

## Colorado

Hi, my name is Jane Bocklage and I would like to tell you all about my home state of Colorado.

Characterized by tall snow covered peaks, canyons and other natural wonders, Colorado is truly one of the most beautiful states in the United States.

The Colorado territory was established in 1861 and was primarily settled by miners who came to the Western United States searching for gold during the “Gold Rush”. Many of Colorado’s cities and towns were originally founded by these miners. Even Colorado’s largest city and capital, Denver, was originally a small mining town. In 1876, President Ulysses S. Grant officially declared Colorado a state. As it was 100 years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Colorado received the official nickname the “Centennial State”.

Although Colorado’s towns were originally small, today the state is diverse and home to over 5 million people. Colorado’s capital and largest city, Denver, draws tourists from all over the world. One mile in altitude above sea level, Denver or the “Mile High City”, is famous for its arts centers, markets, and many sports teams including my favorite, the Colorado Avalanche ice hockey team. Nearby Colorado Springs is also home to the U.S. Olympic Training Center – a haven for athletes from all over the United States training for Olympic competition. Colorado also boasts a thriving business community and numerous educational institutions and universities, including my alma mater, the University of Denver.

Within Colorado’s borders are many diverse environments, from some of the highest peaks in the US to some of its largest canyons, rivers, and prairies. The stark contrasts draw thousands of tourists every year. The Colorado River, for which the state received its name, has been called the “Nile of the West” as it is one of the largest and longest rivers in the Western United States, flowing from Colorado all the way to Mexico and the Pacific Ocean.

The state is also home to many famous national parks, spanning the Rocky Mountains, Colorado’s high prairies, mesa’s, canyons, rivers and dunes. Rocky Mountain National Park, Black Ridge Canyons, the Grand Valley, and the “Four Corners” where the corners of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Arizona meet are just a few.

Famous for its many Alpine lodges and ski slopes, Colorado’s Rocky Mountains are perfect location for skiing and other winter sports. Along with hiking and mountain climbing, the state is an outdoor playground. Colorado’s climate, with its mild summers and snow filled winters, make it a perfect place to enjoy outdoor adventures year round.

I hope you enjoyed learning about my home state of Colorado; maybe soon you can pay its natural splendor a visit!