

BIKING TRAILS IN CARBONDALE

By Savannah Nelson

Carbondale has a rich reputation as one of Colorado's most bike-friendly mountain towns, for good reason. There are miles of scenic roads, routes and singletrack trails catering to every kind of rider, with iconic and diverse nature views.

Here are some of the best biking trails and routes to explore in and around Carbondale.

RIO GRANDE TRAIL

Perhaps the most iconic route in the valley, the Rio Grande Trail follows the former Denver and Rio Grande Railroad corridor for 42 miles between Glenwood Springs and Aspen. The paved, multi-use path traverses through downtown Carbondale and offers riverside views, wildflowers and glimpses of Mount Sopris.

PRINCE CREEK TRAIL SYSTEM

Just minutes from downtown, the Prince Creek area is Carbondale's go-to mountain biking destination, home to 52 trails. A mix of flowy singletrack and technical climbs, these trails offer variety for all skill levels.

Popular loops include Father of Ginormous, Skull Bucket and Monte Carlo—each with smooth descents and epic Sopris vistas. The system connects to the Crown, providing even more options for big-mile rides.

RED HILL RECREATION AREA

Visible from town across Highway 82, Red Hill offers another local favorite for both biking and hiking. Its network of trails weaves

through red sandstone formations, piñon pines and juniper forests, ranging from 2 to 12 miles. The 6.5-mile Three Gulch Loop is a popular moderate trail that offers a steady climb to sweeping valley views, followed by a fast and fun descent.

CRYSTAL VALLEY TRAIL

This paved path runs between Carbondale and Redstone, paralleling Highway 133 and offering a safe and scenic ride along the Crystal River. The multi-use path is 13.4 miles out-and-back, connecting the town of Carbondale to the natural beauty beyond. The rolling terrain and mountain views make it perfect for e-bikes or leisurely spins of all levels.

SPRING GULCH TRAIL SYSTEM

Known mostly for its winter Nordic trails, Spring Gulch offers some fun seasonal gravel riding opportunities when the snow melts. The rolling ranchland and open vistas make it a peaceful spot for an off-the-beaten-path ride just a few miles west of town.

CROWN BLM LANDS

Connecting the Prince Creek network to more advanced terrain, the Crown is a vast area of public BLM land crisscrossed by trails



and jeep roads. The views of Sopris and the Roaring Fork Valley stretch for miles, and the riding is classic Colorado—dusty, technical, and endlessly rewarding.

HAY PARK TRAIL

Accessed via Prince Creek Road by El Jebel, the Hay Park Trail is a moderate-to-advanced ride that rewards every climb with stunning views of Capital Peak in the upper meadow. The route winds through meadows, aspen groves and pine forest, offering a mix of technical terrain and smooth singletrack, while keeping close to town.

From gentle riverside paths to lung-busting climbs, Carbondale is a true cyclist's paradise. Whether you ride for exercise, views or the sense of freedom that comes from two wheels and an open trail, there's no better place to explore than Carbondale.

ELK MTNS CONSTRUCTION
General Contracting • Custom Homes • Remodels

Contact: (970) 331-2481
elkmountainsconstruction@gmail.com

