

The Wanderly Wagon Planning A Cross Country Trip

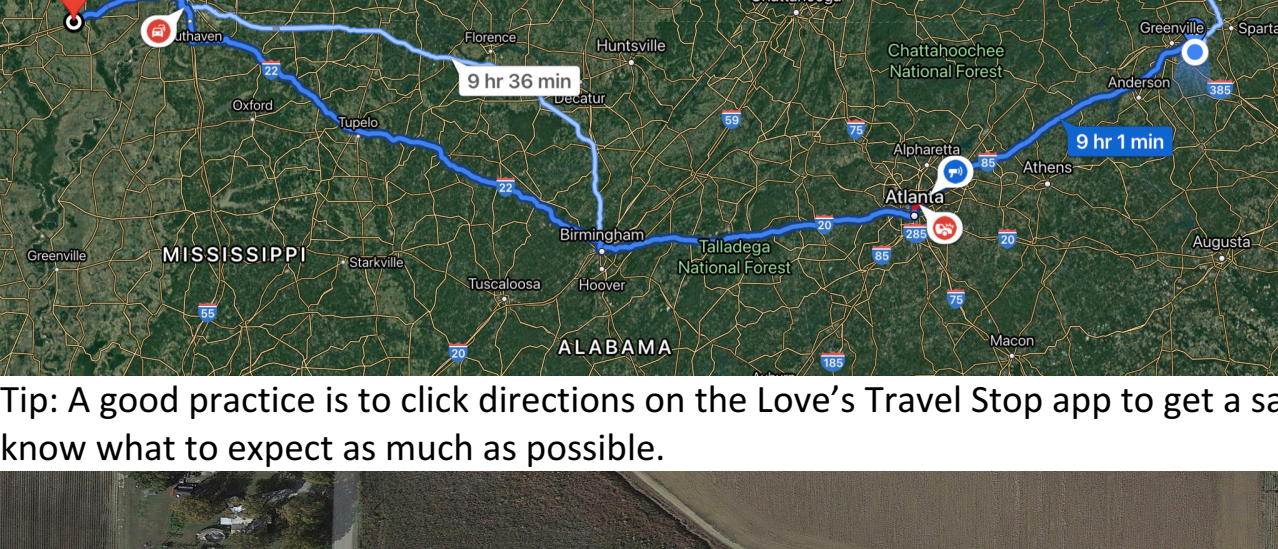
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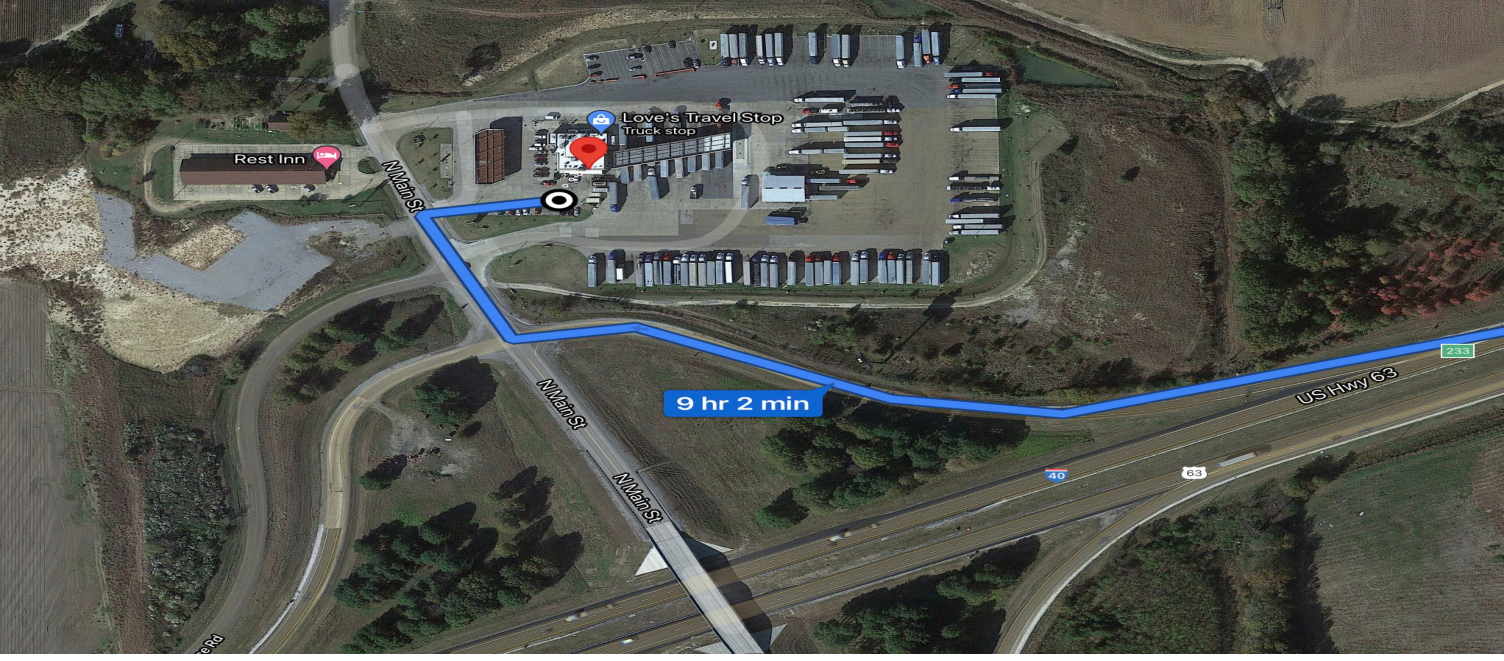
Let me start by saying the most important thing is SAFETY, always think safety first. The end result is getting everyone home safe, period!

The plan is simple. Hook up [The Wanderly Wagon](#), load two weeks of clothes, food and hit the road to Ouray, CO. Plan to spend five days then move on to Moab, UT for additional five days. But wait, the trip out west will be approximately 1,900 mile, so a lot of planning is required.

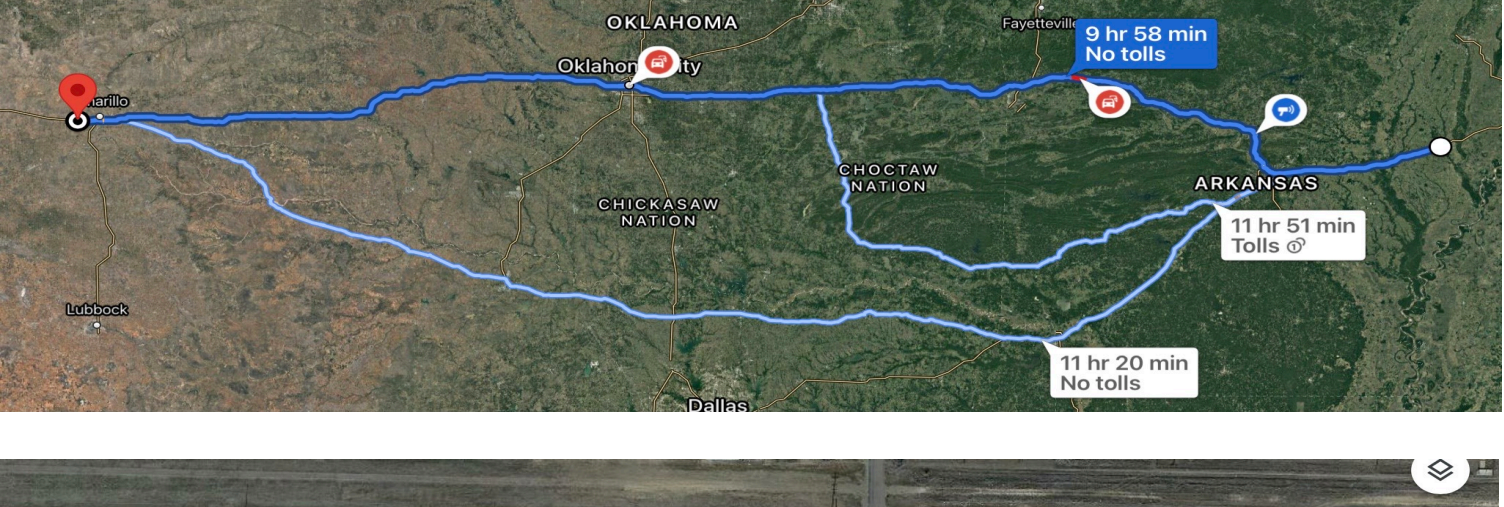
Where will we stay along the route we take? After reviewing several different routes we have decided to take Simpsonville, SC to 1010 N Main St Palestine, AR 72372 a 600 miles trip with an overnight stay at a Love's Truck stop expected drive time 9hrs 36min.



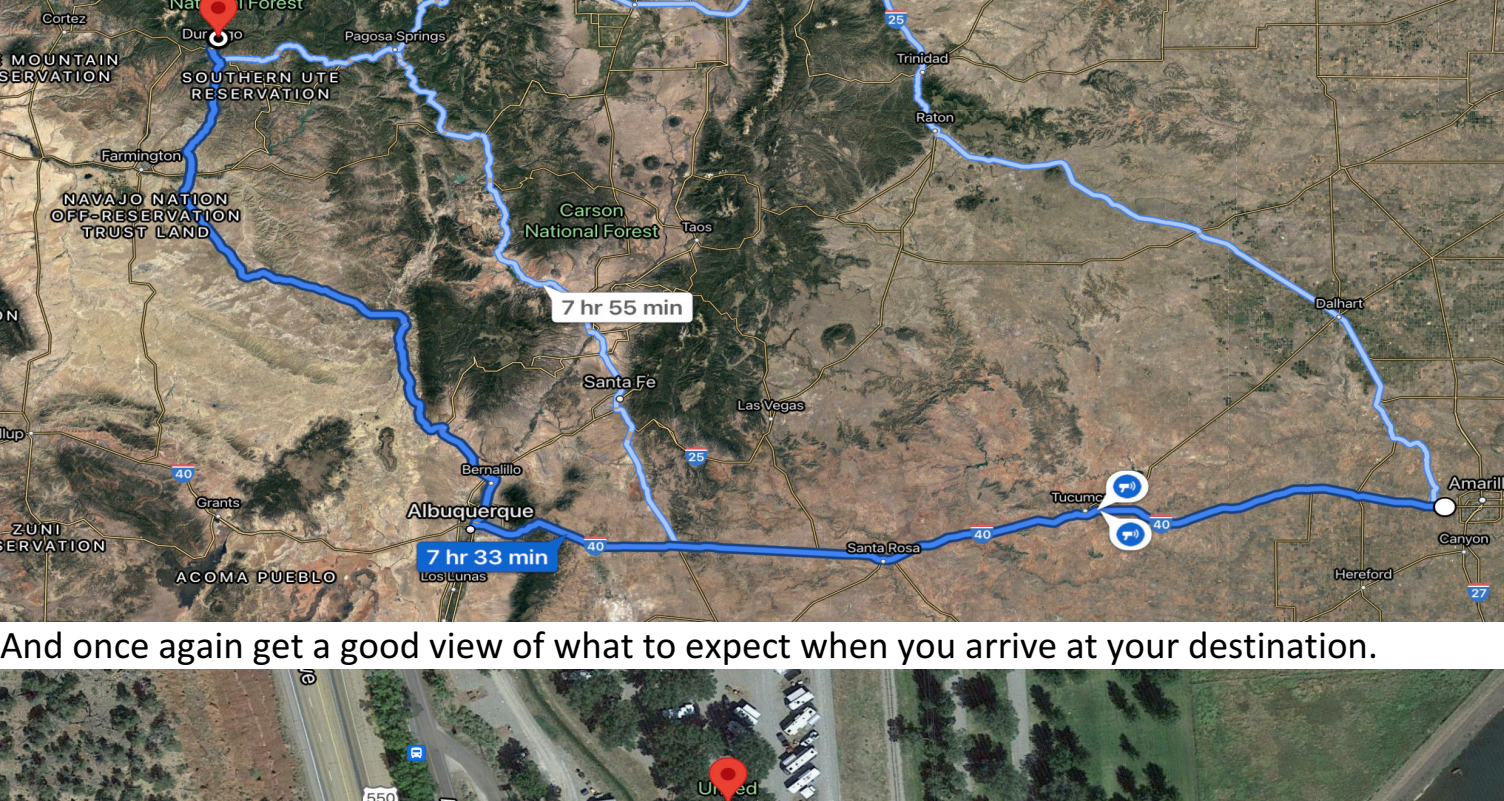
Tip: A good practice is to click directions on the Love's Travel Stop app to get a satellite image of the gas station layout, know what to expect as much as possible.



I plan to review of our experience at Love's Travel Stop, remember everything is an experience. The next morning I will leave from Palestine, AR to Love's Travel Stop 14701 I-40 W. Amarillo, TX 79124 just west of Amarillo a 680 mile journey with a drive time of 9hrs 58min.



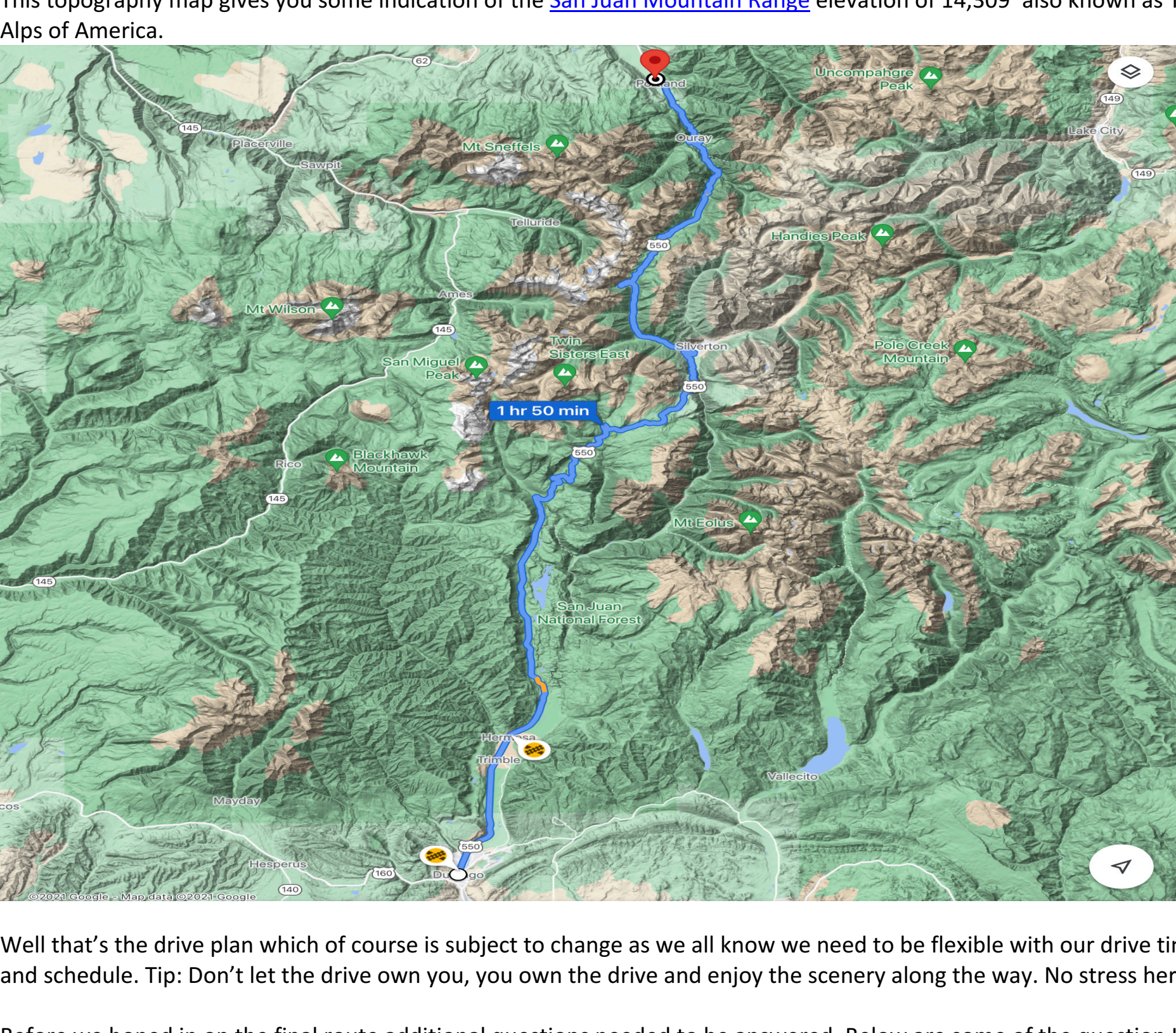
The following morning I plan to complete another review of Love's Travel Stop from previous night stay. Then set the navigation towards Durango, CO perhaps United Campground, 486 mile trip or 7hrs 33min. If we get to Durango on schedule we will have a day to explore the area before the ultimate drive of my life on HWY 550 north. Better known as 'The Million Dollar Highway'



And once again get a good view of what to expect when you arrive at your destination.



The drive to Ouray, CO is only 75 miles from Durango, however it's one of the worlds most scenic and most dangerous roads in the world for inexperienced drivers. I'll be posting this entire drive on [www.thewanderlywagon.com](#). As aforementioned, safety is paramount so this drive is subject to weather conditions it's not a good idea to do this in a heavy rain storms as rock slides are numerous. If weather permits I'll drive this route with The Wanderly Wagon in tow but if not I'll return the following day with just my truck driving South on 550 turnaround then drive back north to Ouray. This topography map gives you some indication of the [San Juan Mountain Range](#) elevation of 14,309' also known as The Alps of America.



Well that's the drive plan which of course is subject to change as we all know we need to be flexible with our drive time and schedule. Tip: Don't let the drive own you, you own the drive and enjoy the scenery along the way. No stress here!

Before we honed in on the final route additional questions needed to be answered. Below are some of the question I needed to answer to in order to help me make my final decision about the route we'll be taking.

How many miles can I drive daily?

On average for a three day drive I will complete ~ 600 miles per day taking about 10 hours per day including stops for diesel. If we stay in Durango for two night it will give us a much needed rest before the first major challenge of our journey '[The Million Dollar Highway](#).' As a rule of thumb our awesome frontline essential truckers who move America forward daily are subject to transportation laws allowing them to drive 11 hours per day, 10 hours of rest and the additional 3 hours are used for gas stops and short brakes. Much respect for truckers!

Are we going to boon-dock?

We considered boondocking at some campgrounds along the way, however the main goal is to get to Ouray, CO ASAP and of course in a safe manner. Stopping at campgrounds takes time to get unhitched & hooked back up we are thinking it's just not worth it for one night stay, also campgrounds are typically several miles from interstate exits, so we decided trucks stops would work better for our schedule. So yes, we are going to boondock at two truck stops along the way. It was suggested to me by my good friend Barry to download the [Love's Travel Stop](#) app, so I did and found it to be very useful. The detailed information they have available within the app is awesome. It really helped me nail down my stops. If I make changes along the way my navigator 'Nicole' will update our plan utilizing the Love's Travel Stop app.

Do we need a generator?

We don't really a generator no one unless you need Air Conditioning. Would you sleep in a camper in the Texas summer heat? That's a rhetorical question! A generator/inverter is a must have when traveling in the summer heat, don't leave home without one. I have reviewed many options when I decided I needed a generator. I was looking for something that was quite but had enough juice to provide 30amps of service in order to run one AC unit. I found that in the [Harbor Freight predator 3500 Inverter](#). Time will tell if I made the right decision, more to come on that later.

How much fuel do we need?

Calculate MPG average then budget fuel cost with the nationwide diesel prices \$3.22 @ 4300 miles / 9mpg = 477 gallons x \$3.22 per gallon = \$1538.44 this is subject to change due to many variables i.e. speed, hill/mountain grade, weather, traffic, cost of fuel you get the point. That said, it's good to have a understanding of the cost associated with a cross country trip. We need to get back so this budget is for round trip.

The more I think about this trip the more questions arise such as what about bridge height when towing 13' 5" tall Montana 5th wheel are all bridges along my selected route tall enough? I won't go in to detail here but when I purchased The Wanderly Wagon I got stuck in the Smoky Mountains by making a wrong turn. That experience got me searching for a navigation system which I found in the Garmin RV 785 it includes a built in dashcam. I'll post a review later.

What happens in the event of a flat tire?

As all Rvers' know the first item you purchase with a new RV is a good toolbox. You need to know how to utilize these tools, something needs to be fixed most of the time, welcome to glamping. You will often hear experienced Rvers' say "it's like pulling a house that experiences a earthquake every time it moves." That said, please know the basics of taking care of your rig before leaving on a cross country trip. Also, review roadside assistance services that fit within your budget. GoodSams, AAA, and most if not all insurance companies offer roadside assistance. I called my provider to discuss my roadside package currently for \$10 per year I have 25 miles of towing, gas delivery, flat tire change, and lockout service. For an additional \$10 per year I upgraded to 100 miles of towing which includes anything connected to my tow vehicle, gas delivery, flat tire change, and lockout services. Having roadside assistance is a peace of mind when traveling, but please know the process on how to change a wheel in the event of a blowout, you will need to purchase a bottle jack just for your RV [Northern Tool](#) has a 12 ton for \$50. The jack in the tow vehicle will not work, get the right tool for the job!

How much water shall I bring for showers?

Our gray tank capacity 96gallons, black tank capacity 49 gallons and fresh water is 66 gallons. Not all 5th wheels or travel trailers are designed to carry water please consult with your manufacturer. The Wanderly Wagon is an all season luxury 5th wheel designed to carry water payload to max capacity of 66 gallons. However, 66 gallons of water is ~550 lbs and based on my experience this is too much to carry for two people & two night of boon-docking. I believe we'll have enough in 25 gallons ~208 lbs. We won't need to dump any of our tanks until we get to United campground in Durango but if needed Love's Travel Stop do provide a dump stations.

Will I have cell phone service in some remote places?

For the most part we'll have cell phone coverage for 95% of the time. But capacity may be limited due to the amount of visitors some of these rural areas get each season. For example, the population of Ouray, CO is 998 and Moab, UT is 5,432 with yearly visitors reaching ~3,000,000 yes Million. With that said, you can expect spotty cell phone service as long as my iPhone video camera works and I can take pictures I'll be a happy camper. It may be a good idea to purchase a few two way radios as we will be leaving the town area to explore the mountain peaks in a Jeep Wrangler 4x4 and for sure you have no cell phone coverage. Again that's a safety thing.

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So, as you can see it's not as simple as hooking up The Wanderly Wagon. A detailed plan needs to be developed then executed upon. As much as possible know what to expect by doing your own research. It's important to me to have a plan! You can always deviate from the plan then later down the road get back on track. I started this journey March 2021 and I continue to learn new things about the wonderful world of Rvin' & life on the road.

