

Escalante Area Day Trips

Are You Ready?



What type of vehicle are you driving?

This is a rugged place. Many parts of the region are neither smoothly paved nor well marked. In some cases, you need a high-clearance vehicle with four-wheel drive and a good map. **Check road conditions before you go.**



How much time do you have?

Most activities in this region take longer than you'd think due to road conditions and vast distances. Check out our recommendations for 1- to 2-hour activities and half- to full-day adventures. **Plan for the unexpected.**



Are you prepared for this wild landscape?

This is a remote place. Most hiking routes are not marked. Cellular phone service is unreliable. Food and other services are only available in local communities. Don't head out without planning for this. **Take maps, food, proper shoes and clothing, and at least 4 liters (1 gallon) of water per person, per day.**



What is the weather forecast?

Weather dramatically impacts this landscape and your safety. Extreme heat can lead to serious illness. Lightning strikes are common, and dangerous thunderstorms often produce torrential rain that leads to flash floods. Heavy rain and snow quickly make roads impassable. **Always be aware of weather conditions.**



Map Legend *This map is not sufficient for backcountry use.

- Utah Scenic Byway 12
- Paved Road
- Gravel Road
- Unimproved (high clearance recommended)
- Escalante Interagency Visitor Center

The Escalante River links a diverse array of agencies, elevations, and ecosystems, providing endless challenges and rewards for the prepared visitor. This guide represents several opportunities on public and surrounding lands.

These lands hold a special place in the soul of pioneers, explorers, Native Americans, and travelers from all walks of life. It is not an easy place to visit – it is primitive, remote and unforgiving. Because of these qualities it is also rewarding. With your care it will retain those elements of challenge, untrammelled beauty, and frontier spirit.

Your safety is your responsibility. Be prepared and know your limits.

- Very few routes are marked or maintained. Keep yourself oriented.
- Road conditions change rapidly. High clearance or 4WD may be required.
- Summer temperatures in the desert can be lethal. Avoid hiking in the heat.
- Flash floods are a significant danger. Do not enter canyons if rain threatens. Dangerous thunderstorms often produce torrential rain that leads to flash floods, sometimes miles away from the storm.
- Respect wildlife. This is their home.
- Soil crust is alive and should not be trampled. Stay on existing routes.



1-2 Hours

Hikes

1 Escalante Petrified Forest State Park

Climb a picturesque mesa to hike among rainbow-hued petrified wood.

Distance from Escalante Visitor Center: 2 miles
Hiking Distance: 1 to 1^{3/4} miles roundtrip loops



Escalante Petrified Forest State Park

2 Posey Lake Overlook

Escape the desert heat by taking a short, steep hike through aspen and pine forest to a Civilian Conservation Corps-era gazebo for views of Posey Lake.

Distance from Escalante Visitor Center: 18 miles
Hiking Distance: 1^{1/2} miles roundtrip



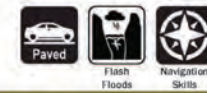
Half to Full Day

Hikes

9 Escalante Natural Bridge

Crisscross the Escalante River through a lush canyon to a towering natural bridge.

Distance from Escalante Visitor Center to trailhead: 15 miles
Hiking Distance: 4 miles roundtrip



10 Lower Calf Creek Falls

Temporarily closed beginning July 8, 2024 for Calf Creek Recreation Site Improvement Project. For more information about re-opening, visit the Monument Homepage at <http://on.doi.gov/3PK2sri>



11 Barker Recreation Area

Explore trails that meander around lovely aspen and conifer-ringed lakes and meadows.

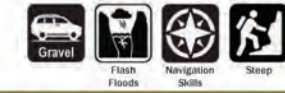
Distance from Escalante Visitor Center to trailhead: 20 miles
Multiple trails of varying distances



12 Dry Fork Slots (Peekaboo & Spooky)

Squeeze, push, and pull your way through a series of fun and challenging slots requiring a 12-foot climb and maneuvering through 10-inch-wide gaps.

Distance from Escalante Visitor Center to trailhead: 33 miles
Hiking Distance: 3 miles roundtrip



13 Chriss Lake

Ascend through aspen stands and mountain meadows while enjoying excellent views of the vast Escalante region below.

Distance Escalante Visitor Center to trailhead: 37 miles
Hiking Distance: 2 miles roundtrip



Points of Interest

3 Hole-in-the-Rock Escalante Heritage Center

Learn about the 1879 Hole-in-the-Rock Expedition-- a treacherous six-month, 200-mile expedition that involved navigating wagons down a 1,200-foot vertical cliff to the banks of the Colorado River.

Distance from Escalante Visitor Center: 2 miles



4 Anasazi State Park Museum

View an original archaeological site, tour a replica-900-year-old dwelling, and learn about the lifeways of this sizable Ancestral Puebloan community through artifacts found at the site.

Distance from Escalante Visitor Center: 28 miles



Long Canyon Slot
Photo: VISIO Photography
GSENM Artist-in-Residence

5 Long Canyon Slot

Experience the towering walls and narrow perspectives of a slot canyon on this short but beautiful walk.

Distance from Escalante Visitor Center to Burr Trail Road turnoff: 28 miles
Distance from turnoff to Long Canyon Slot: 11.2 miles
Walking distance: 1/4 mile



Points of Interest

14 Devil's Garden

Explore, play, or picnic in a garden of whimsical sandstone rock formations.

Distance from Escalante Visitor Center to Hole in the Rock Road turnoff: 6 miles
Distance from turnoff to Devil's Garden: 12 miles



Devil's Garden

15 Dance Hall Rock

Imagine Mormon pioneers enjoying a rest from this unforgiving wild landscape to dance and sing in this natural amphitheater.

Distance from Escalante Visitor Center to Hole in the Rock Road turnoff: 6 miles
Distance from turnoff to Dance Hall Rock: 37 miles



16 Hole-in-the-Rock

Visit this narrow and steep crevice on the western rim of Glen Canyon, listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its significance as the 1879 route for Mormon pioneers.

Distance from Escalante Visitor Center to Hole in the Rock Road turnoff: 6 miles
Distance from turnoff to Hole in the Rock: 56 miles



Drives

6 All American Road Scenic Byway 12

Encounter surprises around each bend on Utah's only All American Road designated for its diverse, remote, and stunning landscapes that range from desert canyons and hoodoos to narrow ridges and lush forests.

Distance from Escalante Visitor Center: 65 miles eastbound to HWY 24
59 miles westbound to HWY 89



Hell's Backbone

7 Pine Creek Road to Hell's Backbone Road

Experience hair-raising heights on Hell's Backbone Bridge, a one-lane bridge that stands 1,500 feet above a gaping gorge north of Box-Death Hollow Wilderness.

Distance from Escalante Visitor Center to turnoff: 1 mile
Distance from turnoff to Hell's Backbone Bridge: 26 miles
Distance from bridge to Scenic Byway 12 near Boulder: 16 miles



8 Burr Trail Road

Travel through Navajo Sandstone domes, drop into the rich and sinuous Long Canyon, and explore the heart of the vast Circle Cliffs region on this beautiful backcountry drive.

Distance from Escalante Visitor Center to turnoff: 28 miles
Distance from turnoff to Capitol Reef National Park boundary: 30 miles



Drives

17 North Creek Road

Wind through a progression of ecological zones, climbing out of the desert to a high-elevation aspen forest. The road ends at Barker Recreation Area, where a peaceful congregation of lakes and meadows awaits.

Distance from Escalante Visitor Center to turn off: 4 miles
Distance from turn off to Barker Rec Area: 17 miles



18 Hole-in-the-Rock Road

Explore natural wonders, see historic places along the route of the Hole-in-the-Rock Expedition of 1879, or access trailheads for hiking and backpacking excursions in the Escalante Canyons.

Distance from Escalante Visitor Center to turnoff: 6 miles
Distance from turnoff to end of the road: 56 miles



Left Hand Collet Road

19 Smoky Mountain/Alvey Wash Road to Left Hand Collet Road

Drive a spectacular loop that leaves from Escalante, climbs up and across the isolated and rugged Kaiparowits Plateau, descend the steep and narrow Left Hand Collet Canyon, and opens onto sagebrush benchlands below the stunning Straight Cliffs.

Distance from Escalante Visitor Center to turnoff: 1/4 mile
Distance of round trip loop: 63 miles

