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August 20, 2008

# Mountain Greenery

Outdoor Fun in Colorado



Never mind your après-ski Aspen hijinks. (We're powerless at The Little Nell, too.) It's always playtime outside in Colorado.

### Summer

Extreme sporters are going crazy for whitewater sledging, the New Zealand import that combines rafting, swimming, and surfing. Aspen is the only place in the U.S. where you can do it. But can your adrenaline handle it?

Sand dunes at 8,000 feet above sea level? Oh, yeah. A deep sea once covered the landscape at Great Sand Dunes National Park in the Southern Rockies. Climb centuries-old sediment in the state's newest park and be one with the ages.

### Fall

So Colorado isn't known for its wine. Yet. High altitude and an extremely dry climate yield lots of Euro-style vino. Hit the Wine Trail and taste for yourself at more than 60 wineries in five wine regions.



Even with gas prices at a premium, Colorado's scenic and historic byways make for outstanding road tripping. Vermont's got nothing on the yellow, orange, and red leaves glowing in the Rockies.



### Winter

Ouray's ice walls soar up to 100 feet high around Uncompahgre Gorge, making it a singular — and spectacular — setting. In January, the world's best ice climbers converge for the Ouray Ice Festival.

At two blocks long, Hot Springs Lodge & Pool in Glenwood Springs is the largest mineral hot springs pool in the world. Who cares how cold it is outside?

### Spring

For a rail good time, hop aboard Pikes Peak Cog Railway, the highest train in the country. When you hit the 14,110-foot summit, you'll know why this place inspired "America the Beautiful."



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In the kitchen

**DailyCandy Polls**

**On what for your pet are you likely to splurge?**

- A. Clothes and accessories. (He gets cold!)
- B. Toys to keep him busy while I watch Lost.
- C. Healthier, better tasting chow.

### People who like this also like...

- Ice Capades  
Fort Dupont Ice Arena  
Washington, D.C.
- Crystal Ball

If you (ahem) dig archeology, swing through [Mesa Verde National Park](#) for Cliff Palace and other cliff dwellings and 700 years of Puebloan history.



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