

Black Hills Budget Trip Planner



CAMP SETUP & GEAR

- ☐ **Tent & Rainfly:** Heavy-duty stakes (mountain wind/clay soil).
- ☐ **Sleeping Gear:** Sleeping bags (rated to 40°F), insulated sleeping pads.
- ☐ **Camp Lighting:** Headlamps (1 per person), camp lantern, extra batteries.
- ☐ **Camp Kitchen:** 2-burner propane stove, extra fuel, cast iron skillet/pot.
- ☐ **Camp Comfort:** Compact camp chairs, outdoor table cloth with clips.



FOOD & COOLER STRATEGY

- ☐ **Hard Cooler:** Pre-chilled, filled with block ice (lasts longer than cubes).
- ☐ **Meal Prep:** Pre-cooked chili/stews, marinated meats frozen in zip bags.
- ☐ **Quick Lunches:** PB&J, deli meats, tortillas (don't crush like bread!).
- ☐ **Trail Snacks:** High-energy trail mix, granola bars, dried fruit, beef jerky.
- ☐ **Refillable Water Jugs:** 5-gallon water dispenser for campsite use.

Money Hack: Buy groceries at Walmart/Aldi in Rapid City before heading into the mountains. Mountain convenience stores charge double!



FAMILY ESSENTIALS & OUTDOOR PREP

- ☐ **Wildlife Safety:** Binoculars/telephoto lens (bison safety 100-yd rule).
- ☐ **Clothing Layers:** Thermal base layers, fleece jacket, waterproof rain jackets.
- ☐ **Footwear:** Sturdy hiking shoes, extra wool socks, water shoes/sandals.
- ☐ **Sun & Bug Protection:** SPF 50 sunscreen, bug spray, wide-brim hats.
- ☐ **Kid Fun:** Junior Ranger notebooks, glow sticks, camp games, headlamps.



5-DAY ACTION ITINERARY

DAY 1 Arrival & South Base

- Stock up on food in Rapid City.
- Set up camp at *Stockade Lake* (Custer State Park).
- Evening campfire & marshmallow roast.

DAY 2 Wildlife & State Park

- Early drive on *Wildlife Loop Road* (Bison & Burros!).
- Picnic at Sylvan Lake.
- Hike Sunday Gulch or Cathedral Spires trail.

DAY 3 Monuments & Tunnels

- Morning at *Mount Rushmore* (Presidential Trail).
- Drive *Needles Hwy & Iron Mountain Rd.*
- Quick stop at Crazy Horse turnout (Hwy 385).

DAY 4 Caves & North Move

- Morning at *Wind Cave* (Free exhibits/Junior Ranger).
- Move camp north to *Sheridan Lake* or *Spearfish*.
- Afternoon swim/kayak at Sheridan Lake.

DAY 5 Canyon, History & Wall Drug

- Scenic drive through *Spearfish Canyon* waterfalls.
- Explore historic Deadwood or Main St.
- Stop at *Wall Drug* for 5¢ coffee & free ice water!

Pro-Tip: Grab Junior Ranger booklets at Mount Rushmore & Wind Cave. They are 100% FREE and give kids an interactive, educational mission during hikes!

ESTIMATED 5-DAY BUDGET (FAMILY OF 4)

Campsite Fees (4 nights @ \$25/night)	\$100
Custer State Park 7-Day Pass	\$20
Mt. Rushmore Parking Pass (1yr)	\$10
Groceries & Cooler Ice	\$180
Fuel (Scenic Loops + Travel)	\$110
Treats (5¢ Wall Drug Coffee/Ice Cream)	\$30
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST	\$450