

CLOSING

Thank you for visiting the Colorado State Capitol. Stairways will take you back to the first floor. You may also use the small elevators located on the east side of the floor. Public restrooms are located in the basement near the cafeteria.

For more information about the Colorado State Capitol and to schedule a tour, please visit www.colorado.gov/capitol

Colorado State Capitol Visitor Services
Colorado Legislative Council
029 State Capitol Building
Denver, Colorado 80203

(303) 866-2604
www.colorado.gov/capitoltour



Self-Guided Student Tour of the Colorado State Capitol



Capitol Etiquette

Groups should consist of no more than 30 guests.

Please keep noise level down (no louder than a whisper).

NO RUNNING

Refrain from climbing on, throwing things, or yelling over the brass rails.

Walk in stairways following in a single-file row on one side only.

Observe posted rules upon entry into both the House and Senate Galleries.

Do not touch the artwork.

COLORADO FUN FACTS (continued)

This pamphlet was designed to help teachers, chaperones, and other adults guide their students through the Colorado State Capitol. It is our intent to have a tour guide for each school group as we feel personal interaction is the best way to learn. However, we realize there are times this will not be possible.

This pamphlet was designed to help teachers and chaperones in the event a Capitol guide is unavailable. This can be read aloud to your students as you tour the building.

- The world's largest flat-top mountain is the Grand Mesa in western Colorado.
- The highest paved road in North America is the scenic drive to Mount Evans, which reaches 14,258 feet or over 4,345 meters.
- Colorado is often ranked as the best place for outdoor activities. Colorado has about 30 ski resorts, over 40 state parks, four national parks (there are 58 in the entire U.S.), and over 300 sunny days a year.
- Colorado's southwest corner is the only place in America where the corners of four states meet: New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and Colorado.
- The Buckhorn Exchange, located on 100 Osage St., is Colorado's oldest continuously operating restaurant and bar. It opened in 1893 and holds Denver Liquor License Number One.
- Colfax Avenue, located to the north side of the Capitol, is the world's longest continuous street in America. It is 26.5 miles long and stretches from Golden through Aurora.
- Leadville, Colorado, is the highest incorporated city in the United States at 10,430 feet.
- The world's first rodeo was held in Deer Trail, Colorado, on July 4th, 1869.
- Colorado has the highest mean altitude of any state.

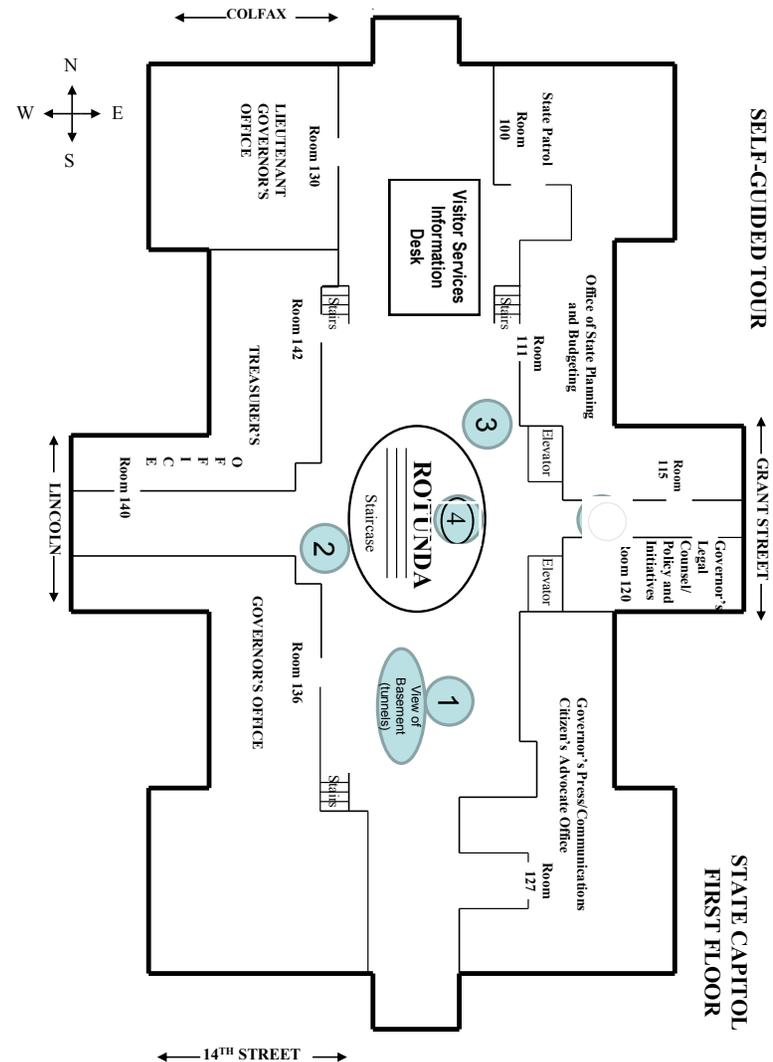
COLORADO FUN FACTS



- Even though Denver is 5,280 feet and is known as the “Mile High City,” we are actually only the third highest U.S. capitol in elevation, behind Santa Fe New Mexico at 7,000 ft. and Cheyenne, Wyoming at 6,097.
- Denver has America’s largest park system with 205 city parks and 20,000 acres of mountain park areas. In the city proper, by design, no resident lives more than six blocks from green space.
- Mesa Verde National Park in southwestern Colorado has 600 Native American cliff dwellings, which are structures built within caves and under outcroppings in cliffs.

These structures were built a thousand years ago. Mesa Verde was the first place in the United States to become a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

These sites are considered to have outstanding universal value, and include locations such as the Egyptian Pyramids, England’s Stonehenge, Australia’s Great Barrier Reef, and China’s Great Wall, among others.



Thank you for visiting the Colorado State Capitol. This is where our legislature makes the laws that affect everyone in Colorado. The Governor's office, the Lieutenant Governor's office, and the State Treasurer's office are in this building. They are all responsible for seeing that the laws are carried out (executed).

STATION 1 – Governor's Office in South Lobby **Executive Chamber**

The entire first floor is used by the Executive branch of the state government and is the area of the Capitol that has always been used for Colorado's Governors.

- On the west side of this atrium is the Governor's Office called the Executive Chamber.

(Gather around brass rail in front of Governor's office)

Tunnels

One of the most unique features of our building is the underground tunnel system.

- It was used in the old days to bring coal carts into the Capitol to be used in furnaces to heat the building.
- We consumed an estimated one-ton of coal per hour!
- Today the building is heated with a geothermal heating system, so the furnaces and the coal cars are no longer used.
- These tunnels, while currently locked and used for storage, still exist beneath our basement floor.

STATION 2- Seated on the Floor Facing Wainscoting

- Before the Colorado (or Pikes Peak) Gold Rush of 1859, Colorado was populated by Native American Indian groups who lived nomadically as seasonal hunters.

CAPITOL FUN FACTS



- The word “capitol” (the building) sounds like “capital” (the main city), but they are two different words. Do you remember the shape of the dome when you looked up? It’s a circle that looks like the letter “o.” That should remind you that the word “capitol” (the building) is spelled with an “o.”
- America’s first women lawmakers worked in the Colorado House of Representatives in 1895. There were three of them!
- Children as young as four have testified before a committee in the Colorado State Capitol! That’s when citizens tell the lawmakers what they think about ideas for new laws.
- Capitol architect E.E. Myers also designed the state capitols in Michigan and Texas
- The light fixtures you see throughout the building are original. Before the 1930s, when they were converted to electric, they were gas lit.

STATION 10 Continued - Presidential Gallery, 3rd Floor

Rotunda

- **LAWRENCE WILLIAMS** (1913—2003), a Massachusetts portrait artist, painted each of the presidential portraits from George Washington through to George W. Bush.
- In 1979, the portraits were purchased by an Arizona couple and then donated, in 1982, to the Capitol.
- Williams also painted President Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush though these were not part of the original gift bestowed to the Capitol. Instead, these two portraits were purchased with state funds then added to the Presidential Collection.
- Williams painted a Clinton portrait, but Mr. Williams donated it to the White House whose staff then donated it to the Clinton Library. The Library has provided the Capitol with a giclée replica of the original.
- To maintain a complete set of Presidents, funds were raised privately to commission the President Obama portrait, which was painted by Colorado artist, **SARAH BOARDMAN** and added to the collection in 2011.

STATION 11 – Entrance to the Dome and Mr.

Brown’s Attic

Our Capitol museum is located between the third floor and the dome and houses artifacts, photographs, drawings, and exhibits for visitors of all ages to enjoy!

The Dome

The dome is included on public historical tours—please visit the Visitor Services Information Desk on the 1st or 3rd floor for more information.

- **The 1859 Gold Rush** brought an additional 60,000+ people to the Denver area in a very short period of time. While the gold wasn’t as plentiful as hoped, many people remained in the area to live.
- With the influx of so many people, Colorado needed the services a state government provides: police, schools, roads, and clean water.
- Colorado became a territory in 1861, and gained Statehood in 1876, as the 38th state in the Union.
- We are called the **Centennial State** because we became a state exactly 100 years after the Declaration of Independence was signed by our United States’ founding fathers.
- **Elijah E. Myers** (1832-1909) was the original architect of the Capitol. Work began on the building in 1886, ten years after statehood.
- Over two acres of **Yule marble** were used in the capitol flooring, most of it quarried in Marble, Colorado.
- Yule marble is the white marble used in the Federal and State buildings throughout the nation.
- The Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C is made from this marble, as is the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.
- The distinctive red veined wainscoting is known locally as **Beulah Rose Onyx** and the Capitol is one of only 3 places in the world where you can see it! (A fireplace in the Governor’s Residence and at a courthouse in Pueblo are the other locations.) It is from Beulah, Colorado, near the town of Pueblo, to our south.
- Due to the unique veining in the stone, characters and creatures can often be spotted lurking in the walls. Can you find George Washington? Perhaps a

turkey?

- Capitol builders used entire known world supply of rose onyx in our building, about two miles of this stone.
- This building used 12 million bricks, and 280,000 cubic feet of granite. It weighs an estimated 300 million pounds, about the same as 30,000 African elephants!
- At the time of the building's completion, we had spent \$60,000 on landscaping and \$100,000 on permanent furnishings. The total construction costs, after all the bills were paid, came to \$2,715,362.
- The construction was budgeted to cost slightly less than one million dollars and the project was estimated to take 4 years to complete. (It took about fifteen!)

STATION 3 – Women's Gold Wall Hanging

This hand-stitched wall hanging tells the story of prominent Colorado women in the first 100 years of statehood and was a gift for our state's centennial in 1976.

- More than 3,500 people put at least one stitch in the tapestry.
- Each contributor signed the book located in the case beneath the tapestry.
- The words embroidered around the edge of the tapestry are the lyrics to *America the Beautiful*, written over 100 years ago by **KATHARINE LEE BATES** (1859-1929).

The remarkable scenery of Pikes Peak Mountain near Colorado Springs inspired her to write these words.

- The Native American woman on the upper left is **CHIPETA** (1843/4–1924), who, with her husband, Ute

THIRD FLOOR

STATION 9 – HENRY C. BROWN PORTRAIT

The Capitol's oldest and largest oil painting hangs on the west wall outside the Senate Gallery.

- In 1864, with the intent of selling off lots for houses, **HENRY CORDES BROWN** (1820–1906) homesteaded 160 acres of land in what is now known as Capitol Hill.

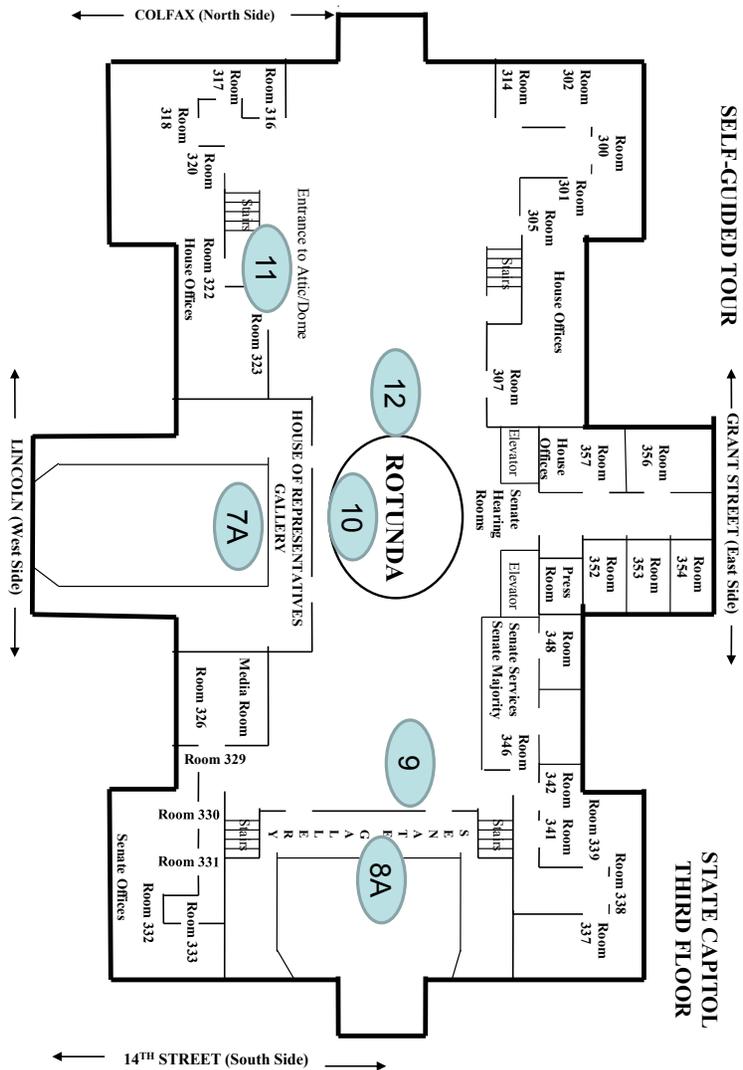
He donated 10-acres of his property to the state of Colorado for the express purpose of constructing the Capitol. As a result of his offering, many of Colorado's wealthy residents purchased land around the donated property to build their mansions.

- Brown also built the elegant and world-renowned Brown Palace Hotel at 321 17th Street, a few blocks away.
- To honor Henry C. Brown, we created a capitol museum and named it Mr. Brown's Attic. It is located between the third floor and the dome. Its main entrance is on the southwest side of the third floor. We hope you will visit during your tour!

STATION 10 – Third Floor Rotunda

The 16 round stained glass portraits above are called **Colorado's Circle of Fame**.

- Each portrait represents a person important in our history. For example, **GENERAL JAMES W. DENVER** (1817-1892) was the Territorial Governor of Kansas for whom the city of Denver is named. Colorado's state flower, the White and Lavender columbine frames each portrait.



Chief Ouray, attempted to make and keep peace between the Ute people and the new settlers.

- The woman in the blue hat and dress standing next to the theatre is **MARY ELITCH LONG** (1856 – 1936), founder of Elitch Gardens, originally located in Northwest Denver.

Elitch's, as it was known locally, opened in 1890 and housed the first zoo west of Chicago, as well as a botanic gardens, and a summer stock theater.

Today Elitch's has been relocated into the downtown area and is a popular amusement park.

- SILVER HEELS** (1860s?) is the woman in the pretty dark red dress standing on the rock. Legend has it that she was a dance hall girl who lived in the mining town of Buckskin Joe in the 1860s.

When smallpox overtook the town, Silver Heels was one of the few people who stayed to help those who became ill.

Mt. Silverheels, located between Breckenridge and Fairplay, is named for her.

- ELIZABETH EYRE PELLET** (1887-1976) is on the top left, walking on the slat path.

Ms. Eyre was a NY actress on Broadway and in silent movies.

She married Robert Pellet and moved to Colorado where she became the first female House of Representative's Minority Leader (1955-56).

Pellet's terms of service to our state lasted off and on for better than two decades (1940-1942, 1948-1964) during which she was instrumental in saving the Rio Grande southern railroad, and obtaining better roads for her district.

(Please take a brochure for more information on the Tapestry)

STATION 4 - ROTUNDA at the Bottom of the GRAND STAIRCASE

A rotunda is a circular room that usually has a dome.

Look up toward the inner **DOME**

- From the first floor of the rotunda to the top of the dome on the inside is 180 feet, about 18 stories.
- The decorative painted star is about two feet wide.

- You can't see it from inside the building, but our dome is covered in Colorado gold.
- When the Capitol was first completed the dome was covered in copper, which is not a material native to our state. Coloradoans quickly sought to change the dome's covering to reflect our mining heritage with a mineral resource more specific to Colorado.
- In 1908, local gold miners gave us about 200 ounces (about 12.5 pounds or 5.5 kilograms) of Colorado gold to gild our dome.
- The most recent restoration, completed in 2014, used only 64.5 ounces of Colorado-mined gold.
- Because of our weather the gold is replaced about every thirty years or so.

- Around the walls of this rotunda is a collection of murals painted by **ALLEN TUPPER TRUE** (1881-1955) in 1940.
- True was a Colorado-born artist whose work featured the American West. He is well-known for the iconic image of a cowboy on the Wyoming state license plate.

- *If you choose to visit the gallery, please observe all posted rules that you will read prior to entering the gallery.*

STATION 8 – Senate Chambers

This is the other room where laws are made.

- As in the House, the Senate lobby may not be available for a tour during session, but you can view the Chamber from the third-floor gallery level, marked as **8A** on the map.
Again, please adhere to posted rules here too.
- Colorado has 35 Senators - each represents about 144,000 people.
- Lawmakers come to work in the second week of January and work on making laws for 120 days, the length of our Legislative Session, which usually ends in May.
- Colorado voters elect the people who work in the House of Representatives and in the Senate.
- Colorado citizens pay legislative salaries through taxes.
Members of the House and Senate make the same salary, about \$33,000 a year.
- For a new idea to become a law, it must be approved by a majority of the lawmakers in both the House and the Senate.
- Colorado lawmakers come from all different parts of the state: mountains, farming areas, and cities. Almost all of our lawmakers have other jobs in their own home areas.

The Colorado Supreme Court is now housed in the Ralph L. Carr Judicial Center, across the street from us on 14th Ave between Broadway and Lincoln. The room you are looking at is now used for public hearings and other meetings.

The stained glass window on the south wall (behind you) depicts the image of **EMILY GRIFFITH** (10 Feb 1868 to 18 Jun 1947).

- Ms. Griffith founded Denver's Opportunity School in 1916, which was renamed for her in 1933.
- She envisioned a school that would serve all who wished to learn, young and old.
- Today, over 1.6 million people have attended the Opportunity School

STATION 7 – House of Representatives Chambers

This is one of two rooms within the Capitol where laws are made. This is the largest room in our Capitol.

- Colorado has 65 members of the House and each one represents about 77,000 citizens.

Here in the House of Representatives, lawmakers vote with the little buttons on their desks.

They push the red for “no” and a green for “yes.” The white button calls staff for help.

- The House of Representative's lobby may not be available for a tour during session, but we welcome you to view the House Chambers from the third-floor gallery level, marked as **7A** on the map. Here you may see our legislators at work.

- Allen True understood the importance of natural resources to our state and these murals depict the value of what we consider to be one of the most significant: **water**. Each mural illustrates, throughout time, the contributions of water to Colorado's growth.
- The words you read are a poem, *Here is a Land Where Life is Written in Water* by Colorado poet Thomas Hornsby Ferril

THROUGHOUT THE BUILDING

As you tour the building, there are many interesting things to see.

- Have you noticed the door knobs? Each is designed with our state seal. Our state seal appears in many place throughout the building, including the name tags of each person working here. The seal was first approved by the General Assembly in 1877. It contains classical Greco-Roman motifs, such as the “eye of God,” and a heraldic shield showing our magnificent Colorado Rocky Mountains and tools used by the miners who first came to our state during the Gold Rush.
- The shiny, yellowish metal seen throughout the inside of the Capitol on the banisters and railings is brass, not gold.
- Brass is a manmade metal, made in a factory and it does not cost nearly as much as gold. This brass must be polished each week to maintain that beautiful glimmer.
- The door handles are made of bronze.

SECOND FLOOR

STATION 6 – The Old Supreme Court Chamber

For 83 years, the most important court and judges in Colorado used this room. Notice the grandeur of the space.

- The chandelier weighs 2,000 pounds, or one ton, the same as a classic model VW Beetle.
- In 1976, when the Colorado Supreme Court justices moved to their then-new site, they wanted to take this beautiful chandelier with them. Senator Hugh Fowler threatened to chain himself to the chandelier rather than let it be taken from the building!

The stained glass **HERITAGE WINDOWS** honor ethnic groups who have been important in forming our state. Starting on the left -

- 1) the Spanish mapmakers and explorers who explored Colorado over 250 years ago
- 2) the early Ute people who lived here hundreds of years before gold was discovered in the Rockies
- 3) Ute peacemaker, Ouray, holding a peace pipe is shown with Alexander Hunt, our 4th Territorial Governor
- 4) the first African-American businesswoman in Colorado, a former slave, Aunt Clara Brown
- 5) Early Chinese and Japanese community members, including businessman Chin Lin Sou. They were mine workers, started much of our agriculture, and built railroads.

