

Below is the proposed itinerary for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

## DAY 1

Arrive Denver anytime. Afternoon and dinner on your own

Arrive anytime today at the Denver airport. We'll be staying at a nearby hotel with an airport shuttle so you can arrive whenever it's convenient, and begin acclimating to the mile-high elevation. Our first formal get together will be tomorrow morning, although everyone who's arrived can get together for dinner.

## DAY 2

Drive to Shadowcliff, first lesson and hike

We'll leave Denver about 9:00 am for the two-and-a-half hour drive to Shadowcliff Mountain Lodges, elevation of 8,600 ft, and our home for the week. Shadowcliff is located on Grand Lake, right on the edge of Rocky Mountain National Park. After sharing a picnic lunch, we'll have an intro to sketching materials and playing with watercolors, with an interactive color wheel exercise. Then, we will walk to the Kawunweeche Visitor Center, 1.5 miles gentle uphill, as we continue to acclimate to Colorado's higher elevations. We'll stop along the way to do some easy thumbnail (tiny) sketches to learn about drawing composition. Next, we'll settle into our rooms in Cliffside Lodge at Shadowcliff. After dinner we'll head outside for a nature walk and sketching the sunset over Grand Lake and the mountains.

## DAY 3

Hike North Inlet Trail

This morning we'll hike right from our lodge on the North Inlet Trail, which is part of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. The out-and-back trail provides an opportunity for two hiking groups: Whomever wants a longer hike, Cascade Falls is 7.4 mile round trip. The falls are multi-tiered cascades that drop roughly 50 feet through a narrow granite chute. Those wanting to stop and sketch/paint the meadows and mountain vistas along the way may opt for a shorter hiking distance. Regardless, later in the afternoon we will have short lessons and practice to learn about perspective, proportions, and perception in landscape drawing. We will also cool off in the stream and enjoy the atmosphere at Shadowcliff, which often includes evening music jam or games.

## DAY 4

Hike East Inlet Trail

Today, we'll hike on the East Inlet Trail past Adams Falls where a rocky outcrop provides views of the rushing falls through a narrow gorge. We continue hiking through aspen and lodge pole pine forests and lush meadows with abundant wildflowers. The out-and-back trail today starts with a gradual up and then proceeds more steeply above the mountain valley with numerous rocky outcroppings and spectacular vistas. We'll again have the option to split into two groups for a faster or slower pace and more or less opportunities to stop and sketch trees, rocks, and wildflowers. While distances and elevation changes will be determined by the group paces, the maximum distance this day will be about 7.1 miles with an elevation gain of 1000 ft. Our art class today will focus on value, light source, shadows, and shapes.

## DAY 5

Visit Alpine Visitor Center, hike downhill to Milner Pass

This morning we will get an early start to avoid afternoon thunderstorms above timberline. We drive an hour to the Alpine Visitor Center, situated at an elevation of 11,800 feet, with exhibits about the alpine ecosystem and spectacular 360-degree views across the Continental Divide. From the visitor center, we'll hike downhill for 4

11,800 feet, with exhibits about the alpine ecosystem and spectacular 360-degree views across the Continental Divide. From the visitor center, we'll hike downhill for 4 miles, dropping 950 feet in elevation, to Milner Pass, an alpine lake and our van. If the weather is conducive, we will stop for quick watercolor sketches along our hike. Options include close-up studies of tiny alpine plants, the snowy peaks of the Never Summer Range, and a series of pristine tarns (small alpine ponds) and their reflections. We'll demonstrate techniques for reflections and water before our drive back to Grand Lake with time to explore the town, starting with the local art gallery.

## **DAY 6**

**Choice of longer loop or out and back hike, Farewell dinner**

Today we have options for a longer loop hike (7.5 mi, 1300 ft. elevation gain) on the Onahu, Tonahutu, and Green Mountain trails, or an out-and-back hike of 3 miles with time to explore some great views, historic buildings and points of interest in the area, as well as more time to watercolor sketch. Tonight, feeling like the accomplished hiker/artists that we are, we'll go out to celebrate at our final celebration dinner in Grand Lake. We will also share our favorite sketches from the week - a mini-art show of our own.

## **DAY 7**

**Return to Denver for flights home**

Today we'll pack up and clean up, sadly bidding farewell to our home for the week and this gorgeous Park. We'll be back at the Denver airport by 12pm and you can plan flights out any time after 2PM.