

**July 23<sup>nd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> : Rapid City to Sheridan WY (247 miles 3.5 hours give or take). We checked in to Hampton Inn in Sheridan for the night. Checked out on July 24<sup>th</sup> and headed to **Devils Tower**. (165 miles 2.5 hours give or take)**

**Significance of Place:** **Devils Tower** (also **Bear Lodge Butte**) is a laccolithic butte composed of igneous rock in the Bear Lodge Mountains (part of the Black Hills) near Hulett and Sundance in Crook County, northeastern Wyoming, above the Belle Fourche River. It rises dramatically 1,267 feet (386 m) above the Belle Fourche River, standing 867 feet (265 m) from summit to base. The summit is 5,112 feet (1,559 m) above sea level. Devils Tower was the first declared United States National Monument, established on September 24, 1906, by President Theodore Roosevelt. The monument's boundary encloses an area of 1,347 acres. In recent years, about 1% of the monument's 400,000 annual visitors climbed Devils Tower, mostly using traditional climbing techniques

**Drive there:** Hilly country via I 90. After exiting, we seemed to be driving on a mesa with a deep gorge, (presumably the Belle Fourche River) on the right.

**Brief History:** The name Devil's Tower originated in 1875 during an expedition led by Colonel Richard Irving Dodge, when his interpreter reportedly misinterpreted a native name to mean "Bad God's Tower". All information signs in that area use the name "Devils Tower", following a geographic naming standard whereby the apostrophe is eliminated. In 2005, a proposal to recognize several Native American ties through the additional designation of the monolith as Bear Lodge National Historic Landmark met with opposition from United States Representative Barbara Cubin, arguing that a "name change will harm the tourist trade and bring economic hardship to area communities". In November 2014, one Arvol Looking Horse again proposed renaming the geographical feature "Bear Lodge", and submitted the request to the United States Board on Geographic Names. A second proposal was submitted to request that the U.S. acknowledge the "offensive" mistake in keeping the current name and to rename the monument and sacred site Bear Lodge National Historic Landmark. The formal public comment period ended in fall 2015. Local state senator Ogden Driskill opposed the change. The name was not changed.

**What we did:** Shree was not able to do the brief hike to the base of the tower. We went early but the place filled up with tourists like us.

**Impressions:** The enormity of the monolith is breathtaking.