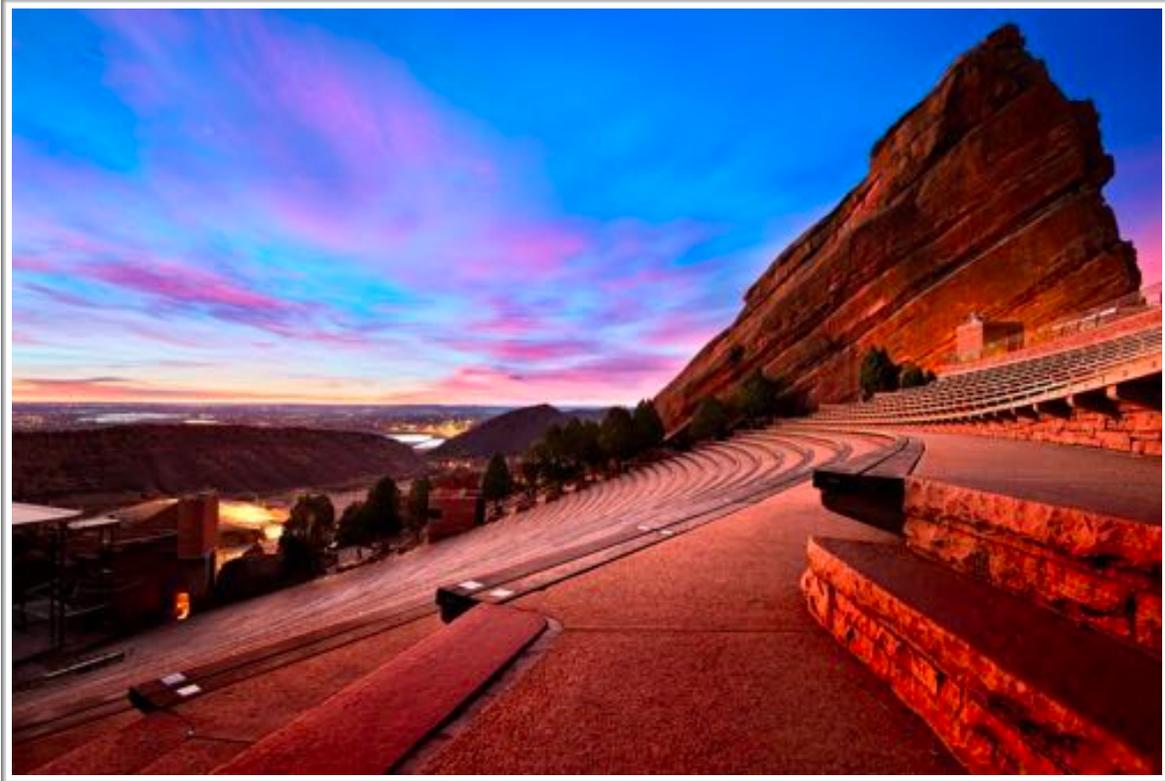


Lariat Loop

Denver's Dramatic Scenic Circles



4 Days/3 Nights

Gateway City: Denver, Colorado

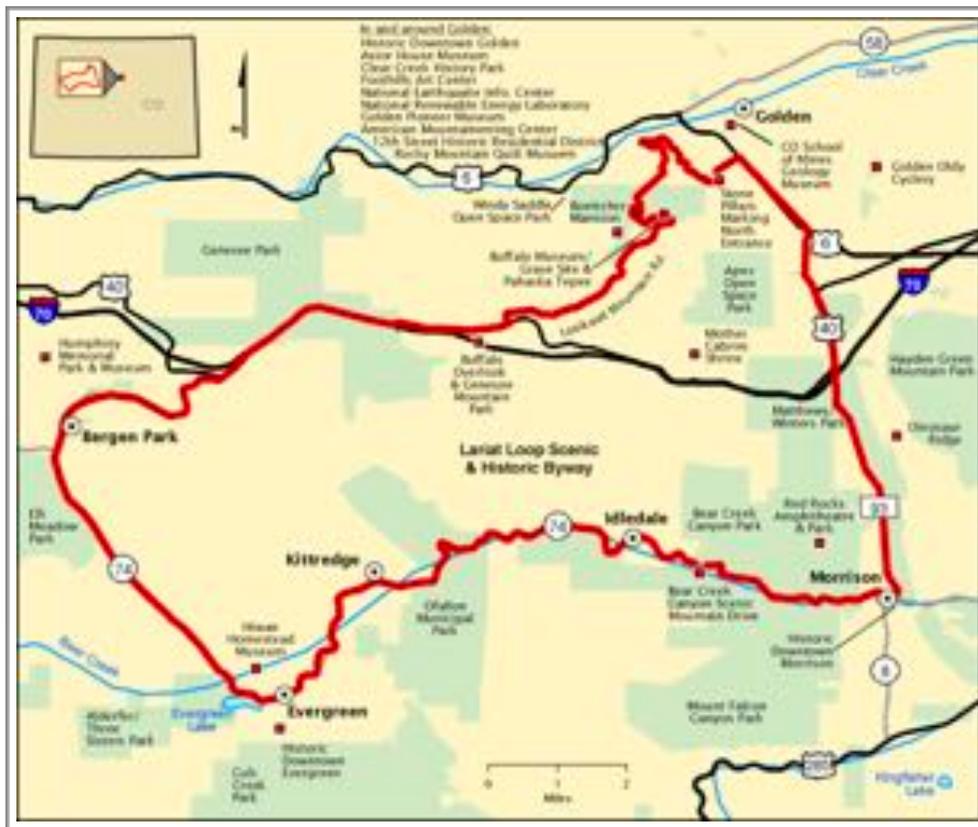


At the dawn of the age of motoring, long before I-70 was a glint in anyone’s eye, Colorado’s mountains beckoned travelers to get out into the rugged landscapes. People were eager to drive their new automobiles on winding roads with sharp curves and spectacular views. To attract these visitors, between 1915 and 1920, Denver developed a series of 24 parks and historic sites including the Red Rocks Amphitheater, Buffalo Bill’s Grave, and the Buffalo Herd Overlook, that are all connected by “scenic circles” - drives that let motorists experience the mountains above the city. The 40-mile Lariat Loop Scenic and Historic Scenic Byway encompasses two of these scenic circles: the Lariat Loop Scenic Mountain Drive and the Bear Creek Canyon Scenic Mountain Drive. Taking its name from the Lariat Trail, the five-mile spectacular feat of engineering that travels from Golden to Lookout Mountain, the route, punctuated with drop-offs and viewpoints, gains 1,300 feet in just 4.3 miles. Lookout Mountain, the highest point at 7,379-feet, delivers sweeping views in every direction. To experience the heritage of the road in addition to the magnificent beauty, we’ve included places along the road that were there in the 1920s. Plus, we’ve added a drive in Clear Creek Canyon, a not to be missed adventure when you’re in the area.

Touring the Byway

We recommend starting your journey in Denver, where you can climb to a mile high on the Capitol steps, stroll on the 16th Street Mall, visit the Denver Art Museum and the History Colorado Center, as well as enjoy LODO, the original historic district in Denver now hosting restaurants, shops and boutiques. Stay at the famous Brown Palace Hotel.

On Day Two, it's time to take a drive through Clear Creek Canyon on US 6 West of Golden. Stay on that route all the way to I-70 for a quick trip back to Golden or opt for the scenic route back. Stay in Golden at The Dove Inn. On Day Three, spend the day exploring locations on the Lariat Loop and in addition, everybody has to tour Coors Brewing Company. On Day Four, travel the rest of the Lariat Loop National Scenic Byway, through Evergreen and Morrison, ending at the stunning Red Rock Amphitheater. From there, we wish you safe passage if you're traveling another Colorado Scenic Byway or a safe and pleasant journey home.



DAY ONE



Denver

Begun as a gamble when the first few flakes of gold were found in Cherry Creek, Denver was the stuff of legends in the Wild, Wild West, with Bat Masterson, the Unsinkable Molly Brown, gunslingers, gamblers, gold miners, saloons, cattlemen and western sheriffs, all competing for the action. Today, the Mile High City, gets its name from the brass cap positioned exactly one mile high on the state capitol steps. The city was so sure it would be a success that the Historical Society was founded in 1879. After winning the title of capital, a cattle exchange, banking and the energy industry combined to create a thriving economy. An incredible amount of early architecture still exists, because almost from the start, Denver was built for permanence. The best attractions are near each other in Civic Park, including the History Museum, Denver Museum of Art (yes it all stands up!), the US Mint, and Larimar Square. The Brown Palace Hotel is right there as well. LODO is filled with arts, entertainment, great restaurants and great buildings.

16th Street Mall

Introduce yourself to Denver on the 16th Street Mall, a great street for strolling. The mall is anchored on one end by Civic Park and the Colorado State Capitol and LODO on the other. There are 42 outdoor cafés along with shops, boutiques and the very Instagrammable D&F Tower, a two-thirds replica of the Campanile of St. Mark's in Venice that was the highest building west of the Mississippi when it was built in 1909.

16th Street between North Broadway and Commons Park

Colorado State Capitol Building

Reach a “mile high” in Denver, on the steps of the Colorado State Capitol Building that stands at 5,280 feet above sea level and watch the sun setting behind the Rocky Mountains.

200 East Colfax Avenue, Denver, CO 80203, 303-866-2604, Building M-F
7:30AM-5PM, Tours M-F 10AM, 11AM, 1PM, 2PM Allow 1 Hour, Free



History Colorado Center

Four floors hosting fifteen exhibits displayed with intermingled artifacts, art and stories reveal the heritage of Colorado and the American West. Learn about such intriguing topics as Building Denver, the Borderlands of Southern Colorado, Liberated: America Fights for Democracy in World War II, and Brick and Soul. 1200 Broadway, Denver, CO 80203, 303-447-8679, Daily 10AM-5PM, Allow 2 Hours, Adults \$14.

Denver Art Museum

Located in one of the most dynamic buildings in the world, the Denver Art Museum holds over 70,000 diverse works spanning from ancient times to today and countries and civilizations across the world. In addition to its famous building, the museum is particularly renowned for an extensive collection of Native American art, and the Petrie Institute of Western American Art. Dine at the Pinto restaurant during your visit.

100 West 14th Avenue, Denver, CO 80204, 720-865-5000, Daily 10AM-5PM, Allow at least 2 hours, Adults \$18.



LODO

Explore 23 blocks of original Denver, dating from 1858, when gold was discovered at the confluence of the South Platte River and Cherry Creek. Within 20 years, Denver City had grown from a tiny cabin to 35,629 residents. A railroad spur from Denver to Cheyenne brought another boom, when thousands of additional workers from around the world arrive to work on the railroad. Today, Lower Downtown, affectionately referred to as LODO, hosts one of the finest remaining collections of late 19th century and early 20th century commercial buildings in the American West.





Destination Distinctive Accommodations

Brown Palace Hotel 321 17th Street, Denver, CO 80202, 303-297-3111

Henry Brown purchased several acres of land in downtown Denver in 1860, including a triangular plot at the corner of Broadway, Tremont and 17th Street, where he grazed his cow. He made a fortune selling the rest of his land on Capitol Hill and no expense was spared for his “Palace Hotel” built where the cow once grazed.

Destination Distinctive Dining

Corinne 1455 California Street, Denver, CO 80202, 720-996-1555

Considered the best restaurant in Denver. Located in the Le Meridien Hotel

Tables 2267 Kearney Street, Denver, CO 80207, 303-388-0299

Destination Distinctive Retail

Visit the Santa Fe Arts District, 525 Santa Fe Drive, and the collection of fine art galleries including 701 Gallery, Walker Fine Art, Gallery 1505 and the Great Western Art Gallery.

DAY TWO



Golden

Golden, which hit the map when a small amount of gold was discovered in Clear Creek, quickly became an important supply depot for miners and farmers and a shipping point for coal and industrial clay found in the area. The town served as the Territorial Capital from 1862 to 1867.



Clear Creek Canyon Drive

Enjoy the drive through Clear Creek Canyon, one of the narrowest, steepest and most dramatic canyons in Colorado. If hiking is an order, stop at the Mayhem Gulch Trailhead, 12 miles west of Golden, and take the Peaks to Plains Trail. At the junction of Highway 119, you have the option to go north to Black Hawk, the largest gambling center in Colorado, or to Central City, once the “richest place on earth” when it was the largest gold rush boom town in Colorado in the 1870’s. Above town, historic graveyards, old mines, and ghost towns are remnants of the past. Southwest of Central City, look for signs for the Virginia Canyon Road, known as the “Oh My God Road.” Legend has it the name came from stagecoach passengers looking down at the sheer drop offs and moaning, “Oh My God!” Go slow, pause on the narrow turns, and follow the signs for Idaho Springs, another old gold mining town. From there, you can take I-70 to return to Golden or go back through Clear Creek Canyon, viewing the dramatic rock formations from a different direction.

Golden Historic Districts/Golden History Tour

During the years Golden served as the Territorial Capital, a remarkable historic district and eight historic neighborhoods were built up. A self-guided Golden History Walking Tour takes you past these fascinating locations, ranging from cobblestone streets and territorial capital buildings to wild west saloons and high style residential areas. To walk with a guide, sign up for the Wild West Walking Tour at the Visitor Center. Tour begins at 718 12th Street





Destination Distinctive Accommodations

The Dove Inn 711 14th Street Golden, CO 80401 720-608-1714

Now a chic boutique hotel, The Dove Inn began life as an 1866 Victorian residence. All 10 stylish unique rooms include luxurious baths, Wi-Fi, and craft coffee beans from local roasters. Breakfast made from locally sourced ingredients is delivered continental style. As the owners say, the Inn is an old soul with a new look and impeccable service delivered from behind the scenes.

Destination Distinctive Dining

Old Capitol Grill and Smokehouse 1122 Washington Avenue Golden, CO 80401

303-279-6390 Built in 1863, Colorado's territorial legislature met in the building that now houses the Old Capitol Grill and Smokehouse, offering classic American fare with some unique twists.

DAY THREE



Boettcher Mansion

Overlooking Denver with commanding views, the Boettcher Mansion, built in 1917, began as Lorraine Lodge, the secluded mountaintop retreat of Charles Boettcher. Separated from his wife at age 66 after making a fortune in hardware, cement, sugar beets and cattle, he relaxed here for the next 30 years. The family rooms include a cathedral-beamed living room flanked by a dining room and sitting porch and a downstairs master bedroom suite.

900 Colorado Road, Golden, CO 80401 720-497-7630 M-F 8AM-4PM, Allow 1 hour for history tour, Adults \$5

Coors Brewery Tour

No one should visit Golden without touring the Coors Brewery, the largest single-site brewery in the world, still standing where Adolph Coors set up shop in 1873. A 30-minute tour takes you through the brewing process, malting, and packaging. At the end enjoy sampling the great beer.

13th Street and Ford Street, Golden, CO 80401 866-812-2337 Th-M 10AM-4PM, Sunday Noon-4PM, 30 minute tour, Adults \$10

Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave

Even though Buffalo Bill is best known for his Wild West Show in Wyoming, it was his request to be buried on top of Lookout Mountain. His funeral in 1917 was the largest in Colorado history. Exhibits cover Buffalo Bill's entire life.

987 ½ Lookout Mountain Road, Golden, CO 80401 720-865-2160 Daily 9AM - 5PM, Allow 1 hour, Adults \$5



Destination Distinctive Dining

Indulge Bistro and Wine Bar 1299 Washington Avenue Golden, CO 80401 303-277-9991

Offering fresh foods like fantastic hand cut steaks, chicken, pork, fish, vegetables, fruits, bread, as well as wine and pre-mixed cocktails.

DAY FOUR

Evergreen

Unlike so many other Colorado towns found by miners, Evergreen was founded by a group of families who came to ranch. Gradually, residents from Denver came “up the hill,” to build summer camps and hunting cabins. Evergreen Lake was created in 1928. Today, downtown’s walkable “Heart of Evergreen” is still a community center where city dwellers can enjoy a day in the mountains. The historic district bordered by a pink cliff wall and rapidly flowing Bear Creek, parallels a street lined with arts and crafts, bistros, coffee shops, boutiques, live music, and dining.

Hiwan Museum

Originally Camp Neosho, Hiwan was the home of Mary Neosho Williams, who hired a Scottish carpenter to convert a simple log structure into a 25- room log lodge in 1942. Before that, overnight guests stayed on the lawn in tents equipped with wood floors, stoves, and double canvas walls. When she passed, the house was sold to a Tulsa oilman whose wife renamed it after his cattle. 28473 Meadow Drive, Evergreen, CO 80439 720-497-7650 Tu-Sun Noon-4PM, 30 minute tour, Free



Humphrey History Park and Museum

To meet Denver's growing demand for lumber, John Clarke established Kinnikinnick Ranch in 1878 with a small cabin that is now the oldest part of the house. Lee Humphrey bought the ranch in 1921 when he became head of the copy desk at the Rocky Mountain News. Well known as Denver's first commuter, he drove a Model T named Mary Ann for two and a half hours daily to work. When he passed, the Rocky Mountain News estimated that he had driven over a half a million miles to spend each evening with his family. 620 Soda Creek Road, Evergreen, CO 80439 303-674-5429 Tuesday-Saturday 10AM-2PM, Guided tours 10:30AM, 11:30AM, 1PM, Allow 1 hour, Adults \$7

Buffalo Herd Overlook

Genesee (shining valley), Denver's largest mountain park is the perfect background for Denver's buffalo herd, descendants of bison from Yellowstone National Park. They can usually be seen from both sides of the road, using their own tunnel under I-70.

26771 Genesee Lane, Golden, CO 80401 720-865-0891

Morrison

The town of Morrison was founded when the narrow-gauge Denver and South Park Railroad was constructed from the Platte River to Mount Morrison. Incorporated in 1872 by the Morrison Stone, Lime and Town Company, it became the stopping place for miners headed for South Park.
Evergreen to Morrison - 10 miles

Destination Distinctive Dining

Twin Forks Tavern 19423 North Turkey Creek Road Morrison, CO 80465 720-536-4191
Offering farm fresh ingredients coupled with flights of wine and cocktails in an elegant dining room.

Red Rocks Amphitheater

Perhaps the best known of Denver's parks, Native Americans thought Red Rocks was spiritual. Early pioneers staged concerts here to take advantage of the natural "bounce" rock Mother Nature placed behind the stage. The curving wood benches and red sandstone stairs were built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1941. The Beatles were the first rock group to perform here, followed by lots of other famous name musicians. Exhibits explain the geology of the rocks, formed from the beach of an ancestral sea that once covered Colorado and Kansas. 18300 West Alameda Parkway, Morrison, CO 80465 Free self-guided tours daily sunrise to sunset, subject to change for performances

