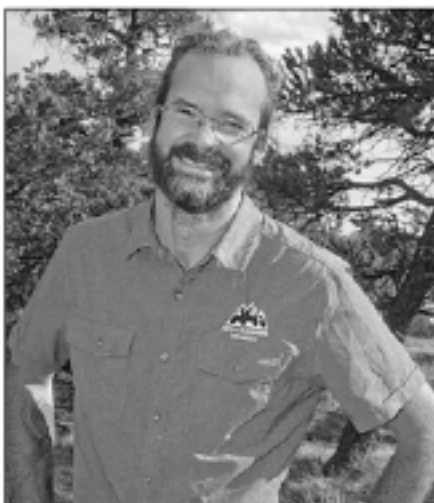


Out & About with Lori Sunflower

Activities to do with Crestone visitors?



Ryan Johns

We live in such a beautiful place that we have no shortage of visitors who want to come see us. It's kind of a struggle to decide between showing them the sights or letting them just experience the natural beauty of Crestone. One of our favorite spots is the Ziggurat, because it's so unique. We also like the ashram because it's so welcoming to anybody who walks in the door and if there's a full moon ceremony, even better. Because we have little kids, our outings usually aren't very long. We spend time outside going to creeks, our favorite swimming hole or a short hike. If we eat out, we often go to the brewery. It's exciting having a new brewery in town and makes me feel like we're a proper Colorado town because we have this lovely brewery that is consistently making better beer. So that's fun to take family to. We actually end up spending a lot of time in our backyard, letting the kids play and letting our family enjoy mountain views and quiet serenity. I find that when people are here visiting, they come to see us but also to get away from the busyness of the city, and if we can offer them that, then the magic of Crestone speaks for itself.



Anne Kelly

I let visitors know before arriving that GPS and Google maps aren't reliable here, so they don't get lost and frustrated. I tell them Joyful Journey's on the way, to shed city stress and get more out of Crestone. I tell them about our grocery stores, liquor store and restaurants with healthy options. I'd found people would stock up in the city, not

knowing. I want to bring as much business to town as possible. I help them prepare any healings beforehand to make it less complicated with last minute bookings. I tell them about the energies in Crestone because quite often in my 14 years here, people come up against things, then blame the restaurant, B'n'B or whatever. But when they know energetic stuff surfaces and moves through quickly here, it's a very transformative and healing place. Crestone's got so much to offer and if visitors don't know about it, they might say, "Oh, it's full of weirdos," and leave saying, "That's a weird place!" That's fine, but my preference is for them to gain from what this place offers and support the people who work so hard here. It's difficult to make a living. I'd encourage B'n'B owners to prepare guests for what's available locally. Everybody benefits hugely! There is nowhere else on earth I'd rather be, and my wish is that people realize what can really take place here. Yes, we can look a bit nutty to outsiders, but they can miss out on so much if they're not even aware of how their visit here can be so life-transforming.



Suzie Ryan

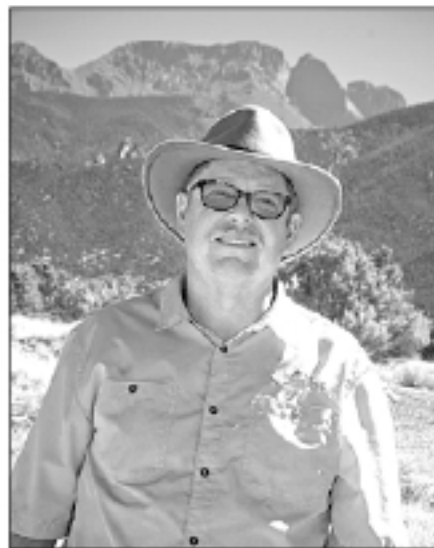
We meet the most number of people when they come for retreat to our Nada Hermitage center. I wouldn't pretend to know what they need for their spiritual retreat, but oftentimes they do want to know what's to do in Crestone and the surrounding area. I love promoting the beauty of this place. Who wouldn't? Look where we live! So I like to encourage them to all the hiking trails, places to walk. This is one of the most beautiful places on the face of the earth, so enjoy that. Get outside! I love to encourage myself to do that, too. I also love places like the Great Sand Dunes, Hooper Pool, etc. I always let people know where the trailheads are and where the grocery stores and little businesses are because I love them supporting that, and they can meet some of the locals while they're at it. So those are the kinds of things I love encouraging people to do, especially getting outside in

the summertime. Most visitors are getting away from their city life, on the whole, and come out here to enjoy the beauty that we live with.



Jodi Tucker

First, we have such a beautiful, natural place here. I send a lot of visitors up to the mountains, but most of 'em come to experience the spiritual centers. So we go to Vajra Vidya and the temple and Chamma Ling—all the different meditation centers. Really, that's my favorite thing to do with these people, cuz most are just here for a short time. Sometimes we go to the hot springs. When people visit, we just have a real family experience, sharing meals together and having that feeling of family. Some seem to be specifically looking for that. My mom, brother and sister have visited and I took them to the spiritual centers, too. We all meditate together! A couple of the hikes we like are Dead Man's Creek and Liberty Trail. And of course we all want to take guests downtown and have a good meal or see some great live music. We like to have music here at the Dream Sanctuary, too. We just built this little stage, so we're starting to have musicians come out here sometimes. In a way, we're kind of a destination ourselves. It's kind of vacation for people just to come out here.



Kelvin Heitmann

Our visitors often are family, including grandchildren, so we like to go to the creeks, where 2 of them caught their very first fish—little brookies. The family loves to go up the hiking trails; some further than others, of course! There are unique local shops like Lonny's imports and the Artisans Gallery; and the Elephant Cloud is a very unique small town store, with selections comparable to bigger chains. We also take visitors to retreat centers if we get a chance. The Big Stupa's a nice drive; that wonderful view clear across the valley is tremendous. The dunes are always fun. One time, the grandkids just

wanted to play in Medano creek—we didn't even get up to the dunes! A visiting friend went up to Zapata Falls with me, and I took an alternate way down. We'd hung onto this mossy bank getting up there, and I'd felt like I was going to fall! Once up there, I said "I'm not going down that same way," and my friend replied, "How are you going?" I said, "Here, hold my glasses!" then got in the water and slid down!

Across the valley is Penitente Canyon, but watch out for rattlesnakes! Donna almost stepped on one this spring. Real close! Other destinations include Salida Fish Hatchery, Hooper pool, and especially Colorado Gators. Having collected reptiles as a child, I like to show the grandkids that stuff. We also like to drive around and see the unique local homes, or just enjoy the wildlife, clean air and quietness. That's a lot of what we do with visitors; plenty of things to do!



Mike Croft

In Crestone, our go-to place is the brewery, which is such an asset to the town. Great bar, great food, and if you love to people watch, it's fantastic just to grab a beer, sit on their deck and watch the local circus happen. For people who like really good beer and selection of spirits, Crestone's Liquor Store is a great place, great folks there. The Indian café, new pizza place and Desert Sage are all really good. And there's Lonny's store on the corner and a unique new gift shop across from the Post Office. The Elephant Cloud Market is worth the trip in just to see 14 different kinds of dried beans and rice! Saturday Market, with local vendors and music, is a really nice thing to do with visitors. The Hooper gas station makes some of the best burgers in the valley (or pretty much anywhere!), making it well worth the drive. Across the valley in Saguache, there's a fantastic pizza pub place with great pasta and live music; a neat coffee shop serving pastries, coffees, and milkshakes, with live music and open mic nights; an organic market attached to a nice thrift store, art galleries, and a huge community park with apparatus for kids to play on. And with all the outdoor stuff to do around here—hiking, fishing, swimming—if somebody were to come to this area and not find something to do, it would be because they weren't trying really hard!

If you have feedback or suggestions for future topics, please email peacelori@peacelori.com. In addition to being the Staff Photographer for the Crestone Eagle since 2012, Lori Nagel is a freelance photographer, graphic designer & web designer. www.sunflowerstudios.us.com.