down to the town of Custer where a picnic lunch awaits • This afternoon, we'll begin our ride where we left off to pedal to the tiny town of Pringle • After some downtime at the hotel, we'll drive the Wildlife Loop in Custer State Park on the lookout for bison, antelope and wild burros on our way to dinner at the State Game Lodge •  
*Overnight Sylvan Lake Lodge (B, L, D)*

## **Day 5: Mickelson Trail / Edgemont / Wind Cave**

Today we will continue our journey south on the Mickelson Trail, completing the final section of our 110 mile journey • This easygoing section of trail passes through rolling foothills, expansive private ranches, and "as-far-as-the-eye-can-see" prairies • Lunch is at the City Park in Edgemont, the official end of the trail, where we will celebrate our last day of biking with a toast! • After lunch, we load up the bikes and shuttle a short distance to Wind Cave, where a tour of the world's first cave designated as a national park will be undertaken • At tonight's dinner, toast to a great week spent exploring the Black Hills! • *Overnight Sylvan Lake Lodge (B, L, D)*

## **Day 6: Sylvan Lake Lodge / Rapid City**

This morning you have the option to sleep in and enjoy the lodge or head out on one last group hike before we load up, say goodbye to the Black Hills and head back to Rapid City for our farewells • (B)

*\* Austin Adventures operates under special use permit on the Black Hills National Forest.*

*\*\*Trip itineraries are subject to change without notice due to road, weather, wildlife, and other factors outside of our control, for the safety and enjoyment of our guests, as deemed necessary and appropriate by Austin Adventures.*

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## Activities

**Biking:** 15 to 32 miles per ride, easy to moderate terrain on paved roads and Mickelson Trail (packed gravel)

**Hiking:** 2 to 5 miles, easy to moderate terrain

**Discovery:** Few attractions stir the emotions of visitors the way Mount Rushmore does. Since its completion in 1941, it has joined the Statue of Liberty and the Stars & Stripes as one of America's most inspiring symbols of democracy. Can you imagine a nose on a person that is 20 feet long?! On Mount Rushmore's presidents' six-story tall heads, their rather large noses appear quite normal. Discover the enormity of the Crazy Horse Memorial, its past and present controversies, and the mountain carving's historic significance at the Native American Cultural Center. Visit a herd of the friendly wild begging burros in South Dakota's first and largest state park, Custer State Park. Descend into the depths of Wind Cave, the first cave designated as a national park and home to approximately 95% of the world's boxwork formation. Follow the route of the 1890 Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad on the Mickelson Trail, keeping an eye out for wild turkeys along the way. Follow the steps of famous historic figures such as Wild Bill Hickok, Calamity Jane, Jack McCall, and Seth Bullock in the Old West historic town of Deadwood. Come see all there is to do in the Mount Rushmore State!

Austin Adventures guides are experienced facilitators and regional experts. They take the time to explain the local history, daily sightseeing, and route options. Each route has been carefully planned to include options to please each traveler's interests. Austin Adventures guides are available to help you select the distance that's right for you and to offer advice and assistance as you desire.

## Mickelson Trail

Imagine a path where the ghosts of Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane still roam; where bicyclists, hikers and horseback riders can explore spruce and ponderosa pine forests; and the very young, the very old and people of all abilities can enjoy.

The George S. Mickelson Trail, in the heart of the beautiful Black Hills, was completed in September of 1998. Its gentle slopes and easy access allow people of all ages and abilities to enjoy the beauty of the Black Hills. Much of the trail passes through National Forest Land, but there are parts of the trail that pass through privately owned land, where trail use is restricted to the trail only.

The trail is 109 miles long and contains more than 100 converted railroad bridges and 4 rock tunnels. The trail surface is primarily crushed limestone and gravel. There are 15 trailheads, all of which offer parking, self-sale trail pass stations, vault toilets, and tables.



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## Distinctive Accommodations

### **Nights 1 & 2: Mineral Palace Hotel & Gaming Complex**

Located in the heart of historic Deadwood, the Mineral Palace Hotel & Gaming complex includes a grand and gracious 75-unit hotel, the biggest casino in Deadwood and a first-class restaurant called the Gem Steakhouse and Saloon that offers the largest variety of superb steaks in the Black Hills. Whether you're partaking in Deadwood's Legendary gaming halls, exploring the stunning backcountry of the Black Hills or enjoying a romantic rendezvous, the tastefully appointed guest rooms offer welcome and luxurious comforts.

### **Nights 3 – 5: Sylvan Lake Lodge**

Rich in history and natural beauty, Sylvan Lake Lodge holds the designation of Custer State Park's "crown jewel". This property features beautifully renovated lodge rooms and cabins, a lounge, a restaurant and an outdoor veranda which offers breathtaking views. The location of Sylvan Lake Lodge can't be beat, thanks to the design inspired by architect Frank Lloyd Wright. When the original lakeshore resort burned down in 1935, Wright suggested the current location amidst a forest of pine and spruce trees. The recently renovated Sylvan Lake Dining Room features the best in steaks, seafood, and chef's specialties. The awe-inspiring views, comfortable accommodations, exciting activities, and mouthwatering meals will leave you so satisfied you may never want to leave!

### **Meals**

The hallmark of an Austin Adventures vacation is our exceptional dining. All meals: breakfasts, lunches, snacks, dinners, refreshments and receptions – except one dinner on your own – are included as indicated by itinerary. (B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner). Alcoholic beverages and related gratuities are not included in the trip price.

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## Arrival & Departures

Please plan on arriving at least one day prior to your trip departure. Day one of your itinerary starts at 8:00 or 8:20 am, depending on your hotel. Your trip ends with a drop-off at either the Rapid City airport (12:00 pm) or your Rapid City hotel (12:30 pm).

## Trip Price

\$2,798 (\$480 single supplement)

## Trip Length

6 days/5 nights

## 2020 Dates

August 30 – September 4

September 6 – 11

September 13 – 18

## Host City

Rapid City, South Dakota

Airport code: RAP

## Reservations & Availability

1-800-575-1540

*Explore the two vast worlds  
(one visible, one hidden) of  
Wind Cave National Park*



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## Trip Reservations

### Reservations, Deposits and Balances Due

To make a reservation, contact Austin Adventures with your choice of trip and dates. A \$500 per person deposit is required to confirm your reservation. **Some Custom and International programs may require additional deposits.** Full payment is required at the time of booking if your trip departs within 90 days. Choose one of the following contact methods:

**Toll free:** 800-575-1540

**Phone:** 406-655-4591

**Online:** [austinadventures.com](http://austinadventures.com)

**Email:** [reservations@austinadventures.com](mailto:reservations@austinadventures.com)

**Mail:** Austin Adventures, P.O. Box 81025, Billings, MT 59108

\* You may also book your Austin Adventure with your preferred travel professional.

\*\* We accept most major credit cards and personal checks (U.S. funds made payable to Austin Adventures). Please do not send cash.

### Included in the Trip Price

- Double occupancy rooms with private baths.
- All meals: breakfasts, lunches, snacks, dinners, refreshments and receptions.
- Fully trained, first-aid certified professional guides and knowledgeable local partners.
- Bikes, helmets and other necessary equipment – all safe and well maintained.
- Vehicle support and land transportation during the trip.
- Austin Adventures T-shirt, water bottle, luggage tags and luggage service.
- Pre-departure and packing information.
- Incidental expenses such as taxes, dining and housekeeping gratuities, local partner and expert gratuities and national park entrance and permit fees.

### Not Included in the Trip Price

- Gratuities to Austin Adventures guides.
- Alcoholic beverages and related gratuities.
- One dinner on your own.
- Pre-and post-trip accommodations and associated expenses.
- Air and land transportation to/from host cities.
- All types of personal insurance.
- Personal expenses.

### Pre-departure Information

After receiving your reservation and deposit, we'll send you a pre-trip planner with general information about the area you'll be visiting, a packing list, exercise guidelines, a guest information questionnaire and a liability release agreement for you to sign and return within 10 days.

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## Private Custom Trips

Maybe your vacation schedule doesn't fit our list of trips and dates. Or perhaps you'd prefer a slightly different itinerary or level of luxury and activity. A Custom Adventure is the perfect answer. You pick the date and destination and brief us on the size of your group, what activities you want, your "must haves" and just how you like to relax and unwind. No detail is too small, no idea too outrageous. Our staff of experts will help create a tailor-made vacation that's just right for you and your group. In short, if you can dream it, we can make it happen.

## Room Occupancy, Single Supplements, and Shared Room Assignments

All trip prices are based on double occupancy. Single rooms are available for an additional charge, referred to as a "single supplement." If you're traveling alone and wish to share a room, make the request at the time of booking. Austin Adventures will attempt to find a suitable roommate for you. If you book 90 days before the trip and we cannot find you a suitable roommate, we will take care of the single supplement. *\*some restrictions may apply*

## Minimum Age

The minimum age on our non-family designated adult and teen adventures is sixteen years old.

## Cancellations and Refunds

The following cancellation policies and cancellation fees are in effect:

\*\*\*As with deposits on some international and custom programs, refund schedule may vary, speak with your Adventure Consultant for details.

**Cancellation 91 days or more before trip departure** – Full trip payment refunded less a \$300 per person administration fee

**Cancellation 61-90 days before trip departure** – Full trip payment less 25% per person is refunded

**Cancellation 31-60 days before trip departure** – 50% of the trip payment is refunded

**Cancellation 0-30 days before trip departure** – No refund is given

## Our Guarantee

Exceeding your expectations is our number one priority. In the unlikely event that you are dissatisfied with something during your trip, immediately notify your guide(s). If he or she is unable to resolve the issue, call our main office and give us the details of the problem, and a chance to correct it. We will do our best to find a resolution. If we are unable to do so during your trip, we will work with you upon your return home to arrive at a fair and equitable solution, including up to a full refund.