



ROUTE 20 STATE PLANNER

Idaho Route 20 State Planner

Divide the long crossing from the Yellowstone forests through the Snake River Plain, high desert, Boise, and the Oregon line into manageable stages.



West Yellowstone and Island Park -> Rexburg and Idaho Falls -> Arco and Fairfield -> Mountain Home and Boise -> Caldwell and Parma

Park-west reset

Use Island Park or Ashton to turn the Yellowstone handoff into a separate decision.

Interior pacing

Use Idaho Falls, Arco, and Fairfield to protect services, range, and daylight.

Treasure Valley

Use Boise or Caldwell as the strongest western Idaho reset before Oregon.

Use this planner for route shape, not live road status. Verify Yellowstone access, weather, construction, smoke, services, lodging, and seasonal roads before travel.



Current Idaho Route 20 guide

Scan for the state page, connected segments, trips, and place guides.

Six-page state planner - Revision: August 2026.



How the Idaho corridor works

PARK WEST

West Yellowstone, Island Park, and Ashton

Re-enter Route 20 west of Yellowstone, use Island Park for a quieter forest reset, and reach Ashton as the first conventional town gateway.

UPPER VALLEY

Ashton, St. Anthony, and Rexburg

Move through the upper Snake River Plain. St. Anthony works as a support stop; Rexburg is the stronger overnight base.

CITY TO DESERT

Rexburg, Idaho Falls, and Arco

Use Idaho Falls for city services before the landscape opens and Arco becomes the high-desert gateway.

HIGH DESERT

Arco, Carey, Picabo, and Fairfield

Plan the quieter interior around volcanic country, Carey Lake, Silver Creek, and widely spaced small-town services.

TREASURE VALLEY

Fairfield, Mountain Home, Boise, and Caldwell

Shift from the interior to the major city anchor, then use Caldwell as a practical western base.

STATE LINE

Caldwell and Parma to Oregon

Use Parma as the final Idaho history stop and prepare for the longer eastern Oregon distances beyond Vale.

My east-to-west chapter

My west-to-east chapter

Idaho is not one easy drive. Treat the Yellowstone handoff, eastern services, high-desert interior, Treasure Valley, and Oregon transition as separate planning decisions.



ROUTE SECTIONS

4 PLANNING LANES

Choose the Idaho chapter that fits

1. West Yellowstone, Island Park, and Ashton

Choose this for the park-west reset, forest scenery, and the first practical Idaho gateway.

Primary anchor

Yellowstone / forest check

2. Rexburg, Idaho Falls, and Arco

Use Rexburg or Idaho Falls for services and an overnight before turning into the quieter interior.

Primary anchor

Service / overnight plan

3. Arco, Carey, Picabo, and Fairfield

Choose this when volcanic landscapes, a planned nature stop, and deliberate fuel and daylight margins are the main chapter.

Primary anchor

Range / daylight margin

4. Fairfield, Mountain Home, Boise, Caldwell, and Parma

Use this for a Boise-centered reset or the final Idaho drive toward the Oregon line.

Primary anchor

Metro / border handoff

My chosen lane

Keep the trip smaller than the whole state when needed.

Route section

Direction

Overnight base

Primary experience



PLACE ROLES

ANCHOR MAP

Use Idaho stops for the job they do best

Island Park

Forest-and-river reset after West Yellowstone; dispersed services and one optional nature stop.

Ashton

Practical gateway for the upper valley and nearby waterfall country.

Rexburg

Strong eastern Idaho overnight base with optional regional side trips.

Idaho Falls

Primary eastern city anchor for riverfront time, museums, food, and services.

Arco

History and services stop before volcanic landscapes and the quieter interior.

Carey

Proportional services stop with Carey Lake as an optional pause.

Picabo

Access point for a planned Silver Creek nature, birding, or fishing outing.

Fairfield

Small-town reset between the high desert and Mountain Home.

Mountain Home

Practical transition from the quieter interior into the Treasure Valley.

Boise

Idaho's strongest city anchor for a full afternoon, evening, or overnight.

Caldwell

Treasure Valley base that works well before the Oregon crossing.

Parma

Short history-and-parks stop before Route 20 crosses into Oregon.

My anchor hierarchy

Not every place needs equal time.

Overnight base

Walk / explore

Quick reset



Build a realistic Idaho Route 20 plan

Park-west handoff

West Yellowstone through Island Park to Ashton. Best when a park day needs a clean, lower-pressure finish.

End point

Eastern Idaho trip

Ashton through Rexburg and Idaho Falls to Arco. Best when services and an overnight need to precede the interior.

Overnight base

High-desert chapter

Arco through Carey and Picabo to Fairfield. Best when the quieter landscape and one planned nature stop are the purpose.

Primary stop

Treasure Valley handoff

Fairfield through Mountain Home and Boise to Caldwell or Parma. Best for a city reset and Oregon transition.

Final base

My plan

Choose one anchor and one backup per day.

Day 1

Backup

Day 2

Backup

Day 3

Backup

Final arrival or departure plan

What gets cut first



BEFORE DEPARTURE

VERIFY LIVE DETAILS

Idaho current-condition and arrival checks

Yellowstone and forest checks

- ☐ Yellowstone road and entrance status
- ☐ Wildlife, weather, and seasonal access
- ☐ Fuel and food before nature stops
- ☐ Island Park or Ashton lodging plan
- ☐ Rigid arrival time removed

High-desert checks

- ☐ Construction and closures
- ☐ Fuel range and service spacing
- ☐ Heat, smoke, wind, or storms
- ☐ Daylight and long-drive margin
- ☐ Arco or Fairfield reset confirmed

Treasure Valley and border

- ☐ Boise traffic and arrival plan
- ☐ Lodging and parking confirmed
- ☐ Caldwell or Parma handoff chosen
- ☐ Oregon road and weather check
- ☐ One stop selected to cut first

Reservation and contact notes

Lodging

Primary experience

Roadside / emergency contact

Exit and fallback notes

Latest acceptable arrival

One stop to skip

Lower-effort backup

Final trip summary

One page, one state chapter.

Direction and route section

Overnight base

Primary anchor

Backup



Continue with the current Idaho state page

Use the online guide for six corridor stages, connected scenic drives, town guides, and the Oregon handoff.

Revision: August 2026.