



Gateway to Adventure

BY ERIN ENGLISH

Travelers choosing a getaway often tend to search out luxe resort towns—beautiful places with an array of shopping, dining and activity choices. But they miss out when they don't consider another option: a self-contained resort in the middle of nowhere that can provide an escape away from everywhere.

Gateway Canyons Resort, nestled among red rock formations on the Colorado-Utah border, offers adventure that extends well beyond its indulgent spa treatments, sparkling pool and quiet spots to sit and take in delicious canyon breezes. Education is part of that adventure, with a wide range of talks, tours, workshops and programs available to guests on topics ranging from paleontology to photography. With surrounding lands rich in natural history, visitors are encouraged to explore them, whether on foot, by ATV or a high-end automobile, or in a private helicopter. Days at the resort are ripe with possibility; even a full week may not be long enough to take in the extensive list of activities. ▸

It appears to be in the middle of nowhere, but that's the point: Gateway Canyons Resort, on Colorado's Western Slope, has everything one could ever need for an exciting, luxurious escape





Behind the Wheel

AUTOMOBILE ENTHUSIASTS come to Gateway just to drool over founder John Hendricks' extensive car collection at the Gateway Canyons Auto Museum (located at the resort), where nearly 60 fabulous vehicles are on display. For an extra fee, an infinitely more exciting and adrenaline-producing experience is also available to resort guests: getting behind the wheel of a dream car for a half or full day through the Driven Experiences rental program (drivenexperiences.com).

Take your pick of a Bentley, Porsche, Jeep or another jazzy vehicle from the 23-car fleet, and head out on one of the staff's top five scenic drives:

Drive #1

2.25 hours

Take Scenic Byway 141 southeast, crank the tunes, and settle in for the ultimate mountain drive to the town of Telluride.

Drive #2

1.25 hours

A relatively quick jaunt down the road takes you to Colorado National Monument, a destination affectionately known as Colorado's "mini Grand Canyon."

Drive #3

2.25 hours

Head northeast toward Glenwood Springs for a downright spectacular day trip. Stop for a stroll in a Palisade vineyard, or proceed straight to the Glenwood Hot Springs Pool for a soak.

Drive #4

2.25 hours

Ready, set, adventure! Rent a Jeep for the day and drive west over John Brown Canyon into Moab, Utah. Be prepared for a fun and bumpy ride on the first 25 off-road miles.

Drive #5

3.5 hours

It's all scenic byways from your starting point of Gateway to the Four Corners Monument. Once there, get out for a stretch, and find your limbs planted in Utah, Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona all at the same time.



Gateway calls its customizable educational experiences "Curiosity Adventures," and enlists "Experts in Residence," who hail from all over the state, to lead them. The focus on learning makes sense once you realize that John Hendricks, founder of the Discovery Channel, is the man who developed this magnificent piece of property. Hendricks was instantly smitten with the area after paying a visit back in 1995, and has been masterfully building his resort from the ground up ever since.

Large and sprawling, the resort has more than 6,000 acres of impeccably maintained grounds and southwestern-style buildings that blend seamlessly with the natural landscape. The resort's last major construction project was completed in July, 2013—the addition of 14 airy and beautiful casitas set well away▷



from the main buildings. These private retreats are decorated with Peruvian furnishings and each comes with a butler, who is on call 24 hours a day to cater to vacationers' every need.

Whether in a lodge room—some of which have private patios with hot tubs and fire pits—or a casita, guests are treated to exquisite views of the red rock canyon, punctuated with bright green foliage and offset by a swath of deep blue sky. The stunning Palisade rock formation towers hundreds of feet in the air and is visible from any location on the property.

After examining dinosaur fossils up close, viewing distant galaxies through a high-powered telescope or swaying to an acoustic trio by the light of a crackling campfire, visitors to Gateway Canyons Resort come to understand the real secret of their adventure—they have actually escaped to the middle of everything.



DR. VINT CERF/PHOTO: JOI ITO

Curiosity Project

LEADERS IN SCIENCE, technology and health—including Dr. Deepak Chopra and Dr. Vint Cerf—will gather at Gateway Canyons Resort this spring and summer to “transform fundamentally the way we understand the world around us, the way we teach each other, and the way we learn.” Seventy spots each are available to the public for two intensive workshops: May 18-23 and July 20-25. curiosityretreats.com



HOW TO GET THERE: Fly into Grand Junction Regional Airport (GJT), Montrose Airport (MTJ), Eagle Airport (EGE) or Denver International Airport (DIA). The drive to Gateway Canyons Resort is 1 hour, 15 minutes from GJT, or 4 hours, 45 minutes from DIA.

Off Road & UNPLUGGED

WITH ALL THAT BEAUTIFUL wilderness tempting visitors to Gateway Canyons, it's hard to resist the call of the wild.

Horseback Riding

Lessons, trail rides and half- and full-day excursions with picnics are available, as well as experiences in “hands on” equine massage, Native American traditional horse painting and yoga on horseback.

Fly Fishing

Join a guided tour to Don's Lake in the La Sal Mountains in search of golden and rainbow trout.

Hiking & Climbing

Explore ponderosa pine forests, majestic canyons and scenic trails with experienced guides. From easy to expert, these challenges will get you out of your rut and into your rugged.

River Trips

Enjoy custom kayaking, rafting and tubing journeys on the Dolores River, with varying levels of difficulty—from a short float to a multi-day paddling adventure.

Mountain Biking

Pedal awesome singletrack trails near the resort, or let Gateway Canyons organize a spectacular trek all the way to Telluride using the San Juan Mountain Hut system. □

