



Colorado: Manitou Springs and Salida Trip Notes March 9-17, 2016

Highlights

- I'm not doing a full report since this is the third time I've been on this almost exact same trip. This time however was with Tom. We eat more and better with Tom along.
- The impetus was the Run Thru Time half-marathon event in Salida of which I've signed up three times and still have NOT done it.
- We love hotels and this gave us three unique experiences, two of which I'd already done: Cliff House in Manitou Springs, The Palace in Salida, and the new Westin at Denver Airport.
- New Jersey friends Dave and Dana moved to Colorado Springs a couple years ago. We had dinner in Manitou Springs and then they stayed in Salida too where we had dinner and hiked.
- Hiking leader friends Steve and Nola first introduced me to Salida during a hiking event and now it's tempting to return each year.
- The elevation is tough on both of us, but on Tom especially.
- One day Dave and Dana took me to Browns Creek Falls to hike from 9,000' up to 9,900 feet with half of the four hours through snow.
- My body failed me one 30-hour stretch with either food poisoning or a 24-hour bug. Fortunately I had a nice room.
- I'll stay short of pictures pending Tom making a photo show to put up onto www.TomsKoi.com.



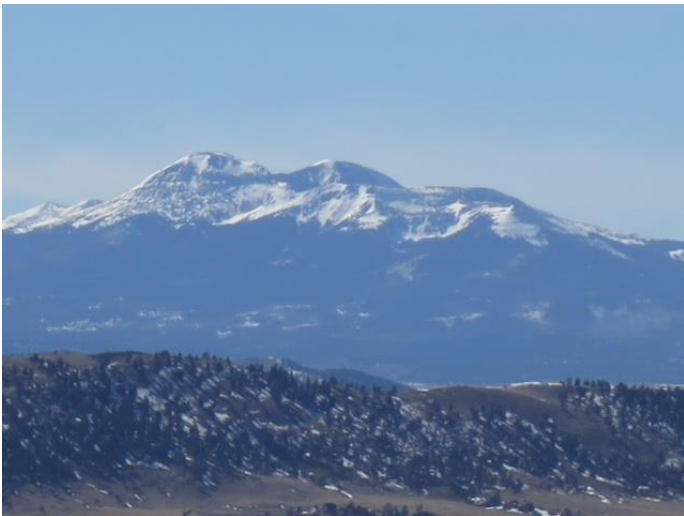
The Cliff House in Manitou Springs is a bargain when its off-season. Rose on the bed, a room that's a suite with a view, a spa tub, and a plate of chocolate coated strawberries, a lovely breakfast buffet, and a \$30 food credit all for the price of a Holiday Inn.

Tom has always been an aficionado of Eggs Benedict and the Cliff House impressed him in many ways and definitely with their restaurant skills.





A Mansion we'd toured previously in Manitou Springs, then a side of a building painting of what we were certain was the liquor store manager.



The land of wide open spaces. This was the northern route over the pass where suddenly the snow covered mountains open up.

During my first stay at The Palace Hotel, a historically significant hotel with views of the town, park and river, I checked out most all of their rooms and found room 301 to be my favorite. It's a huge room with windows on two sides. They bring breakfast in the morning. Six of us had dinner in Dave and Dana's room like we've done in the past, having purchased foodstuff at the supermarket. This allows us to dine with their dog C.C. too.



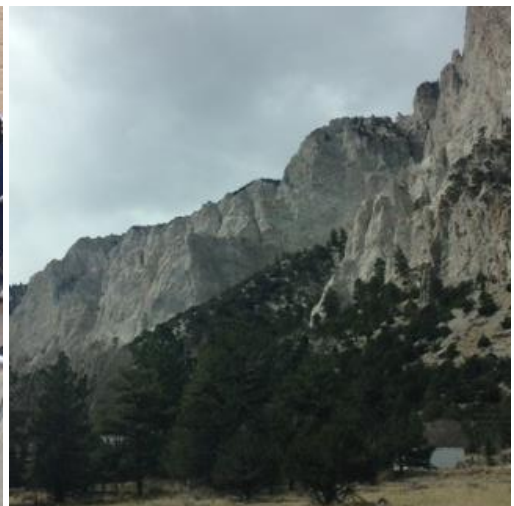
Tom sent around this picture with the following amusing message: *Our hotel in Salida, Colorado has everything - a view of the river from our room, a large suite with a kitchen, and a filling station next door. (Liquor Store.) It was like spring today with sun and a few puffy whites and high 50s low 60s. We drove over to Breckenridge (I'd never been there before), had a nice Mexican lunch, stopped and toured around Leadville on the way, then back to Salida via another route. The altitude affects us both some. Diana's doing a trail run with friends tomorrow. It's an organized annual event and she was here last year and stayed in this old neat hotel (The Palace). I'm not a big fan of the little towns out in the boonies as they're pretty uninteresting and eclectic. Lots of shanty like dwellings. The mountains, particularly those with snow remaining on them, are very picturesque, but I wouldn't want to live out here. I love my little house in Middletown and all that goes with it.*



Salida – some will remember that at my first trip to this quaint little town I immediately got into a couple real estate offices thinking I'd like to live in Salida. It's wonderful! Yet it's a bit remote, pretty mixed as Tom explains, and too far from big civilization so I'm staying in New Jersey. However, for those on a budget, I bet you could sell your New Jersey home, buy in Salida, and retire on the proceeds. It's got a lot going for it yet I'm glad that I don't need to move from NJ.

What did we do in Salida for 6 nights? We enjoyed walking the town, along the river, and even staying in our room with the views. Well, when I wasn't ill. One day we drove to Mt Princeton for lunch and along the White Cliffs/Bluffs. One day we spent in a big circle driving to Leadville, then onto Breckenridge for lunch, then back through other smaller towns.

I chickened out on going to Crested Butte since it was 2-hours one way and I'd driven enough for the Breckenridge trip. We might should have gone to The Sands but lazed around town instead.



On our hiking trail, it looks like a bear at the end of the trail but its C.C., the dog that Dave and Dana got at a pound and who must have thought he died and went to heaven. A good hiking partner too! The town of Salida has a lot of arts and crafts and here is a full size sculpture of one of the crazier. We would spend plenty of time surveying the art scene – after a while in the Gin Distillery. Here are some of the Chalk Cliffs/Bluffs just beyond and in view of Mt Princeton.

Food! I'd been looking forward to Fish Tacos but I overdid. In Manitou Springs we at Crystal Park Cantina and we both had tacos. In Salida there is the Boathouse. In Breckenridge there is Mi Casa Cantina. Always I overate. Only in Mt Princeton did I not overeat and that was because I'd been laid flat, maybe from too many tacos, the couple days prior.

Onto Denver Airport – We took the long way to Denver, going through Canon City after going by the Royal Gorge which is quite impressive but set up like a Disneyland.

Here is the view from our Denver airport hotel room. The new Westin is intended to look like the wings of a bird, and to reflect the tent sails of the airport. The room was nice but nothing dramatically special and in fact just another Sheraton type room. It's the outside-coming-inside that's special. And that its all of two minute walk to the United Airlines counter. The transit center won't open until April 22.



An interesting experience at this newly opened hotel at Denver Airport. Two more pictures from the web:



As we were departing the next day, it started snowing. The Pilot apologized for having to go back for deicing saying they'd hoped to get out before the cold and snow. After we left they had 3-6" of snow and lots of wind so we felt lucky to get home on time.

Itinerary

Wed Mar 9

12:03pm Depart Newark EWR via UA#1811
2:31pm Arrive Denver DEN

Rental car Hertz - drive about 1 ½ hours

Hotel Cliff House Hotel at Pikes Peak – 1 night
306 Canon Avenue, Manitou Springs, CO 80829 Tele 719 685 3000
Conf#268861269 <http://www.thecliffhouse.com/>

Dinner with Dave and Dana in Manitou Springs

Thu Mar 10

Am Drive from Manitou Springs to Salida – about 2 hours via upper route

Hotel The Palace Hotel – 6 nights in room 301
204 North F. Street, Salida, CO 81201 Tele 719 207 4175
<http://www.salidapalacehotel.com/> - Vicki owner

Fri Mar 11

Pm T-shirt pick up and maybe the pasta dinner

Sat Mar 12

Dave and Dana for one overnight in The Palace hotel Hutchinson #101 pet-friendly suite

“Grocery Store” dinner in C.C.’s room; Diana to shop for similar foodstuff

Sat Mar 12

Run Thru Time event – sign up and not do it unless weather perfect

Many of you have asked me if I had an elevation profile. I am sending you a link to an elevation profile sent to me by Sarah Huddleson who ran the course a while back.
<https://connect.garmin.com/activity/1040159798> This does not contain the first mile of the course which has about 150 vert feet of elevation gain and loss all on road.

Sun, Mon, Tue Mar 13, 14, 15

Ideas: Day trips to Leadville, Mt Princeton, Crested Butte, Sand Dunes National Park

Wed Mar 16

AM Depart Salida for Denver via southern route through Royal Gorge and Canon City

4:00pm Turn in rental car

Hotel Westin Denver International Airport – 1 night - StarHOT form in file
8300 Pena Boulevard, Denver, CO 80249 Tele 303 317 1800
Conf#121639507 – <http://www.westin-denver-airport.com/>

<http://www.thedenverchannel.com/news/local-news/15-secrets-of-the-new-denver-international-airport-westin-hotel-project>

Thu Mar 17

3:46pm Depart Denver DEN via UA#2018 (later flight due to lower rate)
9:34pm Arrive Newark EWR