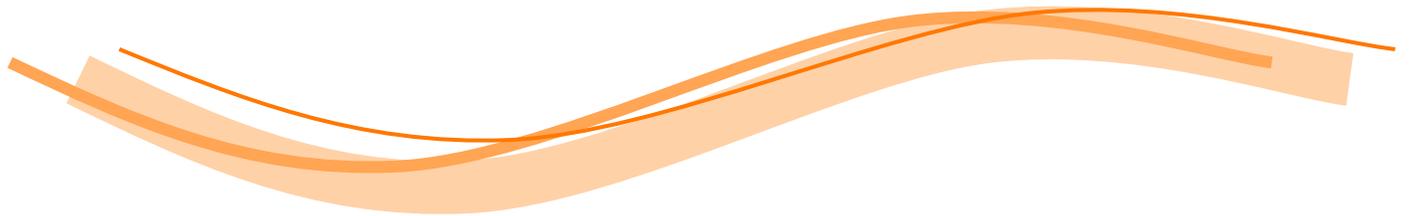




COLORADO





COLORADO

Colorado offers both adventure and well-deserved relaxation. Enjoy urban sophistication in Denver or venture outdoors in the Rocky Mountains. Taste the excitement of some of the world's most sought-after whitewater rafting. Discover the history of mining and historical railways. Or, with an average of three hundred sunny days a year, pamper yourself at one of Colorado's award-winning resorts.

There are impressive urban destinations in the state too: **Denver and Colorado Springs** in particular are great short break destinations and you will find separate sections for these two cities further down in these notes.

Colorado is known for its fabulous skiing at world class resorts such as Aspen and Vail. But it provides great sporting activities all year round including hiking, biking, rock climbing, rafting, zip lining and more! And there is golf, horseback riding – even Segway tours through amazing canyons. When you arrive in Colorado and you look at the western horizon, all you see are awe-inspiring mountains...and adventure beckons with both hands!

The outdoor playground that is Colorado also offers no less than four National Parks:

Rocky Mountain National Park: with high-mountain lakes and streams, peaks more than 14,000 feet, thick evergreen forests and thousands of acres of wildlife, this park conjures up what most people imagine when they think of the Rockies. Trail Ridge Road at 12,183 feet is the highest continuous paved road in the United States.

Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park: no other canyon in North America combines the narrow opening, sheer walls, and startling depths offered by the Black Canyon of the Gunnison.

Mesa Verde National Park: this is the site of the prehistoric Ancestral Puebloan culture, which lasted for some nine hundred years from c 450 to 1300 on a plateau in south-west Colorado at an altitude of more than 2600 meters.

Great Sand Dunes National Park: nowhere else in the United States do mountains of sand stand higher than here in the Rocky Mountains. The tallest dune towers 750 feet high at an elevation of 8,700 feet above sea level.

You will also discover a rich western heritage in Colorado with nine

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historical trains and gold mine routes that introduce you to the Gold Rush days. The 19th-century mining boom drew many people to Colorado with the hope of striking it rich. Today, travellers can experience a mining train trip 3,000 feet into the Bachelor Syracuse Mine in southwest Colorado and see the prosperous, historic main streets of mining towns such as Breckenridge, Leadville and Central City. And one of the best ways to immerse yourself in the wild west is to stay at a Dude Ranch and discover the cowboy lifestyle.

Colorado's history is full of rich American Indian heritage that can be experienced at galleries and festivals across the state, in addition to history museums and sites such as the Ute Indian Museum, Koshare Indian Museum and along the Trail of the Ancients Scenic and Historic Byway. A beautiful new attraction for history lovers is the History Colorado Center in downtown Denver, with three stories of exhibitions packed with gold mining, Wild West, Spanish American War, Ancestral Puebloan, 10th Mountain Division and other Colorado museum treasures.

And one thing that the visitor will certainly enjoy in Colorado is amazing food, wine and craft beer. There are more than 2,000 restaurants in the Denver Metro area alone, serving local dishes such as buffalo burgers and rattlesnake tails. And more than 80 different beers are brewed in Denver alone!

Plus there are four different wine trails in the state, which include dozens of wineries and vineyards.

The Front Range Wine Trail features two dozen wineries and tasting rooms in amazing areas including the Royal Gorge in Cañon City and Rocky Mountain National Park in Estes Park, and the quaint Victorian town of Georgetown.

The Heart of Colorado Wine Country Trail takes visitors around two federally designated AVAs in Colorado's Wine Country: Palisade and Grand Junction.

The Four Corners Region Wine Trail takes visitors from Durango to Cortez, near the iconic Mesa Verde National Park.

The Pikes Peak and The Arkansas Valley Wine Trail, which leads visitors over Wolf Creek Pass through the picturesque San Luis Valley, passes through the Central Colorado towns of Salida and Cañon City. A popular way to experience some of these trails is via bicycle,

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	<p>particularly in Colorado Wine Country.</p> <p>Have a look at Chris' Travel Blog where I have shared previous travels in Colorado at: Colorado North http://christalkstravel.blogspot.com/2009_06_01_archive.html Colorado South http://christalkstravel.blogspot.com/2010_06_01_archive.html</p>
Location	<p>Where the plains meet the Rockies in the heart of the USA, Colorado is 270,000 sq kms of wonder, making it the 8th largest state in the US. Colorado is bordered by the northwest state of Wyoming to the north, the Midwest states of Nebraska and Kansas to the northeast and east, on the south by New Mexico and a small portion of the southern state of Oklahoma, and on the west by Utah. The four states of Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah meet at one common point known as the Four Corners, which is known as the heart of the American Southwest. Colorado is one of only three U.S. states with no natural borders, the others being neighboring Wyoming and Utah.</p>
Geography	<p>Discover Colorado's stunning natural landscape. From the highest sand dunes in North America to mountain peaks over 14,000 feet, Colorado has one of the most unique and varied natural landscape in the entire nation. As you travel through the state, you'll see emerald green forests, fields of vibrant wildflowers as far as the eye can see, picturesque mountain lakes, abundant grasslands and rich red rock formations. You'll find many places to enjoy Colorado's vast natural beauty. There are:</p> <p>four national parks, eight national monuments and 41 state parks waiting to be explored.</p> <p>If you're looking for a beautiful drive, Colorado is also home to 25 scenic and historic byways, noted for their distinct qualities. They include ghost towns, ancient ruins, alpine tundra, some of the oldest trains in the West and much more.</p> <p>The Rocky Mountains within Colorado contain 53 peaks that are 14,000 feet (4,267 m) or higher elevation, known as fourteeners. The mountains are timbered with conifers and aspens to the tree line, at an elevation of about 12,140 feet (3,700 m) in southern Colorado to about 10,500 feet (3,200 m) in northern Colorado; above this only alpine vegetation grows.</p> <p>Colorado is split into seven regions: Greater Denver, the Front Range, Northeast, Southeast, South Central, Southwest and Northwest.</p>
Name	<p>The state was named after the Spanish word "Colorado," which means "reddish coloured" that presumably refers to the red sandstone formations in the area or reddish brown colour of the Colorado River.</p>

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Population	The State's population is nearly 5 million and the Denver-Aurora-Boulder Combined Statistical Area is home to nearly 3 million people, so containing 60% of the state's population.
Language	English, but 17% Hispanic. Colorado's Hispanic presence is one of the largest in the U.S.—only five states have more Hispanics per capita
Currency	US Dollars; the current exchange rate at July 2016 is 77 cents to the US Dollar
Tipping	The custom of tipping is a common practice in Colorado: 15% to 20% for waiters; 10% to 15% for taxi drivers; \$1 per bag for bellmen. Occasionally gratuities are automatically added to restaurant checks.
Government	Like all U.S. states, Colorado's constitution provides for three branches of government: the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. The governor heads the state's executive branch. The Colorado Supreme Court is the highest judicial body in the state. The state legislative body is the Colorado General Assembly, which is made up of two houses, the House of Representatives and the Senate. The House has 65 members and the Senate has 35.
Documentation	Passports are required for Canadian visitors arriving by air and land.
Time zone	Mountain Time Zone, 2 hours behind Ontario and Quebec
Health	Excellent services are available but ensure that you have travelers health insurance as health costs in the US can be very high Remember to drink more water to counteract the effects of altitude
Safety tips	Colorado is relatively safe for the tourist. One should use the same precautions as when traveling anywhere - try not to travel alone and avoid deserted areas at night. In Denver's wild days, famous gunfighter Bat Masterson was employed as a guard at several of the city's saloons, but today, downtown Denver is one of the safest cities in America. Denver is ranked by the F.B.I. as one of the safest downtowns in America.

CLIMATE	
General climate	In summer, dry relative humidity makes Denver feel cool and comfortable, offering natural air conditioning. Fall is a particularly delightful time to visit the city and make day excursions to the mountains to view the colorful changing of the aspens, an event that takes place from mid-September until mid-October
Today's weather	Denver is 25C and sunny (as at 1st July 2016)
Best time to visit	Genuinely a four-season destination: winter is the mecca for skiers, spring is the wildflower season, summer temperatures are tempered by the varying altitudes and fall is a colour explosion!

GETTING AROUND	
Getting There	Denver International Airport is the only major airport to be built in the

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	<p>U.S. in the last 25 years. The current facility can accommodate 50 million passengers a year without any additional construction. It is the USA's sixth-busiest airport and the 11th-busiest in the world. The airport is easily accessed by interstate highways and is conveniently located less than 35 minutes from downtown Denver by car, shuttle buses, public transportation or taxis. I personally rate it as one of the most traveller-friendly airports in North America. Air Canada have daily flights with the only non-stop service - and the only Executive Class - between Montreal and Denver.</p>
<p>Cities</p>	<p>Denver Population: 557,000. Elevation: 5280 feet (one mile high!) Denver is near the mountains, not in them. It is located on high rolling plains, 12 miles east of what locals call the "foothills," a series of gentle mountains that climb to 11,000 feet. Just beyond is the "Front Range of the Rocky Mountains," a series of formidable snowcapped peaks that rise to 14,000 feet. Denver might not be in the mountains, but the mountains dominate Denver. There are 200 named peaks visible from the city, including 32 that soar to 13,000 feet and above. Denver really is exactly one mile high. By an amazing stroke of good luck, there is a step on the State Capitol Building that is exactly 5,280 feet above sea level – one mile high. Denver is one of America's most beautiful and most fun cities. And it's a lively city with a great love of the outdoors. Down every Denver street there are mountain panoramas. Discover sports stadiums, three hundred restaurants, bars and brewpubs, a restored historic district, museums, galleries, shopping, performing arts and more. Plus it's a great gateway to all that Colorado has to offer. In hopes of gaining political favours, local boosters in 1859 named the frontier mining camp on the South Platte River "Denver" after Kansas Territorial Governor James Denver. They never received any favours -- by the time they named the town, Denver had already resigned. It was years before James Denver saw the mining camp named after him. He was reportedly not impressed. In 1858, there was not a single person living in the Denver metro area except for some migrating camps of Arapaho and Cheyenne. Just 30 years later, Colorado was a state with a population of almost 200,000. It was a Gold Rush that caused this boom, and in a 30 to 40 year period Denver saw some of the wildest events in the "Wild West". This fascinating period lives again in museums, old gold mining villages and hundreds of elegant Victorian buildings that can be found throughout the city, many of which now house restaurants, shops and hotels. Denver is one of the few cities in history that was not on a road, railroad, lake, navigable river or body of water when it was founded. Denver just happened to be where the first few flakes of gold were found in</p>

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	<p>1858 and it was here that the first camp was made. The first permanent structure was a saloon. http://www.denver.org/</p>
<p>Cities: Colorado Springs</p>	<p>Colorado Springs Colorado Springs is the state's second-largest city, but it's first in the hearts of many visitors as a place of spectacular beauty with dozens of family attractions, natural landmarks and unique museums. Although many towns and cities in Colorado were settled by miners and ranchers, Colorado Springs' appeal was climate and culture. Known as "Little London" in its early days, the city was founded by Gen. William J. Palmer in 1871. A Civil War hero and railroad magnate, Palmer influenced much of the state's settlement, but Colorado Springs was his home. It had plenty of "civilized" attractions — opera houses, fine hotels and restaurants.</p> <p>The only mountain zoo in the US is in Colorado Springs. This seems fitting somehow in this mountain paradise. Craft beer is big here and there are also distilleries and even the chance to try moonshine...</p> <p>There are pure mineral springs at Colorado Springs – and these have also attracted visitors for well over 100 years. There are also 3 new spas in the area - including a solar powered building that heats the Manitou Mineral Springs</p> <p>The city sits at the foot of one of America's most famous landmarks, Pikes Peak, upon whose summit Katharine Lee Bates was inspired to write "America the Beautiful." You can reach Pikes Peak – America's Mountain – by road, you can ride the spectacular Pikes Peak Cog Railway - or even hike to its 14,115-foot summit. And Colorado Springs offers many opportunities to enjoy breathtaking natural scenery trails, parks and open space. The stunning red rock formations of The Garden of the Gods Park draw tourists with cameras in tow to capture a perfect shot of the rocks framing the snow-capped peak. There are many ways to explore this unique place – walking or hiking, on horseback, or on a thrilling jeep or Segway tour.</p> <p>Colorado Springs' incredible climate means there are more than 300 days of endless blue skies in which to enjoy over 55 attractions and activities. Popular stops include the U.S. Olympic Training Center, North Cheyenne Canon Park and the U.S. Air Force Academy - check out www.visitcos.com for all that there is to see and do. www.experiencecoloradosprings.com</p> <p>Garden of the Gods: The Garden is a unique biological melting pot where the grasslands of the Great Plains meet the pinon-juniper woodlands characteristic of the American Southwest, and merge with the mountain forest of the 14,110-foot Pikes Peak. See the Visitor & Nature Center and see the amazing HD movie "How Did Those Reds</p>

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	<p>Rocks Get There? www.gardenofgods.com Also: Segway tour through the Park with Adventures Out West, www.advoutwest.com</p> <p>Olympic Training Center: 1 Olympic Plaza, Colorado Springs, CO 80909, 719-866-4618 www.teamusa.org/about-usoc/colorado-springs-olympic-training-ctr The U.S. Olympic Complex in Colorado Springs is the headquarters for the U.S. Olympic Committee administration and the Olympic Training Center programs. A visit here is a fascinating insight into the drive behind all Olympic competitors and one of the city's names is "Olympic City USA". There are plans for an Olympic Hall of Fame.</p> <p>Manitou Springs: just west of Colorado Springs, is a magical and historic mountain town filled with galleries, shops, mineral springs, and restaurants. www.manitousprings.org</p> <p>There are new attractions at Royal Gorge Bridge and Park: it's has the highest zip line in the US and the Royal Gorge Dinosaur Experience...</p>
<p>Cities: Grand Junction</p>	<p>The largest city on Colorado's Western Slope and the heart of Colorado wine country, Grand Junction sprawls across the Grand Valley, perfectly situated for exploring the wonders of northwestern Colorado — and wonders certainly abound. Grand Junction presents a dramatically different side of Colorado - where mountain biking leads from a desert trail into any of the 22 wineries. Where you can wine and dine next to the majestic Colorado River, and can explore the Grand Mesa National Forest or the desert landscape of the Colorado National Monument. Grand Junction is filled with unique adventures, such as riding horses to seek out the wild horse bands of the Little Book Cliff Range. Like rafting the whitewater of the Colorado River – or floating gently through town and then making a stop at the brewery when you're done. What about going on a dinosaur dig with a paleontologist? Or hiking to see dinosaur bones right from the trail!</p> <p>Grand Junction is renowned as Colorado's Wine Country and there are 22 wineries are open year-round. Harvest is typically in September, and so is Colorado's largest wine festival – Colorado Mountain Winefest, held the 3rd weekend of every September. That pairs perfectly with the agri-tourism scene, for which Grand Junction is the hub in Colorado. Lavender farms and peach orchards dot the landscape in perfectly planted rows. For a fun, carefree day, rent a cruiser or electric bike and tour winery to farm stand to winery to orchard. And as well as biking you can tour wine country by limo, motorized scooter, motorcycle or</p>

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	<p>horse-drawn carriage! Grand Junction, Colorado is the beginning of the Canyonlands of the West and Colorado National Monument preserves one of the grand landscapes of the American West. Sheer-walled canyons, towering monoliths, colorful formations, desert bighorn sheep, soaring eagles, and a spectacular road reflect the environment and history of the plateau and canyon country. The 37 kilometer long Rim Rock Drive is the primary access to this 20,000 acre park from which visitors can experience all the park has to offer. Touted by Outside Magazine and USA Today as one of the top 10 best places for solitude in the US, the Monument features 11 canyons, 20,000 acres of arched windows, rock spires and natural monoliths - all thrown by the hands of wind and rain over millions of years. http://www.visitgrandjunction.com/</p>
<p>Cities: Fort Collins</p>	<p>Fort Collins Situated north of Denver and tucked between the plains and the mountains, Fort Collins is the last city on Interstate 25 north before you hit the Wyoming border. It's also a gateway city to northern Colorado's Rocky Mountain National Park and Roosevelt National Forest. And it has plenty to offer on its own, including a well-deserved reputation as one of Colorado's top craft-brewery hubs. Though there was a fort here in the 1860s, it was more of a trading post where American Indians and traders met on the banks of the Cache la Poudre River (French for "hide the powder"), for the most part in friendly fashion. While its name suggests otherwise, there's never really been a strong military presence here. Nowadays, Fort Collins is home to Colorado State University, and it has all the liveliness and bustle of a college town. Good restaurants, brewpubs, nightlife and culture abound. There's always something going on! 70% of Colorado's craft beer comes from Fort Collins - there are 16 breweries to visit including the well-known New Belgium Brewing Company. The Fort Collins community is very supportive of its brewing companies – a neat idea is “Branch Out Cider” which collects apples from the “community orchard” (basically apple trees whose owners cannot use the crop) and it then goes on to make ciders and apple wines. Fort Collins also has a growing craft coffee movement. Fort Collins is one of only 4 Platinum Level Bike Friendly communities in the U.S - making it a fantastic destination for experienced cyclists and families alike. The Fort Collins Bike Library allows you to rent a bike free of charge for a day and explore the 280+ bike lanes and trails in and around Fort Collins. In fact Fort Collins is a wonderful base for outdoor adventure of all</p>

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	<p>kinds. The Cache La Poudre River, Colorado's only National Wild and Scenic River, is great for rafting, kayaking, fly fishing and more. While Soapstone Prairie Natural Area represents a pristine, natural environment for the native species to roam as they did hundreds of years ago. There are even plans for Bison to be reintroduced to the area in the near future.</p> <p>http://www.visitftcollins.com/</p>
<p>Cities: Durango</p>	<p>Gold brought many of the first settlers to Durango in the Animas River Valley, located in the southwest corner of Colorado's Rocky Mountains. Durango was founded in 1880 by the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad, when they extended their line from the town to Silverton in order to haul precious metals from high-country mines. Trains were essential transportation of the day, bringing supplies in and gold ore out. Today, when the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad blows its whistle, tourists climb aboard for a 72 kms trip through the still-wild San Juan Mountains to Silverton, where they can lunch and shop before re-boarding for the trip home. Scenic train rides depart 3 times a day from Durango to Silverton and back. Other Special train ride events include the Wine and Rails, the Durango Brew Train and the Blues Train.</p> <p>Suffice it to say, if it can be done outdoors, then it can be done in Durango. There is a huge mountain biking community and there is top-notch whitewater rafting on the nearby Piedras, Animas and Dolores rivers. If you like fishing, bring your pole. Backpacking and camping are prime activities - or you can rent a cabin and spend lazy days on a high mountain lake.</p> <p>Here are just a few of the exciting adventures awaiting you in the area: The San Juan Mountains provide the breathtaking backdrop for Durango's outdoor playground. Experience fun family-friendly outdoor activities like the Alpine Slide, Diggle Mountain Scooters, a zipline, family ropes course, scenic chairlift, mountain bike trails, and more at Purgatory Resort.</p> <p>Enjoy a high elevation festival like Music in the Mountains, Muck & Mire, a family-friendly mud adventure race, and more.</p> <p>Feast on local fare and inspired cuisine at Durango's 100+ restaurants. After a fine meal, stroll the streets, take an art walk or enjoy live music at various indoor and outdoor venues.</p> <p>Pull on the boots and shine up the buckles for the True West Rodeos; there are live Gunfights at Diamond Belle Saloon and the Durango Cowboy Gathering in September.</p> <p>Visit the Saturday Farmer's Market, take a tour of James Ranch and dine at the Harvest Grill & Greens, or perch on the lawn for live music and local wine at Fox Fire Farms.</p> <p>Float or fly-fish the Animas River. Take the whole family to the outdoor</p>

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	<p>Olympic size pool at Trimble Hot Springs. Or rent a boat and BBQ shore side at Vallecito Lake. http://www.durango.org/</p>
Distances	<p>Denver to Colorado Springs: 114 kms Denver to Aspen: 260 kms Denver to Grand Junction: 400 kms Denver to Durango: 530 kms</p>
Trains	<p>Colorado has a number of world class scenic trains:</p> <p>Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad: Perhaps the most famous of them all...In its heyday, more than \$300 million in gold and silver were hauled on the narrow-gauge tracks. Authentically restored 1880 passenger cars will sweep you into days gone by and abandoned mine sites and virgin forests, while chugging along the wild Animas River up into the San Juan Mountains, with a stop at the gold mining era town of Silverton, before returning to Durango. http://www.durangotrain.com</p> <p>Leadville, Colorado and Southern Railroad: Nestled in the alpine valley under the shadow of Colorado's highest peak, Leadville was settled and developed by miners and merchants in the 1800s. Discover the mining and railroad history of Leadville while enjoying the breathtaking views of the Arkansas River Valley as you travel to the Continental Divide. http://www.leadville-train.com</p> <p>Cripple Creek and Victor Narrow Gauge Railroad: Enjoy a four-mile round-trip through historic Victor and past old mining sites, then back to the gold-rush town of Cripple Creek, now known for its low-stakes gambling as well as its restored Victorian-era town.</p> <p>Cumbres & Tolec Scenic Railroad: The longest and highest narrow-gauge line in North America, it stretches 103 kilometers from Antonito, Colorado to Chama, New Mexico. From an open-air sightseeing coach, you can take in the sights and enjoy on-train refreshments.</p> <p>Georgetown Loop Historic Mining and Railroad Park: You can hop on at either the Georgetown or Silver Plume Depot; this historic narrow-gauge railroad loops through both as it makes its way through Clear Creek Canyon. Originally built in 1884, the railroad is a major attraction in Georgetown, and it's easy to see why as you gaze out from open-air or covered cars at the rugged wilderness going by.</p>

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	<p>Manitou and Pikes Peak Cog Railway: The world's highest cog (rack) railroad, this line takes passengers to the 14,110-foot/4,300-meter summit of Pikes Peak, and its one-of-a-kind views.</p> <p>Rio Grande Scenic Railroad: Colorado's newest scenic train offers steam engine rides out of Alamosa. Enjoy hundreds of miles of historic rail, through mountain valleys and passes.</p> <p>Royal Gorge Scenic Railway: The little train with big views of the spectacular Royal Gorge. An incline railway with open-air cars allow for breathtaking vistas of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and Royal Gorge region on this three-mile, 30-minute round-trip ride.</p> <p>Royal Gorge Route Railroad: This 1950s-era rail line forges through one of America's most spectacular canyons. Travel in comfortable cars (including three recently added historic observation dome cars) as you chug along the bottom of the gorge and look up 1,200 feet/366 meters to the Royal Gorge Bridge spanning the top.</p>
Car Rental	<p>There's no better way to see Colorado, than from the open road. Whether you're looking for a car, truck, 4x4 or ATV, there are plenty of companies around the state that provide rental vehicles of all shapes and sizes.</p>
Buses	<p>There is excellent bus service both within Denver and throughout the state. Tour bus charters to many of the sights are also available.</p>
Passes	<p>Mile High Culture Pass, Denver With the Culture Pass in hand, you'll receive admission to some of Denver's most fascinating attractions, all for the bargain, "Mile High" price of \$52.80 (a savings of more than \$25) or three attractions of your choice for \$25 (a savings of \$12). You can receive the Culture Pass via your mobile phone or in a printable format. Over the course of five consecutive days, the \$52.80 pass will admit visitors to all seven participating attractions. Or the \$25 pass will admit visitors to three participating attractions of their choice over the course of three consecutive days. The pass is activated at the first attraction visited. All participating attractions are listed below. Clyfford Still Museum Denver Art Museum Denver Botanic Gardens Denver Museum of Nature & Science Denver Zoo History Colorado Center Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Art</p> <p>When you buy the culture pass, you can also enjoy the following deals:</p>

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	<p>Denver B-cycle: 50 percent-off the city's bike sharing program Molly Brown House Museum: Discounted admission Byers-Evans House Museum: Discounted admission Denver Firefighters Museum: Children 12 and under receive free admission The Counterterrorism Education Learning Lab (The CELL): 2 for 1 admission Butterfly Pavilion: Discounted admission</p>
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ACCOMMODATION TYPES	<p>When each day comes to an end, your choices in Colorado are just beginning. From five-star luxury hotels to rustic campsites, you'll find a wide variety of places to rest at night. Whether it's a city hotel, mountain resort, historic bed and breakfast or rustic lodge, Colorado provides amazing views, values and experiences. Travellers can choose between the largest international hotel chains to small inns, maintained and managed by the owner. And, you'll find plenty of great dining options and activities no matter where you go.</p> <p>Here's a few hotels that I visited on my trips to Colorado and can personally recommend:</p> <p>Far View Lodge, Mesa Verde No. 1 Navajo Hill, Mesa Verde National Park, CO 81330 800-449-2288 Far View Lodge is located 24kms inside Mesa Verde National Park, conveniently close to the park Visitor Center. The traditional Western decor of the lobby and dining room, fantastic views, warm hospitality and superb dining welcome you for an unforgettable stay. The lodge comprises 150 rooms in 2 room types. The lodge was designed to reflect the true essence of Mesa Verde, with solitude all around you and freedom from the distraction of in-room TVs or cell phone service but plenty of wildlife watching and from your private balcony there are fabulous stargazing opportunities. The lobby features free wireless Internet. http://www.visitmesaverde.com/accommodations/far-view-lodge.aspx</p> <p>Residence Inn by Marriott Denver City Center 1725 Champa St., Denver, CO 80202 , 303-296-3444 Downtown's only all-suite hotel. Perfect for extended stays or a short trip, each suite includes all the comforts of home including kitchens and complimentary high speed Internet access. Free hot breakfast buffet, happy hour and 24 hour health club. Walk to the downtown venues, shopping and various restaurants. http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/denrd-residence-inn-denver-city-center</p>
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The Cliff House at Pikes Peak, Manitou Springs

306 Canon Avenue, Manitou Springs, CO 80829, 719-685-3000

One of Colorado's finest luxury hotels, this unforgettable historic hotel has been voted one of the top hotels in the world by Travel & Leisure magazine. From the world-class fine dining, amazing rooms, personalized service, fun new bar and grill, to the limitless experiences and activities Manitou Springs has to offer - you will love your stay here.
<http://www.thecliffhouse.com>

Cheyenne Mountain Resort, Colorado Springs

3225 Broadmoor Valley Road, Colorado Springs, CO, 719-538-4000

This hotel continues to receive accolades and awards from across the country. Set against picturesque mountain views and surrounded by Colorado Springs' naturally breathtaking scenery, Cheyenne Mountain Resort features an impressive range of year-round recreational activities. See Prize Hotel section below for further details.

www.cheyennemountain.com

Broadmoor Hotel, Colorado Springs

1 Lake Avenue, Colorado Springs, CO 80906, 719-577-5896

An historic hotel, built in 1918, in a beautiful part of Colorado Springs. Forbes Travel Guide Five-Star Awards (formerly Mobil Five-Star Award by Mobil Travel Guide) announced its list of Five-Star winners for 2010 and honored The Broadmoor for a record 50th consecutive year. The Broadmoor is the only property ever to achieve this status. Additionally, the resort has the distinction in 2010 of becoming a triple Five-Star winner with the addition of both the Penrose Room restaurant and The Spa at Broadmoor.

www.broadmoor.com

Elk Mountain Lodge, Crested Butte

129 Gothic Ave, Crested Butte, Colorado (CO) 81224, 970-349-7533

Experience the old-world elegance and comfort of The Elk Mountain Lodge, Crested Butte Colorado's Historic Hotel & Inn. Built in 1919 as a miner's hotel, the lodge has a touch of the past with modern conveniences. Completely and beautifully renovated, this one of a kind Crested Butte Hotel features a complimentary full breakfast and 19 guest rooms each with private bathroom, Cable TV, wireless internet, and telephone with voice-mail. All the guest accommodations are individually decorated. Third floor rooms have balconies with spectacular Colorado Rocky Mountain views of the Crested Butte Mountain Resort and the surrounding Elk Mountains. After a long day of skiing or mountain biking guests relax in the indoor hot tub room or the

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	<p>lobby bar which is open each evening. http://www.elkmountainlodge.com</p> <p>Rochester Hotel, Durango 721 East Second Avenue, Durango, CO 81301 970-385-1920 The newly renovated Rochester Hotel, built in 1892, offers 15 luxurious rooms with high ceilings and private bathrooms. The Rochester Hotel is situated on a beautifully landscaped site, featuring a flower-filled courtyard. Rooms are decorated in Old West motif inspired by Western movies filmed in the Durango area. http://www.rochesterhotel.com</p> <p>Brown Palace Hotel, Denver 321 17th Street Denver, CO 80202 303-297-3111 Towering office buildings are softened by many historic structures showcasing the city's Western roots, including downtown's crown jewel, the famed 117-year-old Brown Palace Hotel & Spa, with its eight-story atrium topped by a spectacular stained-glass roof. www.brownpalace.com</p> <p>Hotel Jerome, Aspen 330 East Main Street, Aspen, CO 81611 970-920-1000 The lavish, AAA Four Diamond Award-winning Hotel Jerome features 92 richly appointed guest rooms and suites, several restaurants and the ever-popular J Bar. Hotel Jerome's ornate Victorian mine-camp flavor has been painstakingly preserved and restored so that the smallest detail is an exquisite reflection of the whole. www.hoteljerome.rockresorts.com</p>
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LIFESTYLES	
Kids	<p>One of the most popular sites to visit in Denver is the famous United States Mint, where more than 20 billion coins are produced each year. That's 40 million-plus coins every day! A terrific family outing, the Mint offers tours that begin with the history of money and instruction on the coin stamping process. Watch the faces of the kids as they see the 60 large, high-speed presses and the machines that count, sort and bag the coins. In the basement of the Mint, you'll see the second largest deposits of gold bullion in the U.S. after Fort Knox — an estimated \$100 billion worth of solid gold bars.</p> <p>Rocky Mountain Park Field Seminars are now being offered by the Rocky Mountain Nature Association in the quaint mountain town of Estes Park. This new series of field seminars includes lectures combined with field trips that enhance the Rocky Mountain National</p>

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	<p>Park experience. Affordable courses for kids include an Estes Park Treasure Hunt, geo-caching activities, photography for kids and Animal Tracks Detectives. Adults can participate in courses focusing on cultural traditions on the Native Americans, natural history seminars and hiking with local naturalists. www.rmna.org</p> <p>Glenwood Caverns Adventure Park: www.glenwoodcaverns.com At the top of Iron Mountain, near Glenwood Springs, visitors can tour Glenwood Caverns and Historic Fairy Caves, recognized as one of the leading family cave tours in the country. The Cave Tour is a one-hour guided walking tour appropriate for most people. The Wild Tour is a three-hour, guided, an on-your-belly adventure tour that gives a visitor the opportunity to explore the rarely visited areas of Glenwood Caverns. There's also a great selection of attractions and thrill experiences up there, from Alpine Coaster to Giant Canyon Swing to Bungee Trampoline to the 4D Ride Theater. Glenwood Caverns Adventure Park has also launched a zipline and bungee jumping station– the first in Colorado. Check out my own experiences on my Travel Blog: http://christalkstravel.blogspot.com/2009/06/glenwood.html</p>
<p>Teens</p>	<p>Zapata Ranch 5305 State Highway 150, Mosca, Colorado 81146 719-378-2356 Owned by The Nature Conservancy and managed through a one-of-a-kind partnership with the Duke and Janet Phillips Family- a third-generation ranching family. The ranch is a 103,000-acre cattle, bison and guest ranch. It borders the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, the newest National Park in the United States. The high desert grasslands, alpine forests, wetlands, sand dunes, creeks and lush meadows offer one of the most scenic and ecologically diverse landscapes in the United States. The ranch and surrounding valley is a wildlife mecca and is home to thousands of elk, bison, deer, coyotes, birds and many other species. This is a family-oriented ranch; children are welcome, but must be over 12 years old to participate in the Ranch Experience Program. Exceptions are made for advanced youth riders (no younger than eight years of age). Families are encouraged to participate in activities together and accompany their young children on rides. But at times when adults want to ride together, they have youth programs to allow children to have an enriching experience as well. http://www.zranch.org</p> <p>Denver offers two gigantic water parks: Water World, the largest aqua park in the nation, has wave pools, surfing, tubing, rapids and more. Elitch Gardens is two parks in one with 56 thrill rides and a complete water park.</p>

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	<p>Denver is also the capital of day trip adventures. In just an hour or so from downtown you can go river rafting through a 1,000-foot high canyon, ride a narrow gauge steam locomotive over a 100-foot trestle, hike among towering red rock formations, fly fish in Gold Medallion streams, see elk in a national park, gamble in Old West mining towns or shop in beautiful mountain resort villages.</p> <p>Dinosaur National Monument provides one of the best snapshots of Jurassic dinosaurs found anywhere in the world. Visitors can view fossils exposed on the cliff face of Douglass Quarry and explore displays of classic fossil dinosaur bones including those from the Allosaurus, Stegosaurus, Apatosaurus and Archaeopteryx. www.NPS.gov/dino</p>
<p>Romance</p>	<p>Spas Colorado is home to dozens of hot springs and spas where visitors can soothe sore muscles after a full day of white-water rafting, skiing, ice climbing, hiking or mountain biking. Ranging from rustic to refined, Colorado's hot springs are celebrated for their high mineral content and resulting therapeutic qualities. You'll find the world's largest hot springs pool in Glenwood Springs and the world's deepest hot mineral spring in Pagosa Springs. In addition, Colorado boasts several "man made" spas within its collection of luxury hotel and resort spas. Many of the spas find inspiration in the state's hot springs culture, introducing architectural water features and hydrotherapy treatments that reflect an awareness of and appreciation for water's therapeutic qualities. What more romantic way to finish an active day than a couples massage?</p>
<p>Weddings</p>	<p>Take your love to higher elevations: say "I Do" to a Colorado wedding. From mountaintop views, open meadows near a running river or dramatic red rock formations, Colorado sets the stage, and the mood, for romantic weddings.</p> <p>A Monumental Wedding The Colorado National Monument, located just minutes from Grand Junction, CO, is a gorgeous, unique, and romantic location for a wedding celebration. Weddings are permitted in four different areas in the Monument, including the Book Cliffs View Shelter, the Saddlehorn Picnic Area, the Devils Kitchen Picnic Area, and the Saddlehorn Amphitheater. Each location is surrounded by beautiful views and a dramatic red rock landscape of canyons and cliffs, ensuring a memorable wedding day that will be enjoyed by everyone. For more details about having a wedding in the Colorado National Monument and obtaining the necessary permits, please visit the Monument's website at www.nps.gov/colm/planyourvisit/specialusepermits.htm .</p>

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	<p>A Wedding made in Heaven There's no better place to tie the knot than a Garden created by the Gods. Garden of the Gods Park is a geological and natural wonder as well as a treasure to the City of Colorado Springs. These jutting red rocks spires burst with different hues of red and orange creating an almost surreal scenic surrounding and backdrop. Complete with a road, hiking, biking and walking trails throughout the park, couples can choose the spot that fits them best. The legacy of the Garden of the Gods Park is that it remains free to all people and always be open to the public. Every bride wants to feel like a princess on her wedding day, getting married at Glen Eyrie Castle brings her even closer to royalty. The castle was originally built as the home of Colorado Springs founder General William Jackson Palmer. Whether a dream wedding day is grand or intimate, cottage or castle, Glen Eyrie has the perfect venue for a wedding ceremony and reception. The castle offers various wedding ceremony and reception packages including a wedding planner. Glen Eyrie is home to over 800 acres of stately pines and whispering aspen, lush lawns, sparkling waterfalls and majestic sandstone rock faces.</p> <p>A Rocky Mountain High Wedding International couples looking for an alternative to a fantasy wedding that offers a real and natural experience should look no further than the Gunnison-Crested Butte Valley in southwest Colorado. The Gunnison-Crested Butte Wedding Council and Gunnison-Crested Butte Tourism Association, offer excellent tips for planning an outstanding and affordable destination wedding. Local planners can put all of the details together for couples, and with today's technology make sure everything is planned to their specifications. "That's so important when working with our international brides and grooms," says Jane Chaney, executive director of the Gunnison-Crested Butte Tourism Association. "And, if affordability is important, you'll find Gunnison-Crested Butte to be a great choice as well. Our wedding experts create a plan tailored to each couple, identifying just the right price points for things such as lodging, music, flowers, location, food and beverage." www.gunnisoncrestedbutteweddings.com and www.GunnisonCrestedButte.com</p>
Zoomers	<p>The great thing about Colorado's mighty mountains is that they are so accessible. For Zoomers, this is perfect: you can reach the mountain tops by vehicle or train and enjoy the same great vista as the youngsters who have hiked up the hard way!</p>
UNIQUES	<p>Colorado is a state of the highest! - Trail Ridge Road, the highest continuous U.S. highway, leaves Rocky</p>

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	<p>Mountain National Park on the east and soars to 12,183 feet as it crosses the Continental Divide to the Western Slope.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The highest paved road in North America is the road to Mt. Evans off of I-70 from Idaho Springs. The road climbs up to 14,258 feet above sea level. - The Dwight Eisenhower Memorial Tunnel between Clear Creek & Summit counties is the highest auto tunnel in the world. Bored at an elevation of 11,000 feet under the Continental Divide, it is 8,960 feet long. - Leadville is the highest incorporated city in the United States at 10,430 feet elevation. Because there were many "silver" named towns at the time, the founding fathers suggested Leadville. - Pikes Peak: It was on top of nearby Pikes Peak in 1893 that Katherine Lee Bates was inspired to write the words to "America the Beautiful." - Mount Evans has the highest paved auto road in North America snaking its way to the 14,260 foot (4,346 m) summit. The free road is open only from June through Labor Day and frequently has snow on it, even in August. The view from the top takes in the entire Front Range. The summit is 97 km from downtown Denver. On your way up the mountain, be sure to stop at the M. Walter Pesman Trail (maintained by Denver Botanic Gardens) for a wildflower hike. You won't see anything like the rare flowers and 1,500-year-old bristlecone pine trees anywhere in the world. The trail winds through subalpine and alpine areas where wildflowers and animals of the fragile tundra live. Volunteer guides from Denver Botanic Gardens give interpreted hikes that follow the trail throughout the summer.
<p>Surprising</p>	<p>The point where the Arikaree River flows out of Yuma County, Colorado, and into Cheyenne County, Kansas, is the lowest point in the State of Colorado at 3,315 feet (1,010 m) elevation. This crossing point holds the distinction of being the highest low point of any U.S. state.</p>
<p>History</p>	<p>To a lot of people, Colorado means the Old West. But in the grand scheme of things, the Old West isn't really that old at all. Archeologists speculate that hunters from Siberia crossed into Colorado 11,000 years ago – even before that dinosaurs roamed the state. In relatively recent history, the Ancestral Puebloans inhabited the southwest region of Colorado. Today, you can walk in dinosaur tracks in the Picketwire Canyon in Southeast Colorado or see the petrified remains in Dinosaur National Monument in Northwest Colorado. The rock art on canyon walls and cliff dwellings, such as Mesa Verde National Park is remaining pieces of the ancient people who called this state home. The territory that ultimately became Colorado was added to the United States by the 1803 Louisiana Purchase and the 1848 Mexican Cession. The Colorado Gold Rush of 1859 brought many settlers to the Denver area, though the population collapsed following an initial mining</p>

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	boom. The Colorado Territory was organized as a United States territory on February 28, 1861, and Colorado attained statehood August 1, 1876, (earning it the moniker the "Centennial State"). Colorado women were granted the right to vote starting on November 7, 1893.
Books	<p>Lonely Planet's Colorado is the bible of guide books to the state: http://shop.lonelyplanet.com/usa/colorado-travel-guide-2/</p> <p>Taking the Old Highway by Brad Modesitt – an entertaining account of his canoe journey from Fort Collins in Colorado all the way down to New Orleans.</p>
1000 Places to See Before You Die	<p>There are seven in the state...</p> <p>Aspen – most famous and sophisticated ski resort;</p> <p>Home Ranch, Clark – dude ranch, more cattle baron than cow-poke;</p> <p>Mesa Verde National Park – see National parks section below</p> <p>Durango and Silverton Railway - The D&SNGRR operates coal-fired, steam-powered locomotives, from Durango to Silverton, through the remote wilderness and high-mountain landscape of the San Juan National Forest.;</p> <p>Rocky Mountain National Park; for my Travel Blog, go to: http://christalkstravel.blogspot.com/2009/06/rocky-mountain-national-park.html</p> <p>Telluride – festival capital of the Rockies;</p> <p>Vail – America's largest single mountain ski resort</p>
Must Sees	<p>Sunrise Breakfast on the Colorado National Monument at the Bookcliff Overlook</p> <p>This is noted by Outside Magazine and USA Today as one of the top 10 best places for solitude in the US. The Monument features 11 canyons, 20,000 acres of arched windows, rock spires and natural monoliths - all thrown by the hands of wind and rain over millions of years.</p> <p>Colorado National Monument, Fruita, CO 81521 Tel: 970-858-3617</p> <p>www.nps.gov/colm.com</p>
SPORTS ACTIVITIES	<p>Colorado is the least populous state with a franchise in each of the major professional sports leagues. The state is able to support the teams largely because it contains a large metropolitan area with a higher population than any other city within 885 km. The teams are:</p> <p>Colorado Rockies Baseball Major League Baseball</p> <p>Denver Broncos Football National Football League</p> <p>Colorado Avalanche Ice hockey National Hockey League</p> <p>Denver Nuggets Basketball National Basketball Association</p>
Golf	<p>There's nothing like a round of golf in Colorado to make you feel better about your game. Just tee one up and see how far it flies in the thin mountain air. A golf ball flies on average ten percent farther in Colorado than other states because of the altitude. It flies even farther</p>

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	<p>at higher altitudes (above 7,000 feet). Colorado has nearly 100 of the most beautiful golf courses you'll find anywhere. You'll find award-winning courses, perfect for any skill level, throughout every part of the state, designed by the biggest names in the game. And nowhere else provides as much variety as Colorado. From beautiful mountain views to links courses, Colorado's terrain and elevation makes for countless golfing experiences. For a truly amazing experience, why not go golfing and skiing – all in the same day. Denver alone has over 90 golf courses and they remain open all year. Here is one suggestion:</p> <p>Cougar Canyon: Play Golfweek Magazine's "#1 Best Course You Can Play in Colorado," Cougar Canyon Golf Links, and stay in a suite at Cougar Canyon Resort and Spa, a southern Colorado retreat without equal.</p>
<p>Fishing</p>	<p>With 15,000 kms of rivers and more than 2,000 lakes, Colorado has some of the best, and most abundant, fishing you'll find anywhere. Not to mention the incredible natural beauty that surrounds it all. Go to: http://wildlife.state.co.us/Fishing for more info.</p>
<p>Horse riding</p>	<p>Dude Ranches: For a ropin' good time, lasso your way around Colorado during a visit to one of the state's 32 dude and guest ranches, where you'll experience an authentic taste of the Old West. Serving up Western hospitality since 1946, C Lazy U, located on 8,000 acres of Colorado wilderness outside of Granby, offers the ultimate family vacation. For the kids, the ranch offers "kids' only" programs mastering the skills of cowboys and cowgirls. When the dinner bell rings, bring your appetite for cowboy-sized portions of Rocky Mountain trout, rosemary rack of lamb and sinful desserts. Within a short drive from Denver, you'll be ready to kick up your cowboy boots at North Fork Guest Ranch, in Shawnee. Whether you're a seasoned horseman, hunting enthusiast or nature lover, the ranch has plotted your course for unique Western adventure — from trail rides and whitewater rafting to pony rides for the younger cowboys and cowgirls.</p> <p>Ever since the world's first rodeo was held in Deer Trail, Colorado, in 1869, cowboys have been riding and roping in the state. In addition to the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame in Colorado Springs, you'll find great rodeos all over the Colorado, all year long.</p> <p>Drowsy Water Ranch PO Box 147 Granby, CO 80446-0147 Tel: 970-725-3456 www.drowsywater.com</p> <p>For over 70 years this 600 acre family guest ranch, nestled in its own private mountain valley, has provided folks from around the world with authentic western ranch vacations. Under the same ownership and management since 1977, the Fosha's Drowsy Water Ranch has</p>

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	<p>developed a reputation for quality Colorado Dude Ranch vacations. I had a great time there on a recent trip – see my Travel Blog at: http://christalkstravel.blogspot.com/2009/06/drousy-water-dude-ranch.html</p>
Hiking	<p>For every mountain range in Colorado, there are dozens of valleys to explore. And for nearly every valley, you'll find a trail. No matter where you go, you'll find amazing scenery, incredible wildlife and adventure around every turn. The National Parks all have great trails too. Denver has one of the USA's largest urban trail systems.</p>
Cycling	<p>Denver Bike Tours - Mountain bike in Colorado with these guided bike tours of the city and local mountain bike trails. Rental bikes and hotel pick up are available. Experience breathtaking single-track in the mountains or go for a spin on the local bike path.</p> <p>Canyon Bikes offer a 25 kms trail in scenic Glenwood Canyon. Bike rentals and a shuttle service offers easy downhill rides for the entire family. It's one of the best bike rides around and is open mid-March to October; reservations are recommended.</p>
Rafting	<p>The most popular river for rafting is the Arkansas, which has its headwaters on Mount Democrat near Leadville and drops 10,000 feet in 200kms (to Pueblo), where it continues through southeast Colorado, across Kansas, and eventually into the Mississippi River. The river includes almost all classes of rapids, depending upon which section you tackle, and one of the most exciting is through the Royal Gorge near Canon City.</p> <p>Other popular spots include the Colorado River, through Glenwood Canyon and down to Grand Junction, near the Utah border; the Green River, which bisects remote Dinosaur National Monument; and the Dolores River in southwest Colorado</p>
Skiing	<p>With tens-of-thousands of acres of skiable terrain, high-speed lifts and a wide distribution of areas throughout the state, Colorado's 26 ski resorts remain the top destination for in-the-know skiers and snowboarders. It's well-known that Colorado's resorts offer some of the best traditional downhill in the world, but did you know they also offer challenging bowls, exciting moguls, vast backcountry and energetic winter festivals?</p> <p>Of the four mountains in Aspen/Snowmass, Aspen Mountain is the poster boy. Now in its 64th year of operation, this ski resort has seen a number of improvements made to its already award-winning location. Its workhorse gondola, the Silver Queen, has undergone a major renovation. 147 Swiss-made cabins, with windows reaching nearly floor to ceiling, allow you to take in breathtaking views of the Rocky Mountains before you disembark and bomb down the slopes. Don't ski? Don't worry. Downtown Aspen is a boutique shopper's paradise.</p>

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<p>CULTURE</p>	<p>The Denver Performing Arts Complex is the second largest performing arts complex in the world, just behind New York’s Lincoln Center. It offers a diverse array of Broadway shows, professional theatre, symphony, opera and ballet in dazzling venues. www.DenverCenter.org</p>
<p>Arts</p>	<p>Denver Art Museum 100 W 14th Ave Pkwy www.denverartmuseum.org With more than 40,000 works of art, the Denver Art Museum has the largest and most comprehensive collection of world art between Kansas City and the West Coast. The museum contains a diverse collection of art from all over the world, including Western American art.</p>
<p>Music</p>	<p>Red Rocks Park and Amphitheater, Denver Just 25kms west of Denver, Red Rocks Park is a beautiful place to see a concert. Around you are 868 acres of deer, dinosaurs, pines and prairie, geological wonders and spectacular vistas. At 6,450 feet above sea level, Red Rocks Park is a unique transitional zone where the Great Plains meet the Rocky Mountains. The diverse environment allows visitors to see plants, birds and animals of both regions. Red Rocks Amphitheatre is a geological phenomenon – the only naturally occurring, acoustically perfect amphitheatre in the world. From Sting and The Beatles, to opera stars and U2, every artist aspires to play on this magical, spiritual and emotional stage. www.redrocksonline.com</p> <p>The Denver Botanic Gardens’ annual summer concert series is jam-packed with stars. Each show takes place at the Gardens’ York Street location – bring a blanket or lawn chair along with a bottle of wine and a picnic dinner. A word to the wise: virtually all Botanic Gardens concerts sell out – so get your tickets early!</p>
<p>Films</p>	<p>The first film made in Colorado was filmed in Denver in 1897. Since then, there have been hundreds of other films, television shows, commercials, music videos and still photo shoots. One of my recent favourite films, The Bucket List (2007) with Jack Nicholson, Morgan Freeman was filmed partly in Colorado. And the Durango and Silverton Railway has played a role in a dozen films including Around the World in 80 Days (1956), How the West Was Won (1963) and Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (1969).</p>
<p>Museums</p>	<p>Denver Museum of Nature & Science 2001 Colorado Blvd., Denver http://www.dmns.org/ Explore fantastic fossils, stimulating space science activities, view amazing gems and minerals, Egyptian mummies, and much more. Watch exciting IMAX films and visit one of the best planetariums in the</p>

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	<p>country. The dinosaur exhibit is first rate and I have included this in my Top 10 Dinosaur destinations at: http://www.chrisrobinsontravelshow.ca/images/upload/ChrisFavouriteDinosaurPlaces.pdf</p> <p>Denver's "littlest" museum is found just south of downtown at the Pearce-McAllister Cottage, housing the Denver Museum of Miniatures, Dolls and Toys.</p> <p>Buffalo Bill's Grave & Museum in Denver is filled with memorabilia honoring the famous frontier scout, showman and Pony Express rider, William F. Cody. Gun collections and posters from the Wild West Show are some of the items found here.</p> <p>Gunnison Pioneer Museum 803 East Tomichi Avenue, Gunnison, CO 81230 970-641-4530 The Museum grounds, its 18 buildings, the artifacts and memorabilia that make up the many displays date back to the early settlers. The Museum's collections represent the cultural history and heritage of the people of Gunnison County. The D&RG narrow gauge Railroad came over Marshall Pass to Gunnison on August 6, 1881. The Denver South Park and Pacific came to Gunnison via the Alpine Tunnel a year later on September 1, 1882. The Museum's narrow gauge train consists of the D&RG Engine #268, a flanger, a gondola, a boxcar, a livestock car and a caboose. http://www.gunnisoncrestedbutte.com/activity/pioneer-museum</p> <p>Crested Butte Heritage Museum The Crested Butte Mountain Heritage Museum occupies one of the oldest buildings in Crested Butte in Central Colorado. Built in 1883 as a blacksmith shop, the Crested Butte Hardware Store, referred to as Tony's Conoco, opened the first retail gas pump in 1911. The building served as a local gathering spot for decades as old timers caught up, welcomed new comers and told stories around the pot belly coal stove. http://www.crestedbutteheritagemuseum.com</p>
<p>Festivals</p>	<p>Denver Summer Festivals: During the summer months in the Mile High City, a week doesn't go by without at least one amazing festival taking place. From Memorial Day in May until Labor Day in September, the weekends are filled with arts, entertainment, food and more, all with a distinctly Denver twist. Check out some of the biggest and best ones below.</p> <p>Capitol Hill People's Fair</p>

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When: June

Where: Civic Center Park, Denver

More Info: www.chundenver.org

The Capitol Hill People's Fair is a celebration of Denver's diverse urban community. The uniqueness and magic of Capitol Hill People's Fair is created by the careful blending of great family fun, carefully selected handmade arts & crafts, delicious culinary delights, fabulous entertainment and the commitment to raise funds for and promote the missions of non-profit organizations.

Denver Chalk Art Festival

When: June

Where: Larimer Square, Denver

More Info: www.larimerarts.org

A little bit of Italy comes to the Mile High City this summer, thanks to the 6th annual La Piazza dell'Arte festival. The art you'll encounter during the festival isn't in galleries -- it's on the pavement! The event features more than 150 professional and amateur artists who will spend hours on their hands and knees over the course of two days transforming Larimer Square into a bright and colorful street museum using vivid pastel chalks.

Juneteenth

When: June

Where: Historic Five Points Cultural District, Denver

More Info: www.denverjuneteenth.org

Juneteenth is the time the African American community comes together to honor the past and pay respect for the sufferings of slavery. However, it is also the time the community comes together to celebrate and share the beauty and richness of the African American culture. The celebration will serve as a showcase for community organizations and afro-centric vendors, event sponsors, and some of the area's best African American caterers and restaurants. In addition, this year's celebration will have designated areas that focus on art, education, health, and entrepreneurship. And as in the past, the event will kick off with a parade and a full day of entertainment.

Denver PrideFest

When: June

Where: Civic Center Park, Denver

More Info: www.denverpridefest.org

Denver's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) community throws an enormous party every summer with PrideFest in Civic Center Park. Recognized as one of the top ten pride events in the country,

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Denver's PrideFest is a celebration of community and culture that is welcoming -- and fun! -- to all attendees, regardless of sexual orientation. Produced by the Gay Lesbian Bisexual & Transgender Community Center of Colorado, the two-day festival gets bigger. Expect more than 200,000 people from Colorado and the surrounding areas.

Cherry Creek Arts Festival

When: Friday, July

Where: Cherry Creek North, Denver

More Info: www.cherryarts.org

The arts festival weekend event is a world-class and award-winning celebration of the visual, culinary and performing arts, and enjoys an attendance of 350,000 visitors over the 3-day event. CCAF gives patrons the rare and special opportunity to meet and talk with international visual artists, sample fine cuisine, visit special exhibits and artist demonstrations, and entertain their families with interactive 'Activities' and exciting performing arts.

Colorado Black Arts Festival

When: Friday, July

Where: City Park West, Denver

More Info: www.denbaf.org

This three-day festival will present an array of exciting African-American arts and cultural Delights. A wide array of art will adorn the grounds and live music from the people of African descent will give way to a memorable weekend.

Buffalo Bill Days

When: July

Where: Golden

More Info: <http://www.buffalobilldays.com>

Wild West fans take note! The legacy of Buffalo Bill is celebrated in the city of Golden with a Wild West Show, burro race, games, food and a Western parade. The event dates back to the 1950s, beginning as a trail ride up Lookout Mountain to Buffalo Bill's grave. Since then, the event has expanded and is now the largest community festival held in Golden.

Golden Fine Arts Festival

When: August

Where: 11th St. and Arapahoe St., Golden

More Info: www.goldenfineartsfestival.org

Come browse a variety of beautiful art at this wonderful arts extravaganza. More than 35,000 people attend the Golden Fine Arts Festival, which is becoming increasingly well known for its quality,

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	<p>affordability and ambiance. The festival hosts more than 140 high-quality artists in a variety of media, including ceramic arts, fiber arts, glass, jewelry, mixed media, painting, photography, sculpture. These artists all attend to their own booths - no artists' representatives here - and all artists have committed themselves to more than half their displayed work being original pieces, not reproductions.</p> <p>A Taste of Colorado When: September Where: Civic Center Park More Info: www.atasteofcolorado.com</p> <p>A Taste of Colorado stands proud as the end-of-summer celebration of community pride and spirit in the Denver region. Over 500,000 people make the four-day Festival their Labor Day Weekend celebration and enjoy the offerings of over 50 area restaurants, 250 marketplace artisans and vendors, seven stages, and educational programs promoting the diverse cultural and western heritage of the region.</p>
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ATTRACTIONS	
Green Colorado	<p>Boulder's Open Space & Mountain Parks program is the product of a long history of actions taken by the city of Boulder government and the people of Boulder in response to their concern for the preservation of buffer areas and the mountain backdrop. In 1898, when the Boulder Valley stretched wide and mostly unspoiled from the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains to the far horizon of the plains, residents of the young community of Boulder began preserving land. Their first purchase was the alfalfa fields and apple orchards planted by the Batchelder family, the lovely area now known as Chautauqua Park. City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks PO Box 791, Boulder, CO 80302 www.bouldercolorado.gov/index.php</p> <p>National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) Explore the three floors of weather, climate, and technology-focused exhibits and discover the weather trail. 1850 Table Mesa Drive, Boulder CO 80302 www.eo.ucar.edu/visit</p>
Wildlife	<p>Colorado is a nature lover's paradise. From big horn sheep to black bears, peregrine falcons to pronghorns, native Coloradans come in all shapes and sizes. With more than 960 species in Colorado, our abundant wildlife can be viewed in hundreds of designated areas around the state. You'll also find towering aspen trees, the Rocky Mountain Columbine (state flower) and countless other forms of plant</p>

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	<p>life throughout the state's diverse terrain.</p> <p>Denver Zoo 2300 Steele St. Denver www.denverzoo.org The Denver Zoo, located in City Park, spans more than 75 acres and is home to nearly 4,000 animals including rare Amur leopards, okapi, black rhinoceros, elephants, vampire bats, orangutan, Komodo dragons and more. The 113-year-old Denver Zoo is consistently among the most popular paid attractions in the Denver metropolitan area and among the top 10 zoos in the country.</p>
<p>National Parks</p>	<p>Mesa Verde National Park: The Mesa Verde landscape in the American southwest is considered to be the type site of the prehistoric Ancestral Puebloan culture, which lasted for some nine hundred years from c 450 to 1300, on this plateau in south-west Colorado at an altitude of more than 2600 meters (8,500 feet). There is a great concentration of spectacular Pueblo Indian dwellings. Some 600 'cliff dwellings' have been recorded within Mesa Verde National Park, including the famous multi-storey ones such as Cliff Palace, Balcony House, and Square Tower House, built of sandstone and mud mortar, and an additional 4100 archaeological sites have been discovered. New discoveries are routinely made. The exceptional archaeological sites of the Mesa Verde landscape provide eloquent testimony to the ancient cultural traditions of Native American tribes. They represent a graphic link between the past and present ways of life of the Puebloan Peoples of the American south-west. In 1978, Mesa Verde National Park was named a World Heritage Site in recognition of its exceptional archaeological relevance – including its spectacular cliff dwellings tucked into the sandstone alcoves of its steep-walled canyons. These fascinating cliff dwellings were built by the Ancestral Puebloans (previously known as the Anasazi) in the late 12th and 13th centuries. Guided tours are available for park visitors. Additionally, many prehistoric villages and archaeological sites found on mesa tops, provide a link to North America's prehistoric past.</p> <p>Great Sand Dunes NP: Nowhere else in the United States do mountains of sand stand higher than here in the Rocky Mountains. The tallest dune towers 750 feet high at an elevation of 8,700 feet above sea level. The entire dune field itself encompasses 30-square miles within the 150,000-acre park. Aside from the dunes, this national park provides ample camping and hiking opportunities. Four-wheel driving is also available along the challenging Medano Pass — an off-road route</p>

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	<p>that stretches roughly 40kms from within park to the town of Gardner. Explore the tallest dunes in North America. Whether hiking, sliding, or exploring in a dunes wheelchair, the Great Sand Dunes are a unique wilderness area protected for all to enjoy. http://www.nps.gov/grsa/index.htm</p> <p>Rocky Mountain National Park: This park encompasses the pure and natural beauty of the region. With high-mountain lakes and streams, peaks more than 14,000 feet, thick evergreen forests and thousands of acres of wildlife, this park conjures up what most people imagine when they think of the Rockies. Open from Memorial Day to late autumn, Trail Ridge Road — topping out at 12,183 feet — is the highest continuous paved road in the United States. And it one of the most breath-taking road trips I have ever experienced.</p> <p>Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park: No other canyon in North America combines the narrow opening, sheer walls, and startling depths offered by the Black Canyon of the Gunnison. There are hiking and ranger-guided programs. The Black Canyon of the Gunnison's unique and spectacular landscape was formed slowly by the action of water and rock scouring down through hard Proterozoic crystalline rock. The South Rim Drive is 12kms from Tomichi Point to High Point, and has 12 overlooks. Most are reached by walking a short trail. Allow 2-3 hours to view several overlooks. Those with limited time should consider stopping at Gunnison Point, Chasm View, Painted Wall and Sunset View. The South Rim Visitor Center, which features exhibits on the canyon, is located at Gunnison Point and has exhibits, introductory film, publications and Junior Ranger program for kids. http://www.nps.gov/blca/index.htm</p>
<p>National Monuments</p>	<p>If you want to create lifelong memories, look no further than Colorado's eight National Monuments. Whether you're interested in fossils, geology, ancient peoples or the lore of the gold rush, the National Parks Service and Bureau of Land Management in Colorado have set aside areas of national interest you simply can't miss.</p> <p>Browns Canyon National Monument One of the nation's most popular locations for whitewater rafting, Browns Canyon was just named a national monument in 2015. This Arkansas River-carved beauty also hosts fishers, wildlife watchers, hikers and more throughout the year. Don't Miss: The canyon is a great place to see bighorn sheep (Colorado's state mammal), elk, deer, eagles, falcons and many other wildlife species. Around the Monument: Part of the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation</p>

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Area, the region around Browns Canyon offers up spectacular opportunities for camping, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, hiking, OHV riding, rockclimbing and many more activities. The Collegiate Peaks Scenic & Historic Byway is a great way to explore the area, including many scenic vistas amid the state's densest concentration of fourteeners.

Colorado National Monument

Picturesque Colorado lives here. Don't blink, because with colorfully striated cliff walls, rock arches, high mesas and ample wildlife, there's a magnificent sight everywhere you look in the Colorado National Monument.

Don't Miss: The geology of the site appeals to rock hounds and landscape lovers alike. View the varied formations by taking the winding 23-mile Rim Rock Drive along the plateau, where wind and water-sculpted sandstone greet you around every turn.

Around the Monument: The Colorado National Monument is a gateway to the Dinosaur Diamond Scenic and Historic Byway. Prehistoric rock art is found along this route, as are many dinosaur excavation sites where museum-quality bones have been extracted.

Canyons of the Ancients National Monument

Culturally rich Canyons of the Ancients National Monument holds the distinction of having the highest density of archaeological sites in the country. Come for the Ancestral Puebloan history and stay for the unspoiled land of Colorado's high desert. It's not everywhere that culture, history and pure nature can mingle so well. This monument is perfect if you want to get away from it all and be enveloped in the quiet of the outdoors.

Don't Miss: The Lowry Pueblo is the only developed recreation site within the monument. With interpretive signs and brochures on-site, you can take a self-guided tour of a historic Ancestral Puebloan structure.

Around the Monument: Drive the areas that Ancestral Puebloans once explored on foot, on the Trail of the Ancients National Scenic Byway that circles Canyons of the Ancients National Monument. Make sure to visit the Anasazi Heritage Center, a nearby stop that will help shed light on the history and legend of the people who once settled the area. Full of informative displays and cultural facts, a visit here gives people a greater respect for those who came centuries before.

Chimney Rock National Monument

Chimney Rock National Monument, once home to the ancestors of the modern Pueblo Indians, is of great spiritual significance. More than 200 homes and ceremonial structures built by the Chaco people 1,000 years

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ago near the twin rock structures that give the monument its name. From mid-May through September, guide walking tours are available of the 4,100-acre archaeological site. Starting at the visitor center, you'll head to Great House Trail to learn about the site, its excavation and the people who settled there so long ago.

Don't Miss: This one's easy to miss. Every 18.6 years, a lunar standstill takes place at Chimney Rock. During the winter solstice, the moon rises perfectly between the rocks, framing an amazing scene that can only be seen from the Great House Pueblo. Researchers suggest the pueblo's builders constructed it where they did for this reason. The next predicted alignment is in 2022.

Around the Monument: Chimney Rock is located west of Pagosa Springs in the San Juan National Forest. Navajo State Park, with its beautiful boating and fishing waters is located just 40 minutes south of the archaeological area.

Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument

Tourists have been visiting the fossil beds here since the 1870s. Groves of petrified redwood forests and thousands of fossilized insects populate this national monument. Although the Florissant Fossil Beds are lush and green today, roughly 35 million years ago, volcanic eruptions covered this area in ash and lava, encasing plants and animals in preserving stone. Up to 1,500 different kinds of fossil insects have been found here, making it one of the most diverse insect fossil sites in the world.

Don't Miss: Easy hikes to petrified forests are great for the whole family. Take the Walk Through Time (1/2 mile) and Petrified Forest (1 mile) trails to see some of the largest petrified sequoias in the world.

Around the Monument: The Gold Belt Tour Scenic and Historic Byway begins near the park. Take this 135-mile route through areas that were once integral to Colorado's gold rush. To the east, just outside of Colorado Springs, is the Garden of the Gods, where paved hiking paths weave through a giant natural rock garden.

Dinosaur National Monument

Images of dinosaurs feed the imaginations of children of all ages, and Dinosaur National Monument is where our dreams of unearthing these goliaths become real. The Green River also flows through this area, and wildlife abounds along its banks. You can even drop a line in and tease a trout out of the river with a perfectly placed cast. An inspiring look at the monument can be found on a drive along Harper's Corner Road, a scenic tour that leads travelers to a grand overlook above the confluence of the Green and Yampa rivers.

Don't Miss: While the fossils themselves are the big draw, don't let the

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	<p>name of the park dissuade you from other “must do” activities in the area. In fact, a novel way to see the monument is aboard a raft. Companies take visitors through the park’s two river systems, the Yampa and the Green. Watch for wildlife along the banks and marvel at the canyon walls as you float down the oxbowed rivers.</p> <p>Around the Monument: To the south of the monument is the Dinosaur Diamond Scenic and Historic Byway. This scenic highway showcases Fremont Indian rock art and is spotted with dinosaur dig sites.</p> <p>Hovenweep National Monument Remote and often uncrowded, Hovenweep National Monument includes a bevy of structures, namely a series of stone towers built by the Ancestral Puebloan people. The site is famous for its square, oval, circular and “D”-shaped towers. Square Tower site is easily accessible, with a nice hiking trail and visitor center. Don't Miss: Head out to one of the remote outlying sites, including Cajon, Cutthroat Castle, Goodman Point, Holly and Horseshoe/Hackberry. Each is reached by a half-mile or less hike and offers quiet reflection at the structures built so many years ago. Around the Monument: For a completely different experience, take a tour of the Ute Tribal Park. Full-day tours of this primitive area are led by Ute Indian guides who share their knowledge of both Ancestral Puebloan and Ute cultures, sites and rock art.</p> <p>Yucca House National Monument Yucca House is another Ancestral Puebloan valley pueblo near Towaoc, but it has not yet been excavated and there are no facilities. Hopefully in years to come, it will yield many exciting discoveries.</p>
<p>Gardens</p>	<p>Denver has 200 parks with lakes, flower gardens and mountain views – the largest city park system in the nation.</p> <p>Denver Botanic Gardens 1005 York Street, Denver http://denverbotanicgardens.org/ Denver Botanic Gardens has been a favorite Denver destination for 50 years. Art and science unite in the gardens’ spectacular 23-acre site, offering an unforgettable experience for the whole family, as well as a living laboratory for education and plant conservation programs. Enjoy and Birds and Bess Walk, picnic next to the lily pond in the Monet Garden, or absorb the fragrance of the Herb Garden.</p> <p>Garden of the Gods: The Garden of the Gods is a public park located in Colorado Springs. It contains red sandstone hogback formations, similar to the Red Rocks</p>

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	<p>south of Denver. The name Colorado is said to come from the color of this sandstone. The hogbacks are ridges of sandstone, whose layers are tilted. Instead of lying horizontally, some layers are even vertically oriented. Each hogback can range up to several hundred feet long, some as tall as 50 feet from ground level. Their shapes indeed resemble the backs and spines of a pig. Entrance to the park is free, according to the wish of Charles Elliott Perkins, whose children donated the land to the city of Colorado Springs in 1909. It contains numerous trails for hiking, walking, mountain biking and horseback riding. Many of the most popular trails are paved, in an effort to combat the rampant erosion of the park's land caused by its numerous visitors.</p>
<p>Historical Sites</p>	<p>Fort Garland Museum: Visit this restored frontier adobe fort, built in 1858 to create a military presence in the San Luis Valley. The fort was once commanded by the legendary frontiersman Kit Carson. Buffalo Soldiers who helped protect the valley were stationed at the fort.</p>

<p>OTHER ACTIVITIES</p>	
<p>Shopping</p>	<p>Whether you're looking for the latest fashions or rare antiques, you'll find it in Colorado. From major shopping districts to exclusive boutiques, brand names to one-of-a-kind creations, Colorado offers great shopping all over the state. A day of shopping can lead you from outlet malls to world-class stylish salons, where you'll find jewelry, clothing, collectibles, art, historical memorabilia and souvenirs – just to start with. Be sure to leave room in your suitcase for everything you'll be bringing back home.</p> <p>The 16th Street Mall in Denver is a mile-long pedestrian promenade through the heart of downtown Denver, lined with shops, department stores and outdoor cafes. Free buses leave either end as often as every 90 seconds, making this the best spot for "people watching" in the city. In summer, the Mall is decorated with 25,000 flowers.</p> <p>Tattered Cover, 1628 16th Street, Denver is one of the nation's largest independent bookstores and housed in a restored mercantile building.</p> <p>Rockmount Ranch Wear, 1626 Wazee St., Denver: Papa Jack Weil, who at 106 is the oldest working CEO in America (he comes in every weekday)... invented the snapbutton western shirt worn by everyone from Ronald Reagan to Elvis to Eric Clapton, who is a frequent shopper. There's a little museum in the shop.</p> <p>Pearl Street Mall, Boulder Pearl Street and The Pearl Street Mall are the heart and soul of Boulder</p>

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	<p>and the perfect spot to experience Boulder's distinctive lifestyle. Most of the restaurants and shops are independently owned; some of the shops are wind powered and the free WiFi is solar powered. It is a national model for other downtown areas throughout the country.</p> <p>Downtown Boulder Inc. 1942 Broadway, Suite 301, Boulder, CO www.boulderdowntown.com</p>
Markets	<p>There are Farmers Markets all over the state. To find one near your route, go to http://www.coloradofarmers.org/find_a_market.htm</p> <p>Old South Pearl Street is South Denver's favorite market destination. Unique shopping, excellent dining and community minded businesses in a delightful, pedestrian friendly setting.</p>
Nightlife	<p>Denver Performing Arts Complex has 10 theatres seating 10,000 people and is second only to New York's Lincoln Center. The complex includes the Ellie Caulkins Opera House, which opened in 2005 and has been declared one of the finest acoustical halls in the nation.</p> <p>Jazz at Jack's - Denver's premier jazz room. This intimate, unique and very sexy venue features local and national talent performing contemporary and mainstream jazz, Latin and even the blues.</p>
Casinos	<p>The city of Blackhawk offers the big names of the casino world, while neighboring Central City's casino row looks like it could have been pulled out of a John Wayne flick. Cripple Creek's Old West-themed gambling district evokes a similar feel, while Colorado's two Ute Native American casinos are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.</p>

CUISINE	
Food	<p>A popular local dish is buffalo. High in protein, lower in fat, calories and cholesterol than chicken, buffalo is gaining popularity among health conscious diners and is offered at numerous restaurants in Denver.</p>
Breweries and Wineries	<p>From ales to stouts, lagers to porters, Colorado brews more beer than any other state. Colorado has more microbreweries per capita than any other state. There are over 200 breweries in total! Giants like Coors in Golden and Budweiser in Fort Collins anchor hundreds of smaller breweries specializing in handcrafted brews. Take a tour and enjoy fresh-from-the-tank pours. If you can't fit that in, there's always time to duck into one of the many bars and pubs serving Colorado's finest. Quenching one's thirst has never tasted so good.</p> <p>If beer's not your beverage, Colorado's wine country is establishing itself as one of the country's best. Wineries can be found along the Front Range and across the western slope of the state, including several in the picturesque town of Palisade. Enjoy a hearty cabernet or crisp chardonnay after a relaxing tour of the vineyards.</p> <p>New Belgium Brewery 500 Linden, Fort Collins, CO 80524</p>

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Tel: 970-221-524 www.newbelgium.com

In 1991, Jeff Lebesch and Kim Jordan homebrewed a version of ales Jeff had sampled while mountain biking in Belgium. The brewery now has a capacity of 150,000 barrels a year and Fat Tire Ale continues to sweep the nation. New Belgium is employee owned and known for its environmental stewardship.

Winery Tours in Palisade in northwest Colorado are a surprise and a delight: excellent wines grown in a spectacular setting -

Plum Creek Cellars

3708 G Road, Palisade, CO 81526

Tel: 970-464-7586

www.plumcreekwinery.com

Canyon Wind

3907 North River Road, Palisade, CO 81526

Tel: 970-464-0888

www.canyonwindcellars.com

Varaison Vineyards & Winery

405 West First Street, Palisade, CO 81526

Tel: 970-464-4928

www.varaisonvineyards.com

Colorado has **four distinct wine trails**, which include dozens of wineries and vineyards. A popular way to experience some of these trails is via bicycle, particularly in Colorado Wine Country.

- **The Front Range Wine Trail** features two dozen wineries and tasting rooms in amazing areas including the Royal Gorge in Cañon City and Rocky Mountain National Park in Estes Park, and the quaint Victorian town of Georgetown.

- **The Heart of Colorado Wine Country Trail** takes visitors around two federally designated AVAs in Colorado's Wine Country: Palisade and Grand Junction. Visit wineries in towns such as Delta and Olathe, known for its amazing sweet corn, and along Surface Creek, which offers incomparable views of the largest flat top mountain in the world: The Grand Mesa.

- **The Four Corners Region Wine Trail** takes visitors from Durango to Cortez, near the iconic Mesa Verde National Park. Workers in Vineyards in this culturally significant area have been known to find ancient pottery shards and arrowheads among the rich soil.

- There's also the **Pikes Peak and The Arkansas Valley Wine Trail**, which leads visitors over Wolf Creek Pass through the picturesque San

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	<p>Luis Valley, passes through the Central Colorado towns of Salida and Cañon City, before winding up at Pikes Peak and historic Manitou Springs.</p> <p>Colorado craft distilleries have grown from just four in 2007 to more than 50 in 2015. And the state's rapidly growing artisan craft spirits industry produces everything from artisan whiskey and organic gin and vodka to brandies, liquors, and other spirits.</p> <p>— The master distiller at the brand new Breckenridge Distillery is Jordan Via, American Distilling Institute instructor and, comes from a California winemaking background. Today he uses his talents to turn out bourbon whiskey, single malt whiskey (ready in three more years) and classic vodka as well as infusions.</p> <p>— Breckenridge Distillery: tours, tastings and sales available at the distillery (1925 Airport Road) from 11:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Monday-Saturday and at the Main Street Tasting Room (137 S. Main Street) 1:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday.</p> <p>— CapRock Organic Gin (located in Colorado Wine Country) is distilled using water from an aquifer that sits 10,500 feet above sea level. The distillery then uses apples for a fresh finish that blunts the usually harsh juniper kick.</p>
<p>Restaurants</p>	<p>There are more than 2,000 restaurants in the Denver metro area alone, serving unique native dishes such as buffalo burgers and rattlesnake tails. Find out why Denver beers are an attraction all their own - more than 80 different beers are brewed here.</p> <p>Buckhorn Exchange - Denver's 113-year-old restaurant and saloon. Serving prime beef and buffalo steaks, ribs and elk in a genuine Old West setting.</p> <p>Root Down – is a new restaurant in Denver at 1600 W. 33rd Ave. Denver that I can personally recommend. http://www.rootdowndenver.com</p> <p>Summit is The Broadmoor's (in Colorado Springs) newest restaurant, designed by Adam D. Tihany. Its contemporary design provides a counterpoint to the classic majesty of the resort. Summit is an American Brasserie with an eclectic, innovative wine and cocktail program and has been honored in the Robb Report for "Best of the Best", and Esquire's "Best New Restaurants", along with "Best New Design". The menu's guiding principle is American Brasserie, which starts with classical cooking techniques and adds the finest American produce found seasonally around the country. Whether it's Colorado corn in September, Nantucket Bay scallops in November, or heirloom tomatoes</p>

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from the heartland in the summer, Summit's bill of fare finds strength in a vibrant nationwide network of top-shelf vendors providing the kitchen with the best possible ingredients.

TAG at 1441 Larimer Street, Denver: Chef Troy Guard's home to continental social food offers urban progressive dining in an intimate 125-seat setting right in the heart of Downtown's Larimer Square (303) 288-7700, www.tag-restaurant.com

Timberline Restaurant at 201 Elk Avenue, Crested Butte, CO 81224 Tim Egelhoff and family welcome you to their mountain creation with open arms. A warm, small-town atmosphere and friendly service await you when you come for dinner, albeit with all of the style and quality of the finest metropolitan restaurants. It's a local favourite. 970-349-9831 <http://www.timberlinerestaurant.com>

Seasons Rotisserie & Grill, Durango

764 Main Avenue, (970) 382-9790

Seasons provides guests with the rustic charm of the seasons in the San Juan Mountains of Southern Colorado. Located on Main Avenue in the heart of downtown Durango, Seasons is near everything happening in town and the ambience is warm and friendly.

<http://www.seasonsofdurango.com>

In Boulder, I loved **The West End Tavern** on the rooftop deck (open year round) which affords remarkable views of the Flatirons beneath 300 days of sunshine. Fun retro touches such as the slick industrial copper finishes and the antique movie posters & album covers offset the organic wooden floors and earthy feel. This is Boulder local's favorite for a cold brew and some good eats. Big Red Foods supports sustainable practices by participating in the PACE program and purchasing locally grown and produced fruits, vegetables, meats, goat and dairy products.

www.thewestendtavern.com

926 Pearl Street, Boulder, CO 80302

Dinner was memorable at **Jay's Bistro** in Fort Collins:

Jay's Bistro, 137 W Oak St, Fort Collins, CO 80524

[Tel:970-482-1876](tel:970-482-1876)

I also enjoyed dinner at **626 on Rood**, a sparkling restaurant/wine bar in Grand Junction

626 Rood Avenue, Grand Junction, CO 81501

Tel: 970-257-7663

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www.626onrood.com

MORE INFO	
Brochures	Order a Vacation Guide and Colorado E-Newsletter by phoning: 1-800-COLORADO
Connect	Website: www.colorado.com View the Colorado State Vacation Guide: http://www.smsepub.com/publication/?i=240607 Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/visitcolorado Twitter: https://twitter.com/colorado You Tube: https://www.youtube.com/user/VisitColorado

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES	<p>Denver: Art Museum, Denver Zoo, Botanic Gardens, Museum of Nature and Science, Brown Palace Hotel, Root Down Restaurant, Residence Inn by Marriott Denver City Center, Cook's Fresh Market, Red Rocks Park & Amphitheatre</p> <p>Boulder: Chautauqua Open Space, Pearl Street Mall, National Center for Atmospheric Research, The West End tavern</p> <p>Fort Collins: New Belgium Brewery, The Armstrong Hotel, Jay's Bistro, Silver Grill</p> <p>Rocky Mountain National Park Drowsy Water Dude Ranch Glenwood Springs Caverns Adventure Park</p> <p>Aspen: Gondola, Hotel Jerome</p> <p>Palisade Wineries: Plum Creek Cellars, Canyon Wind, Varaison Vineyards and Winery</p> <p>Grand Junction: Grand Vista Hotel, 626 on Rood Restaurant, Colorado National Monument</p> <p>Colorado Springs: Garden of the Gods, Segway tour in Garden of the Gods Park, Manitou Springs, Olympic Training Center, Cheyenne Mountain Resort, Broadmoor Hotel and Summit Restaurant</p> <p>Great Sand Dunes National Park: Zapata Ranch</p> <p>Gunnison: Gunnison Pioneer Museum, Crested Butte Mountain Heritage Museum, Timberline Restaurant, Crested Butte, Elk Mountain Lodge</p>
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	<p>South Rim of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison</p> <p>Silverton and Durango Narrow Gauge Railway</p> <p>Durango: Museum</p> <p>Pinterest: https://www.pinterest.com/TravelShow/colorado/</p>
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