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44

FEATURED 38

More than Apparitions

Scattered across the Rockies are remnants of once-bustling towns, now reduced to weathered cabins, creaking storefronts, and whispers on the wind. These ghost towns tell stories of boom and bust, of miners chasing veins of silver and gold, of families carving out livelihoods in the thin mountain air—only to vanish as quickly as they came.

By Heather Shoning

44

Built to Last

In Colorado, some businesses aren't just companies—they're family legacies. From custom closets to fine furniture to windows built to last, these family-run firms prove that craftsmanship and care are values worth carrying forward.

By Lexi Marshall

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PHOTO: NICK FOX - STOCK.ADOBE.COM

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October 2025 // vol. 7 // no. 7



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AvidLifestyle (ISSN 2642-0562) is published twelve times a year by Baker-Colorado Publishing, LLC, and printed by Publication Printers Inc. Volume six, number two, 9350 E. Arapahoe Road, #210, Greenwood Village, CO 80112. Order your personal subscription to *AvidLifestyle* at avidlifestyle.com or by calling 720.493.1729. Subscriptions are available at the rate of \$12 per year. Copyright © 2023 by Baker-Colorado Publishing, LLC. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is prohibited. Postmaster: Send address changes to *AvidLifestyle*, 9350 E. Arapahoe Road, #210, Greenwood Village, CO 80112. The magazine welcomes editorial submissions but assumes no responsibility for the safekeeping or return of unsolicited manuscripts, photographs, artwork or other material.

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SETTING THE STAGE // editor's letter

TALK OF THE TOWN

KNOW SOMEONE who should be featured in AvidLifestyle?

Tell me about them at heather@avidlifestyle.com



PHOTO: BY VANESSA MIRANDA

SEASON OF STORIES

AUTUMN ALWAYS FEELS like an invitation. Cooler mornings, the first leaves drifting down and a calendar that fills as quickly as the days shorten—it's a season that nudges me to reflect and reconnect. I love how fall has a way of layering the past with the present, reminding us where we've been and where we're headed.

That's exactly what this issue does. We venture into Colorado's ghost towns (More than Apparitions, page 38), where weathered storefronts and collapsed cabins still whisper of ambition, grit and the fleeting nature of boom times. The history is haunting, but the landscapes are breathtaking, making these towns as evocative today as they were a century ago. We also meet Lone Tree Mayor Marissa Harmon (From Salon Owner to City Hall, page 26), who brings an entrepreneur's drive and a mom's perspective to city hall. Her story is about vision, balance, and the belief that community thrives when people invest in one another.

And because fall is also about legacy, writer Lexi Marshall shares the stories of multigenerational businesses—Closet Factory, Gravina's Windows & Doors in Littleton, and Howard Lorton Furniture—that have weathered shifts in style, economy and time by staying true to both family and craft in Built to Last on page 44.

Of course, sometimes the best way to connect is over a great meal. We take you inside Perry's Steakhouse (Refined Dining, page 18), where dinner becomes an occasion worth lingering over.

For me, this season is about savoring both the comfort of tradition and the excitement of change. I hope the stories in this issue give you a little of both—something familiar, something fresh, and plenty to inspire.

Here's to autumn's reflections, new beginnings, and stories that stay with us.

Heather Shoning

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AvidLifestyle is a lifestyle magazine serving Denver's south suburbs. And we're excited to add new, experienced writers to our growing list of contributors. Do you have magazine writing experience? Do you know Denver's south suburbs? Can you dig deep for the unique story about the people, places and events that make our community special? If so, we want you! Please email heather@avidlifestyle.com with basic info about yourself and at least three published clips (links are fine).



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On behalf of AvidLifestyle, Colorado AvidGolfer, our Title Sponsor Central Bank, and our Presenting Sponsor Howard Lorton Furniture & Design, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for your presence at the 5th Annual Wheels of Dreams Charity Experience at Hangar Club.

Because of your generosity and kindness Wheels of Dreams raised \$151,000 for the FullCircle Program on Saturday evening! Thank you. In 5 years, Wheels of Dreams has raised more than \$489,000 for local kids charities! Every penny has stayed in our local communities helping kids and families.

An Enchanting Evening

We hope you enjoyed this signature event, which raises critical support for FullCircle—a nonprofit devoted to helping young people struggling with mental health and addiction, along with their families. The evening featured captivating performances by Narrow Gauge and FullCircle's own DJ, as well as live artistry from James Holmes and Brook Proctor. Guests also had the exciting opportunity to win an exquisite pair of 2-carat, \$3,200 diamond earrings from Trice Jewelers. To complete the experience, attendees relaxed in beautifully appointed lounges graciously provided by Howard Lorton Furniture & Design and Lehrer Fireplace and Patio—adding a touch of elegance to an unforgettable night.

Exotic Displays & Culinary Delights

We trust you admired our stunning collection of over 34 personally owned classic, exotic, and dragster cars, alongside exotics from Mike Ward Automotive, Bentley Denver, Lotus Denver & John Elway Cadillac & Chevrolet. Guests indulged in delightful culinary offerings from Salt Water Social, FOGO de Chão, Hickory House BBQ, Black + Haus Tavern, Seasons 52, Ornerly Olive, P.F. Chang's, Ted's Montana Grill, Zig Zag Smokin' Burger & Meatball and Imperial Chinese paired with beverages from Anheuser-Busch, wine from Delicato and cocktails by Turnbuckle Distillery, Mile High Spirits and Rocker Spirits.

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Healing Through Art

How a brain injury took an artistic life down a different path

By Kastle Waserman

AT AN EARLY AGE, Gabrielle Shannon immersed herself in a world of creativity. When she was four, her parents divorced, and she spent time with her father exploring galleries and making art. When he enrolled in painting classes at the Art Students League in New York, Shannon eagerly accompanied him. She knew art was her calling.





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“I’d been doing art since I was about age two. I’d kept sketchbooks. Art was all I wanted to do. But it’s not really about wanting. It’s more like you’re compelled, almost addicted to creating,” she says.

She studied at Grove Arts in Berkeley, California, then returned to New York, where she worked on self-portraits and created playbills and posters for the theater district. She later married and had children. When the family tagged along on one of her husband’s business trips to Boulder, Colorado, they fell in love with the Front Range and decided to relocate.

However, Shannon didn’t get much time to enjoy their new city. A week after moving in, while putting away dishes, she fell off a ladder and hit her head on the corner of a wall, suffering a major traumatic brain injury (TBI), leaving her in what she describes as a zombie-like state.

“I didn’t walk or talk again for several years,” she recalls.

During her healing, Shannon said she slept a lot. After about two years, she started having lucid dreams of the ocean and the cosmos

reaching for each other. “It was all swirling and swooshing. The colors were so vivid,” she describes.

Shannon knew she needed to paint what she was seeing. She found a studio and got to work, feeling her dreams were an epiphany. “I realized how deeply we’re all connected to each other, the planet and the universe. I saw it in my mind’s eye. I had to get it out.”

The result was a series of stunning acrylic paintings: bright, vivid blues with a pearlescent shimmer that sweep across the canvas and feel like magnificent waves washing into the space. Shannon says her health issues still leave her unable to drive or communicate clearly. Now living in Denver, she says she loves the nature that surrounds her, but she mostly enjoys it through her garden.

Believing that artists naturally possess a deep sensitivity and empathy for what’s happening around them, she expresses concerns about climate change and the current socio-political landscape.

“My brain injury gave me these profound realizations that have become the foundation of my art. It changed the way I create and why

I create. I want to capture the feeling of interconnectedness. That’s why art is important—it gives us hope and beauty in challenging times.”

While she says she focuses a lot on water—currently what’s happening in the ponds and rivers in Colorado—she doesn’t paint directly what she sees, but rather the feeling she gets from it. “I don’t do realistic work. It comes from the inside. Before I paint, I meditate for about an hour. Then I work, and whatever happens, happens. I just allow my intuitive memory and inner life to flow out.”

That “flow,” she says, is what keeps her going as she continues to paint, despite her limitations. “When you’re creating, you just get amazed by how things turn out. There might be a bunch of not-so-great stuff before you hit it. But that whole journey is completely worth it.”

Learn more on her website:

gabrielleshannonstudio.com





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Refined Dining

PERRY'S STEAKHOUSE & GRILLE offers a decadent menu and dining experience

By Amanda Lacey

Photography Courtesy of Perry's Steakhouse & Grille

AROUND THESE PARTS, it's no secret that we love our steak houses. One that you'll want to add to your list of places to visit? That would be Perry's Steakhouse & Grille. Located in the Park Meadows Retail Resort, Perry's is at the intersection where prime cuts, sophistication and impeccable service meet.

With modest beginnings, the Perry family first opened a meat market in Houston in 1979. The business evolved into Perry's Steakhouse & Grille in 1993 and now has locations across

nine states offering USDA-aged steaks, delectable bites, cocktails and an extensive wine cellar offering a limited quantity of exceptional, highly rated wines alongside its signature brand.

The Park Meadows location offers a warm yet luxurious atmosphere. The bar provides a relaxing retreat vibe, whereas the dining room is situated right off the open-concept kitchen, allowing for a glimpse of the chefs. The ample ballroom-style seating and fresh white linens



are accompanied by glimmering light fixtures, glass structures, and an astounding two-story-high wine tower.

Perry's offers lunch, dinner (with Thursday Dinner and Sunday Supper offerings) and social hour. Suppose you're visiting for the first time. In that case, we recommend getting a seat at the bar to enjoy the Petite Bar Plates, where you can build your own journey and experience a minimum of three signature offerings in smaller portions—perfect for tastings.

You can't go wrong with the cedar plank-fired redfish, petite filet Perry stack and spaghetti squash primavera.

Looking to dine for dinner? The wedge salad is one not to pass up. We repeat: The wedge salad is one not to pass up. The perfect chill, the texture and the buttermilk vinaigrette will make you want to lick the plate.

Among the steaks, prime rib and seafood entrees is an unexpected steakhouse

specialty—Perry's famous pork chop. This mouth-watering chop, measuring seven fingers high (no exaggeration here, it's truly seven fingers high), is made using Perry's signature recipe, one that has been perfected for more than four decades and then carved tableside. The carving process is something Perry's takes very seriously, dividing the chop into three main parts—the eyelash, loin, and ribs. Don't shy away from the applesauce, and there's no shame in using your fingers here—in fact, it's encouraged—as a freshly steamed lavender

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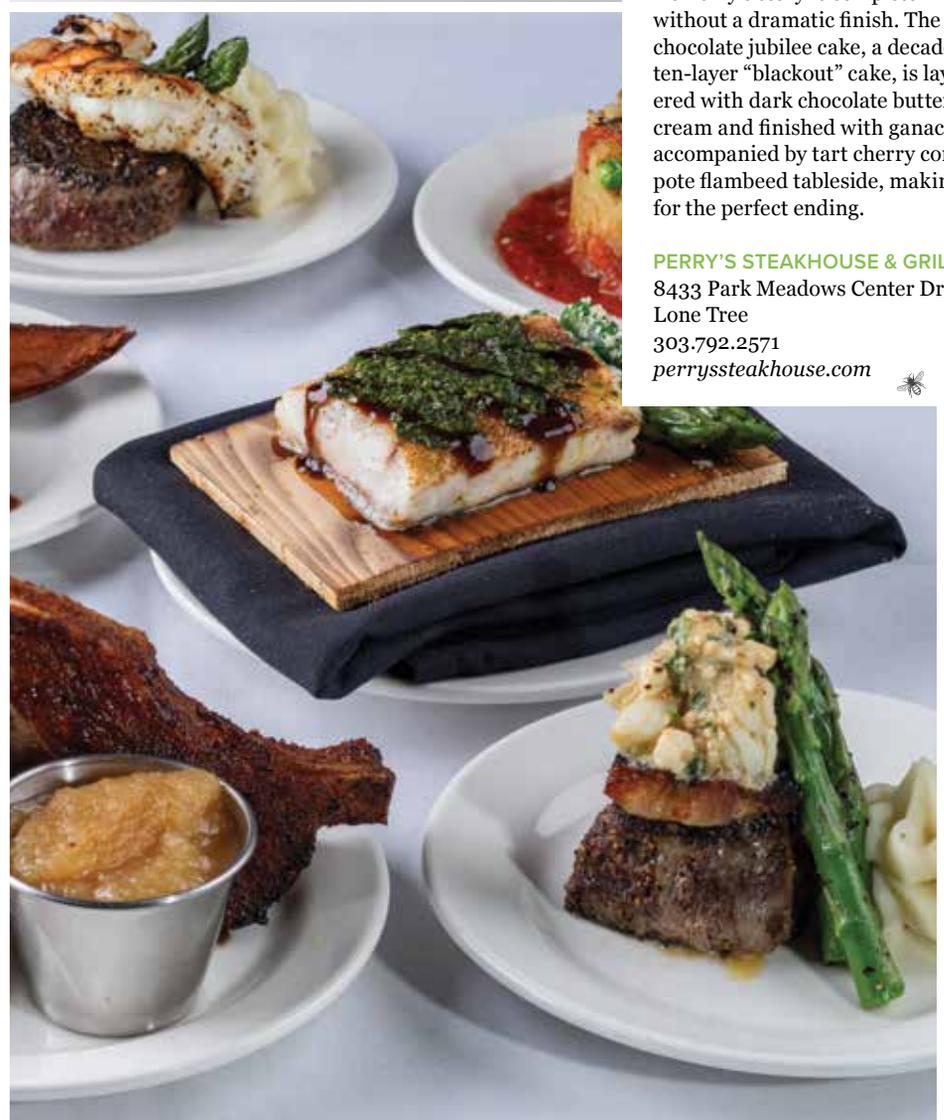
No Perry's story is complete without a dramatic finish. The chocolate jubilee cake, a decadent ten-layer "blackout" cake, is layered with dark chocolate buttercream and finished with ganache, accompanied by tart cherry compote flambéed tableside, making for the perfect ending.

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Personal Safety

SMART HABITS AND SIMPLE TOOLS can help women stay safe while embracing confidence in everyday life

By Nate Day

THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION ESTIMATES that roughly one in three women worldwide experiences physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime. So, self-protection is a vital skill to develop. In an era when tools like social media are used to track people's whereabouts at any given moment, personal safety is a top priority.

Amanda Hardin, founder of Lipstick Tactical, trains professionals and organizations in personal safety, both in and out of the workplace. Avenir Consulting, the company behind the Lipstick Tactical brand, is a boutique risk management firm that works with companies and organizations to equip them with the skills, policies, and mindset to navigate today's most volatile threats. Think: from active-shooter scenarios and workplace violence. The team combines military-grade expertise, behavioral science, and adult-learning best practices to create training that sticks.

While many women “gravitate” toward Hardin’s message of not exchanging femininity for protecting herself, Lipstick Tactical’s personal safety classes aren’t exclusive to just the ladies. These in-person trainings are designed to translate directly into real-world readiness, combining safety principles with practical action. Hardin mixes critical thinking skills with hands-on techniques, emboldening students to lead in moments that matter most. Whether you’re new to personal safety or looking to sharpen your edge, this is where preparation becomes empowerment.

“It’s really about feeling empowered,” she says of the courses she teaches. “I’ve had people come back to me after they’ve taken my classes, and they’ve gone on and made bigger, bolder, braver life decisions.” >>>

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EVERYDAY SAFETY

Hardin recommends being aware and prepared—make a plan with your friends for what to do if you begin to feel uneasy or find yourself in a sticky situation. “Some of staying safe is avoidance,” she admits. “Have you agreed among your friend circle that no woman is left behind?”

To prepare yourself, stay aware of your surroundings. It’s easy to get lost in a podcast or scroll through social media when you’re out on a bike ride or taking a walk, but keeping your senses sharp is a crucial part of the safety puzzle. Keep an eye on fishy characters and make a habit of checking behind you every so often.

Avoid becoming distracted by your phone, but you can also use it to guard yourself. If the device has an SOS feature, such as speed dial or immediate emergency contact, be sure to familiarize yourself with it. You can also pretend you’re on a call to escape an unwanted encounter. Better yet, give a close friend a call if you’re feeling uneasy, as long as you can remain aware of your surroundings.

Some mobile devices also allow location sharing, which can enable you to let someone see precisely where you are. Exercise caution and good judgment when sharing your location with others—choose someone you can trust, such as a family member or close friend.

Listen to your gut. Our instincts are powerful tools if we listen to them. Turn around and return to safety rather than pushing through discomfort. If you feel like something’s wrong, you’re probably right.

When you’re walking alone at night, stick to well-lit and populated areas. Staying near well-lit areas and reputable businesses can significantly reduce the risk of danger for women. Similarly, if you’re driving, make sure to park your car in a well-lit area, eliminating opportunities for harm-doers to lurk in the shadows.

A STEP FURTHER

There are many tools that women can use to protect themselves if needed. Pepper spray and personal alarms can often be fitted on keychains for easy accessibility, as can small self-defense weapons that can be useful in a pinch. Some women elect to carry a firearm. If you choose to arm yourself, be sure to research your options to discover which is the best option for you and what is legal in Colorado. And get training.

Some self-defense courses will cover the use of various weapons and help you determine the most effective method. Additionally, self-defense courses can teach you how to employ practical defense methods in high-pressure situations. In addition to Lipstick Tactical, local agencies and police departments offer personal safety classes.





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From Salon Owner to City Hall

MAYOR HARMON shapes Lone Tree's future

By Kristen West

If you glanced at Lone Tree Mayor Marissa Harmon's resume—or even her daily to-do list—you'd be impressed. You might also feel a little tired just reading it. But Harmon herself? She's anything but drained. Brimming with energy, she says her secret is knowing the difference between a life packed with obligations and

one filled with people and opportunities that uplift. It's a balance she's found, and one she hopes to pass along to her children and the Lone Tree community.

At the heart of Harmon's government origin story is entrepreneurship. She, her sister, and her brother-in-law opened a

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luxury hair salon, Roots & Mane, eight years ago in Lone Tree, expecting a lengthy process to obtain their certificate of occupancy. Instead, Harmon called the city, and someone was there within the hour. “It was so impressive,” she says. “It was the moment that I knew I wanted to give back to the City of Lone Tree.”

That spark carried her onto the planning commission, city council and eventually into her current role as mayor. Being a business owner has given her a perspective she brings to every decision. “It makes all of my decision-making so much more impactful knowing how important it is, whether it’s public safety or the roads or access to great amenities; all those things make sure that businesses not only come to Lone Tree to survive, but also to thrive.”

That perspective, and her role as a mom, fuels her vision. “I’m hopeful that when my kids are grown, they’ll be really proud of the city we built. I want them to feel like they have the highest quality of life, with great shopping options, where they can walk or ride their bikes, know the roads are plowed, and it’s aesthetically pleasing. You have community members that lean in on each other, and a city that feels like it’s thriving,” she says. “And if you don’t live here, when you leave Lone Tree, I hope you



feel like you want to come back. That’s the city I’m looking to build, and my kids can enjoy.”

She points to the city’s small businesses as one of its best-kept secrets—from boutique shops to restaurants—and highlights the Lone Tree Arts Center, a 500-seat theater that brings performances and programs to life. Expanding green space, supporting local business and fostering public safety remain top priorities.

Beyond leadership, Harmon balances family life with her husband, Chris Harmon, and their two daughters. Her girls beam with pride as they introduce their mom as mayor, and she says her husband has believed in her from the

beginning. Their support, along with her network of families, has been vital to her success.

“Having my own village of supportive people has given me the desire to provide that for other busy families. I really like representing that demographic and getting them excited about where they live.”

True to her love of life, Harmon also regularly embraces the Colorado outdoors, enjoying everything from hiking and swimming to skiing, backpacking, or simply time with family and friends. For her, it all comes back to connection—the same value she brings to her role as mayor and the vision she holds for Lone Tree.

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A BETTER



Create an OUT-OF-THE-WAY BEVERAGE STATION for optimal entertaining

By Heather Shoning

THIS TRICKED-OUT BAR is the perfect solution for functionality, as it moves one kitchen task—serving drinks—out of the central working kitchen. It's connected to both the kitchen and the plush seating area in the open-concept space, which makes perfect sense for every day, too. Plus, it creates a secondary focal point with a luxury look. The “raven” custom blue hue adds a moody vibe, and the artful cabinet hardware is a definite talking point. Angela Otten, owner of Inspire Kitchen Design Studio, says, “Every great bar should include a beverage refrigerator, icemaker, wine refrigerator, small bar sink and pullout trash, as well as storage for liquor and glassware.” And like this one, you can tuck it in a wall niche, no matter the size, to keep the kitchen clear and the party going.

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By Harper Thomas

LUXURY LIVING has a new address in Lone Tree—and it's redefining what it means to feel at home. The Reserve at Lone Tree is more than a senior living residence; it's an invitation into a sophisticated way of life where comfort, wellness and community come together seamlessly. This vibrant property, within RidgeGate's master-planned development, offers the perfect blend of tranquility and connection, with access to everything from hiking trails and golf courses to cultural venues and Denver's light rail.



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From the moment you step into your new apartment, The Reserve sets a tone of elegance. Each detail of the private apartments has been crafted with intention, marrying comfort with contemporary design. Spacious layouts, high-end finishes and expansive windows bring in natural light and mountain views, creating residences that feel both modern and warm. Whether you prefer the independence of a private apartment or the security of assisted living, the design philosophy is the same: Your home is your sanctuary.

“Residences at The Reserve at Lone Tree are designed with spacious layouts to suit every taste and stage of life, all framed by endless mountain views,” says Phill Barklow, president of Experience Senior Living. “From private balconies and spa-like soaking tubs to high-end finishes and premium brand features, every detail reflects a resort lifestyle reimagined for year-round living.”

Living here isn’t just about four walls—it’s about a lifestyle. The community connects indoor and outdoor spaces in a way that feels effortless. Walking paths, landscaped gardens and outdoor dining areas invite you to relax in nature, while interiors are styled with a clean, modern aesthetic that encourages relaxation and connection.

AMENITIES BEYOND EXPECTATION

The Reserve’s amenities are nothing short of extraordinary, designed to pamper and elevate daily life. At the heart of the community is the ninth-floor Sky Lounge, a rooftop terrace with sweeping views of the Front Range. It’s a space for cocktails at sunset, gatherings with friends or quiet evenings under the stars.

For wellness, residents have access to a state-of-the-art fitness center, smart fitness technology and an indoor saltwater pool paired with dry and steam saunas. Spa and massage services offer an indulgent retreat within steps of your apartment. For active spirits, there’s a pickleball court, a walking trail and lifestyle concierge services to ensure your days are filled with both ease and possibility. Luxury at The Reserve means living well every day—where high-end residences, exclusive experiences and extraordinary amenities come together in harmony with wellness,” Barklow says.

Cultural and creative amenities further enrich the experience: a music and recording studio, a makerspace with a kiln, an art center and even a chef’s demo kitchen where residents can dish up a personal version of “America’s Test Kitchen.” From game rooms to a pet spa, every corner of The Reserve has been thoughtfully planned to enhance your lifestyle.

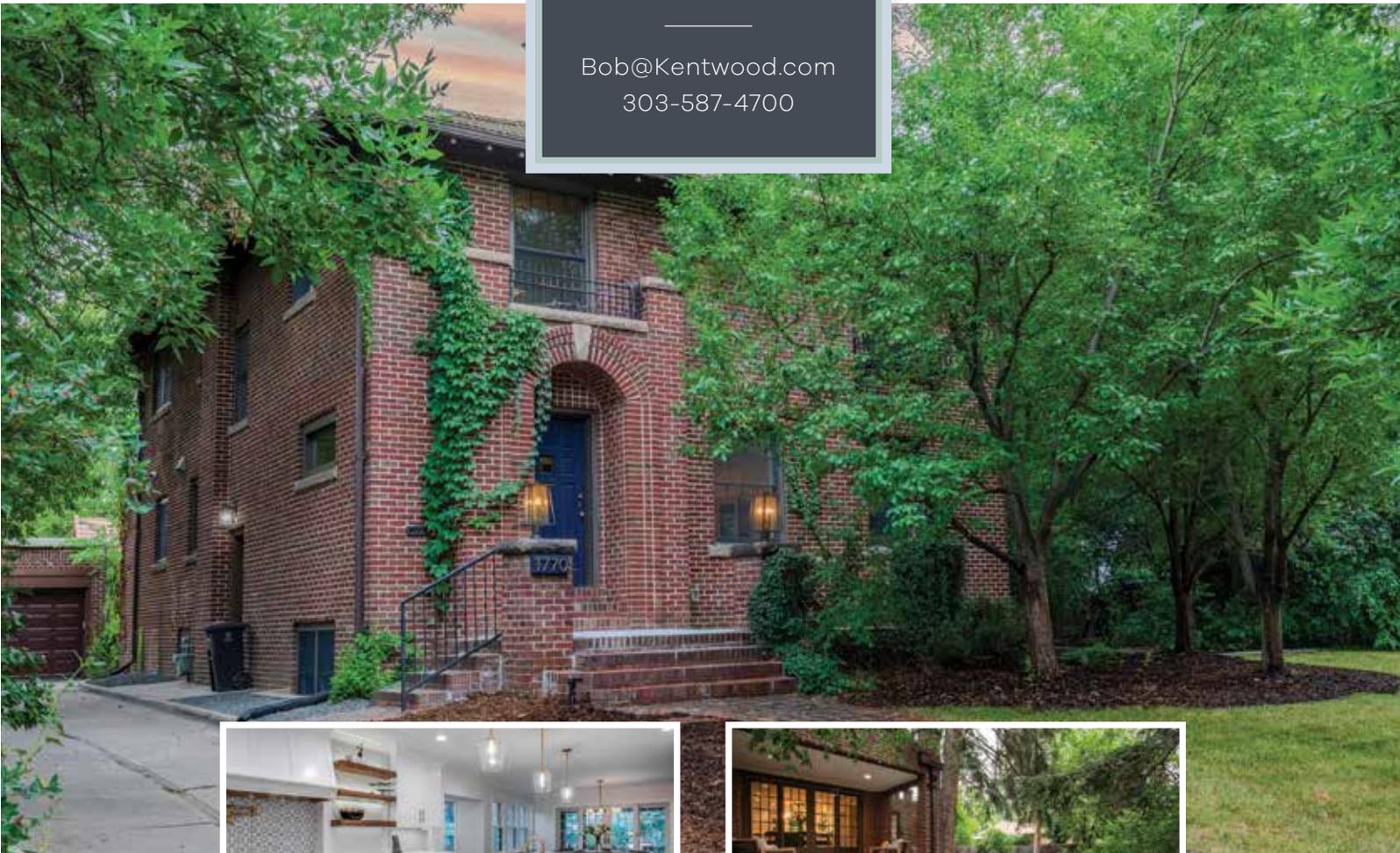
DINING THAT DELIGHTS

Few things elevate daily living like exceptional cuisine, and The Reserve’s culinary program shines. With four on-site restaurants, dining here feels like an adventure in flavor. Meals are chef-prepared with certified organic ingredients sourced locally, showcasing everything from grass-fed poultry to wild-caught fish. Menus balance indulgence with

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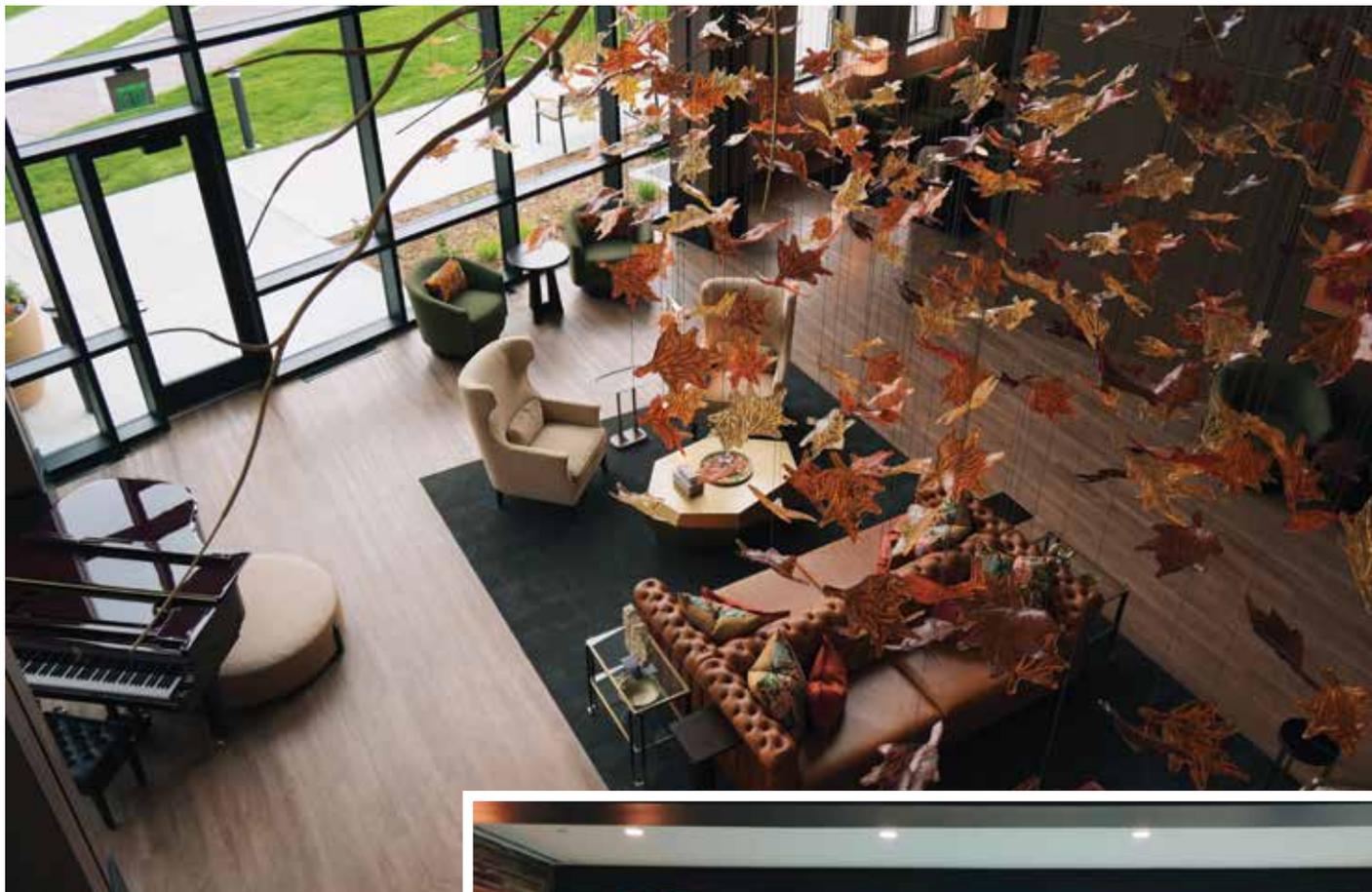


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wellness, offering vegan, gluten-free and dairy-free options so every resident can savor meals suited to their lifestyle.

“As the nation’s first senior living brand to offer all certified-organic menus across various dining venues, life here at The Reserve seamlessly blends sophistication, comfort and vitality,” Barklow says.

Farm-to-table excellence is evident in every dish—house-made dressings, fresh-cut fruit and carefully crafted sauces turn even simple meals into memorable experiences. Dining spaces range from casual grab-and-go options to elegant settings perfect for entertaining family or enjoying a night out without leaving home.

A NEIGHBORHOOD TO CALL YOUR OWN

Location matters, and The Reserve offers the best of Lone Tree living. Residents are just steps away from the Lone Tree Arts Center, golf courses, trails, parks and shopping destinations. A grocery store and local markets ensure everyday convenience, while the nearby light rail puts downtown Denver’s culture, dining and entertainment within easy reach.

It’s a neighborhood designed for connection, one where it’s just as easy to catch a performance at the amphitheater as it is to take a quiet morning walk along a trail. The combination of urban access and suburban calm is the Lone Tree lifestyle you’ve come to expect.

A COMMUNITY THAT CARES

What truly distinguishes The Reserve is its



commitment to creating a sense of belonging. The community’s mission is to ensure every resident feels connection and purpose through meaningful experiences. Exclusive events, art classes and wellness programs encourage personal growth and social engagement.

On-site staff, including nurses available 24/7, provide peace of mind for residents and their families. Concierge services, valet parking, electric vehicle charging stations and housekeeping take the hassle out of daily life, allowing you to focus on the things that matter most. Whether you’re independent, in need of assisted living or exploring memory care, The Reserve offers the perfect level of care, while allowing you to retain the lifestyle you deserve.

The Reserve offers three distinct care options to meet residents where they are in life. Independent Living provides freedom and flexibility, with all the conveniences of a luxury lifestyle. Assisted Living blends support with independence, ensuring help is available without compromising dignity. Memory Care offers compassionate, specialized services in a safe, nurturing environment. Each level of care is designed to evolve with residents’ needs, making The Reserve a true forever home. 

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MORE THAN APPARITIONS

Exploring Colorado's hauntingly beautiful GHOST TOWNS

BY HEATHER SHONING

IN COLORADO, history lingers in weathered wood and echoing valleys—ghost towns that remind us the bust always followed the boom. Scattered across the Rockies are remnants of once-bustling towns, now reduced to weathered cabins, creaking storefronts, and whispers on the wind. These ghost towns

tell stories of boom and bust, of miners chasing veins of silver and gold, of families carving out livelihoods in the thin mountain air—only to vanish as quickly as they came. Today, these towns are not just relics; they are atmospheric destinations where travelers can step back in time and imagine the grit and grandeur of frontier life.

The pages that follow explore some of Colorado's most hauntingly beautiful ghost towns—Ashcroft, St. Elmo, Summitville, Gothic, and Crystal Mill—along with the legends that linger and tips for visiting these often-remote relics of the past.



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ASHCROFT

GLAMOUR AND DECAY IN CASTLE CREEK

Tucked twelve miles south of Aspen along Castle Creek Road, Ashcroft ghost town feels more like a movie set than a relic of ruin. Founded in 1880 during the silver boom, Ashcroft swelled to nearly 2,000 people at its peak. The town boasted more than a dozen saloons, multiple newspapers and even an opera house. But the silver lodes proved shallow, and by the 1890s, the glory had faded. By the 1930s, only a handful of eccentric residents remained.

Ashcroft's lore includes whispers of outlaws, fortune seekers and an ambitious plan by two World War II veterans to transform the site into a ski resort—a dream that fizzled when neighboring Aspen stole the spotlight.

Today, a dozen structures stand preserved against the alpine backdrop: a jail with iron bars still intact, a hotel with ghostly echoes of grand balls, and cabins with sagging roofs and frostbitten doors. Visitors have reported paranormal activity, including sightings of ghosts of miners along the road, so be on the lookout. The Aspen Historical Society maintains the site, and docents in period dress sometimes greet visitors.

HOW TO VISIT: Ashcroft is easily accessible by car in the summer. In winter, visitors are invited to explore the area on snowshoes or cross-country skis, making for a magical—if strenuous—journey through snow-laden aspen groves.

ST. ELMO

THE GHOST TOWN THAT REFUSED TO DIE

Nestled in the Sawatch Range, 20 miles southwest of Buena Vista, St. Elmo may be Colorado's most photogenic ghost town. Founded in 1880, it thrived on gold and silver mining. At its height, the whistlestop bustled with 2,000 residents, a telegraph office, five hotels and—famously—more than forty saloons.

Local lore swirls around Annabelle “Dirty Annie” Stark, the eccentric daughter of one of St. Elmo's founding families. Known for her disheveled appearance and brash demeanor, she stayed in the town long after others left. In fact, after the postmaster died in 1952, she and her brother were the only two inhabitants.

Today, visitors can stroll down Main Street where original false-fronted buildings lean slightly as if bowing under the weight of history. The general store, still in operation seasonally, sells trinkets and cold sodas to dusty travelers. A handful of cabins are privately owned, and summer brings ATV and Jeep tours that rattle through the narrow gulches. Visitors have reported sightings of Dirty Annie and other paranormal activity.

HOW TO VISIT: St. Elmo is accessible by a graded dirt road, passable by most vehicles in summer. Winter access is limited, often requiring snowmobiles. Stop at nearby Chalk Creek for fishing or hike to ghostly Hancock, another forgotten mining settlement.

SUMMITVILLE

COLLAPSE AND CONSEQUENCE IN THE SAN JUANS

High in the San Juan Mountains near Del Norte lies Summitville, a ghost town with both historic romance and modern infamy. Founded in 1870 after a gold strike, Summitville was once home to 600 hardy souls who endured brutal winters at 11,000 feet. Cabins clustered along the ridges, and a main street pulsed with mining commerce.

What remains most vivid today are the collapsed cabins—timbers scattered across meadows like broken ribs of the past. They're stark reminders of how unforgiving this altitude was, where snow could bury roofs and food supplies ran thin.

But Summitville is also infamous for a modern environmental disaster. In the 1980s, a cyanide-leach mining operation contaminated nearby waterways, leaving a toxic legacy that still requires federal cleanup. The ghost of that catastrophe lingers alongside the ruins of the 19th-century town.

HOW TO VISIT: Summitville is remote. Be prepared for rough roads and rapidly changing weather. Respect posted warnings—some areas remain under environmental remediation. The drive itself, with golden quakes and jagged San Juan peaks, is worth the effort. >>>

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A ghost town in
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PRACTICAL TIPS FOR GHOST TOWN WANDERERS

Visiting Colorado's ghost towns isn't like pulling into a museum parking lot. These are wild, fragile places—often remote, sometimes dangerous, always demanding respect.

Check road conditions. Many ghost towns are at high altitude, with roads that may be impassable until late summer.

Bring layers. Weather changes fast in the Rockies; a sunny morning can turn to snow by afternoon.

Respect private property. Some ghost towns still contain privately owned cabins or land. Stick to marked areas.

Tread lightly. These structures are fragile. Don't climb on buildings or take artifacts—leave history where it belongs.

Know your limits. High-elevation sites like Summitville or Crystal require stamina and preparation.

GOTHIC FROM BUSTLING MINING TOWN TO ECOLOGICAL HAVEN

At first glance, Gothic doesn't quite look like a ghost town—it's still alive, though not in the way its founders imagined. Located just north of Crested Butte, Gothic sprang up in 1879 after silver was discovered. The town grew quickly, with saloons, hotels and a lively main street. But by the 1890s, the boom had gone bust, leaving Gothic largely abandoned.

In 1928, ecologist John C. Johnson saw potential in the abandoned settlement and established the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory. Since then, scientists from around the world have come here each summer to study alpine ecosystems. Instead of miners, Gothic now houses researchers cataloging wildflowers, butterflies and the impacts of climate change.

The ruins of cabins mingle with lab facilities, creating a striking juxtaposition of past and present. Visitors can wander among the weathered remains while learning about the cutting-edge science conducted here.

HOW TO VISIT: Gothic is easily accessible by car in summer via Gothic Road from Crested Butte—as you pass the cemetery on your way out of town, watch for the disembodied hitchhiker looking for a ride to the ghost town. In winter, the road closes, and the area becomes

a popular destination for Nordic skiing and fat biking. Stop at the visitor center for interpretive displays.

CRYSTAL MILL THE ICONIC SURVIVOR

Few images of Colorado are as striking as the Crystal Mill near Marble. Perched precariously above the rushing Crystal River, the wooden powerhouse—often misidentified as a mill but actually a compressor station for local mines—looks like it's clinging to the cliff by sheer willpower. Built in 1892, it once supplied energy to nearby silver mines.

Though the town of Crystal dwindled by the early 1900s, the mill endures as one of the most photographed sites in the state. The lore here is less about spectral apparitions and more about the structure itself—a defiant survivor of snow, floods and time.

Visiting the Crystal Mill feels like stepping into a painting. The juxtaposition of weathered timbers against turquoise river rapids, framed by autumn aspens or summer wildflowers, is unforgettable.

HOW TO VISIT: Reaching Crystal Mill requires commitment. The road from Marble is rough and best suited for high-clearance 4x4 vehicles, ATVs or a guided Jeep tour. Many visitors also hike or mountain bike the nearly 10-mile route, although the trail is challenging (plan a

whole day to complete it). Access is restricted to private land, so respect posted signs and entry fees.

WHY GHOST TOWNS MATTER

Wandering these towns isn't just sightseeing—it's time travel. You can almost hear the clang of pickaxes in Ashcroft, feel the grit of Annabelle Stark's stubbornness in St. Elmo, imagine the crushing silence of a Summitville winter, marvel at Gothic's transformation from saloons to science and stand in awe before Crystal Mill's defiant silhouette.

Colorado's ghost towns remind us that boom times never last forever, and that nature always reclaims its territory. That history is written not only in gold strikes and railroads, but also in collapsed cabins, sagging porches, and the echoes of lives lived hard and fast.

For travelers willing to venture off the beaten path, these hauntingly beautiful sites offer more than Instagram backdrops—they offer a tangible connection to the stories that shaped the West.





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Colorado's FAMILY BUSINESSES carry legacies forward

By Lexi Marshall

IN COLORADO, some businesses aren't just companies—they're family legacies. Passed from one generation to the next, these enterprises have endured industry shifts, economic cycles and cultural change by leaning on something deeper than strategy: trust, tradition and a sense of purpose that extends beyond the bottom line. From custom closets to fine furniture to windows built to last, these family-run firms prove that craftsmanship and care are values worth carrying forward.

HOWARD LORTON FURNITURE & DESIGN

In 1927, when Howard Lorton opened his furniture showroom at Speer and Broadway, Denver looked like a very different city. The Golden Triangle district was still dotted with auto dealerships, and Lorton's current space was once home to a Studebaker showroom. But Howard had a vision: to bring the very best of the furniture industry to Colorado

families—pieces that blended beauty, comfort and craftsmanship.

Nearly a century later, that vision still anchors Howard Lorton Furniture & Design. Now located at 12th and Broadway, the store remains a family-owned landmark, helmed by Howard's great-grandson, Will Cook, and his wife, Margot, vice president of operations. Together, they are shepherding the business into its fourth generation while honoring the traditions that have defined it. The fifth generation has worked in the business during the summers, and their daughter, who is studying finance at college, has expressed an interest in joining the business.

For Margot, the key to the company's longevity is simple but unwavering. "We've stuck to Howard Lorton's vision," she says. "We are a high-end home furnishings retailer, and it would have been easy to shift to lower-priced items to appeal to a broader market, but then we'd sacrifice on craftsmanship. We've stayed true to our core, bringing the best the furniture industry has to offer—and pairing it with exceptional service."

That service includes touches rarely seen in

the industry: complimentary in-home interior design service; free delivery across the Front Range and into the mountains to Vail; and an in-house upholsterer and furniture repair technician. "We go above and beyond for our clients," Margot explains. "It's about taking care of them end-to-end, so they can create beautiful homes where their families thrive."

The company's commitment to family is more than a metaphor. Margot and Will run the business side by side, building on the legacy left by Will's father, Bill Cook, who led the firm for decades until his passing a few years ago. "It's an honor," Margot reflects. "Our business has always been about families. Whether we're furnishing a home for a newly married couple, a family with kids or even multiple generations, there's a responsibility to offer something unique, something lasting."

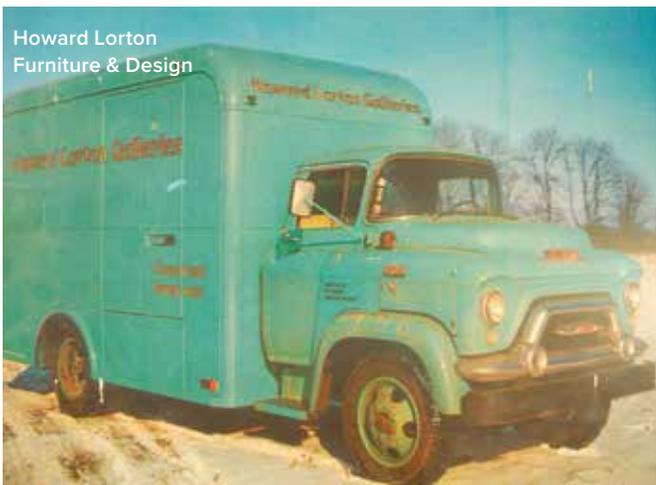
That uniqueness shines through in the company's approach. Roughly 80 percent of its work involves special orders—customized sofas, dining tables and bedroom sets tailored to each client's vision. Customers can choose from thousands of fabrics, finishes and configurations, creating pieces that feel both timeless and personal. "It's more boutique

Will and Margo Cook



PHOTO AS SEEN IN THE SCOUT GUIDE/JENNIFER OLSON PHOTOGRAPHY

Howard Lorton Furniture & Design



Howard Lorton Furniture & Design



than traditional furniture retail,” Margot says. “Clients aren’t just buying furniture—they’re creating their homes.”

Adapting to changing tastes has also been key to Howard Lorton’s success. Twice a year, Will and the buying team travel to High Point Market in North Carolina, the world’s largest furniture trade show. The tradition runs deep—Bill even attended the market during his honeymoon. “High Point is where we see what’s coming,” Margot explains. “It helps us honor tradition while staying ahead of trends.”

Today, the showroom reflects a mix of styles: traditional, transitional, mountain modern and sleek contemporary designs. Clients can experience furniture in person—sitting, testing and adjusting—while also accessing vast digital catalogs and customization tools. “Furniture has to be experienced,” Margot says. “You can’t always buy it sight unseen. Comfort and fit matter—what works for my six-foot-tall husband may not be right for his five-foot-two wife. That’s why we encourage people to come in and try pieces themselves.”

Looking forward, Howard Lorton is also deepening its ties with the interior design community, working with ASID and IDS to become

a destination for designers as well as homeowners. “We can make designers’ lives easier by handling freight, delivery and installation,” Margot says. “That lets them focus on their core business—creating beautiful spaces.”

For Margot, who joined the company full-time in 2019 after a career in corporate training and customer service, the role feels like a natural culmination. “You hit points in life where your experiences come together,” she says. “For me, it’s the chance to carry on a legacy, to work alongside my husband and to help people create homes that are truly their sanctuary.”

That legacy extends well beyond Denver—Howard Lorton’s holds the distinction of being the longest-accredited Better Business Bureau member in Colorado. From the grandeur of its historic building to the intimacy of a custom-ordered sofa, the company continues to embody Howard’s philosophy: Home should be a place of joy, beauty and comfort.

Howard Lorton Furniture & Design, 12 E. 12th Ave., Denver, 303.831.1212, howardlorton.com

CLOSET FACTORY

In the early 1990s, Mark and Polly Lestikow were at a crossroads. Mark had been president

of a company producing business books on cassette tapes—an industry on the verge of collapse with the rise of CDs. With a year’s notice before the company shuttered, he began searching for his next chapter. His father had always urged him to go into business for himself, advice that resurfaced when he spotted an ad in *Inc.* magazine: “We’re looking for a few good presidents.” The ad was for a Closet Factory franchise.

Intrigued but unfamiliar with the concept of custom closets, Mark tested the idea the old-fashioned way—by asking parents at his children’s swim meet whether they had heard of such a service. Nearly everyone had either used or knew someone who had. Convinced there was a market, he pitched the business plan to his wife Polly, who agreed to invest money she had inherited from her parents. On January 13, 1992, Closet Factory of Colorado opened its doors.

From the start, the business flourished. “They were selling closets like hotcakes,” recalls their son, Doug Lestikow, now CEO. The early years were simpler—customers could choose between just two materials, white or almond—but the demand was strong. A key figure in those formative days was Luis





Salazar, a factory manager sent from Los Angeles to help set up operations. He decided to stay in Colorado, becoming Closet Factory's first long-tenured employee and eventually its production manager. More than 30 years later, Salazar and several of his sons still work in the shop, a testament to the company's family-like culture.

That culture has been central to Closet Factory's growth. "My dad just always made people feel important," Doug says. "Even in jobs that can be monotonous, he never made anyone feel expendable." Today, nearly 100 employees—some with decades of tenure—keep the company running smoothly. Generational loyalty extends beyond the Lestikows: Multiple families, from installers to shop workers, have brought in their relatives to join the team.

For Doug, growing up in the business meant weekends sweeping sawdust and evenings assembling belt racks at the kitchen table for 50 cents apiece. Yet his parents never pressured him or his siblings to join the company. Instead, they encouraged independence. Doug studied finance, worked in small-business valuation and envisioned a career in corporate America. But when his father began planning for retirement, he asked his children whether they had any interest in continuing the business.

At first, Doug resisted. But the more he thought about it, the more the opportunity appealed to his entrepreneurial instincts. He joined Closet Factory with a caveat: He needed to earn his place. Starting in sales, he learned the role of a designer firsthand, then moved into technology, introducing systems and tools that modernized the company's processes. Later, he shifted into operations, working closely with long-time managers to prove his commitment.

In January 2023, Doug officially stepped into the role of CEO. Polly remains president, while Mark has retired—though he still lights up when discussing the company he built from scratch.

The second generation has brought its own style of leadership. Where Mark thrived as a hands-on entrepreneur making quick decisions, Doug leans into structure. "Scaling a business really requires more predictability and standardization," he says. Under his direction, the company has fortified its systems, ensuring growth feels steady rather than chaotic.

That growth is central to Doug's vision. Closet Factory has expanded far beyond closets to include pantries, mudrooms, laundry rooms and home offices—essentially any cabinetry project outside of kitchens and baths. Running 15 installation crews a day, the company is poised to strengthen its reputation as Colorado's gold standard in custom storage.

Still, Doug credits the company's staying power less to strategy than to culture. "You can



make great decisions, but if you're not kind to people, your business won't be great," he says. "The stability we have comes from employees who've been here twenty or thirty years. That's because of the way my dad treated people."

As Closet Factory looks ahead, Doug balances his father's entrepreneurial spirit with his own systems-driven approach. Together, those philosophies continue to shape a Denver business that has grown not just through savvy decisions, but through a foundation of trust, respect and family.

Closet Factory of Colorado, 8480 Upland Dr., Suite 200, Englewood, 303.219.4193, closet-factory.com/locations/denver

GRAVINA'S WINDOW CENTER OF LITTLETON

When Jim and Gail Gravina launched Gravina's Window Center of Littleton® in 1973, their vision was simple: to offer Colorado homeowners something better. At a time when most builders were installing steel or metal windows, Jim introduced high-quality wood replacement windows into existing homes—a pioneering move that helped shape Colorado's replacement window industry. That instinct to innovate, paired with a commitment to craftsmanship, set the tone for what would become a multi-generational business.

Today, more than 50 years later, Gravina's Window Center of Littleton is the state's oldest authorized Infinity® by Marvin® dealer and

one of the longest-running dealers in the country. The company has grown well beyond Jim's early days of selling windows and gutters, but its guiding principle remains the same: never cut corners when it comes to a customer's home.

"The company really grew alongside the family," says Tony Ramirez, the company's director of marketing and the owners' son-in-law. "Jim and Gail started the business when they got married, and it's been part of their lives—and their kids' lives—ever since."

The Gravina name is woven into every corner of the business. Jim and Gail's eldest, Crissy, is the top Infinity saleswoman in the country. Jeff and Mike guide growth and leadership, preparing the company for its next half-century. Lisa, Jenny, Jon and Jake lend their talents in scheduling, service and customer care, supported by grandchildren who pitch in with fresh energy. And Gail herself has remained a steady presence, known for supporting the team with flowers at trade shows and coffee on Friday mornings.

Gravina's was the first company in Colorado to sell Infinity by Marvin windows, a product line known for its durable fiberglass construction. Unlike vinyl or wood, fiberglass offers durability, energy efficiency and sleek design. The company's installation philosophy sets it apart, too. While some competitors opt for quick "insert" replacements, Gravina's installers

perform full-frame installations, removing the entire window down to the studs. "It takes longer and costs more in materials, but it protects the home and ensures the job is done right," Ramirez says. "When we leave, it should look like the windows were always meant to be there."

Though rooted in tradition, Gravina's Window Center of Littleton is far from stuck in the past. The company continues to evolve with new products, branding updates from Infinity and an ever-growing emphasis on customer trust.

"Homeowners want to know who they're dealing with," says founder Jim Gravina. "They can come into our showroom, meet our team and know we'll be here to stand behind our work."

As the next generation steps into leadership roles, the Gravinas are focused on steady growth rather than rapid expansion. The priority, Ramirez emphasizes, is ensuring the company's promise of craftsmanship and care endures for decades to come.

"The mission has never changed," he says. "It's about doing what's right for the home, for the family living there and for the community we serve. That's the legacy Jim started, and it's what we'll keep building on."

Gravina's Window Center of Littleton, 209 W. Littleton Blvd., Littleton, 303.794.0490, windowsforyourhome.com



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SWEATER SEASON

Snuggle up with **ON-TREND KNITS** for warmth and style throughout the season

By *Haley Rae Shoning*

TEMPERATURES ARE DROPPING, aspens are glowing golden yellow, and pumpkin spice has returned to your favorite coffee shop. Autumn is on full display in Colorado.

Whether you're mourning the end of summer or welcoming the colorful shift, now is the perfect time to wrap yourself in a sweater and soak in the nostalgia and promise of fall. If your wardrobe is ready for a cold-weather update, this year's trending knitwear will have you excited for the season ahead.

COLOR POP

This year, designers and trendsetters alike are moving away from fall's typical neutrals and showing off bold pops of color. Vibrant jewel tones like burgundy, chartreuse, purple, and bright red are all the rage.

For those who enjoy a more muted wardrobe, consider trading your all-black basics for shades of grey. A charcoal cardigan or a cable-knit pullover offers an on-trend alternative that is effortless to style, yet still looks polished and sophisticated.

Shop for: The Alani Cashmere Mock-Neck Sweater by Pilcro in True Red, \$148, ANTHROPOLOGIE at Park Meadows or anthropologie.com





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SHORT AND SWEET

Though the classic chunky turtleneck will never go out of style, the fashion crowd is stepping out in a fresh new silhouette. From buttery-soft knit tees and polos to cuffed-sleeve cardigans, the short-sleeve sweater is quickly becoming the star of autumn style.

Ideal for those in-between days, these chic pieces transition seamlessly from lingering warmth to crisp autumn air, and they're oh-so versatile—wear them with your most lived-in denim or a pair of stylish satin trousers for a more upscale look.

Shop for: Easy Sweater Tee, \$79.50, ANN TAYLOR at Park Meadows or anntaylor.com

NOSTALGIC KNITS

Call your quirky grandparents—you're going to want to raid their closet. This season, designers are embracing playful patterns that feel delightfully offbeat. Think embroidered farm animals, rustic scenes, and kitschy motifs.

If embroidered horses or fishing scenes feel a little too bold, try a classic Fair Isle or argyle instead. It still carries that "grandpa's closet" charm, but in a more refined way. Choose a cardigan in rich autumn shades or a polo sweater for a timeless preppy look.

Shop for: Women's Signature Original Cotton Sweater Rollneck Novelty, \$130, L.L. BEAN at Park Meadows or llbean.com

CASHMERE CALLING

When it comes to knitwear, quality is everything. There are plenty of reasons that high-quality cashmere basics are trending this fall: they're chic, they go with everything, and they last forever.

A crewneck cardigan is a polished and versatile layering piece that pairs perfectly with jeans and boots or keeps your favorite skirt in rotation a little bit longer. Or opt for an oversized pullover for a cozy, effortless look you'll reach for all season long.

Shop for: Vince Weekend V-Neck Cashmere Sweater, \$325, NORDSTROM at Park Meadows or nordstrom.com

As the days grow shorter and the air turns crisp, there's no better time to embrace the textures, colors, and timeless charm of knitwear. Sweater weather has officially arrived, so make it your most stylish one yet. 

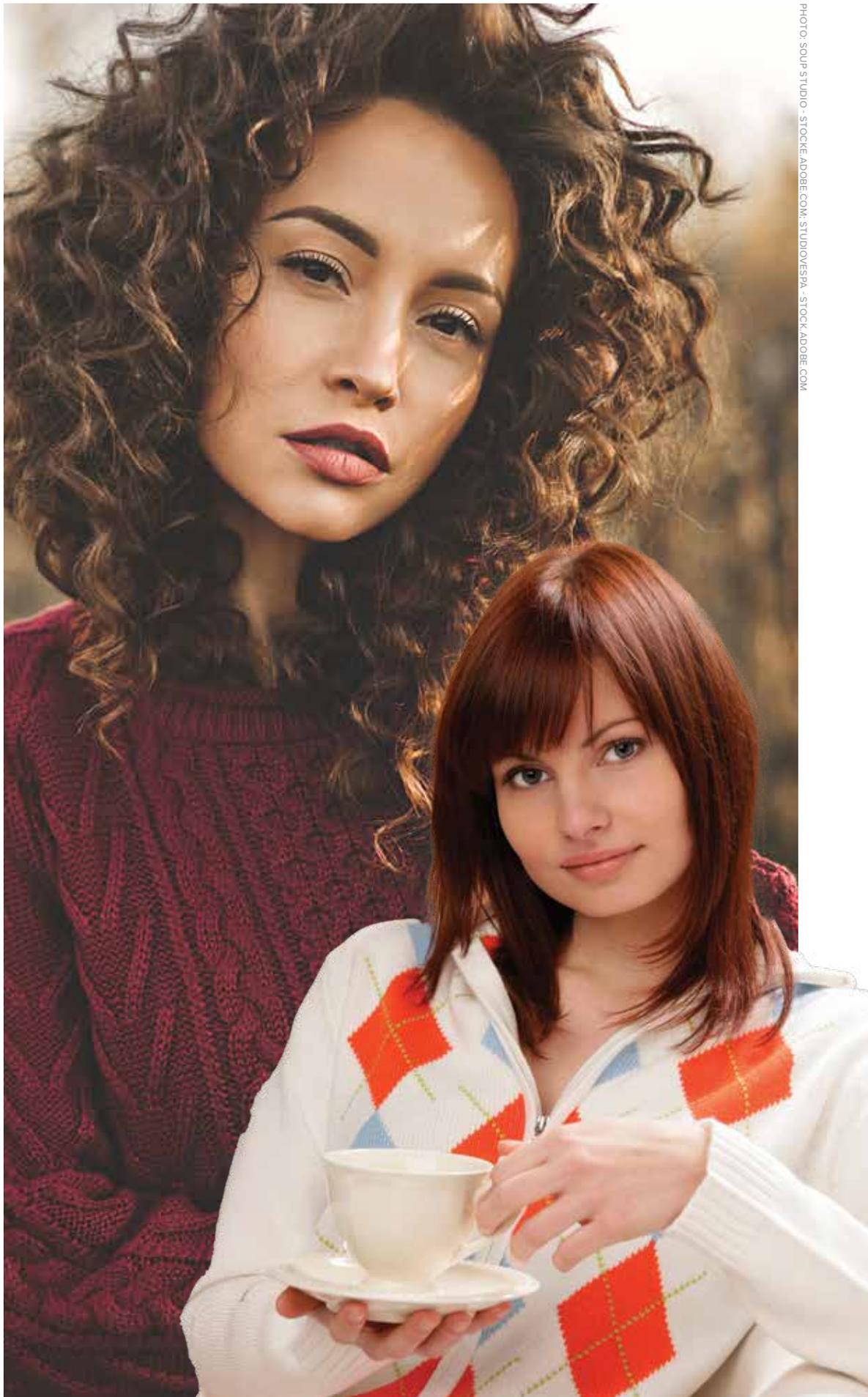


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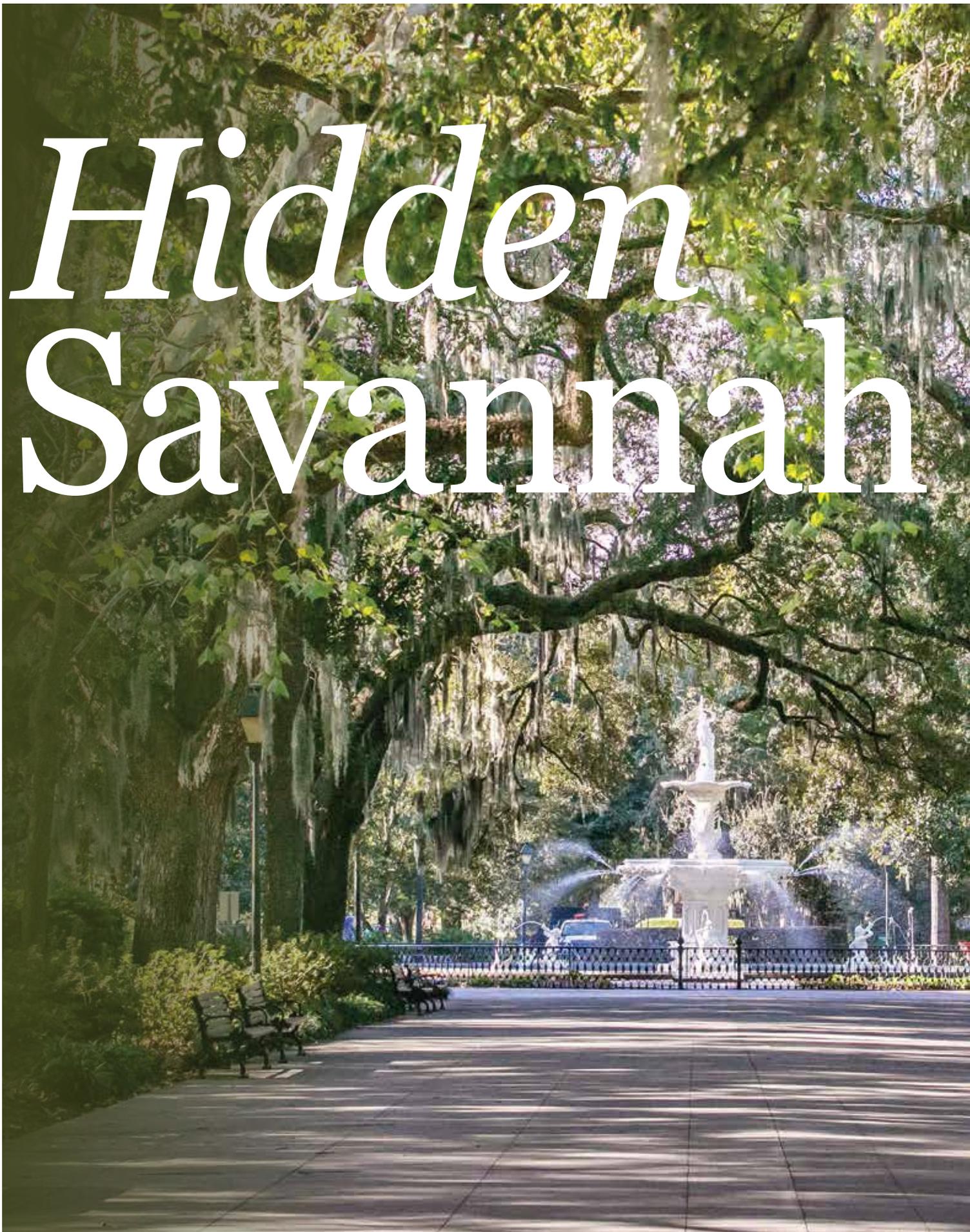


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Hidden Savannah



Green Forsyth
Park Fountain

Beneath the moss-draped squares and stately homes lies a city of speakeasies, ghost stories and rebellious charm

By Rebecca Toy

SAVANNAH'S EVER-PRESENT oak trees wear Spanish moss like a velvet shawl, casting a mysterious allure over an already charming city. The "Hostess City of the South" preens with green in Georgia's coastal climate, lending itself to ubiquitous garden parties. The sounds of laughter and clinking glasses float through the city's verdant square. As horse-drawn carriages clip past 200-year-old homes, the scene is so picturesque it feels staged. Savannah is always ready for the spotlight.

For many travelers, John Berendt's 1994 bestseller "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil" cemented the city in the national imagination: eccentric, glamorous and tinged with danger. The book (and Clint Eastwood's film adaptation) turned Savannah into a destination for literary pilgrims. But any Savannahian will tell you that long before "The Book," the city thrived on hidden layers. Isolated by islands and marshes, genteel Savannah also nurtured a roguish streak, harboring pirates and rum runners while creating ghost stories on every corner and cocktails strong enough to fuel legends.

STORYBOOK SAVANNAH

Walk through photo-famous Forsyth Park on a sunny morning, and you'll find the Savannah everyone desires. Locals walk their dogs beneath the live oaks, families pose by the ornate grand fountain and visitors linger on shaded benches beneath swaying moss.

The 30-acre park is the southern bookend of the historic district, 50 blocks of carefully restored 18th- and 19th-century homes, restaurants, shops and bars. Yet the city's unique layout feels more like a long stroll through palatial gardens than a modern cityscape. City founder James Oglethorpe's vision endures: a grid layout featuring 22 squares filled with flowering shrubs, statues and a diverse array of flora that thrive in the subtropical climate. As you head north to the river, greenery dominates your view, with each square clearly visible ahead, and Victorian and Georgian architecture peeking out from the edges.

The steep steps down to River Street warn pedestrians to take care—a necessary caution in a city that permits the open carry of alcohol as part of its commitment to conviviality. Savannah’s oldest street is worth the maneuvering. Cobblestones lead to boutiques and cafes that spill down to the waterfront, while rooftop bars offer rare aerial views of the city and the ships gliding into port. It’s elegant, leisurely and precisely what a visitor comes to Savannah to enjoy. Yet just beneath this surface, another city waits, a Savannah of shadows, secrets and scandalous stories.

SAVANNAH IN THE SHADOWS

Even though the city developed after the Golden Age of piracy, locals love the lore, and they don’t just have to rely on Blackbeard’s Savannah exploits in “Treasure Island” to prove it. See for yourself on a tunnel tour that spiderwebs beneath the streets. Once used for smuggling and storage, stories also abound of sailors lured into waterfront taverns, drugged and dragged underground to wake up conscripted on a ship bound for Europe or the Caribbean.

The tunnels certainly aided in rum-running during Prohibition, when Savannah was the “Bootleg Spigot of the South.” The Prohibition Museum offers modern visitors a glimpse into the drama and moonshine and will clue you in to the vibrant speakeasy scene. Slip behind unmarked doors in the historic district for sultry basement lounges with top-tier libations.

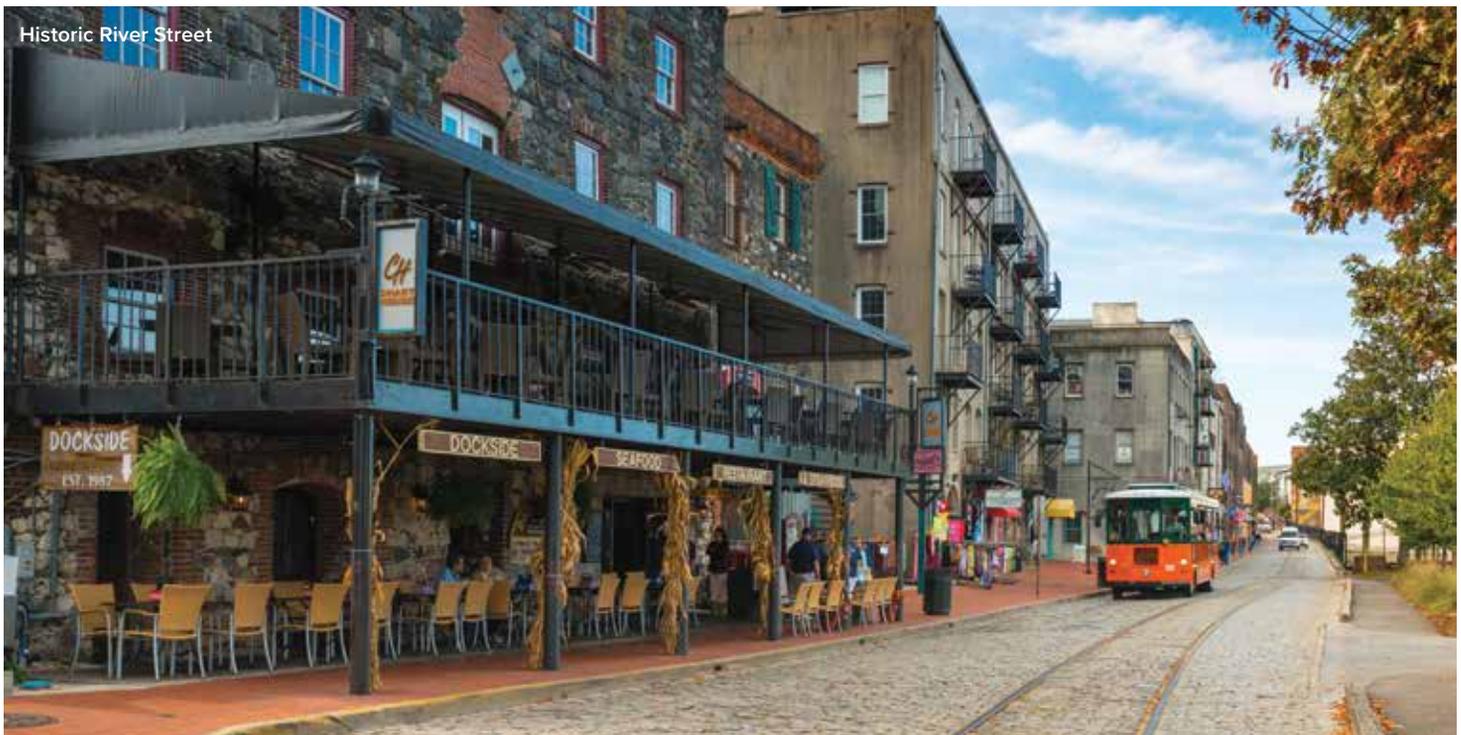
Whether you imbibe in speakeasies or on garden patios, cocktail culture in Savannah is renowned. Just beware the Chatham Artillery Punch, one of the most infamously strong drinks in American history. First concocted in the 1700s, newspapers reported that it



took generals, politicians and even George Washington to their knees. The recipe reads like a dare: rum, brandy, bourbon, Champagne and a generous squeeze of citrus. Bars serve a tamer version, but sip it slowly—this punch will sneak up on you.

Locals swear guests are in for a surprise by a different kind of spirit. Considered one of the most haunted cities in the nation, Savannah treats its ghosts lightly, as if they’re just

another set of locals lingering on the squares. The Mercer-Williams House, immortalized in “Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil,” remains the city’s most notorious address. Tour guides still lower their voices when describing the murder that took place inside. Yet there’s a haunt for every hotel and home, and even the most sensible historic tour will spin you some ghost tales. It’s the city’s embrace of the macabre along with its refined beauty that makes Savannah so magnetic. >>>



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INSIDER TIPS

Dining Delights: The Olde Pink House and Mrs. Wilkes' Dining Room are institutions of classic Southern comfort food, but The Grey, located in a refurbished 1930s Greyhound terminal, is currently a national sensation. Savannah's range goes far beyond fried chicken: fresh seafood at Sorry Charlie's Oyster Bar, creative gastropub takes at Trelor Park and traditional shepherd's pie at Six Pence Pub all nail their styles.

Crafted Cocktails: "Best cocktail bar" is a phrase guaranteed to start a debate in Savannah. The Artillery Bar, with white marble counters and velvet banquettes, turns an old armory into an elegant night out. On the other end of the spectrum, The Bamboo Room commits to the Tiki theme with vigor, blending authentic tropical drinks with its flamboyant decor. Bar Julien, the waterfront Thompson Hotel's rooftop bar, offers some of the best views and drinks, making it the place to be at sunset. Locals love the Savoy Society and Over Yonder, the first serves the famous punch.

Great Guides: From bicycle bar carts to elegant horse-drawn carriages, the city has an answer for every interest. For a little bit of everything, the Savannah Taste Experience makes a great introduction to the city's history and food scene while also pointing out where to find speakeasies like Alley Cat Lounge and La Aparicion.



Historic District



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OCTOBER

Plan Ahead /// November 6-8

ST. NICK'S ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE

Enjoy festive refreshments and soak up the Christmas cheer at St. Nick's 49th open house. St. Nick's Christmas and Collectibles, **LITTLETON**, stnicks.com

Ongoing Through November 9

13TH FLOOR HAUNTED HOUSE

It's that time again – Denver's 13th Floor Haunted House is returning for another season of scares and attractions. Celebrating 18 years of scares in the Mile High, this season brings terrifying twists and turns, scaretastic characters and add-on attractions (think mini escape games, secret bars and more) that are sure to thrill. Enter if you dare! **DENVER**, 13thfloorhauntedhouse.com

October 1 & 2

COLD CASES AND COCKTAILS

Step into an evening of chilling intrigue and spirited discussion at Cold Cases & Cocktails. Grab a drink and join fellow armchair detectives while diving deep into one of Colorado's most haunting unsolved cases. Explore the baffling evidence, controversial conviction and the twists that still raise questions decades later. Can you crack the case? **HIGHLANDS RANCH**, hrcaonline.org

October 2-5

STEAMBOAT FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL

Steamboat Food & Wine Festival is your seat at the table of creation. Interact with renowned chefs in venues that are equal parts intimate and panoramic. Discover first-hand how the collaboration in and origins of food and wine define the most luxurious of flavors. Tickets are now available, with a variety of events to choose from. **STEAMBOAT**, steamboatfoodandwine.com

October 3-5

BRECKENRIDGE CRAFT SPIRITS FESTIVAL

Head up to Breck for this annual festival showcasing the very best of craft spirits and cocktails, plus live music, local restaurant small bites and people's choice voting. A number of other events are taking place in town on the same weekend, including a craft workshop, historic walking tours, and spirits seminars. The festival's hotel, Beaver Run, also offers a variety of lodging options, from hotel rooms to two-bedroom condos. **BRECKENRIDGE**, breckenridgecraftspiritsfestival.com

October 4

GREENWOOD VILLAGE FALL FEST

Spooktacular fun awaits as Carson Park transforms into a haunted graveyard full of family-friendly activities, including a pumpkin

race, fall-inspired crafts and a DJ spinning live Halloween music. Get free tickets online ahead of time; they're required for residents to enter. 1-3:30 p.m. at **CARSON PARK AND CITY HALL**, greenwoodvillage.com

October 4

THE PONTI WINE PAIRING DINNER

Love the Denver Art Museum and looking to experience it in a new way? Dine at The Ponti for a special autumn edition of their wine pairing dinners. Enjoy a four-course dinner with wine pairings in a sophisticated setting, right inside the DAM. This interactive dinner only happens four times a year, so don't miss out. Spots are limited and reservations can be made online, or by calling The Ponti at 720-913-2761. **DENVER**, denverartmuseum.org

October 8

PARKER ARTS LECTURE: GHOSTS OF COLORADO

Calling all spooky season lovers. This free community lecture delves into the mysteries and myths surrounding ghosts in Colorado. As Colorado's first forensic paranormal investigation team, the Rocky Mountain Research Society has spent more than a quarter of a century investigating claims of ghosts, aliens, cryptids, psychics and other unusual phenomena

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Monday–Thursday: 3PM–6PM

here in Colorado and beyond. With open minds and a genuine love for all the stories, but also with an insistence upon subjecting every claim to strict scientific and historical scrutiny, these experts have earned the respect of believers and skeptics alike. **THE SCHOOL HOUSE**, parkerarts.org

October 9

FALLIN' FOR FALL

Summer has passed, and now it's time for the annual fall foliage show and the best time of the year to gather together with family and friends. Whether you're hungry from driving around the mountains all day, taking in the swathes of color, or just ready to enjoy a cozy sweater and the comfort of a great meal, we're all falling for fall. And if you're looking to spice things up in the kitchen, prepare for an evening with a chef-guided experience as you create a gourmet dinner, with just the right amount of pumpkin for dessert. **CENTENNIAL**, uncorkedkitchen.com

October 9–26

NICE WORK IF YOU CAN GET IT

A hilarious screwball comedy, "Nice Work If You Can Get It" pokes fun at the Prohibition era in a clash of elegant socialites and boorish bootleggers, all set to the glorious songs of George and Ira Gershwin. Highlights from the score include "Fascinating Rhythm," "Let's Call The Whole Thing Off," "Someone To Watch Over Me," "Sweet and Low Down," "Delishious" and the title song. **LONE TREE ARTS CENTER**, lonetreeartscenter.org

October 10–12

CASTLE ROCK HOME SHOW

Meet with local and national vendors, check out the latest trends and gain valuable insights. Whether you're looking to renovate, decorate, or build, attending the home show provides the resources and connections you need to bring your vision to life. This big show offers free admission, and times vary on each of the three days, so be sure to check the website for details. **DOUGLAS COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS**, castlerockhomeshow.com

October 13

MOVIE NIGHTS AT INFINITY PARK

Grab a picnic basket and a blanket (or your best costume) and head to Infinity Park in Glendale for the final free movie night of 2025, featuring the popular family-friendly movie "Monsters Inc." Gates open at 4:30 p.m. This event is paired with the YMCA's annual Trunk-or-Treat event for what is sure to be an extra fun evening. If you elect not to bring food with you, food will be available for purchase from on-site food trucks. **GLENDALE**, infinityparkatglendale.com

October 17–19

ROCKY MOUNTAIN WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL

The 38th Rocky Mountain Women's Film Festival is a 3-day celebration of women and others who are often unseen, unheard and misunderstood. To cultivate awareness, empathy and a deeply connected community, all eyes shift each year in October to the



October 10–12

PUMPKIN FESTIVAL

Celebrate fall at Pumpkin Festival at Chatfield Farms, a treasured October tradition for the entire family. Your ticket price includes access to the 10-acre pumpkin patch, corn maze and family and children's activities. Pumpkin prices vary by size and it is recommended to bring a wagon to transport pumpkins. Free pumpkin daycare is available while you enjoy the rest of the festival and tractor-pulled parking shuttles will be available. **DENVER BOTANIC GARDENS (CHATFIELD FARMS)**, botanicgardens.org

array of talent in the women's movie-making community. Whether you want to participate for only a day of entertainment or ensure you don't miss a single viewing within the 3-day movie extravaganza, there is a ticket pass option for you. **COLORADO SPRINGS**, rmwfilm.org

October 24 & 25

HAUNTED HAYRIDES

Storytellers narrate an amusing tale while you rumble down a spooky trail. Rides run every half hour. The event is a fundraiser for the "Cowboy 4H" Club Petting Zoo, Game and 4H food in the barn. Arrive 15-20 minutes ahead of ride time. Payment in full is your reservation confirmation and is non-refundable. Children must be accompanied by an adult. **HIGHLANDS RANCH**, hrcaonline.org

October 24

FANGTASTIC FESTIVAL

It's time for a spook-tacular Halloween Trick-or-Treat Community Event, designed especially for families and caregivers of homeschooled kids and little ones not yet in school. Experience a delightful booth-to-booth trick-or-treat adventure filled with Halloween music, festive vendor booths and plenty of candy to satisfy every sweet tooth. This free event is held outdoors at Philip S. Miller Park, so dress warmly. 1–3 p.m. **CASTLE ROCK**, ergov.com

October 25

EMMA CRAWFORD COFFIN RACES & FESTIVAL

Commemorating the dead is usually a gloomy occasion. Well, not in Manitou Springs. Celebrate autumn and the Halloween season at one of the quirkiest events in Colorado, the Emma Crawford

Coffin Races. Honoring one of the most notable persons in the town's history, Emma Crawford, each team at the event will be composed of one 'Emma' and four runners, all dressed in their costumes. The fastest times to finish the 195-yard track along Manitou Avenue will earn trophies. Other special awards will also be up for grabs, such as Best Entourage, Best Coffin, Best Emma, and Miss Emma. **MANITOU SPRINGS**, manitousprings.org

October 25

SIP IN CENTENNIAL

Enjoy live music and savor the flavors at Centennial Center Park for this annual gathering. This event offers diverse tastings from local breweries, distilleries and wineries. Prepare for a fall afternoon filled with live music and tasty food truck bites while sampling adult beverages. All ages are welcome, must be 21+ to partake in alcohol tastings. 1–5 p.m. at **CENTENNIAL CENTER PARK**, centennialco.gov

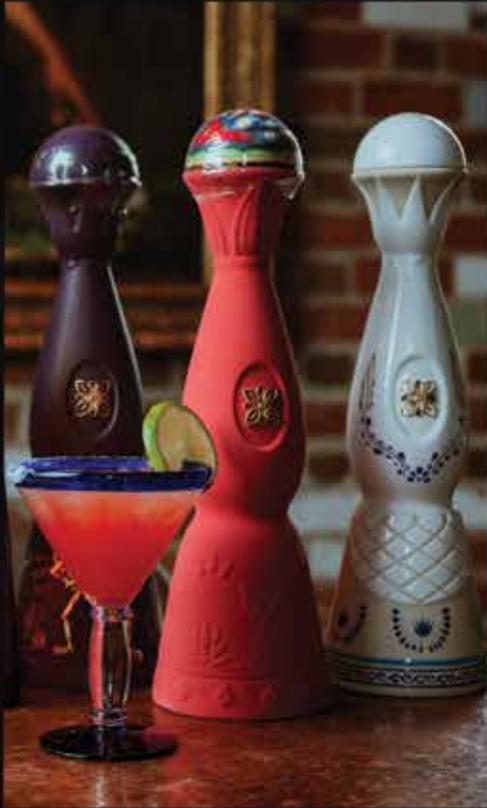
October 25

THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW

Don't miss the 50th anniversary celebration of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" at the PACE Center. Colorado's Elusive Ingredient presents an immersive interactive shadow cast performance of Rocky Horror—played in the PACE Center theater and acted out on stage. This is an audience participation movie where viewers are encouraged to dress up and have fun. Throw bags will also be available for purchase before the start of the show that include all of the Rocky Horror classic essentials and help support future shadow casting experiences in and around Denver. Must be 17+ to attend. **PACE CENTER**, parkerarts.org/pace-center

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