



Take the Scenic Route

WELCOME ABOARD AMERICA'S MOST SCENIC MOUNTAIN RAILROAD

In 1999, we set out to bring Colorado's most storied rail line back to life — armed with five railcars, a cooler full of soft drinks, and more optimism than sense. Somehow it worked. Today we welcome hundreds of thousands of guests aboard each year from all over the world.

Right now, this train is carrying you somewhere no car, bus, or reasonably determined hiker can go: deep into the Royal Gorge, home to some of the most jaw-dropping scenery in the Rocky Mountain West. So settle in. Order a freshly prepared entrée for breakfast, lunch, or dinner — everything is made from scratch in our onboard kitchens (yes, real kitchens, on a moving train — our chefs are show-offs). Add a cocktail, a Colorado microbrew, or a glass of fine wine, and you'll remember exactly why you love to travel.

There's more where that came from. Each holiday season, our Santa Express — one of the most popular holiday trains in the country — carries 50,000 children, parents, and grandparents to the North Pole, where Santa is waiting with gifts for every kid. And on twilight departures, we've turned the magic all the way up with our new laser light shows: a romantic sunset ride that turns into a dancing-under-the-stars kind of evening, with lights choreographed to music that will pull you to your feet in our open-air cars.

And now, big news: we are now opening Antithesis, our new restaurant in the historic Robison Mansion. Why *Antithesis*? Because after 25 years of running a restaurant that moves,

Dawn and I finally wanted one that stays put. If a chef forgets an ingredient, it's in the pantry — not 12 miles back at the depot. The menu is a love song to the best meals we've enjoyed in our own travels, brought to life by Executive Chef Johnny Church, one of the best in the business, and a team as obsessed with delicious food as we are. Same railroad family, zero miles per hour. Antithesis — the opposite of ordinary.

Behind the scenes, a crew of more than 300 makes all of this look easy. It isn't. This is a moving city — to the railcar repair, track maintenance, HVAC, electrical, plumbing, scratch kitchens, plus the conductors, engineers, and attendants taking care of you right now — thank you for helping keep this historic rail line alive.

One last thing: there's no WiFi in this canyon, and we're not sorry. Unplug. Reconnect with your family. You might even make a new friend — passengers have been making new friends on this line since 1879. Thank you for riding.

—Mark & Dawn



■ Railcars & Locomotives ■

Our railcars and locomotives are unlike anything else in the country — historic, rare, and full of soul. Start with the crown jewels: our full-length Vista Domes. Only 30 of these beauties were ever built, and we proudly own eight. With 360-degree views overhead and all around, riding in a Vista Dome is like gliding through the Royal Gorge inside a floating glass cathedral. Look closely and you'll find traces of their past lives — nostalgic touches etched into the vestibule doors from their golden-era journeys.

But this train isn't just about beauty. Our iconic F-7 locomotives, engines 402 and 403, once thundered across the Midwest for the Chicago and North Western Railway, each packing 1,500 horsepower from a V16 diesel engine. Their numbers honor the legendary "400" trains of a bygone era — 400 miles in 400 minutes between Chicago and Minneapolis.

Backing them up are our SD40-2s, which once worked the Escalante Western Railway in Grants, New Mexico, and now haul guests through the Royal Gorge. And keep an eye out for Locomotive #602 — hand-painted by our own crew for the Santa Express Train. These three SD40-2's are now our "prime movers."

Then there's the heart of the train: the comfortable coaches, deluxe, and dining cars, each built in the 1950s by the Canadian National Railway and lovingly restored to capture the charm and elegance of rail travel's most glamorous era.

All told, our rolling stock includes diesel-electric locomotives, Vista Domes, classic coaches, vintage dining and deluxe cars, open-air cars, kitchen cars, and power cars — every one maintained by a crew of passionate professionals who keep the journey safe, smooth, and unforgettable.



■ Dining Aboard ■

The Best Table in Colorado Moves

Where else can you dine with a view that's constantly changing — and food that earns its place beside it? We simply refuse to serve ordinary food in an extraordinary



place. Nearly everything on board is scratch-made in our onboard kitchens — yes, real kitchens, on a moving train — using ingredients

from Colorado ranchers, farmers, bakers, and brewers we know by name. Our bar service is just as impressive. It's stocked deep with Colorado microbrews, local spirits, and handcrafted cocktails and mocktails we're sure you'll love.

First Class turns the ride into an occasion: a sparkling toast to start, a scratch-made three-course gourmet lunch or dinner, and impeccable service in our beautifully restored dining cars and Vista Domes. With every curve of the canyon and every course served, this isn't just dinner — it's the story you'll be telling at the next three dinner parties.



The 403 Grill — named for one of our historic F-7 locomotives, serves made-to-order Railyard Specialties all day long. Sink your teeth into the Colorado Black Angus

Burger, the Crossbuck — grilled Red Bird chicken with melted cheddar, applewood-smoked bacon, and ranch on toasted brioche — or the Trainman, hickory-smoked turkey with our famous honey-jalapeño aioli. Save room for the three-layer chocolate cake or Basque cheesecake. Breakfast in the gorge? Also a thing — and yes, it's as good as it sounds.



We believe your wine should be as memorable as your journey — so we went hunting. We've partnered directly with vintners to bring you hand-selected bottles you won't find at other fine dining destinations, at prices that feel like you got away with something. Ask your attendant for a pairing — the Conductor's Reserve was built for these menus.

■ All Aboard The Santa Express Train! ■



Slip into your coziest pajamas, grab your favorite people, and hold onto your hot cocoa — you're about to ride straight into the pages of a Christmas storybook. The Santa Express Train is Colorado's most beloved holiday tradition: a dazzling journey deep into the Royal Gorge, where the North Pole glows with more than 50,000 twinkling lights. Golden tickets get punched by the conductor. Christmas carols fill the cars. Cookies disappear, cocoa gets refilled, and outside your window, the canyon shimmers like something out of a dream.



Then it happens: the train reaches the North Pole, and Santa Claus himself climbs aboard — elves in tow — making his way car to car with a special gift for every ticketed child. It's the moment jaws drop, eyes go wide, and the whole family remembers exactly what the season is about.



Grown-ups, we didn't forget you. Scratch-made entrées from our onboard grill, a fully stocked bar with cocktails, Colorado microbrews, and wine — plus a front-row seat to the best show of the year: your kids' faces.

The Santa Express runs daily and nightly, mid-November through the end of December — and lucky for you, we are running on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day as well. Imagine Christmas morning at home, Christmas evening at the North Pole.

One Important Warning from the Conductor: This train sells out. Every. Single. Year. Most dates are gone weeks, sometimes months, in advance, and the best seats go first. If the Santa Express is on your family's list this year, don't wait for the last whistle. **Book your tickets at: SantaExpressTrain.com**



1878-'79 - Royal Gorge War: The railroad's initial construction was marred by a two-year struggle between two competing companies, D&RG and Santa Fe, in a race west for silver, igniting a battle true to the old west. The narrow mouth of the canyon created an uncommon strife between rail lines competing for the only route. Eventually, federal courts intervened and D&RG paid \$1.8M to Santa Fe for what they'd built. Tracks from Santa Fe to Pueblo reached Leadville on July 20, 1880. (Photo: President Roosevelt at Hanging Bridge, 1905)

1879 - Royal Gorge Route Opens - Hanging bridge built: The hanging bridge was built



over the river where the gorge narrows to just 30 feet. Construction cost \$11,759 in 1879 — about \$370,000 today. This engineering marvel has served the main rail line for 145 years.

1905 - President Teddy Roosevelt rides the Royal Gorge Route. Roosevelt described his ride as “the trip that bankrupts the English language.” Then, in 1936, while on his campaign trail on the train, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, called it “One of the best loved scenic wonders of America.” We couldn't agree more.



1909 - Water line built: Convicts of the Colorado Territorial Correctional Facility built the wooden water line, remnants of which can be seen about halfway along the route guests ride today. At one time there were 12 suspended footbridges for workers to access the line.

1967 - Train Service Ends: Passenger service between Denver and Salida was discontinued in July of 1967 due in part to the U.S. Postal Service canceling its contract with the train. Travel fads also began to favor more modern modes like airline service.

MILEPOST GUIDE

Watch for black on white mileposts along the north side of the tracks. They will be numbered mostly in the 160's on this segment of the route through the Royal Gorge, denoting rail miles from Denver, Colorado.

Use this simple guide to learn some fascinating facts about what you are looking at just outside your personal window into history.



160.6 Royal Gorge Route Railroad Depot

Originally completed in 1914 by the AT&SF. On June 21, 1921, the Pueblo flood destroyed most of the Santa Fe track between Cañon City and Pueblo. Passenger service ended between those towns, and the depot was used for freight service until 1984.

160.9 Territorial Correctional Facility (on the right)

The older buildings were established in 1871, and are referred to as the old max, this is now a medium security prison. Look closely behind the prison you will see the original rock wall of the older buildings. The prison museum is located on First Street and is open year-round.

161.7 – 163.0 Tunnel Drive

Tunnel drive is a three mile hiking and biking trail, and was once the home of Cañon City's first gravity water diversion system, started in 1892 and built with convict labor.

165.45 Wooden Water Line (across the river)

Dilapidated but still hanging precariously across the two tributary gullies is Cañon City's oldest water line that was started in 1908 and finished in 1910. This gravity diversion water line pushed water into Cañon City up until 1972.

166.0 Royal Gorge Bridge

The bridge is 1,053' above the train. It is owned by the City of Canon City and is open year-round. The best views of the bridge are from the train, of course! So step out onto our open-air car for a view that is simply “priceless.”

166.23 Hanging Bridge

This famous bridge is located at the narrowest and deepest point in the gorge. Between 30 and 40 feet separate the walls of the canyon. The bridge developer, C. Shaler Smith, was able to conquer the challenge of building in this narrow chasm by



1999 - Resurrection of the train line: The former owners of the Georgetown Loop Railroad resurrected the line, and the train first ran with five passenger cars and a cooler with drinks for guests. From humble beginnings, the operation quickly grew with new railcars, offering extraordinary service and dining experiences that the Royal Gorge Route shares with guests today.

2003 - Santa Express Train Launched: The Santa Express Train draws more than 50,000 guests each year on a magical journey to the North Pole in the Royal Gorge. Featuring over 50,000 lights, Santa's workshop, and village,

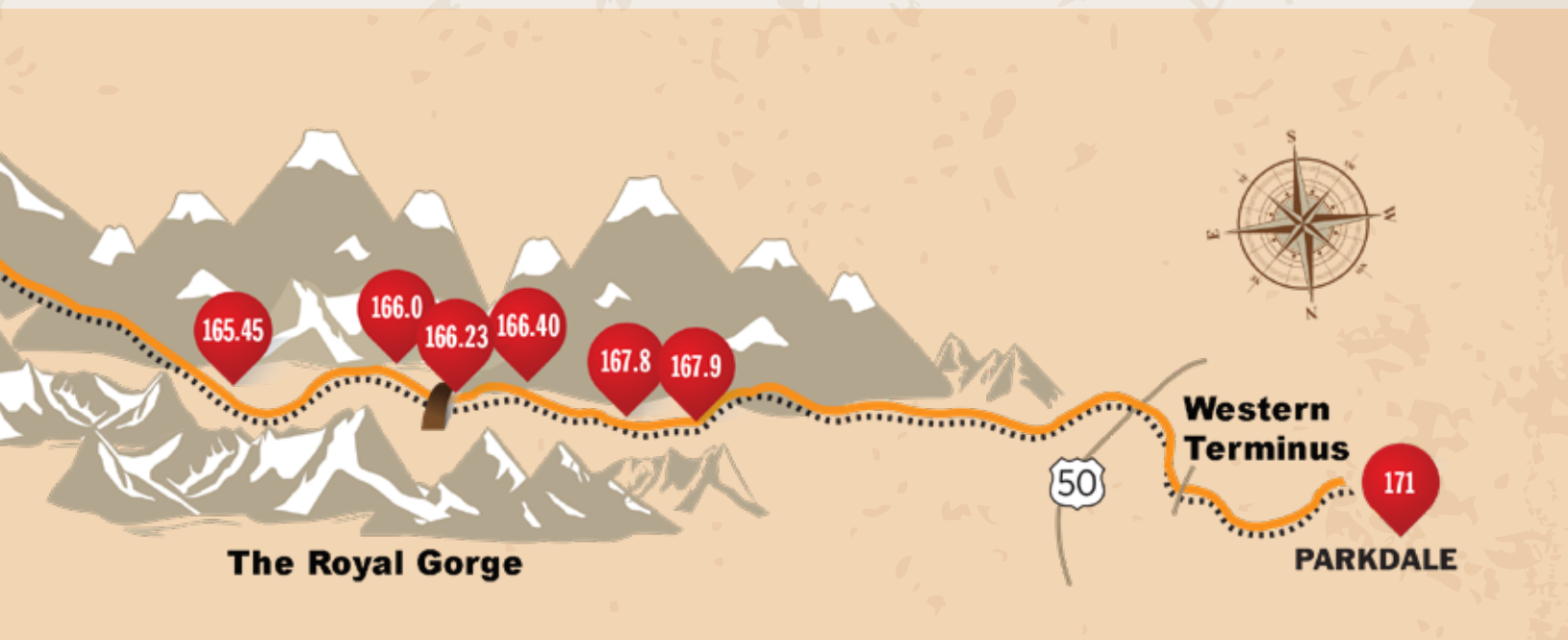
Santa boards the train here with gifts for each child. Enjoy our special holiday menu for lunch and dinner, with drinks and holiday cheer on board the Santa Express Train.

2004 - First Class dining introduced: Growing quickly beyond Coach Class, we added Vista Dome and First Class dining options for lunch and dinner. Four custom-built kitchens and full-service bars allowed us to expand, including our new breakfast offering on morning departures. Murder Mystery rides and five-course Wine Dinner Trains were also successfully introduced (both retired in 2022).

Did you know we have more dome cars than any other scenic train in the U.S.?

2014 - Deluxe class introduced, fresh menus available throughout the train: Kitchens were remodeled, and the Royal Gorge Route Railroad dining experience evolved again – offering organic and locally sourced ingredients. Our extraordinary scenery, service and dining began drawing international acclaim.

2025 - Laser Light Show Dinner Train introduced. In 2026, we launch our new restaurant and events venue: Antithesis at the Royal Gorge Mansion.



constructing a 175-foot (53 m) plate girder suspended on one side under A-frame girders that span the river and are anchored to the rock walls. The Arkansas River is rated Class III-V in this area, and extremely challenging for white-water rafters and kayakers.

166.4 Warming Shack

One of several remaining shacks that were strung along the water line for workers to get out of the cold during frigid winter months.

167 Wings Monument

During World War II, the military used the railroad to haul three dismantled airplanes through the gorge. One plane's wing struck the canyon wall, tearing free and pulling two others into the Arkansas River below. Ever since, locals have called this spot the Wings Monument—it also marks where the Royal Gorge's dramatic formation comes to an end.

167.8 Water Line Junction (across the river)

A portion of the old water line makes an inverted u-shaped bend above the ground. During the winter, sawdust was poured into the water line to help seal leaks between the redwood staves.

167.9 Caretakers' Homes (on the left, across the river)

Caretakers were responsible for the upkeep of the water line, dam and head gate. This home was accessed only by the hanging footbridge.

171 Parkdale.

Parkdale was once the home of a small community for AT&SF workers who called it Webster. Later, when the D&RG took over in 1880, it was renamed Park Dale, later changed to (one word) Parkdale.

■ Shop the Trackside Mercantile & Santa Fe Depot Retail Stores ■



Sure, you can shop on a tiny screen and have a box you don't remember ordering show up on your porch. Or — hear us out — you could shop the old-fashioned way: with your actual human hands.

Step off the train (or just wander in) and you'll find the good stuff. Quality Colorado wear — hats, shirts, and cozy layers that let you brag about your excellent taste in scenic railroads. Train memorabilia and collectibles for folks who never met a locomotive they didn't want a model of. Toys that don't need batteries or an app. Local art, home goods that make your kitchen look like you have your life together, and a year-round Christmas room that's dangerously easy to get lost in.

Oh — and the slightly inappropriate dishtowels. You know you want one.

So come on by. Browse a while. Leave the tiny screen in your pocket — you're in the no-WiFi canyon anyway, and honestly? You've earned it.



■ Stay With Us: Royal Gorge Route Inns ■

The best part of a Royal Gorge adventure might be where you land afterward. The Royal Gorge Route Inns are our two beautifully restored homes in the heart of Cañon City — owned and cared for by the same family that runs the railroad, which means the attention to detail doesn't stop when you step off the train.

Greenwood Suites is our farmhouse-meets-Victorian dream: four gorgeous king suites (hello, Restoration Hardware beds), a fully stocked kitchen, and the kind of front-porch rocking chairs that turn a morning coffee into an hour. Evenings end around the backyard fire pit, drink in hand, stars out. Book a single suite for a romantic getaway or claim the whole house.

The Fairview Victorian is built for the whole crew — a spacious, newly renovated historic home that sleeps eight, with two parlors, a huge yard for the kids, a deck and BBQ for the grown-ups, and a premium kitchen for your family chef.

Both put you minutes from everything: the train depot, the Arkansas Riverwalk, downtown coffee shops and restaurants, the Royal Gorge Bridge. Ride all day, wander a little, then come home to a place that actually feels like one. Fair warning — this is the kind of stay that turns a trip into a tradition.

And new in Fall 2026: wake up in a mansion. We're opening a Bed & Breakfast experience at the historic Robison Mansion — the home of Antithesis, our new dining destination. Dinner downstairs, a nightcap on the grounds, and breakfast in one of Colorado's most storied homes.



RoyalGorgeRouteInns.com



■ All Aboard for a Happy Ending ■



Just west of the depot sits a piece of railroad history you can actually taste — a lovingly retrofitted Great Western caboose, now home to a scratch kitchen, an Italian-style espresso bar, and the best \$3 scoop in Cañon City.

Before you board or after you roll back in, swing by for handcrafted espresso drinks, cold beer, wine, and cocktails, or dig into scratch-made burgers, crepes, and salads.

In a hurry? Grab-and-go drinks, sandwiches, and snacks will get you trackside in no time. Kick back on our shaded patios, cool off inside the air-conditioned caboose, and treat yourself — every day is ice cream day here. Don't leave without browsing our one-of-a-kind merch. Your ride deserves a Happy Ending.

HappyEndingsCaboose.com

ESPRESSO | ICE CREAM | ALL-DAY BREAKFAST | BURGERS | CREPES | COCKTAILS



■ The Twilight Train - Sunset. Dinner. Then the canyon comes alive. ■



Some nights deserve more than a dinner reservation. Board the Twilight Train and glide into the Royal Gorge as golden hour paints thousand-foot granite walls — cocktail in hand, dinner on its way, your favorite people around the table. Then, as the stars come out over the Arkansas River, the canyon itself becomes the show: a laser light spectacular choreographed to music, projected across the sheer rock faces while you dance (or simply take it all in) from the open-air car. There is nothing else like it. Anywhere.

Celebrating something? This is your night. Bachelorette and bachelor parties, engagements, birthdays, anniversaries, girls' trips — the Twilight Train was made for a milestone. Picture the toast at sunset in the Vista Dome, the group photo against glowing canyon walls, the dance floor under the open sky. Want the whole car to yourselves? Call our Group Sales team at 719-276-4000 and make it a private party on rails. (Planning a proposal? Ask us — we love being in on the secret.)

Dinner & drinks - Pre-purchase dinner when you book and your first pour is on us — a draft microbrew, glass of wine, or soft drink, served with a limited-edition commemorative pint glass to take home. Entrées are made fresh onboard from our grill menu, and our full bar of cocktails, mocktails, Colorado brews, and wines stays open all evening, at your table or out on the open-air car.

ANTITHESIS

AT THE ROYAL GORGE MANSION



The Vision: Antithesis has always meant one thing: the opposite of ordinary. From the moment you step into our historic mansion, we want you to feel that something is different here — that you've been transported somewhere that takes the art of dining seriously, without ever taking itself too seriously.

This has been our dream: a place where elegance and warmth live in the same room, where every guest feels genuinely welcome, and where the setting, the service, and the food all rise to meet each other. The historic, 1884 mansion isn't just a backdrop — it's part of the experience, woven into every detail.

The Antithesis menu is built around the beauty and bounty of Colorado and the West. Founding Executive Chef Johnny Church brings his technique and point of view to the table, along with honest seasonality and freshness, all sourced from places where nature still plays a leading role. In many ways, our menu is also a love song to the exceptional meals we've been lucky enough to enjoy in our travels.

Now, here's the part where we're supposed to be humble. We'll pass. When you obsess over details the way we do — the sourcing, the technique, the room, the welcome — you eventually stop scouting the competition, mostly because we can't find any. Our ambition isn't to be the best restaurant in the region. It's to make this corner of Colorado a place food lovers plan entire trips around. Bold? Absolutely. But you don't name a restaurant Antithesis because you intend to blend in.

— Mark & Dawn Greksa

Reserve your table at: AntithesisDining.com



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