



Guanella Pass Scenic and Historic Byway Colorado's Awesome 14er's

22 Miles

3 Days/2 Nights

Gateway City: Golden

Colorado

National Travel Center
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It's hard to imagine that burros, heavy laden with silver from the mountain mines, once passed this way. The beautiful road climbs to the timberline delivering majestic views of 14,600-foot Mount Bierstadt and Mount Evans. Today, the mining has ended and Guanella Pass is paved. The Scenic and Historic Byway over the pass traverses the steep divide between the South Platte River and Clear Creek through a series of distinct natural environments on its way up and down. The lower areas are green with thick forests of spruce, fir, aspen and pine. Further up, the streams thread through broad meadows, rustling with wildlife, nesting birds and industrious beavers.



Above the timberline, the landscape is ablaze with flowers that return every spring. Cool groves of aspen and pine light up with brilliant golden colors in autumn. Moving through the elevations delivers a changing ecology ending in the alpine tundra at the tree line. Enjoy the journey to the top of the world as you move through climate zones on your way to the top of the pass and down again. Keep your eye out for bighorn sheep, mountain goats and golden eagles as you pass through the Arapaho National Forest and the Pike National Forest. The breathtaking views are well worth the trip. September and early October are the best times to drive the Byway, after starting

your visit in two of Colorado's best preserved Victorian towns with outstanding National Historic Districts. Guanella Pass is seasonally closed around Thanksgiving and reopens Memorial Day Weekend.

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Touring the Byway

We recommend beginning your journey in Golden, to enjoy this delightful historic town, named for the gold that was discovered in Clear Creek in the early days of the Gold Rush. During your first day in the area, you have the option to enjoy the Clear Creek Canyon Drive, which can be a nearly whole day experience, ending in gold rush boom town of Central City, where you can get lunch before traveling back. The adventurous can take the "Oh My God Road" with sheer drop-offs and narrow turns. Back in Golden, you can take the Golden History Tour through the Golden Historic Districts.

After a good night's sleep, it'll be time to head for Georgetown, which grew to rival Central City in the 1860s. Today, it is hard to believe it started as a mining camp. A trip on the Georgetown Loop Railroad introduces you to the engineering marvel that was the first to reach Leadville. You will have the option of disembarking for a hardhat tour of the Lebanon Silver Mine, 500 feet into the ground. When you return, you can tour the Hamill House, the centerpiece of the Georgetown Historic District. The Hotel de Paris Museum in Georgetown is the unique creation of a French miner turned



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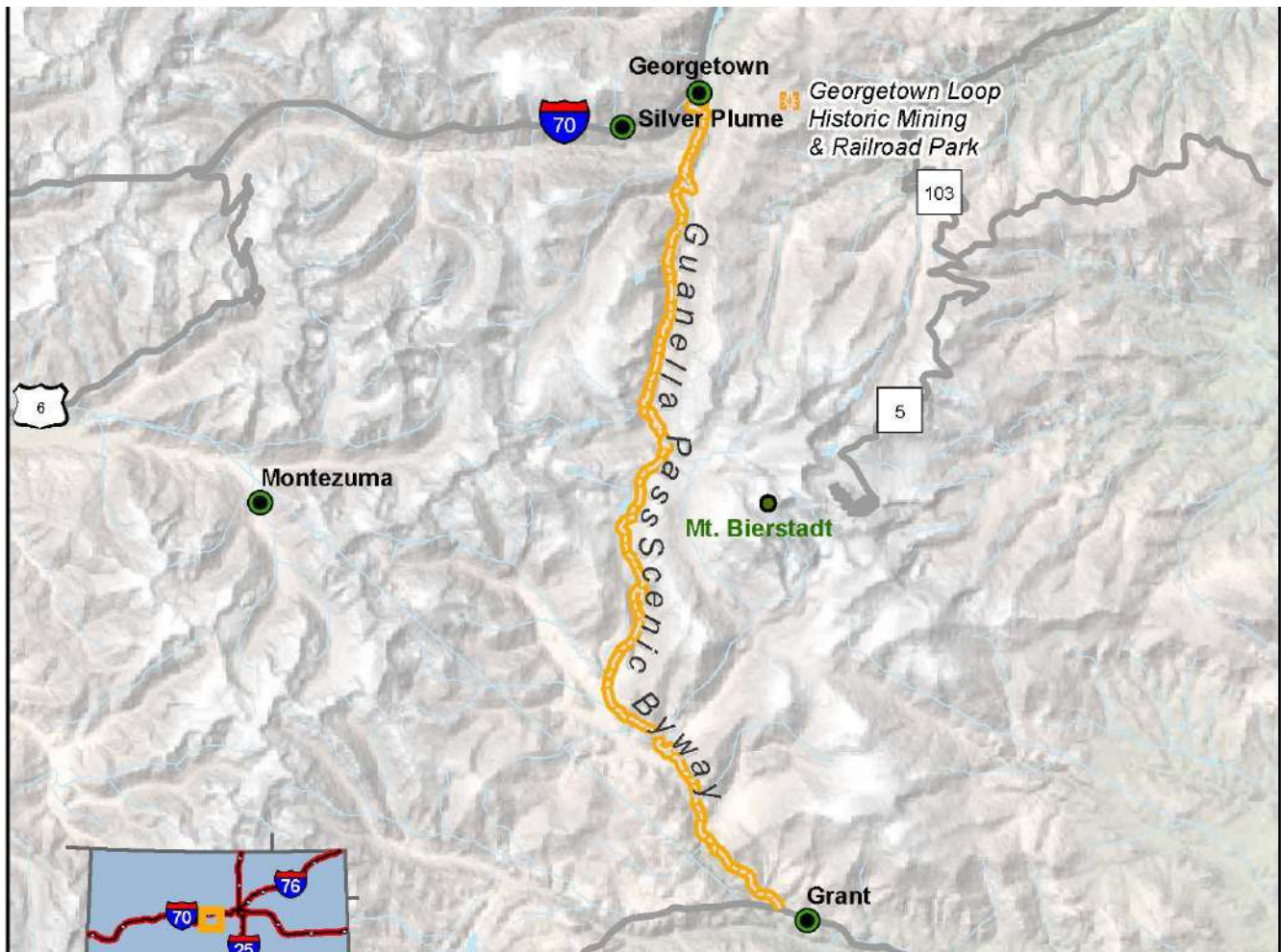
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hotelier when he was injured in a mining accident. The town took up a collection for him and the hotel opened in 1875. On Day Three, it's off to tour Silver Plume, the working side of Georgetown, closer to the mines and less impressive than its neighbor. The George Rowe Museum, housed in a Romanesque school building, features artifacts that reveal the story of the town's rich mining history. Then, it's on to drive the actual route of the Guanella Pass Scenic and Historic Byway over the pass. Before the top of the pass, you can turn off to the Silver Dale Interpretive Site which features a mining ghost town, where the Colorado Central Mill is buried deep in the aspen forest among waterfalls. Further up, you'll find further remnants of the ghost town. From there, you can return to Golden or continue on another Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway. Whichever you chose, we wish you a safe and pleasant journey home.



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DAY ONE



Golden

Idyllic gold rush Golden, nestled in the spectacular foothills of the Rocky Mountains, hit the map in 1859 when a small amount of gold was discovered in Clear Creek. An important supply depot for miners and farmers, the town grew quickly when coal and industrial clay were discovered nearby. Golden became the capital of Colorado Territory in 1862, serving as the seat of the territorial legislature until 1867 when Denver became the Colorado State Capital. Today, the City of Golden, famous as the home of Coors Brewery, continues to thrive with recreational, cultural and culinary opportunities, while preserving its historic core.

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Clear Creek Canyon Drive

If you choose, you can make the drive through Clear Creek Canyon, one of the narrowest, steepest and most dramatic canyons in Colorado, a whole day experience if you choose. Along the way, you might see rafters, kayakers, fishermen, and even panning for gold. If hiking is in order, stop at the Mayhem Gulch Trailhead, 12 miles west of Golden, and hike on the Peaks to Plains Trail. At the junction of Highway 119, you have the option to go north to Black Hawk, the largest gambling center in Colorado, or to Central City, once the "richest place on earth" and the largest gold rush boom town in Colorado with 30,000 residents. Above the beautiful brick and stone Victorian buildings, you'll find historic graveyards, old mines and ghost towns. Southwest of Central City, look for signs for the Virginia Canyon Road, known as the "Oh My God Road." Legend has it the name came from stagecoach passengers looking down at the sheer drop offs and moan, "Oh My God!" Go slow, pause on the narrow turns, and follow the signs for Idaho Springs, another old gold mining town. From there, you can take I-70 to return to Golden or go back through Clear Creek Canyon, viewing the dramatic rock formations from a different direction. Take US Route 6 West of Golden.



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Golden Historic Districts/Golden History Tour

Having been the hub of activity in the territorial capital of Colorado in the late 1800s, Golden has a remarkable historic district and eight historic neighborhoods. The self-guided Golden History Walking Tour guides you past these fascinating locations, which range from cobblestone streets and territorial capital buildings to wild west saloons and high style residential areas. The Tour begins at 718

12th Street, Golden. If you would rather have a guide, you can sign up for the Wild West Walking Tour with Golden History Tours, 1010 Washington Avenue, starting at the Golden Visitors Center.



Golden History Museum and Park

Golden History Park is housed in original buildings that were rescued from the Pearce Ranch in Golden Gate Canyon and moved to downtown Golden. Starting very humbly with a cabin dug out of the hillside by hard rock miner Thomas Pearce who hailed from Cornwall, England, the ranch grew to one of the largest in the canyon. As you stroll among the Pearce/Helps Cabin,



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Reynolds Cabin, Barn, Outhouse, Blacksmith Shop, Chicken Coop, Guy Hill School (which served students until 1951), Bee Yard and Root Cellar, imagine yourself hoeing potatoes or raising chickens. Also visit the museum on the property. 923 10th Street, Golden, CO 80401, 303-278-3557, Th-Sat 10AM-2PM, Free, Allow 2 hours

Public Art Walk

Golden has more than 30 pieces of public art which make for a great walking tour through Golden's natural landscapes. 14 pieces are located along Clear Creek, 10 along Washington Avenue and another 8 in outlying areas of Golden. Relax on an inviting afternoon stroll through it all. The walk begins at The Kayak Racer, on Clear Creek by the kayak course behind Lions Park.



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Destination Distinctive Accommodations

The Dove Inn, 711 14th Street, Golden, CO 80401, 720-608-1714

Now a chic boutique hotel, the 1866 Victorian Dove Inn now has 10 stylish, unique rooms laden with modern amenities, luxurious baths, Wi-Fi and craft coffee beans from local roasters. Breakfast made from locally sourced ingredients is served continental style. Rooms are refreshed during your stay with extra towels and other amenities provided as needed. Enjoy this Inn, an old soul with a new look and impeccable service.

Destination Distinctive Dining

Old Capitol Grill and Smokehouse, 1122 Washington Avenue, Golden, CO 80401,
303-279-6390

Colorado's territorial legislature met in the building that now houses the Old Capitol Grill and Smokehouse, offering classic American fare with some unique twists.

Destination Distinctive Retail

Spirits in the Wind Gallery, 1211 Washington Avenue, Golden, CO 80401, 303-279-1192

Nickel Custom Design Furniture Gallery, 809 Cheyenne Street, Golden CO, 80401,
785-766-3680

Old Barrel Tea Company, 1224 Washington Avenue, #118, Golden, CO 80401, 720-837-0520

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DAY TWO



Georgetown

When you stroll through historic Georgetown, it may be hard to believe it started as a mining camp in 1859. The town quickly grew to rival Central City as the hub of a large mining district, where the area was rich in minerals, yet getting the ore out of the Rockies was a challenge. East Coast industrialists brought in the railroad to connect Georgetown and Silver Plume in 1877, to make transporting ore to Denver easier. The boom resulted in great architecture that today includes the Hamill House and the Hotel de Paris.

Georgetown Gateway Visitor Center

Start your visit to Georgetown at the Visitor Center, managed by the Georgetown Trust, which is dedicated to the preservation of the Georgetown Silver Plume Historic District and to increasing the enjoyment of visitors through great storytelling. 1491 Argentine Street, Georgetown, CO 80444, 9AM-5PM Daily. Free

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Georgetown Loop Railroad

Georgetown became the "Silver Queen of Colorado," when the giant strike in Leadville was discovered. Industrialist Jay Gould wanted to be the first in Colorado to reach Leadville with a railroad to carry out the ore, but the 6% grade was too steep. His chief engineer devised a system of curves and bridges that reduced the grade to 3%. Today, an excursion on the line offers postcard-worthy shots of the mountains, through a forested gorge and lots of mining history. After you cross the 93-foot Devil's Gate



High Bridge over Clear Creek en route to Silver Plume, you have the option to disembark for a hard hat tour of the Lebanon Silver Mine, 500 feet into the ground. 646 Loop Drive, Georgetown, CO 80444, 888-456-6777, Excursions at 10AM, 11:25AM, 1PM, 2:25PM and 3:50PM. Adults start at \$27.50



Hamill House

The centerpiece of Georgetown's historic district was constructed in 1867 and sold to successful mine operator William Hamill, in 1874. He added a dining room, solarium, kitchen and a magnificent conservatory. Hamill departed during the crash of 1893 and by 1914, the house was used for dairy cows. After the new owner of the Bank of Georgetown went bust, the property was empty until it was purchased by the museum. Today, it is a meticulously preserved example of late-1800s residential living, offering an extraordinary opportunity to see the architectural styles, furnishings and

landscaping of the day. 305 Argentine Street, Georgetown, CO 80444, 303-569-2840, Th-Sat 11AM-5PM, Donations accepted, allow 1 hour.

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Hotel de Paris Museum

The great story of the Hotel de Paris is a must to discover. The owner, Louis Dupuy was born in France in 1844. He enrolled in seminary at age 15, but ran away to Paris, where he squandered an inheritance. He moved to London and then to New York at the age of 22. He enlisted in the Army, traveled to Wyoming and deserted. He went to work for the Rocky Mountain News as a roving mining camp reporter and then became a miner. In 1873, he was injured in a blast while pushing a coworker out of harm's way and the people of Georgetown took up a collection to help him start a new business. He purchased a bakery and transformed it into the Hotel De Paris in 1875. Since that time, the hotel hosted thousands and is now a tribute to the diligence of this Dupuy. By the early 1890's, it had tripled in size with numerous rooms, a large restaurant, a sizeable kitchen, and apartments for Louis himself. It served guests with indoor plumbing and electric lighting long before other hotels did. Dinner was served on Haviland china from Limoges, France, elegant linens and imported glassware. The menu included steaks from cattle raised on Louis' ranch in North Park and delicacies such as oysters, and anchovies in olive oil imported from France. 409 Sixth Street, Georgetown, CO 80444, 303-569-2311, Fri-Mon, 10AM-4PM, Adults \$10, 1 hour tour.

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Destination Distinctive Accommodations

Clear Creek Inn, 610 Seventh Street, Georgetown, CO 80444

Stay in the Georgetown historic district in a Bed and Breakfast that is the culmination of 40 years of hospitality, delivered by a father and son who envisioned a beautiful inn to share mountain life with guests.

Destination Distinctive Dining

Cooper's on the Creek, 1500 Argentine Street, Georgetown, CO 80444, 303-569-5088

The highest rated restaurant in Georgetown, with unique food and great service,

Destination Distinctive Retail

Georgetown Gallery of Fine Art, 614 Sixth Street, Georgetown, CO 80444, 303-569-2218

Stonehenge Art Gallery, 514 Sixth Street, Georgetown, CO 80444, 303-569-2153

Ophelia's Antique Gallery, 606 Sixth Street, Georgetown, CO 80444, 303-569-2336

The Trading Post, 510 Sixth Street, Georgetown, CO 80444, 303-569-3375

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DAY THREE

Silver Plume

So near Georgetown that they are basically one town, unlike Georgetown which was the seat of wealth, Silver Plume hosted workers housing. Even though the homes are much less impressive, and the mines are nearby, the historic district is still interesting. Miners from several European countries made Silver Plume a multi-cultural and multi-lingual town.



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George Rowe Museum

The museum in Silver Plume is housed in the 1894 Romanesque brick schoolhouse that served the community until 1959. Ore carts and other mining artifacts that highlight the town's rich mining history, include an antique fire truck, furniture, and clothing from the early 20th-century, an antique dentist chair and manual washing machine, plus a 1920 schoolroom with original textbooks, personal chalkboards, and wooden desks. Street Address: 315 Main Street, Silver Plume, CO 80476, 303-569-2562, Sat-Sun 10AM-4PM, \$2,50, allow 1 hour.



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After exploring both of these fascinating historic towns, it's time to drive the Byway over Guanella Pass. Enjoy the journey to the top of the world as you move through climate zones on your way to the top of the pass and down again.

