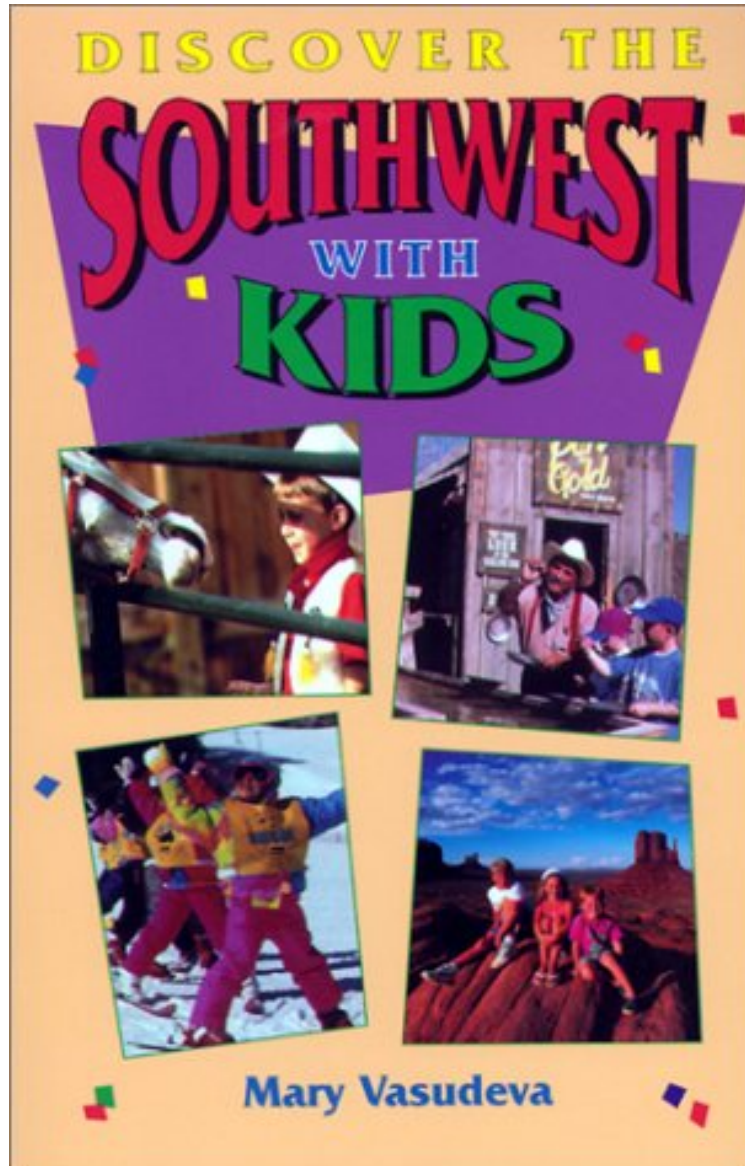


(Free and download) Discover the Southwest With Kids: A Family Guide

Discover the Southwest With Kids: A Family Guide

Mary Vasudeva, Gwynne Spence
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Mary Vasudeva, Gwynne Spence : Discover the Southwest With Kids: A Family Guide before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Discover the Southwest With Kids: A Family Guide:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Our family vacation was so much better and more fun because of this wonderful book.By Lean I amHave you ever just returned from vacation and told someone about how wonderful it

was and they said, "Oh, did you see..." And, you have to stand there feeling remiss and silly for going all that way and missing out on the best attraction ever? Sad to say It's happened to me more than once. Not this time though! This summer my husband and I rented an RV and drove to Moab, Utah with our kids 4 and 9. I'm not really the travel guide type but we were given this book by a friend so we used it to map the trip. I took it to heart when the author stressed the importance of "making a vacation as much the children's as yours." Our vacation was much more fun, and definitely more memorable, because of the guidance and resources provided in this book. We used 'Discover the Southwest With Kids' for the entire trip. I read the descriptions of the various places out loud in the car. The kids had a chance to give a place thumbs up or down. They voted on the places I had already planned and if they didn't want to go, we didn't go. Occasionally, I had to encourage them, and as usual, mom was right! Luckily I had a long list from the book. The author includes a brief history of each place which was interesting and informative but not so in-depth that the kids were bored. We actually played the roles of historical characters - so we snuck in a bit of education - and I guarantee, I learned as much or more than the kids. Instead of making our usual beeline for the parks and campground, (set up tent, eat s'mores, repeat) we planned several side trips along the way. I have the first edition (2001) so I called ahead to be sure the information was current. Knowing how long an activity would take and how much it cost gave us the ability to budget money and time. Typically, if I'm surprised with an entrance fee, I won't pay it no matter how seemingly worthwhile the experience or cheap the fee. But when it's in the itinerary, no problem, it's in the budget! On the way to and through Zion, Bryce, Canyonlands and finally Arches we also checked out some museums (Jacob Hamlin Home, Western Wildlife Museum), National Monuments (you know those signs on the road that you never take time to check it out) and parks we had never heard of (Escalante, Goblin Valley, Natural Bridges and Capitol Reef). We also checked out hiking in and around the parks we never would have known about. Visiting these places was not only memorable, Goblin Park was a huge favorite, our entire trip felt more relaxed. Stopping intermittently to check out monuments made us relax and it broke up the driving. It was fun to be "in the know" about what to do in a place and we also did plenty of exploring on our own. This book contains an extensive and impressive compilation of places to visit, hard to believe it was all in one book. Thumbing through other sections of the book gave us ideas about what we wanted to do on future vacations. The author repeatedly recommended the Junior Ranger programs. I agree wholeheartedly. They are educational and fun. Since they are mostly self-paced they became part of family fun without having to budget time. The kids used them at all the national parks. The safety tips were good reminders; I read those out loud in the car also. More than once my daughter reminded me to be careful of the sun and the snakes! (We never saw a snake out of captivity). The "Practicalities" section was helpful. Nothing worse than expecting a potty and food and finding none! There is an extensive bibliography and lots of resources listed throughout the book. I recommend this book highly if you're traveling in the Southwest - actually with or without kids! I will definitely be looking for a similar guide next summer when we visit Yosemite and Sequoia in California. The only thing that I would like to be included in this book is bigger maps (smaller scale), perhaps with a number key showing each place on the map. I think it would be handy to visualize the relative distances and order of travel. On this trip with this book if we missed something special, it wasn't because we didn't know about it. It was because both kids and parents chose and voted to see something else. Great book, great find, five stars!

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. nice information
By short stuff
We are planning a road trip to the southwest. I purchased several "kids" books and I have found this one the most helpful. It doesn't have all the details but I have "national parks of the american west" for that. It does give a really nice feel for fun kid activities. It is 10 years old so I will have to double check details but overall I am glad I purchased it.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Very limited to her own experiences
By Melise Gerber
I just returned from a trip across the Southwest with my two sons (9 11). I live in the Los Angeles area, and my parents live in Taos, New Mexico, and so I had travelled a number of times with them, but had never taken time to really see some sights. I purchased a number of guidebooks with information about the Four Corners area and the Southwest, but was struggling to find out information about places and sights that might be most interesting to my children. When I saw this book on , I was really excited as it seemed that it might have alot of information specifically useful for me in my situation. However I really was disappointed because the book didn't offer me alot of insider information about things that I couldn't find by myself using other guidebooks, and I found the author's personal perspective on certain places and sights to be offputting. A good example is her statement about Taos, a city that I have spent a good amount of time in with my children. She basically dismisses Taos as a bad place to take kids, complaining that all she experienced is alot of traffic. Now, I agree, Taos is not the best place for travelling with children...there is really not a lot to do in town...but there is a new recreation center in town designed for kids, there is Taos Cow Ice Cream in Arroyo Seco, there is the Gorge Bridge, there is skiing with great instruction for kids in the winter. I don't expect that she has to like the city of Taos, nor do I mind if she tells me that it is a difficult place when you have children. But, for someone like me, who might (for whatever reason) find it necessary to travel there with my kids, some information besides "I don't like it because the traffic was bad" would be useful. This is less a guidebook that can be used to help you plan a more enjoyable version of YOUR vacation with your kids, then it is a travelogue about successful vacations that she has taken her kids.

The Great Southwest is a gold mine of family-friendly activities and adventures just waiting to be explored. Discover The Southwest with Kids takes you both on and off the beaten track to adventures sure to thrill and engage kids and parents of all ages. The book includes family-tested destinations in Arizona, Colorado, Utah and New Mexico; the best museums, tours, State and National parks, and historical sites that interest kids; summer as well as winter destinations; and driving directions, hours, admission fees and web addresses.