

BUFF UP ON BOULDER

The latest and greatest spots for staying, dining, and playing in Colorado's quintessential college town

By **Linda Hayes**

As the #1 Sports Town in America and *Bon Appetit* magazine's America's Foodiest Town, Boulder does an impressive job of mixing urban sensibilities with a laid-back, go-green lifestyle. The edgy little town does it all against the drop-dead gorgeous backdrop of the iconic Flatirons. Now is the perfect time for Aspenites in need of an off-season diversion to make the four-hour trek to Boulder.

Stay



FIT FOR A KING: The Hotel Boulderado's classic "King" room

Hotel Boulderado

You'll get a real taste of Boulder's Victorian roots at this landmark 102-year-old hotel off Pearl Street. Its red brick façade and elegant vintage décor throughout all 160 rooms and suites is pure Victorian. That said, amenities are up-to-date, as is chef John Platt's menu at Q's. *2115 13th St., 303-442-4344. boulderado.com*



RELAX: St. Julien guests can relax, renew, and re-energize in the hotel's one-of-a-kind, 10,000-square-foot spa and fitness center

St. Julien Hotel & Spa

Signature Boulder chic, this stylish hotel within blocks of everywhere you want to be features 201 luxe guest rooms and suites with views of the Flatirons or town. Relax with a Babassu Sugar Scrub in the 10,000-square-foot spa, or chill with a Rosemary Acai cocktail at the T-Zero Lounge. *900 Walnut St., 720-406-9696. stjulien.com*

Eat



JUST LIKE HOME: Don't let the casual atmosphere fool you—The Kitchen offers 100% fine dining

The Kitchen

Along with The Kitchen (Upstairs) and The Kitchen (NEXT DOOR), this community-style bistro by chef-owner Hugo Matheson puts out rustic, carefully sourced eats and drinks inspired by the seasons. Daily menus feature dishes like char-grilled pork chops with rhubarb jam. *1039 Pearl St., 303-544-5973. thekitchencafe.com*

Black Cat Farm Table Bistro

The name says it all. Chef Eric Skokan gets inspiration for his dishes—duck confit with grilled fennel, heritage pork with braised leeks—from what he raises and harvests each day at his organic farm and ranch. Super wine list, too. *1964 13th St., 303-444-5500. blackcatboulder.com*

Eat



HAPPY, HAPPY, JOY, JOY: Tasty Asian treats and cocktails to tickle the senses will have everyone in a good mood at Happy & the Bitter Bar

Happy & the Bitter Bar

Go to this friendly spot (sister restaurant to West End Tavern) for Asian-inspired fare like griddled pork buns with sriracha aioli, banana leaf wrapped sea bass, and miso udon bowls. After hours, The Bitter Bar turns speakeasy with real-deal cocktails handcrafted by mixologist Mark Stoddard. Insider Tip: Late-night entry is via a 'secret' wood door 'round back. *835 Walnut St., 303-442-3050. happyandthebitterbar.com*

Pizzeria Basta

Chef-owner Kelly Whitaker's pizzas were a hit at the Infinite Monkey Theorem's party at Aspen's Smuggler Mine this summer, and fans are following him back to Boulder. Faves include the 'cart-driver' (homemade sausage and mozzarella, rapini, fennel pollen, chiles), kurobuta meatballs, grass-fed beef cheek, and roasted chicken from the wood-fired oven. *3601 Arapahoe Ave., 303-997-8775. pizzariabasta.com*

Shop

Pearl Street Mall, Boulder's outdoor gathering place, features one-of-a-kind, independently owned shops, boutiques, galleries, and more. Some top picks include **Peppercorn** for kitchen, bath and home accessories, **Barbara & Company** for cool women's clothing, and **West End Gardener** for year-round gardening needs. For home projects, supplies or just plain tinkering, 60,000-square-foot **McGuckin Hardware** on Arapahoe Avenue (ask any local for directions) has been the go-to place since 1955.



IN VINO VERITAS: Go to Frasca for the wine, stay for everything else

Frasca Food and Wine

The James Beard Foundation (not to mention food lovers from coast to coast) regularly laud Master Sommelier Bobby Stuckey and chef Lachlan MacKinnon-Patterson for what has become destination dining à la Friuli, Italy. Note: book the two-top in the kitchen, which links to sister restaurant Pizzeria Locale with its Stefano Farrara oven from Naples. *1738 Pearl St., 303-442-6966. frascafoodandwine.com*

Don't Miss

Boulder County Farmers' Market

150 professional and weekend farmers, backyard gardeners, and artisans haul their produce, cheese, bread, flowers, meats, and other items downtown. Saturdays 8:30AM-2PM through November 19. *boulderfarmers.org*

Beer, Beer & More Beer

Pop in for a fresh brew at one of nearly a dozen microbreweries around town. A block off the Mall, sip an Old Elk Brown Ale at Walnut Brewery, Boulder's original brewery. *1123 Walnut St., 303-447-1345.*

Open Studios Fall Artist Tour

For the first two weekends in October, more than 100 artists open their studio doors for visitors. Sat.-Sun., noon-6PM. *openstudios.org*

Colorado Buffs Football

The Fall home season kicks off Saturday, September 10 at CU's Folsom Field. Go Buffs! 🍷

PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY HAPPY & THE BITTER BAR; FRASCA; PIZZERIA BASTA