



Winter Activities

Natural Hot Springs: Centuries before the white man arrived, the Tabeguache Ute, a nomadic band, traveled to this idyllic setting in the summer months to hunt the abundant forest game and to soak in what they called “sacred miracle waters”. Even then, they knew the springs that simmer beneath much of Ouray were therapeutic. In fact, the town’s original name was “Uncompahgre”, the Ute word for “hot water springs”. Today, the natural hot springs in Ouray still draw visitors for their reputed healing abilities. Here at the [Box Canyon Lodge](#), our natural hot springs come out of the ground at 140°. We then feed it into our redwood hot tubs at a more comfortable temperature, between 103°-109°, depending on the time of year.

The Ouray Hot Springs Pool: Ouray’s 250x150 foot public pool contains over a million gallons of crystal clear natural hot springs water, free from the strong smell of sulfur typical of many hot springs. In addition to several soaking sections at a variety of temperatures ranging from 96 to 106 degrees, the pool has a lap swimming section, two large slides, a shallow section for younger children and a game area for water volleyball. [The Ouray Hot Springs Pool](#) is popular with visitors from around the world. In the winter months, after an exhilarating climb at the Ouray Ice Park, cross-country ski trek, skiing adventures in the high-country, or a pleasant day of shopping Ouray’s unique businesses, soaking in the hot springs is truly a restorative experience. Enhance this therapeutic treatment by making an appointment at the pool’s massage facility. If you’re missing your fitness routine, visit their 1,800 square foot Fitness Center. Weight-lifting equipment, treadmills, stair-climbers, stationary bikes, and other exercise equipment are available to visitors for a nominal fee. It is truly a serene and memorable experience staring into the night sky while soaking in the hot springs of Ouray.

Cross Country Skiing: Opportunities for winter sports activities abound in and around Ouray. Within walking distance of town, numerous trails provide cross-country skiing and snow-shoeing access, as well as light hiking, to take in the special charm of our beautiful valley blanketed in snow. A short drive in either direction will open up more challenging winter backcountry terrain along with miles of groomed [Nordic track](#). Cross Country Skis are available for rent at Ouray Mountain Sports on Main Street.

Downhill Skiing: If you’re looking for downhill skiing, Ouray is the ideal location. Visitors can stay in Ouray and ski [Telluride](#), a one hour drive from Ouray, or head south to [Silverton](#) for deep powder snow and extreme skiing. Just a bit further, past Silverton, is [Durango Mountain Resort](#). All of these resorts offer amazing views and the chance to experience the best snow of your life! Take your pick or try them all. For you extreme skiers, backcountry skiing in the San Juan Mountains, will provide the thrill of a lifetime. Just be sure to use extreme caution.

Children's Ski Hill: Ouray is a great place for you to teach your children how to ski. The free rope tow saves money from having to purchase lift tickets and keeps the tracks clear of footprints from walking back to the top of the hill after each “run”. The ski hill rope tow operates on weekends and after school hours. If you don’t have children’s skis with you, they can be rented at Ouray Mountain Sports on



Main Street. [Silverton's Kendall Mountain Resort](#) is another great place for children and families to have a low key day of skiing. They offer ski rental, instruction, and very affordable lift ticket prices.

Sledding: The local children's sledding hill, known as Vinegar Hill, has been Ouray's sledding hill for over 100 years. It is located on the east side of town between Fifth and Sixth Avenue. The top and bottom of Fifth Street, is blocked off with hay bales to block through driving traffic. In addition to this in-town sledding hill, a short drive from Ouray in either direction offers unlimited sledding in some of the most spectacular mountains you'll ever see. If you didn't bring a sled you can purchase an inexpensive plastic one from the Ouray Hardware Store, or rent one from Ouray Mountain Sports, who also carry a variety of handmade wooden sleds from Silverton.

Snow Shoeing: Slip on a pair of snowshoes and explore miles of untouched powder in the backcountry of the San Juan Mountains. When winter comes to stay, many of our summer hiking trails are transformed into magnificent trails through spruce forests. You can really work up an appetite on some of the longer trails so pack a picnic and a thermos of hot cocoa to rejuvenate. Snowshoe rentals are available in Ouray at Ouray Mountain Sports on Main Street.

Ice Skating: The Ouray ice skating rink is located at Rotary Park, approximately one mile north of the Hot Springs Pool, and offers some amazing mountain views during the day, as well as the opportunity for some serious star gazing at night! The rink is typically open from late December throughout the winter as long as winter temperatures remain cold enough to maintain ice. So bring your skates, or rent a pair at the Ouray Hot Springs Pool and enjoy the fun atmosphere of an outdoor ice rink. Or, pick up a game of "broom ball" with some of the locals. The rink is maintained by the City of Ouray and a cadre of volunteers. There is a small warming hut located at the rink. Lights at the rink allow for skating in the cold and silent hours of a winter evening with stars shining above.

Ice Climbing: Ouray is ranked as one of the most popular locations for ice climbing in the world. Not only do the surrounding mountains provide numerous spectacular ice-climbing routes, Ouray has the only ice park where a mile of farmed ice is available to climbers right in the city limits, easily accessible and free to all. With the accessibility of the Ouray Ice Park, Ouray visitors can easily to the park and watch the climbers from the bridges and also from the stands built for this purpose along the top of the Uncompahgre Gorge. Climbers are usually in the park throughout the day but typically start early. CAUTION: Be sure to dress warmly and stay away from both the climbing area and edge of the gorge. There are a number of world-class outfitters who live in the Ouray area. If you are interested in learning how to ice climb, [San Juan Mountain Guides](#) offers guided instruction for individuals or groups. If this sport is new to you consider staying in Ouray for several days and including ice climbing lessons with your other outdoor activities. To support the Park, memberships are available which also include discounts to a number of businesses in town.

RELAXATION: Natural Hot Springs + Spa + Massage = Heaven! If you are in the mood for some pampering then Ouray has got you covered. Following, or before, your relaxing soak in the natural hot springs, let us set up a visit for you at one of our amazing massage therapists here in town. If you are in the mood for a spa specialty, Elevate Day Spa is a great place to come and relax after a long day of jeeping, hiking, or exploring the old ghost towns. We are open year round and offer Customized Facials,



Anti-Aging Treatments, Massage, Body Treatments, Organic Spray Tanning, Waxing and Makeup. Let your stress melt away in our relaxation room and come out feeling rejuvenated.