

Land of Enchantment

A woman in a bright blue jacket and black shorts is walking a large, fluffy, light-colored dog on a leash along a wet, reflective beach. The background is dominated by vast, rolling sand dunes under a clear blue sky. The scene is captured in the golden hour, with warm, low-angle light creating long shadows and highlighting the textures of the sand and water.

Great Sand Dunes National Park
(Grant Ordelheide)



Discover the subtle beauty of the high desert on this road trip through two national parks.



There's something about a desert landscape that draws a person in. It's not loud and obvious, like towering mountain peaks or ocean waves lapping on the beach. It's quiet and subtle.

This road trip travels through New Mexico and Colorado's high deserts and mountains and as your wheels traverse miles of highway, you're sure to feel that gentle tug, drawing you deeper. From the terracotta-colored pueblos near Santa Fe, where the sense of history is palpable, to the Cumbres and Toltec

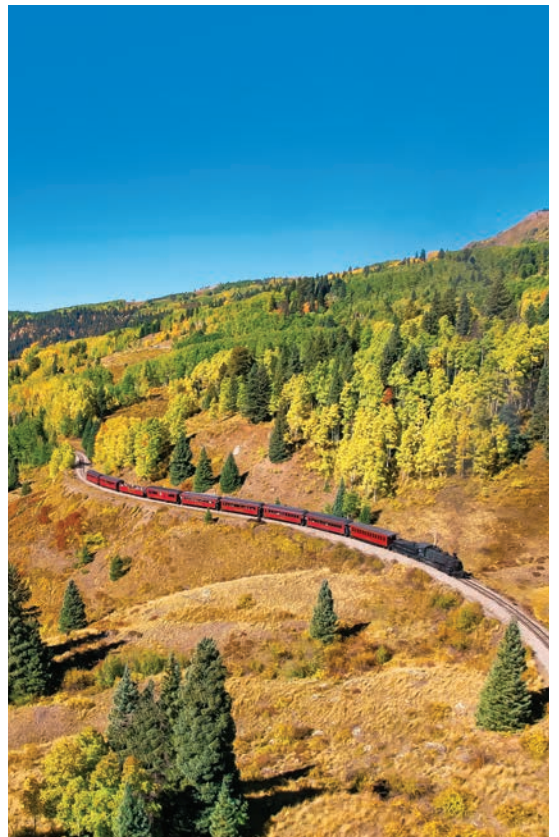
Scenic Railroad straddling the stateline, you'll find that this landscape is teeming with life—both past and present—if you look closely.

In Colorado, discover a sea of sand dunes pressing up against the snowcapped Sangre de Cristo Mountains near Alamosa, one of the state's most fascinating national parks. See an ocean of stars above your head in an International Dark Sky Community with precious little light pollution before learning about the state's boom and bust mining history in Cripple Creek. Head back out towards the Front Range where you can ride a cog railroad or drive up to 14,000 feet at Pikes Peak.

There's gorgeous mountain vistas, alpine lakes and a sea of trees as you head north to Rocky Mountain National Park. Soak it in as you spend the night in a tent or RV at one of the park's campgrounds. Head back towards Santa Fe, tracing the Rocky Mountains and winding through the deserts, to find a rare species of chile in Pueblo.

As you travel, you'll experience the balance of these two landscapes that make up Colorado and New Mexico: the overt mountains, obvious in their beauty and allure, and the subtle deserts, quiet and patient, waiting to be discovered by wanderers. Both extremes are sure to leave you feeling enchanted.

PHOTOS: Hikers in Rocky Mountain National Park (Grant Ordleheide), World's longest and highest steam-powered railroad (Courtesy of Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad)





Biking in Galisteo Basin Preserve
(Courtesy of Santa Fe County)

More Than a Desert Stopover

Santa Fe is a world class destination, but there are fascinating sights dotting the stunning landscape around it. Lose the crowds and enjoy spectacular outdoor activities with these six things to do.

By Tori Peglar

- 1 Pecos National Historical Park**
See what was once one of the largest pueblos in the Southwest, tour the property of a former Hollywood actress and explore the remnants of an 18th-century Spanish mission at this park 25 miles southeast of Santa Fe.
TIP: Join a ranger for one of several fun tours, including the Ancestral Sites, Civil War Walking and the Forked Lightning Ranch House Caravan tours, in which you'll explore the property once owned by Oscar-winning Greer Garson and husband Buddy Fogelson.
- 2 Galisteo Basin Preserve**
Experience dry creek beds weaving through grasslands and rocky outcroppings at this nature preserve, which offers 30 miles of trails for hikers, bikers and horseback riders.
TIP: There's intermittent cell service here. Be sure to bring water, sunscreen and snacks with you.

- 3 Lamy**
A former bustling stop on the Atchinson, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad, Lamy, pronounced "Lay-me," is a quaint town that's attracting artists, writers and food lovers these days.
TIP: Enjoy a drink and a delicious meal at Legal Tender Saloon & Eating House located in a historic structure built in 1881. Relax on the patio and watch Amtrak's Southwest Chief pull into the depot across the street twice a day.

- 4 Cerrillos Hills State Park**
Five miles of trails in Cerrillos Hills State Park offer you a glimpse of more than 1,000 years of turquoise mining history, plus magnificent views of four mountain ranges.
TIP: Check the park's schedule for its Star Parties, where a guide reveals galaxies, star clusters, planets and constellations in the sky above you. The park also hosts birding hikes and other fun events.

- 5 El Rancho de las Golondrinas**
An easy detour, this gem celebrates the state's rich cultural heritage from the 17th and 18th centuries with costumed docents, historic buildings and annual festivals.
TIP: The October Harvest Festival offers cider making with a traditional apple press and other hands-on activities that bring New Mexico's unique history to life.
- 6 Ojo Santa Fe Spa Resort**
Stay at Ojo Santa Fe Spa Resort, an award winning retreat offering secluded and warm outdoor pools with spring fed waters. Indulge in wellness by getting a hot stone massage followed by joining a yoga session.
TIP: Savor a meal at Blue Heron, which showcases seasonal ingredients grown on the resort's farm. The Three Sisters Tamale is a delicious blend of squash, pinto bean ragout and New Mexico's famous Chimayó red chile.

Learn more at SantaFeNMTrue.com.

Walk through history.

PECOS NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

A Site of Many Stories

The legendary Santa Fe Trail
The furthest West Civil War battle
The Mother Road: Route 66

Immersive Experiences

Ranger guided tours
Hike the Ancestral Sites Trail
Fascinating museum exhibits

santafe
COUNTY

NM 
TRUE

SantaFeNMTrue.com



Journey Through Time

Step back into the past as you ride this historic railroad through the Colorado wilderness.

By Mikaela Ruland

It's a clear, cool autumn day in the mountains of southwestern Colorado. Beneath your feet, you feel the rumble of a 100-year-old steam engine. You hear the train's whistle piercing through the wilderness. You see the smoke curling back in the breeze. The aspens, turning golden now, reach their branches out towards the tracks, nearly touching. If you didn't know better, you might think you'd been transported back to 1880.

The Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad is the world's longest and highest steam-powered railroad. Its 64 miles of narrow-gauge track stretch from the small town of

Antonito—located half an hour south of Alamosa, Colorado—to Chama, nestled in the heart of the New Mexican Rockies.

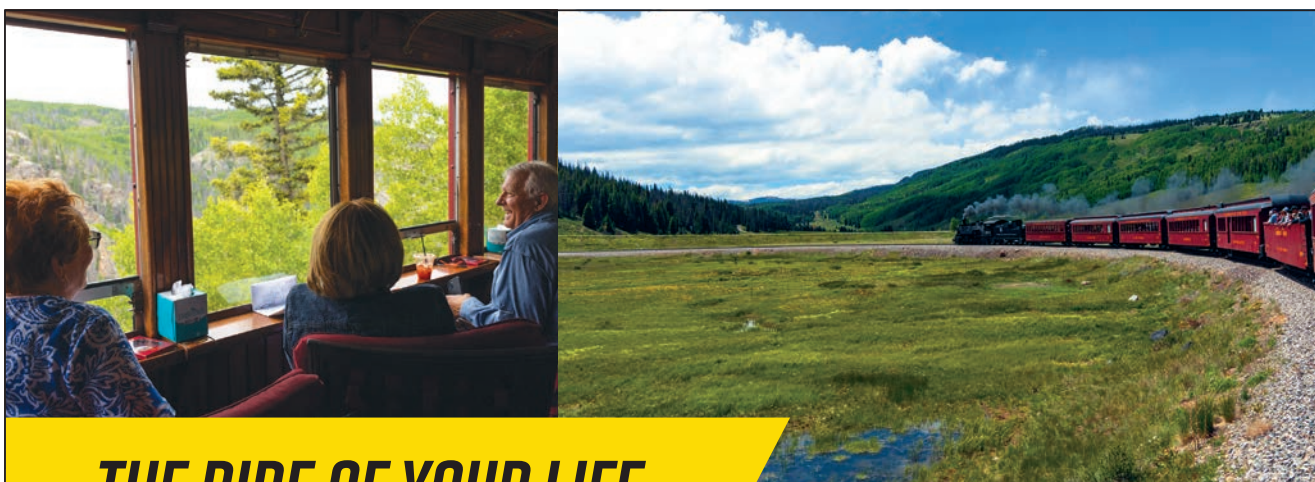
Board the train on either end of the line for a full day of jaw-dropping views. You'll wind through alpine meadows full of wildflowers and trembling aspen forests, rumble through tunnels carved into rock and over trestles spanning raging rivers. The journey will take you over the 10,015-foot Cumbres Pass and at one point, the train will hug a narrow ledge over Toltec Canyon as you peer 800 dizzying feet down. Most of the areas you see are inaccessible by car, so the train gives

you an incomparable peek at untouched wilderness and abundant wildlife.

"You have this feeling that you're doing something so different," says Rich Grant, formerly of Visit Denver. "You can feel the history; it's literally a monument that moves."

Reservations are highly recommended, especially for specialty rides like the geology trains and the 4th of July fireworks train.

Learn more and book your ride late May to mid-October at CumbresToltec.com.



THE RIDE OF YOUR LIFE.

Climb aboard the historic Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad which operates in the scenic landscapes of southern Colorado and northern New Mexico. Journey back in time experiencing the Old West as it was in 1880, as you venture over the highest mountain pass reached by rail, cross gorges and trestles, blast through tunnels, and chug across alpine meadows and high deserts. Depart from Antonito, Colorado or Chama, New Mexico for a ride of a lifetime!

BOOK NOW AT CUMBRESTOLTEC.COM 1-888-286-2737



Cumbres & Toltec
AMERICA'S MOST HISTORIC SCENIC RAILROAD



GREAT SAND DUNES,



VISIT *Alamosa* COLORADO

GREAT EVERYTHING ELSE.

Learn more at: ALAMOSA.ORG



Great Sand Dunes National Park (Lauren Lang)

Basecamp Alamosa

Whether you're looking for a laid-back afternoon on the town or an evening under the stars, you'll find it in the gateway to Great Sand Dunes.

By Kristen Arendt & Mikaela Ruland

Located in the heart of the San Luis Valley, the town of Alamosa, Colorado is perfectly situated as a basecamp for your adventures to Great Sand Dunes National Park. But don't miss the chance to spend the afternoon or the weekend in Alamosa itself. The city has a charming small town feel, historic ties to the railroad days and stunning scenery that impresses in any season.

Start your tour of downtown on Main Street. The walkable historic area has shops, restaurants and the Alamosa Artscape—a rotating collection of sculptures from both local and international artists. If you're interested in the history of the area, stop by the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad Depot at 610 State Street. The historic building dates back to the early 1900s and now houses the Colorado Welcome Center.

Looking for the perfect spot to spend a laid-back afternoon? Stop by the Colorado Farm Brewery, a truly farm-to-tap establishment that sources every ingredient

for their estate beers, from the water to the malt to the hops, on property.

For dinner, Lindo Jalisco is a great spot to enjoy a wide selection of authentic Mexican dishes alongside a margarita. Their birria tacos—adobo marinated beef served along with its juices for dipping—are amazing after a long day of hiking. Another great spot to fill up after adventuring, Woody's Q Shack is the place to go for a hearty lunch. Choose from brisket, pulled pork, St. Louis-style ribs and more on signature sandwiches or plates, along with sides like campfire beans, onion rings and mac and cheese. For barbeque with a Southwestern flair, try the Cowboy Burrito, filled with brisket, campfire beans, mac and cheese, jalapenos and barbeque sauce.

While you're in town, be sure to check out the city's trail system. From wide walking paths that run along the cottonwood bosque of the Rio Grande River to the disc golf course and gravel paths of the Oxbow Trail System, Alamosa has several great

parks, paths and trails to get you out in nature. Just north of town, Blanca Vista Park offers a spot to walk, bike and stand-up paddleboard with outstanding views of its namesake, Blanca Peak. At 14,345 feet, this prominent mountain is the fourth-highest peak in Colorado.

And, of course, you shouldn't miss a trip to Great Sand Dunes National Park while you're staying in Alamosa. The stunning dune landscape is ringed by the towering peaks of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, a sight you won't soon forget.

For more adventurous exploration of the area, Rugged Air Tours, based in Alamosa, will take you up in a four-seat plane for a flightseeing tour above the dunes. If you want to catch the more remote corners of the park, Mountain Master Off-Road Tours offers half-day private trips up Medano Creek Primitive Road.

At the end of the day, Ramble at Great Sand Dunes offers a high-end camping experience that still feels like being out in nature. Each campsite includes an outdoor kitchen, Adirondack chairs, an awning and windbreak, and there's a bath house just a short walk away with hot showers, complimentary toiletries and flush toilets.

Learn more at Alamosa.org.



See the Stars

Experience peaceful trails, a wonderful arts scene and dark night skies in the beautiful Wet Mountain Valley.

By Mikaela Ruland

Drive into the Wet Mountain Valley on the Frontier Pathways Scenic Byway and the first thing you'll notice is all the space. A seemingly endless expanse of grasslands, dotted here and there with historic ranches, rolls up to some seriously stunning mountains, still capped with snow late into the summer. Situated underneath five of Colorado's 14ers, the tiny towns of Westcliffe and Silver Cliff prove that uncrowded mountain towns still exist today.

Named Colorado's first International Dark Sky Community in 2015, that sense of space is even more obvious when the sun goes down. You'll experience a stunning tapestry

of stars overhead on a new moon night no matter where you are, but the Smokey Jack Observatory in Westcliffe is a great spot to take in the Milky Way and learn more about what you're seeing above. Home to one of the state's most powerful telescopes, head to DarkSkiesColorado.org/events to check out the calendar of public star parties.

You'll find some of Colorado's most rugged terrain in these mountains, but there's plenty of recreation opportunities for those not looking to climb a peak. Check out the Rainbow Trail which runs more than 100 miles along the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. Hop on it from several different trailheads and enjoy a day hike, discovering a sense of solitude along the way. A local favorite is a ramble to Crystal Falls from Grape Creek Trailhead, approximately 6.5 miles roundtrip with glorious views of the Wet Mountain Valley. Afterwards, head back to Westcliffe for lunch at Chappy's or Bootlegger's Bistro.

While you can take Highway 69 south to Highway 160 to access Great Sand Dunes National Park from Westcliffe in a little

over two hours, if you're traveling in a high-clearance, four-wheel-drive vehicle, there's a more adventurous route. Medano Pass Primitive Road leads straight up and over the Sangre de Cristos, providing a gorgeous, 22-mile drive.

The Town of Westcliffe may have fewer than 500 residents, but what it lacks in size it makes up for in spirit. The small town is home to an unusual amount of galleries, featuring local artists like Andy Mast, an up-and-coming Amish artist whose graphite drawings evoke the spirit of the West. Another favorite gallery is Greenstone Artworks, with Alpenglow Alpacas' fiber art. Visual arts aren't the only creative juices flowing in town. It's home to the four-day High Mountain Hay Fever Bluegrass Festival each July, plus other events featuring local music, theater and more. Grab ice cream at the Stage Stop. It's one of several great coffee shops downtown, which are all mom and pop businesses, making it easy to support local as you eat and shop.

Learn more at VisitCusterCounty.com.



WORLD-CLASS STARGAZING



EPIC ALPINE HIKING TRAILS



LOCAL ARTISTS & GALLERIES



HISTORICAL & HERITAGE MUSEUMS



LIVE THEATER & SHAKESPEARE IN THE ROCKIES



MUSIC FESTIVALS & LOCAL MUSICIANS



VINTAGE PLANES AT SILVERWEST AIRFEST



HIGH ALTITUDE HORSEPOWER CAR SHOW



WET MOUNTAIN VALLEY

RELAX

ADJUST YOUR ATTITUDE AT OUR ALTITUDE

VISITCUSTERCOUNTY.COM

WESTCLIFFE & SILVER CLIFF · COLORADO'S FIRST INT'L DARK SKY COMMUNITY

Photo © Christoph Stojka



Strike Gold

More than 100 years ago, gold was discovered in Cripple Creek. The population swelled and was at one point bigger than Denver. Unlike many boom and bust regions in the West, gold mining never left. Today, the high elevation town is a small but energetic community where you can stroll in and out of historic buildings, pet free-range donkeys and play the slots if you're feeling lucky. Here's what to do.

By Mikaela Ruland

1 Meet the Donkeys

Donkeys held an important role in historic Cripple Creek, working inside the mines and hauling ore carts, and they still do today. The town has cared for a herd of free-range donkeys since 1931 via the non-profit Two Mile High Club. Each Memorial Day the donkeys are released from their winter paddock and wander the town. You're bound to see these friendly creatures when you visit. Buy donkey biscuits at one of the shops in town, or at the winter pasture platform at 510 CR-89. Don't feed the donkeys anything other than approved snacks, as high sugar treats like apples and carrots can cause diabetes. The last week in June the town gathers to celebrate the donkeys and fundraise for their care at Donkey Derby Days, where runners take to the streets leading donkeys in a hilarious race.



2 Learn About Gold Mining History

Stroll historic downtown and catch a glimpse into the past. The Cripple Creek District Museum showcases the history of gold mining, and you can also tour the old city jail, the fire station and the Homestead House Museum where ladies of the night operated. Pearl DeVere worked out of this building, an illustrious madame

3 Take a Troll Selfie

Between Cripple Creek and Victor find Rita the Rock Planter, a sculpture by world renowned Danish troll artist, Thomas Dambo. "After the humans mined for gold, they left many holes in the ground. Rita wanted to make sure no one fell in a hole, so she decided to put the rocks back in," says Dambo in his artist statement on the giant piece tucked into the mountains. Located on the Little Grouse Mountain Trail, park at either the lower lot for a longer (0.8-mile) uphill hike, or the upper lot for a 0.2-mile downhill hike.

whose funeral procession was rumored to have drawn massive crowds. Her spirit is commemorated at Pearl DeVere Day each July where wheeled beds are raced down Main Street. Cripple Creek is a limited gaming town, with 10 casinos. Johnny Nolon's is located in a historic gambling hall dating back to 1891 while the Colorado Grande is built above the town's old morgue. Its family friendly restaurant, Maggie's, is named after the establishment's ghost, one of many purported to reside in Cripple Creek. For a closer look at gold mining history, visit the Mollie Kathleen Gold Mine. You'll descend 1,000 feet into the ground down an old mine shaft on the hour-long tour.

4 Ride the Train

Hop on board the Cripple Creek and Victor Narrow Gauge Railroad to learn more about the region's mining history and enjoy a scenic ride through the mountains. The 45-minute, open-air, coal-fired ride brings visitors past several historic gold mines, ending at the abandoned mining camp of Anaconda before returning to Cripple Creek. The season runs mid-May through the first weekend in October and trains depart every hour and 10 minutes starting at 10 a.m., with the last ride at 5 p.m. Tickets are first-come, first-served, but there's rarely a wait.

5 Visit an Ice Castle

Mid-December through mid-March, weather permitting, Cripple Creek transforms into something resembling the movie *Frozen* thanks to the incredible Ice Castles installation. This interactive art experience is completely made of ice. You can wander through caverns and archways, slip down ice slides, crawl through tunnels and check out ice sculptures carved by both local and international artists. End your visit with a winter themed cocktail at the Polar Pub. This event is popular, so be sure to book your tickets online at IceCastles.com/cripple-creek-colorado.

Learn more at VisitCrippleCreek.com.



Ice Castles installation
(Courtesy of Visit Cripple Creek)

*There's more
to do in
Cripple Creek*

**Lots of special events
year round!**

**Gamble for GOLD
all night long!**

**Enjoy the dining options
and spend the night!**

**Ride the Narrow Gauge
Railroad and take a
historic mine tour!**

**See Art and History
throughout the town!**

**Visit the variety of
historic Museums!**

**Enjoy Live Melodrama
at The Butte Theater!**

**Feed the famous
Cripple Creek Donkeys!**

**Hike to visit
Rita the Rock Troll!**



Get Out and Play More.

VisitCrippleCreek.com



Overlook at the Pikes Peak Summit Visitor Center
(Vic Moss/Courtesy of Colorado Springs)

Colorado's Easiest Summit

Climbing a 14,000-foot mountain isn't simple—unless you drive.

By Tori Peglar

Want to reach the summit of one of Colorado's famous 14,000-foot peaks (known as 14ers) the easy way?

Point your wheels to the Pikes Peak Highway to reach one of two Colorado 14ers that you can drive all the way to the top. You'll cruise a stunning 19 miles up the mountain, beginning at 7,400 feet and ending at the top of the 14,115-foot summit. It's one of North America's most

visited mountains, and for good reason. Keep your eyes peeled for bighorn sheep, elk, deer and yellow-bellied marmots.

Along the way, stop at the many pull-offs, including three lakes where you can fish or kayak. Don't forget to purchase a Colorado fishing license in advance. There's also the Crystal Reservoir Visitor Center at mile 6 with a gift shop and the historic Glen Cove Inn with a dining area and gift shop at mile marker 13. The new Summit Visitor Center at the top is known for its world famous donuts, but also serves pulled pork sandwiches, grilled cheese, macaroni and cheese, salads, grab-and-go food and coffee. Don't miss the new interpretive exhibit space.

Allow at least two to three hours for this adventure; you'll spend about an hour each way driving, depending on how often you stop. Be sure to fill up your gas tank before you reach the Pikes Peak entrance.

There's no gas station on the road, and you'll need a minimum of a half tank for the entire trip.

If you begin to feel light headed or dizzy, you may be feeling the effects of high altitude and should immediately drive to a lower elevation. Drinking plenty of water before and during the drive can help combat altitude's effects. This drive to a very high elevation is not recommended for infants under six months.

Because this is not a national park, your national park pass won't work here. In summer, a timed-entry reservation is required. Check DrivePikesPeak.com for details and announcements before visiting.

Find the road up Pikes Peak-America's Mountain west of Colorado Springs at 5089 Pikes Peak Highway in Cascade.

Learn more at DrivePikesPeak.com.

Only on Pikes Peak- America's Mountain

**FILL UP ON THE VIEWS.
AND THE DONUTS.**



DRIVEPIKESPEAK.COM



Spring Forward

At the foot of Pikes Peak, one of Colorado's most iconic mountains, lies Manitou Springs. A quirky little town that will steal your heart, it's attracted travelers for hundreds of years.

By Mikaela Ruland

Sample naturally carbonated water which gushes from deep underground at eight points throughout town, regarded for its healing properties across history. Each mineral spring has its own unique flavor. Stop by the visitor center at 354 Manitou Avenue to grab a map and a \$2 tasting cup. Along a self-guided tour, you can pop into locally owned shops and restaurants on Manitou Avenue.

Then, hop aboard the Broadmoor Manitou and Pikes Peak Cog Railway for a stunning trip to the top of one of Colorado's 14ers. As you journey up the mountain on the highest cog railway in the world, you'll catch impressive views before topping out at 14,115 feet. At the top, you can soak in the panoramic

landscape, sample the Summit Visitor Center's famous donuts and learn about the mountain before heading back down. Be sure to buy your tickets a week in advance, especially in the summer.

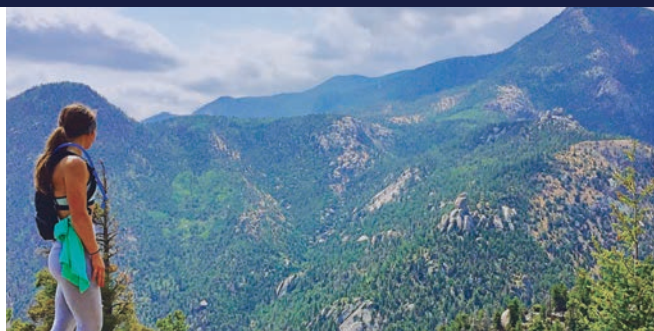
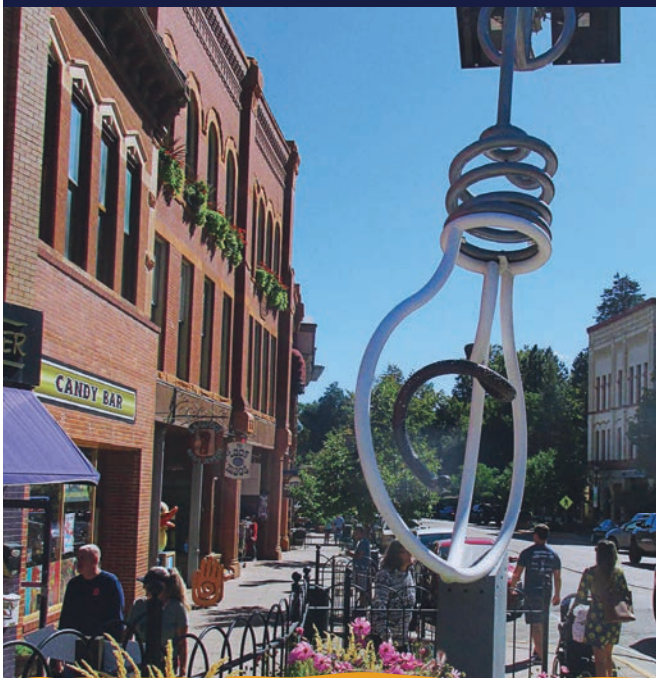
One part natural wonder, one part amusement park, Cave of the Winds is worthy of a day trip. Start with a cave tour. The 45 to 60-minute Discovery Tour explores a half mile of passageways improved with concrete walkways and lights. You'll see some of the cave's most impressive features and learn about its geology and history. Or, opt for the 90-minute Haunted Lantern Tour where you'll explore a mile of unimproved passageways by lantern light with some ghost stories and local folklore thrown in.

Then, head above ground to have fun at an aerial challenge course, ziplines, a rock climbing wall and the adrenaline-inducing **TERROR-Dactyl**, where you'll be launched off a cliff and free fall 150 feet.

For a more relaxed afternoon, head to the stately Miramont Castle and its lush gardens. Take a tour or book High Tea in advance, offered Tuesday through Sunday at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. The Queen's Parlor Tea Room is an experience in itself with original brickwork, period lighting and replica tin ceilings. Sip tea and nibble on scones and tea sandwiches as you imagine what life in the castle would've been like at the turn of the century.

Learn more at ManitouSprings.org.

SMALL MOUNTAIN TOWN **BIG** ADVENTURES



MORE INFO ON WHERE TO EAT ♥ SHOP ♥ STAY ♥ PLAY
354 MANITOU AVE | MANITOUSPRINGS.ORG | 719-685-5089





Camping in Rocky Mountain National Park
 (Unsplash/Keenan Barber)

Sleep Under the Stars

Rocky Mountain National Park has five campgrounds to pull up your RV or pitch your tent at. Use our guide to decide on your perfect stay before reservations open six months in advance on [Recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov). Sites sell out quickly, so log-on early and be ready to snag your spot.

By Tori Peglar

■ Timber Creek Campground

Ten miles inside the park from the Grand Lake Entrance, the Timber Creek Campground is open late May through early October and is the only option on the park's west side. Situated along the Colorado River, this beautiful campground is the definition of Rocky Mountain High since it sits at 8,900 feet. It has flush toilets, a dump station and can accommodate RVs up to 30 feet in length. Be aware that there is no shade at this campground following the removal of dead trees due to a pine beetle outbreak.

■ Moraine Park Campground

For striking views of Longs Peak, settle in for the evening at this campground nestled in a ponderosa pine forest 2.5 miles south of Beaver Meadows Entrance Station on

the park's east side. Open year round, reservations are required in the summer months. RVs up to 40 feet in length are welcome here, and there is a dump station and summer flush toilets. Moraine Park Campground was closed in 2024 due to construction, but is expected to reopen in 2025.

■ Aspenglen Campground

Open year round, Aspenglen Campground is just west of the Fall River Entrance Station in a beautiful pine forest near Fall River. At 8,200 feet, you're that much closer to the canopy of stars hanging above you at night. RVs up to 30 feet in length can be accommodated, but there is no potable water, so bring your own. There are portable toilets available in the summer. Just a short walk away lies Fall River Visitor Center

and ranger-led evening programs are often offered in the summer. During the winter, the campground is first-come, first-served.

■ Glacier Basin Campground

Located along Bear Lake Road, Glacier Basin is a beautiful campground situated among a coniferous forest with expansive meadows where elk can often be spotted. This campground has tent and RV sites (for rigs up to 35 feet in length), a dump station and flush toilets. It's open late-May through early September.

■ Longs Peak Campground

Looking for a tent-only campground? Longs Peak serves as a basecamp for climbers hoping to reach the park's highest summit. As Rocky Mountain's only first-come, first-served campground, arrive early to snag one of 26 tent sites nestled in a pine forest at 9,500 feet. Located at the southern edge of the park off Highway 7, you'll need to drive to the Beaver Meadows or Fall River entrances to access other park trails and areas. Because the campground is at such a high elevation, bring warm layers for the evenings and early mornings. The campground usually opens for the season in July and there is no potable water available. Toilets are vault style.



Turn Up the Heat

A vibrant riverwalk, bike trails and Colorado's favorite ingredient await you in Pueblo.

By Mikaela Ruland

■ Check Out the Riverwalk

The Riverwalk is a mile-long revitalization project that returned the Arkansas River to its historic location in downtown Pueblo following a devastating flood in 1921. It's the city's beating heart and the perfect place to get out and enjoy some Colorado sunshine. Stroll the paved path along the channel, taking in plenty of beautiful street art. From May to September, stop by the boathouse to rent a pedal boat to get out on the water, or opt for an excursion boat tour where you can learn more about the city.

When you get hungry, grab a table on one of the many patios overlooking the river. Brues Ale House is located in Pueblo's historic police station, with a master brewer who studied in Germany. Upstairs, check-in to The Station on the Riverwalk, a seven-room boutique hotel that leans into the police station theme with a speakeasy style bar called The Clink.

■ Sample Pueblo Chiles

The Arkansas River Valley is the only place in the world where the Pueblo chile grows. The mouthwatering smell of these spicy green chiles roasting envelopes Colorado's Front Range in late summer. It's so beloved, there's a massive celebration every September at the Pueblo Chile & Frijoles Festival. Get to know the Pueblo chile otherwise at Milberger Farms, where you can buy products featuring Pueblo chiles year round.

You'd be hard pressed to find a restaurant in Pueblo not featuring chiles somewhere on the menu, but perhaps its most beloved preparation is in the unofficial dish of Colorado: green chile. It's a thick, orange-tinted (thanks, tomatoes), pork-studded and downright heavenly substance that straddles the line between soup and sauce. You'll find green chile served stand-alone, filling breakfast burritos and smothering a plate of hamburger and fries, a beloved Pueblo



Brues Alehouse Beer Garden (Visit Pueblo)



Pueblo chiles roasting (Visit Pueblo)

tradition called a "slopper". Try it at Gray's Coors Tavern or Sunset Inn, each spot claiming the slopper's invention.

■ Explore Historic Union Avenue

From the Riverwalk, it's easy to access historic Union Avenue, a great spot to wander for the afternoon. Pop in and out of a fun mix of boutique and antique shops and discover tons of great dining options. For a delicious, high-end meal head to La Forchetta da Massi, an Italian joint with seasonal menus. Even here, you'll find Pueblo chiles on the menu, incorporated into a decadent ravioli with portabella mushrooms, sausage and Fontina cheese sauce. Fuel & Iron is a unique food hall featuring five rotating concepts from both up-and-coming and veteran Pueblo chefs looking to transition into a brick-and-mortar restaurant.

You can still enjoy a pint at Walter's Brewery—which has been around since

the late 1800s—at their Oneida Street location, but if you want to experience a piece of Pueblo's past, book a room at the Abriendo Inn, a luxury bed and breakfast housed in the Walter mansion on Abriendo Avenue.

■ Get Outside

Because of its mild weather, Pueblo offers year round outdoor recreation. You'll find a whitewater park on the Arkansas River right in the middle of town, plus a wave park opening in 2025. Rent bikes at the Great Divide and hit the many trails around town like paved bike paths criss-crossing the river on cool suspension bridges, offering access to lunch or drinks. Or, just outside of town, gravel and mountain bike routes abound.

The Edge also rents paddleboards and kayaks, a perfect way to spend the day on Lake Pueblo, a state park 10 minutes west of downtown.

Learn more at VisitPueblo.org



LOG OFF & EXPLORE

PUEBLO

COLORADO



VisitPueblo.org



© 2024 Greater Pueblo Chamber of Commerce