



Garden of the Gods (East Side Route)



Hike Information

Rating: 4 - Easy/Moderate

Distance: 4.7 Miles

Total Elevation Gain*: 499 feet

Starting Elevation: 6,309 feet

Hike Time: ~2.5 Hours

Total Event Time: ~2.5 to 3.0 Hours**

Dog Friendly: Yes (on leash)

* Total Elevation Gain includes total feet climbed throughout hike and does not represent difference between low and high points.

** Total Event Time includes Hike Time plus transportation to and from the initial meeting point.

Hike Description

This is a 4.7-mile loop hike which circles the primary red rock formations of Garden of the Gods park near Manitou Springs.

Hikers begin from the large dirt parking lot across the road from the park's Visitor's Center and proceed toward the rock formations along the Gateway Trail; however, instead of entering the crowded area within the formations, the hike circles them counter-clockwise along the Susan G Bretag and Palmer Trails; this route climbs above the main park and provide a spectacular view of the red rocks in all their glory! The hike continues the loop along a series of trails, including Buckskin Charlie, Ute, and others. The hike concludes with a short walk through Rock Ledge Ranch Historic Site, a wonderful treasure of history and friendly farm animals in an idyllic setting.

This hike consists of dirt and rock, sometimes involving stepping up and around obstacles in the rougher places of the trail. The views are excellent along the entire route, including the main Garden of the Gods formations, Pikes Peak, and the surrounding front range mountains.

Although desert-like in appearance, this hike boasts numerous trees, including Ponderosa Pine, Gambel Oak, Piñon Pine, and Juniper, plus Plains Prickly Pear Cactus and variations of drought-tolerant plants. Hawks, falcons, and kestrels are common, and visitors occasionally spot bighorn sheep within this park. Although rare, prairie rattlesnakes can be found here, so hikers are discouraged from venturing off-trail.

This is a fantastic hike which can be done by hikers of nearly all ability-levels. With ample parking and a serene walk through Rock Ledge Ranch at the conclusion of the hike, this is sure to provide a memorable adventure!

What To Bring

- Water:  = 40 ounces
- Food: Light, Healthy Snack
- Clothing: Breathable Layers (adjust for daily temps)
- Footwear: Comfortable hiking boots or shoes
- Headgear: Hat
- Safety: Sunscreen, Sunglasses
- Optional: Hiking Poles



To learn more about this location, visit:
<https://gardenofgods.com/>

See Next Page for Maps and Meeting Point Information

Hikers may meet at the carpool meeting point or the hike location
(Both meeting times are indicated on the Event Schedule)



Carpool Meeting Point

Buffalo Lodge Resort

2 El Paso Blvd, Colorado Springs, CO 80904



About the Buffalo Lodge Hike Series:

This hike is part of a partnership with the Buffalo Lodge Resort, offering guided hikes to lodge guests and members in the Manitou Springs area. Mountain Trails members are encouraged to meet here and learn more about Buffalo Lodge before proceeding to the hike (but may also choose to meet the group at the hike as shown below.)

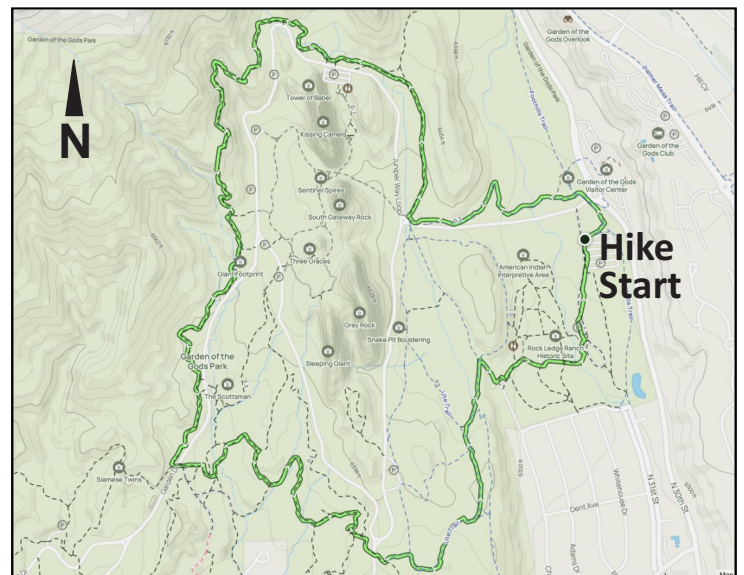
Buffalo Lodge can be a little tricky to navigate the first time you visit. This is a 5-acre self-enclosed lodge with numerous buildings. As you first pull into the property, you will see the main Lodge Office on the right...**this is where the group meets for the hike.**

However, please do not park up front as this is only for lodging guests. Instead, drive through the lot to the rear area and park in the large dirt lot marked "Event Parking". You will then walk to the front of the lot and meet us at the main Lodge Office.

Mountain Trails members may choose to ride with someone, offer a ride to other hikers, or simply follow the caravan in their own vehicle. The priority for this hike series are the Buffalo Lodge guests; if any guest needs a ride, we will provide them with transportation.

Regardless where you choose to meet the group (Buffalo Lodge or hike meeting point), hiking club members are encouraged to visit Buffalo Lodge as they have a lounge with interesting decor, a variety of activities, a bicycle shop, and live music most nights of the week.

Hike Meeting Point & Map



This hike begins and ends at the large parking lot across from the Garden of the Gods Visitor Center (3105 Gateway Rd, Colorado Springs, CO 80904). Please refer to the map above to see where to park meet the group.