



Escalante, Utah

by Kallie Christensen

When planning a trip in the state of Utah, it can sometimes be difficult choosing a location. The entire state is geographically stunning, from the southern tip painted in red to the north lined with the magnificence of the Rocky Mountains.

So, when it came time to choose where I wanted to plan my annual girls trip that could include our off-road vehicles, we opted out of the obvious choice of Moab, and ventured down to Escalante, Utah.

Escalante is most known for the Grand Staircase, and being part of Utah's famous Highway 12. If you've never been on this scenic byway, here's your sign. But like literally;

After driving through the glorious Bryce Canyon, our destination came into view, nestled at the base of the Boulder Mountains, a "glamping" campground called Yonder. It was hands down, the fanciest campground I had ever been to. Equipped with a lovely common area that invited people to lounge by the smokeless fire pits, a pool and hot tub combo, a 50's themed drive-in Movie theater, luxurious spa-like bathrooms & showers (even secluded outside showers that had heaters in them!), and a bar that serves mixed drinks! And If you know Utah, you know how exciting that last part is.

Check out Yonder here: <https://www.stayyonder.com/>

Bryce Canyon



Now, if tenting-it or hauling a trailer is not your cup of tea, there are the quaintest little cabins, and some awesome retro airstreams available for lodging.

However, tenting-it was our cup of tea, and we set up my canvas tent in our designated area.

Yonder is the type of place that you could easily spend your entire vacation at, and is by far one of the most unique attractions Escalante has to offer. The rest of the attractions in Escalante require getting some dirt on the tires.. Or at the very least, the bottoms of your hiking boots.



My Favorite Escalante Attractions

Scenic Byway 12 & Hell's Backbone

Although the byway isn't necessarily an attraction, the beauty that surrounds the asphalt is truly breathtaking. And it leads you to some of the best places in Utah, like Hell's Backbone. If you love off-roading, or as my friend would say "Jeeping", Hell's Backbone is your ultimate test. It is a winding route through (like on top) the Boulder Mountains and

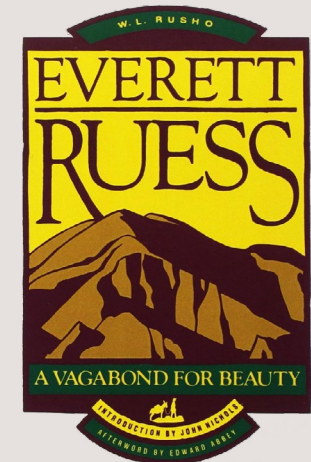


connects to the Escalante River Canyon. Just don't forget your ol' fishing pole, because the Boulder Mountains have some of the best Brook Trout fishing in the state. We're talking about the best fly-fishing for trophy trout you will ever experience. And you have to experience it if you enjoy fly fishing.

Calf Creek Waterfall & Lower Calf Creek Hike

You can't go to Escalante (or anywhere in that part of Utah) without doing some hiking. Although this trip we didn't hike the waterfall trail due to the amount of people, it's still a must do hike when visiting the area. Take a swim suit and be ready for a dip! This trip though, we opted for the lesser traveled Lower Calf Creek hike. If you want peace and nature, this is your hike. Be prepared for river crossings, long strips of hot sand, seeing Native American granaries, natural arches, and the artwork of the Escalante River over thousands of years.

Escalante is a place that all adventurers should experience, especially if Moab is too "touristy" for you. Go and explore all Escalante's attractions here: <https://www.visitutah.com/places-to-go/cities-and-towns/escalante>



An Escalante Legend

The disappearance of Everett Ruess: Everett was an explorer (the man who inspired Chris McCandless) who mysteriously went missing in Escalante a 100 years ago. I first read about him during my undergrad and fell in love with his written word. All we are left with are his letters, some paintings, and poetry that was thankfully saved by relatives and friends. His name still lives on in the little town, and the locals all have their versions of what really happened to Everett.