

TRUE *denver*



Root Down



The Corner Office



Snooze



Kenosha Pass

Photo by Dick Vogel

Maybe it's that old pioneer spirit, but Denver is always ready to try something new—whether it be an unconventional restaurant concept, an innovative art installation or a novel way to save energy. Indeed, going green is the real deal here, from the city's commitment to responsible development to its ever-growing affection for farm-to-table restaurants. But despite their diversity, Denverites remain united on one subject: an unfailing love for the outdoors. And it's really no wonder. With more than 300 days of sunshine per year and the Rocky Mountains for a backyard, Denver does seem to have a new adventure around every corner—and a healthy dose of adrenaline in its veins.



THE *low*down

When Chauncey Billups left the Detroit Pistons in late 2008, Nuggets fans welcomed the Denver native home with open arms. When he's off the court, the NBA Sportsmanship award-winner supports a variety of programs for at-risk youth—and plays it low-key with his family. Here are just a few of his favorite Mile High haunts.

IN THE HOLE: My daughters and I like to play putt-putt golf together. There's a great spot in Westminster called Hyland Hills.

MOUNTAIN MAN: There's a bed and breakfast in Winter Park called The Bear Paw Inn. It's just a quiet getaway with beautiful scenery that's very relaxing.

GAME ON: I'm a diehard Broncos fan, baby! I try to catch all the games I can. John Elway is my man. I chose to wear No. 7 when I got here because of him. I'm optimistic that the new coach can take us back to the playoffs!

FOOD FIX: I go to Marion's Lounge, this little hole-in-the-wall in Northeast Denver, for my fried catfish.



true denver



THREAD COUNT

A favorite of touring musicians, **Hotel Teatro** (888-727-1200) offers big-hotel luxury with boutique appeal. The hotel's hospitality extends to canines, too; ask for the "Pets in the City" package and pamper your pooch with a pet amenity basket. Then treat *yourself* at Teatro's Four-Diamond Parisian-style eatery, Restaurant Kevin Taylor. The recently renovated **Oxford Hotel** (800-228-5838) combines modern amenities with Victorian charm. Don't miss the hotel's soothing spa and historic Cruise Room, a luxe Art Deco lounge that's been serving perfect martinis in its low pinkish light since the day after Prohibition ended in 1933.

The Curtis (800-525-6651) exudes retro-inspired whimsy and fun, with cartoons playing on lobby TVs, 13 themed floors and wake-up calls voiced by Elvis and Austin Powers. Want to party like a rock star? Book the British Invasion Suite—but please don't trash your room.



FOOD FIX

Inside a refurbished Highlands service station with a fantastic view of the downtown skyline, **Root Down** (303-993-4200) serves up vibrant flavors with a flirty ambiance that belies the owners' serious commitment to sustainability. The latter is evident in their locally sourced ingredients as well as their reclaimed floor—which lived a former life as a basketball court. **Bones** (303-860-2929), a nouveau-Japon noodle bar, is the latest creation of chef Frank Bonanno, one of Denver's favorite sons. Lobster ramen with edamame might not be *your* idea of gourmet fare, but it's definitely got the food critics swooning.

The Village Cork (303-282-8399) is a demure starlet in Old South Pearl Street's impressive dining scene, with a carefully orchestrated wine list complemented by a chalkboard menu of cheeses and small plates. And by all means, don't miss **Snooze** (303-297-0700), where breakfast doubles as dessert—including massive pancakes in flavors like pineapple upside down cake and Snickers®.



NIGHT OUT

Catching a show at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts? Meet for a pre-show cocktail at **The Corner Office** (303-825-6500), a mod lounge that's known for its playful mixology. Look for eclectic ingredients like Tang and rock candy. Though it lacks exterior signage, **My Brother's Bar** (303-455-9991) seems to be doing okay; this laid-back Denver fixture has been serving up its unique brand of quiet cool since it opened in the 1930s and was a favorite haunt of Kerouac and Cassady in the early Beat days. The hamburgers, which arrive plateless and wrapped in paper, are still among the best in town. **NoRTH** (720-941-7700), in the posh Cherry Creek North Shopping District, hits the mark for sleek and sexy, with a patio for prime people-watching. Or if you're looking for something a bit more *caliente*, hit **La Rumba** (303-572-8006). Evenings kick off with salsa lessons for beginners, but as the night heats up, newbies sip mojitos on the sidelines while the pros swirl around the dance floor.

DON'T MISS

Catch a **Colorado Rockies** (800-388-ROCK) game at Coors Field, and you'll likely spy a classic Colorado sunset and at least a few home runs—balls fly an average nine percent faster here than at sea level. Bleacher seats in the section known as the "Rockpile" go for cheap, but the best views of the mountains can be found in the upper deck above first base. The **Denver Botanic Gardens** (720-865-3500) is a green, serene place to stroll among plants and flowers from around the world; through September 30, the *Jurassic Gardens* exhibit brings prehistory into the present with life-sized dinosaurs throughout the lush grounds. If you're not averse to change, check out **The United States Mint at Denver** (303-405-4761), the largest circulating-coin producer in the world. Or treat yourself to a lazy day at one of Denver's many well-kept public parks—**Washington Park** is a local favorite, with a sparkling lake, miles of walking paths and a charming Boathouse where you can rent surrey-style bikes and paddle boats.



RETAIL THERAPY

Cherry Creek North (303-394-2904) is Denver's retail ground zero, with 16 blocks of high-end national stores interspersed with local boutiques and galleries. Flagship stores in the nearby **Cherry Creek Shopping Center** (303-388-3900) round out the experience. The **Tattered Cover** (800-833-9327) is a beloved local independent bookstore with a world-class selection of new and classic titles, plus a busy event calendar punctuated by readings with best-selling authors. The store has a historic location downtown and another in the up-and-coming Bluebird District on East Colfax, both of which have a magazine selection that can safely occupy an entire afternoon. In **Highlands Square**, browse locally owned shops for everything from designer denim to artisan cheese. Downtown's charming **Larimer Square** is peppered with funky boutiques and lined with cafés worthy of a post-splurge snack—hit **The Market** (303-534-5140) for lunch and **Osteria Marco** (303-534-5855) for dinner.





Frasca Food and Wine



Denver's ArtDistrict on Santa Fe



Matt Inden/Colorado Tourism Office

STONE'S THROW

Though it's only about 30 minutes from Denver, Boulder is literally a world away—take a day to decide for yourself if it lives up to its reputation as a bohemian paradise. Fuel up at **Moe's Broadway Bagel** (303-444-3252), just blocks from the trailhead of the popular **Mt. Sanitas Loop**, a moderate trek that rewards hikers with panoramic views of the city. Prefer to take it easy? Stroll the shops on the **Pearl Street Mall** (303-449-3774) and cool off at the **West End Tavern** (303-444-3535), where the rooftop patio offers afternoon live music with perfect views of the Flatirons. Stay for dinner at **Frasca Food and Wine** (303-442-6966), a James Beard Foundation award-winner with divine cuisine inspired by alpine Italy. Then tuck in at the **St Julien Hotel & Spa** (720-406-9696), with a central downtown location that's just steps away from the lively **Boulder County Farmers Market** (303-910-2236), held Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings.

ON THE SCENE

The **Walnut Room** (303-292-0529) and the **Bluebird Theater** (303-377-1666) both boast lineups of hot local talent as well as national acts in small-scale concert venues. The **Museum of Contemporary Art Denver** (303-298-7554), which moved to a cutting-edge, eco-friendly building in 2007, hosts fall exhibits by Arlene Shechet, Matthew Buckingham and Kevin O'Connell. Three dozen galleries and working studios make the **Denver's ArtDistrict on Santa Fe** (303-292-3455) a hub of Denver's art scene. Popular neighborhood art walks, where galleries stay open late and offer snacks and drinks, are held every first and third Friday, year-round. If you're traveling with kids, save a few hours for the **Denver Museum of Nature & Science** (303-322-7009) on the eastern edge of City Park. The new *Exhibition Health* exhibit offers a wealth of interactive, educational activities and experiments that will likely teach the whole family new things about the wonders of the human body. 📖

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Jazz Aspen Snowmass

ROCK THE ROCKIES WITH THESE TOP FALL FESTIVALS

SEPT 1-30:

September Splendor In The Rockies

Gunnison and Crested Butte celebrate the changing of the seasons with live music, farmers markets, chili cook-offs, stargazing and more. www.GunnisonCrestedButte.com

SEPT 4-5:

Jazz Aspen Snowmass Labor Day Festival

Elvis Costello & The Imposters, Black Eyed Peas, The Allman Brothers Band and others take the stage for a reliably rollicking good time. www.jazzaspen.com

SEPT 11-13, SEPT 18-20:

Vail Oktoberfest

Brush up on your chicken-dancing skills—when Oktoberfest comes to Vail, it means two full weekends of bratwurst, Beck's and more. summer.vail.com

OCTOBER 1-4:

Durango Cowboy Poetry Gathering

Baxter Black headlines this annual ode to the colorful literary heritage of the American cowboy; features readings, exhibits and trail rides. www.durangocowboygathering.org

events SEP OCT 2009

OPENS AUGUST 20

KOOZA BY CIRQUE DU SOLEIL: Pepsi Center

A return to the origins of Cirque du Soleil, KOOZA combines two circus traditions: acrobatic performance and the art of clowning. Expect a visual world full of color, wonder, audacity and total involvement.

SEPTEMBER 18-20 & 25-27

BEST BREWS

Ballpark Neighborhood (Larimer Street Between 20th and 22nd Streets)

Modeled after the Munich festival, Denver's Oktoberfest is one of the largest German festivals in the U.S. Visitors come for beer and brats, live music, cultural dancing, rides and games.

OCTOBER 10

JACK-O-LAUNCH AT PUMPKINFEST

Delaney Farm, Aurora

A solid fall festival in its own right, PumpkinFest is worth the short trek to the 'burbs for its centerpiece event: a rowdy gourd-launching that pits the Rocky Mountain region's best catapult-makers against one another.

