

GO. SEE. DO.

COLORADO'S CALENDAR OF EVENTS

by LEAH M. CHARNEY

SPORTS

MEXICAN RODEO EXTRAVAGANZA

JAN. 8 • DENVER

A signature event of the National Western Stock Show, the Mexican Rodeo Extravaganza has surprised and delighted audiences for more than 25 years. Started, produced and emceed by fourth-generation charro Jerry Diaz, the extravaganza is a cultural exchange of Spanish, Portuguese and Mexican traditions.

This includes the elaborately dressed charros, whose heritage dates back to the 17th century. The charro “established this frontier we all celebrate,” said Karen Woods, who directs marketing for all Stock Show events.

The Western spirit is fully on display during the Mexican Rodeo Extravaganza. Spectators witness the splendor of mari-

achis parading into the arena before becoming a live backing track for the talents of bullfighters, bareback riders, trick ropers, folklorico dancers and escaramuzas (female charras) riding side-saddle.

Aside from cultural pageantry, spectators take in variations in technique during the Mexican-style bronc riding, where, unlike in American rules, riders hold onto the saddle horn as they try not to get bucked off. The longer they hang on, the more their fellow contestants cheer them on, going so far as to throw their hats into the ring to commemorate the stunning feat of holding on for dear life. Shows are at 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. (303) 296-6977.

Bronc riders, dancers and more perform at this National Western Stock Show extravaganza.

Hector Acevedo/Alamy



WHERE TO EAT DENVER STOCKYARD SALOON

This nearly secret spot is tucked behind the National Western Complex, next to the stockyard pens. Though the “yard bar” is open year-round, expect extended hours and live music every night during the 16-day Stock Show. The menu includes a killer burger, an excellent steak in both sandwich and salad form, and fried options ranging from jalapeños to Rocky Mountain oysters. 4710 National Western Drive. (303) 298-0525.



WHERE TO GO NATIONAL WESTERN STOCK SHOW

Expect to see a wide variety of animals including cattle, swine and goats during the full National Western Stock Show, Jan. 7-22. Other crowd favorite events include the first PRCA rodeo of the year, mutton bustin’ and the emotional ballet of freestyle reining. The Jan. 5 Kick-Off Parade includes marching longhorn cattle from Union Station to the Brown Palace. This year’s parade grand marshal is renowned author and inventor Temple Grandin. 4655 Humboldt St. (303) 296-6977.



UllrGrass

Other events you may enjoy

JANUARY

Wintersköll

Jan. 12-15 • Aspen

A legacy event since 1951, Aspen toasts winter each January with this four-day festival. Celebrations include snow sculptures, theatrical performances, fireworks and a torchlight descent down Little Nell Run on Aspen Mountain. Come hungry to Soupsköll, where local restaurants offer free soup samples to compete for the Soup Pot Trophy. (970) 925-1940.

Ouray Ice Festival

Jan. 19-22 • Ouray

Spectators watch the best climbers from around the world compete in North America's largest ice-climbing event. The festival is held in Ouray Ice Park, where "ice farmers" create towering frozen waterfalls to climb. Clinics are available for people of every skill level to learn how to ice climb. (970) 325-4288.

Sci-Fi & Stir-Fry Festival

Jan. 20-21 • Trinidad

A new food festival makes its way through southern Colorado via Amtrak's Southwest Chief train. This unique event combines science-fiction films, stir-fry dinners and interstate train travel to Raton, New Mexico, in a celebration of geek culture and food. The festival is organized by the Colexico Experience, which previously organized the similar Spaghetti & Westerns Festival. (970) 925-1940.

Colorado Indian Market & Southwest Art Fest

Jan. 20-22 • Denver

Now in its 41st year, the Colorado Indian Market and Southwest Art Fest has moved from Colorado Springs back to Denver. The 150 artists and craftspeople are professionally juried in order to showcase the best works celebrating Native American heritage inspired by the Southwest. Award-winning entertainers also perform original music, traditional dances and engage audiences in vibrant storytelling. (505) 273-7363.

MUSIC

ULLRGRASS

JAN. 27-29 • GOLDEN

This community event in the heart of downtown Golden celebrates both Ullr (pronounced OOL-er), a Norse god associated with winter, as well as bluegrass music. Attendees often dress in Viking regalia as they take part in the tunes, craft beer festival and kid-friendly events, like the UllrEgg Hunt, where kiddos search out candy hidden across Parfet Park.

Co-founder Chris Thompson is proud to bring some of the top newgrass and bluegrass musicians in the state and regionally, including members of The String Cheese Incident, Yonder Mountain String Band, Horseshoes & Hand Grenades, Coral Creek Music and others. That last one is Thompson's own bluegrass band, where he and venerable musician Bill McKay of Leftover Salmon and the Derek Trucks Band mix in the elements of Americana and the steel pan sounds of Caribbean drums.

Proceeds from UllrFest – which Thompson operates with his wife, Susannah – benefits their nonprofit, the Coral Creek Kids Music Program. The program brings music education to kindergarteners across the state, providing each participating school with training, curriculum and more than 100 kid-friendly instruments like shaker eggs, rhythm sticks and tambourines.

Tickets are required for Saturday's daytime festivities and the beer festival, as well as the separate Nightgrass events, which take place on Friday and Saturday nights inside heated tents. Sunday's Family Day is free. ullrgrass.com.



WHERE TO EAT THE BUFFALO ROSE

A watering hole of some kind has been at this location since Golden's founding in 1859. The food here is full of Western flair, like artichoke dip studded with green chiles or the bison short ribs. The restaurant also has a kids' menu and serves breakfast on Saturdays and Sundays. 1119 Washington Ave. (720) 638-5597.



WHERE TO STAY THE EDDY HOTEL & TAPROOM

The newest place to stay in Golden is this dog-friendly boutique hotel perched next to beautiful Clear Creek. Catering to the Colorado lifestyle, room rates include access to mountain and e-bikes and complimentary beer samples at check-in.

Guests can also book experiences, like guided hikes, hayrides and open-air massages. 1640 8th St. (720) 442-8150.



Visit Manitou Springs

This Mardi Gras celebration features a gumbo cook-off and colorful krewes.

CULTURAL

MANITOU SPRINGS CARNIVALE WEEKEND FEB. 17-18 • MANITOU SPRINGS

Often associated with Brazil's famous festival or New Orleans' Mardi Gras, Carnival is a global festive season with its own Colorado celebration. Each February, folks flock to the 5,000-person town of Manitou Springs to get in on the feathered mask and colorful costumed fun.

The Mumbo Jumbo Gumbo Cook-Off isn't just a tongue twister, it's also a contest where up to 20 chefs, professional or amateur, cook 5-gallon vats of gumbo on-site at Soda Springs Park in the cold February morning.

"It makes the pavilion and half the town smell really good," Special Events Coordina-

tor Jenna Gallas said. The smells are free, but a mere 75 cents buys each 2-ounce sample; Gallas recommends buying and trying all of them to accurately vote for a favorite.

The weekend's festivities kick off with the CarniBall masquerade ball; tickets are available in January. At the Carnivale Community Parade, krewes of dance troupes, community organizations and the Carnivale Court, elected by local popular vote, march from Memorial Park to Soda Springs Park. A human-powered bike bar called the Levitator Lounge is always popular, as is a foot-powered float that would make Fred Flintstone proud. (719) 685-5089.

HOWELSEN HILL

SKI FREE SUNDAYS

SKI FOR FREE EVERY SUNDAY AT HISTORIC HOWELSEN HILL

North America's Oldest Operating Ski Area
Located in the heart of downtown Steamboat Springs

845 HOWELSEN PARKWAY | 970-879-8499 | STEAMBOATSPRINGS.NET/SKI
City of Steamboat Springs

MONTE VISTA
Chamber of Commerce
The Heart of the Valley

HOMETOWN FUN
Events in Monte Vista, Colorado

- Ski-Hi Stampede Concert and Rodeo
 - Rotary Outdoor Gun Show
 - Potato Festival
- Brothers Keepers Motorcycle Club's "Thunder in the Valley"

PLUS!

- Mountain Film on Tour • Moonlight Madness
- South-Central Colorado Micro Brew Fest & Car Show
 - San Luis Valley Indigenous Art Market
- Crane Festival • Holiday Bazaar • Cinco de Mayo

MONTE VISTA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
947 1st Avenue • Monte Vista, CO 81144
(719) 852-2731 • montevistachamber.org

EVENT PARTNERS

WHERE TO STAY BLUE SKIES INN

This spot is tucked on 2 ½ garden-filled acres just off Manitou Avenue, where a free shuttle runs ferrying gawkers to the parade. Once part of the estate belonging to town founder William Bell, the property now has 10 suites of 450 square feet each, and the innkeepers live on-site in what was once

Dr. Bell's carriage house.
402 Manitou Ave. (719) 685-3899.

WHERE TO GO MANITOU MINERAL SPRINGS

Manitou Springs doesn't have hot springs. The town is named for eight underground, naturally effervescent, cold water springs – each with its own special mineral content. A self-guided tour to drink from all eight is a 30-minute walk or roll covering about a mile. Start at Seven Springs. 422 Washington Ave. manitoumineralsprings.org.

FEBRUARY

Snowdown

Feb. 1-5 • Durango

When cabin fever starts to set in around early February, the people of Durango put on the profoundly silly “cabin fever reliever” event known as Snowdown. In a tradition dating back 44 years, folks dress up according to a theme – this year, it's “A Shakespearean Revelry” – and participate in zany contests and activities. snowdown.org.

Steamboat Winter Carnival

Feb. 8-12 • Steamboat Springs

For five days, Steamboat Springs indulges in all things skiing: Nordic jumps, downhill racing, a skiing band instead of a marching one and horses pulling children as they zip in and out of cones and glide over jumps. Night events include skiers jumping through fire hoops and the Lighted Man, whose 70-pound pyrotechnic suit shoots fireworks. (970) 879-0695.

Colorado New Play Summit

Feb. 24-25 • Denver

Attendees go behind the scenes and see exactly how new plays are made, while also being part of the process. There are no costumes or sets here: Writers stage stripped-down readings of theatrical works in-progress during this two-day summit and ask audiences to help shape stories. (303) 893-4100.

Voces Vivas

Closing Feb. 26 • Boulder

For the past year, Museum of Boulder has hosted this captivating exhibit that honors the Latino families of early Boulder County and beyond. Stories of joy, sorrow, resilience and community are told using personal narratives and everyday objects. Even baseball is on display in a section devoted to a team started in 1925 by Great Western Sugar laborers living in Greeley's Spanish Colony and working the beet fields. (303) 449-3464.



In Granby, everything's a little more independent.

That's how you end up with a place like **Two Pines Supply**.

Two Pines is a local outdoor outfitter carrying everything you need to ski, bike, camp, hike, and generally enjoy everything the mountains have to offer. That, and they also sell bulk spices, laundry refills, and safety third shirts.

It's not what you'll find everywhere, but that's kinda the point.

GRANBY.

A LITTLE MORE INDEPENDENT.



DESTINATIONGRANBY.COM