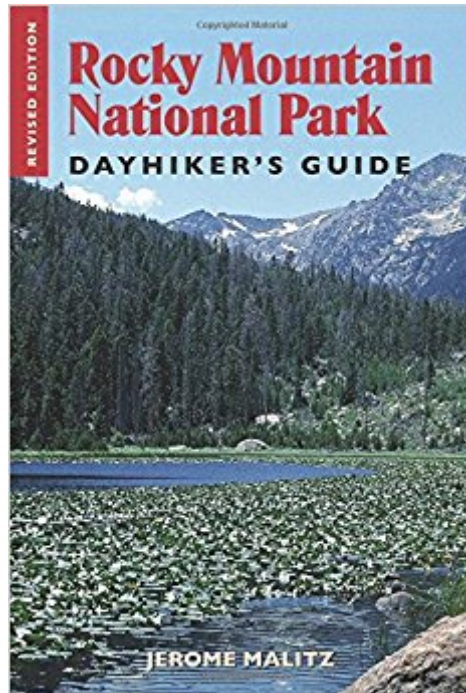




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Rocky Mountain National Park Dayhiker's Guide



Synopsis

Rocky Mountain National Park is one of our greatest natural treasures. In words and color photographs, this guide describes thirty-three of the best dayhikes in the park, emphasizing not only the destination of the hike, but also the remarkable features along the way. The guide includes route descriptions for Longs Peak, Calypso Cascades, Ouzel Falls, The Loch, Hallett Peak, Sky Pond, Lulu City, and many more. Cross-referenced with "Trails Illustrated" topographic maps.

Book Information

Paperback: 141 pages

Publisher: 3D Press; Revised ed. edition (May 1, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1555663400

ISBN-13: 978-1555663407

Product Dimensions: 9.1 x 6 x 0.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 34 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #956,279 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #23 in Books > Travel > United States > Colorado > Rocky Mountain National Park #785 in Books > Travel > Food, Lodging & Transportation > Parks & Campgrounds #1370 in Books > Travel > United States > West > Mountain

Customer Reviews

This is an outstanding introduction for those preparing to shun the automobile for the Rocky Mountain National Park backcountry. In a brief 140 pages Jerome Malitz delivers a superb overview of 33 park trails and destinations. Malitz's introduction includes a nice survey of park flora and fauna, geology and history. There is also a concise overview of precautions before heading into the backcountry. (I've hiked extensively in RMNP and strongly advise heeding Malitz's cautions. However inviting the scenery and innocent appearing the trail, RMNP is not Disney World. People, especially those who casually head down the trail without forethought, can get into trouble.) Information on destinations is logically grouped by sections corresponding to general areas of the park. Each section begins with a very legible, color USGS topographical map with trails and campsites marked. Within each section, Malitz gives a nice description of the trail including the trailhead of choice, distance, altitude gain and elevation at the destination. Narrative is punctuated by color photography of key landmarks. This is a fine primer on RMNP backcountry and will whet the

appetite of any who are ready to see what is beyond Trailridge Road or the parking lot. (For readers ready for the next level of detail, I also recommend Dannen's "Hiking Rocky Mountain National Park" (8th Ed.). Together, these two books provide the maps, photography, narrative and detail to send you on your way with zeal and confidence.

I strongly recommend against purchasing this book. While I agree that the trail descriptions and photos are well done, basic, fundamental information is missing. For example, how does one actually get to the specific trailhead? Yes, I can find this information by googling it; but a good, useable hiking book conveys this information in a succinct way. (I understand that the author does describe in general terms how to access the trailheads, but his presentation is highly uneven.) Also, the maps are not specific to the hikes; again, I can obtain maps of specific hikes on-line, but it makes me wonder why I purchased this book. The author tends to spend a lot of time discussing features of the hike (which is useful), but very little discussion of orientation and access. Note: I've been to RMNP many times, have climbed Long's Peak...but for some of the hikes discussed here, it would be very difficult to determine what the access point for the hike is relative to wherever one is staying in or near the RMNP. Very disappointed in this book overall.

The author spends paragraph after paragraph describing the wildflowers you'll see, and very little time describing the trail conditions or difficulty of the hikes. For example, a "steep gravelly descent" turned out to be at least a mile of nearly vertical and very dangerous rock wash which our group would never have attempted given a more accurate description. The topo maps were nice in some cases, but were difficult to read since they were so small. I did not like having to flip back to the beginning of the section to see the map for a specific hike. In general, it was difficult to find things in the book -- the "overview" map at the beginning does not tell you what page the various sections of the park are on. Altitude gains/losses are just stated as a number -- I much prefer having the profile which shows altitude vs. distance. The photos are wonderful and give you a good taste of what you'll see on your hike, but the language throughout is too verbose -- I'd rather have a concise trail description that is easy to reference.

I used this book to plan four days of day hikes for our trip to Rocky Mountain National Park during the summer of 2016. It greatly helped me in choosing hikes that interested us, and we ended up having a great time. It especially came in handy for describing less popular hikes that weren't as clearly marked in the park, like the Chapin/Chiquita/Ypsilon hike. If you're planning on doing any of

the more difficult day hikes, I'd recommend purchasing the Nat Geo topographic map at the same time. The map subsections in the book are sufficient for describing the location of the hikes, but aren't as useful as looking at a full map of the park while planning.

We just recently returned from our first trip to RMNP (6 days) and used this guide as a basis for finding many wonderful hikes. Since we were unfamiliar with the park, it was nice to read through and pick out hikes in different areas of the park that sounded interesting, and then also get input from the Park Rangers. The hikes that were recommended by the rangers were also the ones in this book, so we felt like we were getting a nice sampling of the park. In general I found the author's descriptions of the hikes to be accurate in terms of difficulty and sights to be seen. The author uses a mathematic formula based on distance, elevation gained, to determine difficulty. In general this seemed to work well except for one hike (The Crater) which we felt was off... It stated "easy" for this 2 mile round trip hike, but due to the steep grade, it felt quite strenuous for the 75% of the hike up. As a side note- I'd still recommend the hike- beautiful views at the top!

Dayhiker's Guide does its job well, describing most of the available day hikes in RMNP in sufficient detail to allow one to make decisions. Since many of the hikes were ones we had taken, I could compare the description to my own experience, and it was quite close (except that the author probably did not have to get used to the altitude like us Flatlanders!) Author also included nice descriptions of why one would WANT to do a particular hike, the views, the options to continue, etc. The maps are not adequate, but the guide is keyed to the National Geographic map, which one should have anyway. I loved the formula for rating how difficult a hike would be, a combination of gain in altitude plus distance. The only addition I would like to see would be an incline depiction like one sees in the pocket guides. It's nice to know that there's a flat place in the middle, followed by a short steep bit, then a little downhill to the lake, etc.

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