

Visitor Activities

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Mesa Verde National Park



October 29, 2017 to April 7, 2018



Spruce Tree House peeking through snowy trees

Welcome

Winter is a special time to visit Mesa Verde National Park and there are many activities available to help you experience this magical place. Step back in time by visiting the Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum to see an Ancestral Puebloan turkey-feather winter boot; view Spruce Tree House surrounded by winter snow; drive the Mesa Top Loop Road and watch for deer making their way through the snow; or enjoy a variety of cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and hiking opportunities in the quiet winter environment. Check the park website at www.nps.gov/meve for information on ranger-guided programs during the winter season.

Winter Logistics

All activities depend on road, trail, and weather conditions. Please check with a ranger before beginning any of the listed activities. We recommend good hiking boots or snow boots, warm layered clothing, a hat, gloves, snacks, sunglasses, and water.

Guide booklets are available at the Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum and at sites along the Mesa Top Loop Road. Limited food service is available at the Spruce Tree Terrace, near the museum. Check *Visitor Services* on the back page for hours. There is no overnight camping or lodging in the park, but accommodations are available in nearby communities. For additional park information, tune your radio to AM 1610.

Visitor and Research Center

The [Mesa Verde Visitor and Research Center](#) is located at the park entrance and serves as the park's primary facility for orienting visitors to opportunities within the park and surrounding area. It also houses a state-of-the-art research and storage facility for the park's archives and museum collection of over three million objects. Open daily except Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

*Please stop by the the Visitor and Research Center to pay your entrance fee and support your parks.



Welcome Plaza, Mesa Verde Visitor and Research Center

Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum

[Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum and Store](#) will help you gain insights into the lives of the Ancestral Pueblo people. The museum is located 20 miles (33 km) south of the park entrance. A 25-minute park video is shown every half hour or upon request. Open daily except Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.



Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum

View Spruce Tree House

[Spruce Tree House](#) is Mesa Verde's best-preserved cliff dwelling. *Although Spruce Tree House is currently closed* due to the continuing threat of rockfalls, you can observe the cliff dwelling from viewpoints near the Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum. The trail to the lower viewpoint is short but steep, and can be icy.

*It is a 45- to 60-minute drive from the park entrance to Spruce Tree House and the museum.



Spruce Tree House from overlook

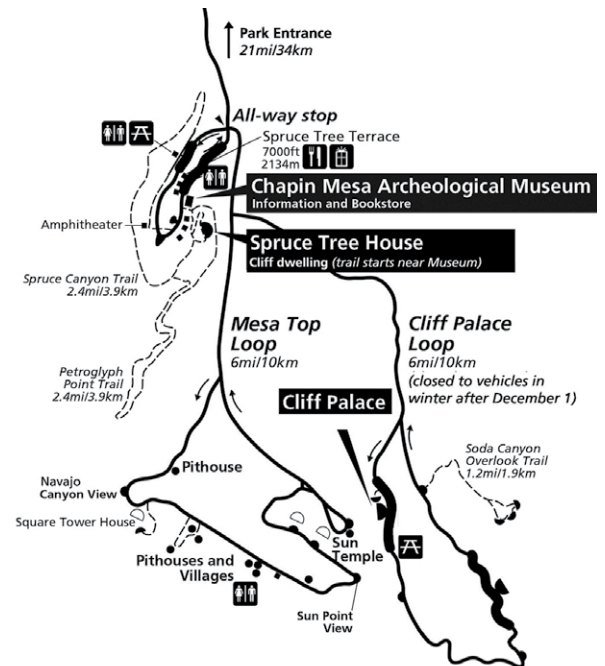
Explore On Your Own

Mesa Top Loop Road is a six-mile (10 km) drive with short paved trails to view 12 easily-accessible archeological sites, including surface sites and cliff dwelling overlooks. Highlights include views of Square Tower House and Cliff Palace. Open daily 8:00 am to sunset. (During times of heavy snow, the loop may temporarily close until the road and walkways are cleared.)

Petroglyph Point Trail is located near the Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum. The 2.4-mile (3.9 km) trail leads to a panel of petroglyphs. In clear weather, the trail can be hiked as a loop. However, due to ice and snow, you may be directed to hike via the mesa top section of the trail, or the entire trail may be closed. Ask a ranger at the museum for trail conditions and to register for the hike.

Cliff Palace Loop Road closes to vehicles on December 1 or with first significant snow fall. The road is then available for cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, or hiking. It will reopen to vehicles in late March or early April when weather and road conditions permit.

Far View Sites Complex includes Far View House plus four other villages and a dry reservoir. Four miles (6.4 km) north of the museum, this 3/4-mile (1.2 km) trail is not plowed. Park just outside the gate, but do not block the gate. Open 8:00 am to sunset.



Winter Recreational Opportunities are available for Nordic skiing and snowshoeing once there is a sufficient amount of snow and the park has begun to groom trails. Ask for maps, descriptions, and trail conditions at the Visitor Center or Museum. You can find out what winter trails are open, by calling 970-529-4622 or 970-529-4631. Information is also on the park website at go.nps.gov/wintertrails.

Snowshoes are available for loan at the Visitor Center and Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum.

Visitor Services

Mesa Verde National Park
970-529-4465 www.nps.gov/meve

Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum
970-529-4631
October 29, 2017 to April 7, 2018
9:00 am to 4:30 pm

Mesa Verde Visitor and Research Center
970-529-5037
October 29, 2017 to April 7, 2018
8:30 am to 4:30 pm

Aramark, Park Partner
800-449-2288 www.visitmesaverde.com

Spruce Tree Terrace Gift Shop and Café
October 29, 2017 to March 14 2018
11:30 am to 2:30 pm (limited menu)
March 15, 2018 to April 7, 2018
11:00 am to 4:30 pm (limited menu)

Mesa Verde Museum Association, Park Partner
970-529-4445 www.mesaverde.org

Museum Store
October 29, 2017 to April 7, 2018
9:00 am to 4:30 pm

Visitor Center Store
October 29, 2017 to April 7, 2018
8:30 am to 4:30 pm

U.S. Postal Service, near the museum

October 29, 2017 to April 7, 2018
Monday to Friday
8:30 am to 3:00 pm

*All visitor services are closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

Protect the Park

Help Mesa Verde preserve its archeological sites and natural environment for future generations.

- Please do not sit, stand, climb, or lean on fragile archeological structures.
- Pets must be leashed at all times; only service animals are allowed in public buildings or on trails. Please clean up after your pet.
- Do not leave pets unattended.
- Help keep wildlife wild. It is illegal to feed, capture, chase or tease wildlife.
- Camping and overnight parking is not permitted.



Protect Yourself

In case of emergency, call 911

Road Advisory

- Obey all traffic signs
- Watch for falling rocks
- Gasoline is only available intermittently during the winter months. Since you will drive *at least* 50 miles while in the park, please plan accordingly.
- Check sign at park entrance for possible chains or snow tire requirements. Watch for snowplows.

High Elevation

- Mesa Verde ranges from 7,000 feet elevation to 8,572 feet at Park Point; the air is thin and very dry.
- Consider your physical health before participating in any activity.
- Carry and drink plenty of water.