

WorldDenver Presents:

STAYCATIONS

a new way to travel the world without leaving your home

BLACK HISTORY AND HERITAGE IN THE "HARLEM OF THE WEST"

On June 19th, 1865, Major General Gordon Granger landed at Galveston, Texas, with news that the war had ended and that the enslaved were now free—more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation had been signed. Juneteenth is the oldest nationally-celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States, recognizing African American freedom and achievement. This week, Staycations is traveling closer to home. Five Points is a historic neighborhood near downtown Denver that was home to the city's Black community for much of the twentieth century. Its rich heritage was recognized in 2002 through its designation as a cultural historic district. Long standing local institutions like Zion Baptist Church, popular community celebrations like Juneteenth and the Five Points Jazz Festival, and the adaptive reuse of historic buildings continue to keep the rapidly changing neighborhood connected to its past.

CULTURE

A walking tour is the best way to view the "Harlem of the West," a nickname given to the Five Points neighborhood. Start your journey inside of the Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library on the third floor where you can walk through The Western Legacies Museum. From early pioneers to present-day heroes, follow the footsteps of African Americans who settled the West in the exhibition space that spans more than 7,000 square feet and includes an African American Legacy corridor. After finishing at the Museum and viewing the replica Office of Former Denver Mayor Wellington E. Webb, walk down Welton Street to the Black American West Museum & Heritage Center. This historic landmark was the home and office of Dr. Justina Ford, Colorado's first Black woman doctor who delivered more than 7,000 babies for members of the community. Along the way, look for the Rossonian Hotel, where jazz greats like Louis Armstrong and Count Basie would stay when performing, and the Roxy Theater, a one-screen, 568-seat Black theater that opened in 1934. Alternatively, enjoy this detailed [photo tour](#) thanks to Ennis Davis, AICP.

CUISINE

Make time during your self-guided tour to stop into Welton Street Cafe, where Mona Dickerson and family have kept customers coming back for more than two decades with catfish, fried chicken, smothered pork chops, and other soul-food specialties served for lunch and dinner. Reviews are glowing with visitors thanking staff for “treating us like family” and “serving the best soul food in Denver.” For those who aren’t venturing out to restaurants yet, consider ordering in from 5280’s list of Black Owners and Chefs leading the culinary scene!

COCKTAIL

If all this walking has made you thirsty, head back to the heart of the neighborhood and visit Coffee at the Point. Community inspired and community driven, The Point donates 95% of its space to nonprofits and other meeting groups. Try a coffee drink, craft beer, or cocktail, and check out some delicious treats named to honor Five Points’ history: The Holiday, Fire Station No. 3, The Ford, The Baxter, and more.