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The Big Change-Up
WHAT'S NEW IN COLORADO {18}



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CHANGE-UP

A stunning amount of what's new in Colorado.

BY BETH BUEHLER

The logical side of your brain is likely concluding that little has happened during the most challenging days of the COVID-19 pandemic. Launches of new additions, renovations and venues have been delayed a bit in some cases, but the amount of new hotels and fresh experiences is simply astonishing.



Food & Beverage //

COLORADO RANCH ADDS A HYDROPONIC FARM

C Lazy U Ranch near Granby has added an automated vertical hydroponic farm built by Colorado-based FarmBox Foods to grow seed-to-harvest produce on-site. Located inside a repurposed shipping container with sensor-based technology, the climate-controlled garden is 320 square feet and allows ranch guests to see where the lettuce and herbs they are eating is grown. C Lazy U also has a hay harvest operation to feed the property's 225 horses, uses the water supply from its own spring, and has beehives. The property welcomes guests to take part in interactive and educational tours of its sustainable operations, including the new culinary garden. clazyu.com



WHAT'S NEW AT STIR COOKING SCHOOL

Stir Cooking School has debuted a new look both online and in-house and welcomed a new executive chef. Fatima Hafiz brings nearly two decades of culinary experience to Stir Cooking School from San Francisco, where she led several different cooking school programs. The school presents a variety of cooking and cocktail classes, hosts private parties for up to 50 guests, and offers off-site gatherings and team-building experiences. stirtolearn.com



CATERING BY DESIGN OPENS LOCATION IN GYPSUM

Denver-based Catering by Design recently opened a location in Gypsum to provide catering and decor services in Vail, Aspen and the entire mountain region in Colorado. The company's in-house décor, design, floral and graphic design departments team up with the catering division to provide clients with elaborate weddings and grand galas along with intimate celebrations.

"Gypsum is a sensible choice for us and for our clients," says COO Syd Sexton. "Our passion is creating customized event experiences, and we are excited to bring our key team members and join with local talent in the mountains to create crafted memorable events." cateringbd.com



PHOTOS: FARMBOX FOODS; WERY CREATIVE; BROOKE HEATHER; COPPOSITE; BRIAN BISHOP; ERIC SPRINKLE

From Slopes to Sales

Brady Johnson, a former member of the U.S. Ski Team, now balances time between C Lazy U Ranch, Destination Colorado, his family and the ski slopes. **BY LAUREN PAHMEIER**

» WHILE MOST PEOPLE RETIRE just once in their lifetime, C Lazy U Ranch's Brady Johnson wants to retire three or four times.

"I think that's the fun part about life. Find something new, chase a goal and accomplish it, and then find something even more fun and exciting that aligns with what you're doing with your life at the time," says Johnson.

And Johnson is already one-third of the way there. After a successful career in competitive freestyle skiing, including winning the North American Tour, Skiing World Cup for four years and forerunning in the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics, Johnson retired from the sport at age 26 after coming back from a knee injury.

Shortly after, Johnson secured an interview for an unpaid summer internship with the owner of C Lazy U Ranch, thanks to a connection in skiing. Thirteen years later, he's director of sales and marketing for the property located northwest of Winter Park in Granby.

Although Johnson is a busy man, he finds marketing not only the property, but also Colorado as a whole, is easy because he loves it. So naturally, he joined Destination Colorado 10 years ago to get more involved in Colorado's tourism industry and now serves as president.

"If we're promoting on a state level and getting business that would otherwise go to California or Montana or Wyoming and it comes to our state, everybody's going to win in the end," he emphasizes.

Eventually, he'll retire from Destination Colorado and C Lazy U Ranch, but in the meantime, Johnson enjoys being based in Denver, saying that there aren't many days he doesn't have the chance to ski, bike or hike.

"At the end of the day, we sell a lifestyle, and it's the lifestyle we live. And if we're not able to go out and enjoy a mountain bike ride after work or something like that, what are you really working for?" **m+e**

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PHOTO: TATE CARLSON