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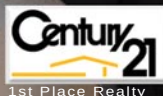
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Good Food, Naturally

Nature is the heart of Boise. The postcard-perfect Boise River, wild-life trails, and the lush Greenbelt are some of the city's most popular attractions. It's no surprise, then, that Boise's restaurants center on the same natural ideal. Fresh ingredients and organic dishes abound in the city's eateries. From swanky hors d'oeuvres and cocktails to eclectic comfort food and desserts, Boise offers it all—with a view.

Andrae's

Perfect for a romantic date or special occasion, Andrae's offers intimacy and elegance. The French restaurant's private Wine Cellar Room is ideal for a cozy dinner for eight, and its main dining room is equally opulent. Start with a look at the 15-page wine list, then try the quail stuffed with duck confit, served on a bed of risotto. End the night with the Warm Chocolate Brioche. It's a treat rich enough for Versailles. 816 West Bannock Street; Tel: 208-385-0707; andraesboise.com

Cazba

For more than 15 years, this Greek and

Mediterranean eatery has been indulging customers with its tender shish kabobs, fresh wraps, and flavorful gyros. The menu is extensive and offers a wide range of specialties, including the popular lamb shish kabob. A skewer full of charbroiled marinated lamb combines perfectly with juicy tomatoes, red onions, mushrooms, bell peppers, and zucchini. 211 North Eighth Street; Tel: 208-381-0222; cazba.com

Chandler's Steakhouse

At some hotel restaurants, the chief virtue is proximity. Not at Chandler's, the steakhouse inside Hotel 43. The steaks and seafood—not

to mention the Idaho baked potatoes—make this a dining destination no matter where you're coming from. To start the evening off right, begin with a drink in the adjoining Martini Bar. 981 Grove Street (in Hotel 43); Tel: 208-383-4300; hotel43.com/dining.asp

Cottonwood Grille

Overlooking the serene Boise River, this restaurant owes its charmingly rustic feel to the alderwood-booth seating and a towering stone hearth in the dining room. Try the Salmon in a Cage, a farm-raised salmon wrapped in a crispy Idaho potato. On a warm night, sit on the outdoor patio and absorb the waterfront's serenity, surrounded by native plants, blooming flowers, and of course, cottonwood trees. 913 West River Street; Tel: 208-333-9800; cottonwoodgrille.com

Flying Pie Pizzeria

Hailed for its trademark "Whirled Famous Pizza," the Flying Pie offers its share of flaky crusts, fresh meats, and savory vegetables. However, it's the fun-loving waitstaff and kid-friendly atmosphere that make it unforgettable. Stop by and take a look at Flora the Giant Foil Ball, a 254-pound (and growing) beauty made of aluminum foil. Triple Pie Ale is the perfect

way to cool off your taste buds after the Zambini, a spicy sourdough pizza with jalapeños and Italian sausage. 6508 Fairview Avenue; Tel: 208-345-0000; flyingpie.com

The Milky Way

Husband and wife chef team Mitchell and Andrea Maricich have more than 30 years of combined culinary experience—and it shows. The MilkyWay serves up comfort food prepared with locally grown organic produce to create a meal that's both tasty and fresh. Try the grilled hanger steak, a signature dish served with roasted garlic "mashers" and housemade Milky barbecue sauce. 205 Tenth Street; Tel: 208-343-4334; milkywayboise.com

Moon's Kitchen

Reminiscent of early drugstores, Moon's Kitchen serves up frothy, creamy milkshakes from its soda fountain in unique flavors such as root beer spin and caramel. Browse through the quirky items in the restaurant's gift shop, then enjoy a warm, hearty meal at the grill. A sizzling lumberjack hotcake or a delightfully messy chili cheeseburger topped with shredded cheese and onions is sure to satisfy. 815 West Bannock Street; Tel: 208-385-0472; moonskitchen.com

The Red Feather Lounge

A trendy, chic atmosphere makes this lounge a hot spot. Its three levels offer everything from quiet, private booths to a bar with one of Idaho's best wine selections. The bar serves up classic cocktails with a contemporary twist, such as the cucumber ginger mojito. The hand-cut French fries are a favorite, cooked in peanut oil and sprinkled with sea salt. 246 North Eighth Street; Tel: 208-429-6340; redfeatherlounge.com

TableRock BrewPub & Grill

The microbrews here have been voted "Boise's Best Beer" seven years in a row. Combining old-world processes with modern technology and local ingredients, TableRock finds the perfect blend. Bangers and Mashers are a pub fare staple, served with three English sausages, fluffy mashed potatoes, and spicy stone-ground mustard. Wash them down with T.D.'s Nut Brown Ale, a favorite toffee-flavored brew. 705 Fulton Street; Tel: 208-342-0944; tablerockbrewpub.com

—Compiled by Courtney Bowman



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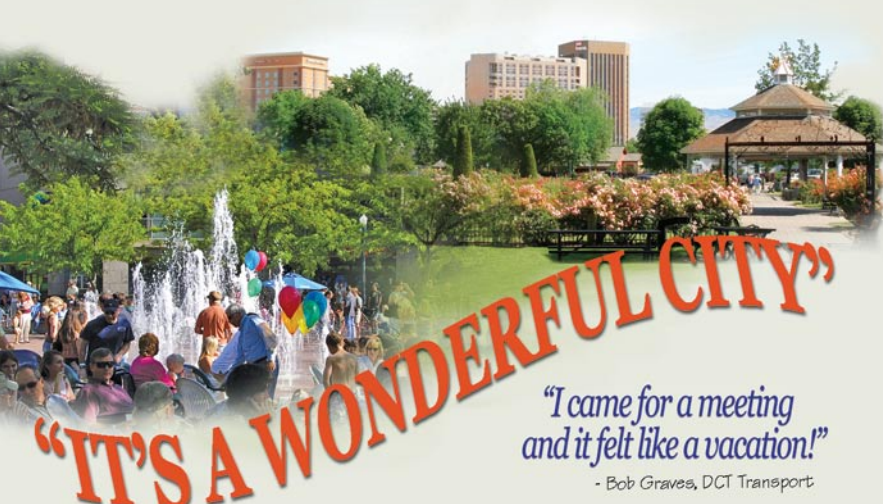
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Havens and Hideaways

Fall into fresh linens. Wake up to hot coffee and a spectacular view of Boise's coniferous skyline. Relive your honeymoon with wine and a winding stair-case. Whatever the occasion, Boise has the accommodations to cater to every need and taste.

The Anniversary Inn

Beside Boise's scenic Ann Morrison Park lies a treasure chest of adventure. Each of the inn's 41 suites is decorated in a different theme, from the romantic Palace to the kid-friendly Enchanted Forest. Indulge your inner rebel in the Biker Road House suite, complete with a soft-tail Harley and round leather bed. Or live like the Montagues and Capulets in the two-story Romeo and Juliet suite. The white winding staircase with scarlet carpet ends atop a romantic balcony. 1575 South Lusk Avenue; Tel: 208-387-4900; anniversaryinn.com

The Grove Hotel

Connected to the Qwest Arena of Idaho, the Grove boasts palpable energy. Perfect for the business traveler looking to experience Boise's nightlife, the hotel combines functionality with luxury. Lavish condos offer original artwork, Jacuzzi bathtubs, and floor-to-ceiling windows to take in Boise's breathtaking views. When the office calls, the 24-hour business center makes the transition from play to work a little easier. 245 South Capitol Boulevard; Tel: 208-333-8000; grovehotelboise.com

Hotel 43

One of Boise's newest luxury boutique hotels, Hotel 43 caters to both the business and leisure traveler. Formerly the Statehouse Inn, it boasts meeting rooms and a banquet facility perfect for a private reception or conference. Its elegant guestrooms and seven suites include plush, oversized furnishings and a morning newspaper delivered right to the door.



Stop in downstairs at Chandler's Steakhouse and try an authentic Idaho potato with all the toppings. 981 Grove Street; Tel: 208-342-4622; hotel43.com

Idaho Heritage Inn

Private covered verandas, bright sunrooms, and rich oak furniture make this inn a quaint getaway. The Governor's Suite is a favorite, with a private sunporch and elegant oriental carpets. Wake up to complimentary breakfasts of buttery French toast stuffed with apricot cream cheese or a sweet-apple skillet cake. Two additional guest rooms in the refurbished 1912 Flamingo Fire Station offer all the charm and simplicity of the inn. 109 West Idaho Street; Tel: 208-342-8066; idheritageinn.com

J.J Shaw House

A proprietor built this Queen Anne Victorian house for his family in 1907, and it still maintains the ornate architecture and detail of the time. Walk past the front columns and through the French doors to step into an old-world gem. Take in the bed and breakfast's lush gardens through the oversized windows of Muriel's Room, or soak in an antique clawfoot tub in Gertrude's Chamber. Want more privacy? Stroll down the tree-lined path to the



Hotel 43's lobby (left) is dominated by stunning chandeliers created by an Israeli artist; each room at the Anniversary Inn offers a different getaway.

guest cottage, where a king-size bed and two skylights await—perfect for admiring the stars. 1411 West Franklin Street; Tel: 208-344-8899; jjshaw.com

The Modern Hotel

Just opened this summer, The Modern puts a fresh spin on the midcentury travel lodge. Rooms are furnished in a tastefully mod style and kept up to date with the best of today's technology, such as iPod docks and gentle rainshowers. As new as it is, the hotel has links to Boise's past: It takes its name from the Basque boardinghouse run by co-owner Elizabeth Tullis' grandmother in the 1940s. 1314 West Grove Street; Tel: 208-424-8244; themodernhotel.com

Owyhee Plaza Hotel

Named for Idaho's Owyhee Mountain Range, this hotel has been a landmark in downtown Boise since 1910. Here, you can get a shoeshine, stop by the in-house barber salon for a trim, then head off to your conference in the hotel's boardroom. Order your favorite cocktail and take in the live weekend jazz at the hotel's Gamekeeper Lounge to bring a busy week to a close. 1109 Main Street; Tel: 208-343-4611; owyheeplaza.com

—Compiled by Courtney Bowman

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parting glance

Insight **Boise**



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A first-time visitor reflects on the mountains that shape a city.

As a native Midwesterner, I'm used to things being flat. What we call hills are mere swells, and the roads run straight on for days, with no elevation to turn the surveyors from their paths.

So I wasn't quite prepared for the mountains surrounding Boise. As I drove down Vista Avenue toward the heart of the city, there they were, big as life: sturdy, gray peaks, dotted with trees and just a touch of snow.

The mountains have made Boise what it is: They held the mines that drew the first residents; they created a valley that protected the young city. But they've also made the city's residents who they are.

The mountains separate the Boise Valley from the rest of the state, making its inhabitants resilient and self-reliant. "It's the continuation of the pioneer spirit," one resident told me.

You can see the mountains from just about anywhere in the Boise Valley. Linger over breakfast alfresco in a downtown cafe, driving through suburban Meridian and Eagle, walking through Ann Morrison Park, I had only to look up to be reminded that I was in a city unafraid to stand on its own.

I'll return to Boise, to spend some more time exploring the mountains that have given the city its freshness, its tang. And I'll remember that the pioneer spirit lives on. —*Marian Cowhig*