

The Roads to Moab, Vol. I

It's been awhile since the "Roads to Leadville" series for the 2001 Convention. I thought I could dust that series off and adapt it to a new one. This series is really easy. There are only a couple of roads, but those are for the next issues.



This intro will address other ways to get there. Planes, trains and you're on your own for buses and bicycles. First, planes. At the moment, there is a daily flight from Phoenix to the Moab airport. There are supposed to be rental cars at the airport. I suspect availability is limited. There is also a small plane 8-10 passenger, I think, that runs to and from Salt Lake City. Air service to Moab changes regularly and I would not count on the current flights being available in October of 2025. Next closest airport is in Grand Junction, Colorado. Non-stop flights into GJ from Denver, Dallas and Phoenix are currently available. I suspect these routes are more dependable than flights into Moab. GJ is about a 2-2.5 hour drive. Further away are major airports in Salt Lake City, Denver, Albuquerque and Las Vegas. SLC is around a 4-hr drive; Denver, Albuquerque and Las Vegas all take 6-7 hours to drive to Moab.

Next up are trains. This is cool as there are actually choices, at least from Denver. Amtrak (www.amtrak.com) runs daily and the closest stops are Grand Junction and Green River. Cars might be available in GJ, probably not in Green River. The route goes through gorgeous mountain and desert country and follows the Colorado River from its headwaters just after crossing under the continental divide using the Moffat Tunnel. It's a one day trip and the last time I checked it's all daylight. Amtrak also, of course, runs from the west and major routes from Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle all follow this same portion

of track. Come to think of it, also from Chicago and further east. Amtrak might arrive in Denver (if on time) to shift to the Mountaineer. In any case, you might arrive in Denver the day before your train departs. If flying, there is a train from the airport to Union Station. The Crawford Hotel (just remodeled) is atop the rail station and convenient. Nearly as convenient is the historic Oxford Hotel a block or so away. Check out the Cruise Room. All trains (and a bunch of buses) depart from Union Station.

Also available is the Rocky Mountaineer (www.rockymountaineer.com). It bills itself as a luxury train and the way train travel used to be. It follows the same route as Amtrak. The Mountaineer makes an overnight stop in Glenwood Springs and travelers stay at the Denver Hotel. It looks wonderful and somewhat pricey. That train goes to the edge of Moab and a shuttle brings passengers into town. It turns the 6 or so hour drive from Denver into 2 day trip. Both train routes take passengers through country that is seldom seen by most folks. The mountain country of Colorado from Granby to Glenwood Springs (Dotsero, actually) and the Knowles Canyon country between GJ and Cisco are both areas into which few vehicles or people get.

Lastly, we are gathering at the end of October. There is a possibility that there could be snow in the Colorado high country (even Denver) and a lesser chance of snow around Salt Lake City, the San Rafael Swell or the Fishlake National Forest west of the Swell. Those areas impact the routes from Denver, SLC and Las Vegas. Only the route from Albuquerque is likely to be snow-free. With the others, snow is unlikely on the day you'll be driving, but there is a chance. Usually, a day's delay is enough for a storm to pass and leaves beautiful, clear skies and cool temps behind the front.

Next issue will be more driving routes to get you to one of the roads into Moab.