

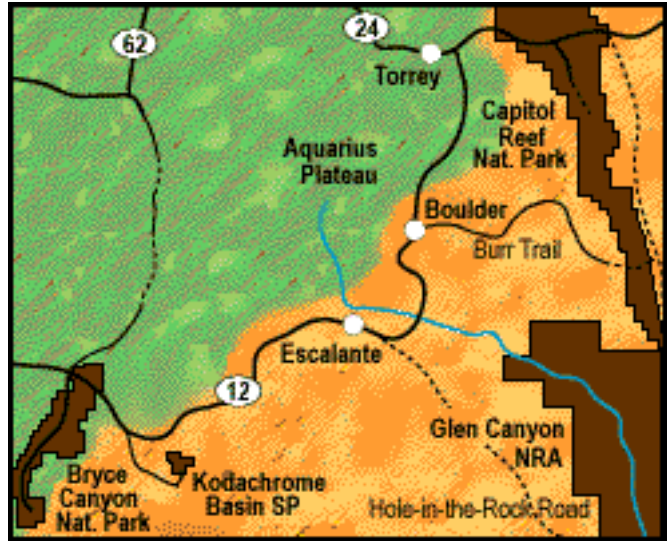


# Escalante

*"As to when I shall visit civilization, it will not be soon, I think."*

Everett Ruess, 11/11/34

Escalante is small ranching town along the Escalante River. In all directions is wild, uninhabited and beautiful land. Indeed, though it has only 850 residents it is the largest town for 70 miles around. To the north of town is the high alpine wilderness of the Aquarius Plateau; to the south and east lie rugged red rock desert canyons.



The town of Escalante itself does not have much to offer, other than tidy rows of well kept homes and a sleepy main street with a few cafes, grocery stores and motels. There are, however, some nice

recreational opportunities in the surrounding areas. You can hike or fish on the Aquarius Plateau or hike the magnificently rugged and pristine canyons of the Escalante River and its many tributaries. On the outskirts of town is Escalante Petrified Forest State Park.

Escalante is located in south central Utah off Hwy 12. It is about 50 miles east of Bryce Canyon National Park and 75 miles south of Capitol Reef National Park.

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## Recreational Activities



### HIKING

The Escalante River originates in the mountains north of town and flows southeast through an extraordinarily pristine and beautiful desert canyon landscape. The maze of canyons created by the river and its many tributaries present some great remote hiking opportunities. There are some day hikes available, but most hikers here backpack.

For more information about hiking in this area select [Escalante-Publications](#). You can also contact the following for information.

BLM - Escalante Area Office	755 W. Main St.	435-826-4291
Glen Canyon Nat. Rec. Area	Box 1507 - Page, AZ	520-608-6404

The Aquarius Plateau, a highland of nicely forested peaks, also offers some hiking opportunities. See Aquarius Plateau-Recreation for details.



### FISHING

The Wide Hollow Reservoir is a popular local recreation spot offering fishing, swimming and boating opportunities. The reservoir has good fishing for rainbow trout and bluegill. Canoes can be rented along the shore.

There are also some decent fishing to be had on the Aquarius Plateau north of Escalante. The following outfitters lead trips and/or rent equipment.

Alpine Angler	Box 324 - Boulder	435-864-3473
Boulder Mountain Flyfishing	Box 1403 - Boulder	435-335-7306
Boulder Mountain Lodge	Hwy 12 at Burr Trail; Box 1397 - Boulder	800-556-3446

See Aquarius Plateau-Recreation for more details on fishing this area.

## Petrified Forest State Park

The Escalante Petrified Forest State Park has the states largest accessible concentration of petrified wood. The wood became petrified when silicon dioxide gradually replaced the wood cells in trees buried for a 100 million years. Minerals color the petrified wood purple, yellow, green, magenta and red. The park also contains Wide Hollow Reservoir, which provides boating, swimming, and fishing opportunities.

The park is located in south central Utah off Hwy 12 a couple miles east of Escalante.

Presented below is information on:

- Exploring the Park
- Camping
- Miscellany



### **EXPLORING THE PARK**

A visitor center near the entrance will provide you with information as well as examples of petrified wood (and dinosaur bones). The "living" examples of petrified wood are along a ridge overlooking the park. The Petrified Forest Trail (1 mile roundtrip) takes you up and around the ridge. At the top you can extend the hike by taking the 3/4 mile Rainbow Loop Trail to more areas of petrified wood. (The petrified wood you'll see in the visitor center is frankly more colorful than the examples along the trail.)

The Wide Hollow Reservoir (130 acres) is a popular local recreation spot offering swimming and boating opportunities. Canoes can be rented at the shore. The reservoir has good fishing for rainbow trout and bluegill.



### **CAMPING**

The campground is set a bit out in the open near the reservoir. 21 sites; modern restrooms w/ flush toilets & showers; elev. 5,800 ft.; open year round; reservations: 800- 322-3770; \$12.



There is an entrance fee of \$4 per vehicle. The park is open all year. You can contact the park at 710 N. Reservoir Rd., Escalante, UT 84726; 435-826-4466.

## Scenic Drives

There are a number of good scenic drives in the vicinity of Escalante.

### Highway 12 Scenic Byway

Highway 12 is one of the best scenic byways in the state. It begins at Hwy 24 near Torrey and runs south and west for 122 miles to Hwy. 89 south of Panguitch. The early section of the route climbs up the side of the heavily forested Boulder Mountains with some nice views east over Capitol Reef and the Henry Mountains. Past the town of Boulder, the route passes through very rugged and often spectacular red rock scenery as it heads west past Escalante towards Bryce Canyon National Park. Areas near the park are very scenic as is the main scenic route through Bryce Canyon.

The entire route is paved and opened year round. Plan on spending about 3-1/2 hours with some stops.

### Burr Trail Scenic Backway

The Burr Trail is a **great** scenic backway. It starts in the town of Boulder, 30 miles north of Escalante, crosses the waterpocket fold of Capitol Reef National Park and then joins Notum Road and continues south to Bull Frog Marina on Lake Powell. The best section is the 25 miles from Boulder to the Notum Road. Here the route passes through some fantastic narrow canyons and then climbs through rugged and beautiful red rock to the top of the reef. At the summit are good vistas of southeastern Utah and the Henry Mountains. The route descends over tortuous switchbacks down the other side of the reef.

It is paved for the first 5 miles and then turns to graded dirt. It is not recommended when wet. It'll take about 1-1/2 hours to reach Notum Road and another few hours to Lake Powell.

### Hole-in-the-Rock Scenic Backway

The Hole-in-the-Rock Road runs through extremely stark and remote areas of the Colorado Plateau before ending at Lake Powell. The "Hole-in-the-Rock" refers to the narrow opening in a cliff through which Mormon pioneers lowered their wagon train to cross the Colorado River in 1879 (which was later dammed to form Lake Powell). The road generally parallels the route these extremely hardy pioneers took. The route is graded dirt and is a 115 mile roundtrip. Plan to spend about 6 hours driving it.

### **Smokey Mountain Scenic Backway**

From Escalante, this route climbs switchbacks 1,200 feet up Smokey Mountain before winding through the exceptionally rugged desert landscape of the Grand Staircase. Along the route are some good views over Lake Powell and up to Bryce canyon National Park. It ends at Hwy 89 near Lake Powell.

The route is graded dirt and 78 miles long oneway. Plan on spending about 4-5 hrs. It is impassable when wet.

## Lodging / Dining



### LODGING

#### Escalante

Circle D Motel	475 W. Main St.; Box 305	435-826-4297	29 rooms	\$-\$\$
Escalante Outfitters & Bunkhouse	310 W. Main St.; Box 570	435-826-4266	7 cabins	
Escalante's Grand Staircase B&B	280 W. Main St.; Box 657	435-826-4890	2 rooms	
La Luz B&B	Box 326	435-826-4720	1 room	
Moqui Motel & Campground	480 West Main St.; Box 534	435-826-4210	10 rooms	\$
Padre Motel	20 E. Main St.; Box 291	435-826-4276	12 rooms	\$\$
Prospector Inn	380 W. Main St.; Box 296	435-826-4653	51 rooms	\$-\$\$
Quiet Falls Motel	75 S. 100 West; Box 279	435-826-4250		\$
Rainbow Country B&B	585 E. 300 South; Box 333	800-252-UTAH	4 rooms	\$\$
Silver Sage Lodge Spa	75 S. 100 West; Box 279	800-863-7525	18 room	

#### Boulder

Boulder Mountain Lodge	Hwy 12 at Burr Trail; Box 1397	800-556-3446	20 rooms	\$\$\$
Boulder Mountain Ranch	Hell's Backbone Rd.; Box 1373	435-335-7480	5 cabins	\$\$\$
Boulder Pines B&B Inn	330 E. Boulder Pines Rd.	435-335-7375	4 rooms	\$
Circle Cliffs Motel	246 S. Main St.; Box 1399	435-335-7353	3 rooms	\$
Eaglestar Ranch (B&B)	Box 1456	435-335-7450	4 rooms	
Pole's Place	465 N. Hwy 12; Box 1342	800-730-7422	12 rooms	\$

The zip code is 84726 for Escalante and 84716 for Boulder.



### DINING

#### Escalante

list to come

**Boulder**

**list to come**

## Camping



### **PRIVATE CAMPGROUNDS**

There are a few private campgrounds in Escalante.

Broken Bow Campground	495 W. Main St.	888-241-8785	28 sites
Moqui Motel & Campground	480 W. Main St.; Box 534	435-826-4210	10 sites



### **PUBLIC CAMPGROUNDS**

There are two public campgrounds close to Escalante.

- The Escalante Petrified Forest State Park has the states largest accessible concentration of petrified wood. It is located a few miles west of Escalante. The campground is set a bit out in the open near a reservoir. 21 sites; modern restrooms w/ flush toilets & showers; elev. 5,800 ft.; open year round; reservations: 800-322-3770; \$12.
- Calf Creek is a pretty BLM campground located a few miles from wonderful Calf Creek Falls. 14 sites; drinking water; vault toilets; elev. 5,400 ft.; open Apr-Nov; first-come, first-serve; \$10.

There are numerous Forest Service Campgrounds on the Aquarius Plateau north of Escalante and one at Kodachrome Basin State Park 35 miles west of town. Select Aquarius Plateau-Camping and Kodachrome Basin State Park for details.

## Practicalities

Provided below is information on:

- Getting There
- Useful Addresses/Numbers
- When to Go/Climate
- Miscellany

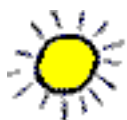


### **GETTING THERE**

Escalante is located on Hwy 12, about 48 miles east of Bryce Canyon National Park and 70 miles southwest of Capitol Reef National Park. The maps below will help you plan your route and get oriented.

- Utah
- Southwest Utah

There is no convenient plane, train or bus service.



### **WHEN TO GO/CLIMATE**

Escalante is best visited in late spring or early fall when temperatures are moderate. If you plan on spending your time in the higher elevations of the Aquarius Plateau, however, summer is best.

Average temperature ranges in Escalante are set out below.

	<u>Jan.</u>	<u>Feb.</u>	<u>Mar.</u>	<u>Apr.</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Jun.</u>	<u>Jul.</u>	<u>Aug.</u>	<u>Sep.</u>	<u>Oct.</u>	<u>Nov.</u>	<u>Dec.</u>
High	40	50	50	60	70	85	90	85	80	70	50	40
Low	0	10	20	25	35	45	50	50	45	35	20	0



### **USEFUL ADDRESSES & PHONE #'S**

Garfield County Travel Council	55 S. Main St. - Panguitch	435-676-8826
Color Country Travel Region	Box 1550 - St. George	800-233-8824
Escalante Petrified Forest SP	710 N. Reservoir Rd - Escalante	435-826-4466
BLM - Escalante Area Office	755 W. Main St. - Escalante	435-826-4291
Escalante Ranger Dist. - Dixie Nat. For.	270 W. Main St. - Escalante	435-826-4221



### Some Other Outfitters

Boulder Mountain Lodge	Hwy 12 at Burr Trail	800-556-3446	4wd, horse trips
Boulder Mountain Ranch	Hell's Backbone Rd.	435-335-7480	horses trips
Escalante Canyon Outfitters	842 W. Highway 12	888-326-4453	horses trips
Escalante Grand Staircase Bike Rental	220 W. Main St.	435-826-4890	bike rentals
Rainbow Country Tours	585 E. 300 South	800-252-UTAH	4wd tours
Red Rock 'N Llamas	Box 1304	435-559-7325	llama trips

## Publications

Presented below are publications that provide coverage of areas near Escalante. Publications are listed alphabetically under the following categories.

- Hiking
- 4wd Adventuring
- Camping

### Hiking

- **Canyoneering 2: Technical Loop Hikes in Southern Utah** -- Steve Allen

Well-done guide for the serious hiker covering some of the most remote canyons of the desert of southern Utah. (233 pages; Univ. of Utah Press; 1995; \$16)

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- **Canyoneering 3: Loop Hikes in Utah's Escalante** -- Steve Allen

(368 pages; Univ. of Utah Press; 1997; \$17.50)

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- **Hiking and Exploring Utah's Henry Mountains and Robbers Roost** - M. Kelsey

Descriptions of 37 hikes in these seldom visited areas. Good background information. Uses the metric system only. (224 pages; Treasure Chest Pub.; 1987; \$10)

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- **Hiking the Escalante** -- Rudi Lambrechtse

Descriptions of 42 hikes, daytrips and backpacking excursions, in the Escalante area. (189 pages; Treasure Chest Pub.; 1985)

[Out-of-print order:](#)  
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- **Hiking Utah** -- Dave Hall and Ann Seifert



Descriptions of 80 hikes throughout Utah from beginner to advanced. Black & white photos and maps. (245 pages; Falcon Press; 1996; \$12)

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## 4wd Adventuring

- **Utah Byways: Backcountry Drives for the Whole Family** -- Tony Huegel



Descriptions with maps of 60 routes throughout Utah. (176 pages; Post Company; 1996; \$13.50)

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**amazon.com**

## Camping

- **Utah & Nevada Camping** -- Gayen/Tom Wharton and Deke Castleman



Comprehensive guide to campgrounds in Utah and Nevada. Provides all the information you need. Note, however, a fair amount of details change in a year's time. (380 pages; Foghorn Outdoors; 1997; \$15.16)

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See Utah Publications for a complete list of publications covering activities and destinations in Utah.