



# TREK WORTHY ATTRACTIONS ALONG CENTRAL HILLS LOOP

With so many things to do on your way to and from Mount Rushmore National Monument, you'll need a little extra time to plan your visit. We've got you covered with experiences that start and end in Rapid City, filling 2-3 days exploring the vast surrounding areas in the Black Hills and all Rapid City has to offer.

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## RAPID CITY

### **The Journey Museum & Learning Center**

Who knew time travel would be possible in Rapid City? [The Journey Museum & Learning Center](#) takes you through 2.5-billion-years of Black Hills and Native American culture with unique and exciting hands-on experiences!

**You'll Love** the Stratobowl exhibit.

With the actual Stratobowl site only a few miles outside of Rapid City, this exhibit takes you through the historical, record setting location where high-altitude balloon flights head into the atmosphere. Make sure to check out the balloon flights Black Hills Balloons offers at this location every fall.

### **Dinosaur Park**

[Dinosaur Park](#) has been giving visitors an up close and personal look at giants from the past since 1939. With seven prehistoric beasts overlooking the city, this is one enormous meet-and-greet you won't want to skip. Don't forget to bring your phone to snap a selfie or two and tag #VisitRapidCity - these dinos are camera-ready.

**You'll Love** the view.

What's better than visiting prehistoric giants from the past? A 100-mile panoramic view! As you look East your gaze will be met by the sprawling heights of the Badlands, and to the West the awe-inspiring Black Hills.

### **Bear Country USA**

[Bear Country USA](#) has the largest collection of privately owned black bears in the entire world. There's nothing better than taking a leisurely, 2-mile drive through an expansive wildlife park, and coming up close and personal with 20 species of North American,

free-roaming animals in their natural habitat. Be on the lookout for wolves, bighorn sheep, bobcats, buffalo, elk, otters and more!

**You'll Love** the un-bear-ably cute newborns.

In the springtime, Bear Country USA welcomes the arrival of extra cute newborn cubs.

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## HIGHWAY 44

### Black Hills Caverns

Lakota Indians had discovered these caverns long before gold seekers in 1882.

Exploring this natural wonder combines history with exciting tales during two distinct tours: The Adventure Tour and The Crystal Tour.

**You'll Love** the kid-friendly treasure hunt.

Experiencing [Black Hills Caverns](#) is a treat in itself and the kids will enjoy it even more as they get the chance to pan for minerals, Black Hills rocks, gems and fossils.

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## HIGHWAY 16 BEFORE MOUNT RUSHMORE

### Reptile Gardens

Named the world's largest reptile collection in 2018 Guinness Book of World Records, [Reptile Gardens](#) can be found just a short drive outside Rapid City on the way to Mount Rushmore. Named the "Top Family Attraction" in South Dakota, Reptile Gardens features a vast indoor jungle with tropical flora and fauna from around the world, gentle giant tortoises and imposing birds of prey, along with Komodo Dragons and many more reptiles making this an attraction you can't miss.

**You'll Love** Marilyn the snake and Orville the giant tortoise.

Not only are these two of the nicest reptiles you'll ever encounter, you'll also get the chance to hold Marilyn and to pet Orville!

### Cosmos Mystery Area

Known as the strangest location in the Black Hills, [Cosmos Mystery Area](#) is a natural and scientific phenomenon experience for all ages. Explore this enjoyable and remarkably bizarre attraction right outside Rapid City.

**You'll Love** trying to figure it all out.

A visit to Cosmos Mystery Area will leave your brain in a knot. How exactly does this whole thing work? It's a strange, physics phenomenon – really.

## Rushmore Tramway Adventures

[Rushmore Tramway Adventures](#) gets the wiggles out and then some! The action park features an alpine slide, scenic chair lift, aerial adventure park and zip line all in one place and is perfect for serious adrenaline junkies and passive explorers alike.

**You'll Love** the new visual perspective of Mount Rushmore on the Pinnacle Zipline. Spanning over 1-mile, take a 2-hour suspended journey on one of five side-by-side ziplines. The views alone will have you in awe as you reach up to 400 feet!

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## HIGHWAY 385 AFTER MOUNT RUSHMORE

### 1880 Train

Take a seat and rest your feet as you enjoy a vintage trip through history on the [Black Hills Central Railroad](#) where the first regional official steam train operated from and continues to provide guests with memorable steam engine experiences.

**You'll Love** their [special events](#).

It's one thing to enjoy a ride aboard a classic piece of history and even more thrilling when you take part in the special events like Old West Shootout, Rails & Ales and Wine Express!

### Pactola Reservoir

Take a refreshing dip in the 785-acre [Pactola Reservoir](#), the largest and deepest of its kind in the Black Hills. Here, you can fish, swim, paddle board, take a boat out for the day and even scuba dive. Why scuba dive? There is a once-prosperous town 150 feet below the surface.

**You'll Love** the Insta-worthy photo opportunities.

Surrounded by luscious greenery and tall trees, Pactola Reservoir provides you with the perfect #NoFilter backdrop (and lighting) from almost any point of view.

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## RAPID CITY

### Chapel In The Hills

Built in 1969, [Chapel in the Hills](#) is an exact reproduction of the Borgun Stavkirke of Laedraal, Norway from 1150 AD. Complete with a museum and Meditation Trail, this chapel still holds church services and makes for an inspirational and free stop after your experience at Mount Rushmore National Monument.

**You'll Love** the wood architecture.

Chapel in the Hills isn't your normal old chapel. As you take in the architecture and

woodcarvings, you'll be keen to notice the only metal used can be found on the door furnishings and locks. As you look throughout the chapel, the intricate details seen in every shingle and every panel will surprise you and transport you to the time of Vikings.

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## **GETTING TO RAPID CITY FROM ANYWHERE IS EASY!**

Whether you fly, drive or hop on a motorcoach, we have all the information you need to plan your trip to Rapid City right [here](#).