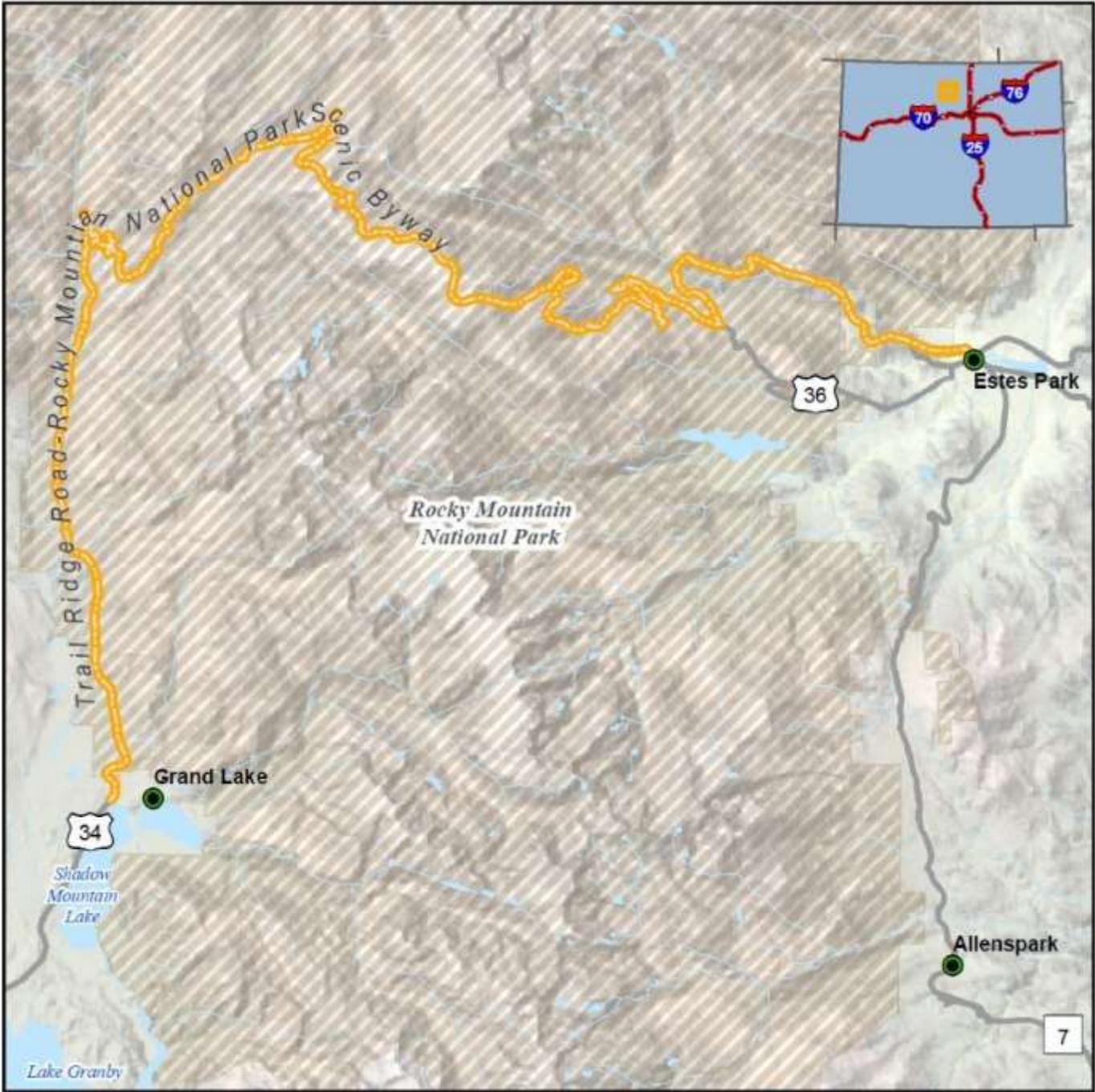




Trail Ridge Road Scenic and Historic Byway

With more than 60 peaks rising over 12,000 feet, Rocky Mountain National Park is a true Rocky Mountain high. Countless breathtaking vistas range from 8,000 to 14,259 feet with a third of the park above the tree line. Scenic vistas and overlooks reveal the Park's awe-inspiring landscapes that spread out at your feet. Winding through 50 miles of forest and mountain landscapes in the Park, Trail Ridge Road Scenic and Historic Byway is an incredibly scenic road that offers access to the higher regions of the central Rocky Mountains. When driving the road in 1931, the head of the National Park Service was awe-inspired, saying "it is hard to describe the sensation this new road is going to make. You will have the whole sweep of the Rockies before you in all directions – a scenic wonder road of the world." Up beyond the aspen, ponderosa pine, fir and spruce, it's usually 20 or 30 degrees cooler. Vistas from the marked pullovers sweep north to Wyoming, east to the Front Range and West into the heart of the Rockies. Along the way, wildlife, colorful ground hugging plants, debris from Ice Age glaciers and lush mountain meadows are common. Stretch your legs on the Tundra World Nature Trail, a half-hour walk beginning at Rock Cut. Take a five-minute stroll for a magnificent view of Forest Canyon, Hayden Gorge and Gorge Lakes at Forest Canyon Overlook. Stand on the Rock of the Rockies at Rock Cut and Rainbow Curb, elevated more than two miles above sea level. At Milner Pass, the Trail Ridge Road meets the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. Take your time and savor the views.



Riding the Ridge Experience



Driving the Byway

You'll begin your journey in Estes Park at the east edge of Rocky Mountain National Park. After spending a day exploring there, you'll have a full day to explore the Park, ending the day in Grand Lake, where there are accommodations and dining options.

Day One



Estes Park

Sitting at 7,522 feet, Estes Park is long in majestic views of iconic mountain peaks and fertile valleys that splay out in every direction. Unlike so many other Colorado mountain towns Estes Park did not start as a mining town. It grew from a small group of buildings clustered at the corner of Elkhorn and Moraine Avenues when it was laid out in 1905. The early infrastructure of electricity, the water system and the sewerage system, was courtesy of F. O. Stanley, owner of the magnificent Stanley Hotel who came to the area hoping to recover his health. The needs of the residents were taken care of by residents with Western self-sufficiency for decades. Today, in town merchants and restaurants still sell locally made products and regional farm to table fare, while decorating in ranch, Western and lodge styles. Jeans and boots are just as common as flip-flops and sundresses. Galleries range from high-end, one-of-a-kind items to whimsical trinkets. On some days, wildlife is so plentiful that elk wander down the streets. After strolling through town, be sure to enjoy the bench-lined Riverwalk and charming sculpture garden.

Day One

Estes Park Trolley Tour



Since there is no historic walking tour of Estes Park, we suggest you start your visit with a two hour Discover Estes Trolley Tour to introduce you to the area. Knowledgeable guides deliver both the history of Estes Park and glimpses of what life is like in this small mountain town all along the way.

1340 Big Thompson Avenue, Estes Park 80517
970-481-8531 9AM-11AM Daily, 2 hour tour, \$50 per person

Aerial Tramway



After your tour of Estes Park, get ready for a birds-eye view without hiking up mountains. The Estes Park Aerial Tram whisks you above the treetops to the summit of Prospect Mountain. One of few European-style cable cars operating in America, instead of using towers to support the wires, the tram travels across a free span of wires strung between top and bottom stations. Spend your time at the top marveling at the stunning views and get photographs of the gorgeous panoramas.

420 East Riverside Drive, Estes Park 80517
970-475-4094, 9AM-6PM, Allow 1 hour, \$14 per person

Day One

McGregor Ranch



Ranching has been a part of life up here since settlement began. In towns with no mining heritage, it is still integral to life. Visit MacGregor Ranch to explore a living history showplace dating from the 1870s. As soon as you step into the front gate, you'll move back in time watching the Preceron draft horses and ranch hands working in the meadows. The main house is furnished with original pieces and personal possessions of three generations of the MacGregor family. Clothing, handcrafts, original paintings, rock collections, personal diaries, books and early photographs are all on display. Historic outbuildings include a milk house, root cellar, smokehouse, blacksmith shop and antique farm equipment yard.

180 MacGregor Lane, Estes Park, CO 80517
970-586-3749, Tuesday-Friday 10AM-4PM, Saturday 11AM-2PM, Allow 1 hour, \$7 per person

Estes Park Riverwalk



After dinner, stroll along The Riverwalk following the Big Thompson and Fall Rivers as they wind through the heart of downtown Estes Park. Wander past babbling brooks and beautiful sights, statues, bridges, fountains and more all along the way.

Riverwalk starts at George Hix Riverside Plaza

Estes Park Destination Distinctive Accommodations and Dining



Destination Distinctive Accommodations: Hotel Stanley **333 Wonderview Avenue, Estes Park, CO 80517 970-577-4000**

The Hotel Stanley is THE place to stay in Estes Park! Built by Yankee inventor Freelan Stanley, who arrived in Estes Park weak and underweight from illness. When after just one summer his health was better, he vowed to return each year, but had to create a life for his wife, who was not happy in the West. Together, they opened the Hotel Stanley transporting guests in stylish Stanley-designed steam cars. In a town mostly occupied by hunters and homesteaders, the hotel had electric lights, telephones, ensuite bathrooms, a staff of uniformed servants and a fleet of automobiles.



Seasoned—An American Bistro 205 Park Lane Estes Park, CO 80517 970-586-9000

Seasoned is a small restaurant with a defined menu, yet flavors that celebrate the cuisine of the Americas to deliver an exciting dining experience. An ever changing menu uses seasonally grown produce to inspire the fare of the day.

Day Two

Rocky Mountain National Park Visitor Centers



Fall River Visitor Center offers a variety of ranger-led programs and activities, plus exhibits on wildlife management accompanied by life-sized bronze sculptures.

At the Alpine Visitor Center, you'll feel like you're on top of the world, at 11,796 feet, with views punctuated by mountain peaks and glaciated valleys. Exhibits here illustrate the amazing alpine tundra ecosystem. This is the only Visitor Center with snacks.

Just north of the town of Grand Lake, the Kawuneeche Visitor Center is located in the west side of the Park. Explore exhibits, the Rocky Mountain Conservancy bookstore and park films, as well as ranger-led activities in season.

Holzwarth Historic Site



The Holzwarths came to make their home high in the Rocky Mountains in 1917. As homesteaders they chose 160 acres close to Rocky Mountain National Park in the beautiful Kawuneeche Valley. During the 1920s, they constructed a home, cabins, sheds, and a barn, ultimately taking in visitors who traveled the Fall River Road. After a multitude of friends stayed for free, Mama Holzwarth suggested they charge guests to stay in a German-style inn on the property, soon known as the Holzwarth Trout Lodge. Mama cooked three meals a day for guests, charging \$1.50 a meal which included freshly caught trout, soup stock, wilted dandelion greens with bacon, vinegar, and sugar, deer roast, biscuits, and boiled potatoes. Exploring the historic area is a look at the life of Colorado homesteaders up here in the mountains. Tour the Mama cabin to see the original furnishings, linens, and even her Admiral Blue stove!

7.4 miles north of Grand Lake, CO

Day Two



Grand Lake

Located on the serene shores of the largest lake in Colorado, Grand Lake has a breathtaking backdrop of Rocky Mountain National Park's majestic, snow-capped peaks. Known as the Western Gateway to the Park, you can enjoy this quaint town by taking a stroll along the historic Western style boardwalk, dating from 1879, enjoy an ice cream cone, watch fireworks, or browse delightful shops and galleries. On some days, moose wander right into town. At an elevation of 8,369 feet, the scenery is unmatched.

Grand Lake Destination Distinctive Accommodations and Dining



Destination Distinctive Accommodations: Grand Lake Lodge
15500 US 34, Grand Lake, CO 80447 970-627-3967

Now celebrating their 100th season, the Grand Lake Lodge has witnessed an incredible amount of Colorado history. Built soon after Rocky Mountain National Park was designated, the lodge has been delivering mountain hospitality to generations of travelers.



Huntington House Tavern/Grand Lake Lodge

Enjoy a meal on the mountainside deck of the Huntington House Tavern right at the Grand Lake Lodge, delighting in the rejuvenating beauty found only in the heart of Colorado.

