

# Star Valley Scenic Byway

*Star of All Valleys*



4 Days/3 Nights

Gateway City: Jackson, Wyoming



According to one legend, Star Valley received its name when Mormon pioneers who settled the area in the late 1870s took one look at its scenic beauty and proclaimed it to be the “Star of All Valleys.” Another legend refers to a series of terribly bitter winters in the late 1800s that were so horrific, locals named the region “Starvation Valley,” eventually shortened to its present name. Whatever the true reason behind the name, western Wyoming’s Star Valley is one of the state’s hidden gems. Nestled between the Salt River Range to the west and the Webster Range to the east, Star Valley is a grand expanse of land dotted with working cattle ranches, sunburnt hay fields, and charming small towns that retain much of their original Wild West flare. The best way to experience this delightful region is on the Star Valley Scenic Byway, an 80-mile route that hugs the western edge of Wyoming and parallels the Snake and Salt Rivers. Discover a road lined with snow-capped mountain peaks and panoramic canyon views, following a pioneer path that took millions of settlers west in search of a better life.



### **Touring the Byway**

We recommend starting your journey in Jackson, a world class mountain town.

Learn about the region's unique local history at Jackson Hole Historical Society and Museum, view one of the country's largest collections of animal art at the National Museum of Wildlife Art, experience iconic performances at Jackson Hole Rodeo, and capture a great view over the city on the Jackson Aerial Tram. Spend your first evening around the fireplace at one of Jackson's most renowned lodges.

On Day Two, the byway begins at Hoback Junction, the confluence of the Hoback and Snake Rivers. Heading south on WY-89, enjoy the valley views on the way to Alpine, a delightful town where you can immerse yourself in the pristine wilderness of the Palisades Reservoir. At night, relax in a hot tub at a rustic resort underneath a blanket of mountain stars. Day Three is all about the charming towns found along the byway. Hear the story of the oldest surviving house in Star Valley at the Historic Baker Cabin in Etna, then enjoy lunch in Thayne, a lovely little town with



an enchanting main street. Stop by Periodic Spring, one of the only mountain streams in the world that starts and stops at regular intervals, at Afton, home to the world's largest elk antler arch. Step back in time at the Star Valley Pioneer and Historical Museum, learn the role Afton played in the Oregon Trail and the Lander Trail Cutoff at the Lander Trail Foundation Historical Center.

Reach new heights on Day Four as you traverse Salt River Pass, a scenic lookout with panoramic views of the Star Valley and the byway's high point at 7,610 feet above sea level. Discover one of the highest densities of nesting waterfowl in the state at the Cokeville Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, then continue on to Evanston, where you can explore a historic Carnegie building at the Uinta County Museum and view bison in their natural habitat at Bear River State Park.

From there, we wish you a safe passage if you're continuing your journey on another Wyoming Scenic Byway, or a safe and pleasant journey home.



## DAY ONE



## **Jackson**

Originally populated by the Shoshoni, Crow, Blackfeet, Bannock, and Gros Ventre tribes, the Jackson area was populated in 1807 by mountain man John Colter, of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. The town takes its name from trapper David Jackson who organized summer rendezvous' of mountain men throughout the Rocky Mountains in the 1820s. Some of the early buildings can still be found on Town Square, now boasting incredible dining, shopping, and historic attractions, under arches made of shed antlers from the nearby National Elk Refuge.

## **Jackson Hole Historical Society and Museum**

Housed in a collection of historic log cabins, more than 7,200 objects, 19,200 photographs, 8,200 records, and 460 oral histories tell the fascinating story Jackson Hole and the town.

225 North Cache Street, Jackson, WY, 83001, 307-733-2414, Tue-Sat 10AM-5PM



## **National Museum of Wildlife Art**

Situated on a butte overlooking the National Elk Refuge, be inspired by more than 5,000 artists' interpretations of wildlife, including work by Georgia O'Keeffe, Andy Warhol, and John James Audubon. The art chronicles wildlife in art from 2500 B.C.E. to the present. The museum houses the largest collection of work by Carl Rungius anywhere and hosts the Sculpture Trail which meanders past more than 20 wildlife sculptures on a sage covered hillside.

2820 Rungius Road, Jackson, WY, 83001, 307-733-5771, Daily 10AM-5PM, Adult \$17



## **Jackson Hole Rodeo**

See roping, bronco riding and other rodeo action that has been a part of Jackson's cowboy culture since the first cattleman and cowboys arrived.

447 West Snow King Avenue, Jackson, WY, 83001, 307-733-9727, Wed and Sat Memorial Day-Labor Day, Wed, Fri and Sat, July-Aug, 8PM, Adults \$35

## **Jackson Aerial Tram**

In just 9 minutes, the Aerial Tram glides skyward 4,139 vertical feet, delivering spectacular 360-degree views of the Teton Mountain Range, Jackson Hole valley, and the surrounding mountain ranges. When you reach the "Top of the World" there are great hiking and running trails, opportunities for climbing and the occasional snowball fight. Take part in the tradition of delicious waffles atop Rendezvous Peak at Corbet's Cabin at 10,450 feet (accessed via the tram).

3275 West Village Drive, Teton Village, WY 83025, 307-733-2292 May 12-Oct 9  
Daily, 9AM-5PM, Adults starting at \$42





### **Destination Distinctive Accommodations**

**The Lodge at Jackson Hole** 80 Scott Lane, Jackson, WY, 83002, 307-739-9703 Enjoy luxurious accommodations and lavish spa amenities in a contemporary Western setting.

### **Destination Distinctive Dining**

**Café Genevieve** 135 East Broadway Avenue, Jackson, WY, 83001, 307-732-1910 Quaint log cabin with a classic American menu, plus wine and spirits.

**Liberty Burger** 160 North Cache Street, Jackson, WY, 83001, 307-200-6071 A locally-owned neighborhood bar serving award-winning burgers.

**Bubba's Bar-B-Que Restaurant** 100 Flat Creek Drive, Jackson, WY, 83001, 307-733-2288 Enjoy specialty barbecue dishes and homemade pies at this old-school joint with booth seating.

### **Destination Distinctive Retail**

**MADE** 125 North Cache Street, Jackson, WY, 83001, 307-690-7957 A unique shop offering handmade items from more than 360 American artists ranging from jewelry and pottery to leather goods and glassware.

**Jackson Trading Company** 25 West Broadway, Jackson, WY, 83001, 307-733-5714 Browse here for gifts for all budgets.



## DAY TWO



### **Alpine / Alpine Junction**

This morning you'll be heading out toward the Star Valley Scenic Byway through Alpine, which was a bit late coming to the frontier party. In comparison to Jackson, settled a century earlier, the first settlers homesteaded here in 1907, with more land opening up in 1912. A ferry carrying teams and wagons across the river operated until 1914, when the first steel bridge was constructed. The Civilian Conservation Corp started building a proper road to connect Alpine with Jackson in 1934.

When the dam that holds back the Palisades Reservoir began construction in 1952, the road to Jackson was relocated to the confluence of the Greys, the Salt and the Snake Rivers, and the effected farmers relocated. The Greys River area encompasses over 471,000 acres of virgin forest, with a large wetland and waterfowl viewing area only a few miles out of town.

### **Palisades Reservoir**

Forested hillsides rising from the water to the towering snowcapped mountains form the backdrop of this 16,100-acre reservoir with 70 miles of limited access shoreline. Located along U.S. Highway 26 near the Idaho and Wyoming borders, Caribou-Targhee N.F., 1405 Hollipark Drive, Idaho Falls, ID, 83401, 208-557-5900



### **Destination Distinctive Accommodations**

**Flying Saddle Resort** 118878 US-89, Alpine, WY, 83128, 877-772-4422 Located on the banks of the Snake River, this resort is perfect for an authentic Western escape.

### **Destination Distinctive Dining**

**Driftwood Pizzeria** 170 US-89, Alpine, WY, 83128, 307-654-5050 Serving up some of the best pizza on the west side of the Continental Divide, along with salads, sandwiches, calzones, and more.

**Brenthoven's Restaurant** 1 Colonial Lane, Alpine, WY, 83128, 307-654-7556 A favorite among the locals.

### **Destination Distinctive Retail**

**Rustik Wyoming** 140 US-89, Alpine, WY, 83128, 480-309-0135

## DAY THREE

### **Etna**

A small town of less than 200 people, nestled in a grassland valley surrounded by forested mountains.

### **Historic Baker Cabin/Marker**

This two-room cabin, built by Anna Eliza and her 12-year-old daughter, May, in 1889 is the oldest surviving house in Star Valley and the first to have a shingled roof. Prior to completion, the family lived in a tent and an overturned wagon box. Hauling the stone for a foundation from Prater Canyon, Eliza selected the logs from what is now the Star Valley Ranch.

West side of US-89 between County Road 169 and Gravel Pit Road







## **Thayne**

Located at 5,945 feet, this tiny town is surrounded by grasslands and ranches, with mountains at the valley's edge, and pines and aspens in the Bridger-Teton, Caribou, and Targhee National Forests, that reach nearly to the stars. An abundance of wildlife includes elk, deer, moose, beaver, ducks, geese, swans, and more. The meandering Snake River provides a scenic backdrop.

### **Destination Distinctive Dining**

**225 BBQ etc.** 261 North Main Street, Thayne, WY, 83127, 307-883-2250 BBQ meats smoked in house, with homemade sauces cooked "low and slow" to ensure optimum flavor.

### **Periodic Spring**

This cold-water geyser, the largest rhythmic spring in the world, features an on/off flows that repeats every 12-18 minutes.

From downtown Afton, follow the signposts on Second Ave off US-89, approx. 5 miles to the trailhead.



## **Afton**

You're welcomed into Afton by the world's largest elkhorn arch - a 75-foot wide, 18-foot high, bridge across Main Street adorned with 3,011 antlers, a fitting entry for a community that had no name until 1880. When the valley was dedicated as a home for LDS colonists, the town was named after the roaring, tumbling stream gushing out of the mountains, which reminded them of a location in Scotland. The city's Periodic Spring is the main water supply, as well as one of its most noted attractions.

## **Star Valley Pioneer and Historical Museum**

The main museum referred to as the "Old Seminary" features room settings with artifacts illustrating the region's early history and displays chronicling the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in southwestern Wyoming. The Barn Museum is filled with early agricultural implements and equipment. The structures are also home to the Star Valley Historical Society Archives, and the Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museum.

138 Washington Street, Afton, WY, 83110, 307-885-3670, Generally open in summer, hours vary. Free

## **Lander Trail Foundation Historical Center**

This historic center features artifacts, information, self-guided tours, videos, maps, and other materials related to the historic Lander Trail - a 252-mile route that was a cutoff of the Oregon Trail built in 1857-58. The trail began in South Pass City, passed through Sublette County, the Wyoming and Salt River Mountains, and the Star Valley, finally ending at Fort Hall, Idaho. The route shaved off seven days traveling west to Oregon. In its first year, over 13,000 emigrants made their way on the route. Portions of the trail are still passable and many stretches on public lands are marked with historical signs and markers.

150 West First Avenue, Afton, WY, 307-883-2174, Day after Memorial Day-Sat before Labor Day, Tu-Th 12:30PM-4:30PM, Fri-Sat 12:30PM-5:30PM







### **Destination Distinctive Accommodations**

**Kodiak Mountain Resort** 82717 US-89, Afton, WY, 83110, 307-885-8800 A luxury log cabin resort at the base of the Salt River Mountains.

### **Destination Distinctive Dining**

**Rocky Mountain Seafood** 492 Washington Street, Afton, WY, 83110, 307-885-2722 Offering fresh seafood dishes to delight any appetite.

**Red Baron Drive-In** 838 Washington Street, Afton, WY, 83110, 307-885-8624 Serving up burgers and shakes in a 50s style atmosphere.

**Salt River Grill** 825 South Washington Street, Afton, WY, 83110, 307-885-7777 Comfort food from breakfast through dinner.

## DAY FOUR

### **Salt River Pass Interpretive Site**

Enjoy majestic views across the divide between Kemmerer and Greys River Ranger Districts, enhanced with interpretive panels that provide a fuller understanding of public lands.

South on United States Highway 89 (US-89) for approximately 16 miles and make a left into the pullout just off of US-89.

### **Cokeville**

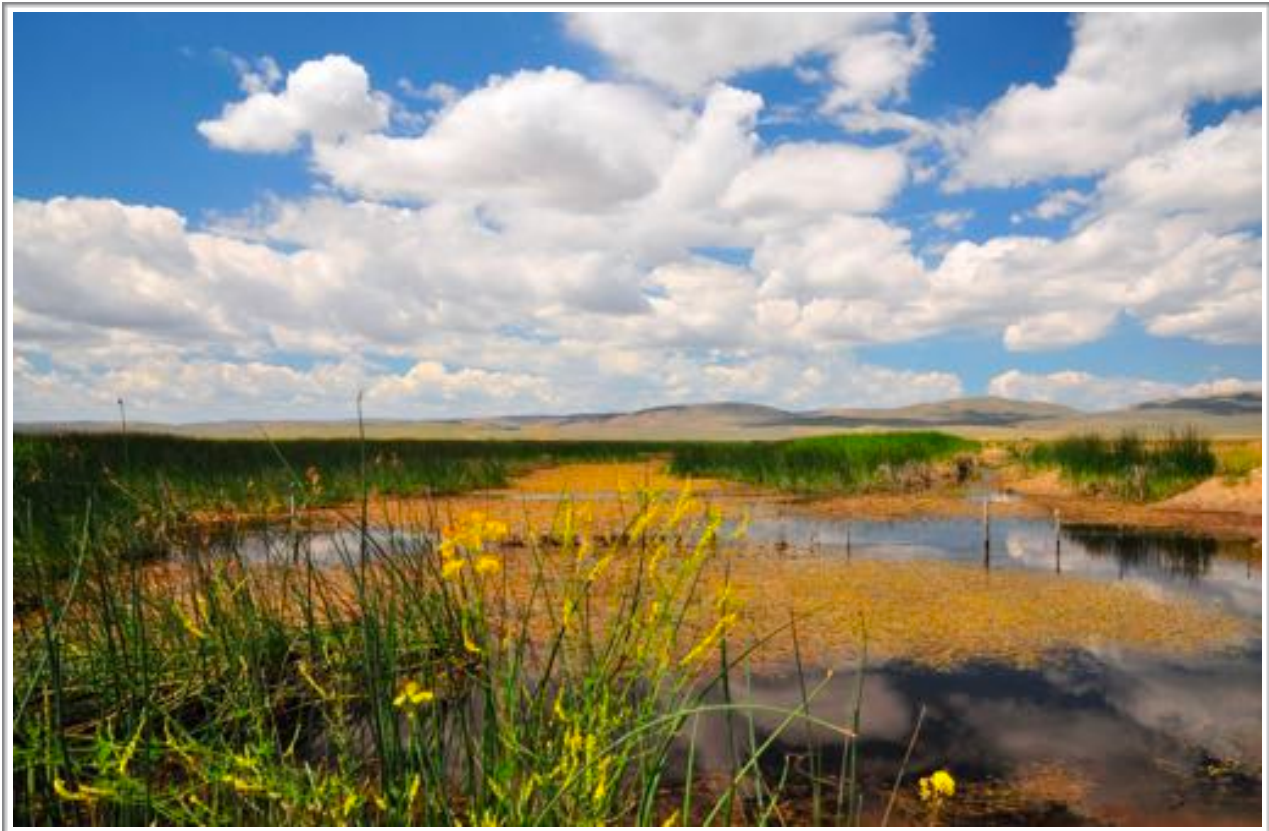
The first inhabitants in the area were the Shoshone, followed by settlers in 1869. By 1873, Tilford Kutch had opened a trading post and was running a ferry across Smiths Fork. The railroad arrived in 1882, and the town was incorporated in 1910, after which sheep ranching earned the town the “Sheep Capital of the World.”



## **Cokeville Meadows National Wildlife Refuge**

Encompassing a 20-mile stretch of the Bear River Valley's wetlands and uplands, the Cokeville Meadows National Wildlife Refuge supports one of the highest densities of nesting waterfowl in Wyoming, while providing an excellent habitat for migratory birds. Species at the refuge include white-faced ibis, black tern, sage grouse, mule deer, elk, and pronghorn sheep.

21618 US Highway 30, Cokeville, WY, 83114, 307-875-2187



## **Destination Distinctive Dining**

**Gold Buckle Grill** 10501 US-30, Cokeville, WY, 83114, 307-279-2900 Great food in a family atmosphere.





## **Evanston**

Evanston was founded in 1868, when the Transcontinental Railroad began construction. It is considered such an important part of the town, that when the streets were laid out, they were oriented toward the railroad tracks instead of compass points. The first establishment in town was created when early entrepreneur Harvey Booth opened the original saloon and restaurant in a tent. The original railroad machine shop and stone roundhouse, gave Evanston a sense of permanence. Ultimately, Evanston became a major stop on the Lincoln Highway, the first coast to coast road in the United States (today's Bear Drive). An oil boom and recent drilling for natural gas have revitalized the area's economy.

## **Historic Walking Tour**

Enjoy a Walking Tour through Downtown Evanston that includes more than 35 structures, some dating from the earliest days of the town. The first stop on the tour, the 1906 Carnegie Library Building, is the current home of the Uinta County Museum. The building was the first in Historic Depot Square, now also comprised of the Union Pacific Depot and Plaza, Wing Family Chinese Gazebo & Garden, the Joss House Museum, the Beeman-Cashin Building, Columbo Hall railroad building, Martin Park, and the heritage gazebo. The site also contains basketball courts, a water fountain, public restrooms, a Lincoln Highway marker, a statue of “Albert the Bison,” a tribute to those lost on September 11, 2001, and an English phone booth. The in town portion of the Walking Tour ends at the Historic Roundhouse and Railyards.



## **Uinta County Museum**

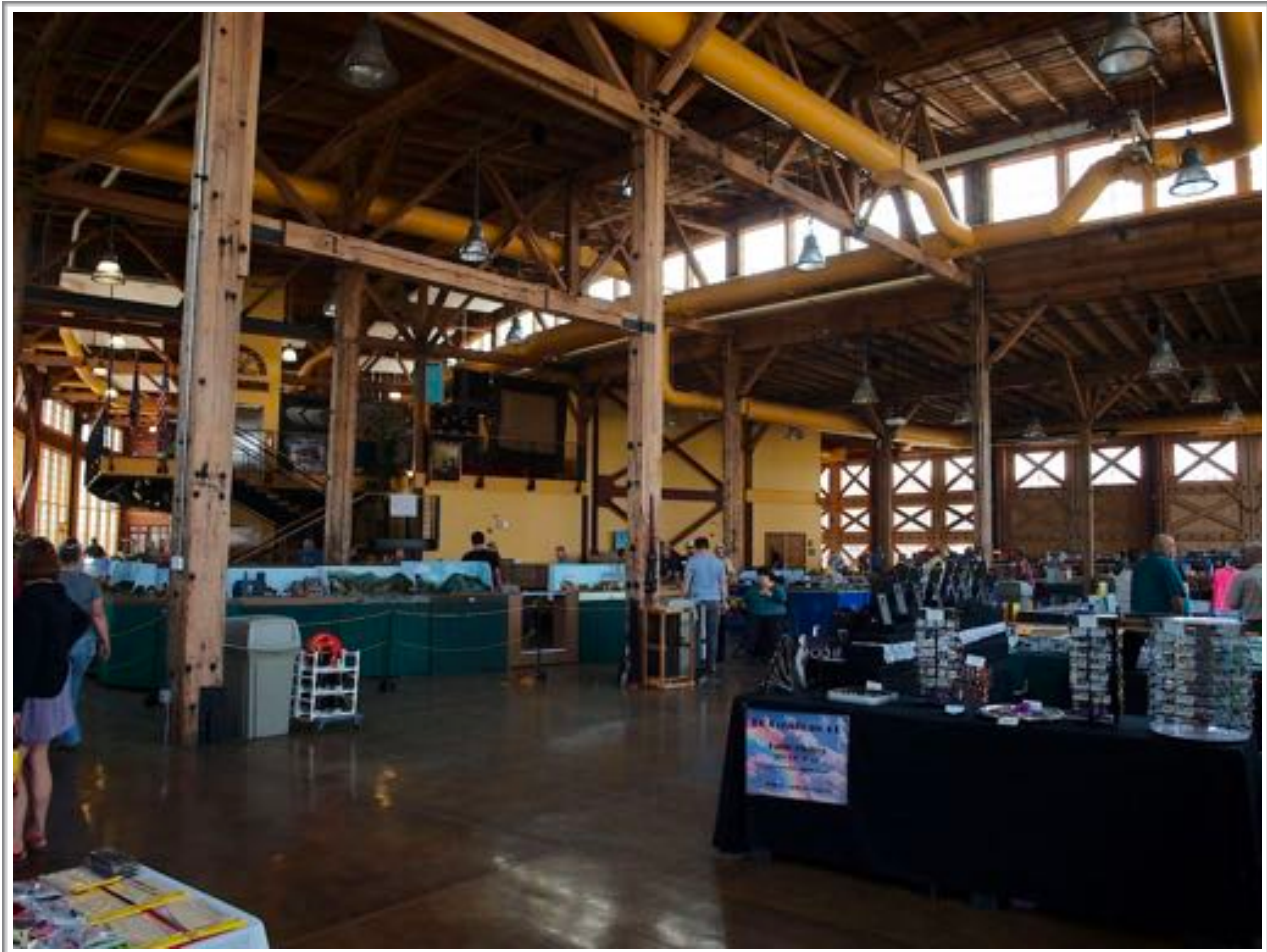
Located in the 1906 Classic Revival Carnegie building, the museum holds nearly 5,000 artifacts, photographs, and archival records, with about 20% on exhibit at any given time. Explore the heritage of the region in Trails, Rails, Ranches and Rigs and learn how the Lincoln Highway impacted the local landscape when it came through in 1913.

1020 Front Street, Evanston, WY, 82930, 307-789-8248, M-F 9AM-5PM Sat  
10AM-4PM

## **Historic Roundhouse and Railyards**

Here you can tour one of the last intact roundhouses in the Union Pacific Railroad Line. Constructed in 1912, the city adopted the structure, rehabilitated and renovated it into a public use facility while keeping much of the historic character. The original Machine Shop still stands across the Plaza. The turntable, used to change the direction of train engines in the Roundhouse, is still operational, the machine shop still outfitted, a superintendent's office and washroom, and a renovated visitor center which was previously the Oil House, make up the complex.

1440/1500 Main Street, Evanston, WY





## **Bear River State Park and Visitor Center**

This 324-acre day-use park with several miles of trails, is home to small herds of bison and elk. The Visitor Center features numerous wildlife displays showcasing a small portion of Wyoming's impressive array of wildlife. The bison herd can be viewed year round.

601 Bear River Drive, Evanston, WY, 82930, 307-789-6547, May 1-September 30, M-Sun 8AM-10PM, \$7 per day, per vehicle



### **Destination Distinctive Dining**

**Jody's Diner** 260 Bear River Drive, Evanston, WY, 82930, 307-789-8550 American comfort foods dished up in retro diner.

**Bon Rico Steakhouse** 925 Front Street, Evanston, WY 82920 307-789-1713 Homestyle freshly prepared dinners.

**Dang Good Smokehouse & Bar-B-Que** 161 Bear River Drive, Evanston, WY, 82930, 307-679-1003 Offering smoked brisket, pulled pork, chicken, and ribs, all rubbed with Dang Good rub.

### **Destination Distinctive Retail**

**Wild Things Treasures and Gifts** 927 Main Street #100, Evanston, WY, 82930, 307-466-3007

Steampunk, BOHO, Tattoo Art, rendezvous, and very unique gifts and home décor.