

LIVING &gt; TRAVEL

# Why Telluride Is So Much More Than Just a World-Class Ski Town

DECEMBER 29, 2015 8:45 AM  
6:30PM A 7:30 PM

Anyone who's ever been to a backyard barbecue will be familiar with Telluride's scenic beauty and iconic silhouettes—the mountain range surrounding the town has graced Coors beer cans and bottles since the '70s. But now this low-key, artsy, historic Colorado mountain town is turning into a destination in its own right. Telluride Film Festival precedes Sundance, making it the place with the most film premieres outside of New York and Los Angeles. (A few months back, Quentin Tarantino shot his new movie, *The Hateful Eight*, here on 70 millimeter, scheduled for a Christmas release.) Ralph Lauren has a ranch here, and anyone in town will mention—casually, of course—that they've bumped into Oprah, Daryl Hannah, and Neil Young on the downtown drag. As the saying goes, "You go to Aspen to be seen; Telluride is for hanging out." And despite its tiny size—the box places to stay, eat, and drink while in town. Here are our picks.



New Sheridan Hotel

Photo Courtesy of Ben Reber



## New Sheridan Hotel

Named after a highly decorated Yankee general, the red brick, green shuttered New Sheridan Hotel actually isn't: After the upper floors of the original 1891 wooden Sheridan Hotel burned down in 1894, it was rebuilt in brick and reopened in 1895 under its current moniker. Many of the original 19th-century features remain, and if you can't score one of the 26 rooms, which come in six different styles, the downstairs dining rooms and bar are fun spots to linger. The former ladies' waiting room—now called the American Room—features the original wood floor and ceiling, and sparkling crystal chandeliers. Après ski, much of the town can be found, at one time or another, sitting up to the original 28-foot darkwood bar, hand-carved in Austria and still fitted with tilted mirrors. Back then, patrons kept an eye on their gunslinging associates in the reflection. Today, light beamed back from original filigree oil lanterns adds a cozy depth to the room.



FREE GIFT

Subscribe now and  
get a free 2016  
Vogue calendar

SUBSCRIBE



221 South Oak

Photo: Gourmia of 221 South Oak



### 221 South Oak

Chef and owner Eliza Gavin, known about town for her quirky personality and for competing in season 10 of *Top Chef*, serves up home-style comforts in spades at this indoor-outdoor restaurant. Everything that can be made in-house is—her sausage plate and brown-butter-drizzled ravioli are local favorites. Chef Gavin offers appetizer and wine pairing classes year-round, and if you swing by on a Wednesday, you can indulge in mussels and a martini for \$15.



Alpino Vino

Photo: Gourmia of Alpino Vino



### Alpino Vino

Set at almost 12,000 feet, the only way to nab a table for lunch at America's highest-altitude fine dining restaurant is to ski in and ski out—waiters and kitchen staff have to ski down the mountain each morning to pick up fresh ingredients, and you might see them riding the lift back up, laden with live lobsters for the evening's dinner service. A wood-burning fireplace and sheepskin throws make the deck a popular spot for skiers to stop and warm up; at night, a snow-coach shuttles diners up and down the mountain for Alpino Vino's celebrated five-course prix fixe menu.



Allred's  
Photo: Gaither & Albrecht



### Allred's

Set at the top of the gondola—the only public-transport gondola in the U.S.—Allred's serves contemporary American accompanied by wines recognized by *Wine Spectator* in 2014 with a Best of Award of Excellence. (In September, Telluride Ski Resort's wine director, Andrew Shaffner, was nominated along with five others for *Wine Enthusiast's* annual Sommelier/Wine Director of the Year award.) The food is delicious—don't miss the Colorado braised-beef short rib with raclette and the bourbon-marinated elk strip loin—but it's the cozy dining room, illuminated by antler chandeliers, and the view of lights twinkling in the town below that make it.

### Brown Dog Pizza

Even Telluride's comfort food is something to write home about. Brown Dog's Parma Italia Detroit-style pizza—baked in square, blue steel automotive parts pans to give it the trademark caramelized cheese crust—won first place at the Campionato Mondiale Della Pizza 2013 in Parma, Italy. Owner Jeff Smokevitch was both the first-ever American to win the Pizza Triathlon and the top-scoring American pizza-maker to compete.



Wagner Custom Skis  
Photo: Gaither & Albrecht



### Wagner Custom Skis

Former computer scientist Pete Wagner has been working on producing custom wood and Kevlar skis since 2000. Fifteen years on, he turns out more than 1,000 bespoke pairs a year using only solar and wind energy. A staff of experienced, exacting skiers craft skis to the level they'd expect themselves, and at Wagner, it's all about work-life balance—under the staff contract's "powder clause," if four inches of powder or more gets dumped during the night, work doesn't start until 1:00 p.m.



Tweed

Photos Courtesy of Tweed



### Tweed

Telluride is known for its litany of architects and interior designers, and hot local firm Tweed also runs a downtown corner-store boutique selling eclectic, charming pieces to take home. The kaleidoscopic throws and cushions and framed woolen pompon beanie hats are standouts.

### Two Skirts

Set along Colorado Avenue—known locally as Main Street—chandelier lit, galleria style boutique Two Skirts has been the go-to outfitters for Telluride's style-minded for more than a decade. If you're looking for chic apparel, accessories, and even high-end cosmetics, you'll find it here—merchandisers select the best in denim, cashmere, and knits from brands such as Current/Elliott, See by Chloé, and M Missoni to ensure you're elegantly attired for the elements.

### Swanky Buckle

Up and over in Mountain Village, sleek upscale boutique Swanky Buckle is another great spot to pick up any essentials—or newly discovered must-haves—that your wardrobe might be missing. Think hot pink skull-printed hats, fingerless gloves by Autumn Cashmere, and crocheted cover-ups.

### The Butcher & Baker Cafe

Megan Ossola's and Cinda Simmons's fresh, tasty baked treats are the perfect pre- or post-run pep up. Breakfast is a sumptuous affair, featuring made-to-order cheese sandwiches and lux on handcrafted pastries, bread, bagels, and English muffins. The lunch menu runs the gamut from house roasted turkey with Brie and fig jam and three cheese melts. And if you're hankering for homespun comfort food come dinnertime, look no further—Ossola also does a mean burger, crispy chicken, and brisket plate with fries.

### Hongas

After taking over downtown stalwart Hongas Lotus Petal earlier this year, chef Erich Owen—formerly of international chain Koi and the New Sheridan Hotel's Chop House restaurant—has shortened the name, revamped its interiors, and launched a French-influenced new American menu that riffs on Japanese flavors. Standouts include nigiri-style crispy rice bites with chantonile smoked salmon and lemon crème fraîche, and black cod misozuke with tempura eggplant.



Madeline Hotel and Residences

Photo Courtesy of Heidi Macklin



### **Madeline Hotel and Residences**

A member of The Leading Hotels of the World, Madeline Hotel and Residences is the perfect home away from home—or just home, if you're in the market for a serviced apartment. Rooms and suites are spacious and decorated in warm woods and neutral-toned upholstery. The new second-floor outdoor pool is set overlooking Mountain Village and surrounding slopes, making it the après-ski place to hang out.

### **Snowmobiling**

In the winter, the only way to reach those rugged slopes and deserted mining outposts not accessed by ski lift is by Nordic skiing (really hard) or snowmobiling (really fun). Telluride Outfitters runs tours to Dutton Hot Springs and Alta Lakes observatory, where you'll pass beaver ponds, America's first AC power lines, and Alta ghost town—in 1875, the main 10-room wooden bunkhouse used to house 180 miners over two 12-hour shifts, each paying \$1 a night for the privilege.

### **Telluride Brewing Co**

A short jaunt out of town—if the snow isn't too heavy, you can rent a fat tire bike from family-run outfit [Paragon Outdoors](#) and ride the pristine valley floor trail in 45 minutes—the award-winning Telluride Brewing Co serves premium house-brewed beers crafted from Rocky Mountain snowmelt. You can even have your favorite draught beer crimped and pressed to go in a made-to-order, slope- and river-ready 32-fluid ounce growler. Don't miss a stop at [Telluride's first legal distillery](#), along the same street: If you call ahead, proprietor and self-confessed ski bum Abbott Smith will open up to pour his American-style single-malt whiskey and mix \$5 Bloody Maria and Telluride Mule cocktails, featuring his ultra-smooth house vodka.