



## Four Corners Ancestral Puebloan Tour

G26050402

with Martha Yates

May 25 - June 4, 2026

Hello Everyone,

Welcome to the 2026 Ghost Ranch Four Corners Ancestral Puebloan Tour. I'm your instructor and guide. I've been an archaeologist, teacher, and guide in the Southwest for over 25 years. This includes as District Archaeologist, Santa Fe National Forest, when the Chief of the US Forest Service presented me with the National Windows on the Past Award for exceptional public interpretation of an archaeological site. For more about my work, a biography is included in the tour information sheet.

Check-in time at Ghost Ranch is 3pm on the day of arrival and check-out on the day of departure 10am. Dinner at the Ranch is from 5:30-6:30pm with orientation after dinner on the day of arrival. You can learn the meeting location when you check in at the Ghost Ranch Welcome Center.

It all begins at the Ranch with one full day and three nights which include my presentations on the cultural history and archaeoastronomy of the Southwest. You'll have the chance to visit the Museums, take the Georgia O'Keeffe Landscape Tour or the Ranch and Museums tour. Please call 505-685-1000 to make reservations, especially for the O'Keeffe tour. It fills quickly. There's a charge for the O'Keeffe Tour. The others are free.



My presentations on Tuesday May 26 begin at 3pm —be sure to choose a tour that ends shortly before that time.

The next day we are on the road to visit many of the most spectacular and important archaeological sites in the region: Chaco Canyon, Chimney Rock, Aztec, Canyon de Chelly, Hovenweep, Mesa Verde and Ute Mountain, among others.

Walking is easy to moderate at Chaco Canyon, Aztec, Mesa Verde and Hovenweep, with a few stairs. Though Chimney Rock is 1,000 feet above the canyon below thankfully we drive most of the way. The last 150 feet are moderately steep (wear good hiking boots). We stop often to see the view.

We visit multiple cliff dwellings (1100s to 1200s CE) at Ute Mountain which National Geographic has named one of 80 best tours in the world. There you will need good hiking gear, good hiking boots, and poles if you use them. A Ute guide leads us. There are 4-5 ladders to use to reach the trail along the side of the canyon, all wide and made of substantial material. Most are short (4-foot, another is 6-foot), another is 15-16 feet. You'll have help with the ladders. At Ute Mountain there's always the option of staying above on the mesa with the Ute guide's assistant and contemplating the stunning view of Canyon Country.

The itinerary accompanies this Welcome Letter, as well as a list of things to be sure to bring. Something like a camera is not on the list, because it's optional. But other items are not. Be sure to know that Chaco Canyon, the Canyon de Chelly jeep ride, and the Ute Mountain tour are weather dependent. It doesn't happen often— once in ten years— and hopefully not on our trip, but we have good alternatives. Ghost Ranch provides all breakfasts and lunches on the road and all meals at the Ranch. Dinners on the road are the responsibility of each person.



Below is my contact information if you have any questions. After May 6th I'm on the road and hard to reach. Best to contact me before that. Please, don't hesitate to call or email me.

I'm looking forward to this amazing trip and to meeting you all.

With Best Wishes,

Martha

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#### Supply List:

- Sturdy hiking boots and comfortable footwear to change into
- If you use poles you will need them
- Several pairs of socks
- 3 Reusable water bottle(s): be prepared to carry several liters
- Small daypack
- Wide brim hat
- Sunscreen & sunglasses
- Layers! Clothing for multiple types of weather, especially protective clothing against the high desert sun.
- Cotton long sleeve shirt and long pants - for sun protection
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Rain gear
- Bathing suit - there may be pools at some of the hotels
- Binoculars - these will be extremely useful!
- National Parks Senior Citizen Passes if applicable



- Personal Medications to maintain health on the trip
- Snacks

## **Trip Itinerary**

<p><b>Arrival Day: Monday, May 25th</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 3pm: Check-in anytime after 3pm</li> <li>● 5:30–6:30pm: Dinner</li> <li>● 7:00pm: Orientation</li> </ul>	<p><b>First Day (At Ghost Ranch): Tuesday, May 26th</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Morning: Individual Exploration of Ghost Ranch: Visit the Museums, hike the trails, or take Ghost Ranch Tours</li> <li>● 12:00 –1:00pm: Lunch</li> <li>● 3:00pm: Background Presentations and Discussion time</li> <li>● 5:30–6:30pm: Dinner</li> <li>● 6:45pm: Presentation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Second Day (Chimney Rock and Aztec)/Night in Farmington, NM): Wednesday, May 27th</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 7:00am: Load vans</li> <li>● 7:15am: Breakfast, pick up sack lunches, water</li> <li>● 7:50am: Depart Ghost Ranch</li> <li>● 10:30am: At Chimney Rock National Monument/ with Picnic Lunch</li> <li>● 2:00–5:00pm: Drive to Aztec National Monument &amp; Tour of Aztec</li> <li>● 6:00pm: Arrival at hotel in Farmington, NM</li> <li>● 7:00pm: Dinner at Three Rivers Brewery – <i>Individuals responsible for paying for dinner and drinks</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Third Day (Chaco Canyon/Night in Farmington): Thursday, May 28th</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Complimentary breakfast at hotel (Make sure to fill water bottles)</li> <li>● 7:30am: Depart Hotel for Chaco Canyon</li> <li>● 9:30am: Arrive Chaco Canyon National Historical Park</li> <li>● 4:00pm: Depart Chaco and travel back to Farmington</li> <li>● 6:30pm: Dinner at Three Rivers Brewery – <i>Individuals responsible for paying for dinner and drinks</i></li> </ul>



**Fourth Day (Night at Canyon de Chelly):**

**Friday, May 29th**

- Complimentary breakfast at hotel (Make sure to fill water bottles)
- **7:30am:** Depart hotel for drive over the Chuska Mountains to Canyon de Chelly with stops at Shiprock/Two Grey Hills Trading Post/Mummy Pueblo etc.
- **4:00–5:00pm:** Arrival Canyon de Chelly/Thunderbird Lodge
- 6:30pm: Dinner at Thunderbird Lodge - *Individuals responsible for paying for dinner and drinks*

**Fifth Day (Night at Canyon de Chelly):**

**Saturday, May 30th**

- 8:00am: Complimentary breakfast at hotel (Make sure to fill water bottles)
- 9:00am: Jeep Ride into Canyon de Chelly
- Noon Lunch
- Afternoon: Drive the loop road to other side, possible hike, Spider Rock and free time to relax
- 6:30pm: Dinner - *Individuals responsible for paying for dinner and drinks*

**Sixth Day (San Juan River Petroglyphs/Hovenweep/Night in Cortez, CO): Sunday, May 31st**

- 7:30am: Breakfast and Checkout
- 8:30am: Depart hotel to Hovenweep National Monument with stops along the way: San Juan River Petroglyphs.
- 3:00pm: Depart Hovenweep, stop at Castle Rock
- 5:30pm: Check into hotel or go straight to dinner
- 6:30pm: Dinner in Cortez - *Individuals responsible for paying for dinner and drinks*

**Seventh Day (Mesa Verde/Night in Cortez):**

**Monday, June 1st**

- Complimentary breakfast at hotel (Make sure to fill water bottles)
- 8:00am: Depart hotel for Mesa Verde
- 9:00am–4:00pm: Mesa Verde National Park
- 6:30pm: Dinner at the Metate Room **at Far View Lodge**, Mesa Verde - *Individuals responsible for paying for dinner and drinks*

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## **Eighth Day (Ute Mtn/Night in Cortez): Tuesday, June 2nd**

- Complimentary breakfast at hotel (Make sure to fill water bottles)
- 8:00am: Depart for Ute Mountain Ute Reservation cliff dwellings. All day hike to backcountry cliff dwellings with a Ute guide.
- 6:30pm: Dinner in Cortez - *Individuals responsible for paying for dinner and drinks*

## **Ninth Day (At Ghost Ranch): Wednesday, June 3rd**

- Complimentary breakfast at hotel (Make sure to fill water bottles)
- 9:00am: Depart Cortez
- Picnic along the San Juan River
- 4:30pm: Arrive at Ghost Ranch
- 5:30-6:30pm: Dinner at Ghost Ranch
- 7:00pm: Discussion and farewells

## **Departure Day: Thursday, June 4th**

- 7:30-8:30am: Breakfast
- 10:00am: Checkout time