

RAVE RUN IN GOLDEN COLORADO

While all of you have been shoveling (and shoveling) I have been exploring the running



possibilities in Golden. One of the best places is actually right behind my house. I live at the base of North Table Mountain. Pictured to the left is what North Table Mountain looks like. It is a 1,000 foot climb and then flat on the top! This photo was taken on the *opposite* side from my house. I don't have to drive to find a trail head -- there is a one just 1.3 miles from me. The 1,000 foot climb is on a rocky path which looks like this:



The mountain is actually quite something -- it is the result of three lava flows. Mostly it consists of grasslands, shrub communities and rock. The mountain is also home to a resident population of about 80-100 mule deer, golden eagles, red-tailed hawks and prairie falcons as well as a small population of prairie dogs. I am told that birds and ducks can be found in the spring around the three ponds that dot the top of the mountain. I am also told that there have been sightings of mountain sheep, mountain lions and elk. So far the only wildlife I have seen are the mule deer and they are everywhere!



The picture on the left is on the climb up. The middle photo is what it looks like once you get to the top and the photo on the right is a view on North Table Mountain looking at South Table Mountain and the Coors Factory.

When I leave my house, I run a gradual up for 1.3 miles on a bike path to the trail head. I have to walk the trail to the top -- its about a 1,000 foot climb even from where I start. Once on top there are trails all over. Supposedly one is 13 miles -- mostly on the outer rim. I've just explored one section doing about 6 miles before I walk down. (I have tried running down but it is just too steep.) Once back at the base of the mountain the gradual downhill to my house is nice since usually I'm pretty tired by the time I get back to civilization.



So far I have had the top of my mountain to myself. At first it was a little scary to be so isolated in such a different environment – It feels like you could be on the Moon! Now I realize I have the place to myself because most people in Golden don't go to North Table Mountain to explore the top. They go for the fun of getting up and down!



Tomorrow I am going Down Hill Skiing but Thursday will probably find me doing this Rave Run again.

Much Much Love
Joan