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San Juan Happenings

San Juan County: Where Adventure Meets Ancient Wonder

by Utah's Canyon Country

In the heart of Utah's Canyon Country lies San Juan County—a land so vast and varied that it could easily be mistaken for an entire state. At nearly 8,000 square miles, this sprawling county is roughly the size of Massachusetts, yet its remote wilderness areas and hidden canyons offer the kind of solitude that's becoming increasingly rare in our modern world.

From the iconic red buttes of Monument Valley to the pristine dark skies above Natural Bridges, San Juan County serves as a living museum where every mesa, canyon,



Monument Valley — Allison Yamamoto-Sparks

and petroglyph panel tells a story spanning millennia. This is where the ancient and the adventurous creating converge, experiences that resonate long after you've returned home.

The county's crown jewel may be Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park, recently named the #3 place to visit in the New York Times' prestigious travel list. Here, towering sandstone formations rise like cathedrals from the desert floor, their shadows shifting throughout the day to create an ever-changing landscape that has captivated filmmakers, photographers, and travelers for generations. Guided tours led by Navajo storytellers offer deeper insights into the spiritual significance of these formations, connecting visitors to traditions that stretch back centuries.

Beyond Monument Valley, San Juan County reveals layer upon layer of natural and cultural treasures. The Needles district of Canyonlands National Park offers world-class hiking and four-wheel drive Monument Valley — Jay Dash Photography adventures through a maze of colorful spires and hidden arches. Natural

Bridges National Monument, the world's first International Dark Sky Park, provides unparalleled stargazing beneath some of the darkest skies in the continental United States.

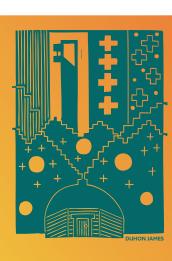
For those seeking to walk in the footsteps of ancient peoples, the county's numerous archaeological sites offer profound connections to the past. From the accessible petroglyphs along the San Juan River to remote cliff dwellings tucked into canyon walls, these sites preserve the stories of Ancestral Pueblo and Fremont cultures that called this rugged landscape home for thousands of years.



Natural Bridges National Monument — Jay Dash Photography

The county's communities—from Bluff's historic charm to Mexican Hat's river access—serve as gateways to adventure while honoring the rich cultural heritage that makes this region unique. Whether you're rafting the San Juan River, exploring backcountry trails, or simply watching the sun set over the desert, San Juan County invites you to slow down and discover what it truly means to be part of something larger than yourself.

In San Juan County, every journey becomes a pilgrimage, every visit a revelation.



BLUFF ARTS FESTIVAL ARTIST LED WORKSHOPS

October 17-19, 2025

ALL DAY AND TWO DAY WORKSHOPS:

Friday, October 17th and Saturday, October 18th 10am-4pm **Creative Tufa Casting** taught by sliversmith Jonah Hill

> Saturday, October 18th, 10am-4pm Nizhóní Navajo Weaving taught by Navajo weaver Arlene Benally

HALF DAY WORKSHOPS:

FRIDAY, October 17th

Afternoon Morning

Salve Making 101

taught by lavender farmer Katie Terrell Ramos of Mesa Verde Lavender

Make your own nature journal and take it for a walk! co-taught by author Robin Patten and artist Kate Aitchison

Intro to Figure Drawing taught by artist Anthony Lot

Plein Aire Oil Pastels of Bluff taught by artist Russell Kahn

SATURDAY, October 18th

Afternoon

Faux Raku Gourd Oil Lamps taught by artist Janice Reich

Gelatin Plate Printing from Natural Materials taught by artist Mary Arnold

Lost City Beading taught by artist Diane Benn Exploring Color, Layering & Texture through **Monoprinting** taught by artist Julia Klema

> **Vintage Rolls Royce Restoration Basics** taught by Alan Gerecke

> > **Blue Corn Bonanza** taught by chef Thomasena Benally

SUNDAY, October 19th

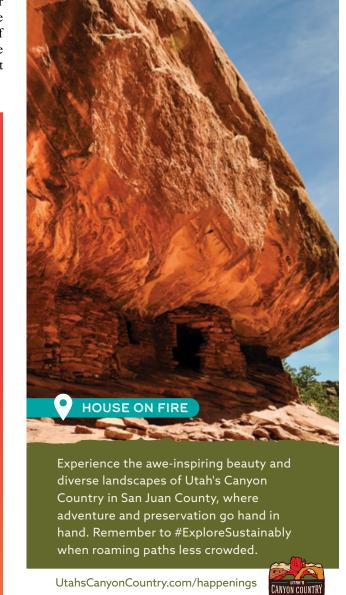
Morning

Eco Printing on Silk taught by artist Roy Kady

Block Printing an Exquisite Corpse taught by artist Brian Whitney

Fun Beasts Dry Felting taught by artist Georgiana Simpson Scan this QR code to learn more and REGISTER or visit bluffartsfestival.org/workshops







Edge of the **Cedars** State Park Museum

Park Hours

(Mar-Nov): Open 7 Days a Week - 9am-5pm (Dec-Feb): Open 7 Days a Week - 9am-3pm **Closed:** Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve/Day New Year's Eve/Day

660 West, 400 North, in Blanding, Utah. For more information please call the Edge of the Cedars State Park Museum at (435) 678-2238

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