

Boulder, Colorado Springs and American Discovery Trail Marathon Notes August 30 – September 7, 2010

I swear that I'm off the "50-states completion" kick but here I am in Colorado and wondering why I'm running at 7200 feet of elevation when my body is used to sea level and in 90+ degree temperatures at that. I suppose I'm here as much for the local experience and that it has been. Chalk up Boulder and Colorado Springs with Tom and then the American Discovery Trail Marathon starting north at Palmer Lake and running through the U.S. Air Force Academy with views of Pikes Peak and into Colorado Springs. This was my 15th marathon of the year and my 64th total marathon finish.



Pikes Peak panorama compliments of Wikipedia

Many of you expect marathon notes first so here goes the good stuff:

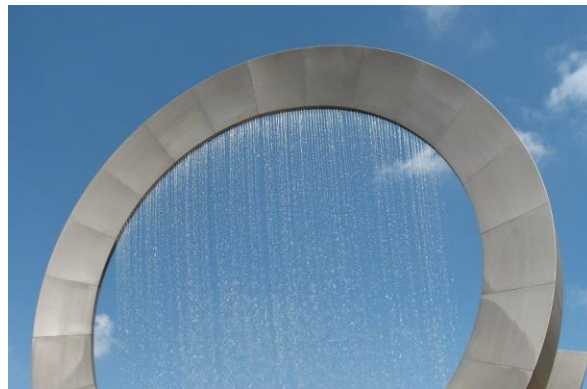
- Gorgeous location with mountains everywhere. Lots of tourist sites in area. (Most needing a car though Grayline offers tours of most sites from the host hotel for a reasonable fee.)
- Nice little expo, just enough vendors, fast service, and helpful volunteers. A cute little lovely gal is the race director too. Never hurts.
- Hilton is host hotel, only \$82, an especially good quality Hilton, and right downtown.
- Nice high-tech women's sized t-shirt probably compliments of that woman race director. White with lavender logo, quality and without advertisement.
- Pacers were available to 5:00 and two that flaunted "Just Finish" signs but they ran along with the 5:00 pacer (which made no sense).
- The course couldn't be better. Soft surface, good views, ups and downs though a total drop from 7300 to 6040 feet. Course is on a series of trails and runs through the U.S. Air Force Academy so there are views of the famous chapel and airfield. But don't be fooled – there are ups and downs that caused bicyclists to dismount. There's soft sand, roots, and varied surface. Where the concrete starts late in the course there's a dirt and weed area to the side where I moved to save the joints. My personal opinion is that this is easier on the legs. These surfaces however would not help making a PR.
- The medal is okay but without the date. Makes sense financially.
- Finish line is at the America the Beautiful Park just 1/3 mile from the Hilton. It's worth a trip if you're in the area. It was organized fine and they left the finish line timing open until the very last thing to pack onto the truck – maybe to 6:50. That tall round fountain in the picture is many stories high.
- There was still plenty of pizza, bananas, oranges, bagels and drinks for us latecomers.



Do we like this or not?

Please remember that we're trying to be fair – not negative. I liked this marathon!

- No pasta party which is good for the local restaurants, fine with me but maybe I miss meeting up with other marathoners.
- Hot with weather at over 90 degrees the couple days before but cooling down to what looked like 83-84 degrees. I know, it's not their fault but it sure was a challenge.
- Bus is required to get to the start. There is no parking at the starting line. I like walking to the start but I like this course too.
- Bus at 5am is painful but at these temperatures it was a blessing.
- Massage can't be faulted for not staying open but maybe they could have a second shift? It wasn't available to me and I came in 19 minutes before the cut off.
- Long potty lines at the start with first a promise to not start the race until everyone got through the line, and then a change when police said they had to start on time. No trees or big bushes either. No trees or bushes suitable anywhere on the course. Worse, we were warned of poison ivy/oak and snakes.
- There was very little shade. Colorado doesn't have big forests.
- No food on the course except Hammer Gel.
- Hilton was sold out more than a month ahead. They also charge \$20 valet-park and \$15 self-parking a day.



Results

There is no longer any question but that I should NOT sign up for marathons with a 6-hour cut off. This was 6:11:08. I'd have had a second place in age group out of two (smile) but the first place got moved into a higher award so I have a first in age group. Too funny. Plus I was the oldest female with only three males older. I almost managed a personal worse second only to Pacific Crest Trail Marathon. How coincidental that there was altitude and heat there too. I can make excuses all day but the bottom line is that I'm into 6-hour plus marathons. Potty stops, heat, altitude, sand, hills, helping a crying young first timer, finding her medical help, moving to the weeds and dirt, some headwinds with dust storms – yet all are marathon situations that aren't terribly uncommon. Knowing that heat was on its way, I'd purposely worked towards getting to 13 miles by 2:45 (for what would have made a 5:30 finish had I kept that pace), and comfortably made it. I also needed to do that since there were cut offs where we could be disqualified. After the first half, I then reverted to total walking which resulted in a second half of 3:25.

Unfortunately Judy didn't make the 18 mile cut off and was disqualified. More unfortunately she didn't continue or got lost on the course and I found her far after 7 hours as she was searching for the finish line. There is a marathon organization problem to tell people to get off the course and yet give no direction. She's a classy lady and after a few moments of anger she realized that she now has the opportunity to return to visit a friend in Boulder and do that marathon. I'll encourage her to have more acclimation time.

While looking for medical care for a young runner I came across two other runners down probably from dehydration. They had ATVs with roving medical that seemed fine. So we were lucky overall. I suspect there were many who suffered the heat and I know there were quite a few who I passed that never got over the finish line.

A note on local weather

No matter when you come, no matter what weather.com says, bring clothing for any and every type of weather. It was well over 90 degrees yesterday and it will fall to 44 degrees tonight. Up on Pikes

Peak it's famous for being 30 degrees cooler too. Bring sun screen to counter a UV index of 8 -- I got burned to a crisp during the marathon despite applying sunscreen twice. Some local runners told me that Colorado Springs has more sun than San Diego! Pack moisturizers since the humidity level can be in the teens. Gee, guess I couldn't get much different than the Jersey Shore -- from sea level to mile-high-plus makes a world of difference.

While in Colorado weather had a major affect on many of our friends. Jake, the Appalachian Trail finisher hero who lives in Boulder, is experiencing a major fire west of Boulder. He was evacuated and hopefully his new home stands. Charlotte, the lovely southern belle who lives on a boat in NC (you know her by her and Tara's marathon costumes) lived through Hurricane Earl and managed just fine despite being newly single and taking care of everything on her own. (Note this guys -- a newly available gal!) Kathrine aka Marathon Woman or Kathrine the Great and instigator of Title IX, lives part of the time near to the New Zealand quake but didn't suffer any damage. David, long time running coach in Houston, is facing a new hurricane. We haven't heard if Maricar's cruise was diverted.

"Walking Diva" on her way to Guinness Book of World Records

A very pleasant surprise was seeing Yolanda in the lobby waiting for the bus. She'd only arrived at 2:30am and this was at 5:00am. She was on her fourth marathon in a row which some call a "Quadzilla." That means she did a marathon on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday. But she still came in at 6:15. She plans to finish her 101 marathon of the year in Las Vegas this December and this was her 77th marathon of the year. (And I think I'm hot-stuff that it was my 15th of the year!) I did push the subject however that if she keeps losing weight, her finish could be in jeopardy. She's a lovely lady but it's worrisome that she's all skin and bones. I always thought we couldn't run ourselves to thinness but she's disproving that -- it just takes a lot of running.



From front page of "The Gazette" newspaper (that's the Academy and Chapel in the background)

Yolanda Holder sat on a grounded Southwest Airlines flight at Los Angeles International Airport late Sunday, growing more concerned by the minute as the disabled plane required attention from fire and police departments.

Her concern had nothing to do with losing her life, but possibly losing a chance to fulfil her life's mission: finish 101 marathons in one year to set the Guinness Book of World Records achievement in that category.

Arriving in Denver three hours late and getting just one hour of sleep before a 4 a.m. wakeup call, Holder answered that call Monday to start race No. 77 of the year, the American Discovery Trail Marathon, which started in Palmer Lake and ended 26.2 miles later at America the Beautiful Park in downtown Colorado Springs.

"I'll definitely be back," said Holder, 52, a Corona, Calif., housewife and race walker who completed the marathon in 6 hours, 15 minutes -- or 15 minutes ahead of the required time to count the race in her annual quest. "This was a great trail, was very organized and had very nice people. I did 77 marathons last year, which is where I am now. I just figured I go for the world record this year."

Holder on Monday completed her fourth marathon this weekend after a starting in Pocatello, Idaho, on Saturday, then flying to Phoenix later that day to run in Buckeye, Ariz., before an event in Long Beach, Calif., on Sunday.

While the two-time Marathon Maniac of the Year steamrolls toward the annual record, she has nothing on New York native and Denver resident Keith Panzer. The 51-year-old consultant completed his 249th marathon Monday, doing so in a Boston Marathon-qualifying time of 3:32.02.

"The body just gets used to it," said Panzer, a fellow Marathon Maniac, a Seattle-based club that only allows athletes who finish three marathons in a 90-day period. "I'll run in one every week or maybe every other week. I got hooked. Perhaps I'm a little obsessive compulsive, and you have to enjoy it to get in this deep." Panzer, a 19-time Boston Marathon contestant who has completed

marathons in all 50 states, still has one more notable race left on his to-do list. "I want to do Leadville (100 miles) next year," Panzer said. "I did 60 of the 100 but never finished. I had knee surgery two years ago, and since then, I feel even better."

Panzer had just one warning for those who might get hooked on extreme running. "Don't let anyone tell you that running is a cheap sport," Panzer said. "After I completed a marathon in all 50 states, I got a little plaque. With all the travel and expenses that went into that, I figured that plaque cost me \$30,000."

The marathon host hotel in Colorado Springs



Yes, those are butterflies and huge medal flowers out front of the hotel as part of an art festival all over town. More coming up on the art festival. There was also a weekend balloon festival.

For some reason that never connected, the hotel was sold out the few days prior. Maybe it was a large wedding, maybe the weekend balloon festival, but the town never looked full. Other runners told me that the hotel had been sold out at least a month before.

Chasing butterflies aka Fluttering around the springs.

The day before the marathon, and despite a full 92 degree major heat wave, I went walking for four hours straight searching butterflies. It's a public art project to raise money for school art programs. Something more culturally correct than painting cows (Chicago), crocodiles (Palm Beach), horses (Louisville) or pigs (Cincinnati). My jaunt took me a few blocks in one direction from the hotel and about a mile and a half to the Colorado College in the other. In between I found there were many more art sculptures. The names and sponsors were oftentimes amusing.

My butterfly collection has background scenery which will give you a view of downtown Colorado Springs too. I can see why people want to live in these Colorado towns.



Retro Flower Butterfly, Precious (the artist used her butterfly to show how precious the gift of life and that the gift is able to pass something of beauty onto others), Gaston Julia Butterfly, and Geometric Wings. All these are in the Palmer Plaza in front of the Antler Hilton Hotel on Cascade Avenue.



Birdwing (where you see five species of birds represented), Lepidoptera Chemica, Building a Better Butterfly and an unidentified one that I can only presume is an ode to Jason Pollock, are at the Pikes Peak Center.



Still at the Pikes Peak Performing Arts Center, add The World is a Rainbow Butterfly, Ode to the Garden of Hope, as well as Humpty Dumpty who sat on a wall.



Fractal Butterfly and Appearances (the black and white face) was at the Fine Arts Center along with the dancers.

Now remember – there may be a lot of butterflies, but this isn't all of them, and the butterflies are presented with Colorado Springs buildings as background to give you a flair of the town.



Steampunk Magic Butterfly had a timepiece and shared space with Planet Butterfly (shown twice) at the CC Cornerstone Building, an art piece in itself.



Dippin' Dots and Conflict of the Roses were at the El Paso Club (that's their county name), with Dragon-Fly and Urban Flight closer to town on Tejon Street.



Doing Yoga with the Rotary Club in front of the Pioneer Museum gave good competition to the giant red paper clips sculpture across the street, as did the bronze figures of kids and daddy picking pumpkins in the planters with real pumpkins growing all around. All in front of the Pioneers Museum.



The Pioneer Museum along with sculpture on the grounds.

Moving on to more sculpture

I'd show you more butterflies but I'm reminded how I got carried away with chasing cows when we had the Parade of Cows in NYC and maybe that's why grandson Joseph refuses to travel with me any longer. He said I wore him out.

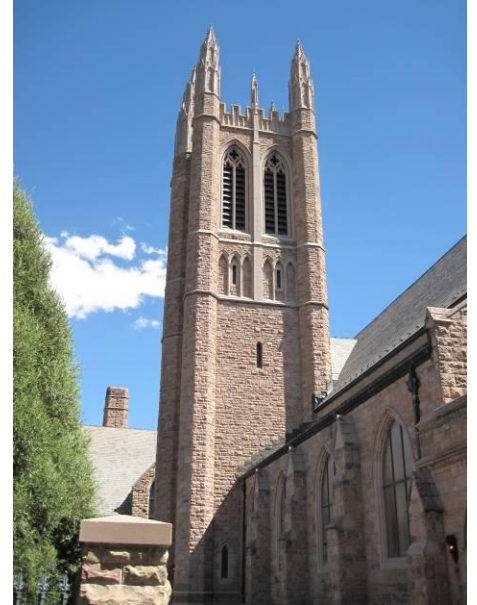


The open door triple size, a little bronze girl outside the public library and some miscellaneous art sculpture on my way to the college grounds.



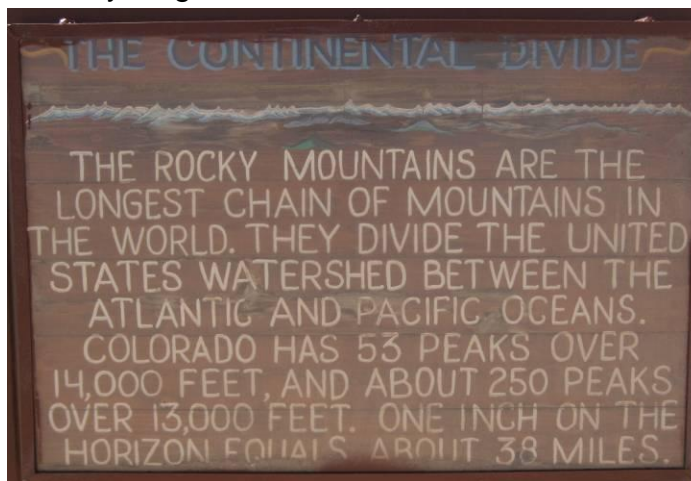
This guy is triple-sized and is the logo for the Pikes Peak or Bust race. While the double eagle on the street corner is representative of the natural look and feel of Colorado. Why the triple-sized dancers are on an automatic twirler I don't know but the effect is mesmerizing.

More buildings of inspiration



The Arts Center with its metal tree where Arlo Guthrie was playing; what I thought was a castle but turned out to be an apartment complex; a private dwelling on the way to the college; one of the college buildings made partly out of metals; a corner of what someone thought was art and I thought was weeds formed into cubbyholes; and one nice church though there were many worthy of pictures.

Tourist sites out of town – Pikes Peak is of course part of the Rocky Mountain National Park chain. We had just come from Rocky Mountain just up from Boulder. This is on the Continental Divide. Some people marathon up to Pikes Peak no matter that its 14,000 plus feet with about 8,000 feet of elevation climb. It takes a very long time and I don't think I could do it though I wouldn't mind trying.



Once upon a time our feet took us up to the top of Mt Washington (as much because I insisted the car should not) but we are older now (and wiser, Tom would say) and we drove the 18+ miles up. It just is impossible to take a picture and get any idea of the magnitude of the mountain or the views. But

here's a try. Pikes Peak is the most visited peak in our country. I felt like they were all there the same day we were.



Garden of the Gods

From the website: *By the 1870's, the railroads had forged their way west. In 1871, General William Jackson Palmer founded Colorado Springs while extending the lines of his Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. In 1879, General Palmer repeatedly urged his friend, Charles Elliott Perkins, the head of the Burlington Railroad, to establish a home in the Garden of the Gods and to build his railroad from Chicago to Colorado Springs. Although the Burlington never reached Colorado Springs directly, Perkins did purchase two-hundred and forty acres in the Garden of the Gods for a summer home in 1879. He later added to the property but never built on it, preferring to leave his wonderland in its natural state for the enjoyment of the public. Perkins died in 1907 before he made arrangements for the land to become a public park, although it had been open to the public for years. In 1909, Perkins' children, knowing their father's feeling for the Garden of the Gods, conveyed his four-hundred eighty acres to the City of Colorado Springs. It would be known forever as the Garden of the Gods "where it shall remain free to the public, where no intoxicating liquors shall be manufactured, sold, or dispensed, where no building or structure shall be erected except those necessary to properly care for, protect, and maintain the area as a public park."*

How we got our name...

It was August of 1859 when two surveyors started out from Denver City to begin a town site, soon to be called Colorado City. While exploring nearby locations, they came upon a beautiful area of sandstone formations. M. S. Beach, who related this incident, suggested that it would be a "capital place for a beer garden" when the country grew up. His companion, Rufus Cable, a "young and poetic man", exclaimed, "Beer Garden! Why it is a fit place for the Gods to assemble. We will call it the Garden of the Gods." It has been so called ever since.

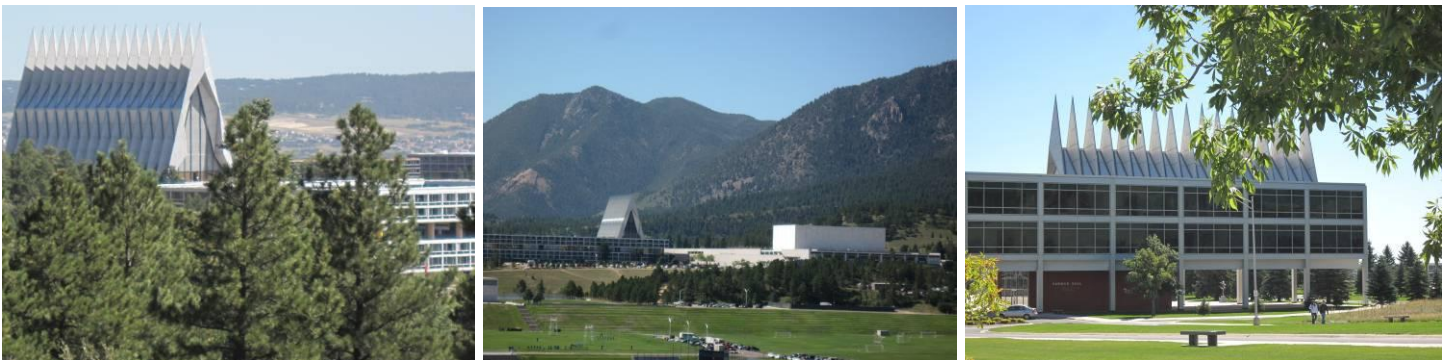
There's a lovely visitors center with film, displays and maps for a self-driving tour which we did. Our hiking was limited but I thought it worthy of a day or two. Adjoining the Gardens is a Trading Post and a 'ranch' not open currently. We chose to do a short hike out to a picnic area and sat under the trees and with boulders in view. Later we drive out to Balanced Rock.





U.S. Air Force Academy

This site has been tops on our list but it was not exactly to be. There was a big game, parent's weekend, plus all the festivals of Colorado Springs so parking was non-existent despite our attempt. The grounds are huge and the marathon course ran through them.

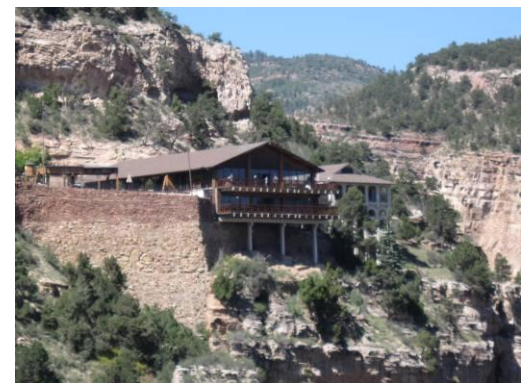


The chapel is said to be “massed like a phalanx of fighter jets shooting up into the sky” and is an architectural wonder. Here are some pictures from the web:



Cave of the Winds

Again, from the web: *Cave of the Winds, literally makes your jaw drop in wonder and astonishment. These Colorado Caves feature geology and adventure rolled into one—a true, unique Geo|Venture! Located in scenic hills above historic Manitou Springs, this Colorado Attraction is one of America's most important show caves and a "must-see" for all Colorado Attractions. Visitors have shared in the stunning beauty of Cave of the Winds for over a century. Early legends of the Jicarilla Apaches, who migrated through the Pikes Peak region around 1000 AD, tell of a cave in this area where the Great Spirit of the Wind resided. In the late 1800s, the modern era of Cave of the Winds began when two young brothers, George and John Pickett, stumbled onto these Colorado natural wonders. Just out for a day's exploration with a church group, the boys never expected to stumble upon what would become one of America's greatest show caves and premier attractions of Colorado! Through the years, visitors have ventured to these Colorado Caves by foot, horse, carriage, car, and RV.*



Set in a huge canyon, high on a cliff, the visitor's center was interesting in itself. A tour guide led us through the numerous caves. The cave is a setting for a 2006 episode of the animated television series South Park, entitled "ManBearPig".



Boulder – Home of Rocky Mountain National Park

Here's our first view of Rocky Mountain National Park starting a few miles from Boulder in Estes National Park. It didn't take us long to figure out the elevation was dramatic to our bodies either. Coming from sea level to 6,000 and 9,000 feet of elevation will make anybody's heart race even without the dramatic views. We drove Happy Valley and close to the famous trail that takes you over 12,000 feet. It was getting dark or I'd have been there. Plus a noted restaurant was calling.



Boulder – home to wildlife

Imagine my surprise, having spent a couple weeks in Alaska hunting for wildlife, to find these animals outside the Estes Park Visitors Center. My best wildlife views yet! Then leaving Colorado Springs to return to Denver airport we saw a field full of buffalo. Blue birds that looked like fluorescent Stella Jays were seen in Estes Park area as were little chipmunk type animals with a short tail. Peggy – eat your heart out. We tried and tried to get good pictures of moose in Alaska and you just wouldn't accept the road kill we finally found (smile). Here you go!



Boulder – home to even wilder life

Having just come from Alaska where it's said about men to women ratio that the "Odds are Good, but the Goods are Odd" I think they need to visit Boulder and even Colorado Springs. It's got to be the land of folks who want to be individualists and that they are.



Varied and amusing always. Gorgeous cycles abound perhaps due to the constantly good weather. Surprisingly so do the India type shops and I don't know who buys all these saris and belly dancers costumes. An old man with his bags loaded up on a tricycle was not unique as there were many street people in both Boulder and Colorado Springs, again maybe due to the good weather. Students with dropped drawers you can probably find everywhere but we were amused at how many and how much work it took to keep these pants from falling on the ground. They were to his knees more than once.



This lovely couple was at an organic farmers market and you have to wonder why they bother. The good looking but scruffy and barefoot guy arrived outside our Pearl Street sidewalk restaurant, rolled out the piano, put his hat upside down on the top of the piano and started playing like a concert pianist. Two couples sitting next to us called him Dr. so I asked for more information. He dropped out of university but has been invited to and did lecture there. He taught himself piano. He's obviously a brilliant guy and most entertaining. The three wheeler hairy guy was seen outside of Balance Rock at Garden of the Gods. With Arlo Guthrie in town, it all fit. This last one makes me wonder if all the facial hair would suggest that it's colder than I thought in Colorado.



Colorado Springs has their fair share of homeless and weird ones too. The parks are infested with them. Here's a young pair who apparently make dressing a challenge to do their weirdest. I think the lumpy one on the left is a female.

Boulder - Tom had always wanted to see Boulder

Tom doesn't generally attend marathons. He wears the shirts and announces "She runs them. I wear them."

However, he offers to attend if I'd do a marathon in Paris or Medoc He's working on a trip that might get me into Medoc for a run through the Bordeaux vineyards (yes, they serve wine at the fluid

stations) before vacationing in Dordogne and Nice. If the plans work out, I'll do Medoc, vacation with Tom, then head to Berlin for the last of the five major marathons. (For non-marathoners, that's NYC, Chicago, Boston, London and Berlin and they are the majors that count for the fast guys to qualify for the Olympics.) Note that this is currently all a pipe dream with the wish that 65 year old legs might keep going -- if I'm ever going to do these, it's got to be now. I'm booked; I'll go; providing the legs still work.

As I look through pictures and find some of us, it becomes clear that we should be added to the Wild and Weird pictures above. Coming up!

When with Tom, we eat well

I'm either a Subway gal or a PB&J-lover yet if I didn't have Tom periodically showing me good food, who knows but I might seek it out on my own. Eating with Tom is usually a tourist adventure in itself as it was in Boulder's Flagstaff House. High up on a cliff, near to Panorama Peak as part of the Flatirons, Flagstaff House is Colorado's highest rated restaurant. With prices to match which far exceeded anything we could remember short of France's dozen or so famous restaurants. We ate on their patio and Tom declares their foie gras to be excellent. While our dinner was late at night, we returned and took in the views the next day.

From Flagstaff House website: *The Flagstaff House Restaurant sits nestled on the mountain side at an elevation of 6,000 feet and was originally a cabin built in 1929. The Monette family has owned the Flagstaff House since 1971 and have greatly opened and expanded the property, featuring floor to ceiling glass walls and several outside terraces. Located just five minutes from downtown Boulder, diners enjoy the changing seasons with breathtaking views of Boulder below, along with abundant deer, an occasional bear, and other wildlife in the surrounding mountain side of Boulder City Park. Extensive interior renovations were undertaken in 1998, including a richly crafted mahogany bar, a cozy fireplace, and rare crystal collected from around the world. Also new, and available for private functions, is the restaurant's Vintner's Rooms which allows guests a look into the extensive 20,000 bottle wine cellar. Restaurant expertise runs high in the Monette family, starting with visionary Don Monette who has over 40 years in the restaurant industry. In 1985, Mark Monette became Executive Chef, continuing the tradition of fine cuisine at the Flagstaff House. In 1993, Scott Monette became general manager of the Flagstaff House, bringing the sharp eye for detail and the ability to make every guest feel special, complementing his brother's skills in the kitchen. Scott's training in the restaurant industry is quite extensive, highlighted by his degree in Hotel and Restaurant Management, as well as fine dining establishments in New York City, Washington DC, and Virginia. The Flagstaff House Restaurant proudly holds many prestigious awards, including Colorado's only Wine Spectator Grand Award since 1983, Mobil Four Star Award, Triple AAA Four Diamond Award, and the DiRoNA Award.*



We couldn't find much more extreme. From eating foie gras at The Flagstaff House to a delicious \$10 meal which included wine at the Trattoria of Pearl Street's outdoor cafe. I'd say that Tom enjoyed both and aren't we fortunate that we have these choices.

In Estes Park we found Twin Owls Restaurant with a delightful setting and in an old log cabin well over 100-years old. The setting was perfect yet the food just so-so. Sampling elk and buffalo was worth the experience as was the surroundings.



Restaurants in grand old hotels are enough to get me to cough up the costs and the Broadmoor in Colorado Springs was just such a spot. We ate at their newer restaurant called Summit.



The Broadmoor, famous for luxury, another foie gras dish (how in the world is his heart taking it all?), and the bar at the Summit with a glassed in wine cellar behind. It was based on the famous one in Las Vegas. We were invited for a tour inside.



Inside the Broadmoor with its opulent design, and speaking of wines they had a collection of old bottles, and then a colorful little mom and pop from their gift shop.

As a major change of pace we went to Boulder's tea house. Tajikistan, not Japanese, you'll be surprised to learn. We were with our friend/ tour guide Jake and had a frivolous time in sampling every appetizer on the menu. We would return to this tea house and eat at the water's edge and take in the evening market. On our second trip, I promise you that we saw a "Jesus" look alike. (As if we really know.) He had long hair and beard, bare feet, long brown robes and with a girlfriend with a major rag wrapped on her head. I wanted to take a picture but for fear they were serious and not in costume, I hesitated. Now I'm sorry. They were picture perfect.



“There are few hours in life more agreeable than the hour dedicated to the ceremony known as afternoon tea.” So says Henry James.



Here’s an inside view with a hint of the detailed ceiling. And just as important, here’s a few of the dishes we sampled.

Gotta work off that food



Here I am at the top of Red Rock just outside of Boulder with friend Jake. He’s my hero who quit his NJ job to hike the entirety of the Appalachian Trail, (and he made it!), then took a few more months to see the U.S. and now has found Boulder as his choice of home. Hopefully this lovely home in the woods with a wrap around deck where we had a beer and good conversation is still standing after Boulder’s major fires. As I write this, Jake is currently evacuated and hoping all is well.

Home and hotels of Boulder

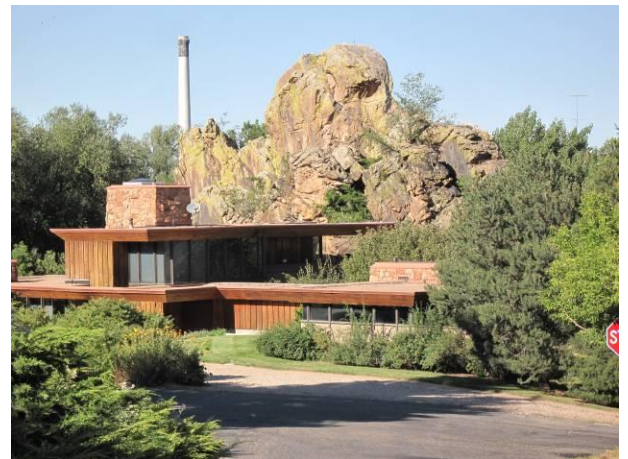
It is easy to see why everyone loves Boulder. There are so many major corporations there, and it’s said to be one of the healthiest places to live, with one of the highest educational levels. They have been careful to save the environment and as a result there are few yards with lawns but rather English style butterfly gardens which border on the un-kept in our view but I suspect are environmentally the way to go. Residents were incentivized to save water, and then the water use fell so dramatically that the city is raising rates to cover their costs, causing the usual revolt. They have saved their downtown Pearl Street Historic area as totally pedestrian and thus it’s full of restaurants, top name retail shops and restaurants.

Here’s historic City Hall on the pedestrian Pearl Street, a fountain in the same historical area, and a shot from our tour inside the old original and saved Hotel Boulderama.



We walked every street of Maplewood Historic Homes area, up the hill from Pearl Street. And even had a swing in one of the front yard swings. We later drove the area again – looking for a house we'd seen from up above Boulder while with Jake on Red Rock. Here it is with a roof wrapped around the red rock. Contemporary style looks like my kind of home.

We talked a lot about whether we'd choose Portland Oregon or Boulder Colorado. There really are many similarities and not only that they both have a lot of homeless. In the end we decided again that New Jersey has everything to offer and all within a short drive. That is, if one can afford the taxes. Turns out Boulder isn't all that inexpensive anyway. But those folks in Colorado sure are correct when they say they live in God's Country.



From downtown we toured Boulder's Chautauqua. It rang a bell and sure enough it's not religious but rather in the time of Teddy Roosevelt there were a series of Chautauqua's formed for educational and social purposes. Boulder's remains original, is on the National Historical Register, and continues to educate and house people. We dined in their cafeteria too which was nothing to write home about but helped us learn the history and purpose of this huge open park area.

Leanin' Tree Museum

Do you know the greeting card company called Leanin' Tree? It turns out that there's a museum created by the owner who has been an art collector. There was so much and Tom was distressed to not be able to take pictures of the inside art, but the outdoor sculpture garden was absolutely amazing. It was all worthy of the trip. And free.



Celestial Seasonings Plant and Museum

Yes, just one more big corporation based in Boulder. Who would have thought a tea processing plant and museum would be interesting.



Free tastings of some 70-different types of tea and a museum of tea pots but the big headline was the peppermint room that was both appealing and yet brought tears to the eyes. Memorable.

More?

Sure! But I'm running out of room and I'm running out of time. Just two days home before heading out to Paris, Brugge and Brussels. Paris is our usual with an apartment rented for a week, this time at the Palais Royal near to Comedies Francaise. Brugge is close to where we'd lived for five years in the 70s. We have also rented an apartment there. We will finalize our trip with a three day stay in Brussels to admire their Grand Place once again and end our stay in a hotel just off the Place.

Europe will take up the rest of September. October takes me to marathon and visit in Minneapolis/St. Paul with friends Parker and David and with daughter Alayna who will join me from Kansas City. Then I head to Hartford where friends Marv and Maryanne will be working towards completion of Marv's 50-state run. In the middle of the month Tom will join me at Maine's Mount Desert Island marathon and we'll stay in first Portsmouth, and then to Bar Harbor which is at Acadia Park. We've never been. Liberty Lady Maricar will be there along with Ali, Donna and Gabriella. I'm home just long enough to switch clothes before heading off to the 2500th Anniversary of the run from Marathon to Athens by Pheidippides. I'll have nine days in Athens. Will my legs survive? If they do, I'm booked for Manchester NH the first weekend of November but it's such a quick turnaround that I'm leery of making it. Enough? That's five in a row! Yes, there's more but I'll save it for another report.

Itinerary

Mon Aug 30 – Diana and Tom

9:00am Depart Newark (EWR) via Continental #628
11:28am Arrive Denver (DEN)

Rental car Thrifty thru Sunday

Hotel Boulder Marriott
2660 Canyon Boulevard, Boulder, Colorado 80302 Tele: 303 440 8877

Fri Sep 3 – Diana and Tom

Travel to Colorado Springs – approx 85 miles from Denver

Hotel Antlers Hilton Colorado Springs
4 South Cascade, Colorado Springs, CO 80903 Tele: 719 955 5600

Sun Sep 5 – Tom

12:25pm Depart Denver (DEN) via Continental #529
6:07pm Arrive Newark and picked up at curb by car service

Mon Sep 6 - Diana

5:00am Bus to start at Palmer Lake
6:30am American Discovery Trail Marathon – 6 ½ hour cut off
www.adtmarathon.com

Tue Sep 7- Diana

2:00pm Depart Antler Hilton in Colorado Springs via shuttle
Peak Transit www.coloradoshuttle.com or 719 687 3456
3:40pm Arrive Denver airport

6:30pm Depart Denver via Continental #529
12:05pm+1 Arrive Newark

No race discounts per race director 2/09/10

From: <david.o.williams@shell.com>

Date: Wed, 11 Nov 2009 08:38:24 -0600

The American Discovery Trail in Colorado Springs was a pretty good marathon but with some issues. It is mostly on a nice wide trail, with a good bit on a rail-trail type so not hilly. But occasionally it goes off and does some steep ups and downs. The surface is crushed granite and in some cases sidewalks or asphalt path. I don't remember any streets.

Start - at a park 26 miles north. Buses from the finish line to the start, packet pickup possible at the park. It was dark at the start area until just before the race so a light would be useful.

Finish - at America the Beautiful Park, very pretty. Plenty of food. Nice medal.

Route - basically straight south through pretty country-side and the edge of the Air Force Academy. Mountain views the whole time without running up them. Later part along a river to the finish. Not much crowd support because you are not accessible on the trail, but good water stops.

Altitude - start about 7100' and goes down to 6300'. But not really any significant downhill, other than the rollers. For me, I had trouble breathing the whole time. I live at 60' and I am twice your size, so oxygen was an issue.

Pasta dinner - 4pm-6pm. Maggie and I got there at 5:05pm and the food was almost all gone. By 5:20 the caterer had left. It was at the park where the finish was so would be pretty except it was windy and rainy at that time.

Packet pickup - at the Hilton. Terrible! 45 minutes in line for a relatively small race. No excuse for this. But easily fixed.

If they fix the packet pickup and the pasta dinner, the race is well-run.

Host hotel - Antlers Hilton - a few blocks from the finish and bus pickup. We stayed at the Quality Suites where I got a better deal. It was a lower end place but actually fairly nice. It is connected to the Clarion Inn and shares breakfast facility. It is a little further from the finish but only about .7 miles. I walked. We had a car so it was an ok location. Without a car, stay at the Hilton.

Restaurants: We ate at a Mexican place Jose Muldoon's that had good food and a nice courtyard. Not too far from the Hilton. We ate at another place north of town called Margaritas at Pine Creek. You would really like it.

Zoo - It is the only zoo on the side of a mountain. Very pretty, with great views. Near the Broadmoor. Overall I wasn't impressed by the animal exhibits - many were being worked on between the summer season and the start of winter. But the giraffe exhibit was outstanding. You can feed them at their eye level.

From: ADTM <runadtmarathon@yahoo.com>
To: Diana Burton <dianab@juno.com>
Date: Tue, 9 Feb 2010 18:36:58 -0800 (PST)

I get told that all the time...email. It was my mission when I took over two years ago. Glad your joining us. ;) Sara

On Feb 9, 2010, at 6:37 PM, Diana Burton <dianab@juno.com> wrote:
I'm impressed that you answer email questions. Thank you. I will register and your answer was fair. Thank you.

On Tue, 9 Feb 2010 17:34:13 -0800 (PST) ADTM runadtmarathon@yahoo.com writes:
No I apologize. Since the marathon is one of the most reasonably priced in the us, we can't afford additional discounts.

On Feb 9, 2010, at 4:24 PM, Diana Burton <dianab@juno.com> wrote:
Hello to the race director -- I'm coming to Colorado Springs this September wanting to participate in the marathon. Question: Are there any registration discounts for USATF, 50-states club, seniors, military dependents, anything?

Date - Monday, September 06, 2010 @ 6:30 AM local time

Address - America the Beautiful Park and Pikes Peak Greenway Trail, W. Colorado Ave & Cimino Drive

Fees - Marathon \$65 til 7/31, \$75 8/1-9/4 at 6PM MDT, 1/2 Marathon \$45 til 7/31,\$55 8/1-9/4 at 6PM MDT

Brief Description - ADTM events are staged from America the Beautiful Park. The finish for all events is at the park. The start lines for the marathon and marathon relay are in Palmer Lake, 26 miles north of Colorado Springs. Marathoners and first leg relay runners should go to America the Beautiful Park to be transported by bus to the start line. The half marathon starts and ends at America the Beautiful Park.

Web Site - <http://www.adtmarathon.com> Details for the ADTM events are to be found at the web site.

Race Day Registration - We encourage early registration. However, should you need to register on race day, the fees are \$80 for the Half marathon and \$100 for the Marathon.

Marathon Course Description - The ADT Marathon is a USATF certified Boston Qualifier (CO-08011-DCR). The marathon starts (6:30 AM) in Palmer Lake, CO. The N to S trail drops gradually from 7300 feet to 6040 feet in downtown Colorado Springs. It is a gently rolling course, with hard-packed trails and some asphalt. It is east of the Rampart Range and offers views of the majestic US Air Force Academy. The race ends at the America the Beautiful Park. There are some minor road crossings, which will have course marshals.

Half Marathon Course Description - The half marathon event starts (6:30 AM) and finishes at the America the Beautiful Park. The half marathon course has little altitude change; it goes north from the America the Beautiful Park and follows Monument Creek out to a point north of Garden of the Gods Road and back. The course is on hard-packed trails with some asphalt and a brief section of concrete paved trail. There are two minor street crossings, which will have course marshals.

Marathon Relay Course Description (4 Persons) - The Heuberger Motors sponsored relay will begin after the marathon, starting in Palmer Lake at 6:45 AM. Relay runners will run to the scheduled transition, with the final runner finishing in America the Beautiful Park. The altitude gradually drops along the trail, starting at 7,225 feet, and ending around 6,040 feet at America the Beautiful Park. The trail is mostly packed dirt, with short sections of asphalt and concrete. 1st leg: 6.75 mi, 2nd leg: 8.5 mi, 3rd leg: 6.75 mi, 4th leg: 4.2 mi.

Walkers Enter the Half Marathon Only! - Walkers are welcome for the half marathon event, but not the marathon or marathon relay events due to time limits. The course closes at 1:00 PM. No aid station services by volunteers or emergency services will be available after 1:00 PM.

Course Rules - Runners are not to push baby carriages or have dogs along on the course. Radios and other electronic devices (and earbuds) are prohibited. If you arrive with such a device, it will be confiscated at the start and returned at the finish. Walkers are welcome only in the half marathon event. The course closes at 1:00 PM. There will be no early start for the marathon event. Each participant must complete the liability waiver form.

Packet Pick-up Prior to Race Day - Packets won't be mailed. Marathon relay packets must be picked up by the team captain or team member before race day. To get the relay packet a liability waiver form must be signed by all team members. See website for downloadable form. Runners should pick up packets on Sunday, Sept. 5. Times and locations TBA in late February. The packets will include a tech short-sleeved shirt for each participant. Shirts are guaranteed at the time of packet pickup if you register prior to July 31, 2010.

Race Day Packet Pick-up (Marathon) - You will receive your race bib at the Palmer Lake start area on Monday morning, Sep. 6, Labor Day. If you are using the bus, you should arrive at the America the Beautiful Park at 5 AM so you can hop on an early bus. If you receive your bib on the morning of the race, you may claim your shirt/race packet at the Park pavilion after you complete the event. There will be a sweats check at the start line (no valuables). You can pick up in the finish area at the America the Beautiful Park.

Shirts - Shirts are guaranteed at the time of packet pickup if you register prior to July 31. If a different size is desired, it may be exchanged only if there are unassigned shirts available. The packets will include a dri-balance (cotton/polyester) short-sleeved shirt for each participant. Male and Female sizing available. Male shirts run slightly large.

Shirt logistics - Additional shirts will be available for pickup at registration to runners based on their sign up date. Any shirts not assigned to pre-registered runners will be distributed at walk in registration and race day registration. If a different size is desired, it may be exchanged only if there are unassigned shirts available.

Parking - Do not attempt to park at America the Beautiful Park on race day. Ample parking will be available in the area to the east of the railroad yard by America the Beautiful Park. Parking marshalls will not allow you to park in the immediate area of the Park. Please follow the directions above to the county parking garage or to a side street near the garage south of Colorado Ave.

Bus to the Marathon Start Area - The marathon events start in Palmer Lake, 26 miles north of Colorado Springs. Bus transportation will be provided for marathon and initial marathon relay participants from the America the Beautiful Park to the start area at Palmer Lake. Bus departure times for marathon participants from the park will be between 5:00 and 5:15 AM. There will be one bus departing from the Hotel at 5:00 AM. Participants can be dropped off at Palmer Lake; however, there will be no parking available.

Marathon Awards and Cash Prizes - For both Men and Women: 1st Place Overall - \$500, 2nd Place Overall - \$250, 3rd Place Overall - \$100; 1st Place Masters - \$100, 2nd Place Masters - \$75, 3rd Place Masters - \$50. The top finishers and top masters finishers will receive special awards, as well as cash prizes. Age group awards in 5-year increments will also be award to the top three in each division. There will be no award double dipping.

Awards Ceremonies - The Awards Ceremony is at 8:50 AM for the half marathon and 11:00 AM for the marathon and marathon relay.

Age Groups for the Marathon and Half Marathon - Marathon and Half Marathon
For both Men and Women, in 5 year categories.

Host Hotel - The Antlers Hilton Colorado Springs is the host hotel. The address is 4 S. Cascade Avenue Colorado Springs, CO 80903
Tel: +1-877-452-4806 . (\$82 in 2010.) The hotel is located only a few blocks east of the America the Beautiful Park. Call in your reservation and mention the American Discovery Trail Marathon. Reserve a room in advance as the hotel will likely be filled over the Labor Day holiday weekend.

Pizza, Pizza, Pizza and Beverages - Pizza will be served to all finishers and their entourage at the finish area. Of course, we'll also serve the normal finish area food, with fruit, drinks, and more.

Additional Information - Please note that fees are discounted for online registration only. A processing fee is assessed to all online registrations.

Average Ratings: Course - ★★★★★ Organization - ★★★★★ Fans - ★★★★★

★★★★☆ **Too much traffic both ways for the trail.** (about: 2009)

Course: 4 Organization: 2 Fans: 3

G. S. from Georgia (9/14/09)

50+ previous marathons | 1 American Discovery Trail Marathon

The course was open to hikers, bikers, and four-wheelers going in both directions. This would have been better if the foliage had been trimmed off of the course. There was no clock anywhere on the course, and the half was not marked. We were warned about cramps, but there were no bananas or oranges to help this. The course itself was great.

★★★★☆ **Nice downhill trail - mostly crushed granite path** (about: 2009)

Course: 5 Organization: 5 Fans: 2

J. L. from Austin, TX (9/9/09)

11-50 previous marathons | 1 American Discovery Trail Marathon

I really enjoyed this race. There were very few road crossings, the scenery in the first 16 miles was outstanding, and the course was very well marked except for one spot where five paths came together. The finish line had more than enough pizza and sodas for even the slower runners.

I couldn't find a lot of information about the course on the web site, so here: the first 20 miles or so are on a wide, crushed-granite trail; then there are about three miles on pavement or concrete; and then about three miles of crushed granite and concrete to the finish at America the Beautiful Park.

For 2009, I felt that the course got a little hot - it can be very exposed. Another complaint would be that the course is open to bikers - it's a bike path, and there are a lot of them near the finish, some of them with very poor etiquette.

The aid stations were about every two miles, and they were well stocked with water and Gatorade, sometimes Heed, and most aid stations had lots of Hammer gels.

I really like the race medal - it's a nice design and it feels solid.

This would be a great first marathon, or for getting a goal time.

★★★★☆ **Nice trail run** (about: 2009)

Course: 4 Organization: 4 Fans: 2

D. M. from Fort Collins, CO (9/8/09)

50+ previous marathons

Pluses:

- + Gentle grade (net downhill; few hills)
- + Packed cinder/some asphalt
- + Pizza at the end
- + Aid stations - everything promised
- + Host hotel Antlers Hilton was nice and a good value given the quality
- + Attractive, quality medal (though no 2009 designation)
- + Cool finish location - stunning park

Minuses:

- Very long line to pick up packets (all of the packets got mixed up, so it took a long time to find them)
 - They bussed everyone out so early that there was almost an hour of waiting before the race started
 - Running by the same sort of grass, trees and foothills got a little boring, especially for non-locals (though overall it was quite scenic)
-

★★★★★ **Great race that you need to do!** (about: 2009)

Course: 5 Organization: 5 Fans: 3

J. V. from The great state of Texas (9/8/09)

50+ previous marathons | 1 American Discovery Trail Marathon

What a wonderful race! New course this year (was my first time, so it would have been new for me anyway!). Very nice course all on a

trail. Very scenic. I hate altitude, and my time sucked worse than normal, but I jogged with a lot of nice folks.

Let's start with what I did not like - a short list. Give me a second... I am still thinking.... Maybe there could have been a few more porta-potties at the start? Or bottles of water at the finish to take for the walk back to the hotel? Man, I am struggling to find the negatives. Oh! I hate that most races use school buses! I knew that I could find something to complain about if thought about it long enough. My legs are too long for school buses. There! I found a negative to post!

Positives: Everything else. Great course. Great location. Great volunteers. Good rest stops, and tons of them, especially for being a trail run! Nice medal and a clean race shirt - not a billboard for every company within 50 miles of the race. Sex specific shirts (not that I can be a guy, but I am sure that if I was a female that I'd like a shirt made for a female). Lots of food at the finish, a great park finish location... and did I mention the views yet?

Things out of the race control: it was warm. We were at altitude. Elevation charts never reflect what I feel while running a course. The staff at the host hotel were very friendly... hey, good things can be out of your control as well. Very friendly public users of the trail; they all cheered us on.

The course must be a huge net downhill. I saw the numbers. There a several tough bumps to negotiate along the way, though. Don't be fooled by the "net" downhill to think that it is all downhill. I was brought to walk a couple of times once it got warm.

This is a great event in great location. Come early and do some of the tourist things. It is an amazing location for a race - the small towns, the views, everything. I choose restaurants poorly and had okay food at best, but everything else more than made up for it. It was even affordable to get to Colorado Springs and the host hotel was a good deal too! I'd recommend this race to everyone. It is at altitude, but most mountain state marathons are... duh!

★★★★★ **Fun course, great volunteers** (about: 2008)

Course: 5 Organization: 4 Fans: 4

J. P. from Colorado Springs, CO (10/16/08)

3 previous marathons | 1 American Discovery Trail Marathon

I am from Colorado Springs, so I'm used to running in the altitude, but the later start (7 a.m.) and the heat were tough for me. The first part of the course is very scenic, as it starts up at Palmer Lake and winds through the Air Force Academy. There are some hills to deal with, but most aren't too long. After about 17 miles, the path is more urban and not as pretty, but still interesting in sections. The volunteer support was fantastic and I really appreciated everyone who helped. There was more crowd support along the trail than I expected, and especially at the finish. I liked running a smaller marathon and not needing to run through a crowd of runners. I had trouble getting information from the organizers through email, though. Overall, I really enjoyed the race and would run it again.

★★★★☆ **Good and bad** (about: 2008)

Course: 3 Organization: 4 Fans: 4

J. B. from Denver, CO (9/16/08)

6-10 previous marathons | 2 American Discovery Trail Marathons

First of all, the volunteers were fantastic!! Also liked the finish area. As for suggestions, please lose the trip around the lake at the start... way too narrow! Also got thrown off by the misplaced early mile markers. That should be easy to correct. All in all, an enjoyable experience.

★★★★★ **great organization; nice and scenic course** (about: 2008)

Course: 5 Organization: 5 Fans: 5

d. I. from SC, USA (9/3/08)

11-50 previous marathons | 1 American Discovery Trail Marathon

This was my first time running a marathon at altitude, and I was not disappointed. It was tough, although the course runs on trails and downhill. Do not try this course if you are looking for a PR; however, it is less hard on your joints and muscles than a road race. There was just enough sun to enjoy the gorgeous, scenic paths, 6:30 is the right time of the day to start (although for some reason, we started at 7 a.m. only). the organization was great in regards to the shuttle buses, all aid stations were well planned and food and drinks were plentiful, volunteers were incredible; thanks much to all, including Pikes Peak club members pacers and the race director! I will be back next year.

★★★★☆ **Discover a treasure of CO at ADT** (about: 2008)

Course: 4 Organization: 3 Fans: 4

[Marina White](#) from Irvine, CA (9/2/08)

6-10 previous marathons | 1 American Discovery Trail Marathon

The course run this year ('08) has not been used since '01, and I can't imagine the one used in those years could have been as pretty as this one! The vast majority was on gravel trails (with the downside of this being that rocks can get in your socks - be prepared!) overlooking a gorgeous valley of trees or streams. Except for a couple short and very steep uphill, it was flat or downhill. The finish was right past a lovely fountain in a pretty park full of families and happy people. :-) Course support was abundant and great - very supportive and helpful handing out water and Gatorade (which was always cold and not watered down thankfully!). The organization was a bit poor - we started half an hour late due to some late buses, and they also had too few restrooms at the start. However, they allowed same-day packet pick up, which is always helpful.

★★★★☆ **Decent, Small Marathon** (about: 2007)

Course: 3 Organization: 5 Fans: 3

B. S. from Illinois (9/7/07)

11-50 previous marathons | 1 American Discovery Trail Marathon

I ran the full marathon. Being from Illinois, the thin air was an issue, even after being in Colorado for 5 days prior to the race. This was a laidback, small race that I enjoyed. The 6:30 a.m. start helped beat the heat somewhat. The course was not all that scenic, although views of Pikes Peak and other mountains are present. The trail mainly follows an urban stream (Monument and Fountain Creeks) and runs near Interstate 25, condos, parks, warehouses, office buildings, etc. Nothing special. Race officials were not present at the turnaround at the south end, not that anyone would cheat (Google Rosie Ruiz), but it would be nice to have a presence there to keep people honest. There are no timing chips or mats used in this race. The far northern end of the race near the Air Force Academy was the most scenic, but the good scenery was only present for a few miles. The volunteers were very helpful and friendly. Aid stations were well stocked and more than adequately spaced. Pizza and drinks at the finish for everyone - not just runners! Not that I wanted any pizza at 10:30 a.m. after running 26.2 miles, although my kids dug in. Some fruit and bagels for the runners would be nice. I would run it again if in the area, but wouldn't make a special trip for it.



• **What to do:** Is NBC's Olympic theme music still ringing in your ears? Are you experiencing toe loop, double McTwist and Super G withdrawal? Get pumped up for the Summer Games of 2012 with a visit to the Olympic Training Center (1750 E. Boulder St.; 719-866-4618; teamusa.org), where scores of elite athletes live and train for a variety of sports, including men's gymnastics, trampoline and triathlon. The Olympic memorabilia is disappointingly thin, but the free tour lets you peek in on training in progress: You might spot an aspiring medalist on the pommel horse or catch an eye-popping display of marksmanship at the pistol range. Kids can pose on a medal stand and mug for photos with svelte statues. And of course, there's a gift shop full of Olympic gear. Still longing for the thrills and spills of the Winter Games? Head over to the World Figure Skating Museum (20 First St.; 719-635-5200; www.worldskatingmuseum.org), which keeps the magic of the triple lutz alive through photos, videos and displays of sequined costumes. Watching all that sweat fly can be quite an inspiration, so head next to Garden of the Gods, a stunning cluster of red-rock formations. Learn about the region's geology at the visitor center (1805 N 30th St.; 719-634-6666; gardenofgods.com), then get out and get moving. Hiking, biking and equestrian trails, some paved, invite exploration; look up as you wander to marvel at elite athletes of another breed—rock climbers—forging daredevil routes up steep cliffs. When the sports theme has worn thin, stop by Magic Town in Old Colorado City, a historic stretch of charming boutiques and galleries. Created by artist Michael Garman, Magic Town (2418 W. Colorado Ave.; 719-471-9391; michaelgarman.com) is a slightly kitschy but mesmerizing small-scale replica of a gritty, Depression-era city populated by hundreds of sculpted characters.

• **What to eat:** Don't miss Yoo Mae, a Japanese restaurant in a modest downtown storefront space (21 E. Kiowa St.; 719-473-8105). The owner has devised sushi rolls named after 49 states (he's still working on Indiana), and they're melt-in-your-mouth delicious; locals also rave about the noodle and tempura dishes. In Old Colorado City, Pizzeria Rustica (2527 W. Colorado Ave.; 719-632-8121) gets high marks for its fresh house-made mozzarella, and Paravicini's Italian Bistro (2802 W. Colorado Ave.; 719-471-8200) offers a tasty array of traditional pasta dishes.

• **Where to stay:** For a splurge, book a room at the Broadmoor (1 Lake Ave; 710-634-7711; broadmoor.com). Nestled against the Rocky Mountains, the five-star, five-diamond resort drips with old-world luxury without feeling stuffy. It boasts a spa, golf course, movie theater, three pools and plenty of boutiques and bistros, some with live music at night. Or try the sleek and centrally located Hyatt Place (503 W. Garden of the Gods Rd.; 719-265-9385; coloradosprings.place.hyatt.com).