

# Take the Rock Chick Tour of Denver

Below, you'll find a list of places noted in the Rock Chick series. Consider the fact they're noted to be my hearty recommendation for you to hit them up. And when I say "hearty," I mean you'll enjoy the heck out of them.

This list is like a tiptoe through the tulips of memories of my twelve years spent in the Mile High City. To this day, when I go to Denver, I'll be sure to swing through some of these places, and they are still fab.

I've noted if you need a booking and if you might need to spruce up.

If you're interested, just Google these joints to get all the deets.

## **Barolo Grill**

This fantastic Italian restaurant is where Indy and Lee never quite went on their date(s). It's also where the RCHB finagled it for Shirleen and Moses to have their first one. Barolo Grill takes their Italian culinary offerings seriously, and to this day, decades later, the best meal I've ever eaten was at this restaurant (it was a truffle risotto). It's a must if you like food. However, it's not super-casual or inexpensive (you won't have to sell a kidney or wear a ballgown...but consider yourself forewarned).

Get in touch with them before to book your table.

## **Brown Palace**

Have you heard of The Unsinkable Molly Brown? Well, that puts the "Brown" in Brown Palace. It's like walking into another century, hitting this hotel. If you can stay there, do. If you can't, book your place for their afternoon tea, or hit the Ship Tavern for a drink. Promise, it won't disappoint.

## **Buckhorn Exchange**

Want more nostalgia of yesteryear? Go no further than the oldest restaurant in Denver (and also where Hank and Roxie had their first date). Great steaks, and if you're a culinary adventurer, they have some unusual stuff on their menu that you can try (Rocky Mountain oysters, anyone?). The décor is Wild West with capital Ws. They used to have a cowboy storyteller who would tell tales on the upper floor, they might still. It's worth a listen if they do.

Get in touch with them before to book your table.

### **Carmines on Penn**

Ren and Ava go here for their non-date, kinda date. Darius, Malia and Liam go here for their first family dinner out. The food is freaking fantastic. I think both times this was mentioned in my books, I noted their dish, Chicken Montana. This is because I love that dish. It's sublime. I wouldn't say this is dressy, but I also wouldn't go here looking grubby.

Get in touch with them before to book your table.

### **Cherry Creek Mall**

It's a fancy mall. The last time I was there, they charged for parking, which I thought was effed up. But they do have some good stores.

### **Colorado Shakespeare Festival**

This festival happens in Boulder. If you're in Colorado during the summer, this is super freaking fun. Take a picnic to consume in the park before the play. And be sure to rent the cushions for the outdoor amphitheater. Ole Will could go long in his tales, and sitting on those hard benches for hours is not a blast. But experiencing Shakespeare like this is.

### **Cruise Room (at the Oxford Hotel)**

The neon Art Deco ambiance of this bar is only surpassed by its martinis. Okay, no. That's a lie. The martinis are damn good, the feel of this place is spectacular. Back in the day, this could get crowded, especially in the evenings and weekends. But the vibe was always awesome. You'll feel underdressed if you show up in shorts and a T-shirt, unless they're very cute shorts and a fabulous tee.

### **El Tejado**

Forever in my mind, I'll be trying to decide if Las Delicias or El Tejado are my favorite Mexican restaurant (nope, it's LD, but El Tejado is a close second). Just to note, I'm not the only one who has this dilemma, so there might be a line.

Casual and no need for a booking.

### **The Gothic**

Small theater for concerts and shows. I saw the Jim Rose Circus Sideshow here with my friend Frank, and as such, it's an experience indelibly etched into my brain. If you're into live music (and other...) and something is playing at The Gothic...go.

### **Gunther Toody's**

This is a throwback to the 50s, with great burgers and amazing shakes, malts and sundaes. If you're with kids, this is a fun place to visit. There used to be a lot of shouting by the servers back in the day, and you might be interrupted by a birthday party, but it's all part of the fun.

Casual and no need for a booking.

### **Herman's Hideaway**

Live music venue. So, yeah, enough said. Go see a show.

**The Hornet**

This was my local when I lived in Indy's house (which is, I believe, only four blocks from this joint). It was a good vibe, it had good food, and it could get crowded, so that was all kinds of fun. They used to have a buffalo chicken salad that I devoured every time I went there. If they still have it, give it a go.

Casual and no need for a booking.

**Hotel Monaco**

Where Ava and Luke had their reception, and a cool, central place to stay in Denver's downtown.

**Jerusalem**

If you like Middle Eastern food, do not miss this joint. It's a hole in the wall, but you will not regret cramming into the space in order to fill your gob with their hummus, stuffed grape leaves, falafel and shawarmah.

Casual and no need for a booking, though you can call ahead for parties of 10 or more.

**King Soopers**

Denver grocery store. In my head, iconic. But in reality, it's just a grocery store.

**LaMar's Donuts**

Honestly, there is no better donut than the ones you can get at Hilligoss Bakery in Brownsburg, Indiana. Trust me, I've done tastings on four continents. But you're looking at this list because you're going to Denver. And if you need a donut, you gotta hit LaMar's.

**Las Delicias**

The best Mexican food I've ever tasted. Period. Dot. The end. Their salsa is amazing, and I always get the burritos chicharrones. I dream of their burritos chicharrones. They have a variety of locations, but the one the RCHB went to was on 14<sup>th</sup>. Since they opened more, I haven't really noticed them having a line, but it can get busy.

Casual and no need for a booking.

**Le Peep**

Ah, Luke and Ava and their bickering at Le Peep. Hmm... Great for breakfast, or brunch.

Casual and no need for a booking.

**Liks**

Super freaking good, homemade ice cream at an ice cream shop that's been there for *ages*. Feeling something sweet? Hit it up! But in the summer, you might be in for a wait. It's worth it.

### **Lincoln's Road House**

This is a must hit, and not only to soak in the vibe of why the Hot Bunch hang there. This is a biker bar that also caters to...well, everybody. I feel like Lincoln's is the true-blue deal of what Denver is, everyone rubbing shoulders with everyone else, all are welcome. It also has a great Cajun-themed menu and fantastic live music.

Casual and no need for a booking, but tell them Kristen, the Rock Chick sent you. They love the Rock Chicks there.

### **Little Bear**

This bar in Evergreen has been around forever. If you head up to the foothills, it's a damn good time.

### **Mercury Café**

"The Merc" as we called it (I think, it's been a long time) was one of the many places we went for brunch. It's a hippie-type place with great food and a cool atmosphere. I remember their eggs benedict being particularly good.

Casual and no need for a booking

### **Mutiny Information Café**

The bookstore Fortnum's is based on—Ichabod's Books and Mrs. Crane's Espresso Coffee Shop—is long gone. But in its place is Mutiny, which has a very different, but still cool AF vibe. If you want to be *in the spot where it all happened*, hit up Mutiny.

### **My Brother's Bar**

My favorite bar in Denver. I love their simple but amazing food (their onion rings are greasy and delicious, their Ticky Turkey is one of my favorite sandwiches *ever*) and how they serve that food with the big, plastic condiments thing.

Casual and no need for a booking

### **Reiver's**

The last time I was in Denver, we went to Reiver's, and it had changed completely. No more ferns, and worse, no more black bean dip. I was disappointed. However, it's still there, but it doesn't look like it did in the books. Though, the food we had was yum.

Casual and no need for a booking.

### **Stella's Coffee Haus**

Obviously, the Rock Chicks have Fortnum's as their go-to for coffee, and if they don't, then they gotta answer to Tex. But Stella's was a hangout of mine back in the day, it's mentioned in the books, and it's pretty damned fab. It's also on this great couple of blocks on Pearl Street that are tucked in a neighborhood that have fun shops and fabulous restaurants.

Speaking of...

### **Sushi Den**

If it's still like it used to be, and when I got sushi there a few years ago, it was, Sushi Den's sushi is some of the best you'll ever have. I believe they fly their fish in from Japan (???) every day. It's a cool, trendy vibe and has been the hip sushi place in Denver now for decades (the time before the last time I was there, Victoria Beckham was having sushi in the back room).

They don't take bookings, and you might have to wait, but it's worth it. You don't have to go formal, but I wouldn't suggest pitching up super-casual either.

### **Walgreens**

The Walgreens Eddie and Indy had their little shopping trip in is on the corner of Broadway and 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Wax Trax**

I'm loving that these days, vinyl and record stores are coming back. When I lived in Denver, everyone went to Wax Trax to get their records and CDs, including me. This has been around for ages, so if you want the real deal...go there.

### **Wynkoop Brewery**

This fab brewpub is close to where Ava and Luke live(d). Great craft beer, fantastic menu.

Casual and no need for a booking

## *Other Mentions You Might Try to find, but You'll Fail*

Sadly, Bonnie Brae Tavern, BJ's Carousel, The Broker, Dozens, The Market, Pandora's Box, Paris on the Platte, Pasquini's, Twin Dragon and Wazee Supper Club have all permanently closed since the Rock Chick books were published. Famous Pizza is also closed, but I think it's now a Voodoo Donuts, which, well...*donuts*, so worth a swing by for some sweetness!

As for the rest...I'll always have my memories.

That said, Beau Jo's Pizza is still around, just not the location where Indy, Lee and the combined families went in Denver. The original is in Idaho Springs, so it's a bit of a drive, but there's also one in Arvada, and that might not be too bad of a jaunt (I can't say, I haven't been there).

## *And Don't Forget!*

Drink a Fat Tire beer while you're in the Mile High State. You can also head up to Fort Collins (about an hour north of Denver) and visit New Belgium Brewery, where it's made.

*Have fun...*  
*and Rock On!*