

Recreation & Leisure

According to a 2008 survey of Garfield County residents, up to 60 percent said they live in the county for its recreational opportunities. As such, tourism is a high priority for the county, which benefits from both significant summer and winter visitations. Over 15 percent of countywide respondents resided or relocated to Garfield County due to its proximity to ski resorts. While many of the signature recreational amenities of the area have been provided in this section, it is impossible to list them all. For more recreational opportunities, visit the town's chambers, visitor centers or recreation centers.



Sunlight Mountain Resort

One of the great independent ski resorts, Sunlight Mountain Resort is a winter playground with hundreds of acres for skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing. The resort provides a full-day of skiing for about half the cost of the large resorts. With 67 trails and 3 lifts, there are rarely lift lines, and everyone parks for

free. Located just 12 miles south of Glenwood Springs, this gem of a resort is a no hassle, no hype resort and is a certain pleaser with powder stashes that lasts for days. Accessed from the same parking lot, is the Babbish Gulch area that provides miles of cross country skiing and snowshoeing. Amenities include a restaurant, lounge, rental and retail shop, ski school, children's center, and snowmobile tours.



Rio Grande, Glenwood Canyon, and Crystal River Bike Trails

For biking enthusiasts, pedaling from Aspen to Glenwood Springs is one of the best things to do while visiting Garfield County. The 44 miles of continuous multi-use trail features many access points, so one can pick the ride that is the right length for either a weekend or lunch-hour ride. The trail is a Rails-to-Trails project and was developed along the old Rio Grande railway corridor. It has an easy grade up and down the valley.

The Crystal River Trail is a spur trail that connects in the town of Carbondale to the Rio Grande Trail. The trail has a gentle grade and follows State Highway 133 south from Carbondale for about five miles.

The Glenwood Canyon trail is a renowned biking trail as well. It is a popular thoroughfare through the narrow gorge of Glenwood Canyon and meanders alongside the Colorado River for 18 miles between Glenwood Springs and Dotsero. For those that enjoy using a paved trail, these trails are not to be missed.

Flattops Wilderness Area

The Flat Tops Wilderness Area is the second largest U.S. Wilderness Area in Colorado. It is 235,214 acres (951.88 km²), with 38,870 acres (157.3 km²) in Routt National Forest and 196,344 acres (794.58 km²) in White River National Forest. It was designated a wilderness area in 1975. Trappers Lake, located in the north of the area, was the lake that inspired Arthur Carhart, a U.S. Forest Service official, to plea for wilderness preservation. This wilderness area is unique. It compares with no other mountain range in the state. There are no tall spires, and no fourteeners are found in the Flat Tops. Rather, it is a massive block of rock pushed upward and planed level, its surface punctured here and there with rare peaks rising a thousand feet above the high plateau.

White River National Forest

Nestled in the heart of the Rocky Mountains, the 2.3 million acre White River National Forest is the top recreation Forest in the nation. Home to world-renowned ski resorts and the birthplace of designated wilderness, the White River has something to offer every outdoor enthusiast. Accessible from every town in Garfield County, the White River National Forest is available for one to enjoy such pleasures as camping, ATV riding, fishing, skiing, rock climbing, or a quiet afternoon reading in the forest.

Gold Medal Fly-Fishing

Garfield County is at the center of five world-class rivers, including the Fryingpan, Roaring Fork, White, Crystal, and the Colorado rivers. Because of this proximity, the City of Glenwood Springs has been named Field & Stream's #1 Top Fishing Town. Anglers of all abilities are successful on these rivers, and can enjoy the day fishing from a bank or by taking a guided float trip. Even if fish are not caught, one cannot help but enjoy the views from either the bank or the boat.

Hanging Lake

There's a good reason this is one of the most popular hikes in the state of Colorado. Geologically speaking, there are few places in the world that can compare to this marvel of Mother Nature. Hanging Lake is a rare example of a lake formed by travertine deposition, where the natural geologic and hydrologic processes continue to operate as they have done throughout the history of the lake. The site is also noteworthy for its thriving hanging garden plant community. Because of these qualities, Hanging Lake was designated a National Natural Landmark by the Secretary of the Interior in 2011. Accessed from I-70 at the Hanging Lake exit, get there early, as the parking lot often fills up!

CARBONDALE

Touted as one of the “Best Towns” according to Outside Magazine and “Top-12 Towns” in the “50 Next Greatest Places to Live and Play” by National Geographic Adventure Magazine, Carbondale is a great base camp for recreation enthusiasts. Whether you are looking for a rad skateboarding park, a scenic drive, a mountaineering adventure or a calming yoga class, you can find your adventure of choice either in or near Carbondale. The town of Carbondale provides a Recreation and Community Center in a 13,500 square foot state-of-the-art facility. Carbondale also maintains an outdoor pool that is open during the summer.

Some of Carbondale’s Top-10 “must dos” are found below; however, a more exhaustive list of Carbondale’s recreational assets can be found by visiting www.carbondale.com/activities-recreation.

Epic Hikes and Bike Trails

Whether one is interested in pavement or dirt, wheels or feet, you can explore Red Hill and Mushroom Rock, the Crown Trails, Thompson Creek, or the Lead King Basin Loop – to name just a few. Stop into one of the local bike shops for the skinny on the latest trail conditions. Don’t forget to spend the day upvalley, too. Aspen and Snowmass are only a quick drive upvalley to some of the best mountain biking in the state (not to mention the not-to-miss road bike to the Maroon Bells). When the ground is still covered with snow in

the winter, or in the midst of spring thaw, head to the desert areas of Fruita, Loma or Moab, Utah, where the trails are world-class and just a short drive away.

West Elk Loop Scenic Byway

Once described as “the closest you can come to a wilderness experience in a passenger car,” this route has a unique combination of geological, historical, recreational, and scenic features. Carbondale is the gateway for this stunning route, which traverses 205 miles of spectacular vistas.



Spectacular Golf Courses

Situated at the foot of the majestic Mount Sopris, River Valley Ranch Golf Club is a 520-acre residential golf and resort community nestled in Colorado’s spectacular Crystal River Valley. The rolling valley floor and banks of the Crystal River unite to create a prime landscape, from which to craft a magnificent mountain golf course. With the natural palette of the valley’s riparian corridors, wetlands, grasses, and rolling topography, River Valley Ranch has been heralded as “the new jewel of the Rockies” by Golf Magazine, which named River Valley Ranch to its prestigious “Top 10 You Can Play” listing. In addition, Golfer Magazine featured this well-known golf club in its recent “Best of America’s New Courses” list.

just above the Crystal River, and framed by beautiful aspens and a backdrop of stunning mountains, giving it an undeniable visual appeal.

Historically speaking, the mill was known as the Sheep Mountain Power House, and was located on the Lost Horse Mill site. Today it is known as “The Crystal Mill”. The mill, constructed in 1893, harnessed the river’s flow to power the air compressor housed inside. The mill closed its operations in 1917. Continuing efforts to preserve it have been aided by the Gunnison and Aspen Historical Societies, residents of Crystal and Marble, and interested individuals caught by the spectacle of the old mill.

Hot Springs

No trip to the mountains is complete without a visit to the hot springs. A few miles south of Carbondale are the geothermal pools at Avalanche Ranch. Just down the road from Avalanche Ranch are the Penny Hot Springs, which sit on the banks of the Crystal River. The historic Glenwood Hot Springs are located right off I-70 in Glenwood Springs. Conclude a weekend of epic adventures by soaking away those sore muscles.

The Crystal Mill

The Crystal Mill is located 6 miles east of Marble, just before the ghost town of Crystal. It is reachable only in the summer and fall months by a rough, one-lane, 4-wheel-drive road. The picturesque Crystal Mill is one of the most photographed sites in Colorado. It’s precariously perched on an outcropping of rock





GLENWOOD SPRINGS

At the confluence of the Colorado and Roaring Fork rivers, the historic resort town of Glenwood Springs is famed for the Glenwood Hot Springs Pool, Glenwood Caverns Adventure Park, Glenwood Canyon, Yampah Hot Springs Vapor Caves, and Sunlight Mountain Resort. Not only can one explore underground caverns, pedal miles of riverfront trails, or paddle the whitewater, they can also sample local produce, shop in unique boutiques, or just focus on relaxation.

Today, Glenwood Springs' attractions draw over a 1.5 million visitors each year. Each season offers something unique. The warm summer months provide endless opportunities to raft, kayak, hike, and bike. While the winter snow attracts skiers, riders, snowshoers, and snowmobilers. Swimming and cave exploration are year-round activities.

Though Glenwood Springs offers a plethora of more traditional recreational pursuits, such as its outstanding community center (gym, climbing wall, aquatic center, fitness classes), it also offers outdoor adventures that are both unusual and unique to the area. For an exhaustive resource of recreational activities visit www.visitglenwood.com.

Hot Springs

Home to two hot springs facilities, including the largest mineral hot springs pool in the world, Glenwood Springs has a deep-rooted heritage in the spa and hospitality business. Visionaries of the late 1800s built an internationally known hot springs resort. Travelers from around the globe soaked in the thermal waters, stayed in luxurious hotels, and explored the wonders of subterranean caves. Originally named Yampa ("big medicine") by the native Utes, early pioneers called it "The Grand Spring." As the world's largest mineral-rich hot springs, it has served visitors for thousands of years and is rich with mythic properties for healing and relaxation. Open year-round, the Glenwood Springs

Hot Springs pool is complemented by a 107-room lodge, water slides, mini-golf, athletic club, and the Spa of the Rockies.

In 2014, owners broke ground on the Iron Mountain Hot Springs and the facility opened in the summer of 2015. The Iron Mountain facility includes a large family pool with fresh chlorinated water and 16 smaller pools that are connected by heated walkways. The smaller pools are filled with natural thermal waters and range in temperatures. Set along the bank of the Colorado River, this facility is quickly becoming a choice location for soaking and relaxation.



Glenwood Whitewater Park

The first whitewater park built anywhere on the entire length of the Colorado River, the Glenwood Springs Whitewater Activity Area ("Whitewater Park") has become a destination for paddling enthusiasts from around the globe. The area's river improvements and the creation of the wave were completed in 2008, to the delight of the local and regional paddling and stand-up surfing communities. Depending on river flows, there is the G-wave and also a "hole" at the feature. It is most popular with park users from May through September. It was selected as the site for the 2009 U.S. Freestyle Kayaking Team Trials, and has been getting rave reviews from paddlers ever since. The site regularly convenes top paddlers who test their skills against the powerful current of this manmade wave.

Stand-Up Paddle Boarding

Though the sport has its origins in Hawaiian surfing traditions, SUPing as its known, is much easier to learn, extremely safe and another great way to play on Glenwood Springs' main waterway, the Colorado River. Much less demanding than surfing, paddle boarding is ideally suited to certain stretches of the Colorado River, including the acclaimed Glenwood Whitewater Park with its innovative standing wave. Stand-up boards are larger and more stable than

surfing longboards, and use a paddle for steering.

Yampah Spa Hot Springs Vapor Caves

One of Glenwood Springs' most unusual attractions is also one of its most historic. The underground vapor-filled caverns at the Yampah Spa and Vapor Caves were originally used by the Ute Indians for both healing and rituals. The Yampah Vapor Caves are one of only a few known natural vapor caves in North America. Deep underground mineral-rich steam from the Yampah spring, the same source that barrels water into the Glenwood Hot Springs Pool, seeps into three subterranean chambers and fills them with hot steam.





Glenwood Springs, Colorado

Voted “America’s Most Fun Small Town,”
— Rand McNally & USA Today Travel

Glenwood Caverns Adventure Park

Home to USA Today’s “One of Top-10 Caves in the World,” and one of seven finalists for U.S. Chamber’s 2015 Small Business of the Year Awards, the Glenwood Adventure Park and Fairy Caves is a not-to-be-missed attraction.

The Adventure Park is a western-themed park, where a scenic tram ride to the top of Iron Mountain begins the day of fun. It comes complete with incredible views of the Roaring Fork and Colorado River valleys, and the mountains beyond. The park features several scream-worthy thrill rides, such as the Cliffhanger Roller Coaster, Giant Canyon Swing, Soaring Eagle Zip Ride, and Alpine Coaster. There are also a variety of other kid-friendly attractions and activities the whole family will love.

No visit to Glenwood Springs would be complete without a tour of the Glenwood Caverns and Historic Fairy Caves. Explore an underground landscape millions of years in the making. Learn about the living cavern that’s home to thousands of formations, including stalactites, stalagmites, soda straws, cave bacon and flowstone. Experience the amazing King’s Row, the most highly decorated cave room in Colorado. Rated “One of the Top 10 Places to Go Underground!” There are two 40-minute walking tours appropriate for most ages that depart throughout the day. No reservations are necessary for the walking tours. Longer “Wild Tours” are available with advance reservations.

Paragliding & Skydiving

High-flying adventures abound in Glenwood Springs. Paragliding, sky diving, and the exhilaration of flight are not only for adrenaline junkies! Adults from all walks of life, kids, older folks, and even girls in dresses have been thrilled by these tandem adventures. There’s no experience required and experienced pilots are there to guide the experience over treetops, rivers, and meadows. Drift on invisible currents and take time to savor the views of the magnificent Roaring Fork Valley spread out like a toy landscape below.

Segway Tours

Glide through downtown Glenwood Springs, and along our river trails aboard a Segway Personal Transporter. The leading-edge mobility technology is not only green, it will have you grinning from ear-to-ear as you maneuver around town. Experienced guides will teach you all you need to know about how to operate your personal transporter. Follow their lead and head to some of Glenwood’s most exciting destinations, including overlooks on Red Mountain with some of the best views of the surrounding mountains and town.

Enjoy ice skating with the whole family at the outdoor, covered, NHL-sized rink at the Glenwood Springs Community Center. Open November through March, this facility is coveted as one of the few covered ice rinks in the area. Winter hockey leagues attract players of all skill levels and from as far away as Grand Junction, Colorado.

Disc Golf

Fans of the Colorado Mountain College Spring Valley Campus disc golf course say it’s one of the best courses anywhere. The best part of playing disc golf at the CMC course is the course itself; it has some of the most jaw-dropping views of Mount Sopris and the Elk Range further to the south.

Established and maintained by Sunlight Mountain Inn and the Roaring Fork Disc Golf Club, the newest disc golf course is at Sunlight Ski Resort. The course features a variety of challenges including tight, tree-lined fairways, long uphill tee shots, and huge downhill drives.



New Castle is western Colorado's best kept secret for mountain living, small town charm, and killer outdoor recreation opportunities. New Castle is proud of its 13 developed parks and well-maintained community center. The parks offer residents and visitors a wide range of recreational and social activities, while there are nearly limitless outdoor recreation options at one's doorstep. <http://www.newcastlecolorado.org/things-to-do>

NEW CASTLE

Lakota Canyon Ranch and Golf Club

Lakota Canyon Ranch and Golf Club opened for play in 2004, offering 18 holes of world-class golf with stunning views of rugged western Colorado canyons and natural terrain. Designed by nationally renowned architect, James Engh, Lakota Canyon provides a rare opportunity to enjoy amazing golf at the doorway of some of Colorado's most breathtaking mountain vistas. Lakota Canyon Ranch and Golf Club is open nine months out of the year. It has been named one of "Colorado's Top Golf Courses," and has earned numerous honors. PGA-certified professionals provide management and instruction for individuals and groups.

Four-Wheeling to the Clinetop

New Castle is the gateway to the Flat Tops. One of the most spectacular drives is the four-wheel-drive road to Clinetop Mesa. The one-lane Clinetop Road has many sharp switchbacks, along with opportunities to pull off to admire the views. Near the upper end of the road is the area burned in the fire of 2002. The new growth is testament to the forest recovery process. The road ends on top of the mesa. During the spring mud season the road requires more caution, and the upper half may be blocked by snow long after warm weather has reached lower elevations. In the fall, the road is heavily traveled by hunters, and progress can be considerably impeded. June, July, August and early September are the ideal times to take the drive.

Winter Sports on the Flat Tops

While winter weather in town can be generally mild, there is always plenty of snow just a few miles away. Buford Road (County Road 245) is open all the way to Buford in the summer. In the winter, the road closes at a large parking lot about 17 miles from New Castle. This parking lot accesses both snowshoeing/cross-country

skiing trails, and miles of groomed snowmobiling trails. Well-placed signs point snowmobilers to the west and foot traffic to the east. The snowshoeing trails lead through beautiful stands of aspens and lead to overlooks limited only by the weather conditions.

Horseback Riding

Colorado is horse country. New Castle offers opportunities to learn riding, take guided trail rides, ride in the wilderness, spend a vacation at a ranch with horses, or watch horse shows in an indoor arena. Several local ranches offer arenas for riding lessons, show and special events. Coulter Lake Guest Ranch located in the Flat Tops offers cabins, horseback riding, fishing, and boating, as well as winter recreation activities. The working Porter Ranch in the Alkali Creek Valley just South of New Castle, offers a venue for campers to enjoy horseback riding, fishing, biking, and hiking on thousands of acres.

Camping

Camping opportunities in New Castle range from primitive to luxurious. Elk Creek Campground offers cabins, tent sites and RV sites along beautiful East Elk Creek, with restrooms, showers and laundry facilities. Meadow Lake Campground features 10 campsites, fire grates, trash disposal, and a vault toilet. Meadow Lake is a popular fishing lake, with a boat ramp. Meadow Ridge Campground, located north of Meadow Lake, has 20 campsites, including pull-in, pull-out and pull-through opportunities and wheel chair accessible sites. Spruce Tree Guest Ranch provides charming knotty pine cabins nestled along East Elk Creek. Lastly, there are areas of dispersed camping allowed in both the White River National Forest and on BLM land.





The Town of Silt has 13 developed parks on approximately 13 acres. The town maintains 3.6 miles of trails. With excellent access to public lands, Silt residents and visitors have a variety of outdoor amenities to choose from to enjoy.

Silt River Preserve

In 2009, the town of Silt purchased a 132-acre parcel south of the Colorado River on County Road 346, known as The Silt River Preserve. The town collaborated with Great Outdoors Colorado, the Aspen Valley Land Trust, the Gates Family Foundation, and with other agencies to develop a plan for the property. The preserve is held as a perpetual conservation easement, and is managed as wildlife habitat, open space, and for agricultural purposes. The preserve provides opportunities for naturalist to observe wildlife, birdwatch, and to access the Colorado River.

Three National Forests

White River, Gunnison, and Grand Mesa forests are accessible from the town of Silt. President Theodore Roosevelt is responsible for preserving the lands of all three of these forests. One of the oldest stations, the Cayton Ranger Station, is near Theodore Roosevelt's 1905 hunting camp in present day Grand Mesa National Forest. Visitors can see the one-room school he dedicated, where the German prisoner of war camp was, and visit

other historic sites, or just take pictures of great scenery. Today enjoy, fishing, hunting, camping, picnicking, and spotting wildlife, such as elk, mule deer, mountain lions, black bears, coyotes, foxes, wild turkeys, and pheasants. These, along with scenic photography, are just some of the activities you can enjoy in these forests.

Harvey Gap State Park

Harvey Gap State Park is Silt's backyard playground and is a favorite spot for anglers in winter and summer. Stocked with catfish, largemouth and smallmouth bass, perch, crappie, rainbow trout, tiger muskie and northern pike, there are plenty of options for anglers. Boats with motors of 20 horsepower or less and canoes are welcome. Ice fishing draws anglers to Harvey Gap in the winter. Harvey Gap also offers shaded picnic tables by the water, boating and a swim beach. The 160-acre lake is also ideal for windsurfing and stand-up paddle boarding. Harvey Gap is a day-use area, but overnight camping is available nearby at Rifle Falls State Park and Rifle Gap State Park.

Hiking

New Castle has several in-town trails, and provides easy access to mountain trails. One of the town's unique features is the small mountain which sits in the middle of town. The Mt. Mederis trail, which can be reached from C Avenue, leads across the ridge of the mountain. The Colorow Trail offers a three-mile hike through BLM land north of town pedestrian bridge and Talbott Trail constructed in 2014 provide riverside hiking and biking. Nearby are the trailheads to the East Elk Creek Trail, the Storm King Memorial Trail, the Hadley Gulch Trail and the Cherry Creek Trail. All provide miles of hiking through magnificent wilderness areas with spectacular views. A guide to the trails is available at New Castle Town Hall and on the town website.

Disc Golf

Coal Ridge Park, on the south side of the Colorado River, is home to the Fire Mountain Disc Golf Course.

The 18-hole course is highly-rated by disc golfers, who appreciate its challenging layout, as well as the spectacular river views. Coal Ridge Park is also home to the town's boat ramp for Colorado River access.

Cross-country skiing and snowshoeing

The Buford Road parking lot gives access to a network of snowshoeing and cross country skiing trails. The trails wind through meadows and aspen groves, leading to spectacular outlooks. Turn onto East Elk Creek Road just north of New Castle to enter the White River National Forest. From the parking lot, the trail is unplowed in the winter and provides a great 1 1/4-mile snowshoeing trail to a bridge crossing the creek. Harvey Gap does not maintain cross-country trails, but the entire park is open to skiers all winter. Lakota Canyon Ranch Golf Course is also a great place to cross-country ski and it is open to snowshoers and skiers all winter.



RIFLE

It's no secret why people want to relocate to western Colorado; the quality of life and the surrounding landscape are unmatched. In the heart of the Rocky Mountains, the Colorado River Valley is a mecca for all things outdoors. With eight major alpine ski resorts within an hour's drive, and more than 800,000 acres of back country wilderness in the White River National Forest, western Garfield Colorado residents spend the majority of their free time on their bikes, rafts, kayaks, skis, and climbing ropes.

Rifle and the surrounding area abound with authentic mountain and outdoor activities. From fishing (rivers and lakes, ice fishing and fly-fishing), boating, hunting, golfing, camping, hiking, world-class rock climbing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, horseback riding, mountain biking, spas, museums, bowling, rodeo, and water skiing, one can nearly do it all in Rifle. The city of Rifle has an active parks and recreation department that has offerings for a variety of ages and skill levels. The city also provides a recreation and workout facility as well as the Art Dague pool and slide.

For a list of other activities in Rifle, visit www.riflechamber.com/tourism; in the meantime, here are a few highlights of the area.



Hunting

Rifle welcomes all types of hunters! Duck and goose hunt on the Colorado River, pack in by horse or ATV to some of the best deer, elk, bear, and lion hunting, or bring your dog to kick up a pheasant or grouse from the tall grass. The Rifle Area Chamber of Commerce hosts a Hunters Welcome Center, so hunters from all over the nation that stop in Rifle have the opportunity to visit with representatives from the US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife and many more! Hunters can get information on "where the deer & elk are," hunting tips and tricks, lodging, restaurants and businesses that supply all their hunting gadgets and gear! Hunters receive a warm

welcome in town and can find accommodations and dine at Shooters Grill, where they are "Armed and Delicious!"

The Flat Top range, accessed from New Castle via the Buford Road (CR 245), is an exceptional region for hunters. The White River National Forest is open to hunting for elk, mule deer, wild turkeys, black bear and bighorn sheep. Hunting licenses are available locally as are supplies for hunting trips. There are campgrounds near Meadow Lake, a prime hunting location, and dispersed camping is allowed throughout the forest. Hunting information and regulations are available from Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

Centennial Park

Centennial Park, the crown jewel of Rifle, was conceived in 2005 and completed at the end of 2010. This park consists of historical information, a water play area, sundial, amphitheater, and a large, open-grass field. This park has been the recipient of four prestigious awards: 2011 Starburst Award from Colorado Lottery, 2011 CPRA Columbine Award for Park Design, 2011 Downtown Colorado Inc. Award for Best Downtown Park and 2011 Design Concepts Merit Award for Design. This park has been the venue for many new events in Rifle, including the very successful Centennial Concert Series and Market, as well as a Fall Festival, Tree Lighting Ceremony and many others. The park continues to be an icon of Rifle's history and the hub for today's arts and cultural events.





Rock & Ice Climbing

"Simply put, Rifle Mountain Park is the best limestone sport climbing destination in North America."

— Wolverine Publishing

If you're feeling adventurous, Rifle Mountain Park features world-famous rock-climbing and ice-climbing opportunities. Rifle Mountain Park is a narrow box canyon located just 13 miles north of Rifle. The area serves as one of America's premiere sport-climbing destinations, and has been listed by Colorado.com as the "Five Spots Not to Be Missed!" The 2.5 miles of steep limestone walls that comprise Rifle Mountain Park contain a wealth of routes. Most of the routes are for advanced climbers, but a beginning climber can still find plenty to have fun with. The rock-climbing season runs from mid-April through late October. Rifle Mountain Park contains an unbelievable concentration of standard setting climbing. Known for its overhanging enduro-fests, caves and "meat" walls, it's the ultimate rock climber's paradise! With names like Noble's Wife, Call the Cops, Don't-Point-That-Thing-At-Me, Swamp

Monster, and the Anti-Phil Wall; there are over 100 climbing routes.

Rifle Falls State Park

Rifle Falls was listed as one of the 99 Gorgeous Places in Colorado. On a hot summer day, the mist that drifts from the exhilarating gush of water over 70-foot-high limestone cliffs and the dark caves below them in Rifle Falls State Park are a sublime natural air conditioner. It's home to Colorado's only 80-foot triple waterfall. Explore through small limestone caves. RV and tent camping, wonderful trails. Rifle Falls State Park is also considered the perfect wedding setting.

Rifle Gap State Park

Listed as the number 5 in the Top Colorado Summer Cool Downs, the well-maintained swim beach at Rifle Gap State Park is a great place to enjoy pristine water, as well as extraordinary Rocky Mountain views. Landlubbers can head to the nearby Rifle Falls to take in the lush scenery, savor its misty spray or explore the limestone caves.



PARACHUTE/BATTLEMENT MESA



Battlement Mesa Golf Club

Battlement Mesa Golf Club opened in 1987 and has been ranked one of the “Best courses in America You Can Play” by Golf Digest. The routing takes full advantage of the one-of-a-kind setting: a high plains plateau overlooking the Colorado River. The club offers affordable golf vacations and a welcome relief from the atmosphere found not far “up valley” in Vail and Aspen. www.battlementmesagolf.com.

Battlement Mesa Trails

The Battlement Mesa trails provide an opportunity for pedestrian and recreational activity. Within the community of Battlement Mesa an extensive system of paved trails provide access for pedestrians and bicyclists to ride for miles, and enjoy the beauty of the community. From the Battlement Mesa trailhead, one can ride ATVs and enjoy the fantastic scenery of the ride and the sight of the Battlement Reservoirs. The trailhead also provides access to the active individuals to either hike or bike to the top of the battlements.

Grand Mesa Access

At 10,000 feet, Grand Mesa, the largest flat-top mountain in the world, rises more than a mile above the valley floor. Discover aspen and spruce groves, flowered meadows and over 200 cool clear lakes offering fantastic fishing for rainbow, brook and brown trout. Some lakes have boat launches, of which many can be reached from the highway. For the more adventurous, visit the lakes only accessible by four-wheel drive, foot or horseback. Utes called this the “Home of the Departed Spirits” and they brought hostages here after the 1879 Meeker Massacre. Almost entirely within the Grand Mesa National Forest, Grand Mesa has abundant wildlife, making this a popular area for fall hunting. Elk, deer, moose, and many smaller mammals roam the alpine forest. Drive the Grand Mesa Scenic and Historic Byway and tour the changing aspens in the fall.

Cottonwood Park

Cottonwood Park, is an eight-acre park in which special events are held and the community gathers to enjoy the outdoor amenities of the park. The town’s festivities of Grand Valley Days and Oktoberfest are held here annually. The park can be reserved by the public for parties, reunions, weddings, and parties.

Colorado River

The Colorado River flows calmly between the town of Parachute and Battlement Mesa. The river affords many opportunities for recreation, including, a smooth raft/canoe/kayak ride down the river from Cottonwood Park to the Una Bridge or all the way to De Beque. It is ride that is conducive for the entire family.

Fishing/Wildlife

The lake on the Colorado State Department Fish and Wildlife property near Cottonwood Park on the Colorado River provides recreational fishing for all ages. It is a stocked pond and fish are plentiful. In addition, the property is a wildlife and environment refuge. One can sight many species of birds and other wildlife and wetlands abound.

Grand Valley Recreation Center

Located in the heart of Battlement Mesa, the well-maintained and loved Grand Valley Recreation Center offers fitness and martial arts classes, a weight room, an indoor running track, spa, sauna, cardio area, racquetball and tennis courts, as well as an Olympic-sized pool. The facility also has a caterer’s kitchen, meeting rooms, and a game room. Discounted rates are provided for in-district members, including homeowners, renters, and other full-time residents. The recreation center is open to the public.



“Diverse” is an appropriate description for the range of Garfield County’s cultural amenities, as it spans six municipalities and several geographic regions, each with their own identities and influences. While much of the county proudly retains a rural and western culture that harkens back to its farming and ranching roots, gradual urbanization is altering the cultural landscape. This is being accompanied by an influx of modern telecommunications, performing arts centers, and urban transplants seeking rural lifestyles.

As just a flavor of the diversity offered to residents and visitors to the county, performing arts are drawing larger audiences with performance centers like Thunder River Theater Company in Carbondale, the New Space Theater at the CMC Spring Valley campus, and the recently renovated New Ute Theater in Rifle. The many world-class cultural offerings in Aspen and Vail are easily accessible from most areas of the county. These venues provide community and professional theater, programs on literature, politics, visual arts, and a variety of public educational, civic and cultural activities. Colorado Mountain College provides multiple cultural opportunities to students and the public at its various campuses within Garfield County.

Each community within the county has a variety of cultural amenity offerings, ranging from film to rodeo, and from fairs to historic walking tours. This section highlights only a few of the unique and signature events that help give each community its unique flavor and feel.

Cultural Events

GARFIELD COUNTY

Garfield County Fair and Events Center

The Garfield County Fair and Events Center is located in the heart of Rifle, Colorado. With nearly \$2 million in recent improvements the facility consists of a 225-by-140-foot indoor arena, a 250-by-150 foot outdoor arena, 140 stalls, and three meeting rooms/banquet halls. The facility hosts a wide variety of events throughout the year, including rodeo events, such as team roping, barrel racing, and bull-riding. The facility is also used for many agricultural events, such as 4-H, Future Farmers of America (FFA) and other youth functions and houses the Colorado State University extension office. The facility also hosts other diverse events, such as job fairs and expos, private parties and banquets, and carnivals and concerts.

Garfield County Fair and Rodeo

In 2018, the Garfield County Fair celebrates its 80th year. The fair and rodeo, held yearly in late July to early August, features a family rodeo, PRCA ProRodeo, bull riding, parade, a car show, concert, and a demolition derby. Evenings at the fair are concluded with well-known musicians showcased in the facility’s arena.



CARBONDALE

First Fridays

On the first Friday of each month, experience all things Carbondale, including gallery openings, art walks, business open houses, live music and street performers in historic downtown, at the Third Street Center, and along Highway 133.

Mountain Fair

The Carbondale Mountain Fair began in 1972 with 20 booths showcasing local artists and artisans. Today, the Mountain Fair draws over 145 vendors, poised to bring their unique and diverse homemade wares to town each summer. In addition to vendors, Mountain Fair features non-stop entertainment – both in live music and various forms of performing arts. There is a family-area called “The Oasis,” which provides interactive, creative experiences for children, there is also great food; friendly competitions that run the gamut from pie-baking to wood-splitting, and an amazing spirit. That spirit is best evidenced by the over 300 volunteers who come together to run the fair. Throughout the weekend, over 20,000 people pass through from across the state and all over the country. www.carbondalearts.com.

5Point Film Festival

Known as Colorado’s basecamp for adventure, the town of Carbondale is home to the world-renowned 5Point Film Festival, which takes place every April. For those seeking an adventurous kick-off to spring, 5Point weekend is an inspiring time to spend days outside in the mountains, followed by nights viewing the best of adventure filmmaking. Visitors can live out a 5Point adventure of their own, with biking, hiking, and mountain activity all on Carbondale’s doorstep. The town offers a range of accommodations and gourmet dining, rounding out a perfect adventure weekend, during which life can indeed imitate art or film.

The 5Point film festival takes place at the Carbondale Recreation Center, and across downtown Carbondale venues. The four-day-long program includes inspiring short adventure films, special guests, filmmakers, outdoor industry professionals and athletes from across the globe. Established in 2008, 5Point Film is on a mission to inspire adventure of all kinds; connect generations through shared experience; engage passion with a conscience; and educate through film. 5Point also hosts various film events around the country, and organizes the Dream Project, which is an adventure scholarship program for local high school students.

Potato Day

Potato Day is the longest-standing annual community event in Carbondale! Since 1909, local farming and ranching families have kept local traditions alive with a parade, BBQ, potato sack races, and other fun activities that take place in Sopris Park.

Carbondale Wild West Rodeo Season

Billed as “The place to be on Thursday Nights” the Carbondale Wild West Rodeo Association presents a 12-week summer season of authentic rodeo, featuring competitors from across the state and as far away as Texas. Each week, more than 150 contestants compete for the coveted end-of-the-year belt buckle, and weekly prize of \$2,000. The rodeo takes place every Thursday, rain or shine, and is held at the Gus Darien Arena. www.carbondalerodeo.com

New Powers Art Center: a World-Class Arts Center

The Powers Art Center offers a world-class gallery facility set against the backdrop of Mt Sopris. The gallery, which opened doors in 2014, is now open to the public Monday through Thursday, and offers free admission. The center’s permanent exhibits showcase Jasper Johns limited edition works on paper, and with over 300 works in the collection, the Art Center is able to feature 100 works in each exhibition. The Powers Art Center was created in memory of the life of John G. Powers as a museum and study center. The center is a gift to the community and visitors to share Power’s passion and study “Pop Art” through the lens of Jasper Johns. The galleries are supplemented by a library and conference room to facilitate contemplative enjoyment and research of the works. The Powers Art Center is located on a ranch setting near Carbondale. The building itself is a new 15,000-square-foot facility, with state-of-the-art solar electric generation and geothermal heating and cooling, designed by Japanese architect Hiroshi Nanamori. www.powersartcenter.org

True Nature Healing Arts

True Nature Healing Arts is a new sanctuary for health and wellness, featuring one of the only reflexology pathways in the country. The center offers daily yoga and meditation classes. The petit spa offers a selection of wellness massages, body treatments, facials and holistic treatments. The sanctuary’s design incorporates Feng Shui principles, eco-friendly materials, solar panels, local artisan crafts and architectural antiquities from Afghanistan, India, Pakistan and Morocco – all creating spaces that transcend time. The High Prana food kitchen serves the vegetarian, paleo, and raw food communities, featuring items such as medicinal loose-leaf teas, coffee, chai, cold-pressed juices, gourmet meals, soups, snacks, and special desserts just to name a few. www.truenaturehealingarts.com.