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ON SPARKING
COURAGE,
CHANGE AND
COMPASSION



elevation gain

OUR INSIDE TRACK ON THREE ROCKY MOUNTAIN TOWNS
WE LOVE ANY SEASON—BUT ESPECIALLY IN WINTER

Written by Jennie Nunn

With its scenic hikes and roaring rivers, historic ski towns with naturally occurring sulfur hot springs, and a long roster of Winter Olympians, it's no surprise that Colorado's Front Range and Western Slope are on the travel bucket list. Whether you decide to hit the slopes or not, here are the state's top winter destinations to explore.

DENVER

In RiNo (the city's River North Art District peppered with art galleries, jazz bars and breweries), The Rumble is the ideal place to unwind after a day of exploring. Evocative of a friend's well-appointed home, the cozy yet stylish, 50-room hotel features guestrooms appointed with wide-plank flooring, antique Persian rugs and in-room tablets for just about any request.

At The Jacquard Hotel & Rooftop, a 201-room property offering three, one-bedroom suites with in-room Peloton bikes, head to the rooftop bar—Kisbee on the Roof—for sweeping mountain views. On the ground level don't miss Narrative, with menu selections like the 48-hour beef short rib paired with root vegetables and balsamic onions.

Newcomer Safta, headed up by James Beard Award-winner Chef Alon Shaya (of Saba in New Orleans), features modern Israeli cuisine such as mafrour—stuffed eggplant with local Buckner Farms dry aged beef, onions and garlic stewed in herb tomato sauce.

In LoDo (or "Lower Downtown"), make a reservation at Woodie Fisher Kitchen & Bar, housed in one of the city's oldest standing firehouses, Hose House No. 1. The restaurant is fashioned with wall-to-wall brick, glass garage doors, leather tufted banquettes and chandeliers made with bicycle chains.

At newly launched Dairy Block "micro-district"

(once Windsor Dairy dating to 1920), peruse 16 food and specialty purveyors at Denver Milk Market, a food hall conceived by Chef Frank Bonanno.

Located a short walk away within the Dairy Block, Foraged features an inventive menu with a blend of local, seasonal and international ingredients. With executive chef Duy Pham at the helm, the eatery offers three distinct dining experiences including a raw bar.

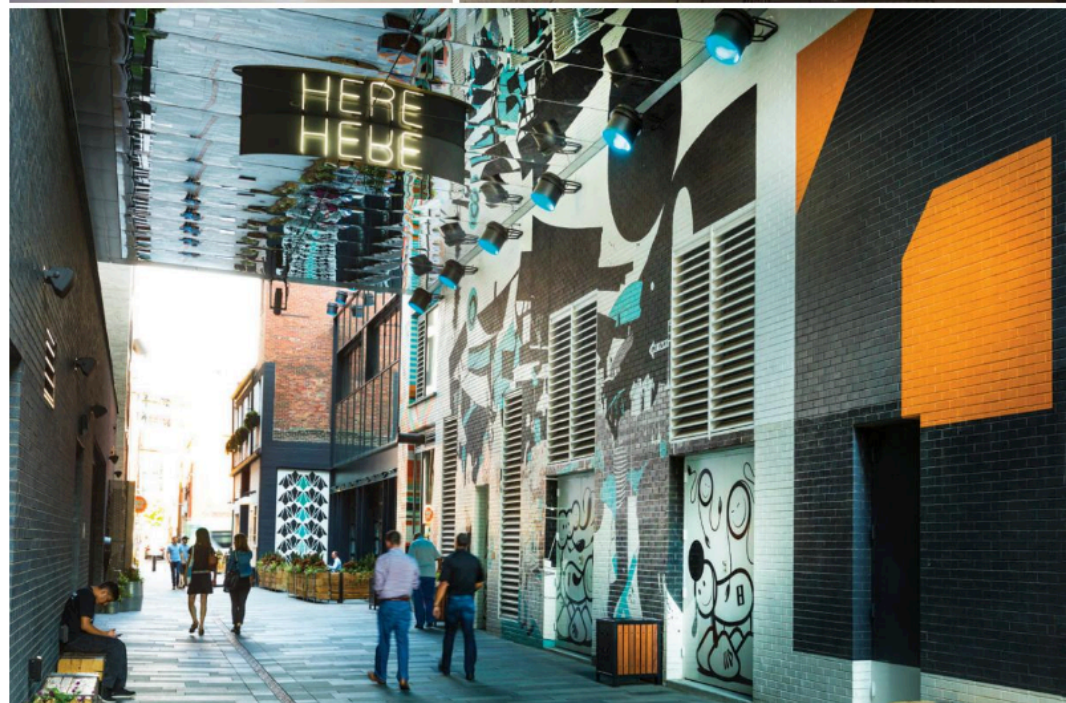
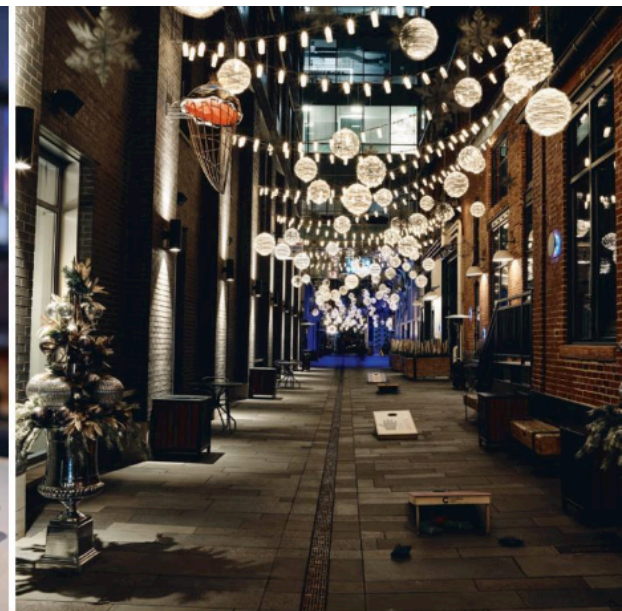
After a bite, take a stroll to nearby Free Market—a modern shopping emporium including Jenni Kane, Clare V. and Alchemy Works. Just down the street, Fetch Shop, a curated brick-and-mortar of the city's Fetch Markets (held once a month), stocks locally made jewelry, candles and aprons.

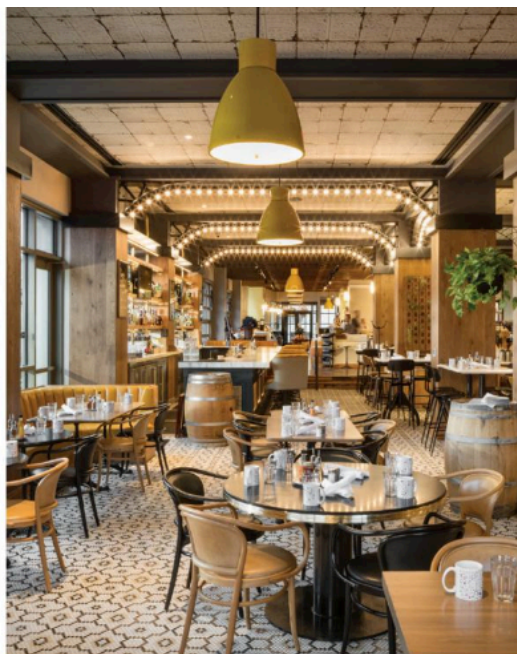
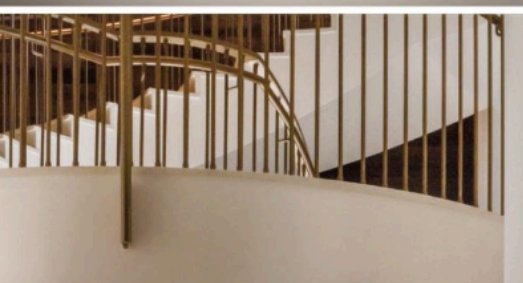
FORT COLLINS

Tap into your inner musician at The Elizabeth Hotel, a 164-room, music- and art-inspired lodging with an Instrument Lending Library for in-room guest use during the stay. Instruments housed in the library include a Kala ziricote concert ukulele made of ziricote wood from Central America.

A few blocks away, The Armstrong Hotel has been a town staple since 1923. Following a major renovation earlier this year, the 45-room hotel is fashioned with leather tufted sofas, a fireplace and artwork depicting local legends. In the guestrooms (each is a different shape and configuration), expect to see macramé wall hangings, brass headboards and industrial-style sconces. Be on the lookout for Oreo, the hotel's resident black-and-white cat, who is usually found in the lobby.

Reconceived in a former 19th-century farmhouse, The Farmhouse at Jessup Farm serves rustic-inspired modern farm fare from truffle-parm brussels seasoned with local Old Town Spice Shop truffle-parm salt and parmesan cheese, to the Colorado Cubano consisting of red chile-braised lamb, pork belly, honey mustard and Swiss cheese. After lunch, meander to Heyday—a women's clothing boutique stocked with a well-edited mix of boho sweaters, silk blouses and double-breasted





coats, and nearby sister store Knapsack for herringbone throw blankets and letterpress stationery.

At Ginger and Baker, a restored old grain mill, grab a slice of freshly baked cranberry or maple pecan pie or shop for locally made wares. Upstairs check out The Cache, open daily for dinner with highlights including fall bruschetta with pumpkin, butternut squash and manchego, and herb-crusted ruby trout with spaghetti squash, watercress, black currant vinaigrette and chive coulis. Venture to New Belgium Brewing Company for a beer tour (book tickets in advance) complete with beer sampling and a glimpse inside the beer production process.

Situated just west of Fort Collins, Horsetooth Reservoir County Park is a hiking mecca with miles of trails. Make a stop at the Horsetooth Area Information Center for a map and to learn about the region's local history and wildlife.

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

Set just a quick walk from the Steamboat Ski Resort gondola, The Steamboat Grand is outfitted with rooms and condos with complimentary Wi-Fi, coffeemakers and flat-screen TVs. In Steamboat Mountain Village—the base area of Steamboat—check out the lively après scene at Truffle Pig, with bacon-wrapped dates and pork belly mac 'n' cheese, or grab wings and a Bavarian pretzel at the newly remodeled Timber & Torch.

Apart from skiing and winter activities, one of the city's most beloved (and popular) attractions is Strawberry Park Hot Springs. Dotted with thermal pools reaching temps of up to 104°, the woodsy park offers watsu (or aquatic bodywork) therapeutic massages and lodging from an old train caboose to a covered wagon.

Just off the main thoroughfare, Old Town Hot Springs is replete with two 230-foot waterslides, a rock climbing wall, a café and a fitness center. For take-home gifts, head to Ohana for one-of-a-kind wares including handprinted tea towels and coasters crafted using 100-year-old barn wood from a local

valley ranch.

At Wallace Jerold "Buddy" Werner Memorial Library, learn about Steamboat's most acclaimed alpine ski racer, Bud Werner. Located on the library's second level, the exhibit highlights Werner's skiing accolades including being selected for the U.S. Olympic Games in 1956, 1960 and 1964.

For a trip back in time through Steamboat's storied history, devote an hour or two to explore the Tread of Pioneers Museum. Partially housed in a 1901 Queen Anne-style Victorian home, the museum features exhibits from Edward S. Curtis (an artist and photographer of Native American culture) and the Winter Carnival—the oldest winter celebration in the West that originated in 1914 with the first twin ski-jumping event by Carl Howelsen and James Pestrud.

For one of the best photo ops in town, head to Fish Creek Falls, a nature destination for hiking, running and mountain biking with an impressive 280-foot waterfall and wooden bridge. ■