ForeWord Reviews

PHOTOGRAPHY

Colorado Scenic Byways, Taking the Other Road
Jim Steinberg
Jim Steinberg, photographer
Photographs by Jim Steinberg Text by Susan J. Tweitt
Susan J. Tweitt
Portfolio Publications
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There is no greater pleasure, especially in winter, than opening a book to a field of flowers. Sunlight bathes distant, sloping hills. Lupines lance towards the sky, opening their purple cups to the paintbrush clouds. Only a few pages later, sheared cliffs dotted crimson by the sunset shoulder against one another, as though competing for warmth. *Colorado Scenic Byways* takes the reader off the beaten path to share unforgettable, breathtaking sights. Vistas, mountains, lush valleys, and historical landmarks are shown in their natural glory.

Colorado Scenic Byways is a two-volume set. The first volume, hardcover, is a photography collection, with some accompanying text and captions. Each page bursts with color; Jim Steinberg's compositions glow. No two photographs are alike, a common problem in other compilations. Instead, for example, there are three different views of the Gunnison River "below bluffs of knobby breccia, formed of hot ash and mudflows from the explosive volcanic activity that built the West Elk Mountains." Each of the three photographs shows the Gunnison in a fresh light, transporting the reader through the moods of the landscape. Susan Tweit's writing is dynamic and smart, and keeps pace with Steinberg. It is accessible in a way many art books are not. In fact, the second softcover volume is a travel guide, with maps for readers who wish to see Colorado in person. The tone is informative without being too scientific.

In many ways, *Colorado Scenic Byways* takes its cues from publications like National Geographic. The US Forest Service, Department of the Interior, and the National Scenic Byways Program all collaborated in the creation of *Colorado Scenic Byways*, which is evident in the combinations of photographs and attention to geographical and historical detail. The photographs dominate the book, flowing from one gorgeous region to the next. Text adds to the reader's experience, explaining briefly how the landscape was formed, by human or natural forces, but plays second fiddle to the images. The resulting balance seems geared to the reader

interested in travel and sightseeing. In fact, the reader who has finished *Colorado Scenic Byways* may feel that she has already been there.

Or she may find herself wishing to stand in a field of swaying wheat or compare her handprints to the prehistoric smudges on adobe walls. The sun beckons from the pages, reminding the reader that summer is coming, and with it, the urge for migration. Colorado is waiting.

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