

THE OFFICIAL LOVE-LIVING-
HERE, GOTTA-DO-IT, KICK-A**

NO CO BUCKET LIST



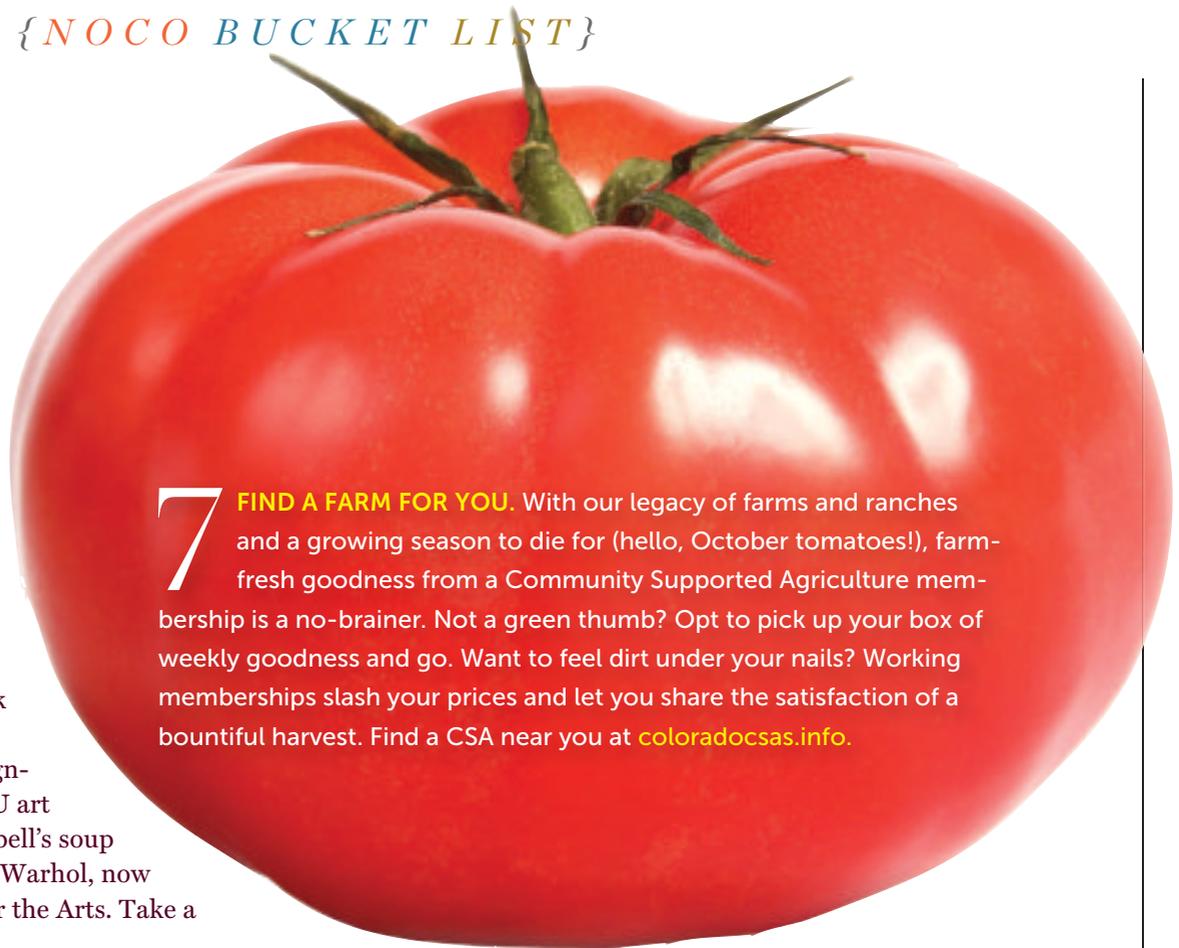
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Life's good here—we've got sunshine and rivers and beer and trails and farms and food and more beer... But any well-rounded must-do list can't leave out the local artists, funky fests, offbeat attractions, outdoor music venues, hikes and rambles, dive bars and Buddhist temples. So we didn't. Here are 50 of our NoCo faves.

**By ANDRA COBERLY, SANDRA HUME, RHEA MAZE,
LISA POGUE, CARA MCDONALD and SHAWNA VAN**



5 GET A PHOTO WITH THE WARHOL CAMPBELL'S SOUP CAN. When you think of pop art, you probably don't think of Fort Collins. But actually Andy Warhol made his mark on the city during a visit in the early '80s. The art icon attended an exhibit of his work on the Colorado State University campus (apparently, he even invited a cow to his signing). As a part of his show, Warhol and CSU art students collaborated on three giant Campbell's soup cans. One of those cans, which is signed by Warhol, now sits on the lawn of the University Center for the Arts. Take a selfie and make your own pop art. —A.C.



7 FIND A FARM FOR YOU. With our legacy of farms and ranches and a growing season to die for (hello, October tomatoes!), farm-fresh goodness from a Community Supported Agriculture membership is a no-brainer. Not a green thumb? Opt to pick up your box of weekly goodness and go. Want to feel dirt under your nails? Working memberships slash your prices and let you share the satisfaction of a bountiful harvest. Find a CSA near you at coloradocsas.info.



6 AMBLE AMONG ART ON A FIRST FRIDAY GALLERY WALK. Fort Collins is ever the gracious host of community events celebrating creativity. Downtown's artsy side shines especially bright on the first Friday of the month when more than 20 galleries and museums roll out the welcome mat, staying open later with special

exhibits and demonstrations and (sometimes) serving gratis wine and apps. The free self-guided walking tour takes place year-round and is the perfect opportunity to rub elbows with local painters, sculptors, jewelry mavens, and woodworkers. Make a game plan—it can be difficult to hit them all between 6 and 9 p.m. Find the gallery walk map at downtownfortcollins.com. —L.P.

8 GET LOST IN THE WILDERNESS. Leave Rocky Mountain National Park to the tourists and explore more of your own backyard. Rawah Wilderness (on the southern end of the Medicine Bow Mountain Range west of Fort Collins) and State Forest State Park (west of Cameron Pass) offer accessible, crowd-free outdoor adventures that are just as scenic and memorable. Rawah is a Native American term for "wild place" and the wilderness area contains 25 named high alpine lakes. State Forest State Park is home to the moose viewing capital of Colorado and maintains an impressive system of yurts, huts, and cabins available for reservation all year. pwv.org/trails/rawah-wilderness, cpw.state.co.us —R.M.

9 BE A PROUD BIRD NERD. Fossil Creek Reservoir Natural Area in south Fort Collins claims fame as a National Audubon Society designated Important Bird Area, but more impressively as a bald eagle confab. The eagles spend the winter roosting in the natural area's cottonwood trees and it provides essential habitat for a tremendous variety of waterfowl, shorebirds, and raptors year-round. Watch for white pelicans, native to the area, and different shorebirds like egrets and great blue herons in the summer. Don't miss the migration action that occurs each fall and spring. Open daily from dawn to dusk. fcgov.com/naturalareas —R.M.

CAMPBELL SOUP PHOTO COURTESY CSU



Million Dollar Quartet is at The Lincoln Center on April 16, 17 & 18

18 CULTIVATE SOME CULTURE. Life in a small town feels less small when you know you can nip out to catch a Broadway show, have a night at the opera, soak in some Shakespeare or check out an odd-ball, offbeat performer you never knew you'd want to see. How to? The small but mighty Lincoln Center offers 1200 seats with a view to expanding your horizons. Tickets start as low as \$5 and rarely climb over \$75. For ticket sales and upcoming shows visit afcgov.com/lctix. —C.M.

20 SAY FAREWELL TO SUMMER

AT TOUR DE FAT. The last hot hurrah of a Fort Collins summer is like Mardi Gras with micro-brews and bikes. Tour de Fat, a traveling celebration started by our own New Belgium Brewing to promote cycling as a sustainable form of transportation, now happens in 10 cities nationwide. Tour de Fat is similar to many other downtown festivals—beer, bungee rides, music—but with the addition of truly outrageous, anything-goes costumes beginning with the morning's bike parade. Fair warning for families: costumes are not always kid-friendly. Look for it on a weekend in late August. newbelgium.com/events —S.H.



19 PAY HOMAGE TO THE BEES. Here's a new way to experience your terroir—like wine, honey is infused with the distinct flavor nuances of the region's natural environment. The Northern Colorado Beekeepers Association offers dynamic learning opportunities ranging from classes on backyard beekeeping to check-ing out their observation hive at various events. Learn the simple things you can do to help create a healthier community of bees, get to know your local honey producers, and support their good work by getting your hands on some of the best sweet stuff around. nocobees.org. —R.M.



21 DO BREAKFAST AT THE SILVER GRILL. Forget Johnson's Corner. Folks in the Fort know there's no cinnamon roll quite like that at Old Town eatery the Silver Grill, northern Colorado's longest-running restaurant. Available whole or sliced and grilled as toast—regular or French, and it's as good as it sounds—the cinnamon rolls are a conversation topic, or maybe even a meal, all their own. In true Fort Collins style, Odell Brewing Company has even used cinnamon roll pieces to brew their seasonal Cinnsation Ale. It's a busy spot, but several expansions mean it's bigger than it looks from the outside, and there's always the back patio. Weekends, try the Bloody Mary bar. 218 Walnut Street, silvergrill.com



24 NOSH SOMETHING SUPER HEADY AT AVOGADRO'S NUMBER. Avo's does the restaurant/bar/venue hybrid right. The institution on the edge of campus has a killer back patio and stage, tons of free live music, and a heaven-for-vegetarians menu. Lizzie's sandwich with grilled marinated mushrooms, banana peppers, black olives, swiss, greens, tomato, avocado and house dressing is a hit. There's a fixed air of FoCo come-as-you-are spirit and they've created some well-loved traditions over the years: Tempah Tuesday burger nights, a famous Bloody Mary, bluegrass jams on Wednesdays (bring your mandolin!), and the Poudre Valley Irregulars pumping out jazz and swing N'awlins-style on first Fridays. 605 S. Mason St., 970-493-5555,



26 BUM A BIKE. Life in a velo-mad town requires an extensive stable of two-wheeled steeds—and not all of us stock a ride for every occasion. Whether it's a commuter, cruiser, tandem, or trail-a-bike for the kiddos, you can check out a loaner for \$10 a day from the Fort Collins Bike Library (or free, if you return it before closing time at day's end). Sign the lending agreement and waiver, leave a credit card number as a deposit, and cruise out with your wheels. When you're done, drop your ride off (even after hours) at the Downtown Transit Center or Crankenstein's; just lock 'em and leave 'em. fcbikelibrary.org —C.M.

25 PEOPLE-WATCH IN OLD TOWN. Fort Collins' epicenter of entertainment, shopping, and dining is the perfect place to wile away an afternoon. The designated historic district is so amiable, Disneyland modeled its Main Street USA after it.

Take a load off—Walrus Ice Cream cone (try the black raspberry Oreo) in-hand, of course—on a bench and admire the sculptures, flowers, and mural-painted pianos. Dine at one of the 80-something restaurants, sip afternoon patio beers, window shop, or pop in to boutiques for a homemade dog treat, new piece of locally crafted art, Colorado-made clothing, antiques, and books. downtownfortcollins.com —L.S.

27 SET THE HOOK ON A GLISTENING CUTTHROAT. Marvel at the beauty of this Colorado fish's signature red throat and colorful spots. Ongoing conservation efforts to preserve the legacy of these fish and complex research on different subspecies continues to unfold. The greenback cutthroat trout, Colorado's state fish, is currently listed as a threatened species and the Colorado River cutthroat trout is designated a species of special concern. Before catch-and-release fishing in NoCo's plethora of rivers, streams, and gin-clear high mountain lakes, take a class or lessons from a local fly shop. Visit cpw.state.co.us for information, licenses, and an interactive atlas for virtually scouting your next excursion. —R.M.





34 DRINK A POUUDRE VALLEY DROP OFF.

Also known as a Poudre Canyon Drop Off, this is the official shot of the Choice City. It's equal parts amaretto and Irish cream with a splash of Bacardi 151, and it's easy drinking: sweet, creamy, nutty and boozy all in one smooth gulp. It's called a Poudre Valley drop off because, well, if you drink too many, you're likely to fall off your bar stool. Bonus points if you order one at Trailhead, Steak-out or Lucky Joe's. —A.C.



36 CATCH A LOCAL BAND ON THE RISE. So you can say you saw them when. Hey, they don't call FoCo a musical incubator for nothing. Devoted audiences, a community dedicated to supporting creativity and indie anything, paired with cool venues and smart business people have made us a welcoming spot for bands on the rise. Acts like Aspen Hourglass, Danielle Ate the Sandwich, Candy Claws, You Me & Apollo call NoCo home and give one hell of a rousing show for the hometown crowd. Catch them at beloved venues such as Avogadro's Number, Lucky Joe's, Aggie Theatre. —C.M.



35 CATCH A DOUBLE FEATURE AT THE HOLIDAY TWIN DRIVE-IN. Pack up the kids, the dog and some blankets and join the line of cars pulling into this nostalgic gem March through September. The family-owned operation is one of six drive-ins still operating in Colorado. Two screens play first run double features and shows start when the sun sets behind the foothills. The drive-in opened with a single screen in 1968. Ticket prices (as of press time) holler back to decades past—\$7 for ages 10 and up, \$5 for kiddos and seniors—and the snack bar is loaded with ol' fashioned carnival goodies like funnel cake, snow cones, corn dogs, and cotton candy. 2206 S. Overland Trail, 970-221-1244, holidaytwindrivein.com —L.P.



37 GIVE FORTOBERFEST A SPIN. Rolling three of the city's cultural pillars—bikes, brews, and bands—into one badass festival, Downtown Fort Collins' newest event sends summer out with a bang. FORToberfest is free to attend and was designed with a hometown backyard vibe in mind. True to local form, costumes and two-wheeled transportation are encouraged. Watch a professional bike stunt show, drink seasonals from local breweries, and bop to up-and-coming Fort Collins and Colorado bands. Last year's headliners included Van Halen tribute Romeo Delight and Americana group Young Ancients. downtownfortcollins.com —L.S.

38 TAKE A ZEN MOMENT AT SHAMBHALA MOUNTAIN CENTER'S GREAT STUPA OF DHARMAKAYA. Located near the rustic mountain community of Red Feather Lakes 50 miles northwest of Fort Collins, the Buddhist retreat center is surrounded by pristine Roosevelt National Forest and offers meditation retreats and workshops on interesting topics like the art of being human. The stupa (the largest in North America) is open daily and free to visitors. After banking some peace, compassion, and good karma, enjoy lunch for a \$10 donation. Blissful bonus: cell phones don't get reception here. shambhala-mountain.org —R.M.

