



Estes Park Convention & Visitors Bureau
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A Visit to Estes Park is a Family Affair

Whether you're a retired couple enjoying time away from home or newlyweds or part of a family with several youngsters, it's important that your vacation destination offers a sufficient variety of activities to keep everyone happily occupied, rain or shine. One of the major reasons people visit Estes Park is the proximity of Rocky Mountain National Park and its natural wonders, wildlife viewing and hiking trails — some strenuous, some quite easy. But let's face it, after several days of hiking in the mountains, the spirit (and the kids) demand something slightly more laid back or, perhaps, a bit more thrilling.

There are a number of things to do in and around town which appeal to visitors of all ages, many of which are available year around. The Estes Park Museum, for example, has displays likely to interest adults as well as a hands-on area for youngsters. Admission fees are family friendly, too – there are none. Youngsters, their parents and their grandparents can all enjoy a summer visit to MacGregor Ranch Museum with its displays of early life on a working cattle ranch in the mountains.

The Estes Park Public Library has a myriad of activities for youngsters, including frequent story times for toddlers and older children, a summer performance series, a delightful children's room with computer terminals and books for all ages. The general library has a wide selection of books and magazines to keep the "older kids" occupied as well.

The whole family can enjoy one of the many horse shows taking place all summer long at Stanley Park Fairgrounds. Most shows have no admission charge to observe the competition, and breeds represented range from adorable miniatures to stunning Arabians and graceful hunter-jumpers. There's free entertainment throughout the downtown area from June through mid-September. Enjoying the tunes is a summer activity that can give the kids (maybe grandpa, too) something to do while the rest of the family strolls through downtown shopping, checking out the galleries or scouting out the perfect family restaurant. Performance Park, an outdoor downtown theater, hosts folk musicians, big bands and more, on its stage in free concerts throughout the summer.

For a change of pace, Estes Park offers many summer activities including horseback riding, 9- and 18-hole golf courses, a marina with boat rentals, miniature golf, bumper cars and boats, go carts, and more. There are evening performance shows, classical concerts and free outdoor musical performances nearly every day during summer months. Smaller playgrounds are located in several parks in the village.

In the winter, families enjoy renting equipment for snowshoeing, cross country skiing, sledding, or visiting the aquatic center (public swimming times available all year long).

Shopping, of course, is fun any time of the year. The cultural scene includes Sunday afternoon recitals and frequent theater productions. A stroll along the Riverwalk or the Lake Estes Hike and Bike Trail can be entertaining during any season.

Not to be overlooked are the many special events throughout the year, including JazzFest in May, Wool Market in June with a children's tent for the young ones and spinning/weaving demonstrations and more for the adults. Other events with broad appeal are the Lake Estes Fishing Derby and Scandinavian Midsummer Festival in June; Rooftop Rodeo in July; and the Longs Peak Scottish-Irish Festival and Elk Fest in September. In February, the annual Imagine This! is an arts event planned with families in mind and includes hands-on arts experiences as well as entertainment by regional performers.

With all there is to do in and around Estes Park, any size family is likely to have to come back for another visit in order to get it all done.

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