

Kermitts Roadhouse

Exit 244

33295 Highway 6, Idaho Springs

Phone: 303-567-4113



Plenty of dives encourage visitors to decorate dollar bills and hang 'em on the wall or from the ceiling. Compared to Kermitts—which boasts somewhere between four and six grand in singles on its surfaces—however, every display you've ever encountered is chump change. Built in 1940 as a gas station and then a bar called the Gold Miner, the 30 year-old Roadhouse is, according to folklore, named for a 7'3" gold miner named Kermitt the Hermit. Today, it's a cult-status biker hangout and après ski destination thanks to a wood-burning stove, famous chili (in addition to other grub) and easy access from the interstate. A former owner used to charge a quarter for directions and put the change in a jar for his daughter's college fund; the current owners still make non-paying customers pony-up 50 cents to use the can.

During the summer, a side patio with a new stage suspended over the creek hosts live music and, often enough for it to be legend, more than \$2 million worth of motorcycles will squeeze into the gravel parking lot and down the road. When I last visited, the signature sign had blown off the roof ("Though no one got squished," explained the bartender with a sigh of relief) and a couple of bored employees had created a crime-scene body outline using masking tape, adding a message on a piece of duct tape: "The last person to mouth off."