

THE DENVER POST

Family-friendly Colorado getaways where you can unplug and relax

Turn off the electronics and focus on what's important in Silverton, Gunnison, Palisade and more

By SARAH KUTA | Special to The Denver Post

PUBLISHED: February 28, 2023 at 6:00 a.m. | UPDATED: February 28, 2023 at 7:29 a.m.

At the end of a long day of Zoom meetings, Slack and text messages, and catchy TikTok songs stuck in your head, you may be tempted to gather all of your electronic devices and toss them in the trash. Vanquishing screen time need not be so dramatic.

Unplugging from technology can be a battle — especially for teens and tweens — but with a little foresight and planning it's possible to enjoy a getaway that's devoid of digital distractions. It's even easier to do in Colorado than elsewhere; our abundant wilderness is the perfect antidote to all those addictive devices.

So before you unplug the Wi-Fi, consider getting away for a few tech-free days in one of these Colorado destinations.

Silverton

Silverton's remoteness is part of its appeal. You'll feel so far removed from your day-to-day routine that you'll easily break the habit of constantly refreshing your inbox or mindlessly scrolling Reels on Instagram. The towering San Juan Mountains are a low-tech playground for your family or friends group. Zip around the region's many snowmobiling trails, which are groomed by the [Silverton Snowmobile Club](#). Try cross-country skiing, ice skating, sledding, tubing and skiing at [Kendall Mountain Ski Area](#). If your crew includes expert skiers, test your mettle on the advanced, lift-accessible backcountry terrain at [Silverton Mountain Ski Area, which you can rent out for yourself](#).

The [bunk bed suites at the Wyman Hotel](#) are ideal for families and small groups of friends. They offer a king bed with twin extra-long bunks lofted above. The boutique hotel is cozy, with just 15 quest rooms, and intentionally low-tech: You won't find TVs in the rooms or in the main lounge, which means there's more time for chatting and playing board games. Larger groups can book the hostel-inspired bunk room, which includes all the luxurious amenities offered throughout the rest of the hotel. (Rooms from \$210; bunks, \$75.)



The Wyman Hotel in Silverton is cozy, with just 15 quest rooms, and intentionally low-tech: You won't find TVs in the rooms or in the main lounge, which means there's more time for chatting and playing board games. The hotel offers bunk rooms for groups, which include all the luxurious amenities offered throughout the rest of the hotel. (Bridget Burnett, provided by The Wyman Hotel)



Scarp Ridge Lodge is an old saloon that's been transformed into a seriously cushy vacation rental in downtown Crested Butte. (Provided by Eleven Experience)

Crested Butte and Gunnison

The [snow and terrain at Crested Butte Mountain Resort](#) are reason enough to make the four-hour trek from the Front Range, but the Gunnison Valley offers multiple activities for families seeking time together. Wander Crested Butte's charming downtown, go ice fishing in Gunnison, ride snowmobiles near Almont and enjoy serene cross-country skiing and snowshoeing throughout the valley.

There are plenty of places to stay, but the [Scarp Ridge Lodge](#), an old saloon that's been transformed into a seriously cushy vacation rental in downtown Crested Butte, is worth a serious look. With five king rooms and a bunk room — complete with seven bunk beds — there's room for everyone to spread out and unwind. Who needs YouTube when you have an indoor saltwater pool, steam room, sauna and indoor and outdoor hot tubs to enjoy? In the morning, after a chef-prepared breakfast, hop into a custom-designed snowcat and follow experienced guides through more than 1,000 acres of powder near Irwin that are open exclusively to the lodge's guests.

For a more off-the-beaten path stay, book a few nights at [Taylor River Lodge](#) in Almont. This cozy, remote lodge is the perfect place to catch up on reading, experience the rejuvenating bliss of snowshoeing through the woods, take a cooking class or sip cocoa by the fireplace. Be prepared, because you never know when [Crested Butte will get an infamous snow dump](#). (Rates vary for these properties, but expect to pay up to \$1,000 a day, which includes food and most activities.)



Taylor River Lodge in Almont is designed to promote cozying up with a good book or pulling out the Uno deck. (Provided by Eleven Experience)



Friends play chess and cornhole and sit around the fire pit outside The Eddy Hotel & Taproom in Golden.
(Hyoung Chang/The Denver Post)

Golden

If you're short on time but still need a getaway, consider a long weekend in Golden. Feel the winter sun on your face while snowshoeing or fat-tire biking in the foothills, then take a trip back in time at the [American Mountaineering Museum](#), the Colorado Railroad Museum (which offers [Polar Express train rides](#)) or the [Golden History Museum](#) (your kids will have so much fun they won't realize they're learning something ... on vacation).

Kick back at [The Eddy Hotel & Taproom](#), which offers a two-bedroom corner suite with a king bed, queen bed, twin bunk and sofa sleeper (no struggles over who has to share a bed). The junior sweet features two queen beds topped by two lofted twin bunks — an ideal setup for telling stories late into the night. (From about \$155.)



The new Limelight Snowmass hotel features a new restaurant with daily specials and live music, a children's game area, pet-friendly rooms and a continental breakfast. (Jeremy Swanson, provided by Limelight Snowmass)

Aspen and Snowmass

Take a break from screens and immerse yourself in arts and culture in the Roaring Fork Valley. [Aspen's new Resnick Center for Herbert Bayer Studies](#), which opened this summer on the grounds of the Aspen Institute, explores the life and legacy of the prolific Bauhaus artist who helped shape the city's post-war revitalization. Come in from the cold and admire the artwork at Aspen's 20 or so private galleries, then venture to Snowmass for a hands-on workshop or lecture at [Anderson Ranch Arts Center](#) (which is also home to a beautiful sculpture garden).

For a splurge, stay at the [Aspen Street Lodge](#), a thoughtfully designed property that seamlessly blends the privacy of a vacation rental with all the amenities of a hotel. Located downtown, the lodge can accommodate up to 32 guests and features a rooftop heated pool and hot tub, an outdoor grill and pizza oven, a game room and more than 3,000 square feet of outdoor terraces offering views of the mountains and the city's charming neighborhoods. A dedicated experience manager can create a custom itinerary for your family, with options ranging from paragliding to a private abstract painting lesson.

Groups also feel right at home at the ideally situated [Limelight hotels](#) in both Aspen and Snowmass. Decorated with bold colors and fun, modern decor, the two sister properties offer casual, family-friendly amenities like a hearty breakfast buffet, gear rentals, outdoor pools and hot tubs, shuttles, and cozy lounges for warming up after a day on the slopes. High prices in Aspen put you off? [New restaurants in Snowmass](#) provide plenty of reasons to stay put after dark. (From about \$240.)



Patio area at the Maverick Hotel in Grand Junction. (Provided by Maverick Hotel)

Grand Junction and Palisade

Unlike many Colorado destinations Grand Junction doesn't tend to draw crowds when the temperature drops, but the region still offers plenty of winter activities that can help you recharge your batteries. Ski or snowboard at [Powderhorn Mountain Resort](#), explore the cross-country ski and snowshoe trails atop the Grand Mesa, zoom around on snowmobiles, glide on ice skates or soak up the region's quiet serenity while ice fishing. The area maintains a blissfully relaxed, laid-back vibe year-round.

[Hotel Maverick](#), located on the scenic campus of Colorado Mesa University, welcomes groups and families. School-themed decor is everywhere, from the historic newspaper clippings on the walls to the cocktails developed by the university's trustees on the menu at Devil's Kitchen, the hotel's modern fourth-floor restaurant offering views of the Grand Valley. (From about \$140.)

In neighboring Palisade, the peach trees and grape vines may be dormant, but adults can still sip Colorado wines in the region's many cozy tasting rooms, [sample spirits are local distilleries](#), and [enjoy sunny winter hiking and biking](#). Book a block of rooms at [Spoke and Vine](#), a renovated roadside motel with a modern amenities and nostalgic charm. (From about \$130.)



A group of kids slide down the tubing hill at Snow Mountain Ranch. (Provided by YMCA of the Rockies)

Granby

With rustic private cabins and spacious lodge rooms, [Snow Mountain Ranch](#) is ideal for groups and multi-generational families who want to ditch the screens and immerse themselves in nature. Part of the YMCA of the Rockies, this 5,000-acre property in Grand County offers a wide range of winter activities for every skill and comfort level, [including cross-country skiing, snowshoeing](#) and dog sledding. This set-up gives families and groups lots of flexibility: One crew may decide to go ice skating while another takes a skijoring lesson or learns a new craft, then everyone can meet up later and share stories from the day's outings. (From about \$110.)

Though you could spend a week at Snow Mountain Ranch and not get bored, there are also ample activities to check out in Granby, Tabernash, Fraser and Winter Park. Skiers and snowboarders can hit the slopes at [Winter Park Resort](#), voted best ski area in the U.S. by USA Today readers last year, and [Granby Ranch](#), while thrill-seekers may want to explore the area's 1,000 miles of snowmobile trails. [Snowshoeing](#), ice fishing, sledding, [tubing](#), sleigh rides, fat biking, [wildlife spotting](#) and tons of other cold-weather adventures are great for reconnecting IRL (in real life, not via a screen).



A cabin at YMCA of the Rockies' Snow Mountain Ranch in Granby. (Provided by YMCA of the Rockies)

[Click here to subscribe to the Denver Post.](#)