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PERFECT-FOR-FALL  
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A COLORADO TRAVEL MAGAZINE

# ALIVE

Fall/Winter 2017/2018



**9 Wild Ways to Love  
Winter in Colorado**

**The Fast Lane:  
Summer Thrill Rides**

# PERFECT- FOR-FALL

# TOURS

BY ASHLEY HUGHES

Between the long days of summer and winter's snowy wonder, fall is an ideal time to explore Colorado in all its glory. And sometimes a structured approach is just what's needed to delve deeper. Enlist the help of professionals, or take a self-guided route to experience the best autumn has to offer.



# FALL IN LOVE WITH FOLIAGE



Missing out on the brilliant yellow, red and orange hues of aspen trees would truly be a shame. Luckily there are a variety of ways to soak up the splendor across the state.

Photography tours mean you'll not only view nature's stunning display, but also snap some Insta-worthy proof. **Yellow Wood Guiding** in **Estes**

**Park** leads photo safaris through Rocky Mountain National Park, with options for private four-, six- or eight-hour excursions. Beginners are taught the basics, like composition and light metering, and more advanced photogs can gain new perspectives. Based in **Golden**, **Big Sun Photo Tours** offers single-day outings in the central Rockies between **Denver**, **Vail** and **Aspen**. Along with beautiful leaves, don't be surprised if an elk or eagle wanders into your frame.

There's something to be said about a bird's-eye view. Take flight with **Royal Gorge Helitours** in **Cañon City** in mid- to late September to be awed by aspens on the west and south sides of Pikes Peak, set against a backdrop of crisp blue skies and clear alpine lakes. Another aerial choice is a morning hot-air balloon ride with **Winter Park's Grand Adventure**. Float above the Fraser Valley while taking in the scenery and enjoying breakfast with a Champagne toast.



Immerse yourself in golden surroundings on a horseback ride. The equines at **Granite Mountain Outfitters** near **Poncha Springs** are gentle and sure-footed as you traverse trails showcasing panoramic views of the Sangre de Cristo and Sawatch mountains and San Luis Valley.

Two-and-a-half-hour rides are recommended, but there are also one-hour, half-day and three-hour sunset alternatives.

Browse more ways to experience our gorgeous autumn splendor at [COLORADO.com/Fall](http://COLORADO.com/Fall).





# SIP & SAMPLE

Maybe it's the fact that the Great American Beer Festival goes down in Denver every October, but craft beverages seem to go hand-in-hand with the autumn season.

Put together a DIY sipping tour in **Longmont**, thanks to the **Brewhop Trolley**. Operating Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 9pm, the hop-on/hop-off trolley makes stops at more than a dozen breweries, tap houses, cideries and distilleries — think Left Hand Brewing Company and St. Vrain Cidery, among others — at roughly one-hour intervals. The flexibility of a one- or two-day pass allows imbibers to choose how they allocate their time.

In the same vein, the **Drink RiNo Collective** sponsors free eTuk circulators (read: an oversize golf cart), which loop through the River North neighborhood in Denver (RiNo to those in-the-know) on First Fridays and every Saturday. Pick-up points make it easy to reach places like Ratio Beerworks, The Infinite Monkey Theorem winery and Stem Ciders.

In and around **Durango**, the **Crafted Beverages of Southwest Colorado** program ([durango.org/crafted-beverages](http://durango.org/crafted-beverages)) provides a brochure and map pinpointing nearly 30 independent producers of tasty libations, from **Ouray** to **Cortez** to **Pagosa Springs**. Of course, leave time for sightseeing, hiking, delicious meals and shopping in between destinations.

Out west, cruise the **Palisade Fruit and Wine Byway** via bicycle or car in search of wineries, fruit stands and orchards — and the fantastic bounties they put forth. Divided into three routes, travelers can scout out downtown **Palisade**, follow the scenic Colorado River or venture deeper into Grand Valley toward **Cedaredge**, **Paonia**, **Delta** and **Olathe**.

Read about more brewery, winery and distillery tours at [COLORADO.com/DrinkTours](http://COLORADO.com/DrinkTours).

# SPOOKY STORYTELLERS

"It's close to midnight, and something evil's lurking in the dark." OK, that's the intro to Michael Jackson's "Thriller," but who doesn't want to set an eerie tone for a ghost or cemetery tour — especially around Halloween?

With four dates in October, the aptly named **Central City Creepy Crawl** is led by guides from the **Gilpin Historic Society**. During your 60-minute jaunt, visit historic buildings and see reenactments of ghost stories and other tales. You'll come away more informed, though with a few goose bumps.

Friday and Saturday nights from June through October, **Haunted Corazon Ghost Tours** will take you on a stroll through the heart of historic **Trinidad**. After departing from **Coin Dancer Antiques**, get ready to hear chilling accounts and mysteries of the Old West. If you're lucky, you might be the next participant to capture some truly eerie photos.

Just once a year on Oct. 31, lifelong **Fort Morgan** resident David Wood extends a historical tour around **Riverside Cemetery**. But instead of scary stories, the focus is on the people who lived in the community who are buried in the cemetery. Meander around graves and tombstones as Wood recounts how the area was settled by westward-moving pioneers and the burial grounds came to be.

While it's scheduled on weekend evenings year-round, the **Fort Collins Ghost Tour** is particularly timely come October. With its journey in and *underneath* the city's Old Town, the tour highlights local legends, hauntings, ghostly sightings and other strange happenings. Depending on the night's itinerary, you may find yourself in an old tunnel or in the basement of Happy Lucky's Teahouse.



FROM TOP: BREWHOP TROLLEY; CRAFTED BEVERAGES OF SOUTHWEST COLORADO; GRAPE VINES AT STONE COTTAGE CELLARS IN PAONIA. C2 PHOTOGRAPHY.



# DOWN ON THE FARM

When the crops are ripe, Colorado farms kick into high gear and open their gates for fall festivities.

**Miller Farms' Fall Harvest Festival** in **Platteville** (east of **Longmont**) is a daily celebration of the season from Labor Day through mid-November. Navigate the corn maze, snuggle up to animals at the petting zoo and ride out to the fields to pick up bags of fresh potatoes, carrots, squash and corn.

Savor small-town Americana during the annual **Mountain Harvest Festival** (Sept. 21–24, 2017). Along with live music, local arts and crafts, a bike parade and a grape stomp, the Saturday schedule features free farm tours around **Paonia** and **Hotchkiss**. Purchase goodies like gourmet cheese from Avalanche Cheese Goat Farm & Dairy, Desert Weyr's wool products, lavender soap at Lamborn Mountain Farmstead and more.

Using the Boulder County Farm Trail brochure ([bouldercoloradousa.com/things-to-do/boulder-county-farm-trail](http://bouldercoloradousa.com/things-to-do/boulder-county-farm-trail)), embark on a scenic drive through **Boulder**, **Hygiene**, **Lyons** and

other locales. Along the way you'll encounter more than 850 farms — many of which regularly welcome visitors — in addition to farm stands and markets. Bring some cash for treasures at honor-system stands, then select a spot for a lovely picnic.

The growing conditions in southeast Colorado yield the famous **Pueblo** chile, a hot and flavorful delight that's practically the town's mascot. Coordinated by the Pueblo Chile Growers Association, a map of farms and stands ([pueblochile.org/farms](http://pueblochile.org/farms)) makes it easy to navigate the area during harvest season (typically July through October). Many allow U-picks and will roast the peppers for you, resulting in a deeply flavorful treat perhaps best used in savory pork green chile.

Find more harvest-time activities at [COLORADO.com/Roots](http://COLORADO.com/Roots) and additional tour options at [COLORADO.com/Tours](http://COLORADO.com/Tours).

*Ashley Hughes is a dining enthusiast and avid home cook who loves to explore the world through food. She lives in Denver, where she keeps up with the city's ever-growing restaurant scene.*



FROM TOP: BOULDER COUNTY FARM TRAIL; PUEBLO CHILES; MILES/DENSE CHAMBERS.

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