



From left to right: Saddleback Ranch, Freshies, F.M. Light & Sons, Grizzle-T Dog Sledding

true steamboat springs

Heads covered in ski toques or Stetsons mingle on Main Street, while at the ski resort, kids strive to out-schuss the local Olympians: Steamboat claims 84 and counting, more than anyplace else in the country.

FOOD FIX Small, candlelit dining rooms and tables tucked into secluded nooks make **Café Diva** a date-night favorite. Follow pork belly sandwiches with the elk tenderloin (1855 *Ski Time Sq.*, 970-871-0508).

Freshies' breakfasts include cherry-granola pancakes and kaleidoscopic veggie scrambles. Lunch means grass-fed beef burgers and Steamboat's best salads (595 *S Lincoln Ave.*, 970-879-8099).

A 122-year-old barn is the setting for sizzling steaks

at the **Ore House at the Pine Grove** (1465 *Pine Grove Rd.*, 970-879-1190).

NIGHT OUT **Saddleback Ranch** hosts sleigh rides to Double Dollar Lodge, where hot cocoa welcomes arrivals and ranch dinners conclude with calf-roping lessons (37350 *RCR 179*, 970-879-3711).

The **Tugboat** has been rocking since 1972 and still stages Steamboat's loudest—and often rowdiest—live music scene (1860 *Ski Time Sq.*, 970-879-7070).

Sleek, modern décor distinguishes **Sweetwater Grill** from the town's Western vibe. Its fire pits along the Yampa River lure revelers outdoors year-round (811 *Yampa St.*, 970-879-9500).

DON'T MISS The Twilight ski run epitomizes **Steamboat Ski Resort's** legendary tree skiing: Here, snow-encrusted

aspens serve as slalom-poles through the region's legendary "champagne powder" (970-879-6111).

Visit **F.M. Light & Sons**, a Western-wear shop founded in 1905 that specializes in dapper cowboy duds (830 *Lincoln Ave.*, 970-879-1822).

STONE'S THROW Hop on a sled and drive your own dog team with **Grizzle-T Dog Sledding** along a scenic 12.5-mile circuit through ranch country (HC 66 Box 39, 970-870-1782).

Rent Nordic skis or snowshoes (*Ski Haus*, 1457 *Pine Grove Rd.*, 970-879-0385) and head to Rabbit Ears Pass for a 3.7-mile trek along the **1A West Summit Loop** that winds through silent pines and open meadows.

THREAD COUNT **The Porches** comprises a cluster of sprawling luxury homes

available to rent that come furnished Western-style, with leather, pony-hide, log furniture and stone fireplaces (1291 *Turning Leaf Ct.*, 866-992-0600).

Overlook the dated décor at **The Ptarmigan Inn** and relish its ski-in, ski-out location and reasonable rates—it's the best bargain in the base village (2304 *Après Ski Way*, 800-538-7519).

A \$20 million renovation added luxury villas, sleek lobby furniture and plush beds to **The Sheraton Steamboat Resort**, located just steps away from the gondola (2200 *Village Inn Ct.*, 970-879-2220). 

A 10-year resident of *Ski Town U.S.A.*, **Kelly Bastone** writes for *Sunset*, *Backpacker*, *National Parks* and *The New York Times*.