



*Riding the
Durango & Silverton
Narrow Gauge Railroad*

Photographs by Rolf Brauch ~ September 1997

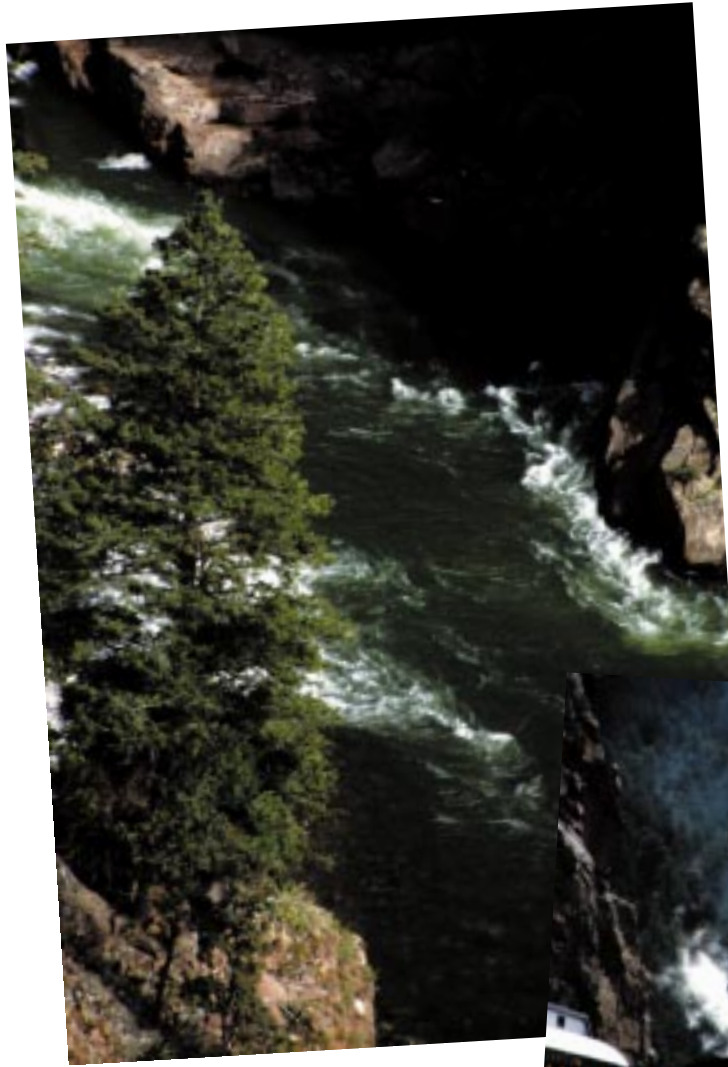




*Helmut, Waltraut and Irma
boarding in Durango*

Entering Animas Canyon

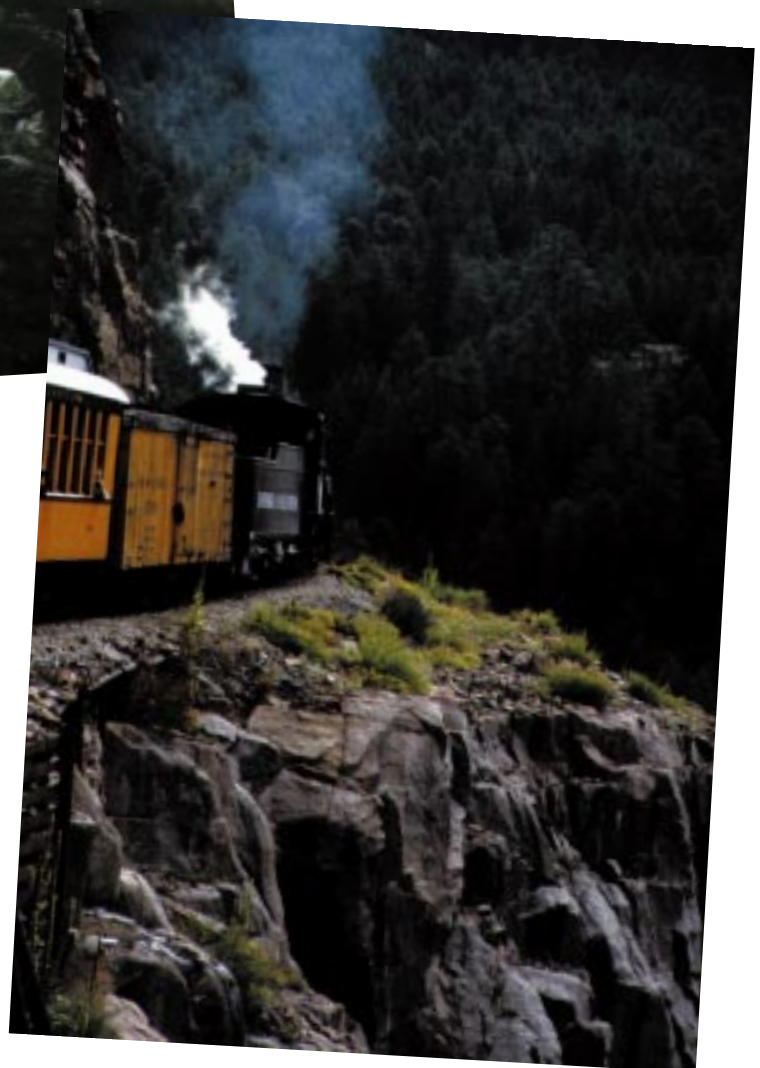




The line from Durango to Silverton was completed in July of 1882, (after 11 months of construction) primarily to haul gold and silver ore from the San Juan Mountains.

Today, the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad provides year-round train service with rolling stock indigenous to the line.

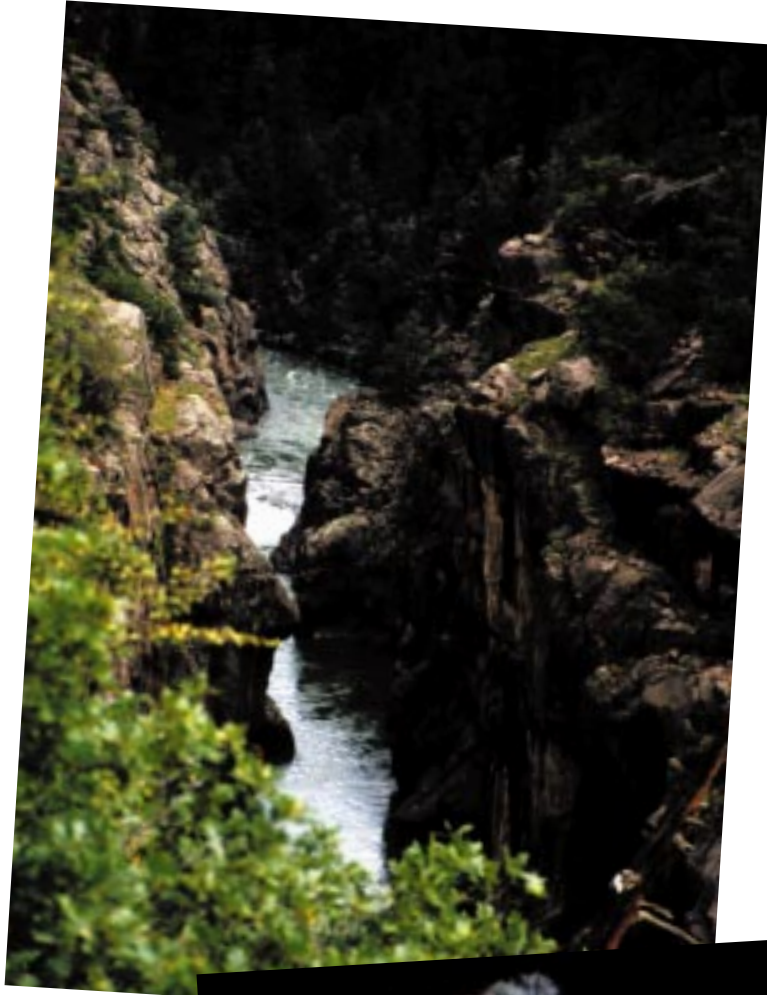
The steam locomotives are 100% coal-fired of 1923-25 vintage and are maintained in original condition.



Animas Canyon

*Chugging through
Coalbank Pass (10,640 FT)*





About half-way up to Silverton the train makes a brief stop for hikers.

If you want to spend a few hours hiking spectacular and rugged trails, this is the spot. You can get off the train here, and later in the afternoon catch one of the trains on the return trip to Durango.

Whitewater in the Animas River

Shot from the moving train



The coaches have bathroom facilities and are heated during the winter months for passenger comfort. Concessions, snacks and beverages are available on every train.

If you value your camera, avoid the open gondola cars — the soot is unbelievable.



*Rolling through the
Molas Divide (10,910 FT)*

Taking on water





Abandoned rolling stock



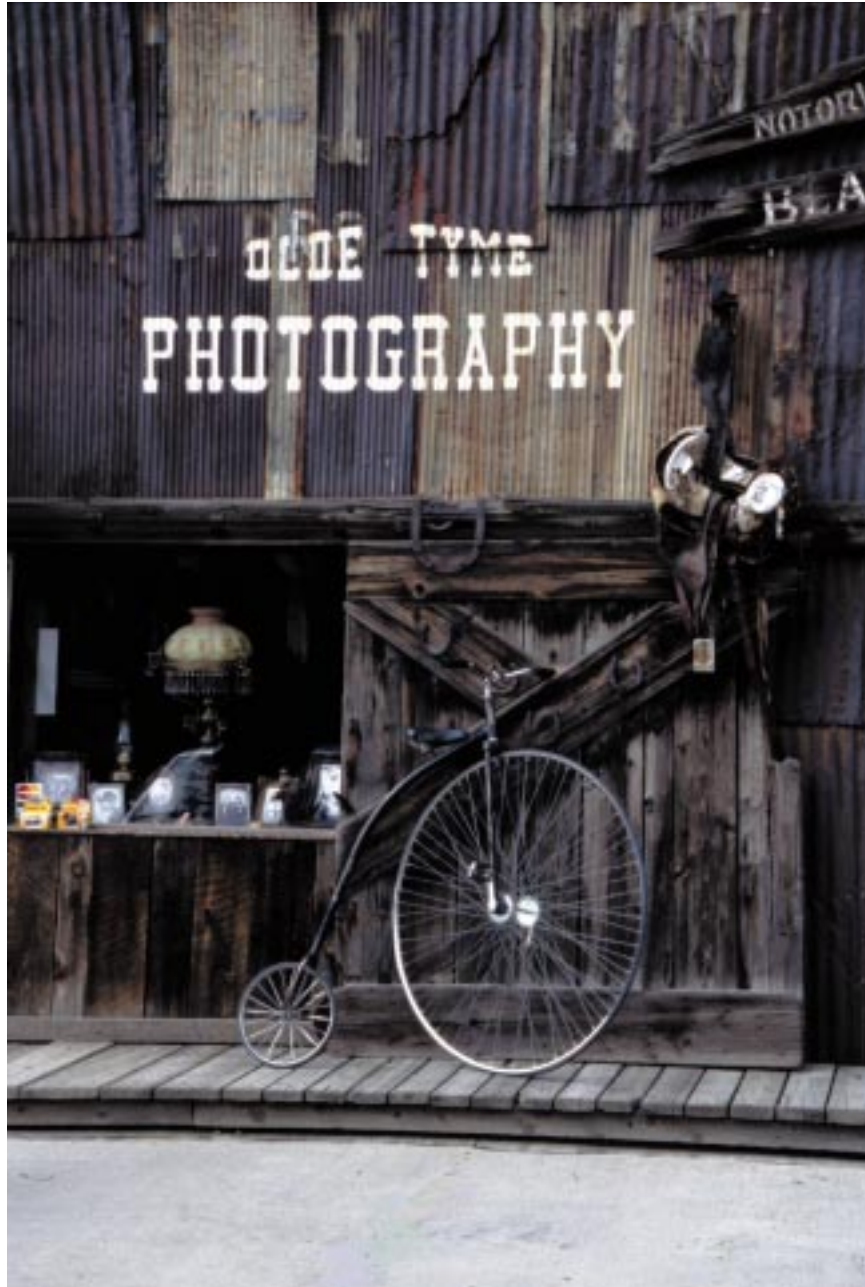


*End of the line ~ Silverton,
a silver mining town in the
San Juan Mountain range of
Southwestern Colorado*

*Main Street with Sunlight Peak
(14,059 FT) in the background*

*Bring lots of money — there are
great selections of reasonably
priced silver and gold jewellery —
you can shop 'till you drop.*





Ye old Antique Shop



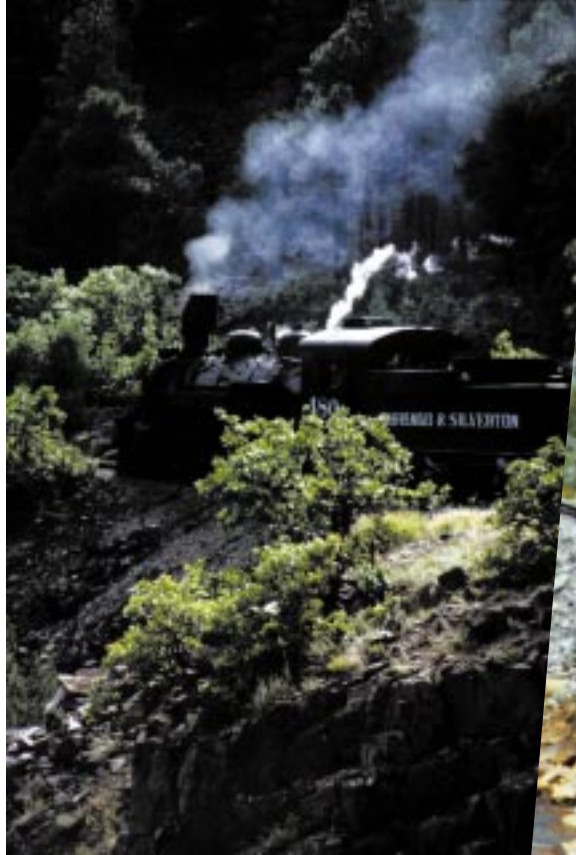


Getting ready for the return journey



Chugging home



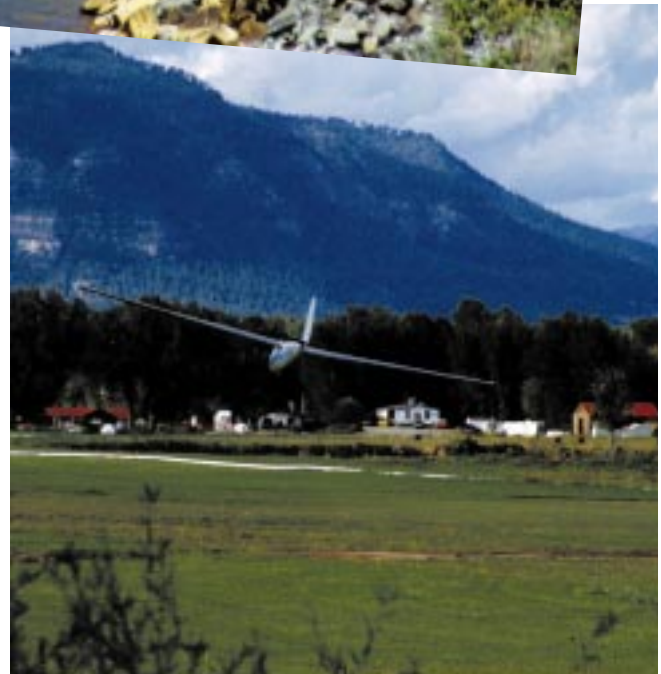


Homeward bound



Coming up to an old mine adit

Glider coming in for a landing in the lower canyon north of Durango





You can't get here from there!

Durango is located in the southwest corner of Colorado, 20 miles north of the New Mexico State line, and roughly 80 miles east of the Four Corner Monument (where Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Utah meet).

Durango has an abundance of hotels and motels, lots of great restaurants, jewellery and art stores. It makes a good base camp from which to explore other attractions within driving distance, such as Chaco Canyon (2.5 hours south into New Mexico), Mesa Verde (45 minutes west), Canyon de Chelly (3.5 hours southwest into Arizona), Monument Vally, Valley of the Gods, Goosenecks State Park (3.5 hours northwest into Utah), Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument (2.5 hours north), and (Great Sand Dunes Monument (4 hours east).

My driving time estimates are not for rubberneckerers ~ if you pull over to gawk at the incredible scenery along the way, stop for lunch and the odd piddle, double the time.

For more info on the Durango & Silverton Railroad see:

<http://www.visitorinformation.com/durango/train/>

