

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOU COME TO COLORADO



### THE ALTITUDE

They call it Rocky Mountain High for a reason. The oxygen level in Aurora is about 15% lower than it is at sea level. Above 8,000 feet, that can increase to 25%. For many, acclimating to increased elevation is easy with few to no side effects. Some, however, will experience altitude sickness, which can include headaches, fatigue, dehydration, and sometimes nausea. To ward off these side effects, take it easy the first couple of days of your visit.



### THE SUNSHINE

If you've never been to Colorado before, you may picture a winter wonderland in your mind, and that's true to a certain extent. Aurora averages about 60 inches of snow every year (with more in the high country). The bleak skies don't stick around, though. This is a local point of debate, but many say Colorado averages more than 300 days of sunshine every year. Whether that number is exaggerated or not, the sun is ample and formidable here. Make sure to pick up some sunscreen for your trip, yes, even in the winter.

## HIGH ALTITUDE TIPS

### DRINK WATER

Before your trip to Denver, and while you are here, drinking plenty of water is the best way to help your body adjust easily to our higher altitude. The low humidity in Colorado keeps the air dry, like the desert, so you need about twice as much water here as you would drink at home closer to sea level. Dehydration is a contributor to altitude sickness, in addition to the obviously reduced blood oxygen saturation levels.

### MONITOR YOUR ALCHOL INTAKE

In Denver's rarified air, golf balls go ten percent farther... and so do cocktails, at least until you've acclimatized to the altitude and dry climate. Recent studies have shown that until you are fully acclimatized, your body can't process alcohol as well, so go easy on the libations. Alcohol can also exasperate dehydration.

### EAT FOODS HIGH IN POTASSIUM

Foods such as broccoli, bananas, avocado, cantaloupe, celery, greens, bran, chocolate, granola, dates, dried fruit, potatoes and tomatoes will help you replenish electrolytes by balancing salt intake.

### WATCH YOUR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The effects of exercise are more intense here. If you normally run 10 miles a day at home, you might try 6 miles in Denver until you build up the red blood cells.

### PACK FOR THE SUN

With less water vapor in the air at this altitude, the sky really is bluer in Colorado. But there's 25 percent less protection from the sun, so sunscreen is a must. Denver receives more than 300 days of sunshine each year (more than San Diego or Miami). Bring sunglasses, sunscreen, lip balm... even in winter.

### DRESS IN LAYERS

Two days before your trip to Denver, check the weather and use this information to pack appropriately. Because the sun is especially powerful in Denver, it can feel much warmer than the actual temperature during the daytime, but then become very chilly after sundown, particularly in the spring and fall. It is best to layer your clothing.