

Climbing has been one of Estes Park's defining activities since the 1800s. The Stone Beaver, an Indigenous American nomenclature for Long's Peak, was a landmark for Native Americans and Western settlers. This magnificent 14er lured travelers from the 1800s to test their strength attempting to summit this peak--including Isabella Bird who summited Longs with Mountain Jim's help in 1873.

Conscientious objectors to the Vietnam war found a safe reprieve working for the YMCA of the Rockies and established several of the alpine and Lumpy Ridge's first ascents of the '70s. Home to famous prolific climbers like Tommy Caldwell, Thomas Hornbein, Kelly Cordes, Josh Warton, Bob Siegrist and the list goes on...the climbing areas have continued to grow because of their efforts and dedication.

### Chaos Canyon

Some of the best summer bouldering in the country in the stunning alpine setting of Rocky Mountain National Park. Boulders are located around Lake Haiyaha and littered throughout the talus field of the canyon starting at 10,000. Access from Bear Lake parking lot in RMNP or take the visitors shuttle. A park pass is required to access this area. Area classics Tommy's Arete V7, Deep Puddle Dynamics V9, Skipper D V8.

### Lumpy Ridge

Trailhead off of Devils Gulch Road approximately 1.5 miles from downtown Estes Park. Approaches 2.5-6 miles. The climbs range from 2-5 pitches of traditional granite climbing with a few bolted routes including El Camino and the Renaissance Wall. Classics Kor's Flake 5.7+ on Sundance, J-Crack 5.9+, Fat City Roof Crack 5.10c, Loose Ends 5.9 on the Book and Clown Time is Over 5.9+ on Batman Pinnacle.

### The Wizard's Gate

Access these crags on Twin Sisters from the parking lot. A steep 45-minute approach veers off north after the 3rd switchback on the Twin Sisters trail. Head to the Lower Great Face and continue around the northside to the cave by the Central Buttress. There are 26 bolted climbs from 5.9-5.13d. Put up by locals Scott Kimball, and father-son team Bob and Jonathan Siegrist.

### Jurassic Park

Park at Lily Lake, walk counterclockwise around the lake to the northwest. Climbers trail is marked by cairns leading you up to the saddle in between granite outcroppings approximately 20 minutes. Mostly sport climbing from 5.6-5.12a. The Edge of Time 5.9 classic arete of the area.

### Performance Park

Newly bolted lines in downtown Estes Park behind the amphitheater. Parking for Performance Park is right in front of the park, leaving you with a 3-minute approach. Great for beginners or getting some climbs in between monsoons. Mostly sport ranging from 5.3-5.11.

### The Monastery

Yielding the most sport climbing in the area. Father-son team Mike and Tommy Caldwell established many of the routes on the granite, gneiss and schist rock. Climbs are predominantly sport but some mixed trad and sport climbing. They range from 5.6 - 5.14d. Area classics The Hot Zone 5.9-, Tabula Rasa 5.10d, Psychedelic 12.d. From Estes Park head down Hwy 34 to Drake, Colorado. Turn left on County Road 43. After .3 miles turn right onto Colorado 128 aka Storm Mountain Road. The parking lot is 5.1 miles from this turn. Continue 2.5 miles to T-intersection, turn left. At the Y-intersection go left. Stay on 128 until you go 5.1 miles. Parking camping area on the left. The trail is about 450 feet up the road off of a switch back to the left. 45 minutes to an hour hike uphill both ways.

Lumpy Ridge, Then Wizard's Gate and Jurassic Park are located in the Rocky Mountain National Park; however, a park pass is not required. Check for closures before heading out.  
[https://www.nps.gov/romo/planyourvisit/area\\_closures.htm](https://www.nps.gov/romo/planyourvisit/area_closures.htm)

How to kill a rest day:

Hiking in Rocky Mountain National Park. Several stunning hikes allow you to summit mountains or reach a beautiful alpine lake. For something shorter Mills Lake 2.7 miles out of Glacier Basin or the magnificent Spectacle Lake at the foot of Mt Ypsilon 5.3 miles Lawn Lake trailhead.

If you want to give your legs a rest, there is \$2 mini golf at Tiny Town on Hwy 36.

Ghost Tours at the famous Stanley Hotel (where Stephen King penned The Shinning) are never a letdown. Stop at the bar to sample some whiskey from one of Colorado's most extensive whiskey collections.

Check out local Colorado artwork at Aspen and Evergreen Gallery in downtown Estes Park.

Where to eat:

Bird & Jim has excellent cocktails, amazing views of RMNP and delicious local Colorado cuisine. They are located on Hwy 36 on your way into or out of the Park.

Ed's Cantina is a classic climber hangout in downtown Estes.

The Dunraven Inn fuel up with a hearty Italian meal; they also feature steaks and seafood.

Elkin's Distillery is making tasty whiskey locally and serving delicious cocktails. It is a great place to celebrate sending.

Lumpy Ridge Brewery on Hwy 7 aka South Saint Vrain. Fun local hangout with live music on occasion and the town's favorite food truck, Rations, is there on weekends.

Rock Cut Brewery--another local favorite brewing great beer and they always have fun events including trivia night, hiking day groups, and rotating nightly food trucks.

Where to stay:

Some better values around town: Colorado Mountain School's hostel

<https://coloradomountainschool.com/product-category/lodging/>.

The Blue Door has affordable rooms, great reviews, a pool, grills, horseshoe pits, a campfire area with live music in summer and not far from Lumpy Ridge trailhead.

Camping--there are many campgrounds in the National Park and around town but be sure to book ahead of time since they fill up quickly with the summer travelers.

Free short-term camping is allowed in Arapaho & Roosevelt National Forrest. These sites can be difficult to find, and four-wheel drive is often necessary. Some areas to explore for free camping are Johnny Park, Pole Hill, Bunce School Road and on Storm Mountain, the camping/parking lot for the Monastery.