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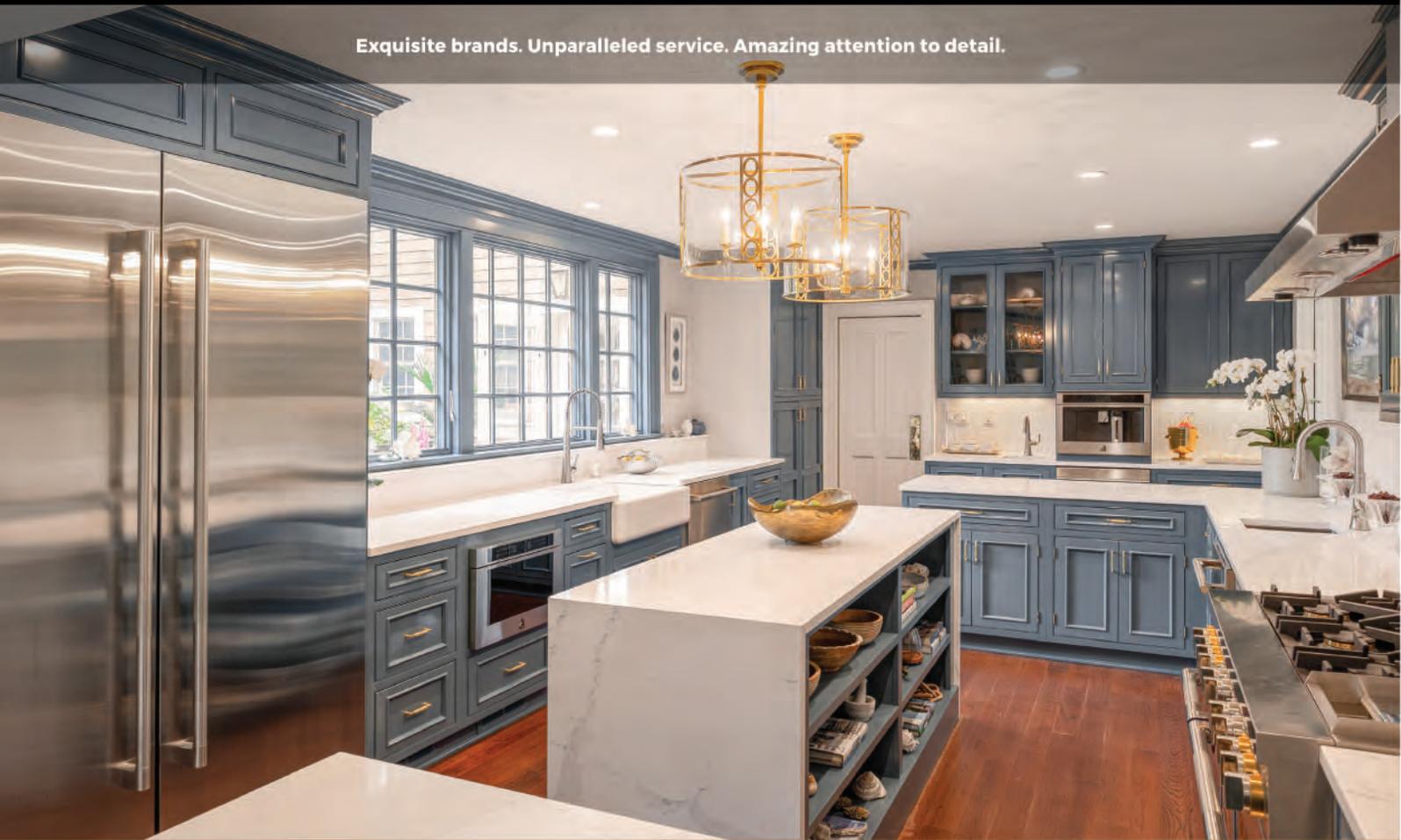


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## FEATURED

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### CREATING MAGIC IN OUTDOOR SPACES

If you've ever wanted to step into a fairy tale, you can't get much closer than the wonderland at the Museum of Outdoor Arts in Marjorie Park. With large brass sculptures of Alice in Wonderland characters to its latest exhibit, "The Cabinet of Curiosities," you can release your inner child in the beauty of this tranquil oasis in the heart of Greenwood Village.

*By Kastle Waserman*

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### DISCOVERING CHEROKEE RANCH & CASTLE

Cherokee Ranch & Castle, in Douglas County, is the culmination of one woman's indomitable spirit. Tweet Kimball, a visionary rancher and art aficionado, transformed a mere piece of land into a living museum of history, culture and conservation. This 3,400-acre estate, now a beacon for adventurers and history enthusiasts alike, owes much of its charm and significance to Kimball's passionate stewardship.

*By Lexi Reich*

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PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/HALE KELL

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## TALK OF THE TOWN

**KNOW SOMEONE** who should be featured in AvidLifestyle? Tell me about them at [heather@avidlifestyle.com](mailto:heather@avidlifestyle.com)



PHOTO BY VANESSA MIRANDA

## DISCOVER COLORADO

**I FIRMLY BELIEVE** that no matter how long you've lived somewhere or how often you've visited a beloved location, there will always be more to explore and experience. So, whether you're a native or a newbie, I encourage you to take a second look around and experience something new in our gorgeous Centennial State.

One of our feature articles, Discovering Cherokee Ranch & Castle on page 36, might introduce you to a side of this iconic venue you've never known before. Sure, it's a destination wedding spot, but it's also enjoyed a long and storied history thanks to visionary rancher Tweet Kimball. Her pioneering story is endearing.

Right here in the metro, at Marjorie Park, you can enjoy a unique fairy tale experience thanks to the Museum of Outdoor Arts' latest exhibit, "The Cabinet of Curiosities." In *Creating Magic in Outdoor Spaces* (page 30), writer Kastle Waserman walks us through this remarkable interactive experience.

If you're interested in performing arts, *Show Stopper* (page 14) outlines what's on tap at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, set to dazzle mile-high theater buffs. Plus, we introduce you to two venues for dining and imbibing at the new Kimpton Claret Hotel in Bellview Station (*A Taste of Italy, A Touch of Denver*, page 20).

Of course, what autumn in Colorado would be complete without a leaf-peeping trip? Lexi Reich takes us on three amazing hikes in the south metro area to catch the splendor of the changing seasons (*Discover the Best Fall Foliage*, page 50).

There's even more to discover about our beloved home here, including an homage to Denver Fashion Week (page 44), a locals' favorite fast-casual dining spot (page 16) and much more. When you're not reading *AvidLifestyle*, I hope you'll be exploring more of our beautiful state. I know I will be!

Happy reading!

Heather Shoning

OOO

**AvidLifestyle** is a luxury 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](mailto:heather@avidlifestyle.com) with basic info about yourself and at least three published clips (links are fine).

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# Show Stopper

DENVER CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS dazzles mile-high loyal theater buffs

By Kastle Waserman

Photo by Matthew Murphy for MurphyMade



**LIVE THEATER IS** an integral part of any community's cultural and social fabric—and Denver metro residents place a high value on it. With some of the country's most engaged and responsive audiences, Denver hosts many pre-Broadway debuts, boasts Janice Sinden, president and CEO of Denver Center for the Performing Arts (DCPA). "Our audiences are phenomenal! And they're loyal—we offer five lines of theatrical programming with two subscription packages totaling about 28,000 subscribers. That's a lot of commitment. Our peers across the country don't see the kind of loyalty we see in Denver."

It could be the number of prestigious shows that come to the stages of the Buell Theatre, with a 2,800-seat capacity, and the Ellie Caulkins Opera House, with 2,200 seats.

Sinden credits the DCPA's executive director, John Ekeberg, for bringing award-winning shows: "He's a Tony voter, so he sees every show that's up for a Tony award. He understands the sentiment of voters and knows what shows will possibly be going on the road. He considers which shows have been here and which should be invited back. He's usually building the calendar a couple of years out."

Theatergoers have an exciting year coming up with blockbuster Broadway shows, including "The Wiz," "Life of Pi," "Funny Girl," "Some Like It Hot," "Back to the Future" and "Gutenberg The Musical." There are also shows from the Tony Award-winning DCPA Theater Company, which creates world-class stage productions from scratch. This year's lineup includes "Hamlet," "I Am Not Your

Perfect Mexican Daughter," "Little Shop of Horrors," "Avaaz," "The Suffragette's Murder," "The Hot Wing King," "The Reservoir" and "A Christmas Carol."

There are other ways to enjoy the performing arts in Denver as well, including intimate performances from the DCPA Cabaret at the Garner Galleria Theatre, immersive experiences from DCPA Off-Center and a Theatre for Young Audiences. A couple of standouts Sinden is looking forward to are "Kimberly Akimbo," about a girl growing up and growing old at the same time and "& Juliet," a new spin on Shakespeare's classic play.

High-quality theater productions are often associated with high ticket prices. But the DCPA strives to accommodate everyone



The cast of the North American tour of Moulin Rouge! The Musical



Gabrielle McClinton as Satine in the North American tour of Moulin Rouge! The Musical.

and has options for lower-priced tickets, including:

**All Stages Package** (combination of Broadway and Theatre Company): 8 shows starting at \$478.50 (\$60 each).

**Broadway full season package:** 8 shows starting at \$526 (or \$65.75 each).

**Theatre Company full season package:** 7 shows starting at \$294.50 (or \$42 each).

**DCPAccess:** various shows starting at \$10 each (single tickets only).

Last-minute rush tickets available at the box office an hour before the show.

For those looking to go from watching the stage to being on it, the DCPA offers adult and children's classes in acting, body movement, voiceover, playwriting, camera techniques and improv, as well as kids camps and a resiliency program for adults with neurodiversity and disabilities.

"My heart grows ten sizes when I see the excitement and enthusiasm as people leave these classes clapping and giggling with joy," Sinden says.

The DCPA is the largest 501(c)(3) non-profit theater organization in the country, made possible by the support and participation of the many theater enthusiasts who attend and donate. Funding also comes from the Scientific

and Cultural Facilities District, which serves seven counties in Colorado. Each participating county receives a share of the tax collected and decides how to spend the tax.

Denverites are lucky to have a well-supported theater and performing arts center that brings exciting shows to look forward to all year round. "Our communities place value on the arts," Sinden says. "It's where stories are told and people come together." 

**DENVER CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS**

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PHOTOS COURTESY MODERN MARKET EATERY

# Better Health, Fast Food

Busy, on-the-go consumers find **QUALITY FOOD** in record time at Modern Market Eatery

By Jamie Lynn Miller

Photos Courtesy Modern Market Eatery

**ANYONE LOOKING FOR** quick meals knows options for nutritious eats are limited. From mass-production, heat lamps and deep fryers, grab-and-go foods rarely feed our bodies the right kind of energy.

Enter Modern Market Eatery. Founded in 2009, this fast-casual front runner strives to make real food the standard in fast food. Co-founders Anthony Pigliacampo and Rob McColgan were always looking for healthy and affordable choices while working or traveling. Unable to find the right options, they decided to create their own. With its first store in Boulder, Modern Market Eatery now serves consumers in locations up and down the Front Range.

Contemporary decor with colorful chairs and high wooden tables provide a tasteful backdrop for delicious recipes made from scratch. "Our teams are chopping and roasting vegetables, stretching pizza dough by hand, and making our new bacon breadcrumbs in-house every day," says chef Nate Weir, vice president of culinary. "We don't have fryers or microwaves in our restaurants." The kitchen can also customize recipes around dietary restrictions or preferences, and vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free options are always available.

Regardless of the menu, timeliness remains paramount. Prepping ahead of time is key, says Weir, as is cross-utilizing certain ingredients. Ready and waiting on the line, a staple like roasted chile sweet potatoes can be quickly





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added to various salads and chef's bowls. As well, the tech-enabled kitchens and easy digital ordering facilitate a quick turnaround.

The son of missionary parents, Weir grew up mostly in Haiti, where he fell in love with Caribbean cuisine. Modern Market Eatery's blackened chicken mango bowl reflects the flavors he loved as a child, as do menu items like marinated kale, rice garlicky black beans with sweet potato and pineapple habanero sauce. "It's Caribbean comfort food done Modern Market Eatery style," Weir says.

Trained in farm-to-table cooking in culinary school, Weir values menus that complement each season. "A portion of our menu is changed out in the fall and the spring to showcase produce at the peak of flavor," he says, while menus are periodically adjusted to integrate new tastes.

Fan favorites include the Thai coconut salad, accented by toasted coconut, pickled onion, peanuts and homemade peanut mango dressing. "This one has a habit of converting first-time guests into raving fans," Weir says. "You'll want it in your life all the time." The Pepe pizza features hand-stretched dough topped with San Marzano tomato sauce and a signature blend of mozzarella and parmesan cheese, while peppery arugula, sliced provolone and basil aioli accent the basil chicken sandwich, which Weir says, "tastes like a summer picnic in the garden."

Each restaurant offers consistency in process, product and service. "Guests can expect an experience that makes their lives easier," Weir says. From ordering on the app or in the restaurant to friendly, efficient service and a diverse menu, a visit to Modern Market Eatery should be a pleasure. He adds, "We want every guest to leave feeling *wowed*."

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# A Taste of Italy, A Touch of Denver

SAVERINA and HALO elevate Belleview Station's dining scene

By Lexi Reich



**AS YOU STEP INTO** Saverina, a culinary gem in the new Kimpton Claret Hotel, the aroma of freshly baked bread and simmering sauces will transport you to the heart of Italy. Yet, the sleek, contemporary interior—with its exposed brick, black steel accents and blonde wood finishes—ensure the sense of being in the heart of Denver's burgeoning Belleview Station.

"We wanted to create the feeling that Saverina has been here for years and will be here for years to come," says executive chef Christian Graves. "In addition to the ambiance, the quality of the food, beverages and service is the real story here."

Graves has crafted a menu that blends Italian culinary traditions with Colorado's seasonal bounty. Begin your journey with a delightful blueberry spritz with housemade limoncello. Then try the brick oven sourdough focaccia, a warm starter where aromatic herbs meld seamlessly with locally sourced flour.

Saverina's commitment to local, sustainable ingredients shines through in every dish. The sourdough pizzas, complete with charred crusts and inventive toppings, are a testament to the kitchen's skill and creativity. The Charred Rapini + Chili Pizza is a standout with fresh mozzarella and fermented chili flakes

that pair beautifully with the Italian-focused wine list.

But the housemade pasta dishes are the true stars here—the Angel Hair Slippery Noodles are a revelation in texture and flavor, while the made-to-order Mortar + Pesto Genovese offers a freshness that lingers long after the last bite.

The menu offers remarkable flexibility, allowing customization of nearly every dish to accommodate various dietary needs—be it vegan, gluten-free or allergy-specific requirements—a thoughtful touch that resonates with today's diverse dining preferences. >>>



PHOTO: BY WHIT PRESTON

As the sun begins to set, make your way up to Halo Bar on the 19<sup>th</sup> floor. The transition from Saverina's warm, inviting atmosphere to Halo's chic vibe is striking. Floor-to-ceiling windows frame panoramic views of the Rocky Mountains, creating a backdrop that's hard to beat. The outdoor space, with its fire pits and comfortable seating, offer a more intimate setting for those looking to enjoy the mountain air along with craft cocktails.

"Halo is the perfect new addition to Denver's nightlife scene offering an alternative to heading downtown," says Mac McNally, food and beverage director of Kimpton Claret

Hotel. "We've worked hard to curate a menu of trendy bites and libations that accentuate Halo's killer views and energetic vibe."

The Vietnamese Espresso Martini provides a much-needed pick-me-up, while the non-alcoholic Mango Sticky shares a refreshing blend of housemade rice water (horchata), mango and coconut. Diners can also grab food items like Dungeness crab fried rice from the bar menu for a light bite.

Saverina and Halo represent more than just new dining options for Belleview Station—they're a reflection of the neighborhood's

growth and evolving identity. The pair—Saverina and Halo—have raised the bar for dining and nightlife in south Denver. Whether you're looking for a romantic Italian-inspired dinner, a lively rooftop happy hour or simply a new spot to impress out-of-town guests, the Kimpton Claret Hotel's new culinary concepts deliver on all fronts. Belleview Station may have just found its new culinary heart. 🐜

#### **SAVERINA & HALO BAR**

6985 E. Chenango Ave.  
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# Current &



# Enduring

TRANSFORMING AN '80S-ERA HOUSE  
into a contemporary masterpiece

*By Lexi Reich*

*Photography by David Lauer*

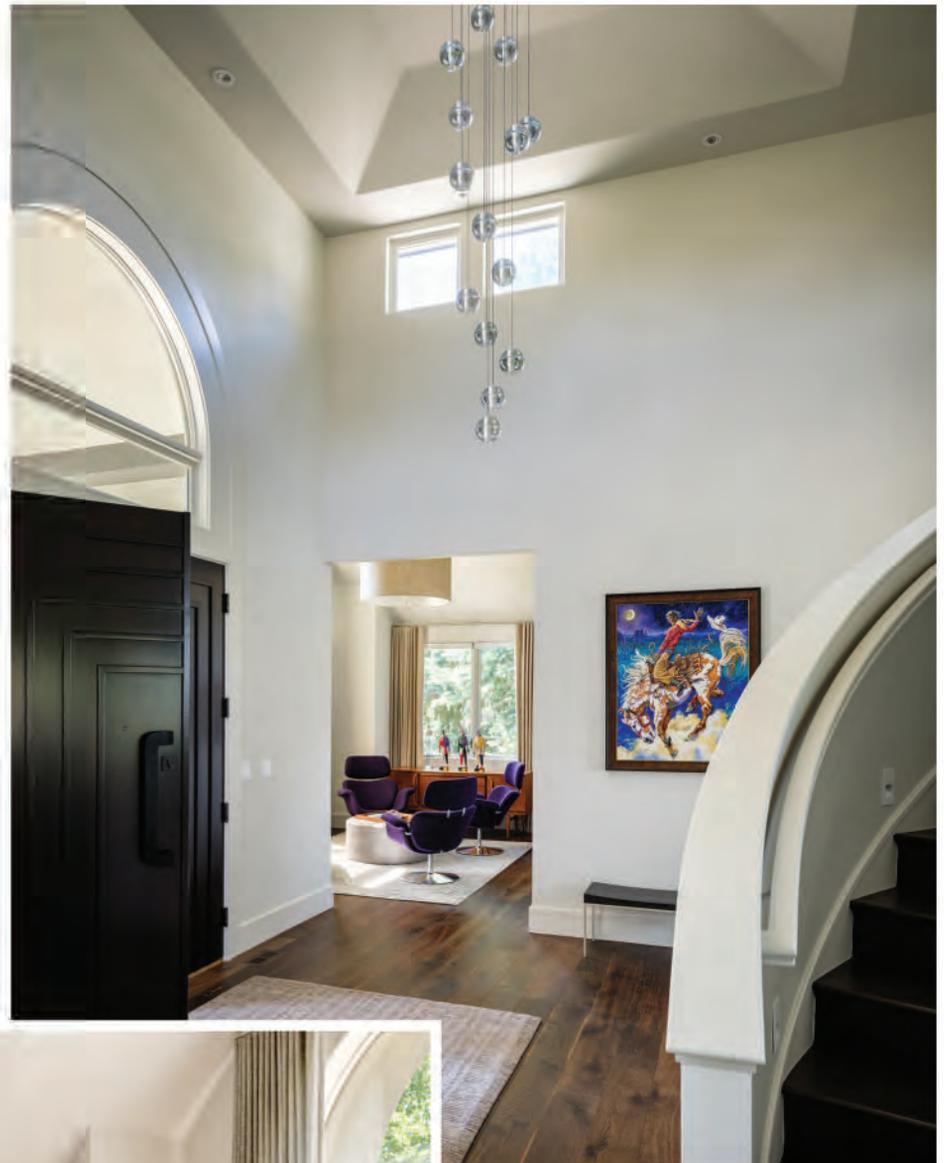


**AFTER 26 YEARS** in their previous Cherry Hills home, Fred and Wendy Boutin sought a larger space and found it in Greenwood Village. The major feature that sold them on the new house was its setting. “The house backs up to the High Line Canal with giant cottonwood trees, and we have an unlimited view of the mountains, and the nature preserve,” Fred Boutin says.

The Boutins knew from the start that the house needed significant updates. They enlisted architect and interior designer Eric Mandil of Mandil Inc. for his expertise even before purchasing the house, having been introduced to him previously. “Eric was instrumental in helping us develop a vision from the beginning,” Fred Boutin emphasizes. “The house had pretty good bones; it just needed better detail.”

So, the Greenwood Village home underwent a notable transformation, shedding its outdated '80s aesthetic for a thoughtful, clean and contemporary design. Mandil teamed up with former builder Robert Koelbel and kitchen designer Bev Adams of Interior Intuitions to complete the project that would reinvent every square inch of the property.

Originally characterized by a sunken living room, unclear lines, arches, built-in plant shelves and jumbles of soffits, the home was in desperate need of a modern update. “The house was like an adult theme park with poor



detailing and even some structural issues,” Mandil recalls. The Boutins’ vision for their new home demanded a precise, tailored approach that balanced midcentury modern and Italian contemporary aesthetics.

Mandil and the team embraced the challenge, beginning with a complete gutting of the interior. Every space was reimagined, from the kitchen and bathrooms to the structural elements like the staircase and bridge. The staircase, previously leading to what Mandil described as a “drywall tunnel,” was transformed into a sculptural centerpiece that now leads to an open bridge spanning the living room. This change not only improved the visual appeal but also maximized the panoramic mountain views that initially attracted the homeowners to the property.

“We worked closely with the Boutins to streamline the existing architecture and make the house feel timeless and sophisticated,” Mandil says. This collaborative process included careful consideration of the



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homeowners' art collection and existing furniture, which heavily influenced the overall design. The aim was to create a space that felt both comfortable and elegant, integrating the couple's midcentury and European tastes.

The renovation extended beyond the interior. Mandil specified exterior paint and simplification of the details, with added decks and stairs enhancing the outdoor living spaces. "We did a major landscape overhaul," Fred Boutin says. "We regraded the yard, added a large patio with a fire pit and built a stairway connecting the deck to the patio."

Despite the extensive work, the project faced typical remodeling challenges. "We had to do some structural work because of the changes we wanted," Fred Boutin recalls. "But our builder handled everything seamlessly."

For homeowners considering a similar project,





# How to Make a Better Salad

WITH TIPS FROM CHEF NATE WEIR,  
VP OF CULINARY AT MODERN MARKET EATERY

Have you ever noticed that a salad from a restaurant always tastes much better than a salad made at home? Modern Market Eatery's VP of Culinary, **Chef Nate Weir**, has thoughts on why that is and how to help you make the best salad of your life. Read on for his top tips to up your homemade salad game instantly.

## PREP YOUR INGREDIENTS

Roast your veggies and protein with salt and spices before adding them to your salad. Restaurants season all elements individually before combining them for maximum flavor impact.

## MAKE YOUR OWN BREADCRUMBS

Combine dry bread with herbs and spices of choice in a food processor. If you really want to get crazy, add a little cooked and crumbled bacon. Pulse until crumbly. Spread on a cookie sheet, add a drizzle of oil,

and bake at 350°F for 10-15 minutes. Homemade breadcrumbs add so much flavor and texture — they're the ideal salad topper!

## GARNISH

Don't underestimate the power of a squeeze of fresh citrus over top of a salad right before serving. Lemon, lime or orange juice brightens things up and helps bring out the flavors of the other ingredients. A sprinkle of parmesan and a handful of toasted nuts also provide additional umami. Don't forget to add the perfect finishing touch!

When it comes to dressing your salad, absolutely nothing beats homemade. Sure, getting started can be a little intimidating, but we've got you covered. Here are Chef Nate's suggestions for making an amazing salad dressing at home.

## USE THE PERFECT RATIO

The oil-to-vinegar ratio is essential in creating a delicious salad dressing. Too much vinegar and the tartness will overwhelm the other flavors. Too much oil and the dressing will weigh down your delicate salad. Nate's ideal dressing is 2 parts oil to 1 part vinegar. This creates the perfect balance of flavor and consistency for evenly coating greens.

## EXPERIMENT!

Add mustard (any kind!), and try different sweeteners and spices until you discover your favorite combination. Here are some fun options in each category to get you started:

### MUSTARD

Yellow, Dijon or Whole Grain

### SWEETENERS

Honey, Agave or Maple Syrup

### SPICES

Tumeric, Cumin or Smoked Paprika

## TRY NATE'S FAVORITE

You can't go wrong with olive oil, apple cider vinegar, dijon mustard, honey, turmeric, and salt and pepper. Combine all ingredients in a jar with a tight-fitting lid and shake like crazy.

If you're not quite ready to jump headfirst into your salad chef era, no problem! Modern Market Eatery has a menu full of made-from-scratch salads that are fresh, delicious, and ready in a flash.

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the Boutins advise focusing on the basics first. “Make sure the roof is in good shape and the building is watertight,” Wendy Boutin says. She suggests investing in the infrastructure to avoid issues later.

One of the most rewarding aspects of the project was its immediate impact on the Boutins’ lifestyle. The redesigned home quickly became a beloved space for entertaining, even hosting their niece’s wedding. “The house turned out well for them,” Mandil says. “They’ve entertained a lot and are very happy with how it all came together.”

The collaborative effort among the project team resulted in a home that feels current and enduring. “We can’t say enough good things about Eric,” Wendy Boutin says. “He was so good at communicating and keeping us on track. The whole team did an excellent job, and we’re just so happy with the result.”

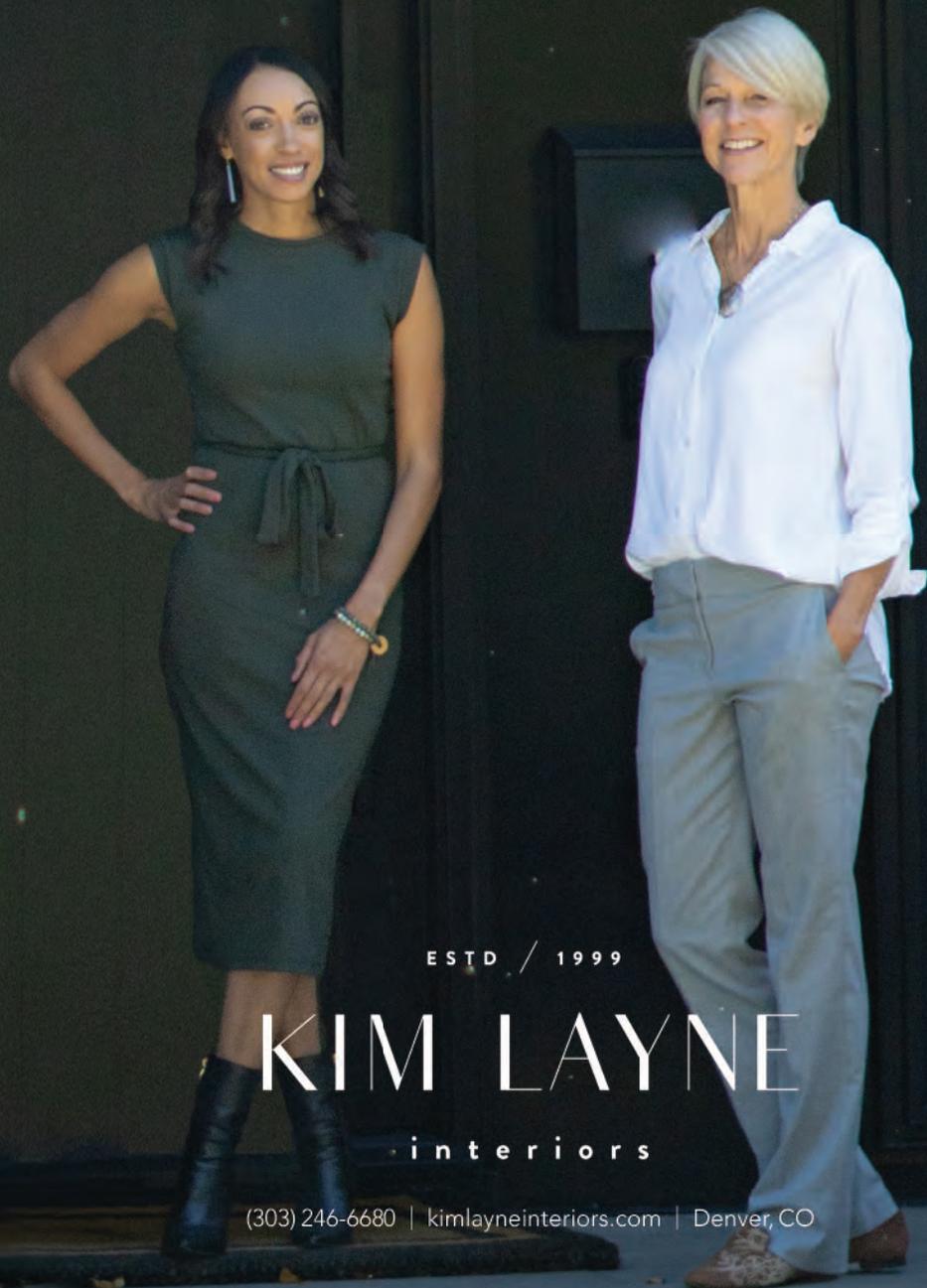
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# Creating Magic in Outdoor

The MUSEUM OF OUTDOOR ARTS  
provides an oasis in Greenwood Village

*By Kastle Wasserman*



# Spaces

**IF YOU'VE EVER** wanted to step into a fairy tale, you can't get much closer than the wonderland at Marjorie Park. With large brass sculptures of Alice in Wonderland characters to its latest exhibit, "The Cabinet of Curiosities," you can release your inner child in the beauty of this tranquil oasis in the heart of Greenwood Village.

Surrounded by office buildings and part of the Fiddler's Green Amphitheatre campus, the Museum of Outdoor Arts (MOA) made its home in the park starting in the early 1980s when commercial developer founder, John W. Madden Jr. donated the property to the museum. It was established as a non-profit arts organization in 1981. The park was originally known as Samson Park, named after John and his wife Marjorie's Yorkshire Terrier. Marjorie Madden passed away in 2014, and in 2015 the park was rededicated as "Marjorie Park" in her honor. John passed in January of 2024 at the age of 94. His daughter Cynthia Madden Leitner remains MOA's president and executive director.

On a beautiful Colorado day, the park gleams with green grass, flowers, and whimsical statues and sculptures among the surrounding glass and concrete office buildings. The director of programs, Tim Vacca, says people often come to the park to walk and picnic on their lunch breaks, taking pleasure in the preserved green space.

The park and sculpture garden are open to the public and often used as a VIP area during shows at Fiddler's Green. The amphitheater itself is filled with large murals depicting Colorado wildlife and living plant walls created by local artists chosen from a call for entries. Selections are juried. A committee also scouts and invites artists during research and travel to create pieces for the museum.

MOA hosts many special events in the park, including, "Uncorked," featuring live music, food and drinks, "Candlelight Concerts," "Rock the Block" lunchtime concerts and Scientific and Cultural Facilities District free days. Fall programming features comedy nights and Halloween-themed movie nights.

"Our mission is to make art a part of everyday life," Vacca says. "When you have art in accessible areas, it adds to the pleasure of being where you are." >>>

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We trust you admired the stunning collection of personally owned exotic cars, race cars and dragster, alongside exotics from Mike Ward Automotive and golf carts from Colorado Golf & Turf. Guests indulged in delightful culinary offerings from Mountain High Appliance, FOGO de Chão, Seasoned Cuisine, Hickory House BBQ, Black + Haus Tavern, Seasons 52, Ornerly Olive, Toastique, and Blue Island Oyster Bar & Seafood, paired with beverages from Anheuser-Busch and cocktails by Breckenridge Distillery and Rocker Spirits.

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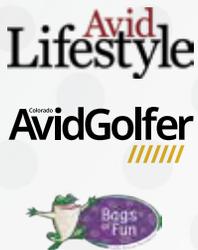
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Access to the park is determined by events and the Fiddler's Green calendar. It's best to make an appointment. For the "Cabinet of Curiosities," requests must be made for a tour as its entrance is into an immersive space, a literal giant vintage-style cabinet located on the park grounds curated by Lonnie Hanzon, a beloved Colorado artist known for his immersive productions such as "Camp Christmas."

Hanzon's 20-year history of working with MOA began through a friend who recommended him to Cynthia Madden Leitner for a mosaic wedding altar project. Hanzon ended up managing light shows and displays for two decades, eventually becoming the organization's "wizard in residence." He's taken breaks from the museum to work with his team creating immersive experiences around the world but says he's happy to be in Colorado—his home and favorite place.

While Hanzon admits he gets a lot of the credit, it took a team of artisans working more than a year to put together the "Cabinet of Curiosities," which invites visitors to imagine what it might be like to step into a cabinet filled with references to fairy tales and nursery rhymes meant to be experienced as if getting to know the storybook characters themselves.

Hanzon explained that much of his love of fairy tale relics stems from a fascination with reliquaries (containers used to hold sacred relics), filled with objects of symbolic or religious significance such as clothing, body parts or ashes. "What happens if you have Little Red Riding Hood's cape? Is it charged with that story, that magic?" he asks.

The Cabinet is filled with reliquaries containing everything from the Little Match Girl's burned clothes to the Queen of Hearts' red fruit tart. Other objects among the collection of cabinets includes antique magic lanterns and colorful slides in musical pullout drawers and hanging from chandeliers, Rapunzel's long braid crawling along the wall, Jack and Jill's pail spilling sparkling tinsel streamers, and the wave of a hand lights up a glittering rabbit hole down a frame of books.

An early incarnation of the Cabinet was on exhibit at MOA's former headquarters and indoor gallery space in Englewood from 2010 to 2022. It then moved to live permanently in its current larger space in Marjorie Park. The exhibit opening in April 2024 was celebrated with a brief run of a related interactive play, "Impossible Things," in collaboration with the Boulder theatrical group The Catamounts from May 25 to June 16.

While Hanzon describes his work as somewhere in the "in-between" of museum and theater, he says he's finally accepted the title of "artist." But mostly he considers himself a "keeper" of objects and art forms that are beautiful but perhaps forgotten by current society.

Though he admits his collection spans vast



warehouses of chaos, Hanzon says what he does isn't meant to be kept and chronicled like a museum, which he takes issue with. "Less than ten percent of the world's beauty and treasures aren't seen by anyone because they're neatly catalogued in basements. For me, I can either put my energy into cataloging or into making the magic. I want to keep

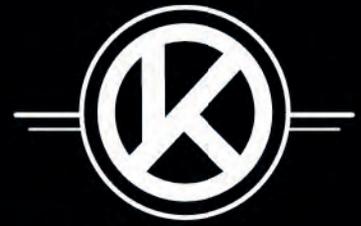
these things alive to be rediscovered by the next generation."

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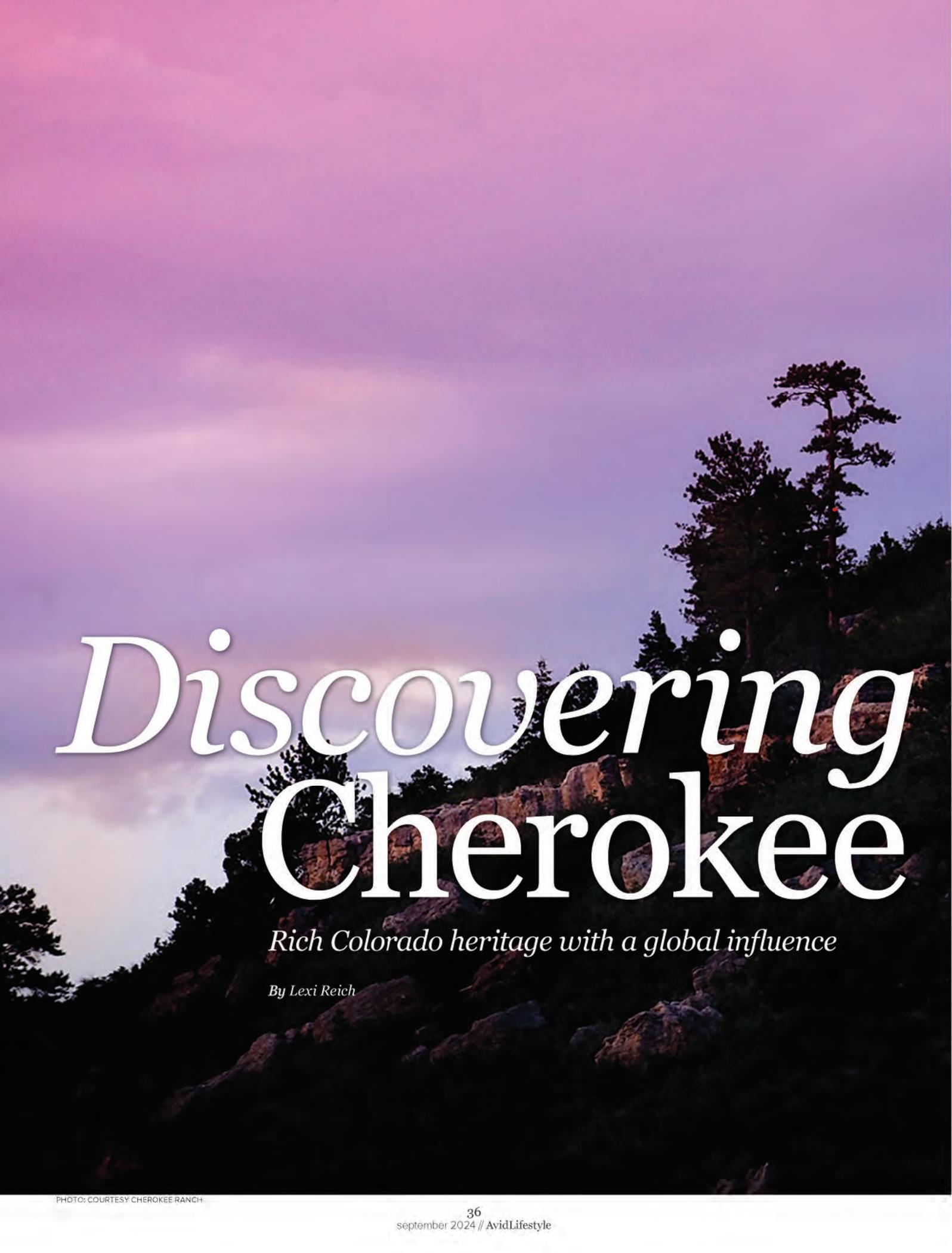


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# *Discovering* Cherokee

*Rich Colorado heritage with a global influence*

*By Lexi Reich*



# Ranch & Castle

**IN DOUGLAS COUNTY,** one woman's indomitable spirit has left an enduring mark on the Colorado landscape. Tweet Kimball, a visionary rancher and art aficionado, transformed Cherokee Ranch & Castle from a mere piece of land into a living museum of history, culture and conservation. This 3,400-acre estate, now a beacon for adventurers and history enthusiasts alike, owes much of its charm and significance to Kimball's passionate stewardship.

James Holmes, executive director of Cherokee Ranch & Castle, has a personal connection to the ranch dating back to the mid-1990s. Holmes competed in show jumping and boarded horses with a friend whose property adjoined the ranch, giving him early familiarity with the land. Although he initially knew little about Kimball or the castle, his involvement deepened in 2002 when he was invited to evaluate Kimball's antiquarian book collection, particularly her first editions of Winston Churchill's writings. Today, he describes the property as "many things"—a house museum, an event center, an active cattle ranch and a wildlife conservation area.

Kimball lived at Cherokee Ranch from 1954 to 1999, during which she indulged in her love for Santa Gertrudis cattle, European art and antiques. "She amassed a significant collection housed within the castle, which was her home," Holmes says. "Her gift to Colorado in

1996, establishing the property as a foundation, ensured that Cherokee Ranch would be preserved for public enjoyment."

Built in the 1920s, the architectural marvel of the castle itself is a significant draw. It sits atop a cliff, offering panoramic views of the Front Range and surrounding countryside. Designed by Burnham Hoyt, the same architect who later created the iconic Red Rocks Amphitheatre, the castle boasts a unique blend of locally sourced rhyolite stone and petrified wood. "It's built in an Irish baronial style, with turrets and rooms that reference that period," Holmes notes. "It's a structure with its own unique style and flavor."

Yet the historical significance of Cherokee Ranch extends beyond its architecture. "Cherokee Ranch was the first property in Douglas County to be placed under a conservation easement in 1996," Holmes says proudly. "This public-private partnership was a pioneering move in Colorado, emphasizing land conservation and sustainable practices."

Education is a cornerstone of Cherokee Ranch's mission. Holmes highlights its diverse educational programs, including the Discovery Series, which features lectures by citizen scientists on topics ranging from indigenous artifacts to geology. "We have a large deposit of petrified wood on the property dating back

**"She amassed a significant collection housed within the castle, which was her home. Her gift to Colorado in 1996, establishing the property as a foundation, ensured that Cherokee Ranch would be preserved for public enjoyment."**

—James Holmes



TWEET KIMBALL

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55 million years; we educate visitors about everything from these ancient logs to the ranch's current conservation efforts," he explains.

The castle tours, led by volunteer docents, offer an immersive journey through time. "Our tours cover Tweet Kimball's personal history, the ranch's history predating her and its evolution since her passing," Holmes says.

But Cherokee Ranch is not just about history and education; it is a thriving cultural hub. The ranch hosts various events, from afternoon tea and yoga sessions to concerts and art shows. "We have a vibrant cultural arts program supported by Scientific and Cultural Facilities District funding," Holmes says. "Our events range from plein air painting sessions to a comprehensive concert series that runs year-round."

One particularly exciting initiative is the upcoming sculpture park, featuring 36 stone sculptures from Zimbabwe's Chapungu Sculpture Park. "This project highlights the global connections we are fostering," Holmes



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says. "It's a celebration of traditional stone sculpture practices from Zimbabwe, curated by Roy Guthrie and Marcey Mushore." This initiative will add an international dimension to Cherokee Ranch's already rich cultural offerings.

As Holmes reflects on his decade-long journey as executive director, he emphasizes the importance of public engagement. "Our mission is to interpret and share the story of Cherokee Ranch in all its facets, from its past to its present," he says. "We want visitors to experience this place and leave inspired."

Many say that the legacy of Kimball casts a warm hue over Cherokee Ranch & Castle. It's a place where history whispers through ancient petrified wood, where art and nature converge in harmony, and where visitors can feel the heartbeat of Colorado's cultural heritage. Whether one's drawn by the architectural splendor of the castle, the stories of its past or the cultural events that breathe life into its present, Cherokee Ranch & Castle invites us to be a part of its ongoing story.

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# Denver Fashion Week

**THIS HIGH-BAR EVENT** continues to grow and delight the fashion community

*By Hailee Lucchesi*

*Photos Courtesy of Denver Fashion Week*

**IT IS HARD TO** comprehend that Denver Fashion Week (DFW) has grown from a weekend show to a bi-annual, seven-day production showcasing worldwide talent in just over a decade. The Aharonian family worked primarily in events with 303 Magazine when they decided to dip their toes in the fashion industry with a hair show in 2010. Back then, they termed the event Denver Fashion Weekend, intending to drop the “end” when it became established enough to produce more than just one night on the weekend.

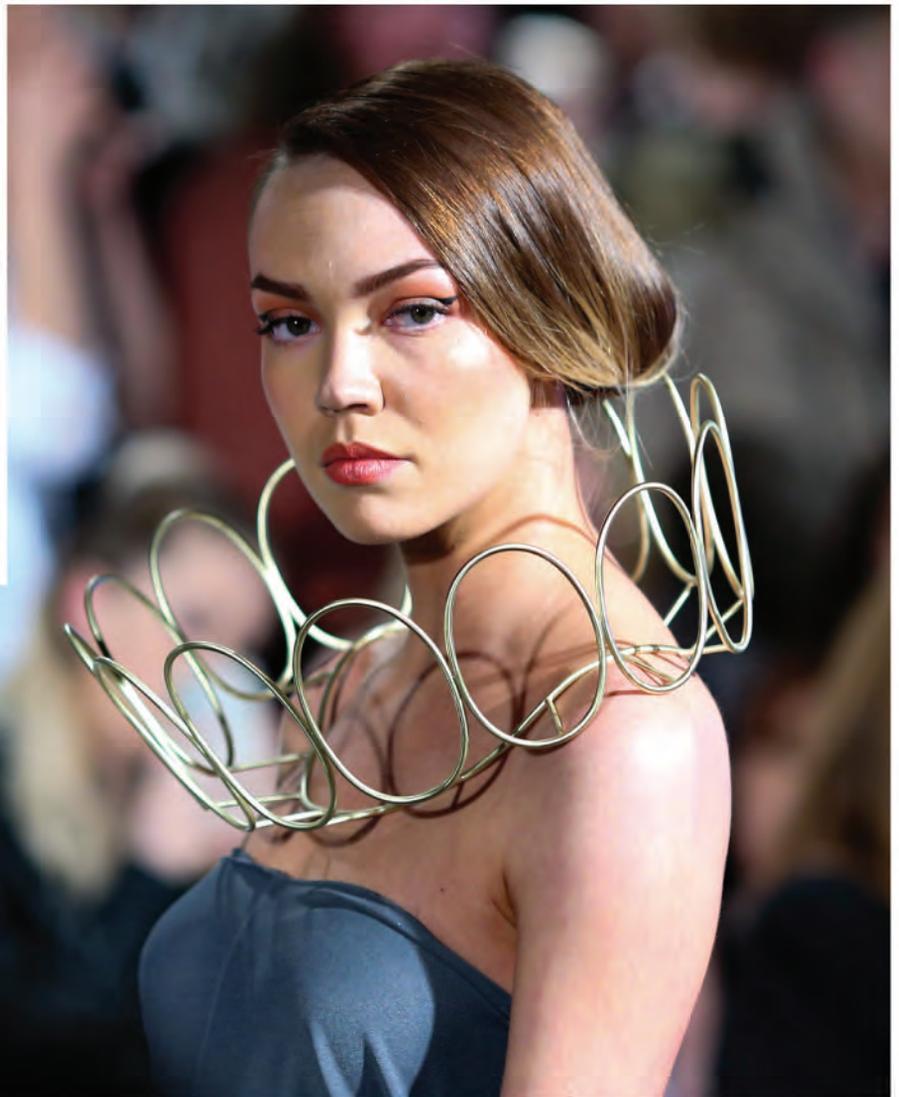
The show quickly built a reputation, landing the iconic Betsy Johnson to showcase her line for an entire night in 2011. Shortly after, the Denver-born “Project Runway All Stars” winner, Mondo Guerra, showcased his marvelous collections in his hometown before and after his big win on national television.

During the Fall 2023 show, on couture night, 8-year-old child protégé designer Max Alexander showed his first-ever runway collection. The crowd was quite confused when they saw a young boy—hand-in-hand with his mother—walking behind ten models as they did their final walk.

New York founded; Denver-based designer Guillermo Pharis runs a bridal atelier in the heart of downtown Denver. Pharis also showed in the fall of 2023, closing the show with his first-ever evening wear collection that concluded with a robust standing ovation from the audience. It is no wonder that Forbes named DFW one of “the fastest-growing fashion platforms in America.”

The Aharonian family credits the cultural partnership with Denver Arts and Venues as pivotal to the show’s growth. This





partnership was crucial for helping curate an entire week of shows. The Aharonian family says, "They understood the immense amount of talent amongst our community. From models, producers, designers, hair and makeup artists, and helping source outstanding venues, they were crucial in our success."

Finding the perfect venue is not an easy feat. In fact, DFW equates it as one of its biggest challenges each year. The team needs an incredibly precise checklist to pull off such an affair. The venue must host up to 1,000 guests, have space to build a cocktail lounge and have a backstage area for designers, models, and hair and makeup, as well as room for pop-up shops for vendors. Not to mention that the event requires use of the space for up to ten days for the show and a few days before and after for preparation and teardown.

What initially ignited the ethos for the show is still what makes the founding



fortunate to be an organization supporting the fashion industry and watching it grow and thrive," they say. "To be able to showcase extraordinary talent and bring national and international designers is just incredible. We are also profoundly proud to be able to support the economy of Denver."

When launching, they would have 100 to 150 models at the castings for designers to choose from to walk in their collections. Now, more than 1,200 models attend the casting. "It is just amazing to see," the family says. "Some models who walk in the show end up getting signed with major agencies and go on to walk in fashion shows all over the world." Jessica Baumann and Emily Rose Turner started their careers at Denver Fashion Week and

only a few short years later. Even the behind-the-scenes team has evolved with exceptional form. Lead producer Nikki Strickler started with DFW as a model in 2013 and now produces seven out of the eight nights.

Denver Fashion Week hosts an important event each year to allow upcoming designers to show their talents during its Designer Challenge. It's a night of fashion where fresh faces compete in front of a panel of judges and a live audience for a chance to unveil their collections during the big bi-annual fashion show. It's a remarkable and vital event that gives these skilled individuals a platform to shine that they may not have otherwise.

With the Fall 2024 show just around the corner, November 9–17, DFW continues to make each season better and better. While the lineup has not yet been released (at press time), we know the organization plans to continue pushing and standing by its mission statement. "DFW is rooted in inclusivity, support and empowerment for all talents, regardless of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, height, body type or age," the Aharonian family says. "We are dedicated to fostering economic growth within Colorado's fashion and design communities, increasing visibility for our runway participants and sponsors, and curating an unparalleled fashion experience that sets the standard in Denver." 

**DENVER FASHION WEEK**  
[denverfashionweek.com](http://denverfashionweek.com)

# Nighty Night

Your CIRCADIAN RHYTHM is a big deal for rest and rejuvenation

By Kristen West

**WE ALL KNOW** how important sleep is based on how we feel when we go without it. Just ask the sleep-deprived parent, shift worker or a jet-lagged traveler. So, what is the secret to maintaining a healthy relationship with sleep?

It's all about the body's circadian rhythm, according to Ellen Stothard Ph.D., research and development director for the Colorado Sleep Institute. "The body's circadian rhythm is not just the little cousin of sleep, it's actually the source code," Dr. Stothard says. This complex function takes information from the external environment and creates signals for major bodily functions, hormones, moods and behaviors throughout a cycle of time, typically about 24 hours. "It's why you don't feel hungry in the middle of the night," Dr. Stothard says.

Maintaining a consistent routine—even on the weekends—and making sure you are getting enough daylight is a major contributing factor

to supporting the circadian rhythm, which maintains healthy sleep patterns. "A great way to keep your circadian rhythm healthy is to get light in the morning," Dr. Stothard says. "If you're trying to adjust to a new time zone, you can wake up a little earlier so that your body thinks, 'OK, I have sixteen hours of wakefulness.'"

Artificial light at night can have the opposite effect, as it may interfere with your body's signals to produce the sleep hormone, melatonin, and therefore negatively influence the deepness of your sleep. According to a recent study at Northwestern University, even the smallest amount of artificial light at night can have significant impacts on the body's sleep, metabolism and long-term health. Turning off all lights and devices, sleeping with a sleep mask and keeping any nightlights dim and low to the ground can encourage better quality sleep.

Another major disrupter of circadian rhythm is caffeine. "Caffeine has a half-life of six hours. If you have a coffee at noon, you still have half that caffeine in your blood at six, so if you're trying to go to bed at eight, you still have a lot of caffeine in your body." To ensure better quality sleep, keep your caffeine fix closer to the morning hours.

If you are doing all the right things and still having trouble sleeping, it may be time to see a sleep expert. When finding a professional, look for someone who specializes in sleep rather than a multi-specialist. Check your insurance to see if you'll need a referral and look for cash-pay options if you don't have insurance coverage. And sooner is better than later. "It's easier to fix things that aren't completely broken," to Dr. Stothard says.

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Jennifer Markus

# All About Family

JENNIFER MARKUS shares her journey to real estate success

*By Kristen West*



**WHEN DENVER** real estate agent and broker Jennifer Markus was rated on the America's Best by Volume list by RealTrends, the weight of it took her by surprise. "I looked at all the people who I aspired to be when I started my real estate career, and then I saw my name on that list. It is still quite shocking because it was not on my radar."

Selling real estate was never about the awards for Markus, who comes from humble beginnings. She and her sister were raised by a single mother who worked as a hairdresser to make ends meet. "I tried to learn as much as I could from wealthy families around us so that it wasn't so hard for us," Markus says. "The desire to help the family was huge."

Markus began her career in Canada as an optician alongside her husband, an optometrist at the time, who shared a similar work ethic. The couple moved to Boca Raton, Florida, and Markus sold high-end jewelry. She leaned on her outgoing personality to develop relationships within the community before transitioning to real estate. "I had a clientele in a very high net

worth place. I would think, 'Why is this guy living on the coast? How did he get there?' He didn't just suddenly buy that house; he may have had eight houses that led him to that property. I was surrounded by people like that, and I learned to think the way they thought."

Real estate was not only a natural transition due to her networking and sales experience but also made it easy for Markus to set her own hours once she had her own family. When the couple moved to Colorado, they created Markus Dream Homes.

That was 20 years ago. Now, Markus sells multi-million-dollar luxury homes in Denver and owns and manages many of her own properties. Reaching this level required hard work and long hours, but Markus says it was all about connections and maintaining relationships, even friendships, with her clients. She encourages clients to look at housing as an investment or business, not solely as a place to live.

When asked about her hobbies, Markus laughs and admits that real estate is genuinely

her hobby. "It's like a void you get sucked into because it's fun." Well, real estate with some quality coffee, wine bars, thrifting and consigning on the side.

Markus owns and manages a handful of historic homes, which she considers a passion. "Who doesn't want to go into an 1890s house and think about how many babies were born there? These beautiful homes were created to be multigenerational and feature striking woodwork and accoutrements," she says. "The way those homes are constructed and are still standing. These are pieces of history. I love that."

Most importantly, Markus's 88-year-old mother has been living "in the lap of luxury," which she says is her true indication of success. Markus is now dreaming of retirement and enjoying some long-awaited travel ... and probably a little bit of real estate.

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# Discover the Best *Fall Foliage*

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## TOP LEAF-PEEPING HIKES near south Denver

*By Lexi Reich*

**AS AUTUMN APPROACHES**, the hills and mountains near Denver transform into a canvas of gold, orange and red hues. One of the best ways to experience this natural spectacle is through leaf-peeping hikes, particularly to witness the aspens in all their fall glory.

### UNDERSTANDING ASPEN LEAF COLOR CHANGE

Aspen trees are renowned for their vibrant fall colors, which result from a fascinating biological process. According to Dr. Dan West, the forest entomologist with the Colorado State Forest Service, aspens flush leaves in spring using sugar stored from the previous season. Throughout summer, these trees produce sugar through photosynthesis, facilitated by chlorophyll, the pigment responsible for the green color in leaves.

However, as days shorten in fall, the production of chlorophyll halts, unveiling other pigments in the leaves. Xanthophylls produce yellow hues, carotenoids create oranges, and anthocyanins bring out reds and purples. The formation of an abscission layer, which cuts off the leaf from the tree's nutrient supply, allows these pigments to emerge. Optimal conditions for vibrant fall colors include sunny days and cool (but not freezing) nights. Variations in weather, such as early frost or drought, can impact the intensity and duration of the colors.

"It's not an exact science year to year, but we can tell how the viewing season might unfold with predictors of moisture and storm outlooks as the viewing season approaches," West says.

As you plan your leaf-peeping adventures, remember to check current conditions, dress appropriately and bring a camera to capture the season's beauty.

**TOP HIKING SPOTS FOR ASPEN VIEWING**  
**GOLDEN GATE CANYON STATE PARK**

**Location:** Approximately 30 miles west of Denver

**Hike:** Panorama Point via Mule Deer Trail and Raccoon Trail

**Parking:** Bootleg Bottom Picnic Area

Golden Gate Canyon State Park is a gem for those seeking a diverse outdoor experience near Denver. The park boasts several trails with varying difficulty levels, making it an excellent destination for both novice and experienced hikers. The Panorama Point Scenic Overlook offers an expansive view of the surrounding mountains blanketed in autumn colors. Many hikers prefer to reach the overlook via Mule Deer Trail and Raccoon Trail to create a moderate 5-mile loop, or you can opt to access it straight from the Panoramic Point parking area. Throughout the park, aspens turn a brilliant gold, contrasting beautifully with the darker tones of the evergreen forests. A daily vehicle pass is \$10 without an annual state park pass.

**Trail Details**

**Distance:** 5 miles

**Elevation Gain:** 1,020 feet

**Difficulty:** Moderate

**STAUNTON STATE PARK**

**Location:** Approximately 40 miles southwest of Denver

**Hike:** Red Wall via Staunton Ranch Trail

**Parking:** Staunton State Park Upper Parking Lot

Staunton State Park is a relatively new addition to Colorado's state park system and has quickly become a popular spot for fall foliage. Staunton Ranch Trail is a highlight, offering a moderately challenging hike with historic buildings, wildlife viewing and expansive views of the park. The park's diverse ecosystem ensures a rich display of colors, from the vibrant aspens to the mixed conifers and grasses. A daily vehicle pass is \$10 without an annual state park pass.

**Trail Details**

**Distance:** 4.8 miles round trip

**Elevation Gain:** 958 feet

**Difficulty:** Moderate

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK**

**Location:** Approximately 55 miles northwest of Denver

**Hike:** Bear Lake Loop

**Parking:** Bear Lake Parking Area

Bear Lake in Rocky Mountain National Park is a quintessential destination for fall foliage enthusiasts. Nestled in the heart of the park, the Bear Lake Trailhead provides easy access to some of the most stunning aspen displays in



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/BOB POOL.JPG



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/PNW PARK RANGER

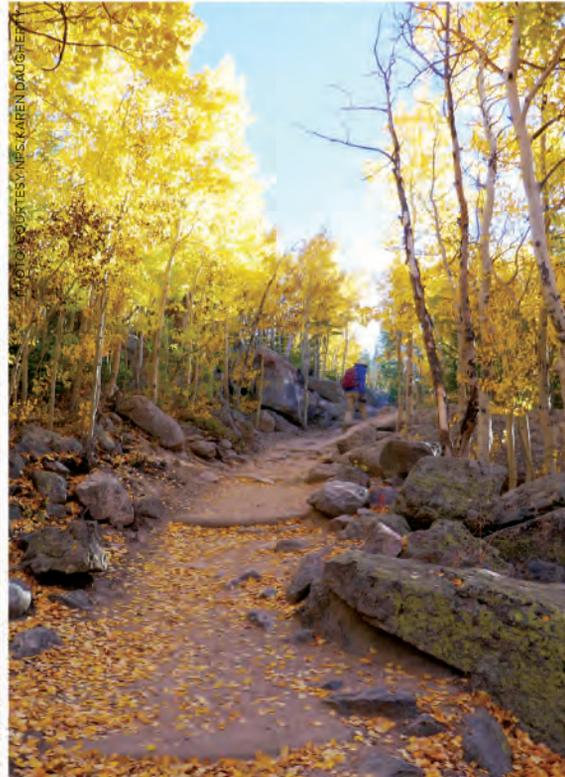


PHOTO: COURTESY NPS, KAREN DAUGHERTY

Colorado. The jaunt is relatively easy, making the loop ideal for families and hikers of all skill levels. The reflective surface of the lake mirrors the colorful foliage, creating a scene that's perfect for photography and peaceful nature walks. There is a timed entry permit system during certain times of the day until mid-October—spots can be reserved in advance online. A daily vehicle pass is \$30 without an annual national park pass.

**Trail Details**

**Distance:** 0.7 miles round trip

**Elevation Gain:** 49 feet

**Difficulty:** Easy

**Optional Extensions:**

**Nymph Lake:** 1 mile round trip, moderate difficulty

**Dream Lake:** 2 miles round trip, moderate difficulty

**Emerald Lake:** 3.2 miles round trip, moderate difficulty

**TIP:** Colorado residents can buy a Keep Colorado Wild Pass, which covers a year-long admission to state parks. This is available during annual vehicle registration through the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV).



# SEPTEMBER

## Ongoing Through October 11

### LEARN TO FLY FISH

Fly Fishing 101 classes are a great way to introduce yourself to the world of fly fishing. Register now at Orvis Park Meadows for these fun and engaging classes. When you're ready for the next step, and once you've completed the Fly Fishing 101 class, you're eligible to participate in the Fly Fishing 201 class, where you'll head out on local waters for the chance to catch your first fish on the fly! **PARK MEADOWS**, [parkmeadows.com](http://parkmeadows.com)

### September 4

#### BRASS & PERCUSSION WITH THE COLORADO SYMPHONY

Head to McGregor Square for a special Colorado Symphony Brass & Percussion outdoor concert in the heart of Denver's historic Lower Downtown district. Resident Conductor Christopher Dragon will lead the full Colorado Symphony Brass in a diverse and engaging performance featuring a variety of classical and pop favorites. Doors open at 6 p.m., and the concert will begin at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$49.50 for adults, \$22 for students/children. VIP tickets are available for \$93.50, which includes two complimentary drinks and light appetizers. **DENVER**, [mcgregorsquare.com](http://mcgregorsquare.com)



PHOTO: COURTESY OF JULIA

### September 6

#### CRIME AND WINE

Don't miss this unique walking tour that combines history, food, wine and, of course, a real-life crime! Travel back in time to see the chilling details of a plane crash that took place in Colorado in the 1950s. While learning the circumstances surrounding this case, patrons can enjoy two glasses of wine and a charcuterie cup. Sessioned groups begin at The Schoolhouse and work their way through the building, visiting different stations along the way. Each station progressively reveals more details of the crime, those involved, and historical facts about the case and the county. During the evening, actors from Sasquatch Productions will move about the event, colorfully bringing to life the story's fascinating victims and felon. **PARKER**, [parkerarts.org](http://parkerarts.org)

### September 6-7

#### HIGHLANDS RANCH PIONEER DAYS

The Old West comes to life for a fun-filled weekend at the Highlands Ranch Mansion. This event offers a variety of hands-on educational opportunities that are perfect

there's more ➔



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## ON THE AGENDA // can't-miss events

to get children engaged with local history. Explore fur trapping, gold panning, traditional Native American dance performances, blacksmith demonstrations, a petting zoo and tours of the Highlands Ranch Mansion. The event runs 9 a.m.–2 p.m. **HIGHLANDS RANCH**, [hrcaonline.org](http://hrcaonline.org)

### September 6–8 & 13–15 VAIL OKTOBERFEST

The award-winning Vail Oktoberfest has announced details of its two-weekend Bavarian extravaganza of competitions, contests, flowing German beer, German delicacies, traditional music and dance, children's entertainment, and more. This free, family-friendly event, named among the 10 greatest Oktoberfest celebrations in the U.S. by USA Today, will be in Vail's Lionshead Village Sept. 6–8 and Vail Village Sept. 13–15. Standout activities include the World Keg Bowling Championship, brat eating contest, stein hoisting competition and a costume contest. **VAIL**, [oktoberfestvail.com](http://oktoberfestvail.com)

### September 7 & 8

#### 35TH ANNUAL COLORADO ARTFEST AT CASTLE ROCK

Get ready to head down to Festival Park as the Castle Rock Chamber hosts a juried fine arts show with artists from across the country. Enjoy live main-stage entertainment featuring popular musicians, interactive exhibits for the kids, savor fabulous food and beverages, and so much more. **CASTLE ROCK**, [ergov.com](http://ergov.com)



PHOTO COURTESY OF GIGI HECHT

### September 7

#### DOGGIE SPLASH & PET EXPO

Highlands Ranch residents, pack up your pups and head to Westridge Recreation Center—it's time for the end-of-season dog swim! Dogs must be accompanied by a human aged 16 or older, though humans aren't allowed in the pool. Three one-hour sessions are available; tickets are required. **WESTRIDGE REC CENTER**, [hrcaonline.org](http://hrcaonline.org)

### September 7

#### PRECIOUS TEA SWEET 16 GALA

Get ready for a delectable evening at the Sweet 16 Gala, celebrating sixteen years of service to Colorado children and families in need. This

will be an amazing evening filled with hope and inspiration, exciting entertainment and some spectacular auction items. **DENVER**, [apreciouschild.org](http://apreciouschild.org)

### September 7–15

#### HARD ROCK SUMMIT

The fall show for the finest minerals, fossils, gemstones and jewelry is here. With more than 150 top-notch exhibitors of high-end minerals and rare fossils Hardrock Summit is the global meeting place for the mineral and fossil communities as well as the leading autumn trading platform for businesses and collectors. **DENVER**, [hardrocksummit.com](http://hardrocksummit.com)

### September 12

#### ROCK THE BLOCK

Get ready to enjoy your lunch in the park while watching live music from a variety of small music ensembles, learn about Museum of Outdoor Arts events and memberships, and network with other community partners. Bring your own lunch or purchase items from the grill bar. Access to the park is free with registration. Not a part of the Greenwood Plaza office community? Not to worry, all are welcome at this time. Tables with shade umbrellas are available on a first come, first serve basis or bring your own blanket or chair. **GREENWOOD VILLAGE**, [moaonline.org](http://moaonline.org)

### September 13

#### WHISKEY TASTING AT THE CASTLE

September's whiskey-tasting event at Cherokee Ranch & Castle features single malt whiskey and its many reflections across the world, plus heavy appetizers, an educational program and tours of the castle. 6:30 p.m. at **CHEROKEE RANCH & CASTLE**, [cherokeeranch.org](http://cherokeeranch.org)

### September 13

#### WINE WALK

Select downtown merchants will be pouring wine for participants at their business locations. Gather your friends and colleagues, grab your collectible glass and map at the Parker Chamber office, and spend your evening wandering Downtown Parker tasting and socializing. It's a great way to make new friends and enjoy a beautiful evening in Parker. Event is rain or shine, 4:30–7:30 p.m. All participants must be over 21 and must present valid ID. **PARKER**, [parkerchamber.com](http://parkerchamber.com)

### September 14

#### HIGHLANDS RANCH OKTOBERFEST

Gather your family and friends for this cultural event, which will include German food, music, and, of course, great beers from Paulaner. There will be live music and non-stop entertainment for the kids, too. Children will enjoy balloons, face painters and games until their hearts are content. And don't forget about the main event—Dachshund races! Oktoberfest is 1–9 p.m.; there's also a 5K race at 9 a.m. **TOWN CENTER SOUTH**, [hrcaonline.org](http://hrcaonline.org)



**September 14**

**CHALK ART FESTIVAL CENTENNIAL**

At this free annual festival, local artists create mesmerizing masterpieces using only colorful sidewalk chalk. Arrive early to spend the day browsing local businesses and vendors, listen to live music, and grab a bite to eat at a local restaurant. You'll have the chance to vote for your favorite chalk art, too. 10 a.m.–4 p.m. at **THE STREETS AT SOUTHGLENN**, [centennialco.gov](http://centennialco.gov)

**September 27 & 28**

**JUNKIN' MARKETPLACE DAYS**

Junkin' Market Days shopping events are all about making shopping unique items for your home fun and easy! Prepare for a fun day of shopping from various vendors, including vintage dealers, upcycled items, crafters, artists, boutique clothing, sweet treats and more. \$5 admission, kids 12 and under free. **CASTLE ROCK**, [visitcastlerock.org](http://visitcastlerock.org)

**September 14–15**

**ART ON THE GREEN**

This huge 2-day outdoor art festival showcases the works of more than 90 specially selected artists from around Colorado. The event also includes food trucks, adult beverages and live music. 10 a.m.–5 p.m. both days at **CURTIS CENTER FOR THE ARTS**, [greenwoodvillage.com](http://greenwoodvillage.com)

**September 21**

**CASTLE ROCK OKTOBERFEST**

A Downtown Castle Rock event staple with stein-hoisting competitions, traditional German music and dancers, free kids' activities, a live DJ, vendor booths and more than 14 different breweries to try. Event runs 1–9 p.m. **CASTLE ROCK**, [ergov.com](http://ergov.com)

**September 26**

**SPREADING WINGS CELEBRATION**

Time to get dressed up as Wings Over the Rockies Air & Space Museum celebrates 30 years of preserving and showcasing the rich history of aviation and space exploration. From its humble beginnings to becoming a premier aerospace museum and learning center, you're invited to participate in this momentous occasion. This milestone event will feature champagne and whiskey bars, live entertainment, a full bar, a seated dinner, a live auction and more! **ENGLEWOOD**, [wingsmuseum.org](http://wingsmuseum.org)



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