

# This Saturday Is Your Opportunity to Tour 14 Solar & Sustainable Homes

The first Saturday in October is when Golden Earth Days and the Colorado Renewable Energy Society hold their tour of solar-powered and otherwise "green" homes. If you like touring great homes and enjoy learning how to make them more energy efficient, then don't miss this Saturday's self-guided tour.

**REAL ESTATE TODAY**



**By JIM SMITH, Realtor®**

Show up anytime after 9 a.m. at the American Mountaineering Center at the corner of Washington Avenue and 10th Street in downtown Golden to get your guide book and map. The cost is \$5 per person,

but is free if you ride a bicycle or drive an electric car to see the homes.

What will you learn from touring these homes? Being on the solar tour committee, I have had the chance to visit many of them and read about others. Homes were carefully chosen because of what they could teach, and being solar-powered alone was not sufficient to be included in the tour.

At many of the homes you'll learn different aspects of passive solar design. This includes more than simply having south-facing windows with large roof overhangs, although that's an essential component. As the Guerra home on Easley Road

demonstrates, the thermal mass of the walls and floors inside those south-facing sunrooms helps to capture heat during sunny winter days and release it during chilly winter nights. You'll also learn about SIP panels used in the exterior walls and about the foam ICF forms used for pouring the concrete foundation. And you'll learn about the HRV unit which uses exhausted air from the house to condition the fresh air coming in from outdoors.

At the Samuelson house up Clear Creek Canyon you'll learn about a shallow-well direct exchange ground source heat pump system that is, in my opinion, the gold standard of geothermal heating and cooling.

At Compass Montessori School you'll not only view the largest photovoltaic system I know of — 129 kilowatts — but you'll learn about the school's one-of-a-kind farm school, which teaches old-time sustainability. This K-12 school puts its middle school students through a program which produces food to sell as well as for the school's own kitchen.

Sustainability is an ever-evolving discipline with new concepts and products being developed regularly, many of them here in Jefferson County at the National Renewable Energy Lab. I have attended and/or participated in these home tours every year for a decade or more, and every year I learn one or more things I didn't know before.

Start your tour early if you want to visit all the homes, but you may wish to pick and choose the homes you visit based on the write-up for each. You'll learn something different at each home. Be sure to return to the American Mountaineering Center

between 4 and 6 pm for the reception. There will be free appetizers and free local beverages plus an expo with booths from vendors selling products and services utilized in many of the homes.

As described below left, an electric vehicle round-up is also part of the tour.

Learn more about this year's tour online at [www.GoldenSolarTour.org](http://www.GoldenSolarTour.org). There's still time to be a volunteer/docent at individual houses. A training session is 6-7:30 tonight at Jefferson Unitarian Church.



## Coming Next Week: Mountain Ridge Ranch-Style Home

This 1997 home at 654 Canyon Point Circle has four bedrooms — two on the main floor and two more in the fully finished basement. The newly rebuilt redwood deck offers both city and mountain views. Best of all, an open space trail-head is less than 100 yards from the home's front door, and a city-maintained park is just two blocks away. Children can walk to highly rated Mitchell Elementary School in 10 minutes without crossing a single busy street. As you can see in the photograph, there is a three-car garage. The home is within the City of Golden, a short bike ride or pleasant walk to Clear Creek, the Golden Community Center, and downtown Golden. A video tour is in production. Look for it soon at [www.MountainRidgeHome.com](http://www.MountainRidgeHome.com). It goes on the MLS Oct. 7th and will be open Saturday, Oct. 10th, 1 to 4 p.m.



\$575,000

## Electric Vehicle Roundup

In case you missed the Drive Electric Week event on Sept. 19th, you'll have a second chance to see and experience electric cars, motorcycles and bicycles during Saturday's Golden Solar Tour.

From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (which overlaps the SuperCruise) the parking lot of Golden Real Estate, 17695 S. Golden Road will be reserved for electric vehicles only. Expect to see Teslas, Nissan Leafs, BMW i3s, Chevy Volts and other electric cars. Look under the hoods, sit in them, ask questions of their owners and maybe even enjoy a free ride-and-drive in the Tesla and others.

In addition, Pedego Denver will be bringing a half-dozen electric bicycles for you to test ride. If you haven't ridden an electric bicycle yet, you should come try it. Last week I was in Vail and rented an electric mountain bike and rode it to top of Vail Mountain. With its pedal assist I made it to the top, but, trust me, it was still quite a workout!

Come enjoy a rock & roll band from noon to 3, and mention this ad for a free serving of BBQ from our food vendor!



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