

Boulder, Colorado: Attractions

The lively college town of Boulder offers attractions for all types of tourists, including those looking to indulge in active daytime pursuits as well as hedonists interested in wining and dining at night. The primary attraction is, of course, the neighbouring Rocky Mountain National Park, but there is enough attractions downtown to keep you here for more than a few days.

- Boulder Creek Path A great way to experience the natural side of Boulder is to take a stroll along the banks of Boulder Creek, which dissects the centre of downtown. The path begins at Civic Park and stretches several miles, taking approximately 1 hour to walk. The partly paved path is popular with outdoor enthusiasts and is frequently crowded with rollerbladers, walkers and joggers. There are plenty of rest spots next to the river, which are ideal for a picnic.

- Boulder History Museum Open since 1944, the museum is housed in the enchanting historic Harbeck-Bergheim House in the University Hill district. Most of the exhibits on display have been donated by local families and the museum houses a total of more than 30,000 objects. The objects shed light on the town's interesting past, with frequently changing exhibitions revealing different aspects of Boulder's history.

- Eldorado Canyon State Park A short drive from Boulder, this is one of the best spots in the region to enjoy rock climbing. With something for every level of climber, visitors can contact The Boulder Mountaineer (tel: +1 303 442 8355) for more information about rock climbing in the park. The park offers scenic sandstone cliffs and picnics on the banks of Boulder Creek as well as more than 500 marked rock climbing routes. Mountain biking and hiking is also popular here, as is cross-country skiing and fishing. The park can get crowded at weekends and during holidays, with off-peak days being the best time to visit.

- Flagstaff Mountain Offering stunning views of the nearby Rockies, Flagstaff makes for an excellent short excursion from Boulder. Situated just to the west of the city, the summit can be accessed by hiking or driving. There are several easy-going routes that lead to the top, from where there good views of the city and a manmade amphitheatre.

- Frozen Dead Guy Days This bizarre annual event, held in neighbouring Nederland, draws crowds who come to pay tribute to Boulder's cryogenically kept Bredo Morstoel and participate in the events, which include coffin races and Morstoel look-alike competitions. Held in early March, the winter festivities last three days, during which time the frozen Norwegian who is in storage, waiting to be re-animated, is celebrated.

- Pearl street mall This tree-lined pedestrianised mall is filled with upbeat galleries, coffee shops and interesting stores, making it the ideal place to soak up Boulder's arty atmosphere and street performers. At night, the street fills with diners, with a number of excellent bars and restaurants in the area. Stretching four blocks, the mall also features several historic buildings and fine examples of the town's early architecture. The nearby Boulder Farmers Market is in operation on Saturday mornings and Wednesday evenings, and is well worth a look.

- Rocky Mountain National Park Just a short drive along Highway 36 will take you to the Rocky Mountain National Park. If you come in summer, you can expect a large percentage of the three million annual visitors to be here at the same time. Incredibly beautiful, some of the snow-capped mountains rise to over 10,000 feet high and are commonly compared with the Alps, with Bavarian and Swiss themed buildings helping to make this connection more prominent. Visitors must pay an entrance fee at the gate, where there is also an informative visitor centre. Most visitors bring their own vehicle into the park however tours are available or alternatively you can discover the mountains by mountain bike.