

## CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR® ROUTE GUIDE

CHICAGO • DENVER • SALT LAKE CITY • SAN FRANCISCO

We hope you enjoy reading this guide and learning about points of interest along our route. It is written starting from the eastern terminus of the train in Chicago and proceeds to points west, ending in San Francisco. If you boarded in San Francisco, just read the guide in reverse, remembering to look in the opposite direction referenced.

**AMTRAK® STATIONS** are shown in all capital letters, as opposed to upper and lower case for towns and geographical areas through which the train travels but does not stop. The Amtrak® System Timetable or the California Zephyr® timetable folder should be consulted for actual station times. While all service presented in this guide was accurate at the time of publication, routes and services are subject to change. Please contact Amtrak at 1-800-USA-RAIL, visit [Amtrak.com](http://Amtrak.com), or call your travel agent for the most current information.

Between Chicago and the great cities of the west lie narrow canyons, towering peaks and breathtakingly beautiful mountain wilderness areas as you cross two great mountain ranges, the Rockies and the Sierra Nevadas. Traveling across this great swath of American West was a challenging journey until 1869 when the first transcontinental railroad was completed at Promontory Summit, Utah. Then, thousands of pioneers were able to easily go west in search of their fortunes, many to San Francisco after the discovery of gold nearby. Modern-day travelers know that same trip as one of the most beautiful train journeys in North America – and the most comfortable way to travel between these two great cities.

Blowing away the alternatives is what Zephyrus, ancient Greek god of the west wind, and his namesake, the California Zephyr, do best. So sit back and be “blown away” by the otherwise unattainable views of the spectacular scenery and changing vistas along the route.

[Amtrak’s California Zephyr carries the same name as the original “most talked about train in America” that went into service on March 20, 1949, between Chicago and Oakland over much of the same route as the train you are riding today. The original California Zephyr, operated jointly by the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad, Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad and Western Pacific Railroad, featured five “vista dome” cars and four sleeping cars. Today, Amtrak uses modern Superliner double-decker cars that give nearly everybody on the train a bird’s-eye view of the spectacular scenery on the route.]



Enjoy the journey.

# WELCOME ABOARD



The *California Zephyr* takes you from the Midwest's Windy City across the American heartland through Denver, over the front range of the Rockies, through the Continental Divide, Glenwood Canyon, the Utah Desert and the High Sierras to the City by the Bay. On board, you will experience the comfort and relaxation of train travel while witnessing some of the very best American cultural and geographic icons. We are happy to have you aboard today and want to ensure your trip is everything you want it to be. If there is anything that can be done to make your trip more enjoyable, please do not hesitate to ask any Amtrak employee.

## THE TRAIN STAFF

The staff of the *California Zephyr* is here to make your trip a special and enjoyable experience.

The **Conductor** is responsible for the entire On-Board Services staff including ticket collection, passenger safety and the safe operation of the train.

The **Lead Service Attendant** is responsible for the operation of the Dining car and Dining car staff.

The **Lounge Car Attendant** is responsible for the operation of the Lounge/ Café car.

The **Sleeping Car Attendant** is responsible for providing all service for passengers ticketed in Sleeping car accommodations, including room preparation, luggage service and any assistance necessary to ensure a comfortable journey. He or she can also assist with meal reservations or arrange for your meal to be served in the privacy and comfort of your accommodation.

The **Coach Attendant** is responsible for providing service for passengers ticketed in Coach. This includes seat assignment, luggage assistance, and assistance to ensure a comfortable journey.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

**Sleeping car** accommodations provide a range of private rooms with amenities for day and night use. From Superliner Roomettes to Superliner Bedrooms featuring a private lavatory and shower, Sleeping car accommodations will suit any need and can be described in more detail by any member of the crew. Please ask to speak to the Conductor regarding the availability of rooms. Sleeping car passengers can enjoy the Amtrak Metropolitan Lounge<sup>SM</sup> available in Chicago.

**Coach** seating provides a wide reclining seat with leg rest, folding tray table and overhead light.

The **Dining car** features full-service hot meals prepared by Amtrak chefs. Here you will also have the chance to meet your fellow passengers for conversation and food while the scenery glides by your window. Sleeping car accommodation charges include meals in the Dining car while passengers ticketed in Coach may purchase Dining car meals at reasonable prices.

The **Sightseer Lounge/Café** is the perfect car for viewing the spectacular scenery along the *California Zephyr*. Large panoramic windows provide the perfect atmosphere for sightseeing and making new friends. The Café is located on the lower level of this car offering sandwiches, snacks and beverages. On-board guides from the California State Railroad Museum provide historical and sightseeing commentary between Reno and Sacramento seasonally.

**HOST RAILROADS** are the freight and commuter railroads that Amtrak contracts with to operate Amtrak passenger trains. The *California Zephyr* is hosted by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) between Chicago and Denver, and the Union Pacific between Denver and Emeryville, CA.

*Information contained in this route guide as well as described amenities and features are subject to change without notice. While gratuities are not required for services provided, it is an appreciated way to convey to an employee that he or she has made your trip more enjoyable.*



**CHICAGO (0 mi.)** Vibrant and energetic, Chicago is the commercial, industrial and cultural core of the Midwest and has always been a major national transportation hub. At Union Station, eight Amtrak® long-distance routes and seven regional corridors connect passengers to and from cities and towns across the country. In the heart of America, Chicago is a leading distribution center for manufactured goods flowing in all directions. Its importance as a commercial center is underscored by the Merchandise Mart, the world's largest commercial office building with over 4 million square feet of floor space.

The many regional food specialties (in addition to Chicago Deep Dish Pizza!) reflect the city's ethnic and working class roots. Chicago's spirit is also exemplified in its unique architecture; it is here that the word "skyscraper" originated with the first one built in 1885. The arts and sciences are alive with an abundance of world-renowned theaters and museums. And Chicago is clearly a sports town with baseball's Cubs and White Sox, hockey's 2013 Stanley Cup champion Blackhawks, basketball's Bulls, and football's Chicago Bears (known around here as "Da Bears"). The city is home to historic Wrigley Field, one of baseball's oldest parks, and one of the tallest buildings in the U.S., the Willis Tower (formerly the Sears Tower) is next to Union Station.

Leaving Chicago Union Station, the South Branch of the Chicago River is on the left. In the late 1890s the flow of the river was changed to flow from Lake Michigan toward the Mississippi River in order to improve the water quality in the Lake, rather than the other way around, through construction of a series of locks and sluice gates. This was considered to be a major engineering triumph of its time, although not without controversy from Mississippi River communities.

**NAPERVILLE (28 mi.)** serves Chicago's western suburbs. Founded in 1831, this is an affluent, family-oriented community, with a restored historic village and modern suburban homes, reflecting both the city's past and present. Today, Naperville is known for its high-tech companies and highly regarded school system. The nearly two mile Riverwalk along the DuPage River features walking paths, fountains, meeting and event places, outdoor sculpture and recreational facilities.

**Aurora (38 mi.)**, west of Naperville, is the second largest city in Illinois, and was the birthplace of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad, predecessor to the Burlington Northern Santa Fe over which the *California Zephyr*® runs between Chicago and Denver. Aurora has been dubbed the "City of Lights" after being one of the first cities in the nation to adopt all-electric street lighting in 1881. We cross the Fox River which bisects Aurora into three regions: The West Side, The East Side, and The Far East Side/Fox Valley.

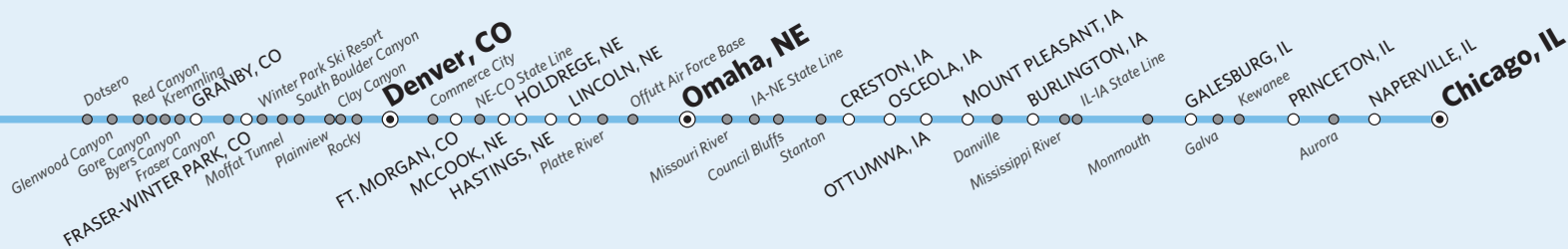
**PRINCETON (104 mi.)** was settled in the 1830s by families from New England and the Mid-Atlantic states. Legend has it that when the three town trustees couldn't agree on a name, each put a name in the hat and Princeton was selected. Owen Lovejoy was an outspoken abolitionist in the mid-1800s, and his home on the east side of town became a major stop on the Underground Railroad for freed slaves on their way to Canada. Today the home is open as a museum and is a National Historic Landmark.

**Kewanee (131 mi.)** is a small industrial town along the Spoon River. It was best known for the manufacturing of steam boilers. The Kewanee Boiler Corporation closed down in 2002. One thing still going strong is the annual Hog Days Festival that has been held Labor Day weekend every year since 1954 following an earlier resolution by the Illinois Legislature declaring Kewanee and Henry County the "Hog Capital of the World." The Amtrak station here is served by the *Illinois Zephyr*® and *Carl Sandburg*® trains.

**Galva (139 mi.)** was settled by a mix of settlers from Vermont, the Isle of Man, and colonists in nearby Bishop Hill who had arrived from Sweden and came to the aid of the new settlers. The name Galva is from the Swedish port of Gefle, from which many of the Swedish colonists had sailed.

**GALESBURG (162 mi.)** has always been an important railroad town served by both the Burlington and Santa Fe Railroads (now both part of the BNSF). It celebrates this heritage with the permanent display of a Burlington 4-6-4 Hudson steam engine that can be seen on the right as we enter the station, its annual Railroad Days Festival in June, its Galesburg Railroad Museum, and as host city of the National Railroad Hall of Fame that is being developed. It's not all railroads in Galesburg, however. It was also the home of writer and historian Carl Sandburg and the site of the fifth Lincoln-Douglas debate in 1858 at Knox College, which we pass on the right shortly after leaving the station. George Ferris, inventor of the ferris wheel, was born here. And Galesburg annually hosts the Black Earth Film Festival which attracts entries from around the world, a kite festival, the Great Cardboard Boat Regatta and the Annual Rubber Duck Race! According to legend, the Marx Brothers received their nicknames here during a poker game in 1914.

**Monmouth (179 mi.)** is another town which supposedly had its name drawn from a hat--except that the name drawn, Kosciusko, was too hard to spell so the second drawing selected Monmouth. Monmouth is the home of Monmouth College and birthplace of western hero Marshall Wyatt Earp.



### Illinois/Iowa State Line – The Mississippi River

The **Mississippi River**, the second longest in the country at 2,320 miles, forms the border here, as well as for several of the other eight states that it flows through. Note the marshy bottomlands beneath the bridge.

**BURLINGTON (205 mi.)** Following the Mississippi River as part of his expedition to explore the Louisiana Purchase, Zebulon Pike in 1805 landed at the bluffs below town and constructed a fort. The first American to purchase a lot, John Gray, bought the right to choose the town name and named it for his hometown in Vermont. Prior to 1868 passengers crossed the Mississippi by ferry here, or in the winter walked across the ice. Reflect on that as you ride in Superliner® comfort today across the river on the *California Zephyr*.

**MOUNT PLEASANT (233 mi.)** is home to Iowa Wesleyan College which can be seen one block away on the right as we leave the station. The college has had a couple of out-of-this world graduates--namely James Van Allen who discovered the earth's radiation belts that bear his name and astronaut Peggy Whitson, who spent over a year in space on two missions to the International Space Station and is the only woman to command the space station. The Midwest Old Threshers has several museums in town featuring tractors, trains, farm homes and even a carousel to celebrate the way it used to be in the Midwest agriculture belt. They hold a major festival each year on Labor Day weekend to pay tribute to the Midwest's agricultural heritage.

**OTTUMWA (279 mi.)** is best known to most Americans as the home of fictional character "Radar O'Reilly" from the TV show *M\*A\*S\*H*. Five sitting Presidents have visited Ottumwa, generally while campaigning. The Des Moines River flows through the center of the city and will be on the left side of the train until we cross it after leaving the station.

**OSCEOLA (359 mi.)** is the nearest Amtrak station to Iowa's capital, Des Moines, 50 miles to the north. Osceola was named to honor a Seminole chief from Florida who in the 1830s was captured and imprisoned after accepting an invitation to meet for negotiations with the U.S. government on the removal of his tribe from Florida. The chief received support from many people around the country, although it didn't keep him from dying in prison. Watch for a 15 foot high carved wooden bust of the chief on the left where our train begins to parallel the highway shortly after leaving Osceola.

**CRESTON (392 mi.)** was established nearly 150 years ago by the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad, and got its name because it sits at the crest of the split between the Mississippi and Missouri River

basins. Southwestern Community College and Buena Vista University are located here, and Creston is the county seat of Union County. The annual Creston/Southwest Iowa Hot Air Balloon Race is held here during September.

**Stanton (435 mi.)** first settled by Swedish immigrants, is best known for its two water towers, one painted and shaped like a giant coffee pot and the other like a giant coffee cup. These unique water towers, which are off to the right as we pass through town, pay homage to hometown actress Virginia Christine, better known to TV viewers as "Mrs. Olson" in the classic Folgers coffee commercials.

**Council Bluffs (491 mi.)**, originally known as Kanesville, was transformed by the California Gold Rush and renamed Council Bluffs, remaining a major outfitting point on the Missouri River for the Emigrant Trail, with a lively steamboat trade. President Lincoln chose Council Bluffs as the eastern location of the transcontinental railroad in 1862. The town has one of only three remaining examples of a rotary jail, with pie-shaped cells on a turntable. It remained in operation until 1969, after the rotary function was disabled nine years earlier. Today, Casino Row is located on and near the river. In 1972, Council Bluffs native Ron "The Bluffs Butcher" Stander fought Joe Frazier for the heavyweight title in the Omaha Civic Auditorium, losing on cuts in the fourth round. It was the most talked about sporting event ever to occur in this city.

### Iowa/Nebraska State Line – Missouri River

**Missouri River** is the state line between Iowa and Nebraska. Lewis and Clark set out in 1804 to explore the river, obtained as part of the Louisiana Purchase. They hoped to find that the Missouri would be the "Northwest Passage" to the Pacific. It wasn't, but at 2,341 miles in length, it drains about one-sixth of the North American continent – and is slightly longer than the Mississippi River that it flows in to north of St. Louis. The river is nicknamed "Big Muddy" for its high silt content.

**OMAHA (500 mi.)** has always been a major transportation center earning it the nickname "Gateway to the West." The eastern portion of the first transcontinental railroad headed west from here in the 1850s, and this town has been home to the Union Pacific Railroad since the company began. Every May, Omaha becomes "Woodstock for Capitalists" as about 40,000 people flock to this city to hear one of the richest men in the world, Warren Buffet, the "Oracle of Omaha," at the annual meeting of his Berkshire Hathaway Corporation. Then for nearly two weeks in June the town is taken over by NCAA baseball as it hosts the College World Series. Besides business, Omaha also has been the



launching pad for many actors who were either born or grew up here, including Fred Astaire, Marlon Brando, Nick Nolte and Henry Fonda.

**Offutt Air Force Base (504 mi.)** to our left was once home to the Glenn L. Martin aircraft plant where the propeller driven B-29s used to drop the atomic bombs on Japan to end World War II were built. From 1961-1990 it was the site of the country's 24-hour airborne command center called Operation Looking Glass. On September 11, 2001, President George W. Bush conducted one of the first major strategy sessions in the base bunker after the Twin Tower attacks.

We cross the **Platte River (507 mi.)** which is over 300 miles long and has served as part of the Oregon, California and Mormon Trails that carried emigrants west in the mid-1800s. The Platte River road was also the route of the Pony Express, the Union Pacific portion of the first transcontinental railroad and cross-country Interstate Route 80.

**LINCOLN (555 mi.)** became capital of Nebraska upon its admission to the Union in 1867. The golden-domed state capitol building dominates the skyline on the left side as the train curves through town. The Nebraska State government is unique as it is the only "unicameral" legislature (a single chamber rather than two as in the other states). Besides the state government and a mix of service industries, the University of Nebraska is the other large contributor to the local economy. The Cornhuskers play at 91,000-seat Memorial Stadium, visible on the left before arriving at the station.

**HASTINGS (652 mi.)** Even though the *California Zephyr* stops in the middle of the night it might be appropriate to raise a glass in honor of the drink invented here by Edwin Perkins in 1927--Kool-Aid! Kool-Aid Days are celebrated here the second week of each August.

**HOLDREGE (706 mi.)** is named for George Holdrege who was the general manager of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad when the first trains reached town in 1883.

**MCCOOK (783 mi.)** Another town created with the arrival of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy. It was the home of George W. Norris who served in both the House and U.S. Senate for a total of 40 years, and is known as the "Father of the Rural Electrification Administration" that brought electricity to rural parts of the U.S.

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#### Nebraska/Colorado State Line (864 mi.)

The state line is the time zone boundary between Central and Mountain Time. Set your watch back one hour going west and ahead one hour going east.

**FORT MORGAN (960 mi.)** Famous Big Band Era musician Glen Miller lived here as a teenager and honed his musical skills in the high school band before beginning a career that revolutionized popular music in the 1940s.

**Commerce City (1033 mi.)** Prior to entering this northeast Denver suburb, the *Zephyr* passes the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge on the left. The Arsenal was where World War II chemical weapons were manufactured, but beginning in the early 1980s an environmental cleanup converted the area into a 15,000-acre refuge for, among other species, the bald eagle--our national symbol. After passing the oil refinery on both sides of the tracks, we'll see the cattle pens on the right remaining from when cattle were shipped by rail to market.

**DENVER (1038 mi.)** is also known as the Mile-High City because its official elevation, measured on the steps of the state capitol building, is 5,280 feet above sea level. Denver was first settled because gold was discovered nearby. There didn't prove to be much of the yellow metal, so the prospectors soon left, but eventually they returned and mined



**Pine Cliff (1074 mi.)** South Boulder Creek is just off to our left as we pass through here.

**Moffat Tunnel--East Portal (1088 mi.)** carries the *California Zephyr* for 6.2 miles through the Rockies and across the Continental Divide. When the tunnel was opened in 1928 after four years of construction, it cut the distance between Denver and the Pacific Coast by 176 miles, eliminating a series of switchback loops and steep grades that previously carried the railroad through Rollins Pass.

**Moffat Tunnel--West Portal (1095 mi.)** The Winter Park Ski Resort, built as part of Denver's mountain parks system, comes right up alongside the railroad at the west portal of the Moffat Tunnel.

**FRASER-WINTER PARK (1100 mi.)** station is located in Fraser and also serves the nearby Winter Park Ski Resort. Fraser and International Falls, Minnesota have sparred over the years over who can claim the nickname "Icebox of America." Regardless, Fraser does not have a frost-free season, thus can claim to be the town with the shortest growing season. However, winter sports aficionados could care least--in addition to the nearby ski resort, the area also has abundant cross-country skiing opportunities.

**Fraser Canyon (1103 mi.)** We follow the Fraser River through this remote canyon. Some of the best fishing for wild rainbows, browns and cutthroats is in the canyon downstream from Tabernash.

**GRANBY (1113 mi.)** is the gateway city to the Rocky Mountain National Park. Leaving Granby we begin paralleling the Colorado River for the next 235 miles, off the left side of the train. Many call the trip along the river the most scenic stretch of track in America that can be seen from a scheduled passenger train.

**Gore Canyon (1115 mi.)** on the upper Colorado River has no roads and is accessible only by rail or kayak. The walls ascend some 1,000 feet on each side over the river, and the Class V whitewater is the wildest commercially available rafting in the state -- some say the entire country.

**Dotsero (1204 mi.)** is the approximate midpoint of the train's journey. Glenwood Canyon, the largest of several on the upper Colorado River, begins a few miles beyond Dotsero. The spectacular high cliffs of this 12.5-mile gorge are dotted with aspen and evergreen trees. In 1906, the canyon served as the route of the Taylor State Road, the first gravel path for automobiles through the Colorado Rockies.

**GLENWOOD SPRINGS (1223 mi.)** at the confluence of the Roaring Fork and Colorado Rivers, has six world-class ski resorts within a 60-mile radius, quite a few noted mountain bike trails, whitewater rafting, numerous backpacking trails and Glenwood Caverns, a geological marvel. Doc Holliday, the Wild West legend of the Gunfight at the O.K. Corral, spent the final months of his life here.

**New Castle (1235 mi.)** was founded in 1888 and like its namesake town in England had an economy based on coal mining. However, high levels of methane gas resulted in several mine explosions that eventually led to the end of active mining after the 1918 explosion. The underground explosions have left a fire that still smolders and is marked by the annual Burning Mountain Festival early in September.

**De Beque (1279 mi.)** is a town where wild horses were rounded up and sold. It pays tribute to that heritage every August with its Wild Horse Days' celebration. Today it is one of only three Certified Wild Horse Sanctuary Cities in the United States, and the town undertakes projects to protect the remaining wild horses and burros. Here we begin a 20-mile trip through the winding De Beque Canyon, emerging in the town of **Palisade (1300 mi.)**.

the long term "commercial gold" as Denver became a thriving business center. Located midway between the large cities of the Midwest and West Coast, Denver has become a major transportation and distribution center, and also has more federal workers than any area other than Washington, DC. The city has eight professional sports teams, and Coors Field, home of baseball's Colorado Rockies, is adjacent to the train station. This is a refueling and service stop for our train. When we leave we begin the 300-mile stretch that makes passengers "ooh and ahhhh" and made the *California Zephyr* famous thanks to its signature passage over the Rockies and along the Colorado River.

**Rocky (1051 mi.)** We leave the Denver suburbs at Arvada and here we begin the climb up the Front Range of the Rockies toward the Moffat Tunnel. We'll pass through 31 tunnels between Denver and Winter Park.

**Clay (1054 mi.)** Winds in the mountains here can be so strong that hopper cars are welded to the rails on an adjacent track to the right of our train and sit there filled with sand to act as a windbreak.

**Plainview (1057 mi.)** offers a view of Denver and the Great Plains beyond that is anything but plain. The view is even more spectacular at night.

**South Boulder Canyon (1069 mi.)** is home to the Roosevelt National Forest, re-named in 1932 to honor former President Theodore Roosevelt, and Gross Reservoir, which supplies Denver with water.

**GRAND JUNCTION (1311 mi.)** is located where the Gunnison and Colorado Rivers join. Prior to 1921, this part of the Colorado River was known as the Grand River--thus Grand Junction. The city is surrounded by the mountains of the Colorado National Monument. Powderhorn Ski Resort sits on the east side of the Grand Mesa, the blue mountain to the east, which is one of the world's largest flat top mountains. The nearby Country Jam Ranch is a permanent music festival site that hosts Country Jam that draws thousands of country music fans to the area each year.

**Mack (1330 mi.)** After the *California Zephyr* passes through the last town in Colorado, it turns southward, passes under I-70 and makes its way back toward the Colorado River and Ruby Canyon, a popular destination for rafting, which takes its name from the red sandstone cliffs lining the Canyon walls. Erosion via wind and water has hewn smooth textures and fascinating shapes in the striking red stone over eons of time. The canyon runs for 25 miles through Colorado and Utah.

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#### Colorado/Utah State Line

A sign marking the state line was painted by railroaders on the canyon wall on the right.

About five miles after passing through Ruby Canyon we get our final glimpse of the Colorado River on the left.

**Thompson Springs (1390 mi.)** In 1985 Thompson went back to the future and re-adopted the town's original name, Thompson Springs. The area south of town is rich in uranium deposits.

**GREEN RIVER (1417 mi.)** sits at 4,078 ft. elevation, the lowest point between Salt Lake City and Denver. It is a popular spot for "freeride" mountain biking. On the left are Marvine and Thousand Lake Mountains. Remain on the alert for herds of the apocryphal jackalope, hare-like antlered creatures said to appear without warning in these parts.

**Price (1481 mi.)** may have a population of only 8,400, but it's the largest town since leaving Grand Junction. It is home to the Utah State University-College of Eastern Utah and a large prehistoric museum. The Book Cliffs on the right extend back into Colorado and offer evidence that everything to the south of here was once under water.

**HELPER (1488 mi.)** The town name comes from the railroading activity that took place here for years--adding "helper" engines to westbound freight trains so they can get up the Wasatch Plateau to Soldier Summit. Mining has always been the other key economic activity here, and there is said to be enough local coal to meet the country's needs for almost three centuries. It's not surprising then that the city hosts the Western Mining and Railroad Museum.

**Castle Gate (1492 mi.)** is a former mining town dismantled in 1974. Its rock formation seems to open like a giant castle gate as the train approaches and closes as it leaves. Butch Cassidy is said to have held up the Pleasant Valley Coal Company here for \$7,000 in gold in 1897. From here to Soldier Summit the *California Zephyr* will follow the Price River up the Wasatch Range.

**Soldier Summit (1513 mi.)** at 7,000 feet elevation is named for the civil war soldiers buried here in 1860. This area is a favorite train watching spot for railfans, so don't be surprised if you see them with cameras ready to photograph the *California Zephyr* as we reach the top of the Wasatch Plateau. After we pass the summit, we'll start heading down thru Spanish Fork Canyon and negotiate a series of switchbacks called the Gilluly Loops.

**Thistle (1542 mi.)** is a recent ghost town, caused by a 1983 mudslide that moved part of a mountain, blocked two creeks and formed an earthen dam. Water from the creeks backed up and flooded the town. The landslide also closed the railroad for months. Thistle's remains, a

few rooftops, can be seen on the left side of the train after emerging from the tunnel which was part of the relocation of the railroad following the disaster. The incident was the first ever federal disaster area declared in the state of Utah.

**PROVO (1563 mi.)**, the third largest city in Utah, hosts Brigham Young University and the largest missionary training center for the Mormon Church. The Wasatch Range "Y Mountain" towers over the city; the letter was built to commemorate the university. Provo is home to software company Novell, Inc., which has helped make technology and software an important industry in the Utah Valley area. Provo is also home to the Osmond family of entertainers. Stephen Covey, the famous author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, also resides in Provo. Just outside of Provo is the entrance to the Uinta and Manti-La Sal National Forests.

**SALT LAKE CITY (1608 mi.)** is the world headquarters of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, founded in 1847 by a group of Mormon pioneers led by Brigham Young. Temple Square in the heart of downtown houses the six-towered Mormon Temple. The church's world renowned genealogical research facility brings people from all over the world researching their family tree. Mining and the first transcontinental railroad brought initial economic growth. Today's economy is primarily service oriented around government, transportation, technology, utilities and professional and business services. In recent years the area has developed both a light rail system (TRAX) for the immediate Salt Lake City area, and a commuter rail system (Front Runner) that links the city to Ogden on the north and Provo on the south. The valley in which the city lies is considered one of the safest and most attractive natural settings in North America.

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#### Utah/Nevada State Line

Change your watch from Mountain to Pacific Time: one hour back if westbound, one hour ahead if eastbound.

**ELKO (1871 mi.)** was founded in 1869 as a town along the just completed transcontinental railroad. Once dubbed "the last real cow town in the American West," the city still is a ranching center with western roots, but now also relies on tourism since the opening of the Red Lion Casino. The town hosts the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering festival each January and the National Basque Festival every July. A stuffed 10-foot tall polar bear graces the Commercial Casino.

**WINNEMUCCA (2013 mi.)** You know you're in a western town when October brings the National Senior Pro Rodeo Finals, the Ranch Hand Rodeo Weekend is held in February, the Winnemucca Mule show in June, and barrel races in August. And if western events are not what you're looking for, try the Run-A-Mucca Motorcycle Rally in May. Indeed, the town's motto may hit the nail on the head: "Winnemucca, NV. There's more than meets the eye."

**Lovelock (2086 mi.)** The area around this town was considered the most difficult of the entire journey by the Pony Express riders and by those who traveled west by covered wagon in the days before the transcontinental railroad. The Humboldt River which meanders across the desert between the Trinity Mountains on the right and the Humboldt Range on the left, would disappear into the sand leaving water that was full of minerals and barely drinkable. Lovelock's economy today is largely agricultural, producing bananas and alfalfa.

**Fernley (2154 mi.)** The first sign that you've left the open spaces of the west and are nearing the Reno/Sparks metro area is this suburb of new homes on the left. This town is best known as the home of a 750,000 square foot distribution center for Amazon.com. From here the *California Zephyr* begins following the Truckee River.

**Sparks (2199 mi.)** is, for all practical purposes, a twin city with Reno. The Southern Pacific built a switching yard here in 1904 which spurred population growth. A number of casinos also contributed to Sparks' growth and then in the 1970s favorable taxation resulted in an expansion of warehousing and distribution industry. The most significant Sparks casino, the Nugget, is on the right side.

**RENO (2202 mi.)** "The Biggest Little City in the World" began as a modest gold mining service settlement which grew after the discovery of silver in 1859. Tailor Jacob Davis came to Reno in 1868 and began to use rivets to secure the pockets of his men's trousers. Worried that the idea would be copied, he contacted Levi Strauss to apply and pay for a patent, which was granted in 1873. As mining waned in the 1900s, Nevada legalized casino gambling in 1931 and passed liberal divorce laws, both boons for Reno. An antique car collection and major entertainers entice gamblers to Reno today, along with special events all year.

**Verdi (2213 mi.)** The site of the first train robbery in the West in 1870. There is now a hydroelectric generator powered by a water flume – a wooden trough that collects water at four sites in the mountains.

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### **Nevada/California State Line (2217 mi.)**

The state line is indicated by a small marker on your right.

**Floriston (2223 mi.)** Here rainbow trout, brook trout and German browns travel up and down the Truckee River to and from Verdi by means of a fish ladder.

**Boca (2229 mi.)** in its heyday produced lumber, but the town was dismantled in the 1920s after the sawmill closed. All that remains are a bridge and a dam on the right. The oddly shaped rock formations resembling castle spires that you now see were developed through erosion by wind and water and are known as "Hoodoo Pillars."

**TRUCKEE (2237 mi.)** was named after a Paiute chief, Trukizo, father of Chief Winnemucca. The first settlers encountered his tribe with the friendly chief yelling "Tro-kay" at them, the Paiute word for "hello." Note the renovated former Bank of America on the left side of the train, now "The Bar of America," a popular downtown restaurant.

**Stanford Flats (2243 mi.)** We now cross back and forth across a series of ascending plateaus as we begin the climb over Donner Pass to the peak of the Sierras. Below is a panoramic view of the Truckee Basin.

**Donner Lake (2245 mi.)** on the right side of the train is where the famed Donner Party, traveling west from Illinois, was stranded during the winter of 1846-47. Some of the party of 87 resorted to cannibalism; only 48 survived. After passing the lake, the *California Zephyr* passes through a series of snow sheds that protect the track from being blocked by the more than 30 feet of snow that falls in the typical winter.

**Mt. Judah (2248 mi.)** We enter a tunnel through Mt. Judah some 7,000 feet above sea level, the peak point of our climb across the Sierras. When we emerge, a ski lift from the adjacent Sugar Bowl Ski Resort carries skiers over the track. The resort closed during World War II for fear the Germans might blow up the tunnel and block this key transcontinental rail route.

**Norden (2252 mi.)** was once the site of a Southern Pacific turntable and maintenance point. It is marked by another snow shed.

**Soda Springs (2255 mi.)** As we reach Lake Van Norden on the left, watch for Castle Peak on the right, a mountain with a rock formation that looks like a castle on top. After Lake Van Norden is the Soda Springs Ski Resort on the left. About 12 miles west of here is where

the Southern Pacific's City of San Francisco streamliner, with 226 passengers aboard, got stuck for three days in a raging blizzard in 1952.

**Emigrant Gap (2273 mi.)** As we cross Interstate 80, look for a gap in the ridge on the California Trail as it crosses the Sierra Nevada, west of Donner Pass. The cliffs here are so steep that 1840's pioneers crossing to California were said to have lowered their wagons on ropes in order to continue.

**American River Canyon (2279 mi.)** on the left side of the train is the valley of the North Fork of the American River, located 1,500 to 2,000 feet below track level.

**Cape Horn (2298 mi.)** is a rocky bluff on the left side of the train some 1,500 feet above the American River. The slope from here down to Colfax is the steepest on the Zephyr's route. In this direction we're going the easy way--downhill as we complete our crossing of the Sierras.

**COLFAX (2301 mi.)** was named for Schuyler Colfax, seventeenth Vice President of the United States under the Ulysses S. Grant administration between 1869 and 1873. A statue at the station showing a prospector panning for gold during the Gold Rush days of the 1850s is featured immediately off Main Street, a charming section of town that can be seen on the right.

**Auburn (2319 mi.)** This is the heart of "Gold Rush" country. Just south of town is Sutter's Mill, where gold was discovered setting off an influx of fortune seeking "49ers" (not the football variety) in the mid-1800s. Claude Chana, a young Frenchman who had come by wagon train to California, is said to have panned for gold and made his discovery on May 16, 1848, in what became known as the Auburn Ravine. A 45-ton statue commemorating the event stands downtown. (James Wilson Marshall's discovery five months earlier on the American River had set the stage for the gold rush. Forced off of his own land, he sadly never profited from his discovery.) Several museums including the Gold County Museum, Bernhard Museum and the Placer County (Courthouse) Museum will tell you everything you ever wanted to know about the Gold Rush, except where to find your own gold! The Amtrak Auburn station is the easternmost terminus for the *Capitol Corridor*<sup>®</sup> trains.

**ROSEVILLE (2336 mi.)** Settled by prospectors who had come to California looking for gold, the town was originally a stagecoach station but soon became a stop on the transcontinental railroad. In the 1900s the Southern Pacific opened a major switchyard here which turned Roseville into a rail town. Now part of the Union Pacific, we'll pass those yards after we leave the station. Today the city features a diverse array of businesses, including one of the largest auto malls in the U.S. Like many California cities it actively encourages transportation alternatives to the automobile and now offers residents over 100 miles of bicycle routes to get around.

**SACRAMENTO (2353 mi.)** was first settled in 1839. The city grew significantly during the California Gold Rush, and in 1854 became California's capital. Sacramento was the western terminus for the Pony Express, and was the starting point for eastbound construction to meet the westbound track of the first transcontinental railroad at Promontory Summit, Utah, in 1869. Sacramento State University is located here. The city is home to the Sacramento Kings of the National Basketball Association, and the Sacramento River Cats, a farm club of the American League's Oakland Athletics and one of the most successful minor league baseball franchises.



Sacramento is at the confluence of the American River that we cross prior to arrival, and the Sacramento River that we cross after departing. We pass “Old Town” and the California State Railroad Museum on the left after departing.

The station stop in Sacramento also serves the routes of the Amtrak *Capitol Corridor* and *Coast Starlight*®.

**DAVIS (2367 mi.)** The long, low trestle we cross marks the “Yolo Bypass”, a flood plain meant to divert flood waters away from Sacramento. The 1913 adobe-style Davis station is an historic landmark. This city is home to UC Davis, the largest campus in the University of California system that in 2012 was ranked as the “greenest” college campus in the U.S. by the *Sierra Club* magazine. Rather than cars, 20,000 bicycles are the primary transportation mode to, from and around campus. Indeed the motto of the City of Davis is “Most Bicycle-Friendly Town in the World.”

**Suisun Bay (2408 mi.)** (Pronounced “soo-soon”) The “Mothball Fleet,” consisting of World War II ships that have been stored for years, can be seen off to the left as our train crosses the Carquinez Strait Bridge. The large peak to the left is **Mount Diablo** (3,849 feet).

**MARTINEZ (2411 mi.)** From a trading post in 1849 to a flourishing town in 1876, Martinez became a hub for the gold and shipping industries. Although there are many competing claims, the town likes to claim the invention of the martini; a plaque commemorating the event is on a downtown corner. The most prominent Martinez native was Joe DiMaggio, a local legend with the Pacific Coast League San Francisco Seals before going on to baseball stardom with the New York Yankees™. (Younger readers of this route guide may recognize him better as pitcher for “Mr. Coffee.”) Martinez is the transfer point to the Amtrak *San Joaquin*®.

The train skirts the shore of San Pablo Bay and then the San Francisco Bay as we cover the final miles of our journey. The Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) trains can be seen on the left as we approach the next to last station, **RICHMOND (2430 mi.)**. Passing through **Berkeley (2436 mi.)**, the San Francisco skyline and Golden Gate Bridge can be seen to the right across the bay.

**EMERYVILLE (2438 mi.)** is a small city of less than one square mile located just north of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, and the end of the rail trip across the west. Major redevelopment in the 1980s and 1990s transformed this former industrial city into a mixed use urban center with retail, entertainment and business centers, as well as condominiums, parks and recreation trails. It’s home to Pixar® Animation Studios and several biotech and software companies.

At Emeryville, passengers en route to San Francisco will board Amtrak Thruway buses that operate to several stops in San Francisco. The bus crosses the San Francisco bay on the San Francisco/Oakland Bay Bridge which spans 8.4 miles some 200 feet above the water. Opened in 1936, it carries approximately 280,000 vehicles per day. Watch for spectacular views of San Francisco, Alcatraz Island and the Golden Gate Bridge. Connecting the two halves of the bridge is the 539-ft. long Yerba Buena Tunnel, the largest diameter tunnel in the world in 1936. The bridge underwent major repairs and retrofitting after it was damaged in the Loma Prieta (World Series) Earthquake in 1989.

**SAN FRANCISCO (2447 mi.)** Almost everybody who visits San Francisco, the City by the Bay, is captured by its charms. The city grew 25-fold in 1849 after the discovery of gold at Sutter’s Mill the year before, and has just kept growing and becoming more attractive. Today, this popular international tourist destination is renowned for its steep hills, famous landmarks, Alcatraz Island, Coit Tower, cable cars and Chinatown as well as for its diverse cosmopolitan population lending unmatched charm and character to the city. While early entrepreneurs capitalized on gold wealth to benefit banking, railroads and trade, the modern era saw the rise of the “Beat” and “Hippie” generations that crystallized the progressive political nature of the population unlike elsewhere in the U.S. Its world famous galleries, restaurants and shops share top billing with Fisherman’s Wharf and the financial district to lure vacation travelers from all over the globe. In the city where Tony Bennett left his heart, small businesses with fewer than ten employees make up 85 percent of city establishments. And in a city where the 49ers won five consecutive Super Bowls, its residents have been judged the fittest in the U.S.

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