

## 25 Free Things To Do While In Denver

To prove that Denver really is "The Mile High City," head to the State Capitol. There's a spot on the west steps of the building that is exactly 5,280 feet above sea level. Once seen as the domain of cowboys and oilmen, today the mile-high metropolis is a cosmopolitan mix of natural beauty and world-class hotels, entertainment and attractions. The Denver Art Museum houses one of the finest collections of American Indian art in the world. The city is also the official home of four national teams: the Broncos, Nuggets, Rockies and Avalanche, meaning every season is sports season. Even with all the big town glitz, Denver has managed to maintain its earthiness. Outdoor recreation is still a major draw. With 205 parks in city limits and 20,000 acres of parks in the nearby mountains, there is ample opportunity for hiking, biking, mountain climbing and more. Families visiting Denver won't know where to begin. The Zoo, the Children's Museum and the Botanic Gardens offer hours of entertainment or stop by the United States Mint for a free tour.

### 1. United States Mint/Denver Mint- W. Colfax Ave. at Cherokee St., Denver, CO

Recording: 303-405-4791; Tours: 303-405-4765

[http://www.usmint.gov/mint\\_tours/index.cfm?action=StartReservation&CFID=17521158&CFTOKEN=65262133](http://www.usmint.gov/mint_tours/index.cfm?action=StartReservation&CFID=17521158&CFTOKEN=65262133)

Opened in 1862, the mint produces over 40 million coins a day. Visitors can view the process of making, sorting and bagging new coins. You must call weeks in advance to schedule a tour in order to be cleared for security reasons. Reservations are required for all tours. Tour reservations can be scheduled through this web site, or by visiting the Reservations Booth at the United States Mint Visitor Center located on Cherokee Street between 14 Avenue and Colfax Avenue in Denver, Colorado. If space is available, walk-up tour reservations will be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. As such, there may be days when walk-up tours are not available.

All United States Mint tours are free of charge. Guided tours start on the hour and are available from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays). We encourage you to submit your request as early as possible since a limited number of tours are available. All visitors should call the 24-hour tour information line at (303) 405-4761 to determine if any last minute changes have been made to the tour schedule.

### 2. Tattered Covered Book Store-2955 East First Ave, Denver, CO 80206-

Tel: 303-322-7727, 1-800-833-9327

<http://www.tatteredcover.com/NASApp/store/IndexJsp>

What started out over 30 years ago as a small, cozy bookshop with an eclectic selection of books evolved into an amazing place for anyone who enjoys books. Not only will you find an outstanding selection of books (over half a million in the two original locations, consisting of over 150,000 titles), but you'll still enjoy the feeling of being in a cozy shop where you feel welcome to curl up on a sofa or sit back in a recliner to enjoy reading a book, magazine, or newspaper.

### 3. Brown Palace Hotel-321 17<sup>th</sup> St, Denver, Co 80202

On Wednesday or Saturday, at 2:00 PM, head over to the historic Brown Palace Hotel downtown. Meet in the sitting area beside the entrance to the Ship Tavern inside the hotel, and enjoy learning some fascinating Denver history on this 45 - 60 minute free guided tour.

### 4. Dinosaur Ridge-16831 W Alameda Prkwy, Morrison Co, 303-697-DINO

Track a T-Rex back in time along dinosaur ridge! Take free self guided tours and explore the visitors center and learn about fossils, footprints and other evidence that prehistoric life was right outside Denver! View prehistoric animal tracks, both large and small, which are available for viewing along this well-preserved site. Stop by the Visitor Center, and then take time to experience the self-guided tour which includes sixteen interpretative signs that describe fossil remains as well as other relevant features of the area.

### 5. Red Rocks Park-16352 County Road #93 , I-70 exit 259 S., Morrison, CO 80465

303-640-2637

URL: <http://www.redrocksonline.com/>

When you are done exploring the amphitheatre, don't miss the captivating Visitor Center, which opened in 2003. The Visitor Center is tucked under the seating, so it made a minimal impact on the appearance of the area. Watch a 10-minute film that describes the history - both natural and musical - of the park. Reminisce as you view concert posters

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from the past 40 years, see instruments belonging to favorite musicians, or use the interactive computer terminals to find out who performed here or to remember a special concert.

### **6. Coors Brewery-1221 Ford Street and 13th, Golden, CO 80401 (Approx 10 miles west of Denver)**

303-277-2337

<http://www.coors.com/>

Take a tour at one of Colorado's best-known companies, Coors, and enjoy up to 3 free samples of their variety of beer products (if you are over 21), or complimentary soft drinks if you are younger or prefer something non-alcoholic.

### **7. Colorado State Capitol-200 East Colfax Avenue, Denver, CO 80203**

303-866-2604

[www.state.co.us](http://www.state.co.us)

As you explore the building on your own, or join a free tour, enjoy the murals, stained glass portraits, wall hanging, and presidential portraits. During the legislative session, step into the Senate or House of Representatives gallery to watch state legislators in action.

### **8. Denver Botanical Gardens-1005 York St, Denver, CO 80206**

720-865-3500

<http://www.botanicgardens.org/ourgardensnew/yorkstreet.cfm>

Start our free day (if today happens to be a Tuesday during the warmer months) by enjoying a fitness walk through the beautiful gardens, followed by a healthy snack (also free!).

### **9. Cheesman Park- 8<sup>th</sup> Ave & Franklin St**

303-964-2500

Perfect place for scenic views of the mountains of Denver

### **10. City Park-Between 17<sup>th</sup> Ave/23<sup>rd</sup> Ave & York St**

This scenic park offers swimming, gardens, and monuments.

### **11. Mizel Museum of Judaica-560 S. Monaco Pkwy, Denver, CO**

303-333-4156

Exhibits about Jewish outreach themes are presented, along with tours and programs.

### **12. Denver Public Library-10 W 14th Ave, Denver, CO 80204-2749**

(720) 865-1111

### **13. Indian Peaks Wilderness Area- Boulder, Co**

303-444-6600

### **14. Cranmer Park-East 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave and Bellaire St, Denver, CO**

303-964-2500

Feature a sundial and a profile of the Continental Divide.

### **15. Aurora History Museum-15001 E. Alameda Dr, Aurora, CO**

303-739-6660

Items from Aurora's history are on display including "Portrait of Aurora" which displays relics from the first half of the 20th century.

### **16. National Renewable Energy Laboratory Visitor Center-15013 Denver West Pkwy, Golden, CO**

303-384-6565

Interactive programs and displays educate public on solar and wind power sources.

### **17. Littleton Historical Museum-6028 S. Gallup, Littleton, CO**

303-795-3950

A living history museum that brings back to life a farm, blacksmith shop, and schoolhouse.

### **18. Hiwan Homestead Museum-4208 S. Timbervale Dr, Evergreen, CO**

303-674-6262

The museum contains exhibits about Jefferson County history, and southwestern Indian art. Guided tours are available.

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### 19. Garden of the Gods (Approx 70 minutes outside of Denver) 1805 N. 30th Street (at Gateway Road), Colorado Springs, CO 80904

Garden of the Gods Visitor and Nature Center 719-634-6666

<http://www.gardenofgods.com>

Enjoy the sandstone formations as you hike a trail, horseback ride, have a picnic, take a bus tour or just stand on the terrace outside the visitor center. There are free hands-on exhibits at the visitor center, as well as a cafe with delicious dining options.

### 20. Celestial Seasonings-4600 Sleepytime Dr. Boulder, CO

303-581-1202

Completely FREE! Tour Celestial Seasonings Tea company right outside of Boulder. The peppermint room is amazing!

### 21. Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities- 6901 Wadsworth Blvd, Arvada, Co

303-431-3939

Two art galleries and a history museum devoted to the city of Arvada are open free to the public.

### 22. Colorado School of Mining Geology Museum-Berthoud Hall, 16<sup>th</sup> & Maples St, Golden CO

Displays present rocks, minerals, and fossils along with an exhibit on mining.

### 23. Hudson Gardens-6115 S Sante Fe Dr, Littleton, CO

303-797-8565

Free only during October through April, the 30+ acre gardens display a wide variety of native plants and flowers.

### 24. Russell Stover Chocolates-2185 Stover Avenue, Montrose, CO 81401

970-249-5372

[www.russellstover.com](http://www.russellstover.com)

Chocolate! One of the basic food groups, right? Wander the aisles of this huge factory outlet store, and pick up a sample or two, or three, or ... now, don't get carried away! You'll see that the store employees have thoughtfully opened sample boxes of various candies throughout the store. Please don't "help" them out by opening additional boxes to sample! Russell Stover is a major employer in the Montrose area, with a production facility located in the building behind the outlet store. Sadly, no tours of the candy-making process are available. Warning: the taste and aroma of chocolate may prove too much for you, and you'll likely end up making a purchase before your friends manage to drag you out of the store. Ask for the free gift-wrapping, and pretend you aren't going to eat it all yourself.

Summer Hours: (April 11-Sept. 5) Monday-Thursday 9:00-8:00; Friday-Saturday 9:00-9:00; Sunday 11:00-8:00.

### 25. Colorado Sports Hall of Fame Museum 1701 Bryant St. #500, Denver, CO 80204

(720)258-3536

<http://www.coloradosports.org/themuseum.cfm>

Here in Colorado, we love our sports. And we've certainly had our share of great athletes and great people associated with sports here in our home state. Whether your interest lies with great moments in Colorado sport history, women in sports, or all things "Bronco", you'll find plenty to enjoy at the Colorado Sports Hall of Fame Museum. There's even a display called "MIND - BODY - SPIRIT / THE IMPORTANCE OF SPORTS CONDITIONING" where John Elway and Amy Van Dyken demonstrate (through photos -- sorry, they're not here in person!) how muscle groups work together and provide injury prevention concepts.

