

5 Reasons Why Steamboat Springs is a Fitness Junkie's Paradise

When I stepped off the airplane 22 years ago and took in my first sights of Yampa Valley, I was completely hooked. Today, the beautiful valley is where I call home -- it's where I ski, hike, bike, snowshoe, and generally get moving. With its ever-present sunshine and stunning landscapes, Colorado is a special place for fitness junkies of all types. Anyone who has had the great fortune of spending time in this stunning natural wonderland knows the virtually endless activities available all year long. Steamboat Springs, in particular, offers a plethora of possibilities to keep outdoor enthusiasts happy and in shape. With its unique down-home resort atmosphere and its prime location, both fitness-as-a-lifestyle gurus and beginners will revel in the heavenly selection of year-round outdoor activities to keep hearts healthy, muscles toned, and mindsets positive.

Located 160 miles northwest of Denver and nestled in the wilderness and national forest, Steamboat rests along the western edge of the Continental Divide with a multitude of flowing rivers, lakes, and natural springs, not to mention trail systems. With all these options to choose from, it might feel a bit overwhelming when trying to decide how to spend your time at Steamboat. To help you break things down, here are five can't-miss reasons why Steamboat Springs is a fitness junkie's paradise any time of year.

1. The Snow



When a town has trademarked its snow, you know there's something special about it. That's right. Ski Town, USA® is known for its world famous [Champagne Powder®](#). So when you come to

Steamboat to shuss, carve, edge, grab, and traverse, or to air, cab, corkscrew, and eggplant, know that you'll be doing so on some of the best, most pristine ski conditions that exist. Make your way down the mountain over the sparkling powder terrain comprised of an entire mountain range -- Mount Werner, Thunderhead Peak, Sunshine Peak, Storm Peak, Pioneer Ridge, and Christie Peak -- providing skiers and boarders of all levels with many options for fun and fitness. And if you like to get your adrenaline going in a more tranquil setting, head 30 miles north to [Hahn's Peak Lake](#) for endorphin-inducing cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.

2. The Land



From the shortest trail ([Vista Nature Trail](#) - .08 miles) to the longest trail ([Nipple Peak Loop](#) - 30 miles), Steamboat is a great place to work up a good sweat, challenge your muscles, and soak up the sunshine. You'll feel cleansed, toned, and a whole lot happier (thanks to all that vitamin D) when you hike or bike the many [trails](#) at Steamboat Springs. Do the full 10.5 mile round trip on [Devil's Causeway trail](#), or go just as far as the Causeway for 5.6 miles. You'll ascend 1,540 feet and take in an awesome view of Flat Tops. If you're staying downtown, try a quick four-mile round trip hike on [Emerald Mountain Quarry](#). And if you love waterfalls, don't miss the 7.6-mile round trip to [Fish Creek Falls](#). Standing at the base of these 280-foot falls will remind you of your connection with nature, and that's always good for the soul.

3. The Water



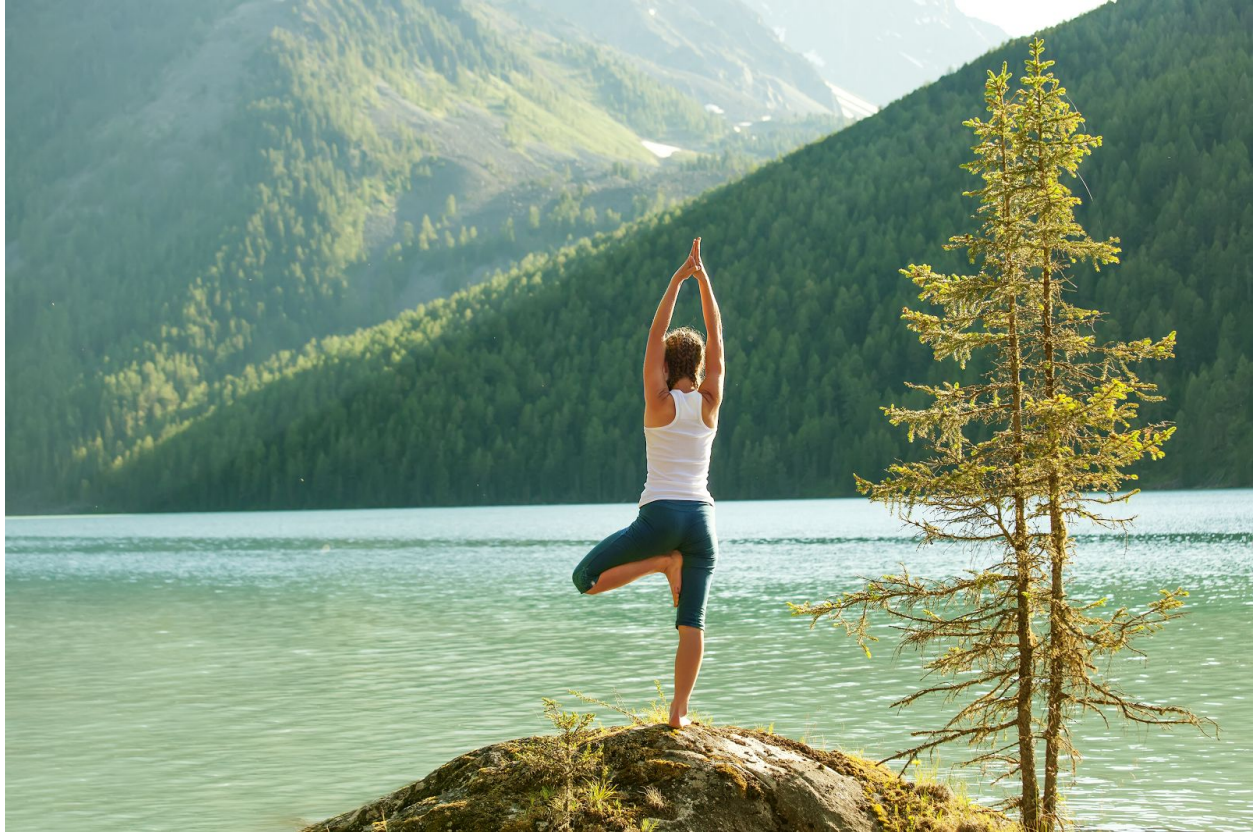
And speaking of water, Steamboat Springs boasts a lovely [collection](#) of sparkling rivers and lakes, giving watersport fitness geeks plenty of challenging and fun ways to get in a good workout. The [Yampa River](#) flows through the entire state of Colorado and passes right through Steamboat, proceeding south near the Utah border to the Green River. Give your upper body and core a workout with some kayaking. Or if the daredevil in you wants to try something even more exciting, do some stand-up paddleboarding on the Yampa for a variation on this balance-perfecting, core-strengthening activity. For a more sedate paddleboard experience -- yet still a fine workout in its own right -- Stagecoach Reservoir is a prime spot. And of course, after you've tested your muscles and endurance and are happily exhausted, reward yourself with a luxurious soak at [Strawberry Park](#) or [Old Town Hot Springs](#).

4. The Weather



The relatively cool and dry summers at Steamboat Springs make it the [perfect](#) place to indulge in outdoor activities without the overwhelming risk of heat exhaustion. (Of course, hydrating with lots of water and taking precautions against the sun's effects -- you are, after all, closer to it -- will ensure the most satisfying outdoor fitness experience.) The low humidity helps reduce water retention, and the fresh, clean air is an excellent panacea for the effects of city living on the lungs and skin.

5. The Extras



What would a fitness regimen be without yoga? Ground and *om* your way to a blissful state of mind at [Sundance Studio](#) to ensure your mind and soul get their own special kind of workout. Throw in a massage and other spa treatments at [Life Essentials Day Spa](#), and be sure to refuel your body with the delicious, nutritious food you'll find at Steamboat Springs' many top-quality dining establishments.

Come to Steamboat Springs any time of year and you're sure to get your heart racing, endorphins flowing, and lungs expanding. When you do, you'll see why this incredible area of Colorado causes fitness junkies from far and wide to clamor to its slopes, trails, and bodies of water.