



Estes Park Convention & Visitors Bureau
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Rocks Rock in Estes Park

ESTES PARK, CO -- Need an adrenaline rush? There are very few locations in the United States that can surpass Estes Park, Colorado and its surrounding areas for the climb of a lifetime.

With Rocky Mountain National Park at its doorstep, the town at 7,522 feet above sea level is about 90 minutes northwest of Denver and has rock with all the feel, personality, touch, grain and consistency that extreme climbers look for. It's one of the reasons why the area has collected high ratings worldwide.

At the same time, there are plenty of cracks, edges and slabs for the novice to enjoy as well. And if you're just intrigued by the concept of rock climbing, an indoor climbing wall in town allows recreational climbers to give the activity a try. Want to graduate to sport climbing or trad climbing? Just schedule a lesson or more with one of Estes Park's guiding companies that provide training and you'll learn how to use those permanent anchors attached to rock walls or how to place passive rock protection, and 'lead' climb.

Traditional climbers have so many choices they can spend weeks in the area and not experience the same climb twice. World class multi-pitch climbs are found throughout Lumpy Ridge or the high alpine environment within Glacier Gorge, the Longs Peak cirque, and also the Sky Pond or Emerald Lake valleys.

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And then there's the thrill of having climbed or scrambled a high peak in Rocky Mountain National Park. Whatever you want to experience is here: gentle peak bagging, superb rock climbing, ice climbing, and exquisite mixed alpine routes. No matter what you choose, you'll be in the midst of spectacular wilderness of rugged beauty.

Looking for some general climbing suggestions? Check out these climbing areas:

The Estes Park Area: The 32-square mile valley surrounding the town of Estes Park has a variety of granitic, gneiss, and schist crags scattered along the hillsides and in the forests surrounding this small town of approximately 7,500 people. The crags in this area are primarily in the 7,000-10,000 ft altitudes. While much of the climbing here is done during the warmer months, it is possible to climb year round with good weather and warm clothing. Outlining popular crags include: MacGregor Mountain, Deer Ridge, DeVille Rocks, and also the Saint Vrain Canyons.

Rocky Mountain National Park: With more than 80 named routes and about eight classic alpine walls, the national park has whatever a climber wants: gentle peak bagging, superb rock climbing, exquisite mixed alpine routes, ski mountaineering, ice climbing, long traverses, and anything in between. There are even a few small glaciers, like: Ptarmigan, Tyndall & Mills that occasionally sprout crevasses. A spectacular wilderness of rugged beauty is your backdrop. There are over 18 peaks over 13,000 feet accessible from front-range trail heads in the Estes Park & RMNP area. You can spend days or weeks wandering the backcountry, or just a day on an exciting climb and be back in town in time for beer and dinner.

Lumpy Ridge: With its major granite domes and spires (200- to 600-foot tall and hundreds of smaller formations) the mountain ridge has attracted its share of pioneer climbers such as Layton Kor and Bob Culp. The mountain's composition has produced over 400 moderate and hard climbs with ratings ranging from 5.6 to 5.13. Lumpy Ridge, which is inside Rocky Mountain National Park, is known as a great destination for low-key, low-altitude adventure. The new Lumpy Ridge trailhead and parking area includes a restroom and does not require a Park Pass. A long, 10-mile easy loop trail circles the ridge and passes large rock formations on the south side as the area dips into an isolated valley on the north. The Needles, the highest point on the mountain at 10,068 feet, is located on the western end, and arguably contains the highest quality, and longest routes, on Lumpy Ridge.

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U.S. Highway 36 between Lyons & Estes Park: Here you'll find both traditional and sport routes with superb conditions. One Buttonrock climbing area is a classic River Wall with steep jugs and cracks and offers both technical top-roping and sport routes.

For information about Estes Park, call 800-443-7837 or 970-577-9900 or visit EstesParkCVB.com.

Climbing lessons & guided climbs can be arranged through these Estes Park businesses:

1. Estes Park Mountain Shop, 970-586-6548
2. Kent Mountain Adventure Center, 970-586-5990
3. Colorado Mountain School, 1-800-836-4008

Web sites that can help you pre-plan your Estes Park mountaineering experience:

<http://www.summitpost.org/area/range/171116/rocky-mountain-national-park.html>

http://mountainproject.com/v/colorado/estes_park_valley/lumpy_ridge/105744228

http://mountainproject.com/v/colorado/alpine_rock/rmnp_rock/105744460

http://mountainproject.com/v/colorado/co_ice_mixed/rmnp_mixedice/105744515

www.summitpost.com

Other detailed climbing information can be found in these publications:

1. Estes Park Valley, climbing guide, Bernard Gillette, 2001
2. High Peaks climbs, climbing guide, Bernard Gillette, 2001
3. Rock Climbing Saint Vrain Canyons, Bernard Gillette, 2008
4. RMNP, the High Peaks, Richard Rossiter, 1997

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