

# FOR A TASTE OF COWBOY LIFE, TAKE A LOOK-SEE AT CHEYENNE

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**CHEYENNE, Wyo.** — Tour guides tell visitors that just 12 trees greeted the man who discovered the land where Cheyenne began. Attracted by the wide open beauty of the area, excitement of the West and boundless opportunity, cattle barons, railroad men, sharpshooters, gamblers and wild women found their way to Cheyenne.

The variety of residents included soldiers from Fort D.A. Russell (now F.E. Warren Air Force Base) and employees of Camp Carlin, a supply camp for all the northern posts on the Indian frontier. Cheyenne had a wild beginning, and it is said there was a graveyard before there was a building.

Some of that excitement is still here, along with rolling hills, grazing bison, lush grassland and a view of the Rocky Mountains Front Range. Amateur astronomers and stargazers find Cheyenne's starry sky a glorious place to pursue their hobby. The area is ideal because Cheyenne has little light and dust pollution, and there is enough breeze most of the time to keep the sky clear.

Stories of the wild and wonderful beginnings of Cheyenne, the capital city of Wyoming, fill history books, bars and barns in this Western city 90 miles north of Denver.

It's a family friendly city

with several attractions ranging from Cheyenne Frontier Days, known as "The Daddy of 'em All" with the world's largest outdoor rodeo and Western celebration, to the Cheyenne Depot and museum, and the historic Plains Hotel with its tiny elevator, marble staircase and brass emblems honoring Plains Indian Chief Little Shield.

## Cheyenne Frontier Days

Thousands of visitors come to Cheyenne every year to experience the excitement of the world-famous rodeo. Bulls, bearing names such as Bad to the Bone, Super Freak and other monikers indicating the bull's reputation for bucking off the best cowboys in the nation, get the excitement going in the largest arena in professional rodeo.

The announcer tells the visitors the economy hasn't hurt Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association events.

"Why are attendance numbers way up?" he asked. "It's good entertainment, and we are looking for heroes. There isn't any trash talk, and fans aren't climbing up in the stands to beat up the judges."

The Cheyenne Frontier Days tradition began in 1897 with a wild horse race that turned into a stampede, and a dog and hare event joined by pet canines

from the stands.

Now, more than 100 years later, the wild horse race is still a popular event during the 10-day celebration. The event is still exciting, minus the chaos.

## Union Pacific Depot

Cheyenne is a railroad town, and more than 100 freight trains pass through Cheyenne each day, supporting its claim as America's Railroad Capitol.

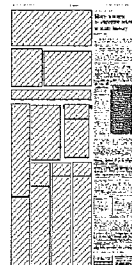
The restored depot is the last of the grand 19th-century depots remaining on the transcontinental railroad. It was designed by the Boston-based architectural firm Van Brunt & Howe, and was built in 1886-87. The six-story clock tower is the most prominent aspect of the Richardsonian Romanesque-style building and it features buff-colored walls with red sandstone and terra cotta trim to match the rest of the building.

The depot is a center of the community just as it was 100 years ago, and visitors come to tour the art deco lobby and visit the Cheyenne Depot Museum.

During the 2009 Cheyenne Frontier Days event, a special train brought passengers from Denver, and a band played as the train pulled into the station.

## The Plains Hotel and more

Cheyenne has a lively downtown area with shops, restaurants and businesses. The historic Plains Hotel, built in 1911,



was restored a few years ago and is a vital part of the downtown area, just as it was in the days of the wealthy cattle barons who came to the hotel for social and business events.

United Airlines trained its stewardesses in the 1940s in a hangar at the Cheyenne airport. The women would relax at the Wigwam Lounge in the Plains Hotel, and an area of the hotel still retains the name Peacock Alley due to the young local cowboys who came to the hotel with hopes of attracting the attention of a pretty stewardess.

Cheyenne is ideally suited for treks to many of the nation's monuments. Mount Rushmore, the Black Hills, Devil's Tower, Yellowstone National Park, Grand Teton National Park and Rocky Mountain National Park are all within a day's drive of the city.

Vedauwoo Recreation Area, 25 miles west of Cheyenne, attracts visitors who come to see ancient rock formations and to hike, climb and ride mountain bikes. It is worth the visit, if just for a short time, to enjoy the scenery and watch the chipmunks play on the rocks.

This 10th largest state in the union offers wide-open spaces and clear, clean air for its population of 500,000. The Equality State, named for being the first state to grant women

the right to vote, is surrounded by South Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Nebraska, Utah and Colorado.

The gold-leaf gilded dome of the Wyoming Capitol is visible from

roads entering Cheyenne. The dome interior features blue and green stained glass from England. A statue of Esther Hobart Morris, the first female justice of the peace in the territory in 1870, greets visitors on the front steps of the capitol.

Visitors who have just a day or two in Cheyenne can make the most of their time with a walking tour of downtown Cheyenne's historic sites.

The self-guided tour begins at the Union Pacific Depot, where free brochures are available.

Visitors who prefer a guided tour have the option of a ride on the Cheyenne Street Railway Trolley operated from May through September.

The route includes the Nagle Warren Mansion Bed and Breakfast, where high tea is served Fridays and Saturdays. The elegant Victorian residence was built in 1888 and retains much of the original woodwork, fireplaces and light fixtures.

Two paintings done for the home in 1892 are part of the current decor.

Cheyenne is sometimes called the heart of the cowboy way of life and the Magic City of the Plains, and visitors won't have to look far to see the magic in Cheyenne.

Travel and accommodations provided by the Cheyenne Area Convention and Visitors Bureau.

## DID YOU KNOW?

### Cheyenne facts, trivia

› Steamboat, the bronco star of Cheyenne Frontier Days from 1901-14, is buried in the mid-

die of the Cheyenne Frontier Days arena.

› Bit-o-Wyo Ranch Horse Barn Dinner Theater is a popular summer event held in a barn where horses are part of the audience. Cowboy music, comedy and a steak dinner attract crowds from throughout the U.S. and world.

› Wild Bill Hickok got married in 1874 at the First United Methodist Church in Cheyenne. He died five months later in a poker game, holding a pair of aces and eights, known since then as the dead man's hand.

› The first Yellow Pages were issued by the Wyoming Telephone Co. in 1881, when the company ran out of white paper.

For more information on Cheyenne, call the Cheyenne Area Convention and Visitors Bureau at (800) 426-5009 or go online to [www.cheyenne.org](http://www.cheyenne.org).

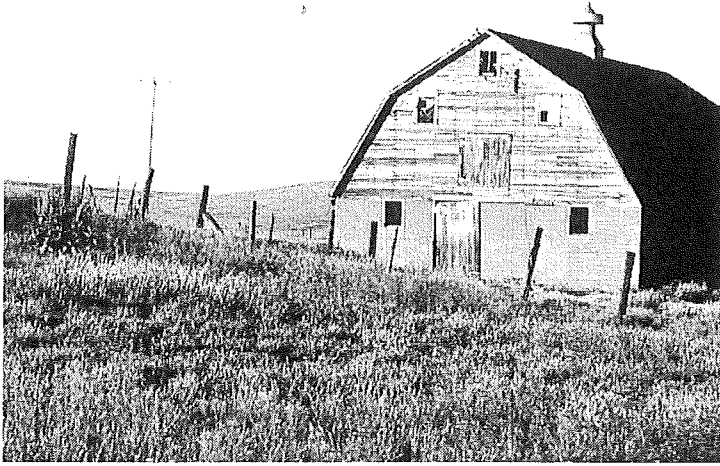


An antique carriage is part of the Cheyenne Frontier Days Parade. The annual event is recognized as the world's largest outdoor rodeo and Western celebration.

PHOTO BY CHRIS JONES, FOR THE OKLAHOMAN



The former Union Pacific depot glows in nighttime lighting in Cheyenne, Wyo. PHOTO PROVIDED



This barn creates a peaceful scene in rural Cheyenne, Wyo. PHOTO PROVIDED



A doorway leads to a bedroom in the Nagle Warren Mansion, a Victorian bed-and-breakfast built in 1888. The historic home is one of the attractions on a walking tour of Cheyenne, Wyo.

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