

Suzy,

Thanks for your note. I understand – and appreciate – your concern.

In answer to your question...Yes, I have been to Coeur D'Alene. I was there about three years ago. And in some of my wording in this article, I was apparently not entirely accurate. I believe the sidewalks – at least in part of the town – are red-brick, not cobblestone. So I did use a poor choice of words there. And I believe, as well, that I should have used the word “style” in describing the streetlamps...as in “gas-lit-style.” I don't believe there's a town in America that has actual “gas-lit” streetlamps any more.

I have to admit, though, that I do find the reactions to these mistakes interesting, as I've written about this town before, and have had nothing but positive comments from locals. Which is the reason I never thought twice about the characterizations I made in this recent article.

Some of the complaints, though, I do find a bit picky. I've used the words “alpine” for example, to describe many lakes around the world. And I've never worried about whether a lake has to be a certain altitude to qualify, technically, as alpine. Ditto for the fact that the lake has apparently had some environmental-runoff problems in the past. As a visitor to the town, and the lake, I thought both were beautiful. I had no idea about any environmental problems. And most tourists wouldn't, either. I thought, quite simply, that the lake was beautiful. And I suspect that so would most other visitors to the town, as well (unless they're in the EPA).

I'm actually planning on going back to Coeur D'Alene this summer – for the precise reason that I thought it was so beautiful three years ago. And I suspect, even though I now know that the lake isn't technically “alpine,” that I'm still going to find CDA the most beautiful mountain town in America.

Suzy, I've written/contributed to 17 books on travel. And my articles have appeared in major newspapers and magazines all over the world. I write very much from the heart. And – having been involved in the tourism/travel industry my entire professional life – I've always believed that the writer's heartfelt impressions of a place are more important to potential visitors than skin-tight facts.

To me, if a beautiful lake is surrounded by mountains – no matter how high – it's an alpine lake. It's an *impression* and a *feeling* that I'm trying to convey – not a fact.

Nonetheless, I do appreciate your feedback. Hopefully I've addressed some of your concerns.

Steve