



Visit Estes Park
The Destination
Marketing Organization
VisitEstesPark.com

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How to Navigate the Height of Summer Travel in Estes Park

ESTES PARK, Colo. (May 25, 2018)—Memorial Day weekend marks the unofficial arrival of summer. School's almost out, the weather's dreamy, and a desire to hit the open road to explore and relax in the mountains starts burning inside. You're not alone.

Heed the following travel tips to help navigate the crowds (and related frustrations) and ensure rewarding travels to Estes Park this summer. We know this stuff because we live here.

Get an "Alpine Start" Many day trippers hop in the car after a nice Front Range breakfast and a coffee stop before heading to Estes, only to arrive to find parking lots full and long lines at the entrance stations to Rocky Mountain National Park. Late morning to late afternoon is the busiest time around Estes—a good rule of thumb is to arrive before 10:00 a.m. to get the most out of your day. The earlier you can arrive, the better.

Grab a Parking Spot Estes Park's new parking structure and the Estes Park Events Complex offer the best parking opportunities and help guests avoid the frustrations of limited parking in the downtown area. Free shuttles run regularly between these lots and various places downtown, and parking is free. Find more information by visiting visitestepark.com/parking.

Take the Shuttle Once parked, get where you want to go by taking one of the free Estes Park shuttles. Choose from five routes that will get you nearly everywhere you need to go, from the heart of Estes Park to the outskirts. Shuttles run from 9:00 a.m. until 8:00 or 8:30 p.m. To see shuttle routes and schedules, visit visitestepark.com/shuttles.

Use These Ranger-Approved RMNP Tactics The reality is that 80% of Rocky Mountain National Park traffic comes through the east entrance, making long lines at the gates hard to avoid (but not impossible if you employ that alpine start). RMNP Public Affairs Officer Kyle Patterson says that most trailheads and the Alpine Visitor Center lots fill early; try to start your hike before 10:00 a.m. or after 3:00 p.m. (weather permitting). You can also decrease wait times by carpooling, taking the park shuttle, or visiting on a weekday. Another hot tip? Buy your entry pass online in advance. This shrinks the time each car spends at the gates. For more park visitation tips, visit <https://bit.ly/2kerNgG>.

Bottom line: Plan ahead (including alternative hikes or activities around town), arrive early, and take a deep breath—there's blue sky and mountain skylines no matter where you find yourself in Estes Park. Plan your Estes Park excursion and get more tips in our blog at visitestepark.com/blog.

Visit Estes Park's mission is to drive tourism and year-round economic growth through effective and efficient destination marketing. For more details about VEP go to VisitEstesPark.com.

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