

# Neighborhoods

PLACES TO LIVE, PEOPLE TO SEE IN COLORADO NEIGHBORHOODS

## CHEESMAN PARK



PHOTOS: STEVE BERCOVITCH

### THE ESSENTIALS

**WHERE IT IS—CLOSE TO DOWNTOWN ON DENVER'S EAST SIDE.** CHEESMAN PARK IS AN URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD ABOUT A MILE FROM DOWNTOWN DENVER THAT RUNS FROM EIGHTH AVENUE NORTH TO COLFAX AVENUE AND FROM DOWNING STREET EAST TO JOSEPHINE STREET. IT IS ADJACENT TO THE CAPITOL HILL NEIGHBORHOOD TO THE WEST AND THE CONGRESS PARK NEIGHBORHOOD TO THE EAST.

**WHAT MAKES IT SPECIAL—CITY LIVING AT ITS FINEST.** CHEESMAN PARK IS AN ICONIC DENVER NEIGHBORHOOD THAT IS VIBRANT, LIVELY AND URBAN YET ALSO HISTORIC, REFINED AND ELEGANT. STEEPED IN THE GHOSTS OF DENVER'S PAST—THE PARK LITERALLY USED TO BE A CEMETERY—CHEESMAN PARK IS A DIVERSE COMMUNITY THAT HAS CHANGED DRAMATICALLY OVER THE LAST 150 YEARS AND CONTINUES TO EVOLVE TODAY. FROM THE MAGNIFICENT NAMESAKE PARK AND PAVILION TO THE VICTORIAN-ERA ESTATES AND HIGH-RISE CONDOS TO THE STREETS OF EAST COLFAX, CHEESMAN PARK IS AN AUTHENTIC SLICE OF DENVER'S URBAN CULTURE.

**THE HOMES—AN URBAN MIX.** A TRUE CITY NEIGHBORHOOD, CHEESMAN PARK OFFERS A WIDE RANGE OF HOUSING FROM MODEST TO MAGNIFICENT. THERE ARE MANY BEAUTIFUL HISTORIC HOMES HERE, WITH ESPECIALLY NOTEWORTHY ARCHITECTURAL GEMS IN CHEESMAN'S THREE LANDMARK DISTRICTS: HUMBOLDT ISLAND, MORGAN'S ADDITION AND WYMANS. YOU'LL ALSO FIND CONDOMINIUMS, INCLUDING LUXURY HIGH RISES ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE PARK, APARTMENT BUILDING CONVERSIONS AND SUBDIVIDED LARGE VICTORIANS.

### FROM CEMETERY TO CITY BEAUTIFUL.

Mingled in with the grand architecture and pastoral scenery of what is now Cheesman Park, you can still see gravestone remnants of the park's first incarnation, City Cemetery. Established in 1859 by Denver founding father William Larimer on a scenic hill atop open prairie, what became known as Boot Hill was the final resting place for numerous gamblers, murderers and thieves from Denver's early frontier days. By the 1880s, the 320-acre boneyard had fallen into disrepair. In 1890, the city successfully petitioned the U.S. Congress to change the zoning of the cemetery to park use, and the area was renamed Congress Park. (The current Congress Park now inhabits the southeast corner of the original cemetery.)

**GRAVES TO GREENERY.** The slow conversion from spooky cemetery to showcase park took many years as graves were exhumed and plans drawn for a land-

**IN CHEESMAN PARK, HISTORIC MANSIONS INTERMINGLE WITH MODEST APARTMENT BUILDINGS AND LUXURY HIGH-RISE CONDOS.**

scaped oasis featuring a pavilion. In 1907, during Mayor Robert Speer's City Beautiful movement, the progress on the park made a huge leap forward. The family members of successful businessman Walter S. Cheesman donated \$100,000 to develop the park in exchange for renaming it in his honor. The Cheesman Pavilion, a neoclassical

STORY: JON GOLDBERG



marble edifice that mimics the Acropolis in Athens, was completed in 1910 and remains the centerpiece of the park, a picturesque gathering place with commanding views of the mountains and city. The Denver Botanic Gardens—still a jewel of the neighborhood and region—was established in the late 1950s in the old Catholic section of the cemetery to the east of Cheesman Park.

Ghosts? Given Cheesman Park's past, it's no surprise that legends of ghosts in the park abound. Some say that during a lunar eclipse, you can briefly see the old cemetery with all its original tombstones. Others claim there is a spot in the park where no shadows are cast at high noon.

**WHY IT'S HOT—AN URBAN MECCA.**

Cheesman Park is a city-lover's dream. You will find not only every urban amenity, but also extensive greenery and maybe even some peace and quiet in this setting. The Satire Lounge and other colorful haunts on East Colfax are as much a part of this neighborhood as the posh Morgan's Addition enclave of magnificent historic estates. In this densely populated (for Denver) cityscape, you will find an intense diversity of people, as well as an amazing array of local shops, restaurants and cultural attractions within walking distance—not to mention the namesake park and botanic gardens.

Resident Michael Salem, President and CEO of National Jewish Health, reflects: "The historic homes on the park and the entire surrounding area are an important and proud part of the Denver community." For the many young professionals here, the dynamic culture and proximity to downtown are major draws. Margaret Fogarty, who works in corporate communications for Qwest, enjoys going to yoga in the Pavilion and riding her scooter to people watch. "I am close to everything, including my office. It's just easy living."

**WHAT YOU'LL PAY—FROM \$100,000 TO**

**MILLIONS.** Cheesman Park has diverse real estate—and with it, diverse prices. Single-family homes typically start in the \$500,000s and go up to more than \$2 million for signature historic properties. Condos have an even wider range, starting near \$100,000 for a one bedroom to more than \$2 million for the penthouse at a park-side tower.

**SCHOOLS.** Denver Public School's Dora Moore K-8 occupies a grand, historic building designed by Denver architect Robert S. Roeschlaub, the creator of the Trinity Church and Central City Opera House. Youngsters in DPS continue on to East High School. Private school options nearby include Graland Academy and Stanley British Primary School.

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