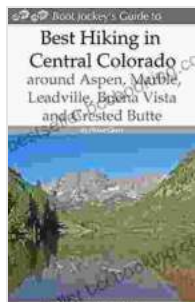


Best Hiking in Central Colorado: Aspen, Marble, Leadville, Buena Vista, and More



Best Hiking in Central Colorado around Aspen, Marble, Leadville, Buena Vista and Crested Butte: Revised and Expanded 2024 by Diane Greer

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

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Central Colorado is a hiker's paradise, with an abundance of stunning trails that offer something for everyone, from easy strolls to challenging treks. Whether you're looking for breathtaking mountain views, lush forests, or sparkling lakes, you're sure to find the perfect hike for you in this beautiful region.

Aspen

Aspen is a world-renowned ski resort town, but it's also a great place to go hiking. The surrounding mountains offer a variety of trails, from easy walks to challenging climbs. Some of the most popular hikes in Aspen include:

- **Maroon Bells Trail:** This iconic hike takes you past two of Colorado's most photographed mountains, the Maroon Bells. The trail is 8.6 miles round-trip and gains 2,800 feet in elevation, but the stunning views are worth the effort.
- **Smuggler Mountain Trail:** This moderate hike offers great views of Aspen and the surrounding mountains. The trail is 6.2 miles round-trip and gains 1,600 feet in elevation.
- **Castle Creek Valley Trail:** This easy hike follows Castle Creek through a beautiful valley. The trail is 4.6 miles round-trip and gains only 600 feet in elevation.

Marble

The small town of Marble is home to some of the most beautiful marble quarries in the world. But in addition to its stunning geology, Marble also offers a number of great hiking trails. Some of the most popular hikes in Marble include:

- **Devil's Punchbowl Trail:** This moderate hike takes you to the Devil's Punchbowl, a natural amphitheater carved out of marble. The trail is 1.6 miles round-trip and gains 200 feet in elevation.
- **Crystal Mill Trail:** This easy hike takes you to the Crystal Mill, a historic mill that is now a popular tourist destination. The trail is 3.2 miles round-trip and gains 200 feet in elevation.
- **West Maroon Pass Trail:** This challenging hike takes you to the top of West Maroon Pass, which offers stunning views of the surrounding mountains. The trail is 9.2 miles round-trip and gains 3,200 feet in elevation.

Leadville

Leadville is a historic mining town that is now a popular destination for outdoor recreation. The surrounding mountains offer a variety of hiking trails, from easy walks to challenging climbs. Some of the most popular hikes in Leadville include:

- **Mount Elbert Trail:** This challenging hike takes you to the summit of Mount Elbert, the highest peak in Colorado. The trail is 14.4 miles round-trip and gains 4,500 feet in elevation.
- **Sugarloaf Mountain Trail:** This moderate hike offers great views of Leadville and the surrounding mountains. The trail is 5.2 miles round-trip and gains 1,600 feet in elevation.
- **Half Moon Gulch Trail:** This easy hike follows Half Moon Gulch through a beautiful valley. The trail is 4.4 miles round-trip and gains only 400 feet in elevation.

Buena Vista

Buena Vista is a small town located in the heart of the Arkansas River Valley. The surrounding mountains offer a variety of hiking trails, from easy walks to challenging climbs. Some of the most popular hikes in Buena Vista include:

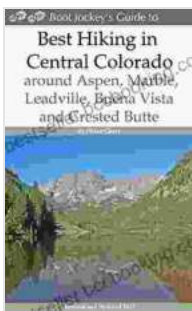
- **Mount Princeton Trail:** This challenging hike takes you to the summit of Mount Princeton, which offers stunning views of the surrounding mountains. The trail is 12.6 miles round-trip and gains 4,000 feet in elevation.

- **Collegiate Peaks Trail:** This moderate hike follows the Arkansas River through the Collegiate Peaks Wilderness. The trail is 10.5 miles round-trip and gains 1,600 feet in elevation.
- **Browns Canyon Trail:** This easy hike follows Browns Canyon along the Arkansas River. The trail is 6.2 miles round-trip and gains only 200 feet in elevation.

Planning Your Trip

When planning your hiking trip to Central Colorado, there are a few things you should keep in mind. First, be sure to choose trails that are appropriate for your fitness level and experience. Second, pack plenty of water and snacks, as there are no amenities on most trails. Third, be aware of the weather forecast and dress accordingly. Finally, be sure to leave no trace by packing out everything you pack in.

With its stunning scenery, abundant wildlife, and endless hiking trails, Central Colorado is a hiker's paradise. So lace up your boots and get ready to explore this beautiful region!



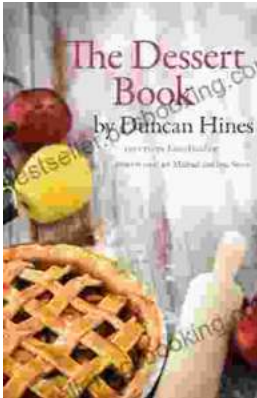
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