



I moved to Denver in September of 2006. While still unpacking, we headed down to Colorado's designated 'Georgia bar' to watch the Dawgs take on Colorado. For about 58 minutes of football, I sat in stunned silence, picturing what it would be like to field cheap shots from CU fans every time I wear a Georgia t-shirt or hat in public. Thank God, Joe Cox threw the pass to Martrez Milner, and I could keep my head held high for the last four years here. Now, four years later, we're ready to welcome the Dawgnation to Mile High country. It's going to be a heck of a weekend.

The following is my take on what a Georgia boy (or girl) might want to know if making his/her first trip out here, based upon my four years at 5,280 feet above sea level:

- 1.) The number one thing we hear when we pick people up from the airport? ***"This isn't really what I expected."*** This is because Denver is not *'in the mountains.'* It just has a *view* of the mountains. Added to this fact, the airport is about 30 minutes east of town and if you look any direction other than west, you'd think you're in Kansas. Flat land and prairie grass. Don't worry, Boulder is snug against the Front Range. And it will give you a good opportunity to quote from Dumb & Dumber – Harry: "I thought the Rocky Mountains would be a little rockier than this." Lloyd: "Yeah, that John Denver's ..." Well, you know.



The planes land mainly on the plains.

- 2.) If you fly in at night, the **'Demon Horse'** will give you a special welcome to town. It's kind of scary in the daytime, but truly demonic at night, when the eyes glow red. The 'art' actually killed the man sculpting it when it fell on top of him, and had to be finished by his children. A website devoted to the horse claims, "It's killed before, it will kill again."
<http://www.evildiahorse.com/>



Wouldn't this be more appropriate in Boise?

- 3.) If you're renting a car and driving to Boulder, the quickest way there (and directions you'd get online) is via E-470. Be forewarned that this is a **toll road without pay booths**. I don't ever use it, so I'm not much of a help here - but you might want to do your homework because I've read about people getting fines in the mail from Hertz a month after they get home. <http://www.e-470.com/Default.aspx?pn=Rental%20Car%20Information> You can also just take I-70 to US 36 if you think the toll situation is going to be tricky. If you are staying near downtown Boulder and just want to walk around town, you can always just take the RTD shuttle from the airport to Boulder for \$12. http://www.rtd-denver.com/skyRide_SubHome.shtml



If they're going to charge a toll, you'd think there could be someone there to take your money...

- 4.) In general, there is always **snow on the peaks** by the first of October. However, this September has been brutal in terms of record heat and drought. I'm hoping for some snow in the mountains before y'all arrive, but don't be disappointed if you don't see it.



Still holding out hope for the peaks to get a dusting, but it's not looking promising.

- 5.) Speaking of weather, you could see temps (in Boulder) ranging from the 80s all the way down to the 30s. And you could very well experience both in 24 hours. Check the weather as late as possible and bring layers. It's all about the **layers**.



I've seen the temperature drop 30 degrees in 6 hours.

- 6.) Get ready for a **culture clash**. Just as you don't bat an eye when spending \$1,000 or more to fly out for this football game, the average person in Colorado doesn't think twice when they spend \$5,000 for a mountain bike in their never-ending pursuit of being the next Lance Armstrong. (Speaking of bikes, drivers proactively stop for cyclists and pedestrians in Boulder. If you don't, you will be a target of Boulder's finest, who can also be intense when it comes to enforcing DUI laws.) Anyhow, football ranks far down the list of priorities for folks out here. And the ones that like football are NFL fans, not college fans. There are a few that insist that the CU/CSU game is a 'bitter rivalry.' I tell them, "That's really cute."



Lance Armstrong – every Boulderites' hero.

- 7.) While Boulder is one of the best college towns in America, it surprisingly doesn't have a ton of places that are strictly '**bars.**' There are plenty of restaurants with bars, but not very many places that are just a good old watering hole. To compare in Athens terms, think a lot more places like Transmet, East-West, and Last Resort and a lot less places like Nowhere Bar, Boar's Head, etc. You will however, see some cool street performers juggling flaming objects or escaping from locks and chains.



The spine of downtown Boulder is Pearl Street – a pedestrian mall. Not nearly as many bars as Athens, but at least the guy asking for money on the sidewalk is an actual entertainer.

- 8.) Nevertheless, this is the Napa Valley of **BEER**. Microbrew selections are unprecedented at most restaurants. And there are tons of great microbreweries you can tour in Boulder or within 30 minutes to an hour of Boulder (Longmont, Fort Collins, and Denver). Have at it - - -
- a. Avery Brewing (Boulder) <http://www.averybrewing.com/>
 - b. Twisted Pine Brewery (Boulder) <http://www.twistedpinebrewing.com/>
 - c. Boulder Beer Company (Boulder) <http://www.boulderbeer.com/>
 - d. Redstone Meadery (Boulder) <http://www.redstonemeadery.com/>
 - e. Asher Brewing (Boulder) <http://www.asherbrewing.com/>
 - f. Upslope Brewing (Boulder) <http://upslopebrewing.wordpress.com/>
 - g. Oskar Blues (Longmont and Lyons) <http://www.oskarblues.com/>
 - h. Left Hand Brewing (Longmont) <http://www.lefthandbrewing.com/verify-age>
 - i. New Belgium Brewing (Fort Collins) <http://www.newbelgium.com/> (tours are by online reservation and currently sold out for most of the weekend)
 - j. Odell Brewing (Fort Collins) <http://odellbrewing.com/>
 - k. Fort Collins Brewery (Fort Collins) <http://www.fortcollinsbrewery.com/>
 - l. See list of brewpubs in Denver later on down.
 - m. Of course, there is always the Coors mega-brewery in Golden as well. www.coors.com



COLORADO THE BEER ME STATE



FACTS ABOUT BEER AND COLORADO



Colorado has **115 breweries** and produces more beer per capita than any other state.^{2,3,5}

You get drunk faster in Denver.

When you drink beer at **high altitude**, you feel the effects faster. Since Denver is the Mile High City, you'll be slurring your words faster here than in most US cities.



The South Park Saloon in the Colorado mountain town of Alma is the **highest saloon in America** – 10,580' above sea level.⁷



Golden, Colorado is home to the single **largest brewery** in the world—Coors!⁴

Denver has become known as the **"Napa Valley of Beer"** and the cultural center of the **fast-growing craft brewing** movement.¹



According to the **Guinness Book of World Records**, there is **no other place on EARTH** where a beer aficionado can find more beers on tap than the **Great American Beer Festival (GABF)**.⁸

COLORADO



Denver's mayor, John Hickenlooper, is a **beer man**. Hickenlooper is one of the founders of the Wynkoop Brewery in the heart of downtown Denver.



Adult Coloradans consumed an average of **30 gallons of beer** per person in 2009!¹

In 2007 Colorado became the nation's **top beer-producing state**, surpassing California.⁶

SALOON



Legend has it that the first permanent structure in Denver (Colorado's state capital) was a saloon.

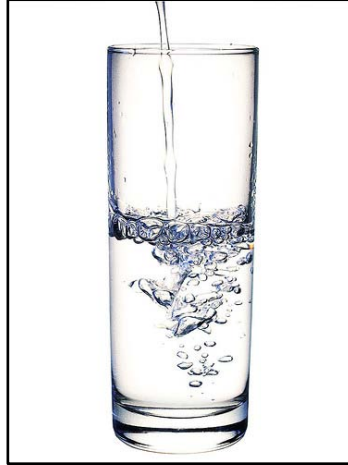
GREAT AMERICAN BEER FESTIVAL

Denver has hosted the Great American Beer Festival – the nation's **oldest and largest** annual gathering of beer brewers – for nearly 30 years.¹



1. John F. Brinkmann, "Colorado's Beer Culture," <http://www.denverpost.com>, 10/10/09.
2. <http://www.beerdrinking.com>, 10/10/09.
3. <http://www.beerdrinking.com>, 10/10/09.
4. <http://www.beerdrinking.com>, 10/10/09.
5. <http://www.beerdrinking.com>, 10/10/09.
6. <http://www.beerdrinking.com>, 10/10/09.
7. <http://www.beerdrinking.com>, 10/10/09.
8. <http://www.beerdrinking.com>, 10/10/09.

- 9.) This would be the opportune time to remind you that your body **dehydrates** at a much faster rate when you are a mile high. It's easy to get carried away with all the good beer, trust me – I know. But you can really pay the price. When I go back to sea level, I often feel like I have a get-out-jail-free card when it comes to hangovers because it's such a noticeable difference. (unless you're still 21 years old) <http://www.denver.org/metro/high-altitude-tips>



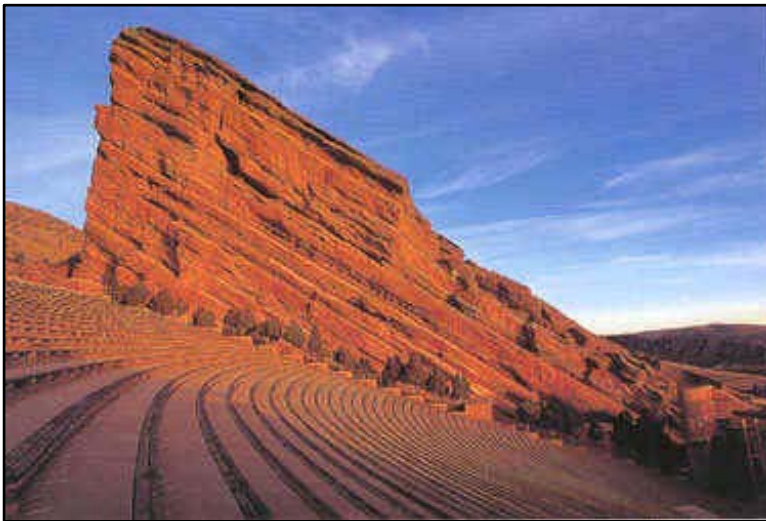
Water - not nearly as exciting as the beer, but equally important.

- 10.) The more exciting side to **altitude** is seeing some great mountain views or getting right out in the middle of it with a great hike. If you have time, here are some sightseeing opportunities that are nearby and don't require an overnight stay:
- Head up to Rocky Mountain National Park.** <http://www.nps.gov/romo/> It's only about an hour northwest of Boulder. If snow hasn't closed it for the season, you can take Trail Ridge Road up to elevations over 10,000 feet for some awesome views. The leaves may still be changing up there as well. This is also the time of year that elk bugle (signal that it's mating season) in the park - <http://www.estes-park.com/go/elkbugling.html>. The Mills Lake hike is one of the most popular hikes in the park. It's moderately strenuous, but this out-of-shape Georgia boy can do it, so you probably can too. It's about 5-6 miles round trip, and takes 2-3 hours. Estes Park is at the entry to the park, and I refer to it as the Gatlinburg of the West – complete with go-carts, putt-putt golf, t-shirt shops, etc.



I've been searching to see a big-horn sheep (L) for four years – to no avail. A bugling elk (R) looking for some action at Rocky Mountain National Park.

- b. **Hit up sites along Interstate 70.** Idaho Springs and Georgetown are cool mountain towns right along the interstate with some nice shops and little restaurants. Drive about an hour up to the exit for Loveland Pass, take Hwy 6 up to the pass, and stop at the Continental Divide to take in the view. Pour out some water and half of it will wind up in the Atlantic and half in the Pacific. If the driver is scared of heights, they'll be white-knuckling it, because you'll be on the edge of some pretty steep cliffs with no guardrails. You can continue on Hwy 6 into Keystone and by Lake Dillon, then come back through Eisenhower Tunnel (longest highway tunnel in America). Or you can just turn around and head back down the pass the way you came. Your first or last stop should be at Red Rocks. There is a cool museum showing the history of the venue and a ten minute film of artists talking about how it's their favorite place to play. <http://www.redrocksonline.com/> One last thing – taking US 6 through Clear Creek canyon is a beautiful way to get back over from I-70 to Boulder via Hwy 93.



After four years here, taking out-of-towners to Loveland Pass, Idaho Springs, Red Rocks, and Clear Creek Canyon never gets old.

- c. If you want to stay **closer to Boulder**, there are good hiking opportunities in Eldorado Canyon, Boulder Canyon, and at Chautauqua. These are all within 5-15 minutes of downtown Boulder. Ask the folks at your hotel front desk – they'll know way more about those spots than I will.

Hungry or Thirsty?

Now – for the official food and drink recommendations. Note: this is just one humble man's opinion, but I like to think I have pretty good taste. If you're not going to be in Denver, just skip right on down to Boulder.

DENVER



If you're coming down to Denver, I'd recommend doing a *brewpub tour* downtown.

Breckenridge Brewpub (Blake Street and 22nd Street) has the best beer of the bunch, in my opinion. It's right next to Coors Field. The Rockies are out of town, but you might be able to do a tour of the ballpark, if you look into it. <http://www.breckbrew.com/food/pubdenver.html>



Breckenridge Brewpub

Wynkoop Brewing Co. (Wynkoop Street and 18th Street) is in a great space, has good food, but their beer is my least favorite. (but still good) I go there a lot because they have a huge pool hall upstairs (about a dozen tables), darts, shuffleboard, jukebox, etc. It's also a cool story because it was the first new business to open in LoDo (Lower Downtown) when it was considered 'skid row.' It's now the most popular place in Denver. And the guy that started it became our mayor, and is now running for governor. Only in Colorado - the Napa Valley of beer. <http://www.wynkoop.com/>



Wynkoop Brewing Co.

The Denver Chop House (Wynkoop Street and 19th Street) has the best food of the bunch, and pretty good beer as well. It's more of a steakhouse than a brewpub, but they brew their own beer. Great steak, burgers, etc. More formal than the others. <http://www.chophouse.com/LocationHome.php?FKLocationID=10089>



Denver Chop House

Also, you can do a tour / tasting at the **Great Divide Brewery** (Arapahoe Street and 22nd Street). (no food) <http://www.greatdivide.com/>



Great Divide Tap Room

Rock Bottom Brewery (16th Street and Curtis Street) is more of a chain, but still has good food and beer. It has a large patio on the 16th Street mall (no cars, only shuttle buses and pedestrians) Good people watching here. <http://www.rockbottom.com/denver-downtown>



Rock Bottom Brewery

Other non-brewery places that have good food / atmosphere in downtown Denver -

Burgers - **H Burger** (16th Street and Blake Street) <http://www.hburgerco.com/>

Mexican - **Illegal Pete's** (16th Street and Wazee Street) <http://www.illegalpetes.com/>



Illegal Pete's

Pizza - **Mellow Mushroom** (16th Street and Lawrence Street) – This is where the Colorado Dawgs watch games on Saturday. It's run by a Georgia grad, and we're having an official 'Welcome to Colorado' night here on Thursday. Come see us!

<http://www.mellowmushroom.com/downtowndenver#/store/index/downtowndenver>



Patio at Mellow Mushroom on the 16th Street Mall

Seafood - Jax Fish House (17th Street and Wazee Street) - <http://www.jaxfishhousedenver.com/>



Jax Fish House

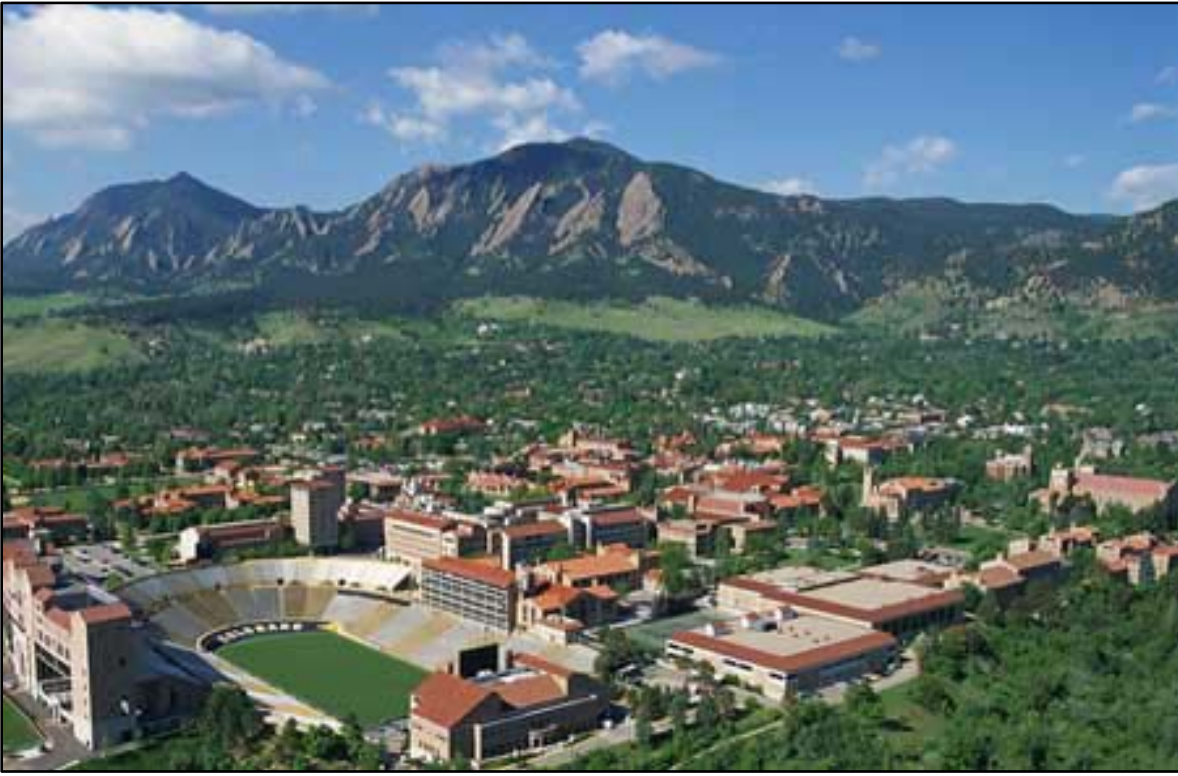
Wine/Tapas/Pizza - Trios Enoteca (Wynkoop between 17th and 18th) - <http://www.triosenoteca.com/>

* All of the places listed for Denver are either on, or within a few blocks of, the 16th Street Mall. Shuttles run on the Mall every couple of minutes, so you can do the entire brewpub tour on foot / shuttle. *



16th Street Mall

BOULDER



In Boulder, I'd recommend these places, most of which are on the Pearl Street Mall unless otherwise noted. Asterisks indicate locations that offer discounts to those that bought tailgate tickets.

Pub Grub - ***West End Tavern**. Good pub food, microbrew selection, and a rooftop patio.
<http://www.thewestendtavern.com/>



West End Tavern has a great rooftop view.

More Pub Grub - ***Boulder Draft House**. Haven't been here, but it's offering the tailgate discount and the menu and beer look good to me! <http://www.boulderdrafthouse.com/>

Laid-back Brewpub - **Mountain Sun**. Definite Boulder hippie vibe (don't go if you don't care for patchouli or people that use the phrase 'far out' regularly in conversation). Great beer. <http://www.mountainsunpub.com/>



Known for their 'Colorado Kind Ale.'

Upscale Brewpub - **Boulder Chop House**. See above, Denver Chop House. Same deal. <http://www.chophouse.com/LocationHome.php?FKLocationID=10090>

Sportsbar - ***Lazy Dog**. Haven't been there, because you don't generally go to Boulder to watch sports - but it's about the only sports bar in downtown Boulder. <http://www.thelazydog.com/>

Burgers - **The Sink**. This is about as 'dive' as you can get for a restaurant in Boulder. Good burgers, and Robert Redford worked here when he was at CU. **It's not downtown.** It's on 'The Hill,' next to the CU campus. <http://www.thesink.com/>



I like their burgers, and their colors.

If The Wife is With You - The Med. It's not the same kind of food *per se*, but I'd say that what Last Resort is to Athens, The Med is to Boulder. Fantastic dining experience.
<http://www.themedboulder.com/>

Mexican – Illegal Pete's. Kind of like Moe's, but better. <http://www.illegalpetes.com/>

Upscale Latin - *Centro. <http://www.centrolatinkitchen.com/> One of the best meals I've had in Colorado. Good patio bar / dining area facing the Pearl Street Mall for people-watching.

Seafood - *Jax Fish House. Oysters on the half shell on special during happy hour. I love the Lobster BLT. <http://www.jaxfishhouseboulder.com>

Pizza - *Old Chicago. As the name suggests, deep-dish pizza reigns supreme. Extensive beer list, as well. <http://www.oldchicago.com/boulder>

Going All-Out / \$ / Gourmet - Frasca. This is considered one of the best restaurants / wine lists (53 pages long) in America. <http://www.frascafoodandwine.com/>

Going Into Southern Withdrawal - Lucille's. Great Cajun/Creole menu. Biggest biscuits I've ever seen. *Not downtown, but close.* http://www.luciles.com/index.php?main_page=page&id=13

Strictly A Bar - Pearl Street Pub (11th and Pearl), *Catacombs (13th and Pine).



The Pearl Street Pub and Catacombs were my two favorite bars in Boulder when I interned there in the summer of 2003.

All of us from the Colorado alumni association hope y'all have a great time out here. Go DAWGS, beat the Buffs!

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