

EXPLORE Colorado

OFFICIAL TRAVEL GUIDE



A wide-angle shot of the Royal Gorge Bridge, a large steel arch bridge. Several people are walking across the wooden deck of the bridge. Some are waving flags. The background shows a valley with mountains under a blue sky with clouds.

WALK

Three red cable cars are suspended from cables and are moving across a deep canyon. The canyon walls are steep and rocky. The sky is a warm orange color, suggesting sunset or sunrise.

RIDE

A man is ziplining over a deep canyon. He is wearing a yellow shirt, blue pants, and a harness. He has his arms outstretched and is smiling. The canyon below is filled with green trees and vegetation.

SOAR

Among the Clouds

ROYAL GORGETM
BRIDGE & PARK
• AMERICA'S BRIDGE •



RoyalGorgeBridge.com

Welcome to The Centennial State!



As the Governor of Colorado, I'm happy to invite you to discover the wonders of the Centennial State, a place where majestic natural beauty and a sense of adventure bring your vacation to life. From our iconic Rocky Mountains and the thrill of outdoor recreation to the charm of our vibrant cities and world-class amenities, there's something exciting for every traveler. And Colorado remains a welcoming place for visitors from all corners of the world!

This is a monumental year for Colorado, as we celebrate 150 years of statehood in conjunction with 250 years of American independence. Join us in commemorating this milestone and welcoming a new era by taking part in a variety of signature initiatives throughout the year.

From touring newly unveiled historic sites to joining organized ascents to some of our tallest peaks, there will be endless opportunities for discovery.

While exploring our beautiful state, we encourage everyone to Do Colorado Right and travel thoughtfully. Small actions, like using public transportation, keeping our trails clean and even renting an e-bike, can help us preserve our pristine environment for future generations to experience, while adding to your adventure.

I wish you safe travels as you create memories that will last a lifetime.



**Learn About
250/150 Digital
Passports, Drone
Shows & More**

Cedaredge

Land Acknowledgment

In the spirit of healing and education, the Colorado Tourism Office acknowledges the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe and the 51 contemporary tribes with historic ties to the land currently known as Colorado. We recognize and honor these Indigenous peoples as the original inhabitants of this land.



STATE OF COLORADO

Jared Polis Governor

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Hilary Lewkowitz Director, Destination
Development & Sustainability

Taren Mulch Director, Visitor Services

Elizabeth O'Rear Director, Grants & Funding

Faith Overall Destination Stewardship Manager

Natazshya Rodriguez Director of Marketing

Hope Smith International Program Manager

Phil Steider Brand Marketing Manager

Sami Wells Grants & Funding Manager

Teagan Wooden Sales & Marketing Coordinator

Michelle Wulfson Marketing Copywriter

PUBLISHED BY



milespartnership.com

Publishers Amanda Scherlin, Adriana Chimaras
Sales Pat Attkisson

Art Direction Hailey Nicol, Carrieann Stutz

Content Chloe Smith, Hannah Brown,
Ashley Hughes, Caitlin Row

Advertising & Data Manager Jason Swancey

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Covers: Summer: Daniel Forster; Winter: Aspen Snowmass

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DO COLORADO RIGHT

Whether you're planning a weekend in the mountains or a road trip across the plains, the *Do Colorado Right Leave No Trace Principles* make it easier to travel smarter and maximize your time.



Near Westcliffe

Know Before You Go

Colorado has pleasant conditions year-round. However, the weather can always change in an instant. Be prepared for anything by checking conditions before you depart, wearing appropriate footwear and bringing protective layers. Pack a reusable water bottle so you can save money, limit waste and stay hydrated by drinking twice the amount of water you normally would.

Since access to cell service can be spotty, bringing a map or downloading offline routes using an app like COTREX can help you stay on track.

Deepen your connection with the great outdoors by visiting a lesser-known trail. Stick to designated parking spaces to allow roadside plants to grow and maintain the flow of traffic. Have a secondary location in mind in case the lot is full so you can keep things moving without a hitch.

Stick to Trails & Camp Overnight Right

Walk or ride on designated trails to help preserve the path and protect the homes of local wildlife. While shortcuts and that perfect selfie can be tempting, staying on the path will decrease your risk of injury and protect fragile trailside plants.

You can't go wrong with setting up in one of the thousands of designated campsites across the state! Check with local land managers for the best places to pitch your tent. Stick to spots that are over 70 steps from water and show signs of having been previously camped on so it will be quicker and easier for you to settle in.

Trash the Trash

We know that you know to throw your trash in designated bins. Just keep an eye out for those tiny plastic wrappers that like to sneak away, and don't forget the peels and cores — while it may be good for you, that doesn't mean it's good for wildlife.

When nature calls and there's no bathroom around, be equipped with a disposable WAG bag and conveniently carry out your waste. Alternatively, find privacy at least 70 steps from water, trails and camp, dig a 6–8 inch hole and bury your business. Keep the trail pristine by picking up after your pup and disposing their waste in the nearest trash can. Pro tip: Let your furry friend carry their own little pack so they can help haul their own poop!

Leave It As You Find It

Colorado is a treasure trove of cultural and natural wonders, offering a unique glimpse into the past and connections to the present cultures. Leave these places as you found them so you can pass the joy of discovery to others.

The state's thousands of wildflowers play a vital role in the ecosystem. Capture a memory and help protect their beauty by taking a photo, not a flower. And when it comes to our trees, even small carvings can harm or kill them. Treat their bark with care to ensure they'll still be here for your next visit.

To help protect our landscapes even further, clean your boots, bike tires and watercraft before and after every outing. This simple habit helps prevent the spread of invasive species, preserves Colorado's natural balance and keeps your gear in great shape.

Be Careful With Fire

Gathering around the warm, glowing flames of a campfire is an ideal way to end a day outdoors — but in some places, fires are restricted or banned where wildfire risk is high.

Check local fire bans to make sure campfires are allowed in the area. Then, keep your fire small, manageable and attended. When it's time to extinguish, douse the embers until they're cold to the touch so you can prevent reigniting a flame. If you smoke, use extra care to dispose of the butts properly so you can enjoy the rest of your time worry-free.

Pro tip: Getting firewood locally prevents the introduction of invasive species like the destructive pine beetle, plus it will save space in your car.

Keep Wildlife Wild

To keep yourself and wildlife safe, make sure to keep your distance. If you can cover the entire animal with your thumb while your arm is outstretched, you're at a safe distance. Otherwise, prevent unwanted encounters by properly disposing of trash, storing food in a bear-proof container or locked vehicle, and cleaning up any food scraps. Even the smallest taste of human food can not only be harmful to an animal's health, it can create dangerous habits. So you can feel good about keeping all of those snacks to yourself.

Share Our Trails & Parks

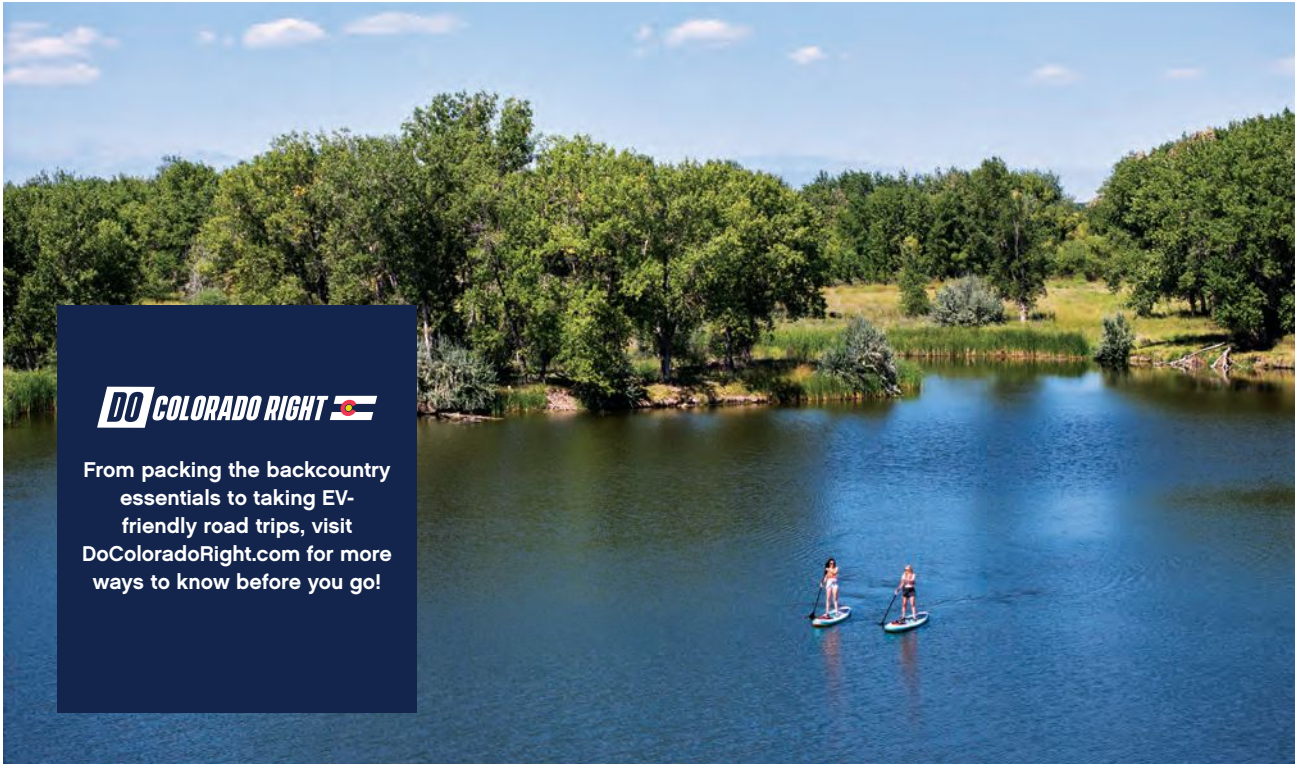
From roaring waterfalls to gentle bird calls, experience the wonder of nature's symphony by being mindful of your group's noise level. Master your trail etiquette by knowing how to pass others — take a breather while yielding to the uphill hiker and biker who need the momentum to finish their journey. But keep in mind that wheelchair users and equestrians always have the right of way.



COLORADO
TOURISM OFFICE



LEAVE
NO TRACE



From packing the backcountry essentials to taking EV-friendly road trips, visit DoColoradoRight.com for more ways to know before you go!



GRAND COUNTY

The Source of the Wild

Grand County is the Source of the Wild. Here, mountain peaks, winding rivers and wide-open skies set the stage for adventure and connection. Whether you're exploring trails, discovering small-town gems or stargazing under clear night skies, every moment becomes part of your story. Come see why Grand County is where the wild truly begins.

VisitGrandCounty.com



HOT SULPHUR SPRINGS

Outdoor Paradise

Located along the banks of the Colorado River, enjoy Gold Medal fishing and relax in the hot springs. Visit the museum filled with pioneer, railroad and Native American history. Experience the outdoors with trails to hike, bike, snowshoe, cross-country ski and more!

HSSChamber.com | 970.531.7588



WINTER PARK FRASER CHAMBER

Visit Winter Park

Experience the Winter Park Way, where we welcome all to play, connect and protect. Enjoy signature events, outdoor concerts, local shops and dining — all surrounded by world-class slopes and trails only 90 minutes from Denver.

[PlayWinterPark.com](https://www.PlayWinterPark.com) | 970.726.4118



KREMMLING CHAMBER

Kremmling, Colorado: A Sportsman's Paradise

Kremmling, Colorado, lies at the confluence of the Muddy Creek and Blue and Colorado rivers. We are within minutes of the Wolford Mountain, Williams Fork and Green Mountain reservoirs, and at the crossroads of Hwy 9 and historic Hwy 40. Known as a sportsman's paradise, Kremmling is your ultimate base camp for adventure.

[KremmlingChamber.com](https://www.KremmlingChamber.com)



GO GRAND LAKE

The Quieter, Wilder Side

Just two hours from Denver, Grand Lake is a lakefront mountain paradise nestled against Rocky Mountain National Park. Uncover the wild side of every season with boating on warm summer days, hiking through stunning fall colors, snowmobiling across winter landscapes and skating on Colorado's largest natural lake.

[GoGrandLake.com](https://www.GoGrandLake.com) | 970.627.3402



DESTINATION GRANBY

Year-Round Basecamp for Adventure

Located in the heart of the Rocky Mountains, Granby is an all-season basecamp for adventure, offering stunning vistas, outdoor experiences, and small-town charm. Hit the trails on foot, bike, horseback, or ATV, or cast your line in the Colorado River or Lake Granby. Come winter, Granby is a snow-covered wonderland with sledding, snowboarding, skiing, and snowshoeing. No matter the season, Granby offers opportunities to spot wildlife, take in the views, and enjoy the fresh mountain air.

[DestinationGranby.com](https://www.DestinationGranby.com) | 970.887.2311

10 Must-Have Moments

in Colorado

Across our pristine landscapes, vibrant cities and charming mountain towns, it feels like there are endless ways to enjoy the beauty and spirit of the Centennial State. From heart-racing adventure to moments of relaxation, add these 10 bucket-list ideas to your itinerary for a quintessential experience. Whether you fit them all in one trip or spread over many, we're sure you'll have a Colorado vacation to remember.



Lake San Cristobal Overlook in Lake City

DO COLORADO RIGHT

Rivers are powerful and always changing, so be sure to check water levels and put on a personal flotation device that's the right size before getting wet. For smooth sailing, hire a guide.



Jackson Lake State Park in Orchard

1 Soak Up Our Water

Each spring, our renowned winter snow transforms into fresh, cool water that fills our rivers and lakes. It happens just in time for you to set up your umbrella on a sandy beach at our more than 2,000 lakes, book a whitewater-rafting trip with an experienced guide, plot which inlets and currents you'll drift into on your stand-up paddleboard, or choose a hike where the refreshing mist of a waterfall revives you with a mid-trek cool down.

Thirty steamy, mineral-rich hot springs bubble up to welcome you in any season. Options range from luxurious resorts where elegant cabins and holistically centered spas sit steps from the water to family-focused fun with slides and diving boards to backcountry hideaways that require hiking a few miles to reach.

And when things are frosty above ground, give our frozen water a whirl atop a pair of ice skates. From rinks with sun-soaked winter skies to city and resort locales surrounded by busy shops and restaurants, this pastime serves up back-to-basics winter joy.



South Mineral Creek Falls near Silverton

2 Spend a Night Under the Stars



San Juan Mountains near Lake City

With high elevations that let you see farther into the galaxy — without even needing a telescope — and towering mountain ranges that shield skies from light pollution, Colorado offers a wide variety of ways to gaze at our spectacularly dark skies.

Glimpse the vast shimmering of the Milky Way and see rocky peaks illuminated by starlight. Take a guided trip through the solar system at an astronomer-led star party or cozy up for a private viewing from your sleeping bag in a backcountry campsite. With 18 certified International Dark Sky

Parks and Communities, you won't travel far to see constellations speckled across a clear Colorado sky.

Add a soundtrack to your night under the stars by grabbing tickets at one of our dozens of renowned outdoor concert venues, where notes dance off surrounding summits and the stars illuminate forest groves. From the incredible acoustics at some of the world's most unique venues to music festivals that echo through surrounding mountain ranges, our open-air stages will ignite your soul.



Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Morrison



Timed Entry

During peak seasons, some national parks and attractions let you guarantee your access with a timed-entry or day-use reservations. Check ahead to secure your spot.

Great Sand Dunes National Park & Preserve



Rocky Mountain National Park

3 Explore Our Parks & Monuments

Colorado's natural assets awaken the imagination and stir the senses. Come to life walking a trail to the twinkling tune of aspen leaves, wrangling a feisty rainbow trout, crunching over pine needles while twisting along on a mountain bike, sitting beside a babbling creek for a picnic, or witnessing

the wonder of bighorn sheep moving from one rocky ledge to another. Our four national parks, nine national monuments and 43 state parks have preserved special moments like these — and millions of others — for visitors to carry with them for a lifetime.



4 Discover Your Favorite Mountain Town

Colorado's small towns cultivate big memories with their charming Main Streets, dining and shopping, and easy access to outdoor encounters. Pick up a trail right in town to hear the crunch of your snowshoes upon freshly fallen snow. Snuggle up in a horse-drawn sleigh as it jingles along to a hot-chocolate pit stop. Or sit back while a chairlift whisks you to North America's best skiing and boarding.

As mild summer and fall weather dawns, those same snowshoe and ski trails open to birders, hikers and mountain bikers, and those same chairlifts ferry you over fields of candy-colored wildflowers and rock faces set aglow with fall's reds, oranges and yellows.

For some Rocky Mountain nightlife, head to our towns with local casinos, where you can catch live music, try your luck at the tables and spin the reels on slot machines to see if you strike gold.



JEFF ANDREW MAGUIRE



Breckenridge



Aspen



5

Live Our Western Heritage

In order to honor Colorado's roots, we remember the land's original inhabitants. Dozens of archaeological sites, museums, byways and roadside plaques dedicated to our Indigenous peoples will have your imagination floating back in time to the first and most fascinating human experiences in Colorado.

Mining towns and tours tell the stories of early explorers, fur trappers and prospectors who came in search of treasure after hearing tales of rivers overflowing with gold rocks free for the taking. The Colorado gold rush was on, with covered wagons crossing the Great Plains to cries of "Pikes Peak or Bust!" Today, you can visit

many of these historical towns and ride our rails to see remnants of this gold- and silver-dusted past.

Nothing embodies the Wild West of our imagination like a dude ranch. There's something special about their down-home hospitality — by the end of your stay, you'll really feel like family. Whether you're looking to live out your on-screen dreams of being a tough-skinned ranch hand or simply wanting a taste of life outside of the city, more than 30 dude ranches supply an incredible getaway. Plan your trip around one of our Western events or small-town rodeos to see cowpoke culture come alive in a spectacular performance.



Trappers Lake near Yampa



Ashcroft near Aspen

6

Find Your Sense of Adventure

Adventure in Colorado doesn't have to mean barreling down a dizzying singletrack trail on two wheels or dodging moguls on a black-diamond ski slope — though it certainly can mean those things! There's adventure to be had atop an e-bike, where you can travel more miles and see more sites while the bike does most of the work. Cover even more ground by zip lining over a rushing river, hopping in a hot-air balloon at dawn to see the sunrise or

buckling onto steel cables to traverse a mountainside from great heights on a via ferrata. If you yearn to explore our outdoors but are hesitant to wander the wide blue yonder on your own, adventure guides can show you the way. These pros set you up with all the gear you need, share their expertise, and guide you safely and easily to the best spots for backpacking, fishing, climbing, hunting, OHVing, kayaking, hut tripping, backcountry skiing and more.



Via ferrata near Telluride



KENNAN HARVEY, ANDREW MAGUIRE

Wagon Wheel Trail near Meeker



Aurum Food & Wine in Steamboat Springs

7 Eat & Drink Local

Rich in homegrown ingredients, diverse cuisines, an influx of internationally recognized chefs and a strong maker culture, it's no wonder Colorado menus are bursting with creativity and fresh flavors — and there are so many ways to taste them.

Going beyond farm-to-table, many Colorado chefs bring the table to the farm with hyper-seasonal dinners crafted from ingredients grown just a

few steps from where you sit. For the next-best thing, hit one or more of our roughly 100 farmers markets for only-in-Colorado produce varieties to fill your basket. Those markets are where you just may find chefs gathering ingredients for that day's menu. Taste the exquisitely prepared bounty at restaurants across the state and keep an eye out for those praised by the Michelin Guide and James Beard Awards.

Our world-class craft-beer scene can trace its roots to the same wealth of local fruit, veggies and grains that brought these amazing chefs to our altitude. In fact, the Colorado Liquid Arts™ scene includes more than 400 breweries and 250-plus wineries, distilleries, cideries and meaderies. And a growing number of these makers partner with farmers to turn our native crops into liquid gold you can taste on site or at local restaurants.



LAURENCE PARENT

Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad



Near Steamboat Springs

8 Take a Scenic Ride

Our 26 scenic byways connect the dots between historic sites and acres of majestic scenery that span red-rock canyons, Rocky Mountain peaks and sun-kissed prairies. The byways are truly a collection of must-see vistas. Picking a couple — and coming back for more later — will ensure you understand the true meaning of Colorful Colorado.

Rent or bring your own electric vehicle and head out on one of our 20 certified Electric Byways, each with charging stations spaced out just right for seeing the sights.

Or consider our scenic and historical railroads, which have held travelers' fascination since the 1800s. From multiday journeys to day trips with five-star dining experiences or seasonal encounters with Santa, you'll carve through jagged gorges and find yourself hugging steep cliffs on narrow-gauge tracks or traversing the banks of crystal-blue rivers.

Come winter, the mountains open to snowmobilers gliding across trails and fields of powder in the crisp, dry air. Find yourself on a meandering, family-friendly jaunt or opt for a high-speed odyssey over endless snowy hills.



RiNo Art District in Denver

9 Experience Our Unique Arts & Culture

Surrounded by natural beauty, it's hard to imagine not being inspired to create something here. In fact, 37 communities brimming with galleries, artists in residence and special arts events have been designated Certified Colorado Creative Districts. You can find each locale's distinct creative flair through art walks, sculpture tours, concerts, street art, cultural festivals and more.

Much of our artistic credibility can also be traced to acclaimed art collections, many of which are found in architectural marvels and amid scenery that are destinations in their own rights. Whether you browse artistic attractions in our big cities or stumble into a

hidden gallery in a small town, you'll be sure to find something crafted with a Colorado perspective.

That point of view can also be found in our collection of historical theaters and opera houses along the Colorado Historic Opera Houses Circuit. These venues have been serving up beautiful performances to Coloradans since the 1800s — and you can feel the history when you take in a show amid their gilded columns and chandeliers today. But there's much more: Our state also boasts the largest performing-arts complex under one roof in the country and several world-class theater companies, so there's always something spectacular on stage while you're in town.



ERIC STEPHENSON

Denver Art Museum

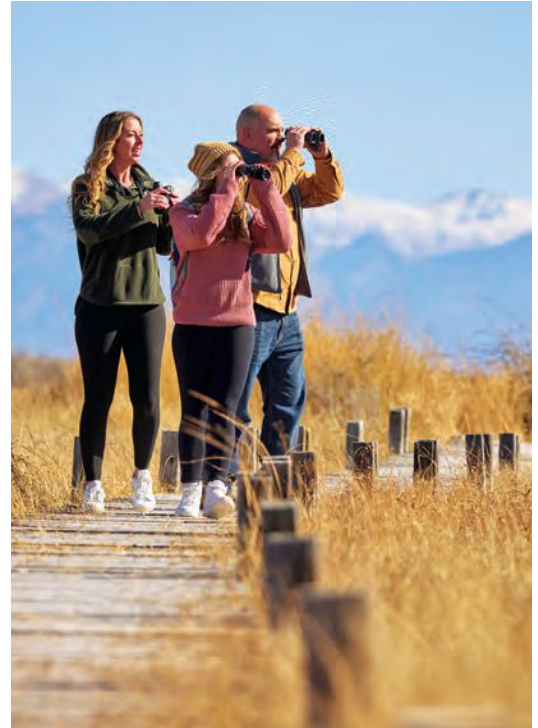
10 Enjoy Our Wildlife

Few places in North America offer the bounty of wildlife-watching opportunities available in Colorado. Our mountains, forests, plains, rivers and mesas harbor 960 different species, luring binocular-toting guests into our natural spaces.

Ensure at least a couple of them are part of your stay by following the birding trails — there are 54 of them! — known to harbor that elusive songbird or raptor you've been seeking. With nearly 400 different species of birds migrating through the state, there's a winged creature to be spotted in every season. Another option is attending

a wildlife festival with friends similarly in awe of an elk, moose or bighorn sheep to hear their bugles and see them prance and strut for their mates.

Or spend a day casting your line: Fly-fishers, ice-fishers and pure rod-and-reelers will find plenty of options along 90,000 miles of rivers and more than 2,000 lakes. Those seeking a bigger catch will find it in our quiet spaces: 23 million acres of pretty pines, plentiful pocket meadows and pure-water ponds host excellent opportunities for hunting, fishing or simply viewing majestic animals in motion.



Russell Lakes State Wildlife Area in Saguache



DO COLORADO RIGHT 

Prevent unwanted animal encounters by properly disposing of trash, storing food in a bear-proof container or locked vehicle, and cleaning up any food scraps.

LUVENATI PRODUCTIONS, BRYAN MALTAIS

Big Thompson River near Rocky Mountain National Park

State Parks, Four Seasons of Fun



Easy and accessible walk to view the falls at Rifle Falls State Park

Wherever you go in Colorado, there's a state park waiting to welcome you. Mountains or prairies, rivers or forests, out in the country or next to the city, Colorado's 43 state parks are as diverse as the state itself, and they offer something for everyone.



Swim beach fun at Cherry Creek State Park

Experience Colorado

Take a hair-raising whitewater river trip, or kick back in a lawn chair and watch the sunset in breathtaking scenery. Enjoy a family day on the beach, take a hike, learn something new in our nature programs, cast a line in the water or try snowshoeing. From Eastern Plains parks to high-mountain parks, the network of state parks offers a wealth of activities or the chance to relax. In winter, spring, summer or fall, more than 4,600 affordable campsites, cabins and yurts are also available under star-filled skies. Camping reservations are required and can be made at [CPWshop.com](https://cpwshop.com) six months in advance.





WHERE WONDER LIVES

Estes Park: where mountain-town charm meets the great outdoors.

[START PLANNING AT VISITESTESPAK.COM](https://www.visitestespark.com)





HOLIDAY INN ESTES PARK

Enjoy the Warmth of Estes Park in Person

Ditch content and seek connection at The Holiday Inn® Estes Park, where Rocky Mountain National Park becomes your personal playground. With convenient lodging to a host of on-site amenities including an indoor swimming pool and hot tub, communal fire pits, a game room and complimentary bike rentals, it's the perfect home base for round-the-clock adventures. Plus, you can cure your hunger and quench your thirst at Latitude 105, where chef-devised fare and locally made craft beer are just the thing after a day exploring.



HolidayInn.com/estesparkco | 970.527.1500

Celebrating America 250-Colorado 150

Explore, check in and celebrate Colorado's history, creativity and adventure. Each visit brings you closer to winning prizes while discovering something new across the state.



UNITED 



Where Every Season Shines Bright

Colorado reveals new adventures with each changing season. Conquer roaring whitewater rapids in summer, carve down powdery slopes in winter, behold budding trees on spring treks and marvel at the blazing beauty of autumn aspens. Whatever the time of year, there's no shortage of activities.



Near Winter Park

Winter

Snowshoeing

Strap on your snowshoes and hit the trails for some crystal-covered alpine scenery. Set off two hours south of Denver to **Mueller State Park** in Divide, where you can find both beginner paths and advanced summits. Or explore **Breckenridge Nordic Center's** snow-draped pine forests, open meadows and icy streams, with well-marked routes ranging from leisurely strolls to challenging expeditions toward historical huts. **Carpenter Peak Trail** in Littleton winds through switchbacks below striking red rocks that lead you to the ridge's pinnacle, where you can snap a snowcapped selfie.

Hot Springs

There are few things as fun as donning a bathing suit and a winter hat, dashing outside and stepping into a steamy hot spring. In Ridgway, soak in **Orvis Hot Springs**, a clothing-optional retreat where rock-walled pools look out on Mount Sneffels. In Buena Vista, **Charlotte Hot Springs** is set amid flower-filled greenhouses and botanical gardens. Family-friendly **Glenwood Springs Resort** includes the world's largest geothermal pool, a smaller therapy pool with higher temperatures, a canteen and lodging just steps away.

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Frisco Adventure Park

Ice Skating

Tighten up your skates, throw on a scarf and head to **Lake San Cristobal** in Lake City. When frozen over, it becomes a clean sheet of ice, ideal for perfecting your crossovers in a winter scene easily mistaken for the North Pole. **Keystone Resort** also has a dedicated skating rink, so you can hop off the slopes and spend an evening carving the ice against the picture-perfect alpine backdrop. Or glide over to **Cherry Creek State Park** in Aurora. When the ice is thick, head to this skating spot to enjoy the cool air and sunset silhouettes of the Front Range.

Sleigh Rides

Colorado's stunning winter landscapes make a cozy sleigh ride a must. When you visit **Dashing Thru the Snow** in Tabernash, snuggle under wool blankets while mighty horses bound along glistening trails. End the night with some fireside cocoa. Or journey to **Bearcat Stables** in Edwards, where cowpokes guide you through a wonderland of white-crowned peaks and frosty stands of aspens to a hearty dinner and warming drinks. See southwest Colorado via old-fashioned sleigh at **Bears Ranch** in Durango, where you can spot snowy views of Engineer Mountain, Hermosa Cliffs and icy Haviland Lake.

Snow Tubing

Hop into a tube and hold on tight at the **Frisco Adventure Park Tubing Hill** to spend the day flying down pillowy, lift-served runs, each tailored to a different speed. In Leadville, snag a tube and head down the free **Dutch Henry Tubing Hill** overlooking the former silver-mining town. For an evening activity, check out **Hoedown Hill** in Windsor, where you can slide under the stars on the longest tubing hill in North America.

Durango: Where Adventure Begins



Durango is nestled in Colorado's southwest corner and blends outdoor adventure and rich cultural heritage. Framed by the San Juan Mountains, it's a gateway to stunning vistas and year-round recreation. Explore a historic downtown, ride a scenic steam train, and visit nearby cultural sites and national parks, including Mesa Verde National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



VISIT **DURANGO**
COLORADO

Family-Friendly

Durango is the perfect place to create unforgettable memories. Ride a historic steam train, take a ski lesson, explore over 300 miles of in-town hiking trails or paddle the Animas River — all with affordable options and a breathtaking mountain backdrop.

Limitless Possibilities

Durango is an outdoor paradise with endless adventures year-round. In warmer months, explore miles of trails with stunning views of the San Juan Mountains. In winter, enjoy skiing, snowboarding and snowshoeing in a snowy wonderland.

Unforgettable Access

With a regional airport offering direct flights, getting here is a breeze. From the moment you arrive in Durango, adventure is at your doorstep — explore legendary national parks like Mesa Verde, Canyons of the Ancients and Chaco Canyon.

Active Cultural Experiences

Step into the Old West through its mining history, gold rush tales and historic railroad. Discover the Southern Ute and Ute Mountain Ute cultures with museums, events and storytelling that highlight the region's Indigenous heritage.





GRAND JUNCTION

WHERE LIFE LEADS

VisitGrandJunction.com

GET WET

Whether your idea of fun is a refreshing float down the Colorado on SUPs right through town or an exhilarating whitewater run in Westwater Canyon, area waters serve up plenty of places to float leisurely and safely on countless sunny days. Playboaters can hop into the standing waves at Las Colonias River Park near the confluence of the Colorado and Gunnison Rivers, hence the name Grand Junction.



INTO THE WILD

The diverse ecosystems of the area are home to a variety of Colorado fauna. Bighorn sheep, elk, deer, lynx and moose ply the high country. Just across the Colorado River from Downtown, the Riverfront Trail traverses a 1.5-mile paved Audubon path providing delightful opportunities to spot over 200 bird species, including blue heron, osprey, hawks and eagles. As one of only three wild-horse sanctuaries designated to protect wild horses in the country, be sure to check out the Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse Range to see the protected bands of wild mustangs who roam freely here. It's a life-changing experience!



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WINTER FUN

The Grand Mesa averages 250 inches of light, dry powder each year and has some of the best glade skiing in the state. Powderhorn Mountain Resort is affordable, approachable and only a short, 45-minute drive from Grand Junction. The Mesa also offers backcountry skiing and 31 miles of groomed trails for Nordic and skate skiing. If speed is more your thing, there is access to over 180 miles of backcountry snowmobiling trails to shred.

TEE TIMES

Enjoy a great day on the links with immaculately groomed greens and red-rock canyons rising in the distance at some of Grand Junction's unique golf courses. Tiara Rado and Redlands Mesa (rated the No. 1 public course in Colorado by Golfweek) afford golfers stunning vistas of Colorado National Monument. Spectacular views of the sandstone Book Cliffs and other surrounding mountain ranges can be found at Chipeta and Lincoln Park golf courses.

ANCIENT ARTIFACTS & DINOSAURS

Channel your inner paleontologist and step back in time 600 million years at Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area. The rugged canyons are etched with petroglyphs, bridging the chasm between past and present, serving as silent storytellers. Other ancient mysteries are preserved in Rabbit Valley along an interpretive trail through a working fossil quarry, where the remains of 140-million-year-old dinosaurs can be viewed.

STAY A WHILE

Grand Junction has the most affordable lodging in Colorado and easy access from Grand Junction Regional Airport. Here, you'll find 32 hotels, six RV parks with campgrounds and hundreds of vacation homes to choose from. Just minutes from the city, Grand Junction's outdoor attractions offer the Colorado experience you expect—without the crowds of other mountain towns. Bonus: The number one comment from guests who visit is, "the locals are so friendly and welcoming!" **So come play with us, we look forward to meeting you!**



LET LIFE TAKE THE LEAD

VisitGrandJunction.com



Grand Junction's majestic landscapes are very different than the rest of Colorado.

**GRAND
JUNCTION**

WHERE LIFE LEADS

PLAY YOUR WAY

Grand Junction is where vibrant music, farm-fresh cuisine and a lively art scene converge with countless outdoor adventures. Here, alpine terrain meets dramatic high desert. Powerful rivers course through verdant valleys, and opportunities for embracing the vast wilderness that surrounds Grand Junction are abundant in every season.

Come follow your passions, indulge your senses and go where life leads. You'll soon see that Mother Nature really does play favorites.



NATURE'S TRIFECTA

Grand Junction is the only place in the world where you can experience three extraordinary geological wonders known as "Nature's Trifecta." Colorado National Monument is a mini-Grand Canyon, affectionately known as "the heart of the world." The Grand Mesa is bursting with over 300 alpine lakes. Rattlesnake Arches is the second-largest concentration of natural arches in the world. Nature did smile on Grand Junction a little bit more!



COLORADO NATIONAL MONUMENT

Just six miles from Downtown Grand Junction, Colorado's secret national park towers over the city. The Monument is famous for scenic hiking, road biking, and its pristine sunrise and sunset views. Journey up Rim Rock Drive, pausing at convenient pullouts and majestic overlooks. Stop at Upper Ute Canyon View for the most amazing echo you've ever heard. At night, the clear desert sky shows off the magnificent Milky Way with shooting stars.

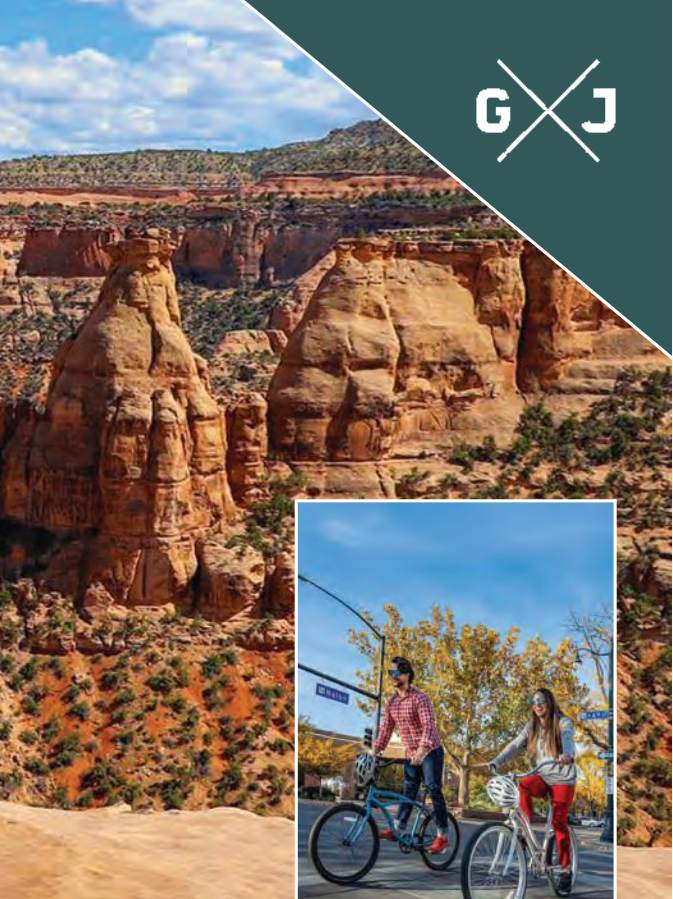


GRAND MESA

Standing tall in the eastern landscape of Grand Junction is the Grand Mesa, the largest flat-top mountain in the world. The Mesa has four distinct seasons of outdoor pursuits, making it a year-round outdoor recreation wonderland. Fishing, camping, hiking, biking, kayaking, skiing, snowmobiling and snowshoeing are just some of the activities that are enjoyed on the Mesa. This unspoiled wilderness is flourishing with aspen groves and pine forests atop the lush plateau.

ARCHES

The McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area's remote canyons slice through colorful sandstone layers to form cliffs, pinnacles, alcoves and arches. Rattlesnake Canyon surprises and excites hikers with over 35 natural arches, the most in the world outside of Arches National Park. All without the crowds!



DOWNTOWN

Grand Junction's historic Downtown is a designated park and pedestrian-friendly area with 115 outdoor sculptures and murals that frame the wide sidewalks. Peruse the many avant-garde galleries, chic boutiques, hip cafes and trendy restaurants. Buy a piece of art, bring your DIY idea to life or relax on a patio and enjoy an après microbrew.



HIT THE TRAIL

The Grand Junction area has over 1.5 million acres of public land — that's 76% of the county and is larger than Rhode Island and Delaware combined! From snowmobiling through the alpine forest on the Grand Mesa to OHV'ing serpentine desert canyons in McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area, there are thousands of miles of uncrowded trails for you to explore. For some truly inspiring views, snowmobile to Land's End Observatory or OHV down Rabbit Valley to the mighty Colorado River.

A SPORTSMAN'S PARADISE

Between the Colorado and Gunnison rivers and the 300 alpine lakes on the Grand Mesa, plentiful water beckons anglers. When hunting season arrives, the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National forests are prime destinations for big game. Trophy elk, pronghorn, deer, moose and other game abound, including a healthy population of winter waterfowl.



FARM-FRESH FARE

From the famous Palisade Peach harvest to pick-your-own cherry and apple orchards, the agricultural character of the Grand Junction area is thriving. Taste farm-to-fork cuisine and pair with award-winning craft beverages. Local breweries, distilleries, wineries, cideries and meaderies round out the refreshing libations. Here, the gifts from the land are always in season.



PEDAL PLEASERS

Grand Junction is a utopia for cyclists. Rim Rock Drive, through the Colorado National Monument, is an iconic road bike ride with sweeping views of the canyon country. Mountain bikers dive into the technical twists and turns on Lunch Loops, a local favorite. The Palisade Plunge expert-only singletrack is a 32-mile, adrenaline-fest that drops 6,000 feet from the top of the Grand Mesa to the high-desert floor.

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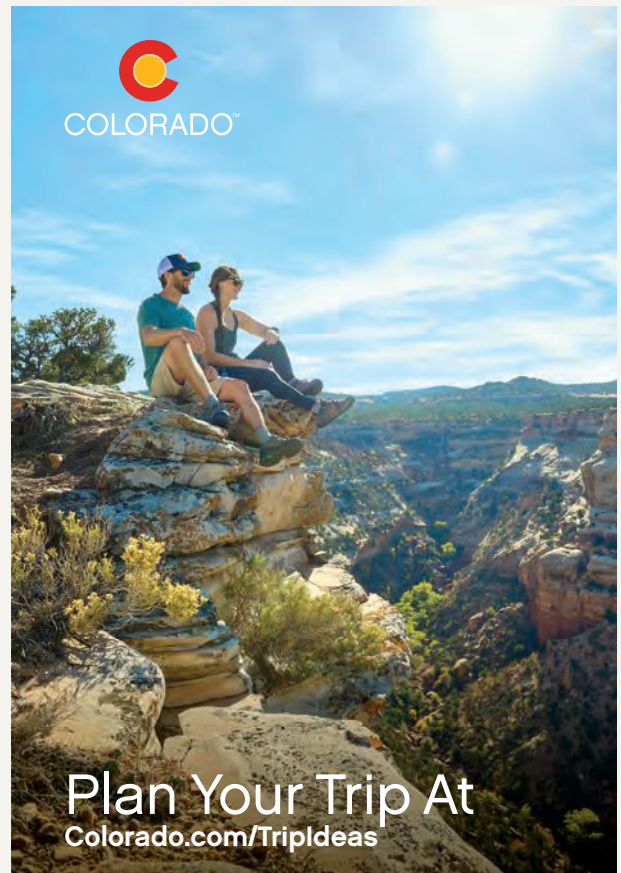


DOWNTOWN GRAND JUNCTION

The Western Slope's Cultural Hub

Welcome to Downtown Grand Junction! We are home to over 500 locally owned shops, galleries, spas, and more! You'll also find over 45 unique restaurants, breweries, tasting rooms, and coffee shops. Meet us on Main Street for seasonal block party events, and take a walk through our outdoor sculpture and mural collection, all part of GJ Creates — our state-certified creative district!

DowntownGJ.org | gjcreates.org | 970.245.9697



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Colorado.com/TripIdeas



Washington Park in Denver

Spring

Desert Getaways

Spring is the perfect time to cruise west to **Unaweep Canyon** near Gateway, where you can find ancient petroglyphs above the flowing East Creek. In Alamosa, see the flocks of sandhill cranes wake up for the season at **Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge**, flying through the air in a breathtaking display. Over on the eastern plains, you'll find remains of Apatosaurus and Allosaurus at **Picketwire Canyonlands**, south of La Junta. As the largest dinosaur tracksite in North America, this paleontological site has footprints big enough to sit in.

Urban Escapes

In Denver, start with a visit to **Museo de las Americas**, located in the heart of the Santa Fe Arts District. This museum showcases a diverse array of Latin American art, including rotating exhibits that delve into themes like Afro-Mexican history and cultural identity. Then head to outdoor spaces like **Washington Park** or **Cheesman Park**, where you can lay down a blanket and picnic or join a pickup volleyball game. Grab a ballpark dog and slide into early baseball season by catching a Colorado Rockies game at **Coors Field**, where the 20th row of the upper deck marks exactly one mile high above sea level. Savor local cuisine at spots like **Tocabe**, an American Indian eatery where you can pile crispy fry bread high with ingredients from Native and Indigenous producers.

In Greeley, catch a live performance at the **Union Colony Civic Center**, where touring musicians, theater productions and community concerts light up the main stage in a sleek, 1,600-seat venue. Wander downtown to explore the **Outdoor Art Walk**, a self-guided loop filled with murals, sculptures and changing installations that reflect the city's historical and cultural roots. In late spring, the **Greeley Stampede** kicks off with rodeos, carnival rides and big-name country acts at Island Grove Regional Park. When it's time to refuel, head to **WeldWerks Brewing Co.**, known for its creative small-batch IPAs and spacious taproom.

In Aurora, explore the **Havana Street Food District**, where Korean barbecue joints, Ethiopian restaurants and dozens of locally owned spots line a stretch known for its global flavors. Just east of the city, visit **Umi** at Hogan Park — a 21-foot-tall sculpture by South African artist Daniel Popper that blends human and tree forms, inviting visitors to step inside its vine-wrapped interior. Tee off at

Heritage Eagle Bend Golf Club, a public course with well-kept greens, wide fairways and open views of the Front Range. For a more laid-back outing, saddle up at **12 Mile Stables** in nearby Cherry Creek State Park, where guided horseback rides take you through cottonwood groves and along quiet prairie trails.

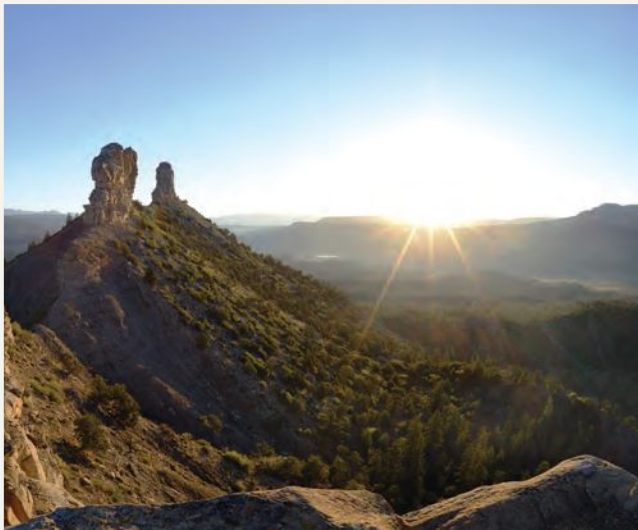
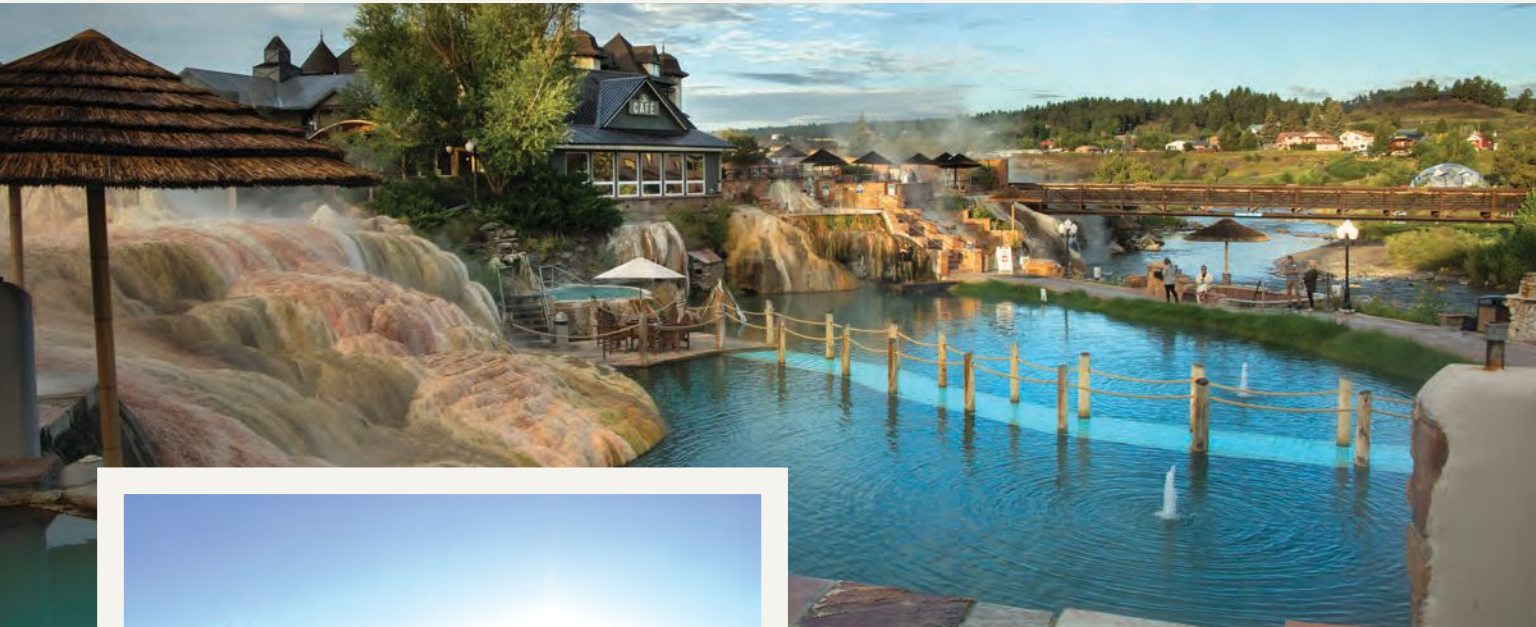
Hop on your bike and soak up the pure fun of downtown Fort Collins. Craft-beer connoisseurs will be in heaven touring the **New Belgium** and **Odell** breweries to learn the secrets to making their perfect pints — and maybe sampling a couple while you're there! Take a hike to **Horsetooth Falls** (bring shoe spikes in early spring) to uncover a tumbling waterfall and stunning outlooks of the city's massive reservoir. Wander the charming Old Town area, famous for inspiring Disneyland's Main Street, which is lined with historical buildings housing boutique shops, art galleries and eateries with sunny patios and live music.



BRENDAN BOMBACI/FLICKR

Horsetooth Falls in Fort Collins

Pagosa Springs, Your Year-Round Retreat



Soak in natural mineral hot springs heated by the earth's geothermal energy. Float above stunning mountain vistas in a hot-air balloon or explore Chimney Rock's ancestral mysteries. Play on the San Juan River, hike scenic trails or hit Wolf Creek's snowy slopes. Take a breath, unwind and **Just Be Here.**



Soothing Hot Springs

Slip into mineral-rich hot springs pools at three downtown hot springs properties, fed by the world's deepest aquifer. Unwind in soothing waters amid stunning surroundings and experience ultimate rejuvenation. Whether you seek relaxation or adventure, Pagosa's hot springs offer the perfect escape.

Year-Round Playground

Experience four seasons of adventure surrounded by 2.5 million acres of wilderness and national forest. Enjoy hot springs, hot-air balloon rides, fishing, hiking, waterfalls, skiing and snowboarding, and more. Whatever the time of year, there's always something new to explore in Pagosa Springs.

Culture, Night Skies and Ancient Stories

Immerse yourself in a vibrant arts scene in Pagosa. Catch live performances at the Pagosa Springs Center for the Arts, browse artist studios or attend festivals and events. Discover the region's rich cultural heritage, ancestral wonders and star-filled dark skies at Chimney Rock National Monument.

Sustainability

In a community powered by nature, geothermal energy heats a grid of downtown homes, businesses and the local community greenhouses. This sustainable, earth-powered approach fuels the hot springs and fosters a vibrant, eco-friendly lifestyle, reducing environmental impact and promoting a healthier future for all.



Near Crested Butte

Summer

Wildflowers

In the summer, the challenging **Goose Creek and Molly Gulch** trail near Deckers is painted with a stunning array of smooth aster, bellflower and yarrow wildflowers among granite rock arches and spires. Sprawling fields of bright yellows, purples and pinks will welcome you for a midsummer sunset hike in **Crested Butte**, the Wildflower Capital of Colorado. Or get your fix of wispy, red Indian paintbrush and a rainbow of columbines at **Lake Isabel** near Colorado City as you make your way to a sparkling reservoir.

Whitewater Rafting

Spend a day rafting through **Dinosaur National Monument**, where rapids thread between towering canyon walls carved by the Green and Yampa rivers, and ancient petroglyphs appear on sunbaked stone along the shore. Gaze at desert ecology from your boat on the **Gunnison River**, where fast-paced rapid expeditions whoosh you through heart-racing water features. For a slower pace, relaxed floats allow you to jump in and swim. Or spot crimson cliffs and centuries-old Ancestral Puebloan sites as you sail down a quiet stretch of the **Dolores River** in Cortez.



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Telluride Jazz Festival

Music Festivals

Seeing some of your favorite acts is even better in Colorado — where performances often come with alpine views and open-air stages. At **Telluride Jazz Festival**, listen to brass bands and soulful ensembles echo through a box canyon surrounded by towering peaks. In Grand Junction, **Country Jam** brings big-name headliners to a desert amphitheater, where crowds dance into warm summer nights. Over in Vail, **Bravo! Vail** features nationally recognized orchestras performing at the Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater, with covered seating, a sprawling lawn space and a backdrop of aspen-covered hills.

Winery Tours

Sip award-winning wines and breeze through the rows of speckled grapevines at **Colterris Winery** in Palisade, home to a new museum featuring 16,000 pieces of wine memorabilia. Make your way to **The Winery at Holy Cross Abbey** — a Gothic Revival monastery turned winery in Cañon City — to try award-winning blends and roam serene gardens alongside views of the Wet Mountains. Or spend a day on the **West Elks Wine Tour** near Hotchkiss and Paonia, where a string of small wineries pour regional reds and crisp whites amid orchards, lavender fields and quiet country roads.



The Winery at Holy Cross Abbey in Cañon City

BARTON GLASSER, THE WINERY AT HOLY CROSS ABBEY

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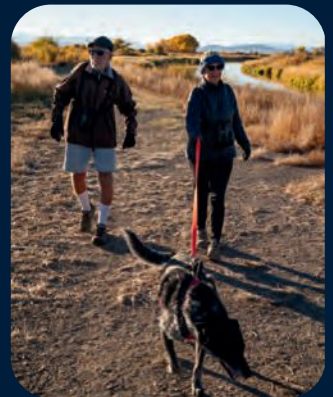


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ConejosVacation.com



Breckenridge Oktoberfest

Fall

Scenic Drives

Load everyone in the car and discover pathways of fall color throughout the Rockies. The views are especially breathtaking on the **Gold Belt Tour** winding through Florissant, Cripple Creek and Cañon City, where you can take a mine tour or see ancient ecosystems at Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. Uncover **Kenosha Pass** between Conifer and Fairplay, pausing to scout Segment 6 of the famed long-distance Colorado Trail. Reflect on some of our state's scenic water sources along the **Colorado River Headwaters Scenic Byway** from Grand Lake to State Bridge. Rent kayaks and paddle on Lake Granby or discover cascades on the hike to Adams Falls.

Festivals

Don your lederhosen and raise your stein at **Breckenridge Oktoberfest**, where Main Street transforms into a lively stretch of beer tents, pretzel stands and Bavarian tunes set against golden aspens and ski-town charm. In Fort Collins, **Tour de Fat** brings out costumed cyclists, whimsical floats and live music in a mashup of parade, party and bike-powered fun. Head to Pagosa Springs for the **Colorfest Hot Air Balloon Rally**, where dozens of bright balloons lift off at sunrise over the San Juan River, followed by wine and food tastings downtown.

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Animas Forks near Silverton

Ghost Towns

For an eerie alternative to a museum exhibit, peer into a Wild West ghost town.

Teller City, near Walden, is a solid place to start. Step back in time 150 years when the silver-mining town was home to more than 1,500 people, 27 saloons and a hotel. Now, you can hike in to spot remaining cabin structures and imagine the lives of those who called it home. Hear the wind whistle through **Animas Forks** near Silverton as you walk down the deserted Main Street, stepping into cabins, a remaining mill and the old jail. Or steer your bike to **Saint Elmo** near Buena Vista to see the town's 43 remaining buildings, including an abandoned courthouse and a general store that still operates seasonally.



Cedaredge

Hiking

While thousands of gorgeous hikes can be found in Colorado's foothills and high peaks, these options really sing when the leaves change around mid-September. Golden Gate Canyon State Park's **Raccoon Trail**, near Rollinsville, opens to panoramic summit views framed by golden aspens and quiet stretches of forest. In Cedaredge, the **Crag Crest Trail** follows a narrow ridge on the Grand Mesa, where high-elevation lakes and vibrant fall foliage spread out in every direction. For a simple outing, head to **Rainbow Lake Trail** in Frisco, where a mellow path leads through colorful trees to a still pond backed by Tenmile Range peaks.



GARDEN OF THE GODS TRADING POST

Beyond the Garden

A trip to Garden of the Gods isn't complete without stopping at the Trading Post, a destination in its own right. This pueblo-style landmark houses an on-site restaurant, coffee shop, boutique, and the region's largest selection of gifts and souvenirs. Relax over lunch on the shaded outdoor patio before exploring the vast collection inside. From Colorado-themed apparel and local artwork to handcrafted jewelry and authentic Native American crafts, you'll find the perfect memento for everyone.

**GardenoftheGodsTradingPost.com
719.685.9045**



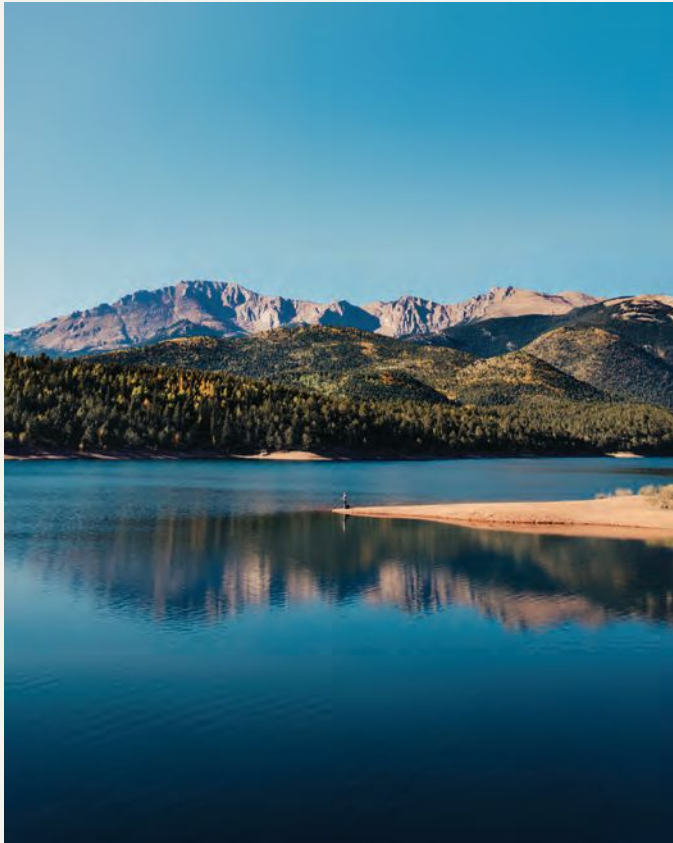
HISTORIC MANITOU SPRINGS

Chock-Full of Charm

The mountain town of Manitou Springs, nestled between Garden of the Gods and Pikes Peak, is the perfect basecamp for many Pikes Peak Region adventures. Minutes from hiking and biking trails — including the famed and challenging Manitou Incline — and packed with local restaurants, art galleries, boutiques and a variety of locally owned accommodations, this town has a wealth of choices. Historic Manitou Springs also hosts unusual and lively events, the best of authentic Colorado.

ManitouSprings.org | 719.685.5089





PIKES PEAK — AMERICA'S MOUNTAIN

The Summit of a Lifetime

Road trip to 14,115 feet on Pikes Peak — America's Mountain! Stop along the way to take stunning photos, hike scenic trails and kayak on serene waters. Be sure to keep an eye out for bighorn sheep roaming the slopes! The summit promises unlimited views, world-famous doughnuts and learning exhibits that explore the rich history of the mountain. Your unforgettable adventure begins the moment you fuel up!

DrivePikesPeak.com | 719.385.7325



CAVE OF THE WINDS MOUNTAIN PARK

Find What Lies Beneath

Cave of the Winds Mountain Park has been a must-see Colorado attraction since the late 1800s! Choose from three underground cave tours: the scientific Discovery, Haunted Lantern and down-and-dirty Spelunking tours. The above-ground attractions include the 100-mph Terror-dactyl giant canyon swing, three-story ropes challenge course, cliff climbing along the Via Ferrata, and the harness and hard-chair ziplines! Everyone will be sharing these memories for years to come!

CaveoftheWinds.com | 719.685.5444





HISTORIC CRIPPLE CREEK

There's More To Do in Cripple Creek

Discover the historic mining sites, museums, trains and theater. Visit the Cripple Creek Heritage Center, tour the Outlaws & Lawmen Jail Museum, ride the Cripple Creek & Victor Narrow Gauge Railroad or venture into the Mollie Kathleen Gold Mine. Be sure to see Rita the Rock Planter, Colorado's newest troll. Meet the Cripple Creek donkeys roaming the streets all summer. Explore the historic buildings rebuilt following the fires of 1896 and enjoy historic games. Take a drive on the Gold Belt Tour Scenic & Historic Byway.

VisitCrippleCreek.com
719.689.3315



MANITOU CLIFF DWELLINGS

Explore Ancient Pasts

Encounter the history of the Native Puebloan people at the awe-inspiring Manitou Cliff Dwellings, a popular locale that encourages visitors to get interactive and touch history. Step back in time as you explore each preserved cliff dwelling, relocated from the Four Corners region near McElmo Canyon in southwest Colorado in the early 1900s. These 40 unique rooms, remnants of ancient Native American culture, illustrate what life was like for the Indigenous peoples of the state.

CliffDwellingsMuseum.com
719.685.5242



THE NORTH POLE SANTA'S WORKSHOP

Experience the Magic

Welcome to The North Pole Santa's Workshop, an enchanting Christmas-themed amusement park nestled at the foot of Pikes Peak. Bring the kiddos to enjoy more than two dozen rides, charming shops, special treats, and a chance to meet Santa.

NorthPoleColorado.com | 719.684.9432



PIKES PEAK REGION ATTRACTIONS

More Than Just a Mountain

The Pikes Peak Region is packed with iconic Colorado landmarks, Wild West history, parks the whole family can enjoy and epic thrills for a surge of adrenaline. All the need-to-know info is curated in one place to make planning easy. Head to pikes-peak.com for attraction videos, hours, rates, itineraries, events and discounts.

Pikes-Peak.com | 1.800.525.2250

**Adventures Out West**

If witnessing waterfalls, cruising dirt roads, biking through a scenic byway or soaring on a zipline is on your Colorado bucket list, look no further than Adventures Out West. This top-rated tour company has all your thrill-seeking and sightseeing needs, including hot-air balloons, Jeep and Segway tours, group hikes and more!

**AdventuresOutWest.com
719.578.0935**

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The beauty of Colorado meets the magic of the Old West at the iconic Flying W Ranch. Don't miss this extraordinary Colorado Ranch dinner experience in operation since 1947. The majestic western grounds and outdoor activities, the hearty Cowboy Dinner, and the riveting musical performance by the Flying W Wranglers will leave you with memories to last a lifetime!

**FlyingW.com
719.598.4000**



Cheyenne Mountain Zoo

Hand-feed the herd in our new Giraffe Center while taking in incredible mountain views at the #2 Zoo in North America, as ranked by USA TODAY 10Best Readers' Choice Awards in 2025. From up-close animal demonstrations to sky-high adventure on the Mountaineer Sky Ride, every visit supports wildlife. Advance tickets required. Rideshare tickets always available.

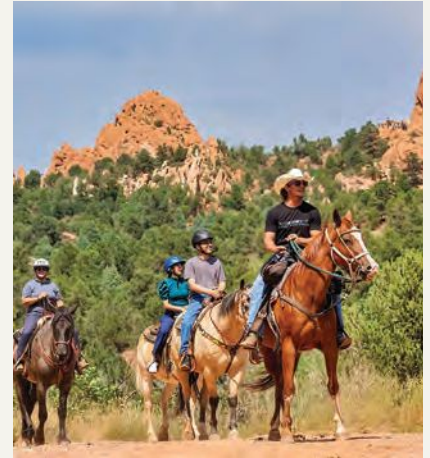
CMZoo.org
719.633.9925



Ghost Town Museum

The Ghost Town Museum is a living-history exhibit of Colorado's Wild West past with fun and educational activities for the whole family. Explore the preserved Gold Rush-era town displaying authentic artifacts, crank a butter churn, operate an old-time arcade game or pan for real gold in the summer. Plus, you can shop for gifts or sip an old-fashioned sarsaparilla beverage.

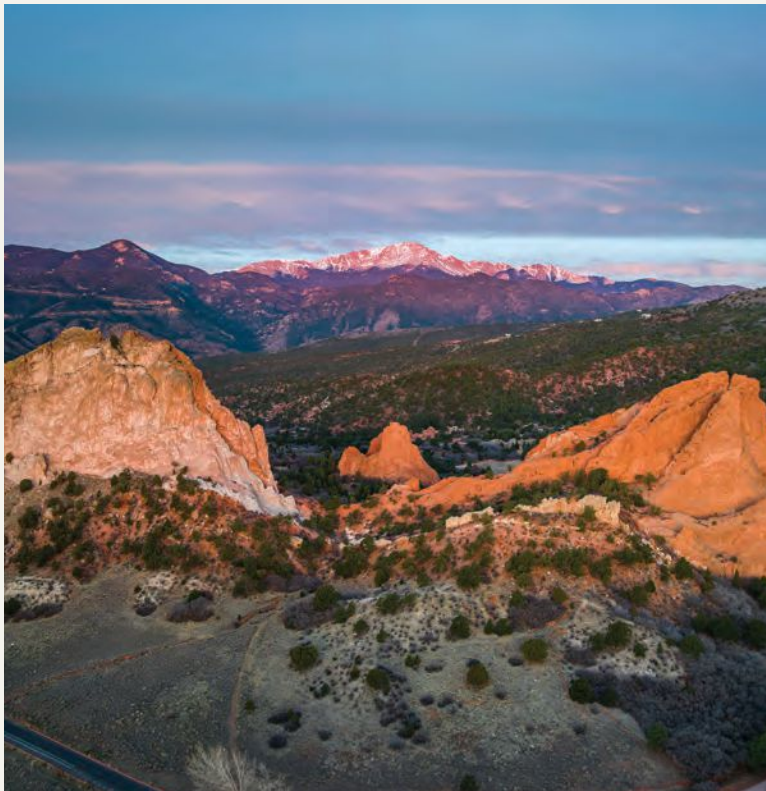
GhostTownMuseum.com
719.634.0696



Academy Riding Stables

Enjoy the epic red sandstone and limestone landscape of the Garden of the Gods with Academy Riding Stables in an iconically Western way — on horseback. You'll make a new, neighing friend while learning horse-riding basics (or improving your current skills) on one- and two-hour scenic rides through giant rock formations or on pony rides for kids ages 2 to 7.

AcademyRidingStables.com
719.633.5667



PIKES PEAK REGION ATTRACTIONS

15 Attractions for \$15 or Less!

Discover incredible family-friendly adventures in Colorado Springs with 15 amazing attractions that won't break the bank at under \$15 each! From the free natural wonder of Garden of the Gods with its towering red rock formations to hands-on excitement at the Space Foundation Discovery Center, there's something for every budget-conscious traveler. Whether you're seeking outdoor adventures, educational experiences, or unique attractions like panning for gold at the Western Museum of Mining and Industry, Colorado Springs delivers unforgettable memories without the hefty price tag.

Pikes-Peak.com/15 | 800.525.2250



Your Perfect Ski Trip

On the Slopes & Beyond

There's a reason Colorado remains a top destination for winter travelers year after year. Our 28 ski resorts are nestled near charming mountain towns packed with delicious eats, exciting rest-day adventures and, of course, some of the best descents in the world. Those downhill runs are also a favorite for athletes like Tony Drees, an adaptive ski champion, instructor and motivational speaker who knows firsthand how transformative time on the mountain can be. Whether you're just getting started with your first lesson or you're already a seasoned powder enthusiast, you can plan the perfect winter getaway in Colorado's Rockies. Find your ski-trip inspiration, with motivational tips and stories from Tony Drees.

Idaho Springs

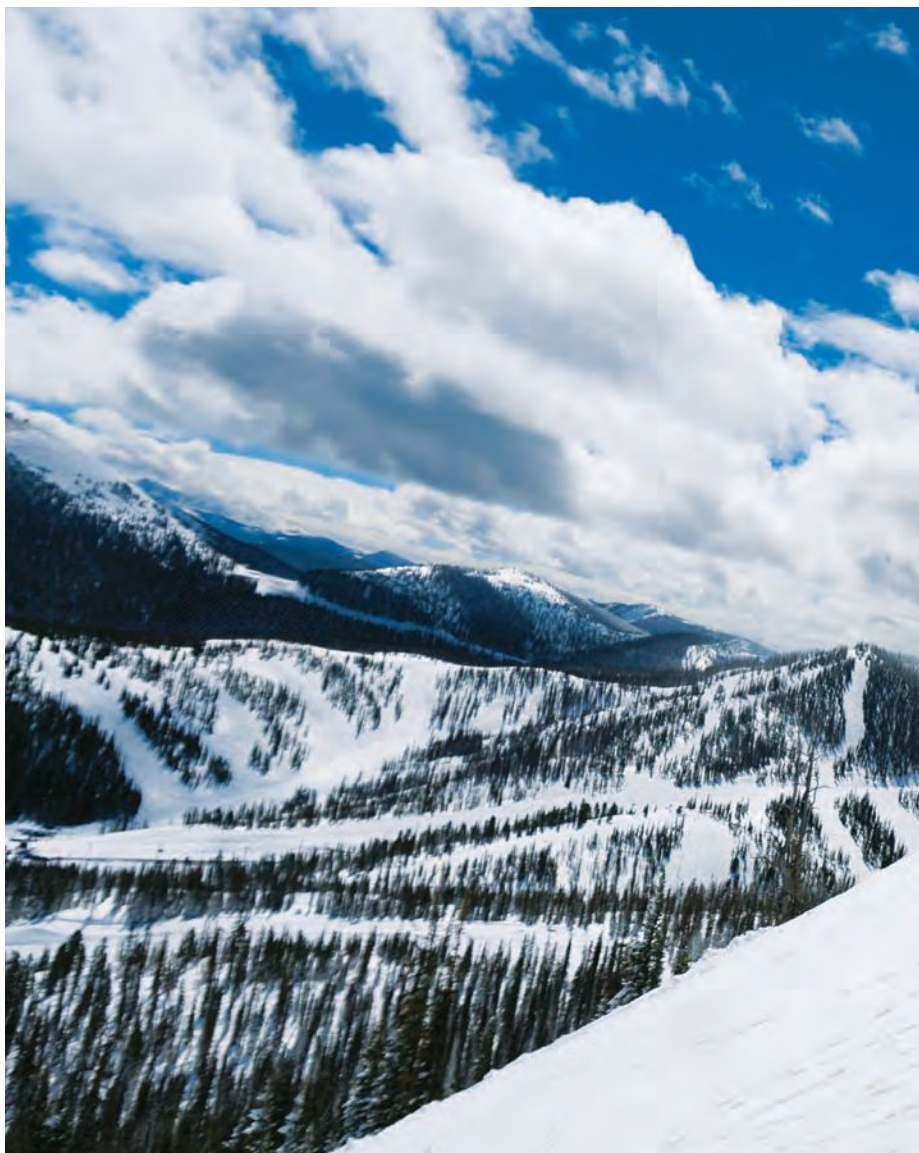
Echo Mountain's approachable terrain and close-to-Denver location make it a favorite for spontaneous ski sessions — especially under lit runs in the evening. After you kick off your boots, plan an après-ski soak at **Indian Hot Springs**, where steamy, mineral-rich pools sit tucked in stone caves and lush, tropical greenhouses. Then refuel at **Tommyknocker Brewery & Pub** with a craft beer and hearty mountain fare that nods to the town's gold-mining roots.

Salida

Hailed for its high-elevation terrain and shorter lift lines, **Monarch Mountain** near Salida is a bit of a hidden gem. Ride the treelined Panorama Lift to the top for 360-degree views of the Continental Divide. On your rest day, roam through downtown Salida, a Certified Colorado Creative District. Browse handmade ceramics at **The Maverick Potter**, then swing down to **Mountain Spirit Winery** to sample local wines in a relaxed, rustic tasting room.

Vail

As one of the largest ski resorts in North America, and with seven legendary back bowls, it's no wonder **Vail Ski Resort** is one of the most iconic winter destinations in the world. The sheer scale of terrain — plus the luxurious villages that surround the resort — draws snow-sports lovers from across the globe. While you're in town, dive into the history of skiing at the **Colorado Snowsports Museum and Hall of Fame**. For an intimate evening, reserve a table at **Tavernetta** and dig into house-made pastas, slow-braised meats and a standout Italian wine list served in a sleek, warmly lit dining room.



DAN DAVIS; TONY DREES; MONARCH MOUNTAIN



Vail Ski Resort



Monarch Mountain near Salida



Meet Tony Drees

If you visit Aspen Highlands, don't be surprised if you spot Tony Drees surrounded by an eager group of students or whooshing past you on three-track skis. As an instructor and avid adaptive skier, he easily clocks over 100 days on the mountain each season.

However, as a military veteran who lost his leg in 2018, his sunny ski days were not born from an easy journey. The award-winning documentary “One For All” tells his story of resilience through the unimaginable as he becomes the first Black amputee to do a ski-jump backflip at 55 years old. Today, he translates the lessons he's learned to inspire skiers of all stripes, ages and abilities, so they too can get a piece of that joy.

“For me, to be able to show up every day and have this [mountain] as my office view — and that I get to do this thing that I love so much around a bunch of people that also love it so much — what that does for my mental health is almost unquantifiable.”

Experience the wonder of skiing in Colorado for yourself. From beginner-friendly bunny hills to black-diamond glades, there's a route for every skier at these resorts. Get to know them all at Colorado.com/28Resorts.



Aspen Highlands



Purgatory Ski Resort in Durango

Durango

Purgatory Ski Resort features wide, rolling groomers, sunny skies and approachable terrain that make it especially popular with families and relaxed skiers. Scenic lifts and plentiful blue runs set the tone for an easygoing day on the mountain. When you're ready to unwind, grab a cocktail at **The Bookcase and Barber**, a fully functioning barbershop in Durango with a hidden entrance through a bookshelf that leads to a speakeasy serving expertly crafted drinks. On your off day, try ice fishing with Fisher Guide Services at **Vallecito Reservoir**, where you can settle in and try your luck catching trout and kokanee salmon in a tranquil, snow-blanketed setting.

Aspen

Aspen boasts four distinct mountains: Aspen Mountain and Aspen Highlands cater to intermediate and expert skiers, while Buttermilk is ideal for families and freestyle enthusiasts. Snowmass, the largest mountain, has something for all skill levels. On a rest day, visit the **Aspen Art Museum** for rotating exhibits from contemporary artists. Then swing by **Sway Aspen** for upscale Thai food like crispy pork and shrimp dumplings, bone-in beef ribs with peanut sauce and cocktails as artful as the décor.



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TownofFrisco.com



Mesa / Grand Junction

At **Powderhorn Mountain Resort** on the Grand Mesa, wide groomers and blue skies make for laid-back ski days. In nearby Grand Junction, you can pack in a “two-helmet day” — carve turns at Powderhorn in the morning, then gear up for an afternoon ride through the snow-dusted terrain of the **Lunch Loops mountain-bike trail system**. Wrap it all up with bold tacos and house-made salsas at **Tacoparty**, where the atmosphere is as bright as the flavors on your plate.

Crested Butte

Crested Butte Mountain Resort is known for gnarly terrain parks, expert runs and some of the steepest tree-cut trails in North America. On your rest day, explore the galleries, shops and colorful storefronts of **downtown Crested Butte**. Then head to **Two Twelve** for a seasonal menu — think braised buffalo, locally foraged mushrooms and creative vegetable-forward plates served in a warm, modern space.



Crested Butte Mountain Resort



Overcoming Fear as a Beginner

Whether it's your first time on the slopes or you're trying your very first black diamond, fear is a natural part of visiting the mountain. Drees sees the process of overcoming that feeling as one of the most rewarding parts of the sport. In fact, he often compares the learning curve to everyday challenges — saying that conquering obstacles on the mountain can help you face life's obstacles after you return from vacation.

“You're going to fall. You're going to take a hit ... that's what life is full of. No one goes to après ski and talks about how many times you fall. What you talk about is how you were able to get back up and conquer that thing that you were initially scared of.”

Silverton

Silverton Mountain Ski Area is Colorado's boldest choice for advanced skiers, with a single lift, no groomers and mandatory avalanche gear for all visitors. This expert-only experience pairs massive vertical drops with untouched powder runs. Off the mountain, head into the backcountry on a snowmobile tour with **Ice Pirate Backcountry Adventures**, then wind down at **El Bandido**, a cozy cantina tucked into Silverton's main drag, ideal for high-piled nachos and juicy margaritas.



Adaptive Ski Programs

After losing his leg, training for adaptive skiing helped Drees through the difficult transition. At the time, his teenage sons were getting excited about winter sports, so he made it a goal to get out on the mountain with them.

"It's liberating. It helps you gain a sense of independence. It helps you gain a sense of community and for me, it gave me a purpose. I wanted to ski with my sons."

While Drees teaches all forms of skiing, one-third of his year is dedicated to adaptive lessons through Challenge Aspen, where he instructs and skis alongside people with disabilities. And he notes that there are adaptive programs throughout Colorado that can accommodate people with various forms of adaptive equipment.

"What I love about adaptive and what I love about skiing, in general, is that regardless of your ability level, there's something for you."

TONY DREES, JEFF ORICO



Silverton Mountain Ski Area



Winter Park Express

Frisco

Frisco makes a great ski-trip home base, especially with **Copper Mountain** just down the road — a favorite for its high-alpine bowls and long, varied runs. In the afternoon, anglers can venture to the nearby **Blue River** in Silverthorne for some fly-fishing, where steady water flow keeps trout-filled stretches of water open all winter long. As the sun sets, head to **Kemosabe at Silverheels**, an American sushi grill known for its lively atmosphere and expertly prepared sashimi and steaks.

Winter Park

Hop aboard the **Winter Park Express** train from Denver's Union Station, which drops you right at the base of **Winter Park Resort**. Here, two sections offer something for every skier, from beginner-friendly greens on the front side to the exhilarating tree runs of the Mary Jane side. The resort is also home to the **National Sport Center for the Disabled**, one of the country's leading adaptive programs. After a day on the slopes, head to **A-Frame Club**, where retro-inspired cabins, a roaring fireplace and craft cocktails create one of the coziest après scenes in the Rockies.

Ski-Trip Tips

When it comes to ski-trip tips, Drees suggests drinking plenty of water, eating a good breakfast and scheduling in some extra time to adjust to the mountains' high elevation.



"If you fly into Denver, I recommend that you stay in Denver for a day and acclimate to the altitude. Even if you come straight to the mountain, don't ski your first day. Maybe go get your gear and wander around to get used to the environment."

And if it's your first time taking on the slopes, be sure to schedule a lesson to ensure a safe start for you and everyone else on the hill. Prepare for a few falls and challenges — and most importantly, lots of fun and laughs.

"There's going to be joy. There's going to be accomplishment. There's going to be adrenaline. ... They all have an opportunity to be present, to light up. That's the beautiful part."

Learn more about Tony Drees' story at transition-expert.com.



TONY DREES, COURTESY OF COPPER MOUNTAIN

Copper Mountain Ski Resort in Frisco



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6 Iconic Events

You Won't Want to Miss

There's no better way to experience Colorado's character than through the festivals that fill its calendar. Live music drifts through alpine air, local wine is poured with pride and surprises await in every corner, from frozen sculptures to parading tarantulas. These six events span the silly, the spirited and the scenic — and every one is distinctly Colorado.

1 Outside Days

Summer kicks off in downtown Denver with late May's Outside Days — a high-energy festival built around movement, music and the outdoors. The four-day schedule is packed with trail-running clinics, yoga sessions on the grass and opportunities to try out the latest hiking, biking and climbing gear. Live music fills the day with Colorado-grown bands and national acts, building to evening sets from headline performers. And there's more to discover in between: Step into a shaded wellness lounge, catch a film screening or listen in as adventurers share stories of hard-earned summits and long miles. Whether you're stretching, exploring or just taking it all in from a shady spot with a cold drink, don't miss this celebration of Colorado's outdoor culture.

Make the most of it: Fuel your festival with a stroll down food-truck row — a flavor-packed lineup featuring everything from spicy tacos and shwarma to sweet crepes and vegan street eats. Don't forget a reusable water bottle to take advantage of free refill stations, and look out for bike taxis offering an easy ride to and from the action.



Outside Days in Denver



BRYAN OUTWEST, SEAN MC MULLEN/COLORADO SNAKE HUNTERS



Tarantula Fest near La Junta

2 Tarantula Fest

Each September, hundreds of male tarantulas traverse Comanche National Grassland near La Junta in search of a mate. Their epic journey inspired the creation of Tarantula Fest, a lively celebration of the region's most surprising seasonal travelers. The phenomenon has drawn visitors from near and far for the chance to see the eight-legged critters up close. Alongside this natural spectacle, the festival includes a costume-filled parade, an education pavilion, contests, food trucks, live entertainment, face-painting, vendors selling spidery swag and, of course, tarantula tours.

Make the most of it: As you explore the area, cruise down Hwy. 50 to stop at the numerous farm stands for fresh produce — including Palisade peaches — one of Colorado's sweetest seasonal treats.

Sundance Heads to Boulder

Sundance Film Festival is coming to Boulder in 2027 — stay tuned for indie premieres, filmmaker spotlights and a whole new way to experience cinema in the Rockies.



Colorado Mountain Winefest in Palisade

3 Frozen Dead Guy Days

Held in Nederland for more than 20 years before its resurrection in Estes Park in 2023, Frozen Dead Guy Days is an offbeat March tradition. The multiday festival features a lineup of musical acts on three different stages and a zombie bar crawl around town — in addition to spectacles like coffin races and a polar plunge. The backstory behind this quirky event is a fascinating tale involving a Norwegian man, cryonics and a storage shed in Colorado. After Bredo Morstøl's death in 1989, his family brought his body to the U.S. where it was cryogenically frozen and later relocated to Nederland and the aforementioned shed. Packed in dry ice, "Grandpa" Bredo and his journey inspired the festival's name and legacy.

Make the most of it: Take a tour of the International Cryonics Museum located in the Stanley Hotel's Historical Ice House. Dedicated to the science of human preservation, it's also the new home of Morstøl's body, preserved with liquid nitrogen in a steel chamber.

4 Colorado Mountain Winefest

Palisade is home to towering mesas, the winding Colorado River and acres of vineyards, so it's only natural that the Colorado Mountain Winefest thrives here. During the third weekend of September, more than 50 of the state's wineries congregate on Riverbend Park's lawn to top off your glass with vino and celebrate their craft. Enjoy samples from dozens of producers and stop by food trucks serving delicious bites. Sway your dance partner around to live music, partake in barefoot grape stomping, and post up for educational seminars and chef demonstrations.

Make the most of it: The festival is part of Colorado Wine Week, so look for additional events throughout the Western Slope like wine dinners, chocolate and wine tastings, tours and more.

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5 Monte Vista Crane Festival

What better way to immerse yourself in Colorado's majesty than watching thousands of birds with 6-foot wingspans dot the sky in front of the snowcapped San Juan Mountains? Now in its 43rd year, March's Monte Vista Crane Festival is an activity-packed adventure. Events include a craft and nature fair, movie screenings, speakers and even expert-led bus tours in Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge to learn about sandhill crane migrations. Keep your binoculars ready to spot other birds, too, including ducks, geese, owls, eagles and raptors. If you prefer to explore on your own, the refuge has a walking trail, interpretive auto-tour route and designated pull-offs to maximize your viewing opportunities.

Make the most of it: Looking for an all-encompassing San Luis Valley trip? Just 40 miles east of Monte Vista are the tallest sand dunes in North America and an International Dark Sky Park — Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve.



Monte Vista Crane Festival



International Snow Sculpting Championship in Breckenridge

6 International Snow Sculpting Championship

Each January, visitors flock to this frosty fest in Breckenridge to watch pros from around the world gently coax intricate sculptures out of 25-ton blocks of snow. Over the course of five days, they create jaw-dropping and whimsical scenes of mythical creatures, larger-than-life natural wonders and elaborate abstract artworks — all without the use of power tools. Food trucks, hot cocoa, music performances and a beer garden keep things lively, and those in the know go around sunset to see golden hour's sparkling effect on the frozen works of art.

Make the most of it: Viewing the sculptures while they're being carved is free, but timed-entry reservations may be required. After admiring the icy masterpieces, swing by the Breck Create arts district to craft something of your own.

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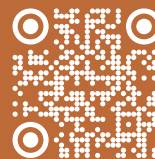
The electric energy and stunning sounds that come from live-concert performances can feel otherworldly — and at these scenic venues, the setting amplifies every note. From the crimson monoliths of Red Rocks Amphitheatre to the calm waters behind Dillon Amphitheater, these venues pair standout performances with unforgettable backdrops.



Mishawaka Amphitheatre in Bellvue

Mishawaka Amphitheatre

Mishawaka Amphitheatre in Bellvue sits on the wooded banks of the Cache la Poudre River, just west of Fort Collins. It draws a large audience for its lineup of jam bands and other live acts, all set against the background of a rustic, lodgepole-pine stage. While you're rocking out, you can peer at the rocky hills beyond the performance platform where you just might see bighorn sheep grazing. Between sets, listen for whitewater whooshing past in the river below this locally loved venue.



Explore
Upcoming Concerts
& Festivals



Before you depart for the show, check weather conditions, wear appropriate footwear and pack layers, sun protection and rain gear so you can enjoy every moment.



Dillon Amphitheater

Las Colonias Park Amphitheater

Just minutes from downtown Grand Junction, Las Colonias Park Amphitheater sits along the Colorado River, framed by the rust-colored Bookcliffs and the flat-topped Grand Mesa. Come early to explore the riverwalk trail that winds through the park before the music kicks off. Grab something to eat from the food trucks lined up near the entrance then set up on the grassy lawn with a blanket or low-back chair to jam out.

Dillon Amphitheater

Sailboats crisscross the crystal-blue reservoir that serves as the backdrop for this stunning stage on the banks of Lake Dillon. Sit back and relax as you watch a vibrant summer sunset reflected across the sparkling water, listening to the voices of established and emerging artists echo through the valley. The Dillon Amphitheater is a bit of a hidden gem in Colorado, where fans of the venue itself often book tickets every year, with the music as a secondary — but crucial — factor.

Red Rocks Amphitheatre

The naturally occurring, acoustically perfect Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Morrison is the mother of all outdoor music venues. Built into the copper-hued cliffs just outside Denver, this stage is renowned for its impeccable sound quality, which complements performances ranging from folksy rambles to bass-pumping EDM sets. The giant sandstone outcroppings that form the walls are higher than Niagara Falls and are part of the geological Fountain Formation deposited approximately 280 million years ago. And it's been captivating audiences and musicians alike for more than 100 years now, hosting icons like The Beatles and John Denver.

Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater

Affectionately referred to as "The Amp" by locals, Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater in Vail is known for its big acts and rugged views of the Gore Range. Lay down a blanket and lounge on the lawn or get closer to the performers by reserving seats near your favorite artists in the pavilion. In the evening, watch as the sky sets ablaze with rose-colored clouds. And once the sun descends westward over the mountains and stars begin to appear, the celestial show above just might rival the on-stage performances.

The Fred Shellman Memorial Stage

Jagged San Juan peaks rise above Telluride Town Park, creating a dramatic backdrop for the Fred Shellman Memorial Stage. From this spot, you can soak in 360-degree views of the mountains. The craggy landscape that surrounds the box canyon creates a breathtaking setting for signature music events like Telluride's Blues & Brews Festival and Bluegrass Festival. And when the season transitions from summer to early fall, the aspen groves that frame the stage glow bright gold. Many visitors set up tents at the park campground during multiday musical events and summertime shows so they can wake up amid the action.

Ford Amphitheater

One of Colorado's newest outdoor music venues, Ford Amphitheater in Colorado Springs offers a wide range of vibrant performances and spectacular sunsets against views of Pikes Peak. And there's no such thing as a bad seat at this amphitheater: Near the front, you can see your favorite artists up close. Farther back, you can gaze at the Rocky Mountains that stretch beyond the stage.



Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater in Vail



The Fred Shellman Memorial Stage in Telluride



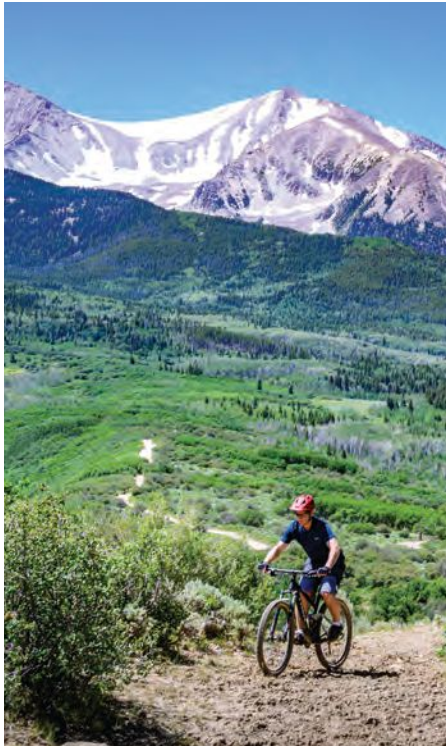
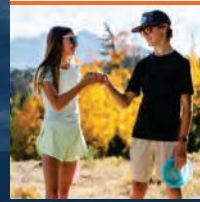
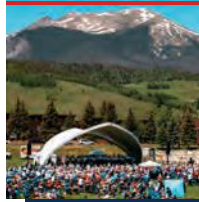
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MONARCH
MOUNTAIN

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Rocky Mountain Hot Springs

No Two the Same

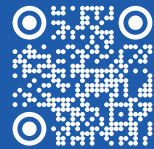
While all Colorado hot springs offer the comfort of warm, soothing pools, their similarities end there. These rejuvenating spots vary from luxurious spa escapes to rugged, natural springs, creating the perfect reset for every type of traveler seeking a relaxing respite during an adventure-filled vacation.



Breathtaking Views

If gorgeous scenery is your primary criterion, several hot springs offer views as captivating as the baths themselves. **Avalanche Ranch** in Redstone is a hidden gem tucked in the Crystal River Valley, where red-rock cliffs rise above emerald pastures and grazing alpacas. Three tiered soaking pools crafted from stone look out onto Mount Sopris and the Elk Mountains. A stay in one of the property's vintage cabins or wagons means you'll wake up just steps from the springs, making it easy to catch the glow of sunrise on the surrounding summits.

Spy on ancient peaks and sun-scorched desert plains dotted with sagebrush at **Joyful Journey Hot Springs Spa** in Moffat. Nestled at the northern edge of the Mystic San Luis Valley, the resort's tiled pools invite hours of indulgent soaking at varying temperatures. And as you steep, you can treat your eyes to the stunning scenery of the Sangre de Cristo range, where fiery sunsets paint the sky and cast a golden glow over the valley landscape.



Get a Guide to
the State's 30
Hot Springs

Avalanche Ranch in Redstone

Rustic Experience

When visiting the West, a rustic retreat can feel like you're stepping back in time. At **Strawberry Park Hot Springs** in Steamboat Springs, the rock formations that make up the pools are surrounded by blush-colored wildflowers in summer and tall, golden trees in fall. And when you stay in one of the resort's converted chuckwagons, you'll wake up feeling like a pioneer. During the day it's a family-friendly affair where all ages are welcome, and at night the pools are adults only and clothing optional. Once the lights turn off, you can peer up and spot bright constellations across the night sky.

For another historical hangout, head to **Hot Sulphur Springs Resort & Spa** in the town of Hot Sulphur Springs. The area was first visited by Ute and Arapaho hunting parties who discovered the steaming pools, calling them "big medicine." It was believed that the mineral-rich water healed pains and ailments — and many modern visitors can attest to feeling restored and remedied after a soak. Once you dry off, the on-site cabins offer cozy accommodations for a peaceful evening sipping wine by the fireplace.



Glenwood Hot Springs Resort in Glenwood Springs

Family-Friendly Fun

The world's largest mineral pool can be found at **Glenwood Hot Springs Resort** in Glenwood Springs, offering big-time fun for families. Let the kids play in the dedicated splash zone modeled after Glenwood Canyon's Hanging Lake or bring the tots to the kiddie-pool fountain to frolic. Hop on an inner tube and take a trip down the whitewater "river" that twists and turns you through thrill-filled chutes. Or just kick back and picnic on the patio surrounded by towering red mountains while you snack on juicy burgers from the grill.

At **Ouray Hot Springs Pool & Fitness Center**, the diving board, winding waterslide and fun-filled game area with a volleyball net and inflatable obstacle course will entertain your whole crew for hours. Their restorative waters are rich in potassium, manganese and iron, and don't have a strong sulfur smell. Parents can also wade around in the infinity-edge overlook pool and soak in the views of the snowcapped San Juan Mountains.

Off-Peak Visits

Want more relaxing soaks to yourself? Plan to visit on a weekday for a more private experience.

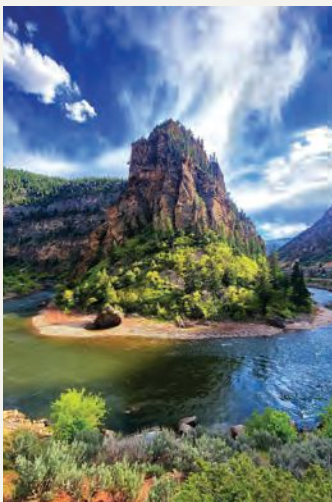


Welcome to Glenwood Springs

Glenwood Springs is the genuine Colorado mountain town famous for hot springs, outdoor recreation, spectacular scenery and nonstop fun.



Hanging Lake, a National Natural Landmark



Welcome to the Land of Water

Glenwood Springs is a year-round recreational paradise famous for the world's largest hot-springs pool, natural vapor caves and more than 30 mineral springs on the banks of the Colorado River. Enjoy Gold Medal fishing, rafting and kayaking. Bike or hike for awe-inspiring scenery or discover winter sports without the crowds.



Thrills for Everyone

Discover Colorado's favorite mountain playground. Glenwood Springs offers America's only mountaintop theme park with thrill rides and historic cavern tours. The charming downtown is the center for shopping, dining, rich Western history and culture. Be sure to reserve a time to hike to Hanging Lake, a National Natural Landmark and Colorado favorite.

Romantic Hot Springs

Few things are as romantic as spending a day relaxing in the steaming waters at **Durango Hot Springs**. Sip rosé with your partner as you settle into one of 32 natural hot springs. For a more private experience, reserve one of the small ofuro-style soaking tubs, where you can lounge together and set the temperature to your precise preference. Add a couples' hot-stone massage and unwind next to each other as the smooth, heated rocks infuse your skin with therapeutic essential oils and boost circulation.

At **Mount Princeton Hot Springs Resort** in Nathrop, romance flows as naturally as the water. The resort's creekside hot springs and infinity pool look out on the dramatic Collegiate Peaks, creating a dreamy setting for couples. Soak in quiet corners tucked along Chalk Creek, schedule side-by-side massages or book a suite near the historical bathhouse for a charming overnight stay. Whether it's an anniversary, proposal or just a spontaneous escape, this mountain retreat delivers an unforgettable atmosphere for connection.

Luxurious Spa Day

Sometimes, an ideal hot-springs getaway means waking up slowly, sitting in geothermal waters and sipping a mimosa as you wait for your massage reservation. **The Springs Resort** in Pagosa Springs is a riverside retreat home to the world's deepest geothermal hot spring and more than 45 soaking pools, each with different temperatures and mineral profiles. Choose a private terrace pool, indulge in a custom spa treatment or dine on-site at their recently unveiled signature restaurant, Wild Finch, featuring a wellness-focused menu. The major expansion also features elegant guest suites and additional soaking pools along the San Juan River.

Meanwhile, at **Dunton Hot Springs** near Telluride, elegance blends with whimsy and peaceful seclusion as you sink into a steaming natural tub steps away from your restored cabin, many hand-built in the 1800s. The site was once a mining camp, but now hosts luxurious lodging within the ghost town's authentic homes, stores and barns. The toasty springs — some reserved exclusively for your little chalet — are just one piece of the all-inclusive experience, best combined with fine dining, custom massages and day trips exploring the aspen-lined trails.



Dunton Hot Springs near Telluride

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Discover the Hot Springs of Glenwood Springs

Sink into the soothing geothermal waters of Glenwood Springs. At Iron Mountain Hot Springs unwind in mineral-rich pools while taking in views of the Colorado River. At the Glenwood Hot Springs Resort, play in the world's largest hot springs pool and bask in the sunshine. Descend into the Yampah Vapor Caves, still considered a sacred place for America's Indigenous people. No matter the season, you'll discover the magic of hot springs in Glenwood Springs.



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Your Guide to a Great Day on the Trail

When Nelson Holland moved to Colorado and saw the picture-perfect beauty of the state, it was a life-altering moment for the Brooklynite. Not only was he introduced to a new, lifelong passion, he started on the path to becoming an outdoors-focused social-media influencer — and a featured guest for the Colorado Tourism Office's Do Colorado Right campaign.

"Once I saw the Rocky Mountains, it unlocked a bunch of new things for me," Holland said. "There was this bison spot at Rocky Mountain Arsenal [National Wildlife Refuge] with 200 bison 15 minutes away from where I used to live in Thornton, and I started going over there because I wasn't really a nature person in the same way in New York."

That was 10 years ago, and Holland said those early visits to Rocky Mountain Arsenal kicked off a decade of outdoor discovery. Since then, he's explored Colorado's vast landscape, seeking big views and glimpses of the local wildlife — keeping Do Colorado Right Leave No Trace Principles, like Keep Wildlife Wild, in mind. He's shared his adventures along the way, too, collecting a bounty of likes and followers on his Instagram and TikTok platforms, @fatblackandgettinit. There, he works to encourage others to explore the great outdoors, while elevating the importance of representation and inclusion.

"There are people like me that don't look like the traditional hiker," he said. "There are people that are plus sized that take more time. There are people that need poles. We should really be inclusive of everybody getting out there. There's a trail for everybody as long as [people are] respectful of everybody else."



Nelson Holland

“Once I saw the Rocky Mountains, it unlocked a bunch of new things for me.”

For Holland, heading out for a hike — either solo or with a group — means he's seeking towering panoramas, endless wildlife and restorative moments found only in nature. It's essentially his special time to recharge and take in the tranquil landscape around him.

"It was always about seeing the views," he explained, "but then I saw woodpeckers and moose and things that I had never seen while I was taking these journeys. So, then I became a wildlife lover."

When Holland is outside, especially early in the morning when he has a trail all to himself, his favorite wildlife sightings — done from a safe distance — include elk, bison, bighorn sheep, eagles, osprey, red-wing blackbirds, Steller's jays, beavers and mountain goats. Basically everything.

"I'm a moose-aholic," he added.

Living in Colorado's Front Range doesn't limit his access to beautiful places in the state, either. A quick ride in the car from Denver lets Holland reach shady forest trails, rushing streams, alpine lakes and all of his favorite summer destinations.



Walk or ride on
designated trails to
help preserve the path
and protect the homes
of local wildlife.



Rim Trail near Snowmass

Nelson Holland's Top 6 Colorado Trails

Mount Crested Butte Crested Butte

Trek up Crested Butte Mountain Resort by foot from the base area to a vast network of trails, or ride the chairlift up for a shorter hike, since you'll just be going down. No matter your method for reaching the top, you're in for startling mountain vistas swathed in green grasses and blooms — and marmot sightings, too.

"It's a great way to get up above 12,000 feet," Holland said of the summer chairlift offerings, adding that there's an element of safety for newcomers to the outdoors, who are still out there building confidence, given the trail network is part of the resort.



Mount Crested Butte



Near Dillon

Mount Sniktau Near Dillon

More than once, Holland mentioned this easy-to-access thirteener (peaks over 13,000 feet). The nearly 4-mile, round-trip hike can be tackled all year (yes, you can do it with snowshoes!), and even the trailhead is high up — 11,990 feet to be exact. As far as thirteeners go, it's a shorter hike to the summit with a less-intense (but still challenging) elevation gain of 1,555 feet.

"It's just about the easiest thirteener you could do," he said. "I think I might like thirteeners more than fourteeners, not just because they're less crowded but because the backdrop is a fourteener right next to it. ... You get to the top, and I can't think of anything more beautiful."

According to him, hikers should watch for Torreys Peak while hiking Sniktau's marked trail. It's one of those neighboring fourteeners — peaks that are more than 14,000 feet — that reminds him of the Swiss Alps, especially during winter and early spring.



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Loveland displays over 500 pieces of public art, and is home to four distinct sculpture parks, one-of-a-kind festivals, 12 breweries and fabulous shopping throughout Centerra and historic Downtown.

Loveland is an outdoor enthusiast's paradise from hiking Devil's Backbone to boating at Carter Lake, riding the range at Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch to golfing one of our three courses. What's not to LOVE about Loveland, Colorado?

*Only 35 minutes to Rocky Mountain National Park
45 minutes north of Denver*



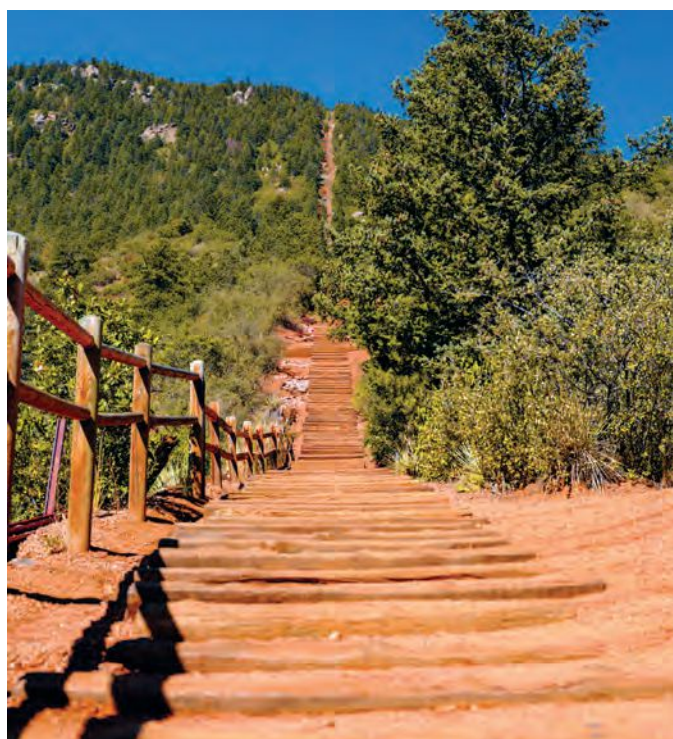
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To start planning your vacation



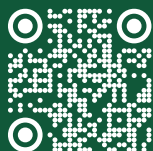
Bear Peak Near Boulder

Bear Peak is a “butt-buster,” according to Holland. Come for toothy mountain views, wildflower-strewn meadows and rushing water sounds from Boulder Creek. Expect a bevy of wildlife-viewing opportunities, too, from curious deer to a rainbow of birds and an occasional bear, with steep switchbacks at the top. The loop clocks in at just over 8 miles.

“It’s a super beautiful hike the whole way through, but once you get to the top you have views that you probably didn’t think you could see from the Front Range,” he said. “You can see all of the Indian Peaks Wilderness and an amazing view of Longs Peak.”



Manitou Incline



**Get Pro Tips
for Colorado
Hiking**

Deer Mountain Near Estes Park

This moderate-rated Rocky Mountain National Park trail is just over 6 miles round-trip and tops 10,000 feet. He loves it for its fluttering aspens and numerous wildlife-spotting opportunities, including some of his Colorado favorites — moose and elk.

“Estes Park might be my favorite place in the world,” he said. “On that hike specifically, you get amazing views of the Continental Divide, and it has this part — looking back in — where you can see the [town of Estes Park].”

“There’s a hike for everybody out here in Colorado.”

S-Mountain Salida

Walk north of downtown Salida for a panoramic dirt road meandering up S-Mountain, also known as Tenderfoot. Head along Spiral Drive to the mountaintop to see grand views of the town or wander onto a connecting trail for a rocky challenge.

“Salida has beautiful weather year-round, so it can be sunnier there than it is in Denver; and it’s really accessible, too,” he said. “It’s 3 miles, 500 feet or so elevation gain, and the views are amazing. So, it’s a hike that everyone can do.”

Manitou Incline Manitou Springs

Holland describes his relationship with the Manitou Incline as “love-hate” due to the challenging nature of the steep outdoor stair climb, but the scenery alone makes it worth it. He suggests getting there as early as the reservation system allows — which is 6 a.m. — for a strenuous climb up 2,744 stairs while basking in the sunrise afterglow.

If you’re planning a visit to Colorado, are new to outdoors exploration and don’t know where to start, he suggests checking out his @fatblackandgettinit accounts on Instagram and TikTok or even reaching out in a DM.

“There’s a hike for everybody out here in Colorado,” he added.



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Must-Try Experiences

for Every Type of Traveler

With so much to explore, Colorado is an escape full of endless possibilities. Some come to chase thrills flying on zip lines or kayaking through rapids, while others unwind in a quiet mineral spring and sip wine in the sun. Across the state, you'll find experiences that feel tailored to your travel style — and a landscape that makes every moment more rewarding. Whether you're here for the heart-pumping rush, rejuvenating rest, local flavors or the rich culture, it's easy to find what speaks to you and shape your perfect Colorado vacation.

For Adventurers

If your ideal getaway means chasing bold, memorable moments, Colorado has plenty of ways to take things up a notch. Start in Longmont with a jump from up to 18,000 feet at the **Mile Hi Skydiving Center**. It's fast, intense and delivers unbeatable views of the Front Range mountains.

In Colorado Springs, try the **Broadmoor Soaring Adventure**, where you'll zip line near the cascading waterfalls of Seven Falls from cliffside platforms built to limit environmental impact.

Book a lesson and rentals at **Confluence Kayak & Ski** to practice whitewater kayaking right in downtown Denver on the Platte River. It gives beginners a taste of carving through rapids without having to leave the city. Head to Castle Rock for **Epic Sky Trek**, where you'll climb, balance and zip through 110 aerial challenges across four levels — perfect for families, friends or solo travelers looking for a full-day thrill.

The **Royal Gorge Via Ferrata** in Cañon City adds another layer of excitement: guided climbs along granite cliff walls with panoramic gorge views. After conquering the traverse, stick around for a walk across the Royal Gorge Bridge — the highest suspension bridge in the country — or book an ATV or Jeep tour amid the Sangre de Cristo Mountains.

KENNAN HARVEY





The Royal Gorge Via Ferrata in Cañon City

For Indulgent Types

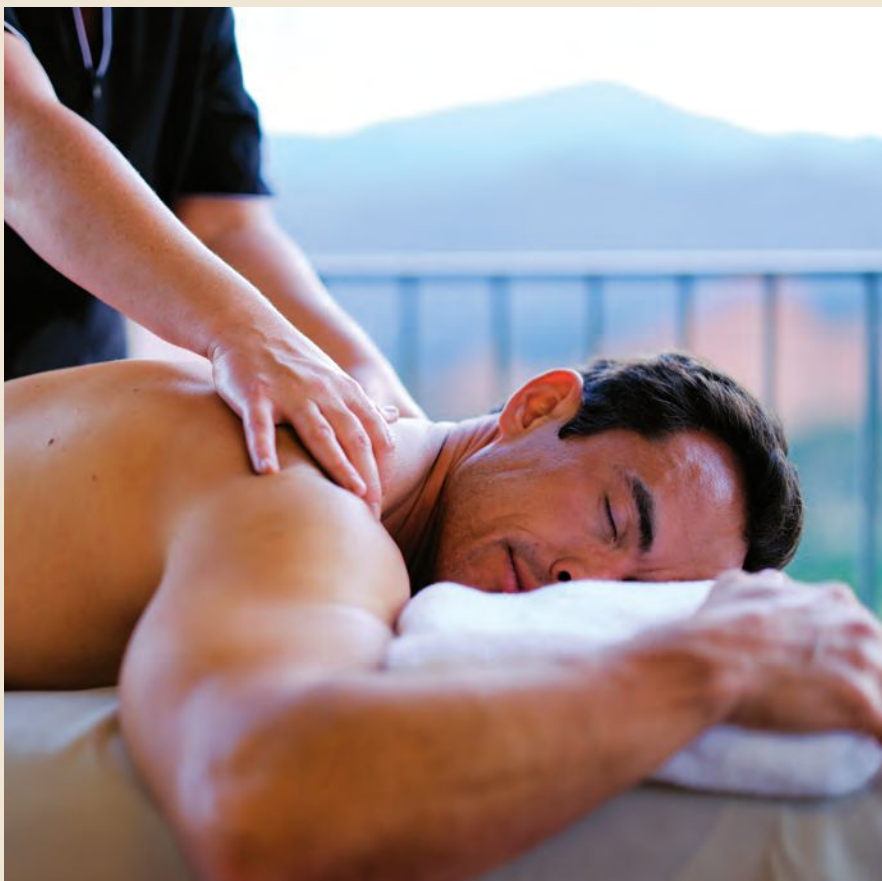
If you enjoy the finer things in life, Colorado invites you to slow down and savor every second.

The Ritz-Carlton Spa in Denver focuses on high-altitude recovery with targeted facials and massages. In Colorado Springs, the **Strata Spa at Garden of the Gods Resort** pairs full-body treatments with panoramic views of surrounding sandstone formations.

Denver's **Champagne Tiger** is a high-energy French American diner on East Colfax serving bottles of bubbly and brasserie-style comfort food. Piano nights, martini lunches and drag brunches add a little fun and glamor to any day. In Palisade, **Carlson Vineyards** welcomes guests to sip fruit-forward wines made from Colorado-grown grapes while they relax on a sunny lawn looking out on the fields.

Monarch Casino Resort Spa in Black Hawk blends upscale amenities with round-the-clock energy. Try your luck at the table games and slot machines, then head to the rooftop pool, unwind with a massage and grab dinner at one of several restaurants on-site. Or book a wellness-focused stay at **True Nature Healing Arts** in Carbondale, where you can take a yoga class, book a spa treatment and relax in a tranquil garden cafe.

Visitors to Glenwood Springs can spend the day soaking at **Iron Mountain Hot Springs**, which includes more than 20 mineral pools right beside the Colorado River. It's also a featured stop on the Colorado Historic Hot Springs Loop, an 800-mile route connecting 23 geothermal destinations across the state.



The Strata Spa in Colorado Springs



Monarch Casino Resort Spa in Black Hawk



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For Culture Lovers & Creative Minds

Art and history take center stage across the state. The **Denver Art Museum** houses over 70,000 works spanning global cultures and eras — including renowned collections of Western American, Indigenous and Latin American art. Just a few miles away, **Meow Wolf** immerses visitors in glowing labyrinths and cosmic portals built from storytelling, interactive tech and large-scale installations that invite exploration around every corner.

MCA Denver focuses on contemporary works, spotlighting artists through rotating exhibits, artist talks and seasonal rooftop events. Over in Grand Junction, **The Art Center of Western Colorado** showcases regional talent with gallery exhibitions and artist-led studio workshops that offer visitors a deeper connection to the region's creative identity.

Or simply head downtown, where the **Art on the Corner** program integrates permanent sculptures throughout the city's streetscape. Opening this year in Pueblo, **The Leonardo da Vinci Museum of North America** explores the inventor's legacy through full-scale engineering models and hands-on installations designed for interactive learning.

Fort Collins' **Lincoln Center** hosts touring productions, symphony concerts and dance performances year-round. In Pueblo, the **El Pueblo History Museum** shares stories of the region's cultural and ethnic groups through exhibits, reconstructed dwellings and excavation sites with bilingual interpretation.

Round out your cultural itinerary with a visit to the **Central City Opera House**. Built in 1878, it's still

home to summer performances that pair historical ambiance with professional-level productions. Take a self-guided walk through town to see the original gold rush-era buildings like the Teller House — once billed as “the finest hotel west of the Mississippi.”

Car-Free Travel

You don't need a car to experience the boundless wonders of Colorado when buses, shuttles, trains, and ride- and bike-shares are easily found. [Colorado.com/Carless](https://colorado.com/carless)



JONATHAN PHILLIPS

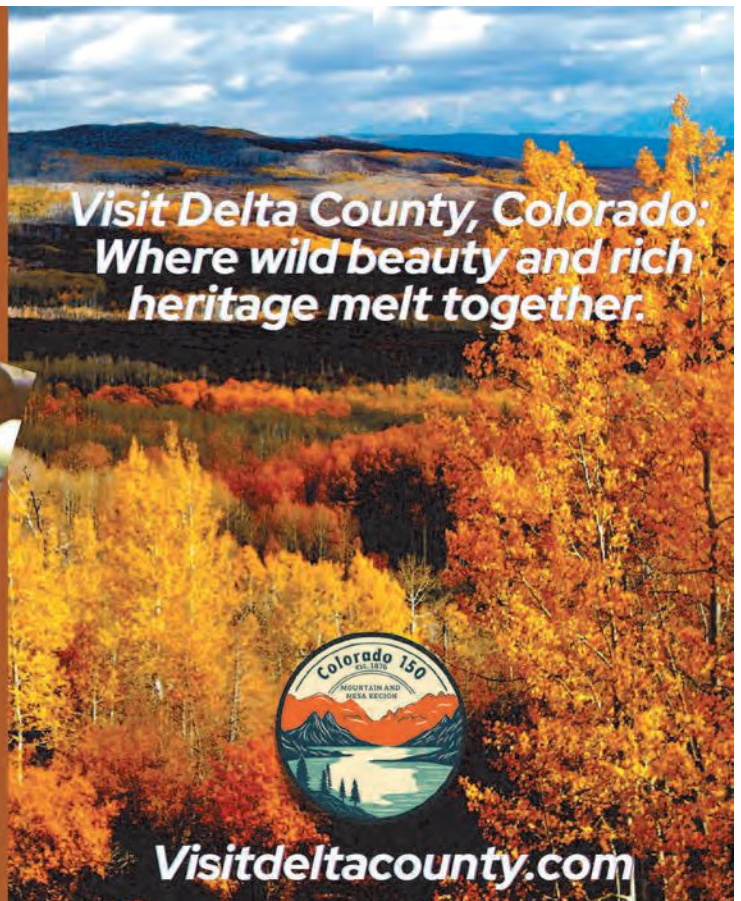
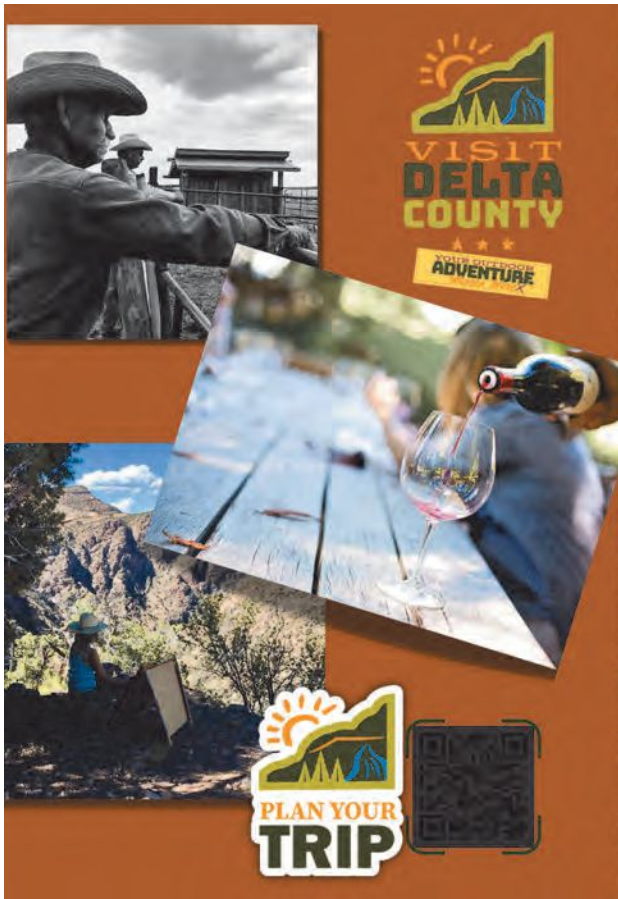
Meow Wolf in Denver



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The Lyons Farmette

For Foodies

From food trucks to fine dining, Colorado's culinary scene spotlights local ingredients in striking settings. Denver's **Le Colonial** delivers French-Vietnamese cuisine in a polished space inspired by 1920s Saigon, with hand-painted murals, gold-leaf ceilings, velvet banquettes and tropical touches that blend Parisian and Moroccan design. The dishes are built around fresh herbs, quality seafood and house-made rice noodles.

In Grand Junction, James Beard Award finalist **Bin 707 Foodbar** champions local agriculture with seasonal fare emphasizing Western Slope ingredients like Palisade peaches and Olathe sweet corn. Boulder's **Dushanbe Tea House** serves globally inspired plates in a hand-carved building with colorful columns, ornate ceilings and ceramic tilework. Take a seat for afternoon tea, which pairs their expansive tea menu with finger sandwiches and pastries. Just a few blocks away, **Corrida** serves steaks and tapas alongside unobstructed mountain views, with jamón ibérico sliced to order and an all-Spanish wine list. And Michelin Bib Gourmand restaurant **Ash'Kara** in Denver serves modern Israeli cuisine rooted in tradition and driven by bold flavors, with dishes like fresh-baked pita, house-made hummus and lamb kofta.

Set on a working flower and vegetable farm, **The Lyons Farmette** hosts seasonal dinners by innovative chefs from around the state with beautiful long-table seating, string lights and a welcoming, communal atmosphere. In Colorado Springs, **The Studio** by celebrity Chef Brother Luck is an intimate, reservation-only venue where guests can participate in hands-on cooking classes or enjoy multi-course tasting dinners.

For Romantics

Colorado is a standout for couples looking to unwind, explore or celebrate. Book a private tour with **Lake Dillon Boat Rides** to spend a peaceful afternoon cruising across the water with a backdrop of alpine summits. In Colorado Springs, take a sunrise hot-air balloon ride with **Rainbow Ryders** to float above the landscape and gaze at Pikes Peak, then finish with a toast.

In Denver, reserve a booth at **Nocturne**, a jazz club where the seasonal tasting menu pairs perfectly with live sets from local and touring musicians. Spend the afternoon wandering through the **Denver Botanic Gardens**, where themed floral designs, shaded walkways and water features create a peaceful retreat in the middle of the city — then stay for an evening concert at the **UMB Bank Amphitheater**.

Over in Boulder, the stunning Mary Rippon Outdoor Theatre sets the stage for the **Colorado Shakespeare Festival**, where actors perform the classic plays on warm summer evenings. Then, cap off your Colorado visit with dinner at **Flagstaff House**, known for its Wine Spectator Grand Award-winning wine list, panoramic views, and seasonal menus that showcase Colorado-raised beef and lamb.

Welcome to More at Gaylord Rockies



Nestled at the base of the Colorado Front Range, Gaylord Rockies Resort & Convention Center offers a refreshing departure from the ordinary mountain getaway. From the exhilarating Arapahoe Springs Water Park to family-friendly activities and entertainment, this 85-acre resort promises an unforgettable experience for all.



GaylordRockies.com | 720.452.6900

Aquatic Oasis

Dive into year-round bliss at Arapahoe Springs Water Park, featuring heated pools, thrilling slides, a serene lazy river, and more. Reserved exclusively for overnight guests, this aquatic haven offers relaxation and excitement in equal measure.

Culinary Delights

Embark on a culinary journey with a variety of dining venues, ranging from the laid-back ambiance of Mountain Pass Sports Bar to the upscale elegance of Old Hickory Steakhouse. Exciting additions to our eclectic assortment of restaurants include Embers Lodge Bar, Garden + Grain Seasonal Kitchen, Copper Table, and The Fortunate Prospector.

Family Escapade

Create lasting memories with an abundance of seasonal activities, onsite shopping, outdoor adventures, and family suites adorned with charming bunk beds. Whether hosting a small gathering or a large reunion, there's ample space and entertainment to keep everyone delighted, complemented by seasonal specials year-round.

Holiday Splendor

Immerse yourself in the enchanting world of Christmas at Gaylord Rockies, featuring live entertainment, interactive exhibits, and the beloved ICE! attraction. Crafted by master artisans from Harbin, China, using 2 million pounds of ice, this captivating spectacle breathes new life into timeless Christmas tales, promising a magical experience for all.

Colorado's Top Kid-Friendly Adventures

Fuel your child's curiosity through Colorado's family-friendly attractions. Whether your little one would visit Jurassic Park if given the chance or can talk your ear off about their favorite wild animal, there are tons of attractions where they can learn and play.

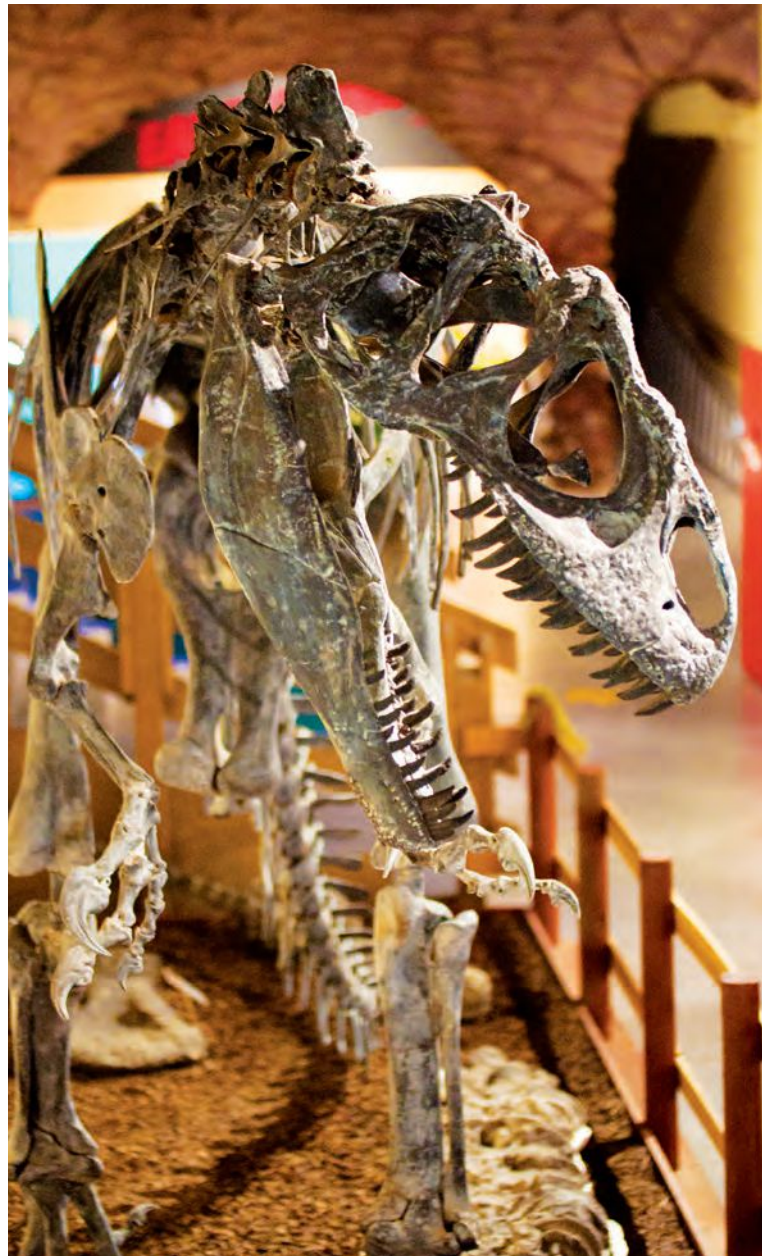
Dinosaurs

Have an aspiring paleontologist on your hands? You've come to the right place because a plethora of prehistoric giants once roamed the Centennial State, leaving behind tracks and fossils to marvel at.

Grand Junction is an ideal starting point for a road trip along the **Dinosaur Diamond Scenic and Historic Byway**. Heading northwest toward Fruita, stop to hike the "dinosaur trails" where important discoveries have been made, including Riggs Hill — the site of the first Brachiosaurus ever discovered — Dinosaur Hill and the Fruita Paleo Loop. Farther down the byway is the aptly named town of Dinosaur, which serves as a gateway to Dinosaur National Monument.

Fruita is home to the **Dinosaur Journey Museum**, where kids will be amazed at the vast collection of more than 15,000 fossil specimens. Here, they can make their own dino tracks and dig at a "quarry site" for actual dinosaur bones. Your family can also register for summertime Dinosaur Digs and Expeditions to go out in the field at a real dig site and search for Jurassic treasures.

See where some of today's most notorious dinosaurs were first discovered in **Dinosaur Ridge** near **Morrison**. Learn about these Late Jurassic giants at this outdoor museum known as one of the world's most famous dinosaur fossil localities. Daily self-guided and guided tours of excavation sites and exposed fossils provide a closer look at the area's history.



DINOSAUR JOURNEY MUSEUM

Dinosaur Journey Museum in Fruita



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Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad in Antonito

Trains

All aboard! If there's one thing that tends to fascinate kids, it's trains. Luckily, we have no shortage of locomotive lore and railroad-related attractions to choose from.

At the **Colorado Model Railroad Museum** in Greeley, kids and adults alike are dazzled by the miniature world created here — 80 scale miles of train track, to be exact. Observe the model railroad from interactive stations and see how many little details you can “ooh” and “ahh” over. Check out the collection of rare model locomotives, walk through a restored 1919 caboose and encourage the kids to let off some steam in the play area.

Traversing between Georgetown and Silver Plume, the **Georgetown Loop Railroad** is one of the state's original

tourist attractions. Hop in the open-air cars of this narrow-gauge train and wind through pine and aspen trees, and over a rocky canyon. To fully immerse in the history of the area, add on a tour of Lebanon Mine and try your hand at gold panning.

For a journey any train enthusiast will never forget, look no further than the **Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad** in Antonito. At 64 miles in length, the route zig-zags through spectacular forests, wildflower-filled plains and a rugged gorge, chugging to a peak elevation of 10,015 feet at Cumbres Pass. Full- and half-day excursions include a stop at Osier Station for lunch, while express trips are a good option if you're short on time.



Snow Days

Does your child's face light up whenever snowflakes start to fall? Whisk them away to our winter wonderland with activities the whole family will love.

Book a family retreat at **YMCA of the Rockies - Snow Mountain Ranch** in Granby and stay in rustic cabins or hotel-style lodge rooms. With a variety of things to do on-site and in the area, you'll have no trouble filling out your itinerary for frosty fun. Head to the Winter Pavilion for ice skating and snow tubing, or arrange a sleigh ride or dog-sledding tour.

For kids with a daredevil streak, **Welder Ranch and Outfitting Services** in Meeker has the adventure for you: a family snowmobile tour through the backcountry of White River National Forest. Choose

from half- or full-day rides that are tailored to your group's abilities and experience level, with children riding as passengers. Cruising through the fluffy powder of Colorado's spectacular alpine environment is a brag-worthy memory that youngsters will never forget.

Make your little one's "Frozen" dreams come true at the **Ice Castles** in Cripple Creek and Silverthorne, where magical worlds are built from thousands of hand-carved icicles. Explore frozen towers, caverns, archways and crawl tunnels, with sculptures and color-changing LED lights peppered throughout. Ice slides and chutes, including ones designed for younger kids, will have everyone singing "Let It Go" before you know it.



Ice Castles in Cripple Creek

Fairy Tales

Seeking a sprinkle of magic for your wee explorer? Encourage their imagination and carefree spirit at these unique spots that feel right out of a storybook.

Built by one man over several decades, **Bishop Castle** in Rye is an impressive sight to behold. Perpetually open, it's free to visit the sprawling stone-and-iron structure and admire it from the outside. From the ground there's plenty to take in, from the towers and bridges to the Grand Ballroom accented with stained-glass windows and the fire-breathing metal dragon perched off the front.

Though it's been a fixture of Nederland since 2010, the **Carousel of Happiness** dates back a century to its creation in 1910. A town resident brought the original frame to Colorado, restored it and hand-carved a whimsical menagerie of 50-plus animals for the ride. Point out the hidden fairies perched in the nooks and crannies of the Carousel House, and listen to the Wurlitzer organ tune as your little ones gleefully whirl around.

Have a playful frolic at the **Denver Botanic Gardens**, an ethereal oasis away from the urban surroundings of the city. The Mordecai Children's Garden is a 3-acre area where kids can explore and learn about flora and fauna through interactive features, such as an alpine meadow, swinging bridges and splash streams. The facility also offers year-round children and family programs, including building a personal fairy garden to take home.



Denver Botanic Gardens



Bishop Castle in Rye

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DISTANT GALAXIES

JUST ANOTHER DAY
AT THE MUSEUM



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Cheyenne Mountain Zoo in Colorado Springs

Animals & Insects

If furry friends are all your kid can think about, let them take a walk on the wild side and see their favorite critters up close.

In addition to an unconventional mountainside location at 6,714 feet in elevation, **Cheyenne Mountain Zoo** in Colorado Springs is known for its unforgettable animal experiences and demonstrations with an array of species, from penguins and rhinos to sloths and lions. Learn about caring for elephants or book a meet-and-feed with giraffes.

Specializing in spineless creatures, the **Butterfly Pavilion** in Westminster showcases everything from beetles and bees to sea stars and a tarantula named Rosie, utilizing immersive exhibits and interactive “touch” experiences. But the highlight is the Wings of the Tropics area, where you can walk among 1,600 free-flying butterflies in a lush tropical paradise. Peek into the Chrysalis Chamber and you might just catch a butterfly emerging for the first time.

In Keenesburg, the **Wild Animal Sanctuary** offers a bird’s-eye view from its 1.5-mile-long elevated walkway of more than 1,000 tigers, lions, bears, wolves and other species. This sprawling refuge takes in animals from captive situations and allows them to roam freely in large natural habitats, while visitors marvel at them from above. Watch as they run, play, relax and maybe even roar or howl as the sun lowers in the sky.

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In Colorado, flavor starts in the soil. From spinach sweetened by snowy nights to wheat grown for world-class beer, the state's ingredients are shaped by the landscape and an unrelenting spirit of experimentation. Among those embracing this philosophy is chef and farmer Eric Skokan who together with wife Jill Skokan, has transformed a more than 500-acre farm into the foundation of their Boulder restaurant, Bramble & Hare, and Black Cat Farmstead in Longmont.



Black Cat Farmstead in Longmont

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Black Cat Farmstead in Longmont

That commitment to local agriculture earned Bramble & Hare a Michelin Recommended designation and a Green Star — which recognizes exceptional restaurants that demonstrate sustainable and eco-friendly practices. Skokan's certified-organic farm supplies as much as 95% of the food on his menus — known for standout dishes showcasing fresh-picked produce and local meats.

"The quality of things I was able to grow in the garden and then bring into the restaurant would just be worlds better than the produce that I was purchasing from national companies," said Skokan.

That's why he and so many other chefs around the state are rethinking how they source and serve — spotlighting ingredients that thrive here seasonally — and inviting visitors to savor something unmistakably local.

At **Black Cat Farmstead**, guests can experience this local-first approach in its most immersive form. The menus shift daily, inspired by whatever is at its peak in the field. That might mean goat-cheese terrine with baby carrots, sweet-corn flan

picked hours before dinner or wood-fired porchetta wrapped in porkbelly from hogs raised just down the road.

Guests dining at the farm are greeted with a drink and a small bite. Then you are encouraged to walk the gardens and fields, where the Flatiron mountains are visible beyond neat rows of fennel, strawberries and lettuce. Once you've had a chance to explore, settle in private cabanas for dinner as the sun dips behind the peaks.

"The landscape is just absolutely spectacular," Skokan said. "And when the air races off the mountains and cools everything down, we start the wood stoves in the cabanas. You can see the last worries of the day sort of melt away from people and it's just a joy to see."

For dessert, ingredients from the field often share the spotlight with a little indulgence. "I cannot pull chocolate off in an agricultural sense," he said, "but we serve it anyway. I love when my wife Jill eats chocolate and I see her smile. That's how I envision all the rest of the guests enjoying it."

Skokan adds that the farm's produce is just as delectable. "[Colorado's] root crops — beets, parsnips and carrots — are as sweet as candy," he said. "And the exceedingly cold nights make our arugula some of the best on the planet."

Here, high elevation, sun-filled days and cool nights work in tandem to produce ingredients with concentrated flavor and strong character. As summer unfolds, other regions of the state showcase their signature harvests. In the Arkansas Valley, Rocky Ford has become synonymous with sweet cantaloupes, honeydew and watermelons — varieties cultivated over decades for their consistent show-stopping taste. Later in the season, Olathe sweet corn reaches its peak, prized for its crisp bite and mellow, sugary profile. Grown in the farmland surrounding the town of Olathe on the Western Slope, it's a seasonal favorite — served hot off the grill, tossed into salads or layered into all kinds of late-summer dishes.

For something a little spicier, Pueblo has carved out a name for itself with its iconic green chiles. Known for their deep, smoky heat, these peppers are fire-roasted in tumbling metal baskets at farm stands and festivals — a bold taste of fall in Colorado. They shine tucked into breakfast burritos, spread onto cheeseburgers and stirred



Black Cat Farmstead in Longmont



Black Cat Farmstead in Longmont



Salida Farmers Market

into soups, like the traditional Mexican stews at **La Diabla Pozole y Mezcal** in Denver. Pueblo green chiles are often put at the forefront of the Michelin Bib Gourmand restaurant's menu, elevating classic pozole with distinctive, focused flavors.

But Colorado's contributions don't stop at fruits and vegetables — its dryland staples are central to crafting pastas, pastries and loaves of bread. At the farm, the Black Cat team grows their own grains used to mill flour and bake sourdough daily from a starter that's over 20 years old, served with house-made butter. "Grains are something that Colorado does exceptionally well," Skokan said, evidenced by the many craft

breweries scattered throughout the state. He encourages visitors to see — and taste — that connection for themselves. "Spend an afternoon or an evening in a brewpub and try a couple of beers. I think the state separates itself in a really wonderful way with the great grains that we're growing and malting."

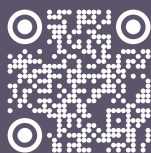
With abundant grassland throughout the state, Colorado is also well suited for raising lamb, beef and pork — resulting in meat that's clean, delicious and unmistakably tied to the land it comes from. **The Ginger Pig**, a Michelin Bib Gourmand eatery in Denver, draws from East and Southeast Asian street food, reimagined with locally grown meats. Dishes like Chinese borscht beef-and-

“Go to the farmers market and carve out an hour or two to wander around in an unstructured way and see what inspires you.”

vegetable soup bring global inspiration to the table without losing sight of the local harvest. Head west to the mountains, and that same ingredient-first philosophy takes on a refined alpine character. At Michelin-Recommended **Splendido at the Chateau** in Beaver Creek, Colorado-raised lamb and seasonal produce shine in a lodge setting that blends elegance with mountain hospitality.

And for travelers eager to explore the state's flavors more casually, Skokan offers this: “Go to the farmers market and carve out an hour or two to wander around in an unstructured way and see what inspires you.”

Maybe it's a just-picked Palisade peach or a bottle of green-chile hot sauce you pack home like a trophy. Because here, food isn't confined to one style or setting. It spans tasting menus, farm dinners, roadside stalls and weekend markets — all grounded in the ingredients, people and stories that make Colorado's food scene its own.



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Boulder Farmers Market

Boulder in Balance

In a city with an alpine pace but an urban pulse, you can play outside at the foot of the Flatirons and then shop, dine and stay in style.



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From Peaks to Patios

Spend your day reconnecting with Mother Nature on a forested trail, zipping down scenic singletrack on a mountain bike or schussing through the snowy slopes at Eldora ski mountain, then catch a show at the Boulder Theater, sip cocktails on a rooftop and grab a bite at 400+ restaurants (including 10 Michelin-recommended spots). Rest up in one of Boulder's luxury or boutique hotels so the next day you can explore a hand-carved Persian teahouse, linger in a contemporary art museum, tour a tea or puzzle factory, and take a scenic drive. Find more ideas at BoulderColoradoUSA.com.

Find Your Flow With Festivals & Events

Whether you're excited to attend the Sundance Film Festival in Boulder starting in 2027 or want to check out a longtime Boulder classic — like the spectacle that is the BOLDERBoulder 10k race, the crunch-er-ific Boulder Taco Fest or the arts extravaganza of Boulder Arts Week — there is always a packed calendar of events to choose from year-round. Find a full events calendar at BoulderColoradoUSA.com/events.



PHOTO CREDIT E CLARK



Be BoulderWise

Boulder is a place that's wild at heart yet grounded in care, where love for the land and way of life run deep. That's the spirit behind BoulderWise, a Visit Boulder program that shares locals' best tips for exploring responsibly. From sticking to trails and packing reusables to traveling with kindness, we invite you to help keep Boulder's natural beauty and vibrant culture thriving as you experience the magic of this little city at the foot of the Rockies. Learn more at BoulderColoradoUSA.com/BoulderWise.

Ride Colorado's EV-Friendly Scenic Byways

Colorado's 26 scenic and historic byways connect you with places where the terrain, culture and everyday life reflect the character of the region. Along these drives, you'll have the opportunity to walk through ancient cliff dwellings, trace a pioneer route across the plains, sip local varietals at a working vineyard or embark on a trail that leads to panoramic views.

Nineteen of these byways are electric vehicle-friendly, with charging stations conveniently located near museums, restaurants and downtown areas. That means you can take your time exploring while your car powers up — making it easier than ever to enjoy a sustainable road trip through Colorado's most scenic and storied routes.

Santa Fe Trail Scenic and Historic Byway

Following one of the oldest trade routes in the American West, the **Santa Fe Trail** stretches across southeastern Colorado, linking towns where frontier history, Hispanic heritage and prairie ecosystems intersect.

In Trinidad, preserved adobe buildings and 19th-century storefronts shape the downtown and just a short walk away, you can explore the **Trinidad History Museum** campus. Inside the **Baca House and Bloom Mansion**, period furnishings, trade goods and personal belongings reflect the wealth, cultural influences and trading relationships that developed along the Santa Fe Trail during Trinidad's rise as a commercial hub.

Cruising south, you'll make your way to La Junta, home to the **Koshare Indian Museum**. Constructed in the 1940s by a local Boy Scout troop, the space includes a hand-built kiva and an extensive collection of Native American art, beadwork and textiles.

Farther east along the byway, **John Martin Reservoir State Park** draws anglers, kayakers and birders to a high-plains lake bordered by cottonwoods and wetlands. The area supports over 400 documented bird species, and late-spring migration fills the air with calls from warblers, herons and terns. Hook up to Level 2 EV charging, then walk the **Red Shin Trail** or cast a line from one of several shoreline access points.





Trail Ridge Road in Rocky Mountain National Park



Buena Vista

ANDREW MAGUIRE (ALL PHOTOS)

Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway

Between Salida and Buena Vista, the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway cuts through the **Arkansas River Valley** in one of Colorado's most dynamic recreation corridors. The route sits beneath a cluster of 14,000-foot peaks named after Ivy League universities — a nod to early surveyors — and connects towns known for their creative energy and access to the outdoors.

In Salida, charging stations are scattered near art studios, gear shops and casual eateries in the historical downtown, where many buildings date back to the railroad boom. The **Chaffee County Libations Loop** links several local beverage makers; venture to **Tres Litros Beer Company** for hop-forward ales, **Wood's High Mountain Distillery** for small-batch gin and whiskey, and **Mountain Spirit Winery** for Colorado-grown reds.

About 30 minutes north, a gravel road leads into **St. Elmo** — one of the state's best-preserved ghost towns. Built during the mining rush of the 1880s, the town retains a seasonal general store, a former hotel and a handful of homes still surrounded by wooden fences and rusted equipment.

Back on the byway, Buena Vista's riverside district was built for exploration. At the edge of South Main, the **Surf Hotel** stands out with its modern design, polished interiors and live-music calendar that draws touring artists from around the country. EV chargers are located nearby, and from the hotel, it's a short walk to trail access, restaurants and locally owned shops that extend into the heart of town.

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Mesa Verde National Park

Trail of the Ancients Scenic and Historic Byway

In southwest Colorado, the Trail of the Ancients Scenic and Historic Byway brings you into direct contact with millennia of human history. The route connects modern towns with archaeological sites that trace the deep cultural lineage of Indigenous peoples in the Four Corners region.

Begin in Towaoc at the **Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Park**. Tours are led by Ute guides and include access to cliff dwellings, petroglyph panels and ancestral sites not open to the public without a reservation. These guided experiences combine oral histories with on-the-ground interpretation, offering context for a deeper understanding.

Northwest of Towaoc, **Sutcliffe Vineyards** operates in McElmo Canyon, growing

grapes at 5,300 feet above sea level.

Relax in the outdoors with a tasting surrounded by fruit trees and sandstone rock formations. The vineyard specializes in Rhône varietals like syrah, and its off-the-grid feel makes the experience especially memorable.

Cortez lies east of **Mesa Verde National Park** and serves as a base for exploring the region's deeper archaeological landscape. You can access charging here before heading into the park, where ranger-guided tours visit sites like **Cliff Palace** and **Long House**.

Mesa Verde includes more than 600 cliff dwellings, and seasonal programs allow you to climb ladders, walk into alcoves and hear how people once lived on this dramatic terrain.

Flat Tops Trail Scenic and Historic Byway

The Flat Tops Trail Scenic and Historic Byway links Yampa and Meeker across one of the most geologically unique mountain ranges in Colorado. Unlike the jagged peaks farther east, the **Flat Tops** were formed by volcanic activity and shaped by glaciers, leaving behind broad summits, hidden lakes and alpine meadows.

Start in Yampa, where you can charge up, then pick up supplies or maps at the ranger station before heading west. Several **Colorado Birding Trail** segments begin just outside town, leading into wetland and conifer habitats where you might catch a glimpse of northern goshawks or red-naped sapsuckers. From late spring through early fall,

wildflowers blanket the forest floor in purples, yellows and reds.

As you gain elevation, **Dunkley Pass** offers wide-angle views of the Flat Tops Wilderness. Interpretive signs explain the region's volcanic origins, and clear days reveal layers of basalt cliffs and spruce-covered valleys. The road turns to gravel near the summit — manageable for most vehicles, but best taken slowly to allow time for stops and photos.

Trappers Lake sits near the western edge of the byway and played a key role in the 1964 Wilderness Act. Just a few minutes from the sparkling waterfront, **Trappers Lake Lodge** rents rustic cabins and guides fly-fishing and horseback excursions into surrounding valleys.



Flat Tops near Steamboat Springs



Pawnee Buttes near Ault

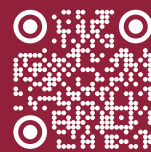
Pawnee Pioneer Trails Scenic and Historic Byway

On Colorado's northeastern plains, Pawnee Pioneer Trails opens up a region shaped by geology, shortgrass prairie and homesteading history. The route spans Ault to Sterling, with an offshoot to Fort Morgan, and rewards travelers with wide-open views, wildlife sightings and cultural stops tied to the land's agricultural legacy.

Near Ault, the **Pawnee Buttes** rise from the prairie, two sedimentary formations more than 300 feet high. The hike from the trailhead crosses open rangeland and includes interpretive panels about the area's unique ecosystem. This is one of the best places in the state to view shortgrass prairie birds including mountain plovers, burrowing owls and lark buntings — Colorado's state bird.

In Sterling, the **Overland Trail Museum** recreates a frontier-era town. The museum's layout encourages self-guided wandering through shaded grounds. Step into a general store, print shop or church, each staged with tools and artifacts that reflect early settler life on the plains.

Power up the car by **Parts & Labor Brewing Company**, which pours small-batch beers inside a converted auto shop. Sample a lineup that highlights regional ingredients and classic styles — like a dry-hopped pilsner crafted with Colorado-grown malt or a seasonal wheat beer flavored with local fruit — all while surrounded by retro decor.



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Whether it's watching the night sky on a summer evening or teeing off with the locals at the annual ice golf tournament in winter, North Park has everything you've been looking for in your new favorite place.

[VisitNorthParkCO.com](https://www.VisitNorthParkCO.com)



Colorado Welcome Centers

If you want to travel like a local during your visit, simply head to one of the state's Welcome Centers. Stop by for advice from knowledgeable volunteers and pick up maps, brochures and regional guides that will keep you inspired during your Colorado stay.



Lamar Welcome Center

Alamosa Welcome Center

610 State Ave.,
U.S. Hwy. 160 and State Ave.,
719-589-4840

On your way in from New Mexico at the intersection of highways 160 and 285.

Burlington Welcome Center

48265 I-70, I-70 between exits 437 and 438, 719-346-5554

Located on I-70 near the Kansas border.

Cortez Welcome Center

928 E. Main St., U.S. Hwy. 160/491,
970-565-4048

Located near the Four Corners region.

Dinosaur Welcome Center

101 E. Stegosaurus St., U.S. Hwy. 40,
970-374-2205

Located near Utah and Dinosaur National Monument.

Fort Collins Welcome Center

7 Old Town Square, Suite 100,
970-232-3840

Found off I-25 at exit 269B, located in Old Town Fort Collins.

Frisco/Copper Visitor Information Center

300 Main St., 970-668-5547
Partnering location with the Colorado Tourism Office (CTO), located in downtown Frisco.

Fruita Welcome Center

340 Hwy. 340, I-70 at exit 19,
970-858-9335

Located just off I-70 near the Utah border.

Gunnison County Visitor Center

500 E. Tomichi Ave., U.S. Hwy. 50,
970-641-1501

Partnering location with the CTO, found along Hwy. 50 in Gunnison.

Julesburg Welcome Center

20934 C.R. 28, I-76 at exit 180,
970-474-2054

In the northeast corner of Colorado, near major interstates I-80 and I-76.

Lamar Welcome Center

109 E. Beech St., U.S. Hwy. 50,
719-336-3483

Situated near the Kansas border in southeastern Colorado.

Logan County Visitor Center

102 N. Riverview Rd., 970-522-8962
Partnering location with the CTO, located off I-76 at exit 125.

Montrose Visitor Center

107 S. Cascade Ave., 970-497-8558
Partnering location with the CTO, located in downtown Montrose.

Trinidad Welcome Center

309 Nevada Ave., 719-846-9512
Located off I-25 near the New Mexico border.

Talk to a Local

Visiting a Welcome Center
is the easiest way to
discover what Coloradans
love most. Find one near
you to talk to a local and
get the inside scoop
for exploring the area.

Navigate Colorado

Colorado is the eighth-largest state in the U.S., measuring 380 miles east to west and 280 miles north to south. Yes, that's more than 100,000 total square miles to explore. Luckily, with so much to see and do, Colorado is very easy to navigate. The articles starting on page 8 will give you ideas for exploring each corner of the state — and everywhere in between.

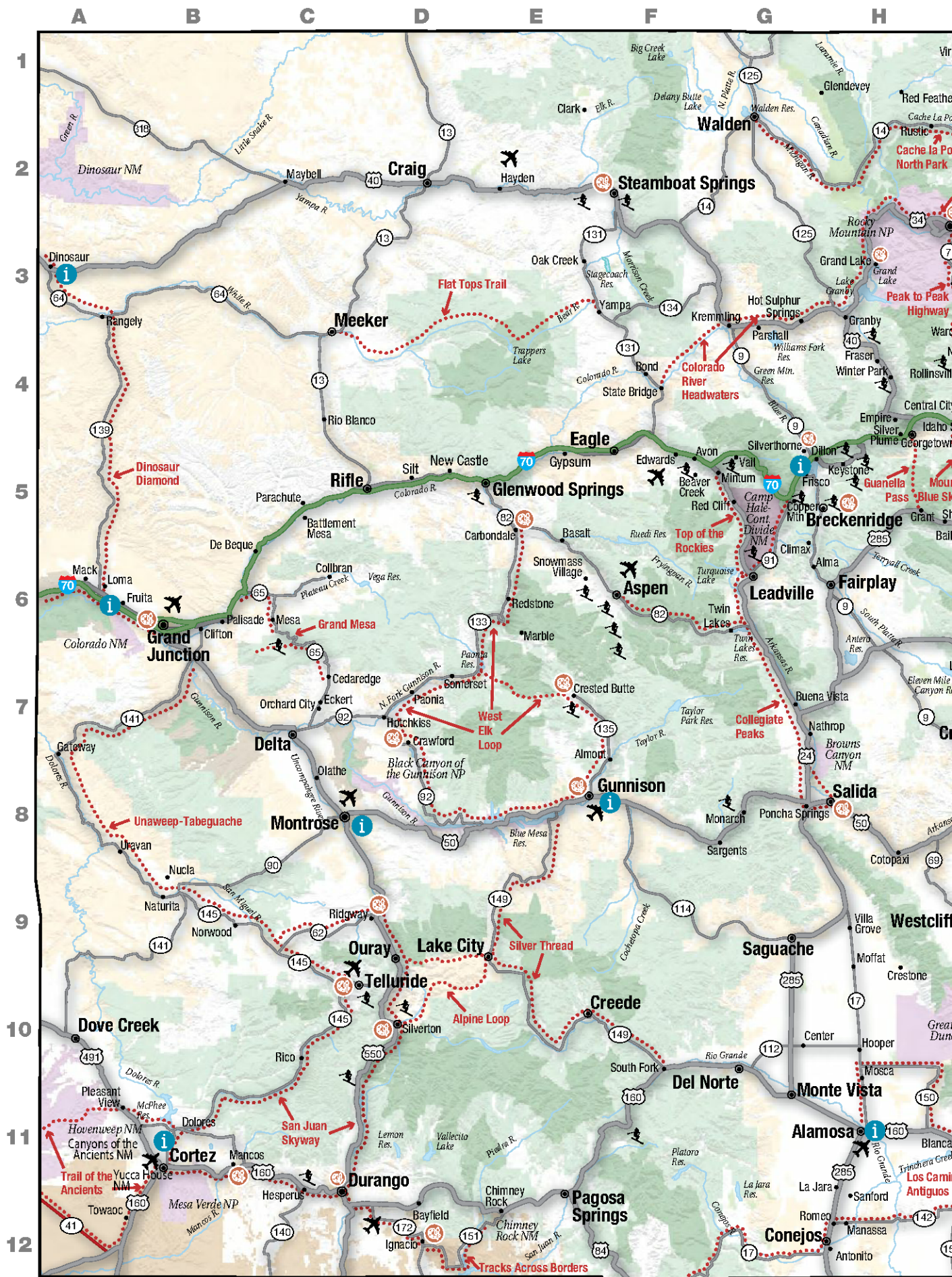
If you already know exactly where you want to go, use the list below to locate a specific city or town.

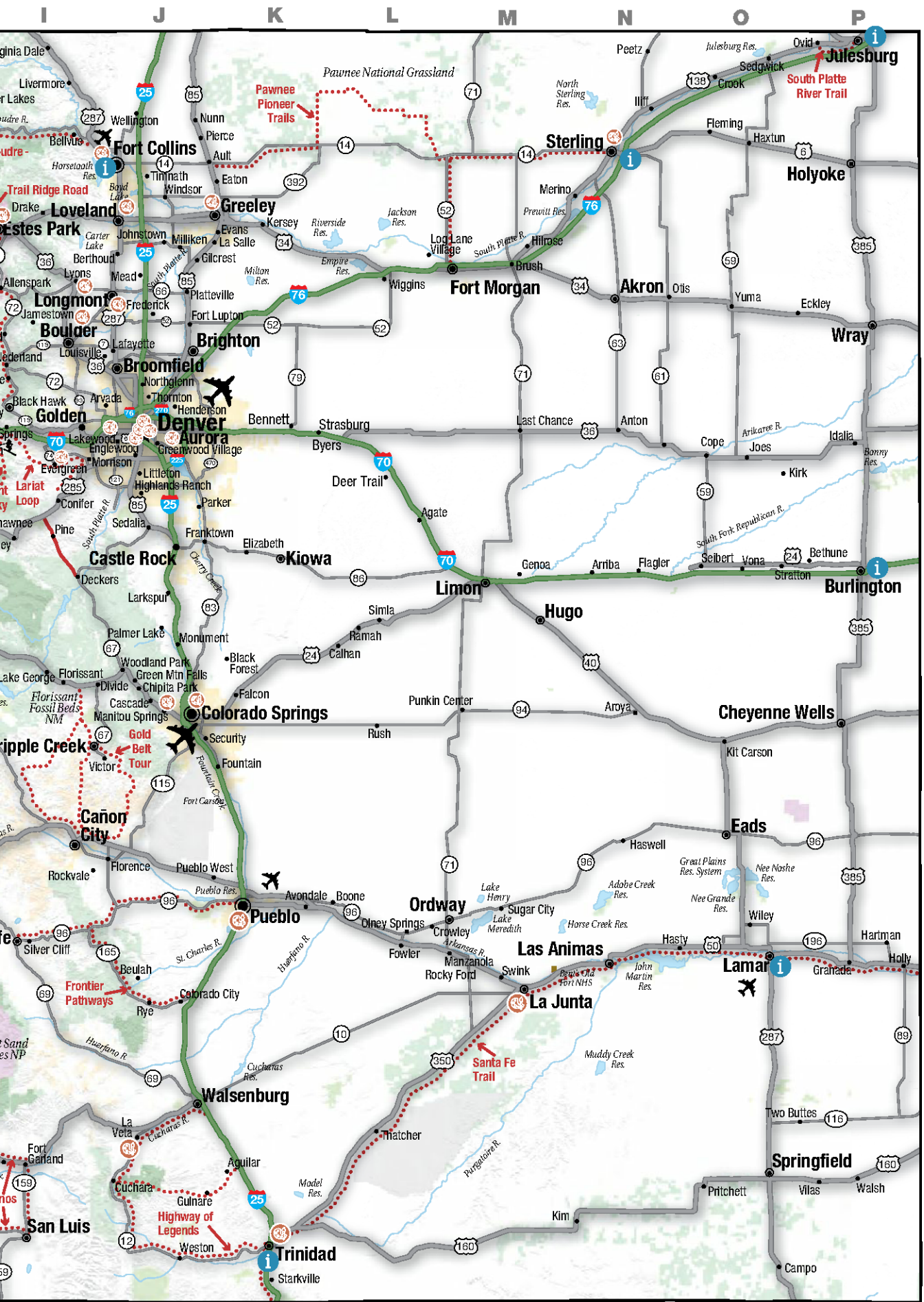


Colorado Welcome Centers

Alamosa.....	719-589-4840	H-11	Fruita	970-858-9335	A-6
Burlington.....	719-346-5554	P-6	Gunnison.....	970-641-1501	E-8
Cortez	970-565-4048	A-11	Julesburg.....	970-474-2054	P-1
Dinosaur	970-374-2205	A-3	Lamar	719-336-3483	O-9
Fort Collins...	970-232-3840	J-2	Logan County...	970-522-8962 ...	N-2
Frisco/Copper...	970-668-5547 ...	G-5	Trinidad.....	719-846-9512	K-12

City	Map Location	City	Map Location	City	Map Location	City	Map Location	City	Map Location
Agate	L-5	Conifer	I-5	Glenwood Springs	E-5	Manassa	H-12	Romeo	G-12
Aguilar	K-11	Cope	N-5	Golden	I-4	Mancos	B-11	Rush	L-7
Akron	N-3	Copper Mountain	G-5	Granada	P-9	Manitou Springs	J-7	Rustic	I-2
Alamosa	H-11	Cortez	A-11	Granby	H-3	Manzanola	L-9	Rye	J-10
Allenspark	I-3	Cotopaxi	H-8	Grand Junction	B-6	Marble	E-6	Saguache	G-9
Alma	G-6	Craig	D-2	Grand Lake	H-3	Marshall	I-4	Salida	G-8
Almont	E-7	Crawford	D-7	Grant	H-5	Maybell	C-2	Sanford	H-12
Anton	N-4	Creede	E-10	Greeley	J-3	Mead	J-3	San Luis	I-12
Antonito	G-12	Crested Butte	E-7	Green Mtn. Falls	J-7	Meeker	C-4	Sargents	F-8
Arboles	D-12	Crestone	H-9	Greenwood Village	J-5	Merino	M-2	Security	J-7
Aroya	N-7	Cripple Creek	I-7	Grover	K-1	Mesa	C-6	Sedalia	J-5
Arriba	N-6	Crook	N-1	Gunnison	E-8	Mesa Verde	B-12	Sedgwick	O-1
Arvada	J-4	Crowley	L-9	Gypsum	E-5	Milliken	J-3	Seibert	O-6
Aspen	F-6	Cuchara	J-11	Hartman	P-8	Minturn	F-5	Severance	J-2
Aspen Park	I-4	Dacono	J-3	Hasty	N-9	Moffat	H-9	Shawnee	H-5
Ault	J-2	DeBeque	C-5	Haswell	N-8	Monarch	G-8	Sheridan	J-5
Aurora	J-5	Deckers	I-6	Haxtun	O-2	Monte Vista	G-11	Silt	D-5
Avon	F-5	Deer Trail	L-5	Hayden	E-2	Montrose	C-8	Silver Cliff	I-9
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Bailey	I-5	Delta	C-7	Henderson	J-4	Morrison	I-5	Silverthorne	G-5
Basalt	E-5	Denver	J-4	Hesperus	C-12	Mosca	H-10	Silverton	D-10
Bayfield	D-12	Dillon	G-5	Highlands Ranch	J-5	Mountain View	J-4	Simla	L-6
Battlement Mesa	C-5	Dinosaur	A-3	Hillrose	M-3	Mt. Crested Butte	E-7	Snowmass Village	E-6
Beaver Creek	F-5	Divide	I-7	Holly	P-9	Naturita	B-9	Somerset	D-7
Bellvue	I-2	Dolores	B-11	Holyoke	P-2	Nathrop	G-8	South Fork	F-10
Bennett	K-4	Dove Creek	A-10	Hooper	H-10	Nederland	I-4	Springfield	O-11
Berthoud	I-3	Drake	I-2	Hotchkiss	D-7	New Castle	D-5	Starkville	K-12
Bethune	O-6	Durango	C-12	Hot Sulphur Springs	G-4	Niwot	I-3	State Bridge	F-4
Beulah	J-9	Eads	O-8	Hudson	K-4	Northglenn	J-4	Steamboat Springs	F-2
Black Forest	J-6	Eagle	F-5	Hugo	M-6	Norwood	B-9	Sterling	N-2
Black Hawk	I-4	Eastlake	J-4	Idaho Springs	I-4	Nucla	B-9	Strasburg	K-4
Blanca	H-11	Eaton	J-2	Idalia	P-4	Nunn	J-2	Stratton	O-6
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Bond	F-4	Eckley	O-3	Iliff	N-1	Olathe	C-8	Superior	I-4
Boone	K-9	Edgewater	J-5	Jamestown	I-3	Olney Springs	L-9	Swink	M-9
Boulder	I-4	Edwards	F-5	Joes	O-5	Orchard	L-2	Telluride	C-10
Bow Mar	J-5	Elbert	K-6	Johnstown	J-3	Orchard City	C-7	Thatcher	L-11
Breckenridge	G-5	Eldorado Springs	I-4	Julesburg	P-1	Ordway	M-9	Thornton	J-4
Brighton	J-4	Elizabeth	K-6	Keenesburg	K-3	Otis	N-3	Timnath	J-2
Bristol	P-9	Empire	H-4	Kersey	K-3	Ouray	D-9	Towaoc	A-12
Broomfield	I-4	Englewood	J-5	Keystone	G-5	Ovid	O-1	Trinidad	K-12
Brush	M-3	Erie	J-4	Kim	N-12	Pagosa Springs	E-12	Twin Lakes	G-6
Buena Vista	G-7	Estes Park	I-3	Kiowa	K-6	Pallisade	C-6	Two Buttes	P-11
Buford	D-4	Evans	J-3	Kirk	O-5	Palmer Lake	J-6	Uravan	A-8
Burlington	P-6	Evergreen	I-5	Kit Carson	O-7	Paonia	D-7	Vail	G-5
Byers	K-5	Fairplay	G-6	Kremmling	G-4	Parachute	C-5	Vallecito Lake	D-11
Calhan	K-7	Falcon	J-7	Lafayette	I-4	Parker	J-5	Victor	I-7
Campo	O-12	Federal Heights	J-4	La Jara	H-12	Parshall	G-3	Vilas	P-11
Cañon City	I-8	Firestone	J-3	La Junta	M-10	Peetz	N-1	Villa Grove	H-9
Carbondale	E-5	Flagler	N-6	La Salle	J-3	Pierce	J-2	Vona	O-6
Cascade	J-7	Fleming	N-2	La Veta	J-11	Pine	I-5	Walden	G-2
Castle Rock	J-6	Florence	I-8	Lake City	D-9	Pitkin	F-7	Walsenburg	J-11
Cedaredge	C-7	Fort Carson	J-8	Lake George	I-7	Platteville	J-3	Walsh	P-11
Centennial	J-5	Fort Collins	I-2	Lakewood	J-5	Poncha Springs	G-8	Ward	I-3
Center	G-10	Fort Garland	I-11	Lamar	O-9	Pritchett	O-11	Waterton	I-5
Central City	I-4	Fort Lupton	J-3	Larkspur	J-6	Prowers	O-9	Wattenberg	J-4
Cheraw	M-9	Fort Morgan	L-3	Las Animas	N-9	Pueblo	K-9	Wellington	J-2
Cherry Hills Village	J-5	Fountain	J-8	Last Chance	M-4	Pueblo West	J-8	Westcliffe	I-9
Cheyenne Wells	P-7	Fowler	L-9	Leadville	G-6	Punkin Center	M-7	Westminster	I-4
Chimney Rock	D-12	Franktown	J-5	Limon	M-6	Ramah	L-6	Weston	J-12
Chipita Park	J-7	Fraser	H-4	Littleton	J-5	Rangely	A-3	Wheat Ridge	I-4
Clark	E-1	Frederick	J-3	Livermore	I-2	Red Cliff	G-5	Wiggins	L-3
Clifton	B-6	Frisco	G-5	Lochbuie	J-4	Red Feather Lakes	H-1	Wiley	O-9
Climax	G-5	Fruita	A-6	Log Lane Village	L-3	Redstone	E-6	Windsor	J-2
Colbran	C-6	Gateway	A-7	Loma	A-6	Ridgway	C-9	Winter Park	H-4
Colorado City	J-10	Genoa	M-6	Longmont	I-3	Rifle	D-5	Wolcott	F-5
Colorado Springs	J-7	Georgetown	H-5	Louisville	I-4	Rio Blanco	G-4	Woodland Park	J-7
Columbine Valley	J-5	Gilcrest	J-3	Loveland	I-3	Rockvale	I-8	Wray	P-3
Commerce City	J-4	Glendale	J-5	Lyons	I-3	Rocky Ford	M-9	Yampa	E-3
Conejos	G-12	Glendevy	G-1	Mack	A-6	Rollinsville	I-4	Yuma	O-3





KEY

-  National Park/Monument
-  Scenic & Historic Byway
-  Certified Creative District

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Celebrating America 250- Colorado 150



2026 is a year to celebrate — Colorado turns 150 and the nation marks 250 years of independence. All across the state, you'll find festivals, community celebrations and hidden gems waiting to be explored.



Get all the details for events, The Colorado Passport Program, drone shows and more at: [Colorado.com/am250-co150](https://colorado.com/am250-co150)

Celebrate & Honor America 250 - Colorado150 Across the Centennial State

Colorado earned its nickname — the Centennial State — when it became the 38th state in 1876, exactly 100 years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Now, 150 years later, it's the perfect time to reflect on that legacy by exploring the places that helped build Colorado's identity.

This milestone anniversary is your chance to explore the epic stories, landscapes and cultures that shaped the region. From dinosaur fossil beds and Indigenous cultural sites to mining boomtowns, steel mills and key civil rights landmarks, these places help tell the story of how the state came to be. And according to Colorado's 2024/2025 official state historian, Dr. William Wei, visiting them can leave a lasting impact on you. "Traveling to historical sites allows you to connect deeply and meaningfully with the past. Various factors strengthen this bond, including physical presence, sensory experiences, cultural immersion and emotional resonance."




Celebrate
Colorado's 150th
Anniversary



WILLIAM WEI, ANDREW MAGUIRE



William Wei

“Traveling to historical sites allows you to connect deeply and meaningfully with the past. Various factors strengthen this bond, including physical presence, sensory experiences, cultural immersion and emotional resonance.”



Kremmling

Dinosaurs & Fossils

For millions of years, this land was formed by volcanoes, submerged beneath oceans and roamed by dinosaurs. Today, fossil sites across the state offer rare windows into ancient worlds. “Colorado experienced a 19th-century ‘Dinosaur Rush,’ during which significant discoveries of dinosaur fossils, such as the Apatosaurus and Stegosaurus in the Morrison Formation, were made,” Wei said.

At Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument, you’ll walk among massive stumps — some more than 10 feet wide — preserved in a quiet valley west of Pikes Peak. Beneath your feet, layers of volcanic ash contain thousands of fossilized leaves, fish and insects, so finely detailed they still show veins and wing patterns. “In my mind’s eye, I still have images of the Florissant Fossil Beds’ petrified redwood tree stumps,” Wei said. “There is nothing more enjoyable than being outdoors in colorful Colorado, exploring its ancient life forms and environments.”

Head northwest to **Fossil Ridge** near Kremmling, where limestone cliffs reveal something unexpected. “Marine fossils in Colorado indicate that parts of the state were once underwater, suggesting that there were shifting sea levels and climatic changes,” Wei said. Along this short hike, you’ll find the largest concentration of ammonites in the world — shellfish, coral and other early marine creatures — all preserved in stone.

Just outside Denver, **Dinosaur Ridge** invites you to follow a trail of discovery to the very rock that sparked North America’s fossil fever. This rugged hillside was where the Stegosaurus was first unearthed. “Governor Richard Lamm designated it the state fossil in 1982, in no small part due to a two-year lobbying campaign by a class of Thornton fourth-graders,” Wei explained. As you explore the area, keep an eye out for three-toed dinosaur footprints, sandstone slabs embedded with fossilized bones and ripples left by prehistoric streams.

Indigenous & Ancient Cultures

Long before Colorado became a state, it was home to dozens of Indigenous nations with deep connections to the land. From the Ute to the Cheyenne and Arapaho peoples, these communities shaped the region for generations — and continue to do so today. “After arriving here in 1980, I heard various well-educated people refer to frontier Colorado as a vast, empty space,” Wei said. “It reflected the master narrative of the country’s westward expansion and the invisibility of the Indigenous people who lived there.” Today, travelers can connect with that history through cultural sites that recognize Indigenous knowledge and presence across the state.

At **Chimney Rock National Monument** near Pagosa Springs, you can walk among the remnants of a high-altitude settlement built by Ancestral Puebloans more than 1,000 years ago. Twin rock spires rise above the valley, aligning with a rare lunar cycle that guided agriculture and ceremony. Trails wind through ancient dwellings and up to stunning overlooks — a reminder

of how deeply these communities understood the land and the sky.

Hovenweep National Monument near Cortez offers a quiet but powerful experience. Here, stone towers and dwellings built more than 700 years ago still stand along the canyon rim. Many are believed to align with solar events and cardinal directions. These places indicate that Indigenous people weren’t just surviving here, they were building sophisticated, innovative societies.

On the plains east of Pueblo, **Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site** confronts one of Colorado’s darkest chapters. On Nov. 29, 1864, U.S. troops attacked a peaceful Cheyenne and Arapaho village, killing more than 230 people — mostly women, children and elders. “For the descendants, the massacre is not simply history, but family history,” Wei said. Interpretive trails guide you through the site and its stories, encouraging reflection on settler colonialism and the need for healing.



Chimney Rock National Monument near Pagosa Springs

ANDREW MAGUIRE



Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site in La Junta

Wild West & Frontier Life

The discovery of gold in Colorado in 1858 didn't just bring prospectors to the state — it changed everything. Tens of thousands of people traveled west during the Colorado gold rush, helping build the towns, industries and transportation networks that would push the region toward statehood in 1876. The gold rush helped cement the story of the West: a place where fortune felt within reach and opportunity drove the region's rapid transformation. But most miners didn't get rich. Instead, they laid the foundation for future industries — and many stayed to build a life.

At the **Hidee Gold Mine** in Central City, you can step inside that chapter of Colorado's growth. Guided tours take you through narrow underground tunnels, where you'll learn how miners extracted ore and panned for gold — and you can even try your hand at it. "Mining created a need for services and supplies that fostered trade networks," Wei explained. That demand helped

shape entire towns, laying the groundwork for many of the communities still thriving in Colorado today.

Travel southeast to **Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site** in La Junta to experience a different kind of frontier. This reconstructed adobe trading post from the 1830s once served as a hub for commerce between Plains tribes, Mexican traders and American settlers. Today, costumed interpreters bring the site to life with blacksmithing, bartering and frontier cooking demonstrations.

High above Telluride, **Alta ghost town** is a striking reminder of how quickly fortunes could rise and fall. Once a bustling mining settlement, it was abandoned when the silver ran out. Now, remaining wooden cabins and mining structures stand against a backdrop of high-alpine peaks. "Boomtowns often quickly turned into ghost towns when resources dwindled," Wei said. Ghost towns like Alta offer space to consider the ambition and optimism that built the early West.

Industrial & Cultural Change

Colorado's industrial history is one of determination, innovation and community. From steel mills and railroads to acts of civil courage, the people who worked in the state's early industries laid the groundwork for modern progress — often under challenging conditions. According to Wei, “[These historical sites] provide tangible connections to the past that can educate current and future generations about what it took to develop the Centennial State.”

In Pueblo, the **Steelworks Center of the West** sheds light on the forces that shaped Colorado's industrial past. “Visitors to the Steelworks Center of the West can learn about America's industrialization, particularly the coal and steel industry in the American West, and the labor movements it engendered in response to inequitable labor practices, unsafe working conditions and low wages in the mines and factories,” Wei said.

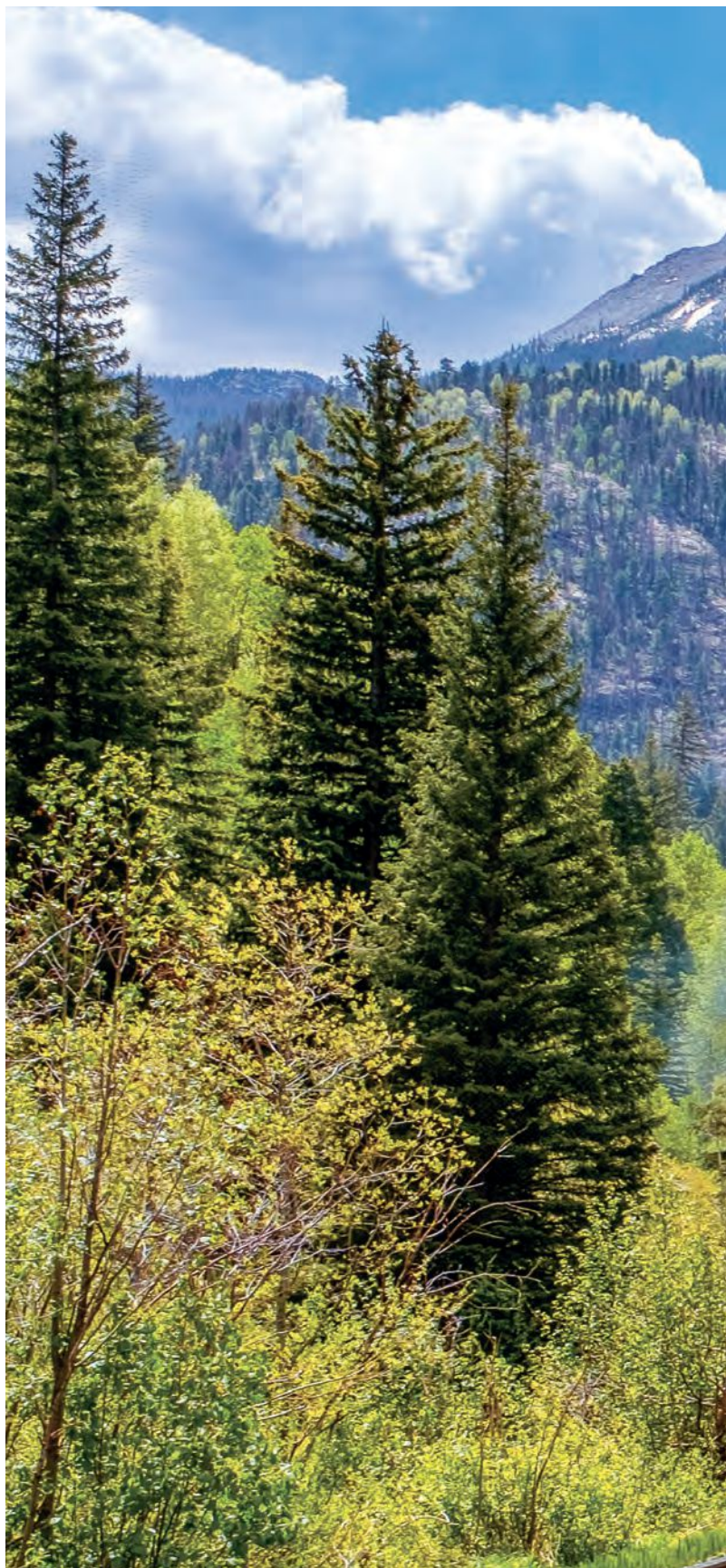
At **Amache National Historic Site** in Granada, you'll encounter one of the most powerful reminders of the importance of civil rights. During World War II, over 7,000 Japanese Americans — most of them U.S. citizens — were forcibly incarcerated here (and more than 120,000 were incarcerated across the country). “Learning about Amache is knowing about the most blatant mass violation of civil liberties in American history,” Wei said. “It's an essential civics lesson.” As you walk past reconstructed barracks and stand before the site's quiet cemetery, you're invited to reflect on this moment in history.

In the 1880s, as Colorado's mining economy boomed, railroads became vital lifelines connecting remote mountain towns to the cities. One of the most iconic lines from that era still runs today: the **Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad**. Originally built to haul ore from the San Juan Mountains, the line now carries sightseers through breathtaking canyons and alpine forests. The route is a testament to ingenuity and perseverance. “It gives you an appreciation of the immigrant laborers who constructed the railroad in rugged terrain,” Wei said, “and the indispensable role that railroads played in the growth of mining and industry in Colorado.”

Traveling between these unique places — whether it's an eerie ghost town or an educational museum tour — offers a broader view of how different experiences and eras intersect across the state. That's because Colorado's history is not a single story, it's many. It lives in Indigenous voices, fossil layers, steam locomotives and gold-dust tunnels. It tells of struggle, innovation and a state constantly redefining itself. At 150 years, these stories aren't finished — they're still unfolding. “History continues through how we remember, how we teach and how we travel,” Wei said. “If we want a more just and inclusive future, we have to engage with the full story of Colorado, not just the easy parts.”

Colorado celebrates 150 years of statehood in 2026 alongside America's 250th birthday. Find upcoming events, exhibits and ways to experience it all at Colorado.com/am250-co150.

JASON LEWANDOWSKI





Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad

Colorado's Most Accessible Places to Stay & Play

Discover the wonders of Colorado with Wheel the World's Destination Verified program — your vetted guide to accessible travel across the state. These certified cities and towns have been professionally evaluated for their accessibility based on high standards that consider infrastructure, mobility and traveler experience. Smooth trails, adaptive soaking pools, accessible lodging and other thoughtful features make exploring Colorado's stunning beauty easier than ever. So you can feel empowered to travel the state with confidence knowing each of these destinations will be able to provide an unforgettable adventure.

Colorado Springs

At **Garden of the Gods Visitor & Nature Center**, accessible parking leads directly to a paved path that winds through towering, rust-colored sandstone monoliths. Then, explore everything from Mars rovers to satellite tech at **Space Foundation Discovery Center**, with ramps providing easy access to most areas. **Cheyenne Mountain Resort** includes stair-free entrances, rooms with roll-in showers or accessible tubs, plus outdoor firepits where you can unwind under starry skies or gaze at pine-covered summits.

Estes Park

Rocky Mountain National Park's breathtaking views, forested trails and wildlife sightings are easier to experience with the help of the **Grit Freedom Chair** — an all-terrain wheelchair available to reserve at the Estes Park Mountain Shop. It's perfect for navigating improved trails like the Sprague Lake Loop, a gently graded path that circles an alpine lake and looks out on the Continental Divide. Travelers can also book adaptive outings with **Keyp Expeditions**, which tailors each experience — like wildlife photography or trail exploration — to individual ability, pace and interest. For overnight stays, the **YMCA of the Rockies** offers wheelchair-accessible cabins and sensory-friendly activities designed to support fun, comfort and flexibility.



Sprague Lake in Estes Park



Rio Grande Trail near Glenwood Springs

Glenwood Springs

Take in picturesque views from the **Rio Grande Trail** as it parallels the rushing Roaring Fork River between Glenwood Springs and Aspen. Smooth pavement, gentle grades and frequent access points make it easy for everyone to hop on the path and enjoy sightings of Mount Sopris and meandering wildlife. Over at **Iron Mountain Hot Springs**, you'll find pool lifts, zero-entry options and wide walkways — all designed to help everyone soak comfortably in mineral-rich waters while taking in the forested slopes. **Hotel Colorado** is close to major attractions and has been modernized with elevator access and accessible rooms, while retaining its Gilded Age charm.

Pueblo

The **Pueblo Riverwalk** winds through the heart of the city with generous, level walkways and frequent rest spots. Ramps link to sunny patios, waterfront cafes and bursts of colorful public art lining the water's edge. Nearby, the **Pueblo Zoo** spans 25 acres of paved trails looping past lions, sea otters, penguins and plenty of other fascinating creatures with accessible viewing areas. At the **Pueblo Weisbrod Aircraft Museum**, wheelchair-accessible hangars house more than 30 aircraft spanning decades of aviation history, and visitors can get up close to jet engines, cockpits and interactive military exhibits.

Beaver Creek

In winter, **Beaver Creek Resort** runs an adaptive ski program with trained instructors, sit-skis and customized gear suited to individual needs. Gondolas are accessible to most wheelchairs, with boarding assistance available to whisk you up the mountain to fresh powder. At **Beaver Creek Lodge**, ADA-compliant suites come with roll-in showers or accessible tubs, with some rooms also offering hearing-accessible features like flashing door knockers. A short distance away, **Vilar Performing Arts Center** has a level entry, designated wheelchair seating and assistive listening devices for a packed schedule of concerts, dance festivals and live performances.

Colorado's capital is now a verified destination with Wheel the World. Learn about Denver's accessible offerings at [Denver.org/accessibility](https://denver.org/accessibility).



Pueblo Riverwalk

A Stargazer's to Parks & Monuments

In Colorado, nightfall reveals a side of the landscape that often goes overlooked. Thanks to the high elevation, dry air and miles of undeveloped land, the state is known for having exceptionally clear, dark skies. These natural advantages have helped Colorado claim 18 International Dark Sky Places — with more designations in the works.

Whether you're planning a multi-stop stargazing trip or pairing nighttime skies with daytime adventures, these International Dark Sky Parks deliver clear views, minimal light pollution and easy access to hiking, dining and small-town charm.

Browns Canyon National Monument

Located between Buena Vista and Salida, Browns Canyon National Monument's rugged granite cliffs, pinyon forests and rushing Arkansas River create a remote, undeveloped setting that feels far from it all, especially when the stars emerge. As the last light fades, the air cools down and the sky starts to shimmer.

During the day, spend some time hiking along tree-lined trails or book a whitewater adventure with **Browns Canyon Rafting**. Their guides run half-day and full-day trips with plenty of chances to take in views of the Collegiate Peaks.

After drying off, stop in Buena Vista for a laid-back dinner at **Simple Eatery**. With counter-service speed and fresh ingredients, it's easy to build a post-adventure meal with baked focaccia bread, crisp Caesar salads and rainbow-trout filets.

Guide



When outdoors at night, ensure your lights are directed only where necessary and aren't excessively bright. This helps reduce light pollution for better views of Colorado's star-filled skies.

GLENN RANDALL

Great Sand Dunes National Park & Preserve

In the evening, steer to your spot at Ruby Mountain Campground in the park and watch as the sky transitions from blue to black.

Great Sand Dunes National Park & Preserve

At the edge of the San Luis Valley, the tallest dunes in North America rise against a backdrop of rugged peaks and endless sky. By day, Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve is a landscape of sweeping ridges and shifting sand. By night, it transforms into one of Colorado's most surreal and spectacular places to stargaze.

Begin your visit with a morning stop in nearby Blanca to rent sandboards or sleds from **Spindrift Sandboards**, then head into the park early while the sand is still cool. Hike up the dunes for panoramic views, ride down their slopes or explore the flowing waters of Medano Creek if you're visiting in late spring or early summer.

Drive into Alamosa for a meal at **The Friar's Fork**, a cozy, James Beard Award-nominated restaurant housed in a converted church with fresh pasta dishes. As twilight sets in, return to your campsite or stay in a sustainable, luxury villa equipped with its own telescope at the new **Kosmos Stargazing Resort**. It's an ideal spot to take in the night sky, with on-site guides to lead an unforgettable stargazing experience.

Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park

At Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, towering cliffs block out horizon glow and the remote location eliminates nearly all ambient light, creating ideal conditions for stargazing. When evening arrives, the park turns into a natural observatory, where you can watch the Milky Way stretch overhead.

To make a full day of it, start with a morning hike along Warner Point Nature Trail overlooking the Uncompahgre Valley

and San Juan Mountains. Or in nearby Montrose, spend some time at the **Montrose Botanic Gardens**, strolling past colorful native plants and jagged peak outlooks.

Grab an early dinner at **Camp Robber**, where the menu leans into Colorado comfort with spicy chile rellenos and juicy elk burgers. Return to the park as twilight fades and the stars take over. If you're visiting during **AstroFest**, held each summer, the park's night skies come alive with ranger-led programs, telescope stations and constellation tours.



Discover More
Dark-Sky Places



JASON HATFIELD

Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park



Kosmos Stargazing Resort & Spa in Mosca



DANIEL SCOTT JENKINS, VISIT MONTROSE

Curecanti National Recreation Area near Gunnison

Jackson Lake State Park

Set on the northeastern plains, Jackson Lake State Park gives travelers a different kind of experience. Here, the open sky stretches in every direction, and with no city lights nearby, the horizon feels truly endless in the evening. It's especially striking when the perfectly still surface of **Jackson Reservoir** mirrors the stars on calm nights.

Set up camp at one of the reservable sites surrounding the reservoir. Then, spend the day exploring birding trails along the shoreline. Depending on the season, you might spot pelicans, herons or raptors flying above the water.

Drive into Fort Morgan for dinner at **The Mav Kitchen & Tap House**, where the menu features French onion soup, St. Louis ribs and craft burgers. Back at camp, lay out a blanket and let your eyes adjust. Within minutes, you'll start to spot constellations above.

Curecanti National Recreation Area

Curecanti National Recreation Area stretches across a wide swath of western Colorado, where high desert meets tranquil water and rugged rock between Gunnison and Montrose. Blue Mesa Reservoir, the state's largest body of water, anchors the landscape — surrounded by mesas, rolling hills and volcanic cliffs. And at night, the reservoir reflects the stars above, doubling the view and making the sky feel even closer.

By day, paddle through calm inlets or cast a line from the reservoir's edge. Meanwhile, mountain bikers will want to detour south to **Hartman Rocks** — 50 miles of flowy singletrack that rollercoasters past tall granite boulders and sweet-smelling sagebrush.

For an early dinner, head to **High Alpine Brewing Company** in Gunnison, with wood-fired pizzas, hearty salads and rotating taps. Set up camp at **Elk Creek Campground**, just off the north shore of the reservoir. Sites near the water offer open views and a short walk to the lake's edge — perfect for stepping away from your tent and gazing up at the stars. Plan your trip around one of the park's summer astronomy programs, where guides provide telescopes and tips for spotting astral landmarks.

See Colorado's Big 5 for Wildlife

Moose, elk, mountain goats, bighorn sheep and pronghorn are some of Colorado's most iconic wildlife — and spotting them in their natural habitat is easier than you might expect. Whether you're driving a high mountain pass, hiking quiet backcountry or scanning open prairie, seeing these animals from a safe distance in the wild adds something special to any trip.



Elk near Rocky Mountain National Park

Moose


In **State Forest State Park** near Walden — also known as Colorado's Moose Capital — dense forests and slow-moving streams create the perfect conditions for the massive mammals year round. Stop by the Moose Visitor Center, where rangers often know where a bull or cow was spotted that day. Near Grand Junction, a broad plateau lined with lakes and thick spruce spread across **Grand Mesa National Forest**. Easy hikes like the 3.2-mile Mesa Lakes Trail pass through moose habitat, where you might catch one grazing by the water or stepping out of the trees to cross a clearing. Begin your trek early in the morning for the best luck in spotting one of these impressive creatures.

Elk

In autumn, elk bulls gather groups of females and defend them with dramatic, echoing calls. One of the best places to hear and see this behavior is right in town at **Estes Park Elk Fest**. The September event also features elk-themed art, Native American music and a front-row seat to golden fall colors. For a more secluded setting, head to **White River National Forest** near Aspen. The easy, 2-mile Maroon Bells Scenic Loop Trail winds past tall tree stands and a sparkling lake — where elk often wander between feeding and bedding areas.

DO COLORADO RIGHT 

Always give wildlife plenty of space — if you can cover the entire view of the animal with your thumb when your arm is extended, you're at a safe distance.

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a yellow helmet, a green long-sleeved shirt, blue leggings, and tan sneakers, is rappelling down a vertical rock face. She is smiling and looking upwards. Her gear, including a harness and ropes, is visible. The background shows a vast mountain valley under a clear blue sky.

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Mountain goats near Cripple Creek

Mountain Goats

These white, bearded creatures love tall peaks, so your best shot at seeing them is by heading up to high elevation. **Pikes Peak** is one of the easiest places in Colorado to see mountain goats, thanks to a paved road and cog railway that reach the 14,115-foot summit near Colorado Springs. The goats are often spotted near the top — especially in the morning — moving across the rocky slopes. Outside of Georgetown, **Mount Bierstadt** is one of Colorado's most popular hikes, known for its broad tundra approach, panoramic views and frequent mountain-goat sightings. Though considered beginner-friendly by fourteenner standards, the trail still tops out above 14,000 feet and requires solid fitness, proper prep and time to acclimate to the altitude.

Bighorn Sheep

In late fall and early winter, **Glenwood Canyon Recreation Path** becomes a hotspot for bighorn sheep. The herd here often moves down from the cliffs to lower elevations near the Colorado River, where you can easily glimpse them from the paved path. Meanwhile, **Georgetown** has regular bighorn-sheep sightings near town, especially on the steep, rocky hillsides. Plan your visit in November to catch the annual Bighorn Sheep Festival, which features guided walks, educational programs and family-friendly activities.

Pronghorn

Pronghorn rely on their sharp vision and speed — up to 60 miles per hour — to survive in Colorado's open terrain. See them year-round at **Comanche National Grassland** west of Campo, where expansive landscapes of swaying shortgrass prairie make it easy to spot herds moving gracefully across the landscape. You can also catch sight of pronghorn near **Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve**, grazing the grassy plains that border the tallest sand dunes in North America. Behind them, the Sangre de Cristo Mountains' peaks rise along the horizon.

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