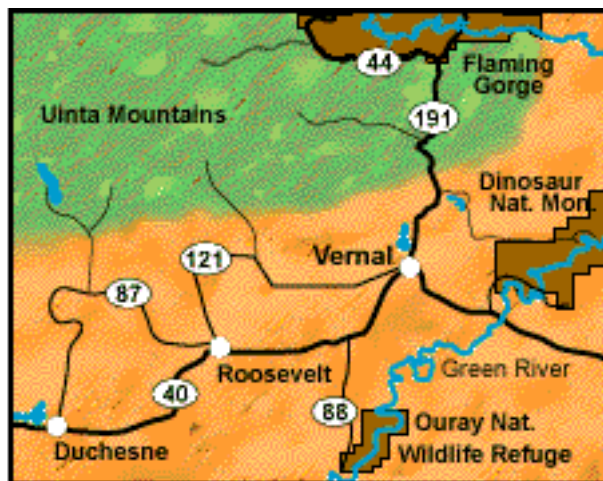




## Vernal

A green and tree shaded community in an otherwise dry plain, Vernal is an attractive small town with some 7,000 residents. It serves as a good base for visiting nearby Dinosaur National Monument, Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area and the Uinta Mountains. It offers a decent selection of motels and has numerous small restaurants, cafes and fast food joints. It also has a small, well-done prehistory museum, a couple of movie theaters and water slides for the kids.



Vernal is located along Hwys. 191/40 in the northeast corner of Utah. It is southeast of the Uinta Mountains, 20 miles west of Dinosaur National Monument and 35 miles south of Flaming Gorge.

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## Some Things to See

Vernal serves mainly as a base for exploring Dinosaur National Monument, Flaming Gorge and the Uinta Mountains. Each is covered separately in its own section. Presented below is information about a few other attractions in and near town:

### Utah Field House of Natural History

The Utah Field House of Natural History is a small, good quality prehistory museum. It displays a wonderful full size skeleton of a diplocodous in the main entrance and contains other good archeological and geological displays. Of the latter, a display of ultraviolet rocks is especially striking. Outside in a small garden area are full size fiberglass models of numerous dinosaurs including a tyrannosaurus Rex and a large stegosaurus. (Though well done, the effect is diminished its proximity to the highway.)

The Museum is located at 235 East Main St. It is open daily 8 to 9 from Memorial Day to Labor Day, and 9 to 5 the rest of the year. The entrance fee is \$2 per person, \$5 per family. [435-789-3799](tel:435-789-3799).

### Parcel Post Bank

A bit of ingenuity at the post office's expense created the "Parcel Post Bank." In 1916, bank president William Colthart got the idea that he wanted to build a new bank using special textured bricks rather than the ordinary red ones available locally. Normal freight costs to remote Vernal, however, greatly exceeded the value of the bricks. So he hit upon the idea of having them **mailed** -- all 80,000, individually wrapped. His success got others to thinking, and soon even crops were being sent to market through the post office. (Before things got completely out of hand, or rather shortly thereafter, the post office changed its rules.)

The story is a bit more interesting than seeing the bank, which looks like... well... a bank made of brick. But it's in the middle of town on the southwest corner of Vernal Ave. and Main St., so take a look. It's now called the Zion National Bank.

### Ouray National Wildlife Refuge

The Ouray National Wildlife Preserve (31 miles southwest) surrounds the Green River for some 12 miles providing habitat for hundreds of species of migratory birds in spring and fall. You can see golden eagles year round and bald eagles in early winter. The preserve is managed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, which maintains an information booth, observation tower and a 10 mile car tour route. From Roosevelt take Hwy 40 east for 16 miles to Hwy 88. Head south 16 miles to Ouray.

## Recreational Activities

Within the Uinta Mountains, Flaming Gorge and Dinosaur National Monument are great recreational opportunities, including hiking, whitewater rafting, fishing and mountain biking. Information on those activities are contained within those sections.

Described below are a few other opportunities in and near Vernal.



### **WATER RECREATION**

**Steinaker Reservoir and State Park** is located in the dry foothills of the eastern Uintas about 6 miles north of Vernal. Some pinyon pine, juniper and cottonwoods grow along portions of the shore, but most of this large 750 acre reservoir is exposed. It has a decent swimming beach, boat ramp, picnic areas and a campground with modern facilities. [435-789-4432](tel:435-789-4432).

**Red Fleet Reservoir and State Park** (10 miles north) is much more attractive. The well-maintained picnic areas and campground sit on a bluff overlooking the 650 acre Red Fleet reservoir, which sits down among colorful cliff walls. To reach the beaches, you'll need to hike or boat. [435-789-4432](tel:435-789-4432).



### **CANOEING**

There is some pleasant flat water canoeing available 40 miles south of Vernal in White River Canyon. The river is isolated and pretty. There are several different points to put-in and take-out enabling trips from one day long to a week. For more information, contact the BLM Vernal District Office, 170 South 500 East, Vernal, UT 84078; [435-789-1362](tel:435-789-1362).



### **GOLFING**

			<u>Rating/Slope</u>
Dinaland Golf Club	675 S. 2000 East	435-781-1428	71.5/129*
Roosevelt Golf Course	1155 Clubhouse Dr. - Roosevelt	435-722-9644	72/121

\* Indicates rating and slope from championship tees.



## **HORSEBACK RIDING**

There are numerous riding opportunities in the Uinta Mountains northwest of Vernal and other areas. The following outfitters lead trips.

All Round Ranch	Box 153 - Jensen	800-603-8069
Altamont Flyfishers	Falcon's Ledge - Altamont	[801-454-3737]
Cassiday Trails	Box 145 - Jensen	800-230-4868
Chapoose River & Trails	32 S. 100 West - Roosevelt	800-854-4364
Flying J Outfitters	Box 284 - Myton	435-646-3208
J/L Ranch Outfitter & Guides	Box 129 - Whiterocks	435-353-4049
LC Ranch	Box 63 - Altamont	888-874-7071
Rock Creek Guest Ranch	Box 60 - Mountain Home	435-454-3332
Rocky Meadows Adventures	HC 65; Box 165 - Bluebell	435-454-3176
U-Bar Wilderness Ranch	Roosevelt	800-303-7256

## Scenic Drives

### Flaming Gorge-Uintas Scenic Byway

Flaming Gorge-Uintas Scenic Byway, also known as the "Drive Through the Ages" for the millions of years of geological strata it climbs through, runs north from Vernal to Flaming Gorge along Hwys 191 and 44. The byway climbs slowly at first through arid foothills north of Vernal and then through colorful rock formations past Steinaker and Red Fleet State Parks. The route then climbs steep switchbacks up into the Uinta Mountains and through its forests of lodgepole pine and aspen. Highway 44 intersects Hwy 191 in Flaming Gorge and heads west through heavy forests and some nice views of the gorge. (See Flaming Gorge for more details on this portion.) The route is all paved and runs 35 miles to Flaming Gorge and then 28 miles to Manila.

### Red Cloud/Dry Fork Scenic Backway

The Red Cloud/Dry Fork Scenic Backway is a 45 mile loop through the eastern Uinta Mountains. It winds through attractive forests of aspen and pine, pleasant open meadows and tumbling mountain streams. The return through Dry Fork Canyon provides nice views of canyon walls. Numerous picnic areas and campgrounds are on the route. About half of the route is paved or gravel, the rest is dirt which can be rough and shouldn't be attempted when wet. The route is not passable during the winter.

## Lodging

### Lodging in Vernal

#### Hotels and Motels

Best Western Antlers Motel	423 W. Main St.	800-528-1234	43 rooms	\$\$-\$\$\$
Best Western Dinosaur Inn	251 E . Main St.	800-528-1234	59 rooms	\$\$\$
Econolodge	311 E . Main St.	435-789-2000	49 rooms	\$\$-\$\$\$
Lazy K Motel	1500 E. 775 South	435-789-3277	8 rooms	\$
Motel Dine-A-Ville	801 West Hwy 40	435-789-9571	19 rooms	\$
Rodeway Inn - Vernal	590 W . Main St.	800-828-2000	42 rooms	\$\$-
Sage Motel	54 W. Main St.	800-760-1442	26 rooms	\$
Split Mountain Motel	1015 East Hwy. 40	435-789-9020	40 rooms	\$\$-
Super 8	1624 West Hwy. 40	800-800-8000	42 rooms	\$\$
Weston Days Inn	260 W . Main St.	800-382-1011	42 rooms	\$\$
Weston Lamplighter Inn	120 E . Main St.	435-789-0312	96 rooms	\$\$
Weston Plaza Hotel	1684 West Hwy. 40	435-789-9550	102 rooms	\$\$-\$\$\$

#### Bed & Breakfasts

Hill House Bed 'N' Breakfast	675 West 3300 North	435-789-0700	4 rooms	\$\$-
Landmark Inn B&B	288 East 100 South	888-738-1800	11 rooms	\$\$-\$\$\$

The mailing address for each entity includes "Vernal, UT 84078."

### Lodging near Vernal

#### Whiterocks (about 25 miles west; 84085)

J/L Ranch	Box 129	435-353-4049	4 cabins
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#### Roosevelt (31 miles west; 84066)

Best Western Inn	E. Hwy. 40	435-722-4644	40 rooms	\$\$
Cedar Trail Ranch	P.O. Box 67	888-852-6706		\$\$-\$\$\$
Frontier Motel	65 South 200 East	800-248-1014	54 rooms	\$
Regal Motel Apartments	160 South 200 East	435-722-4878		\$
U-Bar Ranch	Uinta Mountains	800-303-7256		\$\$-
Western Hills Motel	737 East 200 South	435-722-5115		\$

#### Altamont and Mountain Home (about 55 miles west; 84001 and 84051)

Vernal Lodging and Dining Options

Falcon's Ledge	Box 67 - Altamont	435-454-3737		\$\$\$\$
LC Ranch	Box 63 - Altamont	888-874-7071	23 units	\$\$\$
Kickin "W" Resort	Box 58 - Mountain Home	800-800-8000	4 units	\$\$
Moon Lake Resort	Box 70 - Mountain Home	435-454-3142	13 cabins	\$\$-
Rock Creek Guest Ranch	Box 60 - Mountain Home	435-454-3332	7 units	\$\$-

**Duchesne** (59 miles west; 84021)

National 9 Rio Damian Motels	23 W. Main St.	800-800-8000	52 rooms	\$\$-
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## Dining in Vernal

**list to come**

## Camping

There are several private campgrounds in and near Vernal as well as two public campgrounds at state parks north of town. Descriptions are set forth below. Camping options within Dinosaur National Monument, Flaming Gorge and the Uinta Mountains are covered in those respective sections.

### Private Campgrounds

#### In Vernal

Campground Dina	930 N. Vernal Ave.	800-245-2148	100 sites
Fossil Valley R.V.	999 W. Hwy. 40	888-789-6450	34 sites
Vernal KOA	2.5 mi W. of Hwy. 40/191	800-KOA-7574	55 sites
Western Heritage RV Park	271 S. 500 East	435-789-3324	32 sites

#### Near Vernal

Classic RV Park	145 S. 500 East - Roosevelt	435-722-2294	10 sites
Country Village Trailer Park	8 mi E on Hwy 40 - Roosevelt	435-722-2890	19 sites
Dinosaur Village	East Hwy. 40 - Jensen	435-789-5552	32 sites

### Public Campgrounds near Vernal

- Steinaker State Park is located just to the west of Hwy. 191, 5-1/2 miles north of Vernal. Its campground sits along the shore of the Steinaker reservoir, partially shaded by juniper and cottonwoods. Its attractive sites are reasonably well spaced. The surrounding park has swimming beaches, a boat ramp and courtesy docks. 31 sites (2 group); modern restrooms; drinking water; disposal station; 5,500'; open year round; reservations advised: 800-322-3770; \$9.
- The very attractive Red Fleet State Park campground is set on a bluff overlooking the Red Fleet reservoir. Juniper and sage provide partial shade and privacy for some though not all the sites. There is a central parking area with individual sites located a short walk away. The surrounding park has swimming beaches and a boat ramp. To get there from Vernal, take Hwy 191 north for 10 miles, turn left and continue 2 miles to Red Fleet. 29 sites; modern restrooms; drinking water; disposal station; 5,500'; open year round; reservations: 800-322-3770; \$9.

## Practicalities



### **GETTING THERE**

#### **By Car or RV**

Vernal is located in the northeastern corner of Utah at the junction of Hwys. 40 and 191.

#### **By Plane**

Skywest/Delta Connection (800-453-9417) provides [daily] air service to Vernal from Salt Lake City.

#### **Rental Cars**

Rental cars are available in Vernal from:

Avis Rent-a-Car		800-331-1212
Showalter Ford	100 E. Main St.	435-789-3818



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

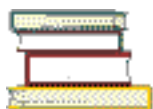
Vernal is best visited in the spring or fall when temperatures are moderate and visitors fewer. (Of course, if you are visiting the Uintas or Flaming Gorge from Vernal, it would need to be late spring or early fall.) Summers are dry and hot. Average daily highs and lows are set forth below.

	<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	29	36	49	62	72	83	88	85	76	62	48	31
Low	5	11	23	32	39	46	52	51	41	30	24	7



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

Dinosaurland Travel Region	25 E. Main St.	800-477-5558
Northeastern Utah Visitor's Center	235 E. Main St.	435-789-7894
Vernal Area Chamber of Commerce	134 W. Main St.	435-789-1352
Dinosaur National Monument	Hwy 40; Box 4545	970-374-3000
Dinosaur Nat. Mon. - Quarry Visitor Center		435-789-2115
Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area	Box 279	435-784-3445
Ashley National Forest	355 N. Vernal Ave.	435-789-1181
BLM - Vernal District Office	170 S. 500 East	435-789-1362
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources	152 E. 100 North	435-789-3103



## **HELPFUL PUBLICATIONS**

- **Dinosaurland Visitor Guide**

Travel council pamphlet that lays out the basics about visiting Vernal, Dinosaur National Monument, the Uintas and Flaming Gorge. To order call 800-477-5558. (20 pages; Dinosaurland Travel Council; published annually)

For a list of other publications on Utah, categorized by activity and destination, see Utah Publications.



## **MISCELLANY**

### **Outdoor Gear**

**list to come**

### **Bookstores**

Bitter Creek Books	672 W. Main St.	435-789-4742
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### **Religious Services**

**list to come**