



# CUSTER STATE PARK · RIDE GUIDE

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## LEGEND

- Visitor Center
- Concession (Lodge)
- General Store
- Gas
- Tunnel
- Points of Interest
- Needles Highway (Distance: 14 miles)
- Wildlife Loop Road (Distance: 18 miles)
- Iron Mountain Road (Distance: 17 miles)
- Main Entrance Station  
Temporary entrance motorcycle license required  
Valid for 1-7 consecutive days; \$10 per bike

## Contact Information:

605.255.4515  
custerstatepark@state.sd.us  
www.custerstatepark.com



Wind Cave National Park



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## Needles Highway (Distance: 14 miles)

### Expected travel time: 45-60 minutes

The Needles Highway is a spectacular drive through pine and spruce forests, meadows surrounded by birch and aspen and rugged granite mountains. The road's name comes from the needle-like granite formations which seem to pierce the horizon along the highway.

The roadway was carefully planned by former South Dakota Governor Peter Norbeck, who marked the entire course on foot and by horseback. Construction was completed in 1922. Visitors traveling the highway pass Sylvan Lake and a unique rock formation called the Needle's Eye, so named for the opening created by wind, rain, freezing and thawing.

## Wildlife Loop Road (Distance: 18 miles)

### Expected travel time: 45 minutes

The Wildlife Loop Road twists and turns its way through the prairie and ponderosa pine-studded hills that harbor many of the park's wildlife species. On most days guests will come face to face with the number one inhabitant of the park, our 1,300 free roaming buffalo.

The best time to view animals along the Wildlife Loop Road is early morning or late in the evening, just before sunset. White-tailed and Mule deer are often seen early in the morning and late in the afternoon, and if you're lucky, you may see elk, big horn sheep, or even a mountain lion. Two of the most colorful characters along the way are the prairie dogs and a band of the parks free-loading burros.

## Iron Mountain Road (Distance: 17 miles)

### Expected travel time: 45-60 minutes

The Iron Mountain Road is a work of art in itself. The highway connects Custer State Park and Mount Rushmore National Memorial. The highway passes through some of the most beautiful scenery in the Black Hills including three tunnels that frame Mount Rushmore in the distance. The road is famous for the "Pigtail Bridges" that allows travelers to drop or gain altitude quickly.

The highway was constructed in the 1930s under the direction of Governor Peter Norbeck, who is also known as the "Father of Custer State Park." Norbeck said of the Iron Mountain Road, "this is not meant to be a super highway, to do the scenery justice you should drive no more than 20 mph and to do it full justice you should simply get out and walk." Experience the road that engineers once said couldn't be built; you'll be happy you did.



## Restaurants:

*(All four locations serve breakfast, lunch & dinner daily. Special BBQ cookouts held throughout Rally Week.)*



### Blue Bell Lodge

A hearty Western, ranch house experience

### Legion Lake Lodge

Casual diner-style fare, featuring Starbucks®

### State Game Lodge

Casual yet elegant meals featuring local game selections

### Sylvan Lake Lodge

Fantastic views and fare such as buffalo, fresh water trout and Wapiti (Elk) tenderloin

## Gifts, Souvenirs, & Supplies at Stores:

- Apparel for the whole family
- Groceries & beverages (beer & liquor at some locations)
- Grab-&-go food
- Camping, fishing supplies & fishing licenses, & firewood
- Quality bison & wildlife items
- Personal care products

**Gasoline can be purchased at the Blue Bell and Coolidge General Stores.**

