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ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



joiseyshowaa

Top 10: Free Things to Do in Boulder

Boulder, 1 Day

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: Once you've calculated your budget for lodging and food, this guide will help you enjoy Boulder without spending another dime. Luckily, much of what Boulder has to offer is based on its natural beauty and wonderful weather, so a perfect way to spend much of your time in Boulder is to hike, climb, and picnic while soaking up the Colorado sunshine. In the summer, Pearl Street is full of street performers and live music that will keep you interested for hours at a time, and the Outdoor Cinema is donation-based, so pay if you can or just enjoy the show!

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - Boulder



Flatirons (The)

A geological landmark and popular climbing spot



Boulder Outdoor Cinema

Interactive Theater



Bands on the Bricks

Free downtown concerts



Conference on World Affairs

Attendees go to free panels, plenaries, and performances on nearly limitless topics



Boulder Creek Path

Gorgeous path through the Boulder foothills



Flagstaff Mountain

Climbing, hiking and upscale dining on this famous mountain



Chautauqua Park

Gorgeous view of the Flatirons with trails and picnicking



Boulder Farmers' Market

Bi-weekly market full of local produce and other goods, open Apr-Nov



Pearl Street Mall

4-block pedestrian mall with shops, cafés, and people watching



Boulder Falls

Picturesque waterfalls a short walk from the road

Day 1 - Boulder

QUICK NOTE

location:

3198 Broadway (Parks Department)
Boulder CO 80302

hours:

24 hrs

1 Flatirons (The)

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Some of the best views of the Flatirons can be seen from Chautauqua Park, where many trails into the foothills begin.

DESCRIPTION: If you fly into Denver airport, the famous foothills of the Rocky Mountains, the Flatirons, are undoubtedly the first things you'll notice. The Flatirons provide exceptional hiking, bouldering, and climbing, with rock grades ranging from easy to world-class. Different angles of these iconic mountains can be seen from various spots around the town, and of course an incredible view of the town can be seen by hiking or climbing up the Flatirons. Their red sandstone slabs provide a dramatic background for the town and images of the Flatirons are a ubiquitous symbol of the town of Boulder. © NileGuide



contact:

tel: 303 447 9308
<http://www.boulderoutdoorcinema.com/>

location:

1750 13th Street
Boulder CO 80302

2 Boulder Outdoor Cinema

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Some of the popular cult classics fill up quickly, so if you want to secure a good spot, get there early and bring some dinner to munch on while you wait for the movie to start.

DESCRIPTION: The Boulder Outdoor Cinema redefines going to the movies. Once a week during summer months, viewers set up lawn chairs and blankets on the green behind the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art and prepare to make noise. Yes, moviegoers are encouraged to sing along and call out lines from the film. The Applause-O-meter and contests like "Best Film Related Costume" promote audience participation and a lot of fun. A different classic or cult favorite runs each week. Past features have included The Wizard of Oz, War of the Worlds, and Pee Wee's Big Adventure. All shows are suitable for family entertainment. © wcities.com



contact:

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

location:

Pearl Street Mall
Boulder CO 80302

hours:

check website for details

3 Bands on the Bricks

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

There are some seats available at the event, so get there early if you don't want to be up dancing the whole time.



Downtown Boulder

DESCRIPTION: Listen to a great concert as you watch the sun dip behind the Rocky Mountains at the Bands on the Brick concert. The best of Colorado's local bands play on the County Courthouse steps at this weekly summer event. Bring your lawn chair and relax, or get up and dance. Enjoy a variety of talented performers, from the bluesy sounds of Hazel Miller to the eclectic rhythms of Freddi Henchi. Catch dinner before or after the show from one of surrounding Pearl Street Mall restaurants. Admission is free. © wcities.com

contact:
tel: 303.492.2525
fax: 303.492.3934
<http://www.colorado.edu/cwa/>

location:
University of Colorado
Boulder campus
Boulder CO 80309

4 Conference on World Affairs

DESCRIPTION: Founded in 1948 as a forum on international affairs, the Conference on World Affairs (CWA) has expanded to encompass nearly every other aspect of life, including the arts, media, science, technology, environment, spirituality, politics, business, etc . Over the years, the Conference on World Affairs has been graced by such personalities as Roger Ebert, Patch Adams, Eleanor Roosevelt, Ralph Nadar, and Henry Kissinger. Attendees can attend free panels, plenaries, and performances on these nearly limitless topics over the course of the week of the CWA. © wcities.com



Jess Steinitz

contact:
tel: +1 303 441 3200
<http://www.ci.boulder.co.us/>

location:
Parallels Arapahoe Avenue
Boulder CO 80302

hours:
Daily 24 hours

5 Boulder Creek Path

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Be sure to stay in your lane (or on the right) so as not to collide with any bikers riding in the other direction.

DESCRIPTION: The Boulder Creek Path runs from east Boulder up Boulder Canyon Dr. as it winds itself through the foothills. The path is paved as it meanders through town and then becomes gravel and dirt as it heads up into the mountains. The Boulder Creek Path is popular with joggers and cyclists because of its beautiful scenery; so enjoy the sights but you'll have to head further out of town if you're seeking solitude. There are many places along the way to stop and enjoy the sounds of the Boulder Creek, or to stop at a table or bench and have a picnic. In the summer time, head to Eben G. Fine park along the path just west of downtown where there is a playground for kids, picnic tables and grills, and a great area for tubing down the creek (there are some small cascades, so if the kids want to go, put a helmet on them and stick them in your lap). © NileGuide



contact:
tel: +1 303 441 3408

location:
Flagstaff Mountain Road
Boulder CO 80302

6 Flagstaff Mountain

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Full of hikers and climbers on the weekends, head up Flagstaff on a weekday for a more secluded hike or picnic.

DESCRIPTION: Just west of downtown, the winding road up the mountain provides stunning panoramic views of Boulder, Denver, and the eastern plains after a beautiful drive or a strenuous bike ride. There are many picnic tables just off the road where you can park and walk for a few minutes and find yourself in a relatively quiet and secluded area. Flagstaff Mountain also has mountain bike trails and popular climbing routes, as well as the Summit Nature Center (open weekends in the summer) and an outdoor amphitheater. The Flagstaff House, one of Boulder's most upscale restaurants, is also situated on Flagstaff Mountain, which affords it incredible views and quite a romantic atmosphere. © NileGuide



Photo courtesy of /kallu

contact:
tel: 303 442 3282
<http://www.chautauqua.com/>

location:
Ninth Street & Baseline Road
Boulder CO 80302

7 Chautauqua Park

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

If you're short on cash but still want to hear the music, Chautauqua Auditorium opens its doors for listeners to bring blankets and sit outside the auditorium.

DESCRIPTION: This picturesque park located at the base of the Flatirons has many trailheads that are the gateways to the Rocky Mountains. The park is a wonderful place for walking, picnicking, and people-watching. The park is part of the Chautauqua community, an idea built from the Chautauqua movement popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries that was based around adult education that attempted to provide entertainment and culture for the whole community. The Boulder Chautauqua community opened in 1898 and contains a public dining hall, lodging, a community house for local events, and the beautiful Chautauqua Auditorium, which houses the esteemed Colorado Music Festival in the summer, as well as other concerts throughout the year. © NileGuide



editor

contact:
tel: +1 303 910 2236
<http://www.boulderfarmers.org/>

location:
13th Street
Boulder CO 80302

8 Boulder Farmers' Market

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Wednesdays are usually less crowded but are also full of locals there after work to do their weekly shopping, so the pace is slightly faster. If you



want to meander, try checking out the Saturday market...but get there early to avoid the crowds!

DESCRIPTION: A local treasure, this is one of the best farmers' markets around. Almost everything can be found here, from freshly roasted green chilies, to gourmet cheeses and wines, to flowers and plants. Much of the food is organic, and all of it is grown by the people selling it. The Farmers' Market also has a food court with delicious prepared foods, picnic tables, and music. Grab some breakfast or lunch and take it over to Central Park to sit in the grass and watch the people. The Market hosts thousands of Boulderites and visitors every week, some who are there to see the sights and take in the smells, and others who are just there to do their weekly grocery shopping.
© NileGuide

contact:
tel: +1 303 442 1044

location:
Pearl Street
Boulder CO 80302

9 Pearl Street Mall

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Pearl Street gets much busier on the weekends, especially if the weather is nice, but the crowds are half the fun! So grab a spot on a bench or get an outdoor table at one of the many cafés and let the people-watching begin!

DESCRIPTION: This four-block pedestrian mall is a unique and essential part of Boulder. With a wide selection of shops and restaurants, this mall is sure to keep you entertained as you stroll in and out of art galleries, listen to musicians playing free live music, enjoy the shows of buskers (such as the famous Derek Derek), and have a bite to eat on one of Pearl Street's many outdoor patios. It's also a great place for kids, with water spouts that come out of the bricks by 14th street, street performers making balloon art, and big animal statues on which to climb on the east side of the walking mall. In the summer, Pearl Street is host to many events such as Band on the Bricks and the Downtown Boulder Art Fair. The stores also extend both east and west of the walking portion of the Pearl Street Mall, so be sure to continue on to find more interesting stores and restaurants. © NileGuide



contact:

tel: +1 303 441 3388
<http://www.ci.boulder.co.us/index.php>

location:

Canyon Blvd
Boulder CO 80302

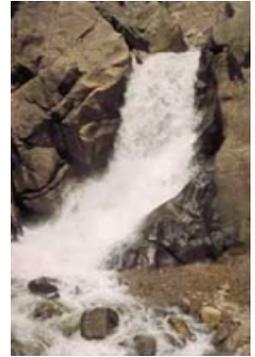


Boulder Falls

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Restricted areas around Boulder Falls are there for a reason. People die or get seriously injured every year in this area, so be sure to stay on the paths.

DESCRIPTION: Boulder Falls is located 11 miles west of Boulder on the north side of Boulder Canyon Drive. In the past, carryalls would bring visitors up for a visit and a picnic, especially after the narrow gauge railroad washed out in the great flood of 1894 and made the area more accessible to pedestrians. Boulder Falls today is still quite lovely, and merits a stop as you head west up the canyon toward Nederland. The torrent of icy cold water occurs where North Boulder Creek plunges 70 feet to enter Middle Boulder Creek. To get to Boulder Falls, follow Canyon Blvd. west into the mountains until you see signs for it. The Falls will be to your right and there is plenty of parking, but take care when crossing Boulder Canyon Drive, as people drive quickly around the mountain turns.
© NileGuide



Boulder Snapshot

Local Info

Boulder's natural beauty is second to none, shadowed by the towering Flatirons and surrounded by more than 31,000 acres of recreational open space and nature preserves. Often described as "the little town nestled between the mountains and reality," Boulder is a small town of 28 square miles and only 100,000 people that has the quality of restaurants and variety of activities of a big city.

Downtown

The Pearl Street Mall, Boulder's "downtown," is a four-block pedestrian mall brimming with tourists and locals alike. This tree-lined promenade, long ago a refuge for the wildest of the wild westerners, is alive with cafés, galleries, brewpubs, restaurants, musicians, street performers, and every type of shopping imaginable. In the summer, the Pearl Street Mall is host to popular events such as Bands on the Brick and the Downtown Boulder Art Fair. The Boulder County Farmers Market is a short walk from the Pearl Street Mall, and is one of the most happening summer events in Boulder, offering organic fruits and veggies, local wines, artisanal cheeses, and beautiful flowers. The popular Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art is just next to the Farmers Market, as is the Boulder Creek Path, which runs along the Farmers Market and meanders downtown. The Boulder Creek Path, which is often busy with bikers, joggers, and meanders through town, also heads up the Canyon, which leads to Boulder Falls.

University Hill

The University of Colorado at Boulder—referred to as "CU" not "UC"—is spread across more than 600 acres of landscape, dotted with gorgeous stone buildings with red Spanish-tiled rooftops. Catch a CU football game at Folsom Field, or during the summer, see a performance from the Colorado Shakespeare Festival. The Boulder History Museum is also on the CU Campus, as is Fiske Planetarium—a superb place to catch up on your stargazing. Macky Auditorium Concert Hall is a magnificent venue on campus that hosts a variety of music throughout the year.

Known as "The Hill" by locals, this neighborhood is right next to the CU

Boulder campus and is a popular hangout spot for college students. Literally parked on a hilltop above downtown, this district provides pizza, subs, burritos, coffee, beer in a bucket, and head shops to CU's 30,000 students. Fox Theater is located at the center of The Hill, and is a popular spot for students to go hear their favorite bands play live. The residential neighborhood on The Hill is an odd mix of fraternity and sorority houses, apartment complexes, student rental houses, and huge, beautiful old houses. Chautauqua Park rests at the base of Flagstaff Mountain on the southwest side of The Hill. The park, one of three remaining from the early 1900s cultural movement, features a dining hall and an auditorium that hosts an excellent summer concert series in a unique venue. Flagstaff Mountain is an great place to go hiking or to just drive up and get a spectacular aerial view of the city.

Surrounding Areas

Celestial Seasonings is just a short drive from downtown and offers a tour and plenty of samples. Eldorado Canyon State Park—where the world comes to rock climb—is a 25 minute drive from downtown Boulder, as is the small mountain town of Nederland, home to Eldora Mountain Resort.

© NileGuide

Things to Do Insights

Outdoor Activities

If there is one thing you must not miss during your time in Boulder, it is a chance to view and explore the iconic Flatirons. Try hiking or climbing on Flagstaff Mountain, or simply picnic in the gorgeous Chautauqua Park. The Boulder Creek Path is also a great place to go for a walk or bike ride, as it meanders through town before heading up the Canyon to Boulder Falls. The Falls are beautiful, but the incredible drive there through the mountains makes it all the more worthwhile. Another great place slightly outside town is Red Rocks Park, which is a spectacular drive as well and has some beautiful, relatively easy hikes. This park is in the same location as Red Rocks Amphitheater, which is arguably one of the best venues in the country to see live music.

Boulder is infamous for its winter sports because of its proximity to multiple ski resorts, the closest of which—and the cheapest and least crowded of which—is Eldora Mountain Resort, so keep that in mind when you're deciding which winter clothes to pack.

Sightseeing

Spending an afternoon just wandering around the campus of the University of Colorado at Boulder is worth it simply because of the beautiful buildings and the weather, which is almost always beautiful as well. While you're there, stop in and check out the CU museum to learn some history about the school and the town.

Boulder has several unusual tours available, including Banjo Billy's bus tour and the tour of Celestial Seasonings, which will also allow you to sample a wide variety of teas. Speaking of tea, the Dushanbe Teahouse is a beautiful piece of architecture with hand-carved and hand-painted ceilings, columns, and ceramic panels that warrants a visit even if you aren't a tea fanatic (but do try the tea—it's delicious). If you're interested in finding more experiences to engage a variety of senses, check out the Boulder Creek Winery, Redstone Meadery, and the Belvedere Belgian Chocolate Shop.

Shopping

The Pearl Street Mall, a 4-block pedestrian mall in downtown Boulder, has the best shopping in town. With an eclectic combination of art galleries, outdoor gear shops, and clothing stores, Pearl Street is the place to go for one-stop shopping. Be sure to check out the stores just off the walking mall, too, as they are equally as good but often get missed; among these is Willow, which has lovely, affordable, local art.

Events

Popular summertime events in Boulder include the Farmers' Market, Downtown Boulder Art Fair, Boulder Creek Hometown Fair, and Folks Festival. Another incredibly popular event in Boulder happens in early

Boulder Snapshot continued

April—theConference on World Affairs—which brings in speakers and panelists from around the world to talk about and debate nearly everything imaginable. Held annually on President's Day Weekend, theBoulder International Film Festival draws crowds from around the country. Every year in early October,Open Studios provides people an opportunity to bike around town visiting the homes and studios of local artists.

© NileGuide

Fun Facts

1. Interesting fact: Baseline Road is a significant east-west route to both Boulderites& cartographers, for it marks the 40th parallel on world maps.

2. Weird fact: Boulder's Third Flatiron, which towers 1,400 feet high-- a few hundred feet

higher than the Empire State Building-- has been climbed by people without using their hands, on roller skates, naked, and in 8 minutes(by separate climbers).

3. Fun fact: Robert Redford was a janitor atThe Sink, before moving on to become famous!

4. Random fact: Boulder has more used bookstores per capita than any other city in the country.

5. TheFlatiron Mountains got their name by pioneer women who said they looked like flat, metal irons used to iron their clothes.

6. TheUniversity of Colorado at Boulder's buildings are built with red sandstone, quarried in nearby Lyons.

7. With Coors, Anheuser-Busch, and local microbreweries such asBoulder Beer andAvery Brewing, this area has become the largest beer-producing triangle in the world.

8. In 1967, Boulder became the first city in the United States to tax itself for funds to be used specifically for the acquisition, management, and maintenance of Open Space.

9. One of Boulder's sister cities is Dushanbe, Tajikistan, which gifted us theBoulder Dushanbe Teahouse.

10. Boulder is surrounded by more than 31,000 acres of recreational open space and nature preserves.

11. Boulder has been referred to as the"Boulder Bubble" and"28 square miles surrounded by reality."

12. Boulder has received myriad accolades over the years, ranging from Foodiest to Brainiest City, from Best Biking City to Best City for Teleworking, from Best City for Young People to Best City to Retire in Style.

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