

(/sweepstakes)

Home (/blog/) > Cannabis Culture

Cannabis Culture (/blog/category/cannabis-culture/)

Marijuana Business and Industry (/blog/category/marijuana-business-and-industry/) Politics (/blog/category/politics-2/)

A Long Strange Trip: The History of Cannabis in Denver

By **Savannah** (/blog/author/savannah-nelson/) - June 7, 2017



(/blogs/content/uploads/2017/10/Denver-Colorado-Skyline-Marijuana.jpg)

Photo by: Charles Knowles/Shutterstock

The Mile High city wasn't always filled with smoke. For many in Denver, the battle for cannabis legalization came after many struggles and defeats—it was a well-earned victory. Marijuana has a long history in Colorado, from the plant's endearing roots to a turbulent (and resilient) prohibition. Weed has been a part of the state's past, from the very beginning.

Table of Contents 

1. 1876
2. 1917
3. 1929
4. 1975
5. 1998
6. 2000
7. 2012-Present

1876

Colorado became a state in 1876, and cannabis was not only legal, it was a regular commodity. Its oil was used for medical treatments, and there were lots of products that were hemp-friendly.

1917

Prohibition struck the state, and Denver faced its first round of cannabis regulation. The restriction of marijuana-possession was ruled as a misdemeanor at the time—was a follow up to the cease of alcohol, enacted a year previously.

1929

Possession, growth, and use of cannabis was dubbed a felony offense in 1929 in Denver. A Westword article (<http://www.westword.com/news/the-history-of-cannabis-in-coloradoor-how-the-state-went-to-pot-5118475>) from 2012 cites racial discrimination as a reason behind the legislative change, as minorities were targeted as users of marijuana, as seen by both politicians and media at the time.

1975

Decriminalization came as a gift to Coloradans after a long-fought era of free-love and experimentation left residents with little hemp reform to show for it. Legislators heard the cry of the people, and legendary Pitkin County DA swayed Republicans with his why-waste-money-on-marijuana-enforcement argument.

1998

Following the 1996 example that Californians left–by passing legalized marijuana–voters in Denver had the chance to vote yes on Amendment 19. Sadly for mmj supporters, the bill failed.

2000

Those supporters showed up in droves, however, in 2000, and suddenly medical marijuana was no longer a fantasy for people living in Denver. Amendment 20 made changes to the state constitution, making Colorado the first state to legalize medical cannabis in their constitution—a historic landmark both on a national and localized level for cannabis activists and supporters.

Medical marijuana, thanks to Amendment 20, allowed patients to use cannabis to treat illnesses such as severe nausea, cancer, epilepsy, muscle spasms, weight loss, HIV/AIDS, and chronic pain.

2012-Present

2012 is what’s known as a historic year for the people of Denver. On November 4, the polls reflected a victory for cannabis enthusiasts everywhere: recreational marijuana was legalized in Colorado. Amendment 64 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colorado_Amendment_64) allowed for people over the age of 21 to purchase, use, possess, and grow cannabis for adult use.

Since then, over 62 of the 271 Colorado cities–Denver included–has implemented a form of recreational marijuana regulation, and the numbers are growing. There are state and local laws about production, distribution, and retail, in addition to policies on taxation and sales. According to Wikipedia (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cannabis_in_Colorado), during 2014 the retail market for legal marijuana reached \$700 million worth of total sales statewide. It was also reported that the 2015-16 fiscal year saw that cannabis brought in \$42.5 million in tax revenue, which was divided up for the Colorado Department of Education.

Colorado has paved the way for many states, showing that cannabis can play a large role in successful and growing states, rather than detract. Their historic legalization–tied with Washington State’s 2012 ballot measure–has been the

cultivation of long-winded efforts, mainly seen on the legislative battlefield. Cannabis in Denver has gone where no one had gone before, and chances are, there's still room for growth.

LEAFBUYER DEALS NEAR YOU



3 FOR \$30!
3 joints for the price of 2 on Thursdays!

[Click Here To See More Deals \(/deals/dispensaries/CO/Rifle\)](/deals/dispensaries/CO/Rifle)

TAGS

[marijuana \(/blog/tag/marijuana-2/\)](/blog/tag/marijuana-2/)

[marijuana history \(/blog/tag/marijuana-history/\)](/blog/tag/marijuana-history/)

[nationwide marijuana \(/blog/tag/nationwide-marijuana-2/\)](/blog/tag/nationwide-marijuana-2/)

Previous article

[Projected Revenues from Weed in San Francisco for 2017 \(/blog/tales-green-rush-projected-revenues-from-weed-in-san-francisco/\)](/blog/tales-green-rush-projected-revenues-from-weed-in-san-francisco/)

Next article

[How to Score the Best Weed Deals in Your State \(/blog/best-weed-deals-your-state/\)](/blog/best-weed-deals-your-state/)



[\(/blog/author/savannah-nelson/\)](/blog/author/savannah-nelson/)

Savannah (/blog/author/savannah-nelson/)

Savannah is a freelance writer based in Western Colorado. She hopes that her work with Leafbuyer inspires education and insight into the cannabis industry, and often writes with novice users and first-time inquirers in mind.