

Where to Find Your GROOVE

BY ASHLEY HUGHES



Greeley Blues Jam

Hey you rock-and-rollers, blues travelers, festival goers and everyone in between: Here's an inside look at where to experience all things musical in the Centennial State — from stages in the smallest of settings to seeking your favorite summer headliners.

FROM TOP: RED ROCKS AMPHITHEATRE/MICHAEL GOLDMAN; GREELEY BLUES JAM/RICHARD HAWES.

Small-Town *Sounds*

The hills — or rather, mountains, in Colorado’s case — are alive with the sound of music far and wide. Discover local talents or hear who’s passing through at these gems tucked across the state.

TABOR OPERA HOUSE, Leadville

Once billed as the finest theater between St. Louis and San Francisco, this cultural treat — originally built in 1879 by silver baron Horace Tabor — embodies the elegance of the Victorian era. The likes of composer John Philip Sousa, poet and playwright Oscar Wilde and singer Anna Held have all taken the stage here, but these days a diverse program of cultural events, from musical performances to theater and flamenco dancing to comedy, draws crowds throughout the summer season.

Pre-show bites: High Mountain Pies

Post-show nightcap: Silver Dollar Saloon

THE TANK CENTER FOR SONIC ARTS, Rangely

The words “railroad water-treatment facility” don’t exactly evoke acoustical prowess, but The TANK was originally constructed as one in the 1940s and has since seen a second life as a performance and recording space that has to be heard to be believed. Step inside the tall, cylindrical venue during Open Saturdays from May through October to share the sonic environment with others or reserve your own private session. The attention also turns to various artists throughout the year for spontaneous and scheduled sets.

Pre-show bites: Giovanni’s Italian Grill

Post-show nightcap: Main Street Pub

STEVE’S GUITARS, Carbondale

In an intimate listening room on Fourth Street, with vintage guitars adorning the walls and hanging from the ceiling, people have gathered weekly on Friday evenings to hear live music for nearly two decades. The cozy setting almost feels like someone’s living room, with old movie-theater seats and plush couches to sink into while you take in the show, which could feature local acts just getting their start in the biz or veterans on the scene.

Pre-show bites: Phat Thai

Post-show nightcap: Marble Distilling Co.

THE MISHAWAKA, Bellvue

Affectionately known as The Mish, you’ll find this beloved amphitheater northwest of Fort Collins, set along the wooded banks of the Poudre River. From late May to late September, the lineup of jam bands draws big crowds to the endearingly rustic lodgepole-pine stage and shows by Leftover Salmon, Toad the Wet Sprocket and The Wailers keep the Colorado-cool vibe here alive.

Pre-show bites: The Mishawaka’s on-site restaurant

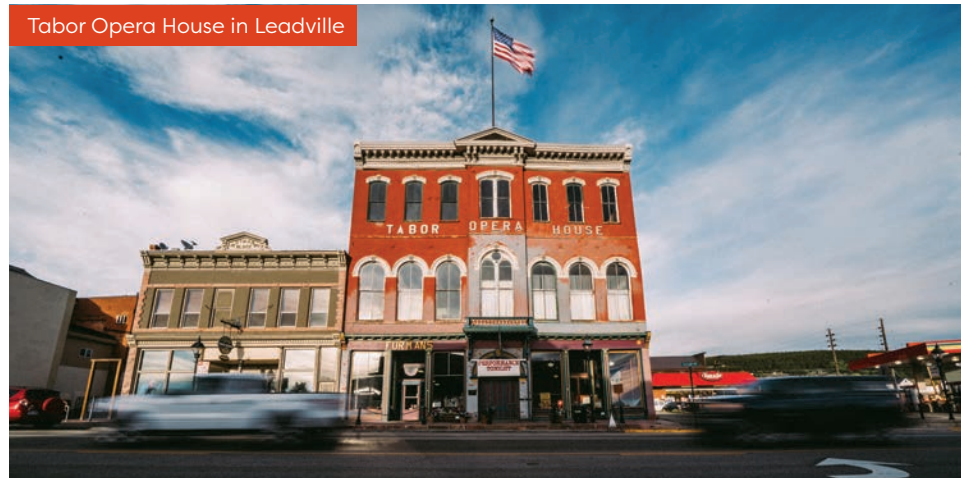
Post-show nightcap: Tap and Handle in Fort Collins



Red Rocks Amphitheatre near Denver



The TANK Center For Sonic Arts in Rangely



Tabor Opera House in Leadville

FROM LEFT: THE TANK CENTER FOR SONIC ARTS/JEREMIAH MOORE; TAVOR OPERA HOUSE.

ANIMAS CITY THEATRE, Durango

When in the Four Corners region, there may be no better venue to catch a little entertainment than the ACT (as the locals call it). Not only is it a full-fledged movie theater that screens classic and indie movies, it also hosts live music throughout the week and boasts a state-of-the-art sound system. Plus, the spacious dance floor means you can really rock out.

Pre-show bites: Ore House

Post-show nightcap: Eno Cocktail Lounge & Wine Bar

IVY BALLROOM, Buena Vista

The Ivy Ballroom has the distinction of being the newest venue on the list (the boutique spot opened in June 2018). Housed in the also-new Surf Hotel, it overlooks the whitewater waves on the Arkansas River and aims to be a world-class concert destination with its year-round lineup.

Pre-show bites: Eddystone Restaurant at South Main

Post-show nightcap: The Jailhouse Craft Beer Bar

THE SHERBINO THEATER, Ridgway

You'll feel like part of the community at The Sherb, especially since it's served as a social hub of downtown Ridgway over the course of the last century. Previous iterations saw use as a drug store, post office, roller rink and a saloon, but after a revival in 2011, it's been restored as a place for performing arts and music.

Pre-show bites: Colorado Boy Pub & Brewery

Post-show nightcap: Steps Tavern

DILLON AMPHITHEATER, Dillon

It wouldn't be an overstatement to say this mountain-town stage has a million-dollar view. In fact, a recent overhaul involved more than a million dollars in upgrades, including additional seats and a larger dance floor. But the vistas of sailboats crisscrossing Lake Dillon in the background and free concerts on Friday and Saturday nights throughout the summer are truly priceless.

Pre-show bites: Pug Ryan's Brewery

Post-show nightcap: The Pub Down Under at Arapahoe Cafe

THE CARIBOU ROOM, Nederland

North of funky Ned's main drag, the Caribou Room helped to revive the music scene in this Rocky Mountain enclave, which was previously known for the famed Caribou Ranch recording studio that attracted stars like Elton John and The Beach Boys. The former storage warehouse was designed to create the best-possible live sound experience for both audiences and bands, with nods to music history in the ticket office, including a jukebox loaded with '60s and '70s jams.

Pre-show bites: Kathmandu Restaurant

Post-show nightcap: Very Nice Brewing Company

THE ARMORY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, Brighton

No longer do the denizens and visitors northeast of Denver have to travel into the city for their live-music fix. Thanks to the Armory, a regular schedule of music, dance and theater performances has made the old military building into a cultural center.

Pre-show bite: Pinocchio's Italian Eatery

Post-show nightcap: Something Brewery

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Ivy Ballroom in Buena Vista



Dillon Amphitheater in Dillon

FROM LEFT: SURF HOTEL/LACI MONTROSE; DILLON AMPHITHEATER.

Which Music Fest Is Right for YOU?

No matter your personality or musical tastes, with plenty of events to choose from you're sure to find your festival match.

IF YOU'RE FEELING bluesy ...

Get your fill of twangy rhythms at the **RapidGrass Bluegrass Festival in Idaho Springs** (June TBA, 2019) or gather the family for soulful jazz riffs during the **Greeley Blues Jam** (June 7–8, 2019).

IF YOU'RE YEARNING TO pitch a tent ...

Certain multi-day occasions welcome campers to stay for the duration, including the **Telluride Bluegrass Festival** (June 20–23, 2019) and **Buena Vista's Seven Peaks Music Festival** (Aug. TBA, 2019).



Telluride Bluegrass Festival

IF YOU'RE COMFIEST IN YOUR western WEAR ...

Don your best two-steppin' boots and 10-gallon hat for country-music celebrations such as **Country Jam** outside of **Grand Junction** (June 13–16, 2019) or **Hugo's Colorado Prairie Music Festival** (June 22, 2019).

IF YOU WANT TO kick off YOUR SHOES ...

No one will judge if you opt to go barefoot and feel the cool grass underfoot while enjoying low-key affairs like the **Copper Mountain Music Festival** (July TBA, 2019) or the **Farm to Fiddle Summer Festival in Hotchkiss** (Aug. TBA, 2019).

IF YOU KEEP IT classical ...

The orchestral stylings of famed composers like Beethoven and Mozart fill the air over the course of **Boulder's Colorado Music Festival** (select dates, June 27–Aug. 3, 2019) and **Bravo! Vail Music Festival** (select dates, June 20–Aug. 1, 2019).

IF YOU'RE SEEKING FETES FOR foodies ...

Don't miss the chance to get down and chow down when **Frisco's Colorado BBQ Challenge** (June 13–15, 2019) combines top-notch brisket and ribs with nearly a dozen bands, while the **Festival Italiano** (Sept. TBA, 2019) in **Lakewood** rejoices in the sounds and flavors of Italy.



IF YOU DON'T WANT THE good times TO END ...

Why attend one day's worth of performances when you can return over the span of several weeks? Recurring programs such as the **Aspen Music Festival and School** (June 27–Aug. 18, 2019) and the **Crested Butte Music Festival** (July 2–28, 2019) ensure you'll want to circle back to see what else is in store.

IF DANCING a jig IS YOUR THING ...

The refrains of harps, pipes and melodeons provide plenty of merriment and keep traditions alive during **Colorado Springs' Pikes Peak Celtic Festival** (June 14–16, 2019) and the **Spanish Peaks International Celtic Music Festival** (Sept. 19–22, 2019) in **La Veta**.



Southwest Chief
Bicycle & Comedy Festival

Looking for a laugh? The first-ever **Southwest Chief Bicycle & Comedy Festival** (May 2–5, 2019) stops in **Trinidad** with a train full of acts.

Denver in the Spotlight

Scope out where you can experience the best of the Mile High City's music scene.

UNDER THE STARS

Rock out al fresco at these picturesque outdoor venues — we think you might have heard of at least one?

- Fiddler's Green Amphitheatre in Greenwood Village
- Levitt Pavilion Denver
- Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Morrison

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Make a night (or day) of it at lively fests and treasured summertime traditions.

- City Park Jazz (Sundays, June TBA–Aug. TBA, 2019) cityparkjazz.org
- Westword Music Showcase (June 29, 2019) westwordshowcase.com
- The Underground Music Showcase (July 26–28, 2019) undergroundmusicshowcase.com
- A Taste of Colorado (Aug. 31–Sept. 2, 2019) atasteofcolorado.com

EAST COLFAX/BLUEBIRD DISTRICT

There's bound to be a show any night of the week along this buzzy strip of Colfax Avenue.

- Bluebird Theater
- Fillmore Auditorium
- Ogden Theatre

BIG VENUES

Home to Denver's pro sports teams, these spots have the capacity to host a crowd when big names like the Rolling Stones and Jay-Z come to town.

- Broncos Stadium at Mile High
- Coors Field
- Pepsi Center

DINNER & A SHOW

The classic date-night formula gets an upgrade at delightful dining/entertainment hybrids.

- Nocturne Jazz & Supper Club
- Ophelia's Electric Soapbox
- Syntax Physic Opera



Creative Districts: Where Art & Acoustics Go Hand in Hand

Designated communities across the state brim with cultural offerings, including these tuneful locales and events.

Downtown Grand Junction: Check out the newly renovated **Avalon Theatre**, where you might catch anything from a Grand Junction Symphony Orchestra program to vocalists on the Sunset Terrace.

Pueblo Creative Corridor: The **Sangre de Cristo Arts Center's** summer **Festival Fridays** are the perfect time to mingle, sip a cocktail and listen to live bands of all genres.

Corazón de Trinidad: Each August, the **Trinidaddio Blues Fest** (Aug. 24, 2019) is a can't-miss collection of local, regional and world-class blues performers.

Downtown Fort Collins: You don't have to be a professional musician to appreciate **The Music District's** status as a creative playground and workspace. Check their calendar for community events happening throughout the year.

Breckenridge Creative Arts: As young musicians gain experience from unique fellowships with the **National Repertory Orchestra**, summertime visitors to Breck benefit from a free chamber concert series in June and July.

Downtown Longmont: Go ahead, dance in the streets as the area around Fourth Avenue and Kimbark Street shuts down every Friday in June for **Downtown Summer Concerts**.

Paonia: From June through October, **Final Friday Frolics** showcase art galleries, live music and tasty local treats throughout downtown. And on Thursdays in August, **Pickin' in the Park** features both up-and-coming and established acts in Paonia Town Park.

Explore all 23 of Colorado's Certified Creative Districts at COLORADO.com/CreativeDistricts.



Final Friday Frolics in Paonia

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



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