

COOL RETREATS F

8 places to enjoy great summertime

Summer brings long days, concerts under the stars, farmers markets, picnics and hiking — and, in many areas, uncomfortably hot temperatures that can linger into fall.

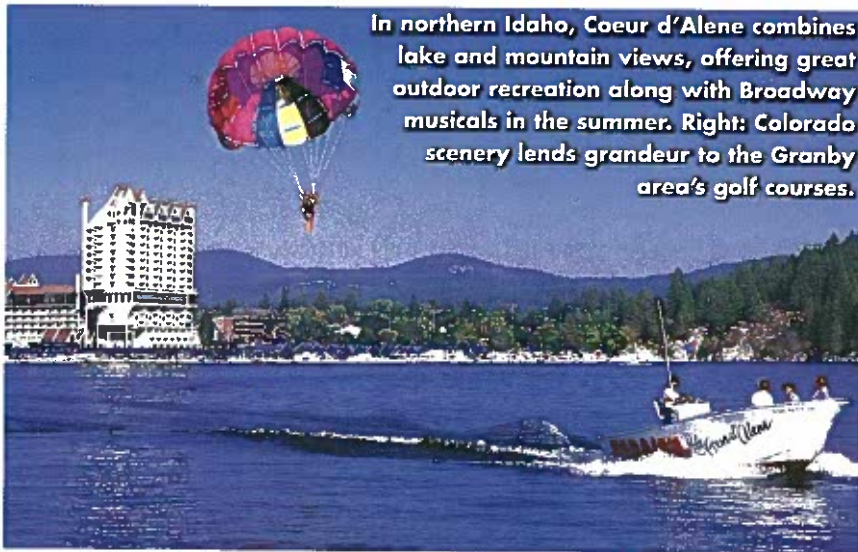
If you want summer's fun, but not

and on lakes and rivers.

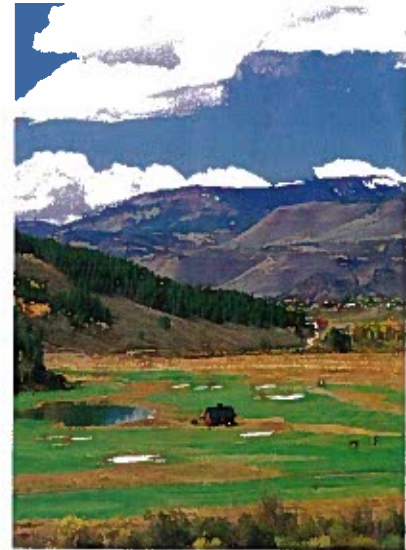
Located 85 miles northwest of Denver, Granby is close to the Arapaho National Recreation Area and National Forest. More recreational space, such as Winter Park, is within a 20-mile radius.

Winter Park Resort and a marina and beach club on Lake Granby. Information: (866) 866-1121.

Though it's still quite small, at 1,668 residents, Granby has grown more than 70 percent since 1990. That growth is



In northern Idaho, Coeur d'Alene combines lake and mountain views, offering great outdoor recreation along with Broadway musicals in the summer. Right: Colorado scenery lends grandeur to the Granby area's golf courses.



the sizzling heat, look to places that promise a cool retreat. Their lake-borne breezes, fresh mountain air, shaded forests or rushing streams are refreshing, whether you are biking a water-front trail or picnicking in the dappled shade.

Here are eight destinations with abundant outdoor activities and a summertime climate in which to enjoy them. And what begins as a summer home just might become a full-time residence in retirement as golf and hiking give way to winter sports.

GRANBY, COLORADO

Granby Mayor Jynnifer Pierro says activities and affordability are Granby's key attractions for retirees. "We have just about anything you'd want to do, year-round. Golf has added another summer component," she says. There's abundant outdoor recreation at ski areas, along mountain and forest trails

"Granby is one of the most affordable resort communities in Colorado," Pierro says. "Both lots and houses are affordable. Although skiing is on a smaller scale, our lift tickets are much less expensive than in other areas."

Two developments include club amenities. Options at Granby Ranch on mountain, golf or trailside locations include energy-efficient townhomes, single-family homes, furnished and unfurnished condos, and home sites. Furnished condos at Base Camp One begin at \$299,000. Granby Ranch's 5,000 acres include the SolVista Basin ski area, hiking trails and a river camp for fly-fishing enthusiasts. It is also home to the par-72 Headwaters Golf Course. Information: (888) 850-4615.

The 450-acre Grand Elk Ranch & Club has single-family homes and home sites. Grand Elk's amenities include an 18-hole Craig Stadler golf course, a private club at the base of

bringing amenities such as a new grocery store, new restaurants, even a second traffic signal. A 10-acre medical campus in Granby Ranch is in the planning stage. The town sits in a valley at an elevation of 7,935 feet.

Even though she has seen a tremendous amount of change, Pierro says Granby has retained its strong sense of community. "We're a pretty tight-knit town. The lifestyle can be relaxed to busy, take your pick," she says.

Population: 1,668 in town, 13,781 in Grand County.

Climate: High Low

January 27 1

July 74 42

Cost of living: Above average

Housing cost: The average sales price of homes in the Granby area was \$376,563 for the second quarter of 2009, according to the Grand County Board of Realtors.

Information: Greater Granby Area Chamber of Commerce, (800) 325-1661

DR SEASONAL FUN

ring

By Mary Ann Hemphill

or www.granbychamber.com.

HELENA, MONTANA

After his 2007 move from Arizona to Helena, Michael May quickly discovered the two things he likes best about

buildings, such as the newly restored state capitol. Last Chance Gulch, the original gold discovery site, is now an appealing outdoor area of historic sites and a diverse mix of shops, coffee-houses and restaurants.

Population: 28,726

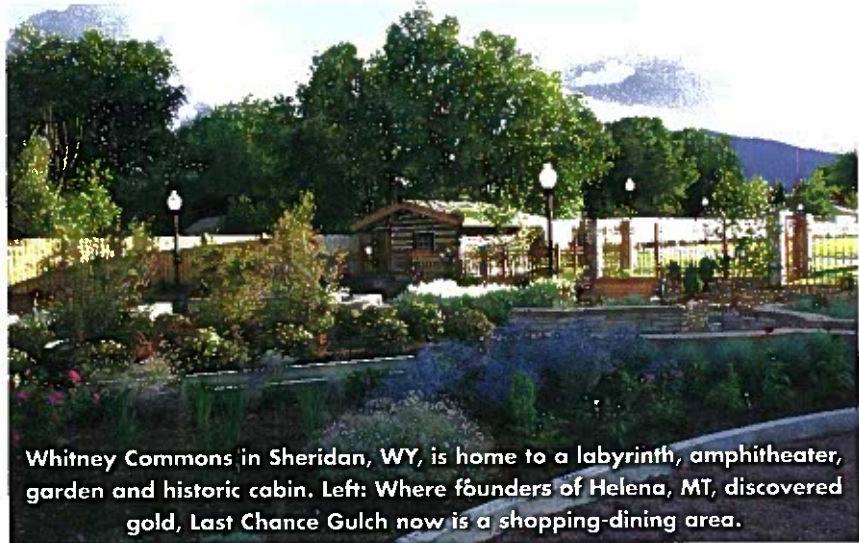
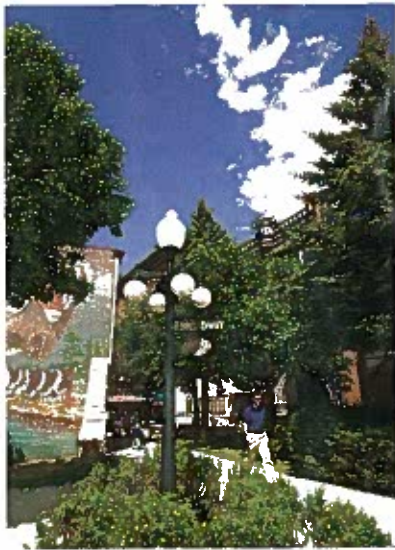
Climate: High Low

January 30 10

July 83 52

Cost of living: Above average

Housing cost: The average sales price



Whitney Commons in Sheridan, WY, is home to a labyrinth, amphitheater, garden and historic cabin. Left: Where founders of Helena, MT, discovered gold, Last Chance Gulch now is a shopping-dining area.

the town — the people and the countryside.

"I've never met people like this," he says. "They are nice, friendly. No one is in a hurry. People take the time to talk." Michael describes the lifestyle as "laid-back and easygoing," adding that he "slipped into that mode pretty quickly."

Michael, 60, and his wife, Pam, get outdoors as much as possible during the summer. "Wildlife abounds, and it's hard not to go someplace and see deer or antelope alongside the road. Canyon Ferry Lake is a great place to fish, and I've caught trout that were well over 18 inches long," he says.

Hiking and biking trails, bird-watching, camping and boating are within short drives, and there are two public golf courses.

Veins of gold in Helena's Last Chance Gulch funded a legacy of architectural wealth that includes Victorian neighborhoods and landmark

Helena boasts numerous galleries and museums, a symphony and a theater. "Helena is kind of unusual in that it has some of the characteristics of a small town, yet the people here are big into college sports and cultural events," Michael says. "I think that is part of the charm of living here for me. It manages to blend rural and urban living in one package and does it very well."

In-town housing options include elegant Victorian homes, modern ranch-style houses, townhomes and condos. Outside town you can bury yourself deep in the pine trees or select a home site with lake views or rolling hills. Several subdivisions are under way. One is Westridge Heights, (406) 459-0230, a planned community with both single-family and multifamily units.

Helena is in west-central Montana, in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, 20 minutes from the Continental Divide. The elevation is 4,157 feet.

of single-family homes in Helena was \$217,867 for the second quarter of 2009, according to the Helena Association of Realtors.

Information: Helena Area Chamber of Commerce, (800) 743-5362 or www.helenachamber.com.

SHERIDAN, WYOMING

Set on the Bozeman Trail, that turbulent 19th-century path to the goldfields of Montana, Sheridan is a friendly small town replete with Old West history and charm.

Buffalo Bill Cody auditioned acts for his Wild West Show at the Sheridan Inn. Downtown has more than 30 buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. The Sheridan WYO Rodeo in July is considered one of the top professional rodeos in the country. And the buffalo roam, along with elk, in Kendrick Park.

Foothills and the Big Horn Moun-

tains provide not only a scenic backdrop but also varied and abundant outdoor recreation, ranging from leisurely wildflower tours to hang gliding. Residents enjoy hiking, biking, boating, water skiing, spelunking, horseback riding, rock climbing and wildlife photography. Trout and other game fish are plentiful in the area's many streams and alpine lakes. Four golf courses lie within a 35-mile radius.

Summer brings weekly outdoor concerts in Kendrick Park, the Celebrate the Arts event, Big West Arts Festival, Sunday polo games and the Sheridan Farmers Market where local growers, artisans and musicians offer food, crafts and music.

Housing options include single-family homes, condos, townhomes in and near town and several new developments on the edge of town and near the foothills. The Powder Horn Golf Community is on 900 unspoiled acres six miles from downtown. The community includes a championship 27-hole golf course, a large clubhouse with a fitness center, a pool house,

two tennis courts, nature trails and trout-stocked ponds. It was among America's 100 Best Master-Planned Communities cited in the Where to Retire July-August issue.

The Powder Horn's real estate options include home sites, custom homes and maintenance-free homes. Short-term and long-term rental options offer opportunities to test-drive the community. Information: (800) 329-0598.

Sheridan is in north-central Wyoming, 23 miles south of the Montana border. The average elevation is 3,964 feet.

Population: 16,719

Climate: High Low

January 33 10

July 85 52

Cost of living: Above average

Housing cost: The median sales price of homes in Sheridan was \$215,000 for the second quarter of 2009, according to the Sheridan County Board of Realtors.

Information: Sheridan County Chamber of Commerce, (800) 453-3650 or www.sheridanwyomingchamber.org.

PORT LUDLOW, WASHINGTON

Sheltered by the rain shadow of the protective Olympic Mountains, Port Ludlow offers resort-style living along with 200 sunny days per year. Port Ludlow is drier and sunnier than Seattle and has only half of that city's rainfall. Set against a backdrop of evergreen forests, the community is on the west shore of Admiralty Inlet and the mouth of the Hood Canal, a 90-minute trip from Seattle by ferry and scenic drive.

Port Ludlow is a master-planned resort community with more than 1,800 homes set in several distinct villages, with a building cap of 2,250 homes. Housing options range from maintenance-free condos and waterfront townhomes to waterfront estates.

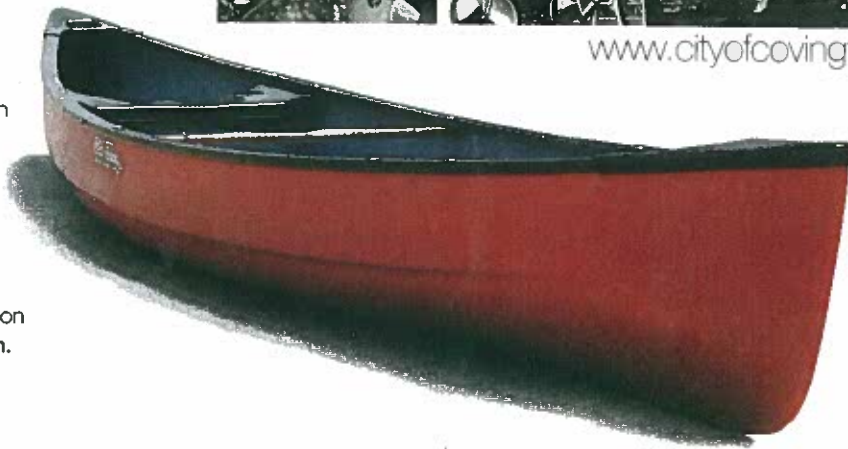
Chuck Hynden, managing broker for John L. Scott Real Estate, says that since there are few businesses in this area, the community is comprised mainly of retirees. Given the proximity to Seattle, Hynden says, "There are an increasing number of younger retirees from the high-tech industries

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