



FLAGSHIP TRIP COMPANION

Rexburg to Arco Route 20 Weekend

A one-night, two-day Idaho trip pairing Idaho Falls city time with Arco and volcanic country, with the overnight chosen according to the next morning's priority.



Day 1: Rexburg -> Idaho Falls. Day 2: Arco + planned volcanic-country anchor.

Overnight choice

Idaho Falls for broader lodging and meals; Arco when an early Craters of the Moon start matters more.

Best for

Travelers who want one city day and one high-desert destination day.

Core rule

Treat Craters of the Moon as a planned destination, not an extra stop on the way west.

Check Idaho road conditions and National Park Service guidance before the volcanic-country day. Cave access, permits, water, snow, heat, smoke, and road status can materially change the visit.



Current trip page

Scan for the online itinerary, connected segments, and place guides.



Give the city and high desert separate jobs

Best version

Two days with one night in Idaho Falls or Arco.

Shorter version

One long day with an Idaho Falls river walk and brief Arco stop; skip a full park visit.

Slower version

Add a second night so Craters of the Moon and Arco history do not compete.

Choose the overnight first

The next morning should decide the base.

Stay in Idaho Falls

Choose the broader lodging and meal base when the city evening matters.

Stay in Arco

Choose the closer start when an early Craters of the Moon visit matters more than the city evening.

Overnight choice

Day 1 city anchor

Day 2 volcanic-country plan

First item to cut



DAY 1

CITY DAY

Rexburg and Idaho Falls: make the city stop count

REXBURG

Keep the opening stop simple

Use a park, garden, or breakfast stop. Save regional dunes and waterfall outings for another day so Idaho Falls has room to be more than a fuel stop.

IDAHO FALLS

Choose one city lane

Start with the Snake River and the falls. Add the Japanese Friendship Garden for a compact outdoor visit, or choose the Museum of Idaho when one indoor attraction should carry the afternoon.

EVENING

Stay according to tomorrow

Use Idaho Falls for the broadest lodging and meal choices, or move to Arco when the early park start matters more.

Family option

The zoo is a longer, seasonal commitment and works best as the main family activity rather than an extra.

Day 1 success test

Idaho Falls feels like the main city stop and the overnight sets up Day 2 rather than complicating it.

Rexburg start

Idaho Falls city focus

Overnight location

Morning departure target



DAY 2

Arco and volcanic country: choose the destination depth

OUTDOOR
ANCHOR**BEFORE LEAVING****Settle fuel, food, water, and offline directions**

Idaho Falls is the strongest resupply point. Arco has essential traveler services, but options become more dispersed beyond it.

ARCO**Use the town as base and history context**

Arco carries the story of the first city powered by nuclear-generated electricity. EBR-I is south of the Route 20 corridor and is a separate historic-site visit whose access should be checked in advance.

CRATERS OF THE MOON**Make one outdoor anchor the day**

Choose visitor-center orientation, a scenic loop, or a manageable trail plan based on current conditions. Check National Park Service guidance before departure.

If Craters of the Moon fills the day, end in Arco. Continue toward Carey only when the park visit was intentionally short and the driver still has enough daylight and attention for the open road.

Fuel / water settled

Park condition check

Chosen park depth

End-of-day town



SERVICES AND CONDITIONS

CURRENT CHECKS

Prepare before the landscape opens

Idaho Falls

Strongest resupply point and broadest lodging base.

Arco

Essential services and the small-town base for the volcanic-country day.

Condition checks that matter

Do not let the printed plan outrank current guidance.

- ☐ Idaho road conditions
- ☐ National Park Service alerts
- ☐ Cave access and permits
- ☐ Snow, heat, or smoke
- ☐ Water availability

- ☐ Offline directions saved
- ☐ Fuel settled before the open road
- ☐ Food and water packed
- ☐ Cell-service limits assumed
- ☐ EBR-I access checked if included

Do not depend on cell service inside the monument. The printed companion is a planning aid, not a current road or park-status source.



What to cut when the weekend slips

1 Drop the extra Rexburg outing

Protect Idaho Falls as the primary city anchor.

2 Reduce Idaho Falls to one lane

Riverfront plus one compact choice is enough.

3 Skip EBR-I unless it was planned

It is a separate historic-site visit, not a corridor add-on.

4 Shorten the park depth before extending west

Do not trade daylight and attention for a longer checklist.

My cut order

Switch triggers

- ☐ Park access changes
- ☐ Heat, snow, or smoke
- ☐ Late morning departure
- ☐ Low water or fuel margin
- ☐ Low driver energy



FINAL PLAN

READY TO DRIVE

Copy the decisions that matter

Day 1 Idaho Falls focus

Overnight location

Day 2 park depth

Fuel / water plan

First item to cut

Next town if continuing west

Notes from the road



Current trip page

Use the online trip page for the Rexburg-Idaho Falls-Arco segment and the onward Arco-to-Fairfield connection.

Revision: August 2026.