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

Acclimatization evening in Boulder

Arrive at the Denver airport by 2PM today. Weâ€™ll meet as a group before driving west to our lodging located just outside of beautiful Boulder, Colorado. The plan for the evening is acclimatization - so we'll check into our hotel and grab our water bottles before driving to explore the always entertaining Pearl St. pedestrian mall. We can watch some of Boulder's famous street performers, do a little sight-seeing, and enjoy our first of many group meals.

Overnight: Best Western Plus Boulder Louisville, Louisville, CO (D)

DAY 2

Acclimatizing Hike

Boulder is known for its stunning location, nestled against the foothills of the Rockies, in the shadow of the dramatic Flatirons. We'll shake out our legs with an acclimatization hike that offers a lower elevation but still challenging inclines. Depending on the group and the weather, we may hike to Royal Arch, or we may elect for a longer hike in Gregory or Bear Canyon. No matter our choice of hike, we'll end our time in Boulder with a cool beverage on the porch of the historic Chautauqua Dining Hall. Then it will be time to load up the vans and head for the Rockies! We'll drive to Estes, get settled, and enjoy a home-cooked meal from our guides in our home away from home.

Hiking: 3.5-7.5 miles round trip, 4- 6 hours. Overnight: Airbnb in Estes Park, CO (B, L, D)

DAY 3

Odessa Lake via Fern Lake

There are over 300 miles of hiking trails in Rocky Mountain National Park and weâ€™ll get to see a variety of ecosystems during our active week. The park is one of the nationâ€™s highest, with elevations ranging from 7,860 feet to 14,259 feet, youâ€™ll feel like you are on â€˜top of the worldâ€™! Wildfire is a part of the natural history of RMNP, and today's hike to Odessa Lake via Fern Lake is a perfect study in fire ecology, the history of fire suppression in the West, and the regrowth of the ecosystem. Much of today's trail is in the burn zone of the 2020 East Troublesome Fire, and the contrast between blackened trees, the brilliant green of new growth, wildflowers, and flowing streams is quite dramatic. The trail climbs steadily, but is never extremely steep or technical. It bridges crystal clear creeks brimming with native trout, passes the gushing Fern Falls, and culminates at a peaceful chain of alpine lakes. Weâ€™ll bring our hearty appetites back home for another delicious dinner.

Hiking: 7.5-9.6 miles, elevation gain/loss: 1,750â€™. Overnight: Airbnb in Estes Park, CO (B, L, D)

DAY 4

Hike Milner Pass

Today we will drive into the heart of the Park on Trail Ridge Road - the highest continuous paved road in the United States, reaching an elevation of 12,183 feet. Bundle up today - temperatures on top of Trail Ridge are typically 20-30 degrees colder than in Estes Park! On a clear day we can see Wyoming to the north, the Great Plains to the east and the Rockies on the south and west sides.

Our hike today begins at Milner Pass Trailhead. We'll hike up the Ute Trail into the tundra and then continue up to the Alpine Visitor Center, all the time keeping our eyes open for yellow-bellied marmots and pika. Not only are there spectacular 360 degree views across the Continental Divide from the Center, it also has a wealth of information about the fragile alpine ecosystem. Tonight dinner is on your own in Estes Park, a great chance to explore, shop and then dine at one of the many delicious restaurants in the charming downtown area.

Hiking: 4.5 miles, 3 - 3.5 hours, elevation gain: 950'. Overnight: Airbnb in Estes Park, CO (B, L)

DAY 5

Ascend Hallett Peak

Now that we're fully acclimated, we're ready for the higher and more challenging hikes. We'll start with an ascent of Hallett Peak. The Arapaho Indians called Hallett Peak "banah ah netaieux", which means Thunder Peak, a reference to the storms that frequent the mountain. We'll definitely be keeping an eye out for storms and be ready to turn around if necessary.

At 12,718 feet Hallett Peak is considered one of the most beautiful alpine hikes in the Park. Starting at Bear Lake it traverses the side of a valley that was carved out long ago by a glacier. Today the only remnant is the Tyndall Glacier, which we pass on the way to the summit. Needless to say, the views are stunning both on the way up and at the top. Famous 14,259â€™ Longs Peak is visible, as well as Otis and Taylor Peaks. You will even be able to see Grand Lake off in the distance. It's an out and back hike. For dinner tonight weâ€™ll relax at our home and order pizza from town.

Hiking: 10.4 miles, 8 - 9 hours, elevation gain/loss: 3240'/3240'. Overnight: Airbnb in Estes Park, CO (B, L, D)

DAY 6

Hike to Ouzel Falls

Today we have an option for a shorter or longer hike, depending on how your legs are feeling after a week of altitude and adventure! Weâ€™ll start early to beat the crowds to Ouzel Falls on the Wild Basin Trail (hikers who stop here and turn around will hike 5.3 miles out and back, elevation gain/loss: 921â€™). Weâ€™ll hike alongside a roaring mountain creek the entire way up to a series of three beautiful rushing waterfalls. Those that want to keep going can continue on toward Bluebird Lake. Your guides will cook you one last healthy and home-cooked dinner tonight.

Hiking: 5.3-11 miles, 3 - 8 hours depending on distance, elevation gain & loss: 921 - 2443. Overnight: Airbnb in Estes Park, CO (B, L, D)

DAY 7

Hike to Chasm Lake at Base of Long's Peak

Our final hike is to one of the most beautiful lakes in the park, Chasm Lake. Though we're not climbing a peak today, there is still plenty of climbing to get to the lake. Chasm Lake sits in a deep cirque at the base of Longs Peak and Mount Lady Washington. The famous east-facing wall of Longs Peak, known as the "Diamond", rises more than 2,400 feet above this stunning alpine lake, and Longs Peak climbers start from the same trailhead. Our trail starts in a thick forest of lodgepole pine, spruce and fir, crosses the familiar subalpine landscape of krummholz and continues through a stretch of boulders with some easy scrambling and rewarding, spectacular mountain views. Tonight we'll celebrate our fantastic week together with a celebratory dinner out on the town.

Hiking: 8 miles, 6 - 7 hours, elevation gain/loss: 2524'/2524'. Overnight: Airbnb in Estes Park, CO (B, L, D)

DAY 8

Goodbye Colorado!

Today after breakfast we'll pack up, sadly bidding farewell to each other and this gorgeous park. We'll be back at the Denver airport by 11AM and you can plan flights out anytime after 1PM. (B)