



The Rockies

- The **Rocky Mountains**, commonly known as the Rockies, are a major mountain range in western North America. The Rocky Mountains stretch more than 3,000 miles (4,830 km) from the northernmost part of British Columbia, in western Canada, to New Mexico, in the southwestern United States. The Rockies are somewhat distinct from the Cascade Range and Sierra Nevada which all lie farther to the west.
- Currently, much of the mountain range is protected by public parks and forest lands, and is a popular tourist destination, especially for hiking, camping, mountaineering, fishing, hunting, mountain biking, skiing, and snowboarding.



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rocky_Mountains

The Rockies

- Apart from the **Ancestral Puebloan** cliff-dwellers, who lived in southern Colorado until around 1300 AD, most **Native Americans** in this region were nomadic hunters. They inhabited the western extremities of the Great Plains, the richest buffalo-grazing land in the continent.
- Only after the territory was sold to the US in 1803 as part of the **Louisiana Purchase** was it thoroughly charted, starting with the **Lewis and Clark expedition** that traversed Montana and Idaho in 1805. As a result of the team's reports of abundant game, the fabled "**mountain men**" had soon trapped the beavers here to the point of virtual extinction. They left as soon as the pelt boom was over, however, and permanent white settlement did not begin until gold was discovered near Denver in 1858.
- Within a decade, speculators were plundering every accessible gorge and creek in the four states in the search for valuable ores. The construction of transcontinental rail lines and the establishment of vast cattle ranches to feed the mining camps led to the slaughter of millions of buffalo, and conflict with the Native Americans became inevitable. The **Sioux** and **Cheyenne**, led by brilliant strategists like Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse, achieved decisive victories over the US Army, most notably at Little Bighorn – "**Custer's Last Stand**". By the late 1870s, a massive military operation had cleared the region of all warring tribes.
- Most of those who followed saw the Rockies strictly in terms of profit: they took what they wanted and left. Small communities in this isolated terrain remain exclusively dedicated to coal, oil or some other single commodity.

<http://www.roughguides.com/destinations/north-america/usa/rockies/>



Yellowstone NP



hot springs

- Established in 1872, it was the first protected area for wildlife in the world
- Stretches across Wyoming, Idaho and Montana
- Geyser: Old Faithful



mudpots



herds of buffalo

Devil's Tower National Monument, Wyoming



It is a PHONOLITE, a volcanic rock with vertical lines going down its sides

The Grand Canyon, Arizona



- A powerful and inspiring landscape, Grand Canyon overwhelms our senses through its immense size.

Unique combinations of geologic color and erosional forms decorate a canyon that is 277 river miles (446km) long, up to 18 miles (29km) wide, and a mile (1.6km) deep.

<http://www.nps.gov/grca/index.htm>

- It became a national park in 1919
- It was formed by the mighty Colorado River
- First seen in 1540, first explored in 1869

Mesa Verde, Colorado



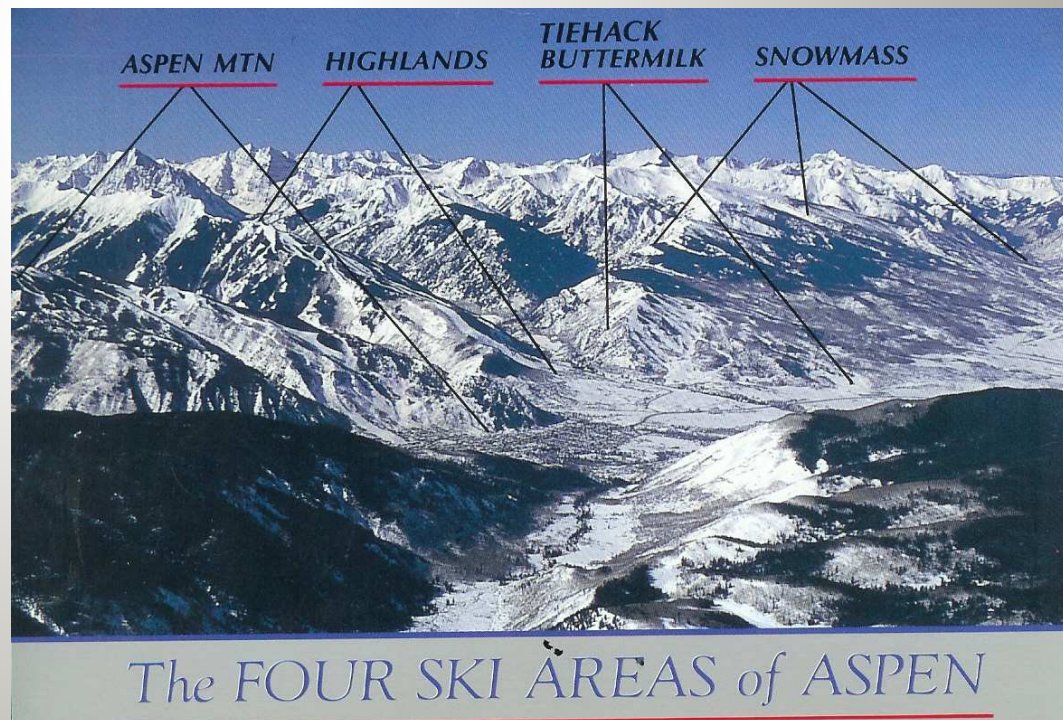
- **Mesa Verde National Park** is a U.S. National Park and [UNESCO](#) World Heritage Site located in Montezuma County, Colorado. It is the largest archaeological preserve in the United States. The park was created in 1906 by President Theodore Roosevelt to protect some of the best-preserved **cliff dwellings** in the world, or as he said, "preserve the works of man". It is the only cultural National Park set aside by the National Park System. It occupies 81.4 square miles (211 km²) and features numerous ruins of homes and villages built by the Ancestral Puebloan people, sometimes called the **Anasazi**. There are over four thousand archaeological sites and over six hundred cliff dwellings of the Pueblo people at the site.
- The Anasazi inhabited Mesa Verde between 600 to 1300, though there is evidence they left before the start of the fifteenth century. They were mainly subsistence farmers, growing crops on nearby mesas. Their primary crop was corn, the major part of their diet. Men were also hunters, which further increased their food supply. The women of the Anasazi are famous for their elegant basket weaving. Anasazi pottery is as famous as their baskets; their artifacts are highly prized. The Anasazi kept no written records.
- Mesa Verde is best known for cliff dwellings, which are structures built within caves and under outcroppings in cliffs — including Cliff Palace, thought to be the largest cliff dwelling in North America. The Spanish term *Mesa Verde* translates into English as "green table".
- The ancient people of Mesa Verde left the area in the late 1200s, possibly in response to a 24-year regional drought.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mesa_Verde_National_Park

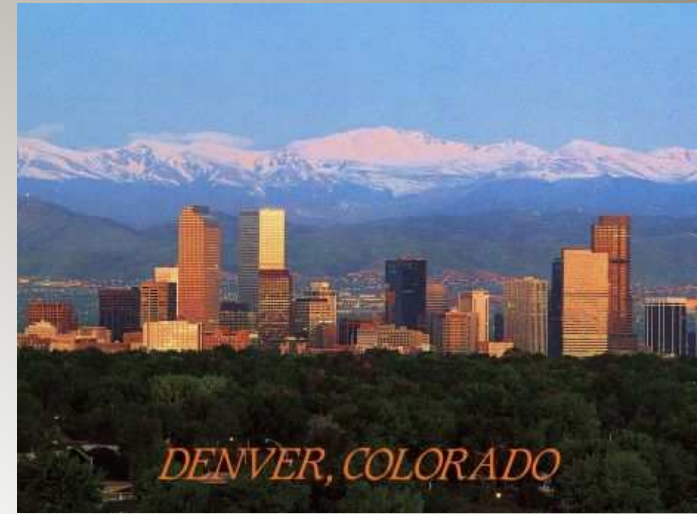


Aspen, Colorado

- = ski country, USA
- Founded during the Colorado Silver Boom as a mining camp
- A Swiss engineer built the first ski lift in the 1940s
- Now: great ski resorts



Denver, Colorado



- Founded as a mining town in 1858
- The “Mile High City” – it is located on a plain elevated 1 mile above sea level
- It is the gateway to the Rockies
- The only major metropolis in the Rockies
- 1972 — Denver becomes the only city ever to decline to host the Olympics. Selected in 1970 to host the 1976 Winter Olympics, city and state residents voted against hosting the games based on the financial burden and environmental concerns.

Salt Lake City, Utah



- Founded in 1847 by a group of Mormon followers near the Great Salt Lake
- **Mormons** are a religious and cultural group related to Mormonism, the principal branch of the Latter Day Saint movement of Restorationist Christianity which began with the visions of Joseph Smith in upstate New York during the 1820s. After Smith's death in 1844 the Mormons followed Brigham Young to what would become the Utah Territory. Today Mormons are understood to be members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church). Some Mormons are also either independent or non-practicing. The center of Mormon cultural influence is in Utah, and North America has more Mormons than any other continent, though the majority of Mormons live outside the United States. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mormons>
- It hosted the Winter Olympics in 2002.



Nevada



- It is largely desert.
- It is dominated by the Sierra Nevada mountain range
- The name *Nevada* is derived from the nearby Sierra Nevada, which means "snow-capped range" in Spanish
- A scarcely populated state
- Was used as a nuclear weapons test site in 1951 and 1961.
- It has the lowest rainfall of any state in the union
- It was subsequently claimed by Spain as a part of Alta California until the Mexican War of Independence brought it under Mexican control. The United States gained the territory in 1848 following its victory in the Mexican-American War and the area was eventually incorporated as part of Utah Territory in 1850. The discovery of silver in 1859 led to a population boom that was an impetus to the creation of Nevada Territory out of western Utah Territory in 1861. Nevada became the 36th state on October 31, 1864, as the second of two states added to the Union during the Civil War (the first being West Virginia). <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nevada>



Las Vegas, Nevada



- The “City of Lights”
- Center of gambling – (mispronunciation of LOST WAGES?)
- The name Vegas, the Spanish word for meadows, derives from a few desert springs and grassy meadows that existed.
- The foundation for urbanization was laid when railroad investor William Clark purchased land and water rights in the valley and persuaded the Nevada state legislature to allow a railroad depot there. The city was founded in 1905 when Clark auctioned off much of his land.
- Visitors came to the small city for its gambling casinos, operating legally at first and then illegally from 1910 to 1931. Construction of the Boulder Dam (later renamed Hoover Dam) on the Colorado River nearby in the 1930s brought the electric power and water on which the modern metropolis depends.
- After the state legalized gambling again in 1931 and large military bases went up near Las Vegas during World War II, hotel owners attracted more visitors by featuring famous entertainers such as singer Frank Sinatra. In the 1940s and 1950s, major casino-hotel complexes began to rise along the stretch of Las Vegas Boulevard known as “the Strip.”

<http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/pamphlet/2012/09/20120921136416.html#axzz2I580UBqd>

The Hoover Dam



- **Hoover Dam**, formerly called **Boulder Dam**, dam in Black Canyon on the Colorado River, at the Arizona-Nevada border, U.S. Constructed between 1930 and 1936, it is the highest concrete arch dam in the United States. It impounds Lake Mead, which extends for 115 miles (185 km) upstream and is one of the largest manmade lakes in the world. The dam is used for flood control, electric power, agricultural irrigation, and domestic water supply. It is also a major sightseeing destination, with almost one million visitors per year going on tours through the dam.
- As the dam and surrounding Lake Mead recreation area rose in popularity, traffic increased, and the problem became especially severe under security restrictions imposed after the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Construction began in January 2005 on a long-planned Hoover Dam Bypass Project, and in October 2010 a concrete arch bridge with a 1,060-foot (322-metre) span—the longest in North America for that type of bridge—opened for through traffic within view of Hoover Dam. The old road along the crest is reserved for use by visitors to the dam.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/271416/Hoover-Dam>