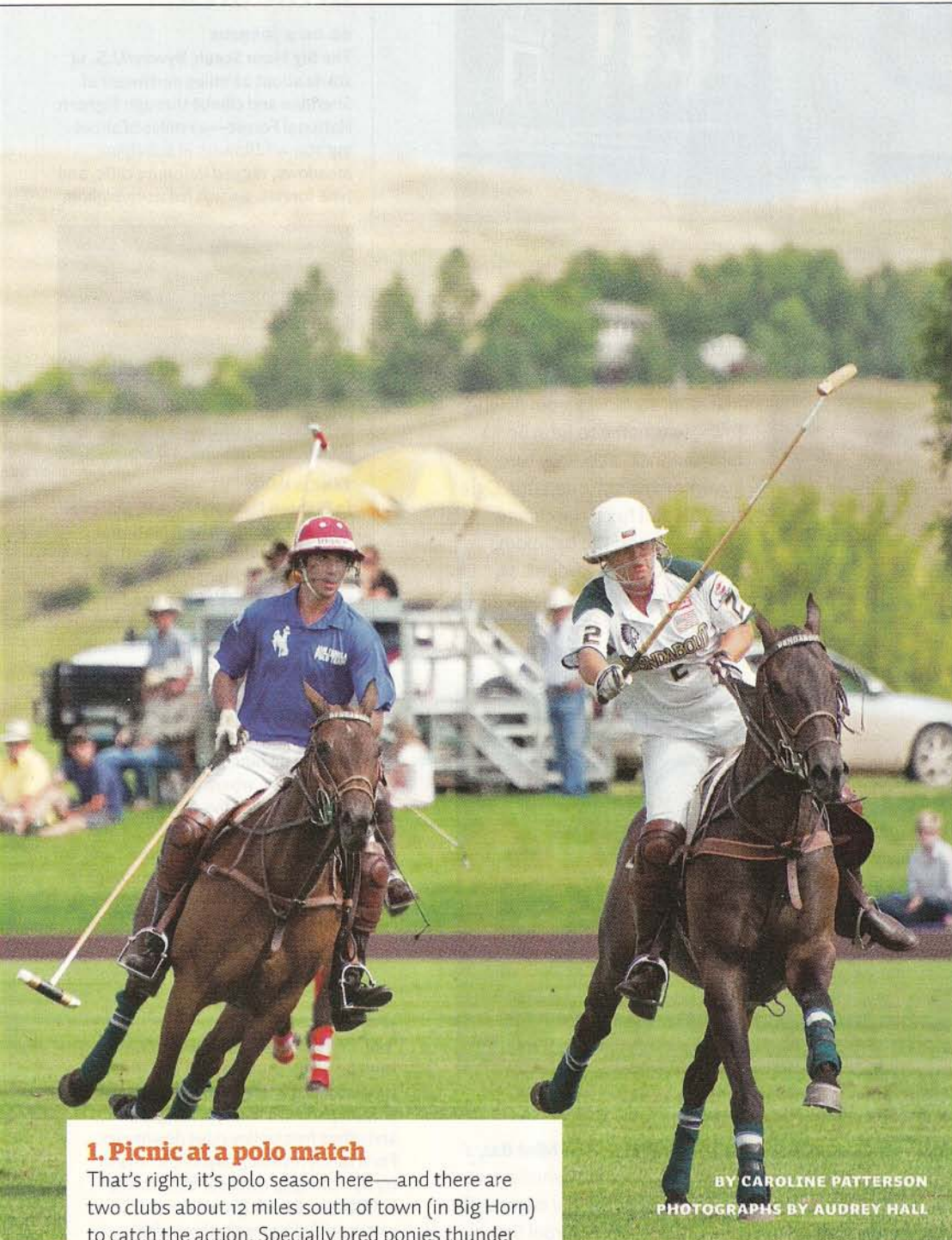


Mountain weekend

» **Inside** Polo in Wyoming? Check out the Wild West version »
» Aspen on a budget » Two ways to cool off on Utah's Provo River »



1. Picnic at a polo match

That's right, it's polo season here—and there are two clubs about 12 miles south of town (in Big Horn) to catch the action. Specially bred ponies thunder down bright green fields at the **Big Horn Equestrian Center** (free; 352 Bird Farm Rd.; thebhec.org), where you can tailgate at amateur Sunday matches all summer. Or catch a professional game Thursdays and Saturdays starting July 8 at **Flying H Polo Club** (pictured; free; 280 Bird Farm; flyinghpolo.com).

BY CAROLINE PATTERSON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY AUDREY HALL

Wyoming day trip Sheridan

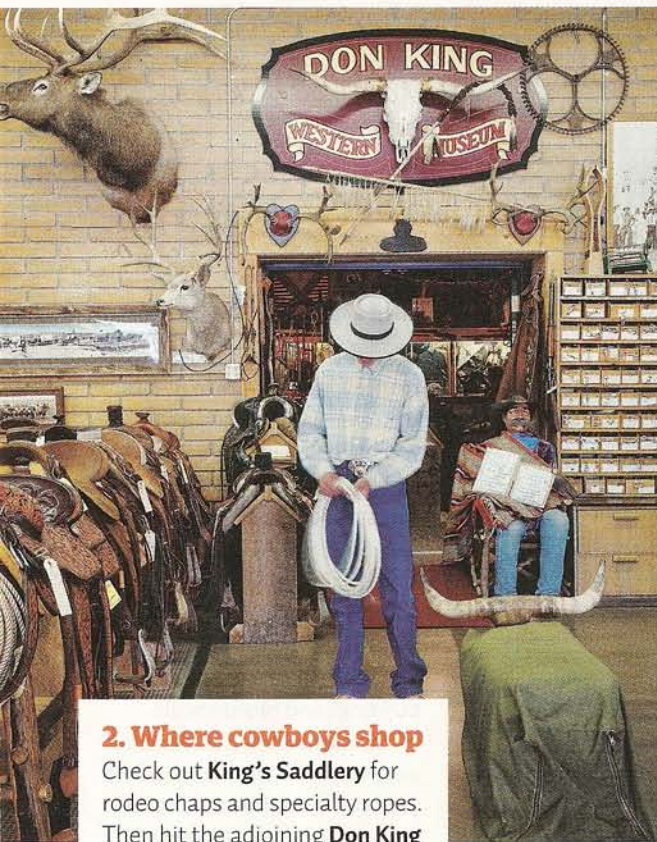
Why go now: The nearby Big Horn Mountains are in bloom, the temps are perfect, and if you haven't been here in a while, you'll be surprised by this spruced-up cowboy town.

Heading to Yellowstone? It's worth a detour. **Downtown scene:** Poke around the shops and galleries in the 12-block historic district lined with brick buildings and bronze sculptures. **Number of dude ranches near town:** Six **Dress code:** Take your cue from the cattle ranchers, and wear your cowboy boots and jeans. **Get the look:** Pick up lizard-skin boots or round-toed ropers at Dan's Western Wear (closed Sun; 226 N. Main St.; danswesternwear.com).

Famous guest: Buffalo Bill stayed and held auditions at the Historic Sheridan Inn. At the inn's 1893 Grille & Spirits (\$\$; 856 Broadway; 307/673-2777), park yourself on Bill's barstool. Starting this fall, you can stay in one of the inn's reopened western-themed suites (sheridaninn.com). **Beyond steak and potatoes:** Mix it up with, say, lamb osso buco and crème brûlée at Oliver's Bar & Grill (\$\$\$; 55 N. Main; 307/672-2838).

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Mountain Day trip



2. Where cowboys shop

Check out **King's Saddlery** for rodeo chaps and specialty ropes. Then hit the adjoining **Don King Western Museum**, named after the famous saddlemaker, for more than 500 fancy saddles, Native American artifacts, guns, and old wagons. *Closed Sun; free; 184 N. Main St.; 800/443-8919.*



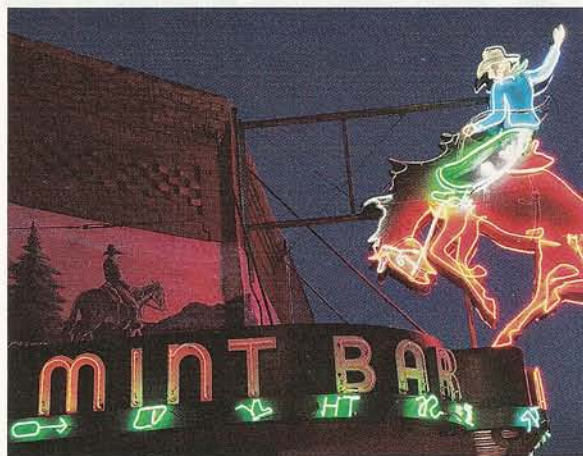
Getting to Sheridan

The town is 130 miles south-east of Billings and 370 miles north of Fort Collins. It's also 204 miles from the East Entrance to Yellowstone. **INFO** sheridanwyoming.org



3. A glimpse of the good old days

Step into the world of a Wyoming cattle baron at the **Trail End State Historic Site**. The 1913 mansion, six blocks from downtown, was home to John Benjamin Kendrick, a cowboy turned governor and state senator. Ogle the Oriental rugs, the carved staircases, and the ballroom, then wander the gardens. \$4; 400 Clarendon Ave.; trailend.org or 307/674-4589.



4. Belly up to the bar

Follow the neon bucking-bronco sign into the **Mint Bar**, a legendary watering hole from 1907. Beer and whiskey are the bevs of choice here, so nab a seat at the bar decorated with local cattle brands, and order a Moose Drool Brown Ale before racking 'em up at the pool table in back. *Closed Sun; 151 N. Main St.; 307/674-9696.*

3 more must-dos in the area...

GO ON A JOYRIDE

The **Big Horn Scenic Byway/U.S. 14** starts about 28 miles northwest of Sheridan and climbs through Bighorn National Forest—47 miles of shooting star wildflowers in subalpine meadows, ragged dolomite cliffs, and pine forests. www.fs.fed.us/r2/bighorn



TAKE A HIKE

In Bighorn National Forest, pull over at the **Medicine Wheel National Historic Landmark** (pictured). It's 1.5 miles to the 80-foot-wide, 28-spoke stone wheel that's been used in tribal ceremonies for centuries. 70 miles west of Sheridan off **Medicine Wheel Passage/U.S. 14A**; 307/548-6541.

VISIT AN ARTISTS' RANCH

The **Ucross Foundation** is a 20,000-acre cattle ranch, 30 miles southeast of Sheridan, where artists, writers, and composers live and work (Elizabeth Gilbert wrote *Eat, Pray, Love* here). Take in the ranch house and an exhibit of West-inspired paintings in the Big Red Barn. *Mon-Fri, weekends by appointment; free; 30 Big Red Lane, near Clearmont; 307/737-2291.*



Make it a weekend

High on a hill, the **Wingate Inn** (from \$132, including breakfast; 307/675-1101) is landscaped with local prairie grasses and offers free trolley rides downtown. For a ranch retreat (maybe it's time to try fly-fishing?), consider the century-old **Canyon Ranch** (from \$210 per person, including meals; three-night minimum; canyonranchbighorn.com), 15 miles from town in Big Horn.

