



VisitGolden.com

## Golden At A Glance...

**Location:** Located in an area of spectacular natural beauty, Golden is where the mountains meet the plains in pretty Clear Creek Valley. The town is completely surrounded by high points – to the east are two high volcanic mesas (North and South Table Mountains). To the west are the foothills, dominated by Mount Zion and Lookout Mountain. Lookout Mountain can be climbed by car, the others by trails. Clear Creek flows directly through the town and is lined with paved bike and hiking trails. Golden is one of Colorado's oldest and most historic towns and is filled with a large number of historic buildings. The town occupies approximately 8 square miles and is located 12 miles west of Denver at an official elevation of 5,675 feet above sea level.

**Population:** Approximately 20,500

**History:** Golden was founded in 1859 and was the territorial capitol of Colorado from 1862 until 1867. It was originally called "Golden City," not only because it was a supply center for miners of the region during the Pikes Peak Gold Rush, but also, ironically, because one of the first prospectors to pan for gold in this area was named Thomas L. Golden.

**Museums/Attractions:** Golden is proud to be home to many museums and attractions.

**Coors Brewery Tour:** Coors is the largest single-site brewery in the world and one of Colorado's most popular attractions. Since 1873, Coors Brewing Company has thrived on a legacy of quality, innovation and customer service, transforming authentic Rocky Mountain spring water into a wide variety of beers known around the world. The tour highlights the malting, brewing and packaging processes. Visitors see the giant copper kettles and watch as thousands upon thousands of cans are filled with beer and slotted into six pack holders. The tour is \$5 for Colorado residents and \$10 for other visitors, and no charge for active duty or veterans with military ID. All visitors over age 21 may opt for a short tour (samples only) or the full tour experience, and they are all eligible to enjoy three 8 oz. samples and receive a commemorative glass. Non-alcoholic beverages are also available. 13th & Ford Streets, (303) 277-BEER (2337), Tour Info - (866) 812-2337, [www.MillerCoors.com](http://www.MillerCoors.com) Golden is also home to six craft breweries, each of which has a dog-friendly outdoor beer garden.

**Foothills Art Center:** Award-winning art exhibits in a historic setting. Located in the heart of downtown Golden, the galleries are situated in a gorgeous Gothic church, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Exhibits showcase artists of regional, national and international renown, featuring traditional and contemporary artwork. Art classes are available for people of all ages and abilities, and the gift shop offers high quality, affordable works by Colorado artists, including jewelry, ceramics, glass, paintings and much more. The Holiday Market every December features holiday art gifts by Colorado artists. 809 15th Street, 15th and Washington Avenue, (303) 279-3922, [www.foothillsartcenter.org](http://www.foothillsartcenter.org)

**Miners Alley Playhouse:** Miners Alley Playhouse is an intimate 120 seat theatre featuring award-winning professional theatre at affordable prices and at a very convenient location. Free parking is located on the west side of the building. Enjoy delicious varietal wines, specialty cocktails, or boutique beers before the performance. Visit their website for a schedule of performances, concerts, classes, and workshops. Miners Alley Playhouse is also the home of Lillie's Saloon - a full bar and lounge in the lobby of the theater. Lillie's Saloon is open for Happy Hour one hour before showtime, and provides a gathering place for the audience before the show. This is also where the cast, crew and audience can mingle after the show. Miners Alley Playhouse has been providing an entertainment center for audiences and an artistic home for artists in the greater Denver area for over twenty years. 1224 Washington Ave. (13th & Washington), 303-935-3044, [www.minersalley.com](http://www.minersalley.com)

**National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL):** This is the largest renewable energy laboratory in the world with more than 1,200 scientists engaged in finding new energy sources. Visitors can learn more about renewable energy research at NREL's distinctive Visitor's Center, just off I-70 in Golden. In addition to exhibits and other educational opportunities, the Visitor's Center features energy-saving technologies such as a Trombe wall for comfortable efficient heating. NREL is a national laboratory of the US Department of Energy. 1617 Cole Boulevard, (303) 384-6565, [www.nrel.gov](http://www.nrel.gov)

**Bradford Washburn American Mountaineering Museum:** Golden's newest museum opened its doors in February 2008 and is the first and only museum in the United States dedicated to the heroism, technology, culture and spirit of mountaineering. The museum brings visitors into the world of mountain and rock climbing and honors the achievements of mountaineers from America and around the world. Exhibits on climate, science, cultures and the humanities as they relate to mountains promise to make the visitor experience rich, exciting, and interactive. There is an exhibit on climbing Colorado's 14er's, information on the famed 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division that fought in WWII and trained in Colorado, and a gigantic 12x12 foot scale model of Mount Everest showing the many different routes up the peak. 710 10th Street, (303) 279-3080, [www.mountaineeringmuseum.org](http://www.mountaineeringmuseum.org)

**Buffalo Bill's Gravesite and Museum:** Buffalo Bill Cody was the world's first super star, and the most famous army scout and showman of the Old West. Buffalo Bill chose to

buried in a scenic spot on top of Lookout Mountain with views of the plains and snowcapped peaks. An exciting museum has exhibits exploring Buffalo Bill's life and times include Wild West show outfits and posters, Indian artifacts (including Sitting Bull's headdress), and antique firearms. Temporary exhibits, changed every year, explore a variety of Western themes. Children and adults alike can try on cowboy outfits and get a picture while seated on "Stumpy," the Museum's fiberglass horse. The complex on Lookout Mountain includes the Buffalo Bill Museum, Buffalo Bill's grave, and the Pahaska Tepee gift shop and snack bar, often ranked as the best souvenir shop in Colorado. The view from the overlook takes in an area larger than many states. 987 1/2 Lookout Mountain Road, (303) 526-0747, [www.buffalobill.org](http://www.buffalobill.org)

**Colorado Railroad Museum:** It was the railroads that made Denver and Colorado, and this is the largest collection of trains in Colorado. Every inch of the 12 acres is packed with narrow and standard gauge locomotives, cars, and cabooses, many of which can be entered and explored. There is a gigantic outdoor model railroad, as well as a huge indoor HO railroad. The museum has 50 thousand rare old photographs, papers and artifacts housed in a replica of an 1880-style masonry railroad depot. A half mile track circles around the museum grounds. Once a month, the museum operates steam locomotives on this giant circle of track; on other occasions, the museum runs a Galloping Goose, a 1920s Pierce Arrow limousine that was put on tracks with a bus welded on the back. Kids love the contraption, which once ran over Lizard Head Pass near Telluride. In November-December, the Polar Express steams three times a night with Santa Claus coming on board to distribute hot chocolate and silver bells. The gift shop has over a thousand railroad books, videotapes, posters, prints, jewelry, and other memorabilia. 17155 West 44th Avenue, (303) 279-4591, or (800) 365-6263, [www.crrm.org](http://www.crrm.org)

**Dinosaur Ridge:** The world's first dinosaur bones were discovered near Golden in 1877. Today, the discovery site is a world-renowned geological and paleontological outdoor museum, containing more than a hundred dinosaur tracks. You can take your own tours with fifteen interpretive signs and guided tours on open days. State Highway 26 (between C-470 and Highway 93), (303) 697-DINO (3466), [www.dinoridge.org](http://www.dinoridge.org)

**Geology Museum:** The free Colorado School of Mines Geology Museum offers extraordinary exhibits including Minerals from Colorado, Colorado Mining Heritage, Mining Artifacts, Gold & Silver Display, Gemstones, Mineral Properties & Earth History, special Radioactive exhibits, World Minerals and Fossils. You can see Miss Colorado's official jewel-studded crown, or stare at rocks from the Moon and Mars. A favorite for many visitors is the representation of a uranium mine, complete with driller and crystal pocket. The gift shop sells prospecting tools for those who want to try gold panning on their own. Colorado School of Mines, 13th and Maple St., (303) 273-3823, (303) 273-3815 Tours Hot Line, [www.mines.edu/academic/geology/museum](http://www.mines.edu/academic/geology/museum)

**Golden History Museum:** The newly refurbished museum has exhibits on every aspect of Golden and early Colorado history. Learn about everything from Castle Rock (the high rock butte of South Table Mountain that once had an inclined railroad), to kayakers,

railroads, gold miners and even Demons. Golden was the first capital of Colorado territory and was visited by an extraordinary lists of Old West celebrities, including generals Grant and Sherman. As far back as 1938, citizens officially began collecting, exhibiting and preserving Golden artifacts. Visitors will see over 80 hand-picked items from the decades-old City of Golden collection of 15,000. Each tells its own story about Golden history. 923 10<sup>th</sup> Street, (303) 278-3357, [www.goldenhistorymuseums.org](http://www.goldenhistorymuseums.org)

**Golden History Park:** Get outside and see how Golden's early settlers worked and played in the late 1800s (1867–1915, to be precise). The park is ideally located along Clear Creek in downtown Golden. Its outdoor setting recreates the look and feel of a late 1800s mountain ranch complete with gardens, a blacksmith shop, schoolhouse and chicken coop with a variety of exotic chickens included. Kids can feed the chickens for 25 cents. The grounds are open from sunrise to sunset every day of the year. Stroll around for free and peek through the windows of these beautiful old buildings, which make for spectacular photos with South Table Mountain in the background. For a more in-depth experience the buildings will be open with scheduled activities Thursday – Saturday from 10:00am – 3:00pm in June, July and August. (303) 278-3557, [www.goldenhistorymuseums.org](http://www.goldenhistorymuseums.org)

**Lookout Mountain Nature Center and Preserve:** Connect with nature at this 110 acre park, which was originally a hunting lodge owned by one of Denver's oldest families, the Bottecher family. Inside experience exhibits that depict migrating birds and reveal secrets of the ponderosa pine forest. Visit the Discovery Corner and Observation Room. Outside stroll on three miles of trails winding through forest and meadow, picnic beneath towering pine trees or join a naturalist-guided program. A popular exhibit is the night cam that records animals that visit the museum after dark. Fox, elk, racoon, bears and even mountain lions have been recorded. 910 Colorow Road, (720)4977600, [http://jeffco.us/openspace/openspace\\_T56\\_R14.htm](http://jeffco.us/openspace/openspace_T56_R14.htm)

**Rocky Mountain Quilt Museum:** Come explore the world of quilts at the Rocky Mountain Quilt Museum. RMQM is dedicated to the preservation of quilts, and the continuation of the art of both traditional and contemporary quilting. They present ten quilt exhibits a year, each with a unique and different style, history and theme. The Quilt Market is a great place to find quilts and related gifts. 200 Violet Street, Suite 140, Golden, CO 80401(303) 277-0377, [www.rmQM.org](http://www.rmQM.org)

**Recreation:** Golden offers every type of mountain outdoor recreation from kayaking to some of the top rock climbing locations in the nation; from easy hiking trails to challenging climbs; from flat paved bike paths to some of the most difficult mountain biking trails near Denver. The city maintains 253 acres of parks with thousands of acres of nearby publicly owned open space. The Clear Creek walking paths are incredibly popular and Clear Creek Whitewater Park was built for recreational canoeing and kayaking and offers a quarter mile course. Bikes are available for free rental at the Golden Bike Library located behind the Visitors Center. Nearby, Apex Park, White Ranch Park, North and South Table Mountains, and Golden Gate Canyon offer some of the region's best hiking, biking, camping and fishing. It is possible to climb all of the mountains ringing Golden on hiking trails, several of which start right downtown.

**Fun Facts:**

The Colorado School of Mines maintains one of the country's oldest mountain monograms. Perched on Mount Zion above the campus, every evening, the stone monument of the school's **M** logo is illuminated (these days, with energy efficient light bulbs) and can be seen from miles away. When students arrive at the school, they must carry a white rock up to the giant M. When they graduate, they take one home with them.

America's favorite candy, Jolly Rancher, was founded in Golden in 1949 by Bill and Dorothy Harmsen. They called the company Jolly Rancher to suggest a hospitable, western company. Jolly Rancher was originally an old fashioned candy store located on Golden's main street, Washington Avenue, where ice cream, chocolate and hard candy were made. Today, the Hershey Company owns Jolly Rancher.

A statue of Buffalo Bill Cody greets visitors as they enter downtown Golden. Sitting atop Buffalo Bill's shoulders is a laughing child – his granddaughter.

Golden served as the territorial capitol of Colorado from 1862 to 1867. The Colorado Territory legislators voted and passed by a single ballot to move the capitol to Denver on December 9, 1867.

Golden's Armory Building is the largest cobblestone building west of the Mississippi, built in 1913 with 3,300 wagonloads of stream-worn boulders from Clear Creek and quartz from Golden Gate Canyon.

Golden brews more beer than any other city in the world! The city is home to six craft breweries and the world's largest single site brewery, Coors Brewery.

**For More Information:**

Visit Golden is an excellent source for visitor information. Stop into the Golden Visitor Center at 1010 Washington Ave. in the heart of Golden. Find us online at [visitgolden.com](http://visitgolden.com) and on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter at [@VisitGoldenCO](https://www.instagram.com/VisitGoldenCO)

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