



Vail, Aspen & Central Colorado

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Tennessee Pass Cookhouse (p240)
- ➔ Matsuhisa (p226)
- ➔ South Ridge Seafood (p190)
- ➔ The Tenth (p203)
- ➔ Pullman (p212)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Denver's Thumb Ranch (p175)
- ➔ Tennessee Pass Sleep Yurts (p239)
- ➔ The Sebastian (p200)
- ➔ Avalanche Ranch (p215)
- ➔ Railroad Bridge (p235)

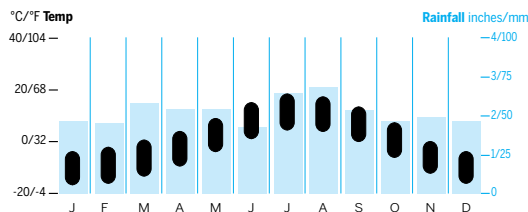
Why Go?

If you ask us where you can find the most trillion-dollar sights, where you can run the gnarliest rivers and charge the sickest runs, and to choose one hike that is sure to save your citified soul within a single afternoon, we would take out the map of Colorado, trim the edges and zoom into the center. Because here's where you'll find more magic per square mile than anywhere else in the state.

It's the stomping ground of war heroes and X Games athletes, and the hideaway of billionaires, ski bums and gonzo fugitives. Celebrified, intellectualized and musical, it's patrolled by bear, elk, hummingbird and eagle, laced by trail, rail and river, and linked by free transport, epic bikepaths and more friendly smiles than seems reasonable. But then again, of course these people are smiling. They freaking live here!

When to Go

Vail



Jan–Mar

Classic Colorado: fresh powder, blue skies and epic runs all day long.

Jun–Aug

Long sunny days means hiking, biking, paddling and outdoor concerts.

Sep & Oct

Terrific lodging deals and last gasp high-country camping amid golden aspens.

Vail, Aspen & Central Colorado Highlights

- 1 Experience the backcountry: climb a 14er, such as **Quandary Peak** (p186), day hike the **Colorado Trail** (p235) or ski hut-to-hut around **Shrine Pass** (p223).
- 2 Explore historic **Breckenridge** (p182) and ski from Peak 8 all the way down into town.
- 3 Hike to the Maroon Bells, soak in hot springs and fall in love with glamorous **Aspen** (p216).
- 4 Drive alongside the nimble mountain goats atop **Mt Evans** (p171) and **Independence Pass** (p237).
- 5 Toast the powder in the legendary back bowls at **Vail** (p197).
- 6 Cycle from **Frisco** (p177) along Summit County's bikepaths or ride epic singletrack on the **Monarch Crest Trail** (p231).
- 7 Ski like a local at **Winter Park** (p173), **Arapahoe Basin** (p181), **Loveland** (p175) or **Copper Mountain** (p193).
- 8 Paddle white water or cast for trout on the Arkansas, near **Salida** (p231).
- 9 Ride horseback through the high-altitude prairie of **South Park** (p191).
- 10 Get a glimpse of gold-rush history in ghost towns like **St Elmo** (p240) and **Crystal** (p215).

