

GET OUT THERE

I visited Omaha for best steak, but found best Mediterranean instead

Omaha — somewhere in middle America. Biggest city in Nebraska. Nationally known for Warren Buffet (successful investor), superior stockyards, and famous steaks.

I originally booked my trip to Omaha to witness

the nearby sandhill crane migration, one of the world's greatest wildlife spectacles, where millions of birds lay over every spring at some random river. Sounds exhilarating, I know. YouTube it before judging me.

Anyways, the bird party got canceled after a scheduling snafu. So my wife and I did the next best thing: eat the best Omaha steak in the city, as well as a few other unexpected regional delicacies.

Those were namely Ruebens — which most food historians believe were actually invented in Omaha, years

before they became popular in New York. Also runzas, a homemade hot pocket of beef and cabbage. And lastly ... wait for it, chili and cinnamon rolls! You read that right. Many Nebraskans eat the breakfast dessert with hot chili as if it were corn bread or a dinner roll.

Is it weird? Yes. Does it work? No. Which is why the food pairing never ventured farther than a few isolated pockets in Iowa and Kansas. I tried the combo at the best fast food restaurant in Nebraska and my favorite original food in the entire state: Runza. Their homemade chili was five stars and the cinnamon roll was a solid four.

But the real star of the show was their fresh baked runza — an elongated and empanada-like soft roll filled with juicy ground beef and cheese-like cabbage. Uh — may — zing, dear reader. A taste and texture love letter from the marvelous Midwest. These warm sandwiches are so beloved, my Uber driver ships them on dry ice to his

mother in Florida.

As for the Rueben sandwich, I found the best one (in the actual town that invented them) at All In Thyme. Homemade rye grilled in butter. Thousand island “aioli.” Just the right amount of sauerkraut. And thick chunks of slow-cooked corned beef stacked in juicy layers. Not dry, deli sliced. Real, unprocessed corn beef, people. (Eat your heart out, Katz's of New York. I did.) Holy moly, it was good.

As for the namesake Omaha steak, what started as a showdown between the top-two ranked steakhouses in the city — J. Gilbert's and The Drover — ended with an unassuming darkhorse winner at Burdock & Bitters, right next door to J. Gilbert's. While the latter was fantastic in both the ribeye and tenderloin cuts, the former was a titch better with the succulent bone-in ribeye, no name brand needed. (That said, J. Gilbert's served the best soy glazed salmon of my entire life, flown in fresh



COURTESY LINDSEY SNOW

Blake Snow sits down for a meal in Omaha, Neb.

every two days, I kid you not. Best dessert too: 24 layer chocolate cake.)

As for The Drover, they served the best filet mignon — aged in whiskey marinade and melt in your mouth delicious. So I had found my answer.

And then Clio happened. I'm so glad “she” did. Located in the charming Old Market district, where you

can literally see the once famous starting point of westward pioneers, this trendy new restaurant has to be the best Mediterranean restaurant in America. Has to be. Because it innovates on old world recipes from the Mediterranean in a way that excited my palate more than any other meal on any other continent — let alone the Midwest — in years. Years!

The hanging ceilings, rich and complex mouthfeel of the food, adorable plates, colorful decor, passionate service — everything (minus the confused baba ganoush) was a revelation and culinary highlight of a weekend filled with serendipitous delights and several added pounds. Make that many added pounds.

In Omaha of all places. This isn't flyover country. It's must-visit country. If only for the food.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

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PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

April 18

Utah Children's Choir: My Country!, Utah State Hospital Chapel, 7 p.m. (utahchildrenschoir.org)

Charlie & Chocolate Factory, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

Sourdough Bread Class, Baking Me Crazy, 10 a.m.-noon (shopbakingsocrazy.com)

IZAK, Velour, 7:30 p.m. (24tix.com)

How to Raise Bilingual Kids, Provo Library, 10-11 a.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Celestial Zoo Pet Rescue Bingo Night, Village Inn, 4-9 p.m. (celestialzoo.org)

Intro to Studio Production, Provo Library, 2-3 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Tea in Wonderland, Taste 117, 1 p.m./7 p.m. (taste117.com)

Gilded Paradise: Recasting Lorenzo Ghiberti's Baptistery Doors, BYU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (April 18-Oct. 24, moa.byu.edu)

Provo City School District High School Art Show, Provo Library, 3:30-8 p.m. (April 18-May 1, provolibrary.gov)

The Way of the Cross: A Series by David Habben, Brigham Young University Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. (April 18-Aug. 22, moa.byu.edu)

Mimi Chen Ting: Make Movement Visible, BYU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (April 18-Oct. 10, moa.byu.edu)

NIGHT: New Work by J. Kirk Richards, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (April 18-25, jkrgallery.com)

Greatest Act of Love: Group Art Show, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (April 18-25, thecompassgallery.com)

Queens and Priestesses, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (April 18-25, thecompassgallery.com)

April 20
All-Levels Yoga, Provo Library, 7-8 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

April 21
Ballroom Book Sale, Provo Library, noon-8 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

April 22
Open Piano Lab, Provo Library, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

April 23
Utah Metropolitan Ballet Tribute, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (Feb. 23-24, covey.provo.gov)
New Band Showcase #3, Velour, 7:30 p.m. (24tix.com)

April 24
EJ Michels “Album Release”, Velour, 7:30 p.m. (24tix.com)
Adjacent to Nothing/Penalty of Treason/Spine Chewer, The Rise, 7 p.m. (therisevenue.com)
EDM WAVES, The Rise, 9 p.m. (April 24-25, therisevenue.com)

The Afters, Arlington Hall, 10 p.m. (linktr.ee/theaftersutah)

April 25
Provo's Ties & Tiaras Daddy Daughter Dance 2026, Provo Recreation Center, 5-7 p.m. (provo.gov)

A Long Day's Journey into Night, Covey Center for the Arts, TBA (renaissancenow.com)

Shaun Johnson Stand Up: Big Kid Tour, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

Firefighters Pancake Breakfast 2026, Sundance Resort, 8-11 a.m. (sundanceesort.com)

Monster Mashup Family Drawing Activity, Provo Library, 10:30-11:30 a.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Fiber Arts Supply Swap, Provo Library, noon-1 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Author Event: Meet Cute: An Author Speed Dating Event, Provo Library, 2-4 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)
The Last Wild Buffalo “Album Release”, Velour, 7:30 p.m. (24tix.com)

Orem

April 18
Esprit d.c Concert, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7:30 p.m. (uvunoorda.universitytickets.com)

Andrew Lloyd Webber's SCHOOL OF ROCK: THE MUSICAL, SCERA Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (April 18-May 1, scera.org)

Seeing Wilde Songs: Charles T. Griffes' Synesthetic Musical Settings of Oscar Wilde's Poetry, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (April 18-May 23, uvu.edu/museum)

The Divine Sarah: Writing her name in the stars, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (April 18-May 30, uvu.edu/museum)

Teen After Hours: Comedy Night, Orem Library, 7-9 p.m. (orem.librarycalendar.com)

The Pen is Mightier: Writing a Revolution, Orem Library, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. (April 18-May 9, oremlibrary.com)

April 20
We Hold These Truths: Celebrating 250 Years of American Independence, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7 p.m. (uvunoorda.universitytickets.com)

CANTORUM: Both Sides Now, Orem Public Library, 7 p.m. (cantorumchamberchoir.org)

Film: Tolkien, Orem Library, 6-8 p.m. (orem.librarycalendar.com)

Makerspace Workshop: Crafting Cards for a Cause, Orem Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (orem.librarycalendar.com)

April 21
Joshua Bell, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7:30 p.m. (uvunoorda.universitytickets.com)

April 22
Open Studio 2026, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

April 24
Film: Midnight in Paris, Orem Library, 6-8 p.m. (orem.librarycalendar.com)

April 25
Downton Abbey: A Grande Marathon, Orem Library, 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. (orem.librarycalendar.com)

Vineyard

April 18
Berliner Play Area - Utah City Ribbon Cutting, The Greenline Promenade, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. (utah-city.com)

April 25

Earth Day Service Project, Grove Park, 9 a.m.-noon (vineyardutah.gov)

SOUTH

Springville

April 18

Dungeons and Dragons, Springville Library, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

RIICHI Mahjong Club, Springville Library, 1:30-3:30 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (April 18-June 25, smofa.org)

April 20
Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

April 21
Nebo Novelists, Springville Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

April 22
Art City Concert Band Spring Concert, Springville Library, 7-8 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

April 25
102nd Annual Spring Salon, Springville Museum of Art, 7-9 p.m. (April 25-June 3, smofa.org)

April 26
Sunday Concert Series: Utah Baroque Ensemble, Springville Museum of Art, 4:30-6 p.m. (smofa.org)

Spanish Fork

April 18
Utah Tulip Festival 2026, Leland Legacy Farms, 4-8 p.m. (April 18-30, utahtulipfestival.com)

Earth Day Celebration, Community Action Services and Food Bank Garden, 10 a.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

UVSCC Einstein Chess Tournament, Spanish Fork Library, 10:30 a.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

April 21
Adult D&D Club, Spanish Fork Library, 6 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

April 22
Mental Health Monthly Workshop, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

April 23
Chess Club, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30-8 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

April 24
Family Friday Movie: Up, Spanish Fork Library, 4 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

April 25
Children's Day, Spanish Fork Library, 1 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

Payson

April 18
Game Night, Payson Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

April 19
Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

April 20
Weekly Craft Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotu-

cafe.com)

April 21
Live Local Music Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Chess Club, Payson Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

April 22
Midweek Matinee, Payson Library, 4:30-6 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

April 23
Strum Circle, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)
Mother and Daughter Book Club, Payson Library, 7-8 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

April 24
Library Night Out, Payson Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

April 25
Poetry Night, Peteetneet Academy and Museum, 6-8 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

Dungeons and Dragons Beginners Club, Payson Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

Santaquin

April 25
Blossom Run 10K, 5K, 1 Mile, Rowley's Red Barn, 8 a.m. (blossom.run)

Mapleton

April 24
Arbor Day, Harvest Park, 1 p.m. (mapleton.org)

NORTH

Pleasant Grove

April 18
Over the River and Through the Woods, Keith Christeson Little Theater, 7:30 p.m. (April 18-May 11, pgplayers.com)

Saturday Morning Movies: Zootopia, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

April 2
D&D Night, Pleasant Grove Library, 6 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

April 21
Table Talk: Reduce the Risk, Pleasant Grove Library, 12:30-2 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

Beautification Gardening Class: Watering Systems - Drip Line & Lawn Sprinklers, Pleasant Grove Library, 7-8 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

April 22
Utah Flower Market 2026, Grove Station, 9 a.m.-noon (utah-flowermarket.com)

BookEnders, Pleasant Grove Library, 7-8 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

April 24
Alt Rock Rewind, The Soundbox, 7:30 p.m. (ccsoundhouse.com)

April 25
Saturday Morning Movies: The Iron Giant, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Lehi

April 18

Thanksgiving Point Tulip Festival 2026, Thanksgiving Point, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. (April 18-May 16, thanksgivingpoint.org)
2026 Tulip Festival Brunch, Thanksgiving Point, 9:30 a.m.-noon (thanksgivingpoint.org)

Legacy Center Youth Market, Legacy Center, 10 a.m.-noon (events.lehi-ut.gov)
Super STEM Saturdays, Curiosity Farms, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

April 23
Lehi Expo, Legacy Center, 4-7 p.m. (lehi-ut.gov)

April 25
2026 Tulip Festival 5k, Thanksgiving Point, 7:30 a.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

American Fork

April 18
The Fantasticks!, Valentine Theater, 7:30 p.m. (April 18-25, timparts.com)

Afternoon Tea with Author Julie Daines, American Fork Library, 1-2:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)
Rug Tufting Workshop, The Rug Room, 6-9:30 p.m. (April 18-July 31, therugroomutah.com)

April 20
Family Night, American Fork Library, 7-8 p.m. (americanfork.gov)
Gardening: Colorful Pots, American Fork Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

April 21
Family Yoga, American Fork Library, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

April 23
Adult Writer's Club: Advanced, American Fork Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)
Paint Night, American Fork Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Highland

April 18
3D Printing: Beginning and Intermediate, Highland Community Center, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (April 18-June 27, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

April 20
Observational Drawing: Illustrate Your Photos, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (April 20-June 22, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

April 21
Oil Painting: Spectrum of Painting, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (April 21-June 23, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

April 22
Digital Art: Illustrate a Book in Procreate, Highland Community Center, 7-9 p.m. (April 22-June 24, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)
Observational Drawing: Animals and Nature, Highland Community Center, 10 a.m.-noon (April 22-June 24, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

April 23
Oil Painting: Beginning and Intermediate, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (April 23-June 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Sketching: People, Highland

Community Center, 12:30-2:30 p.m. (April 23-June 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Alpine

April 18

Trail Service Day, Lambert Park Bowery, 8 a.m.-noon (alpineut.gov)

Cedar Hills

April 20

Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

WEST

Eagle Mountain

April 20

Bingo, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 5-6 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

April 21

Eagle Mountain Academy: Celebration/Recognition, Eagle Mountain City Hall, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

April 22

Arts and Crafts, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 10 a.m.-noon (eaglemountain.gov)

April 23

Arts and Crafts, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 10 a.m.-noon (eaglemountain.gov)
Senior Exercise Class, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 11-11:30 a.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

April 25

Family Game Day, Eagle Mountain Library, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Cedar Valley

April 18

Camp Floyd Artisan Day 2026, Camp Floyd State Park, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (stateparks.utah.gov/parks/camp-floyd)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

April 18

Baby Animal Celebration at This Is The Place 2026, This Is The Place Heritage Park, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (thisistheplace.org)

Cirque Italia: Water Circus Metropolis, Utah State Fairpark, 1:30 p.m./4:30 p.m./7:30 p.m. (April 18-20, cirqueitalia.com)

April 25

5th Annual Dutch Day Festival, Millcreek Common, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. (dutchsocialclubutah.com)

Heber

April 18

Utah Barrel Race, Wasatch County Event Complex, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. (April 18-19, utbra.com)

April 24

Spring Concert by Wasatch Camerata Chamber Singers, Rising Heights Academy, 7:30 p.m. (April 24-25, wasatchcamerata.com)

April 25

'80s Techno Community Dance, Timpanogos Valley Theatre, 6:30 p.m. (midwaycommunitydance.com)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jllloyd@heraldextra.com.

GET OUT THERE

5 things I've learned from recent travels

I've always believed you don't have to travel far to learn something new. Sometimes a quick weekend getaway, a new restaurant across town, or a nearby ski trip can teach you just as much as crossing an ocean.



BLAKE SNOW

Over the past several months, my family and I have been doing a mix of both: small road trips, local staycations, and a little international travel sprinkled in. Along the way, I've picked up a handful of practical tips and discoveries that made our trips easier, cheaper, and more memorable.

Here are five things I've learned from recent travels.

1 Hotel lounges are like "all-inclusives."

As with basically everything recently, the cost of travel has risen by 23%, according to the U.S. Travel Association. Thankfully there's a hotel hack that can dramatically reduce your food budget while traveling.

They're known as club, concierge, or "executive" lounges, and business travelers have been using them for years to score free breakfast, all day drinks and snacks, and even light dinners. When used properly, these VIP lounges turn almost any participating hotel (usually nicer downtown ones that business travelers frequent) into a virtual "all-inclusive" stay.

My family has done this on several vacations, most recently while staying at the wonderful Provo Marriott Hotel over a holiday weekend. Their lounge is so good, my family actively looked forward to the generous daily breakfast, afternoon snacks, and fancy salads, hors d'oeuvres, charcuterie boards, and desserts they served on weeknights.

The only catch is you need hotel status to get access to these rooms. But you might unknowingly already have access, and oftentimes hotels will gift access for special occasions or requests if you ask nicely.

2 eSIMs are cheaper and easier to stay connected.

International roaming used to be one of the most annoying parts of traveling. Either you paid ridiculous roaming fees to your carrier, hunted down a local SIM card at the airport, or simply lived without reliable data.

Thankfully, eSIM technology has quietly solved most of that headache.

If your phone supports eSIM (most modern iPhones and many Android phones do), you can download an international data plan before you even leave home. Once you land, your phone simply connects to local networks automatically. No swapping tiny SIM cards. No standing in airport kiosks. No worrying about surprise \$200 roaming bills when you get home.



COURTESY LINDSEY SNOW

Blake Snow

Better yet, it's cheap. Many plans through roamia.com, for example, cost \$2-\$10 depending on how much data you need and how long you're traveling. Maps, messaging, ride apps, and restaurant searches all work on eSIMs like they do at home. Nice!

3 Deer Valley pulled off the biggest ski expansion in North America.

Skiers in Utah already know how special Deer Valley is. But this year the resort did something unprecedented: it doubled in size.

The new East Village base area and surrounding terrain represent the largest ski expansion in North American history. When fully completed, Deer Valley will have more than 200 runs and dramatically expanded lift access across thousands of new acres.

Even better, the expansion spreads skiers out. One of Deer Valley's biggest advantages has always been its uncrowded feel. With all the new terrain, that advantage becomes even stronger. I experienced that first hand this winter and loved the new terrain, which reminds me of the Canyons side of Park City (i.e. less crowded and quieter).

Bonus points that you get to bypass

Park City traffic right off Highway 189. That alone is a welcome improvement.

4 Di Napoli is the best Italian food this side of New York.

Thanks to our high concentration of returned missionaries and sometimes gluttonous love of food, Utah is filled with amazing restaurants and diverse cuisine from all over the world. But few are better than the family-owned Di Napoli, with locations in Orem, Sandy, and Midvale.

What started as a successful high-quality chain in New York has since worked its way west, and I'm so glad they did. Fresh house-made pasta, schiacciata bread, paninis, salads, and Italian desserts like cannoli and Italian cream cake do not disappoint. Neither does the fast service.

It's basically a full-service kitchen hiding inside a fast-casual storefront. You order at the counter, grab a table, and within minutes food that tastes like it came from a sit-down Italian restaurant and arrives piping hot.

The pasta is legitimately fresh. The bread is dangerously addictive. And the portions are generous without being over-the-top.

5 Asher Adams is the most impressive new hotel in Salt Lake City.

If you haven't stepped inside the new Asher Adams yet, do yourself a favor and walk through the lobby.

Built inside the historic Union Pacific Depot building next to Salt Lake Central Station, the hotel blends old-world architecture with modern luxury in a way that feels both grand and welcoming.

The lobby ceilings soar. Massive original stonework and wood beams frame the room. Pioneer-era artwork lines the walls. It feels less like a typical hotel check-in desk and more like stepping into a restored piece of Western history.

Upstairs, the rooms are unusually large for a city hotel and continue the historic theme without feeling dated. It's clear the developers leaned into the building's story instead of trying to hide it.

Salt Lake has added several new hotels in recent years, but this one stands apart. It's distinctive, memorable, and rooted in local history.

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ATV ADVENTURES

Arapeen Sunset UTV Ride takes place June 22

Many of the Utah OHV jamborees include night rides in their itineraries. At first, I thought it was to enjoy the splendor of the night sky. While that is a possibility, I have learned by experience that you don't see much of the night sky because the people who go on these night rides drive machines that are lit up like Christmas trees.



LYNN R. BLAMIRES

Sponsored by Sanpete County and the city of Ephraim, this sunset ride takes place when the days are longer. The date is set for June 22, and the lineup is on the road to Ephraim Canyon, next to Roy's Pizza. The ride begins in Ephraim Canyon from the city of Ephraim at 6:15 p.m. after signing in and feasting on pizza at Roy's Pizza. The pizza is hot and fresh, and it's an all-you-can-eat dinner, including drinks.

There will be two groups of 30 machines – both rides are rated moderate, with one slightly more so than the other – and a total length of about 33 miles. Both routes turn off the highway onto the New Canyon Road and follow scenic Arapeen trails through canyons and ridgelines. After enjoying the transition from daylight to twilight, the two groups gather around a bonfire for refreshments and entertainment.

When the fire dies down and the laughter trails off, it is time to come down off the mountain. The machines are fired up and lit with light bars, rock lights, and whip lights for the ride into town. What a show it is with 60 machines lighting up the night in a long line coming down the canyon road.



LYNN R. BLAMIRES, SPECIAL TO THE DAILY HERALD

Lynn R. Blamires and his brother-in-law, Mike, are coming through a water crossing at dusk on the Arapeen Sunset Ride.

All of this is offered to you for only \$28 per person. However, it gets even better. With the opening of the Cobblestone Hotel & Suites in Ephraim last year, and the Willow Creek Inn, you can stay overnight and enjoy a hot breakfast, which both hotels include, and ride another day on the Arapeen trails.

Registration for the Arapeen Sunset UTV Ride is now open. It is limited to 60 machines and includes dinner, a guided evening ride, a free Arapeen trail map, an evening bonfire, and participation in a light parade down the canyon. Register at <https://utvevents.weebly.com>.

The Arapeen Trail System sprawls

across 350,000 acres of Manti-La Sal National Forest, with more than 600 miles of UTV-friendly routes threading through aspen groves, past mountain lakes, and along the high ridgeline called Skyline Drive. The Skyline Drive has about 58 miles of road that stays above 10,000 feet in elevation. Details are in the Arapeen trail map.

The Arapeen Trail map is the best I have seen offered. The system offers three different trail widths – 50-inch, 66-inch, and open to all machines. They are color-coded on the map to help you plan your route. The map offers four different ride plans to take the guesswork

out of wondering where to ride. They include two-day and single-day rides, and they are designed to give you premium ride experiences in the Manti La Sal Mountains.

Do you love to fish? The Arapeen map includes 53 GPS coordinates for lakes and fishing holes for you to fish to your heart's content, or until you reach the legal limit. I don't think of myself as a fisherman, but my brother-in-law, Bob Smith of Kaysville, taught me how to use a fly on a bubble.

We planned an ATV fishing trip on these trails – some of the places can only be reached by OHV. We used renegade and double renegade flies. I caught over 60 fish on our two-day trip. Tiger trout are plentiful in these fishing spots – they fight and are fun to catch. We loved them and left them, but it was great fun.

In addition to the 600 miles of Arapeen trails, there are many miles of Forest Service roads marked in brown. Many of them are dead-end roads. I am not a big fan because they don't go anywhere, but some of them connect and are fun to ride.

The map also includes interesting historical items. The trail system, for example, was named after the Indian Chief Jake Arapeen. He was a Ute who roamed these mountains. A skirmish with a drunken rancher, John Lowry, who grabbed the Chief by his hair and yanked him off his horse. This ultimately led to the beginning of the Black Hawk War. When you go, take plenty of water, keep the rubber side down, and register now for this sunset ride.

Lynn R. Blamires can be reached at quadmanone@gmail.com.

GET OUT THERE

Critic turned fan: How Disneyland made me a travel writer

Comedian Jim Gaffigan once joked, "My favorite ride at Disney was the air conditioned bus back to the airport." When asked why he paid so much money to wait in long lines for underwhelming rides, he replied, "Because I love my children."



BLAKE SNOW

I love my children, too. But unlike Gaffigan, I was previously unwilling to visit Disney because I viewed it as a rip-off, an unneeded parental sacrifice, and not nearly as rewarding as the great outdoors. Although I have fond memories of visiting Disneyland with my family as an eight year old boy, I have fonder memories of visiting the nearby Laguna Beach that same week. "So I'll take my kids to more majestic, less expensive places instead," I told myself.

Deep down, however, I wanted to know: Could so many people be wrong? Why do over 70 million folks visit one of Disney's templated parks each year, making it the third most-visited tourist attraction on Earth? Can a place that averages 4.6 out of 5 stars really be an overpriced tourist trap?

To find out, I finally caved and booked my family for two-day passes to Disneyland. Tickets weren't cheap. In fact, admission into the park totaled more than the combined airfare and four-day stay we paid for a well-rated hotel



COURTESY UNSPLASH

Mickey Mouse welcomes visitors to Disneyland in Anaheim, Calif.

across the street, not to mention the expensive dining we were sure to encounter inside the park.

Upon realizing that, I had buyer's remorse. Had I made a mistake? Was I turning into sheep? Maybe. But I was determined to find out for myself, if not for humanity's sake.

Turns out, my inner-critic was wrong. Disneyland is enchanted—a captivating delight. During my visit, I wasn't the only one who thought so.

I saw several bearded, grizzled men in full Micky garb. A pair of Gothic girls sporting oversized Mini Mouse t-shirts under layers of black. A senior couple euphorically boarding Peter Pan's Flight. Grown adults rising and falling on King Arthur's Carousel with nary a concern of looking foolish. And a model-esque, exotic-looking

blond inching closer and closer to a passing parade just to catch a glimpse of her favorite princess, if not touch her past.

At Disneyland, the stoic and cool are nowhere in sight. I've never seen so many smiles and cheery dispositions in public. Almost no one is heads down on their phone. At one point I bumped into a lady in her 40s. We both smiled, apologized, and hi-ho'd our separate ways into Tomorrowland. Had the encounter happened "in the real world," I would have expected a lot more grunts, grumbles, and annoyed looks.

I certainly didn't expect so much wonderment. When my wife and two daughters exited from Indiana Jones — their first ride of the day — they did so with bright eyes and full faces. While whipping through

Big Thunder Mountain or dropping from Guardians of The Galaxy, we screamed a whole lot more than we do at our local theme park.

Upon approaching Space Mountain for the first time in 27 years and encountering those hypnotizing blue lights and launch tunnel, I thought to myself: let's see if this still has it after all the years. I'm here to report, it does. I retired giddy with laughter. All three times.

But Disneyland and the adjoining California Adventures capture more than just thrill rides. The fifteen themed areas arrest the imagination. Sure, the robotics of Pirates of the Caribbean, Ariel's Underwater Adventure, or Nemo's Submarine Voyage won't suspend your belief. But Cars Land will. The Star Wars rides will. Midway Mania will. Fantasyland will. So does Animation Academy and several others.

Like he's done with so many of his movies, Walt Disney bottled magic in his theme parks. Not because I need them to be worth the price of admission. Not because I overvalue nostalgia or feeling young again. Not because I love my kids. But because I shared two fun-filled days with them at a truly remarkable place.

Upon retiring the first night, my wife (who entered the park more jaded than I) turned to me and said, "That was a blast!" Lying next to us in the queen-size bed, two of our daughters were sleeping in each other's arms. I'm romanticizing, but not making that up. No, Disneyland

didn't mend the sibling rivalry between them. Maybe they were just tired. But I believe there's more to it.

We entered the park that day as a family that prides itself in avoiding tourist traps, taking the road less traveled, and frequenting some of the most awe-inspiring landscapes the world has to offer. But we left that day little younger, a little happier, and fully converted to the gospel of Walt Disney.

There I go getting romantic again.

Is Disney the "happiest place on Earth"? I don't know about that. But there's virtue in the slogan. It is indeed a happy, happy place. That's not the stars in my eyes talking. For any still in doubt, I can positively say Disney is anything but a tourist trap, rip-off, or somehow inferior as a synthetic apple to the authentic "oranges" of nature.

In short, my first visit with kids to Disneyland over 10 years ago exceeded all of my skeptical expectations. I've enjoyed it many times since (much more than Disney World). And believe it or not, that first visit actually prompted my career as a travel writer, after reviewing the trip for a national magazine. If that's not magic, nothing is.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

April 4

Hamlet and Zombies, BYU West Campus, 7 p.m. (April 4-11, onstage.byu.edu)

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

FESTIVAL OF FOOLS (Costume Concert!), Velour, 8 p.m. (24tix.com)

General Cover La Rumba - "Vibras Nuevas", The Rise, 10 p.m. (April 4-5, therisevenue.com)

Magic Morning, Provo Library, 10 a.m.-noon (provolibrary.gov)

Provo City Library Writing Group, Provo Library, 4-5 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Gilded Paradise: Recasting Lorenzo Ghiberti's Baptistery Doors, BYU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (April 4-Oct. 24, moa.byu.edu)

Provo City School District High School Art Show, Provo Library, 3:30-8 p.m. (April 4-May 1, provolibrary.gov)

The Way of the Cross: A Series by David Habben, Brigham Young University Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. (April 4-Aug. 22, moa.byu.edu)

NIGHT: New Work by J. Kirk Richards, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (April 4-25, jkrgallery.com)

April 5

2026 Easter Brunch at Sundance, Sundance Resort, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Community Easter Sunrise Service, Provo Community Congregational United Church of Christ, 8 a.m. (KeepingtheFaith-Provo.org)

April 6

2026 Easter Family Night, Bean Life Science Museum, 6-9 p.m. (lsm.byu.edu)

54 Ultra, Velour, 7:30 p.m. (24tix.com)

Thank You, Mr. Falker, Provo Library, 5 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

April 7

Swan Lake & Tap Vibes, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (April 7-8, covey.provo.org)

University Orchestra and University Strings, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Jazz Combo Showcase, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m./8:45 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Guitar Studio Recital, BYU Music Building, 5:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Lovingly Clad, Social Cinema (Nebraska), The Moonspinners, Velour, 7:30 p.m. (24tix.com)

April 8

String Chamber Night, BYU Music Building, 5:30 p.m. (on-

stage.byu.edu)

Author Event - Ally Condie, Provo Library, 7-9 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

BYU Symphonic Band: Sounds of Home, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Organ Area Recital, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Open Piano Lab, Provo Library, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

April 9

Camino al Carnaval, Covey Center for the Arts, 8 p.m. (covey.provo.org)

Ballroom Dance Company in Concert, Marriott Center, 7:30 p.m. (April 9-11, onstage.byu.edu)

DancEnsemble in Concert, Dance Performance Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (April 9-11, onstage.byu.edu)

A Light in the Piazza, BYU West Campus, 7:30 p.m. (April 9-11, onstage.byu.edu)

Student Composers Showcase, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Poetry Reading featuring David Thacker and Steven L. Peck, The Compass Gallery, 6 p.m. (thecompassgallery.com)

April 10

The Split Signal Tour 2026, The Rise, 6:30 p.m. (therisevenue.com)

Blood Drive, Provo Library, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

BYU Wind Symphony: A Brazilian Celebration!, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Jazz Voices: Swing into Spring, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Drop-n-Decorate (April), Baking Me Crazy, 4-8 p.m. (shopbakingmecrazy.com)

Mimi Chen Ting: Make Movement Visible, BYU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (April 10-Oct. 10, moa.byu.edu)

The Afters, Arlington Hall, 10 p.m. (linktr.ee/theaftersutah)

April 11

JK LIVE!, Covey Center for the Arts, 4 p.m./7 p.m. (covey.provo.org)

Rock For A Cause (Benefit Concert), Velour, 7 p.m. (24tix.com)

BYU Philharmonic: From the New World, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Harp Ensemble, BYU Music Building, 3 p.m./5:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

2026 Pride in Progress, Provo Veterans Memorial Park, 4:15 p.m. (cougarpridecenter.org)

Poetry Reading featuring Millie Tullis and Stephen Tuttle, The Compass Gallery, 6 p.m. (thecompassgallery.com)

Orem

April 4

Easter Extravaganza 2026, University Place Orem, noon-4 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Secret Garden, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7 p.m. (April 4-11, uvunoorda.universitytickets.com)

The Pen is Mightier: Writing a Revolution, Orem Library, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. (April 4-May 9, oremlibrary.com)

April 6

Family Movie Night: Coco, Orem Public Library, 6-8 p.m. (oremlibrary.org)

Makerspace Workshop: Crafting Cards for a Cause, Orem Public Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (oremlibrary.org)

April 8

Open Studio 2026, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Andrew Lloyd Webber's SCHOOL OF ROCK: THE MUSICAL, SCERA Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (April 10-May 1, scera.org)

Film: Il Postino (The Postman), Orem Library, 6-8 p.m. (orem.librarycalendar.com)

Opera Scenes: The Things We Do For Love, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7 p.m. (April 10-11, uvunoorda.universitytickets.com)

Luminesce: Senior Dance Capstone, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 5/7:30 p.m. (April 10-11, uvunoorda.universitytickets.com)

April 11

Art for All 2026, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Vineyard

2026 Easter Bunny Hop Egg Drop, Vineyard Grove Park, 9 a.m. (vineyardutah.gov)

SOUTH

Springville

Springville Easter Egg Hunt 202, Memorial Park, 9-10 a.m. (springvilleutah.gov)

Dungeons & Dragons, Springville Library, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (April 4-June 25, smofa.org)

April 11

Board Game Club, Springville Library, 1-3 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

Art City Ukulele, Springville Library, 11 a.m.-noon (springvilleutah.gov/library)

Spanish Fork

2026 Spanish Fork Easter Egg Hunt, Sports Park (East Complex), 8-10 a.m. (spanishfork.gov)

Ophir, Tintic & Western 2026 Spring Train Show, Spanish Fork

Fairgrounds, 3-9 p.m. (otwtrain-club.org)

April 6

Utah Tulip Festival 2026, LeLand Legacy Farms, 4-8 p.m. (April 6-30, utahtulipfestival.com)

Marriage Preparation: Building a Happy Home Before It Begins, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

April 7

Shelf Indulgence Book Club, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

Adult D&D Club, Spanish Fork Library, 6 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

April 8

Creating a Happy and Mindful Home, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

Men's Mental Health: A Support Group for Men, Spanish Fork Library, 7 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

Chess Club, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

April 11

Autism Awareness Day, Spanish Fork Library, 11 a.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

Payson

2026 Payson Easter Egg Hunt, Hillman Field, 10 a.m. (paysonutah.gov)

April 5

Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

April 6

Weekly Craft Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

April 7

Live Local Music Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

April 9

Strum Circle, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

April 10

Family Movie Night, Payson Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

Santaquin

Santaquin Recreation's Great Easter Egg Hunt, Santaquin Baseball Fields, 9-10 a.m. (santaquin.activityreg.com)

NORTH

Pleasant Grove

Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

April 8

Utah Flower Market 2026, Grove Station, 9 a.m.-noon (utah-

flowermarket.com)

Lehi

April 4

Curiosity Circus, Thanksgiving Point, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

April 8

Thanksgiving Point Tulip Festival 2026, Thanksgiving Point, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. (April 8-May 16, thanksgivingpoint.org)

April 10

SAVOR 2026, The Lodge at Traverse Mountain, 6 p.m. (April 10-11, wasatchcontemporary.com)

American Fork

April 4

Rug Tufting Workshop, The Rug Room, 6-9:30 p.m. (April 4-July 31, therugroomutah.com)

April 7

Dungeons & Dragons (Adults), American Fork Library, 6-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Classical Lit Book Group, American Fork Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

April 9

Dungeon Master Club, American Fork Library, 5-6:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Adult Writer's Club: Advanced, American Fork Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Kiss and Tell Book Club, American Fork Library, 7-8 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Highland

April 4

2026 Highland City Easter Egg Hunt, Highland Heritage Park, 9 a.m. (highlandut.gov)

3D Printing: Beginning and Intermediate, Highland Community Center, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (April 4-June 27, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

April 6

Observational Drawing: Illustrate Your Photos, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (April 6-June 22, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

April 7

Oil Painting: Spectrum of Painting, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (April 7-June 23, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

April 8

Digital Art: Illustrate a Book in Procreate, Highland Community Center, 7-9 p.m. (April 8-June 24, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Observational Drawing: Animals and Nature, Highland Community Center, 10 a.m.-noon (April 8-June 24, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

April 9

Oil Painting: Beginning and Intermediate, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (April 9-June 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Sketching: People, Highland Community Center, 12:30-2:30 p.m. (April 9-June 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

April 11

3D Printing: Beginning and Intermediate, Highland Community Center, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (April 11-June 27, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Cedar Hills

April 6

Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

WEST

Eagle Mountain

April 8

Arts and Crafts, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 10 a.m.-noon (eaglemountain.gov)

April 9

Arts and Crafts, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 10 a.m.-noon (eaglemountain.gov)

Senior Exercise Class, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 11-11:30 a.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Adult Book Club, Eagle Mountain Library, 6:45-7:45 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

April 11

Family Puzzle Day, Eagle Mountain Library, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Cedar Valley

April 4

Camp Floyd Egg Scramble 2026, Camp Floyd State Park, 1 p.m. (stateparks.utah.gov/parks/camp-floyd)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

April 4

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints General Conference, Conference Center, 10 a.m./2 p.m. (April 4-5, churchofjesuschrist.org)

April 11

2026 Reptilian Nation Expo, Mountain America Expo Center, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (April 11-12, reptilianationexpo.com)

17th Annual Alta Earth Day, Alta Ski Area, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (alta.com)

Heber/Nephi

April 4

Easter Bunny Train, Heber Valley Railroad, 4 p.m./6 p.m. (heberttrain.com)

Easter Egg Hunt, Wasatch Back Alpacas, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (wasatchbackalpacas.com)

April 11

Ask Heber Valley Community Expo, Wasatch County Rec Center, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (gohebervalley.com)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jllloyd@heraldextra.com.

Spruce things up

10 tips to help you make the most of spring cleaning

BY JARED LLOYD
Daily Herald

Although the weather in Utah has felt like spring for much of the last few months, last week it became official with the vernal equinox on March 20.

The changing of the seasons brings with it an annual tradition that is both beloved and dreaded: spring cleaning.

According to a National Geographic article by Lola Mendez in 2024, the origins of the practice trace back to ancient times and are common in many cultures.

Many religions had symbolic spring cleansing rituals for individuals and places of worship, while there were also many historical practical reasons like removing the soot and grime left by burning wood and coal for heat during the winter.

We may not have the same reasons as our ancestors for doing a thorough cleaning at this time of year, but it can still be beneficial for our psyche.

"It (spring cleaning) also holds symbolic significance," Mendez said in the National Geographic article. "Viewed as a fresh start, the tradition symbolizes the transition from the dormant winter season to the vibrant growth of spring. By purging the home of accumulated debris and organizing its contents, individuals create a cleaner living environment and a sense of mental clarity and freshness."

Still, the process can be daunting as we look at an enormous amount of things to be cleaned in our homes.

To help break down the process and provide a better chance for successful renewal, here are 10 tips from cleaning resources to make the most of your spring cleaning:

1. Make a plan

Just about all of the spring cleaning guides recommend starting by deciding what you want to accomplish.

"Without a doubt, the top piece of advice I received from professional cleaners on where to start spring cleaning was to plan my approach on paper before I picked up a single tool," Gabriella Dyson said in a 2024 article on HomesandGardens.com.

Sylvane.com had a similar approach, saying "Scope out your home: What areas need the most work? Where do you skip during routine cleaning? Those are the best places to start. Regardless of where you start, having a plan will keep you focused on the task at hand. Just go room by room."

2. Get some fresh air

The warming temperatures make spring a great time to get things aired out.

"I love opening my windows to air out my home (even in the winter)," Tammy Strobel said in a spring cleaning article on BeMoreWithLess.com. "However, springtime breezes are the



COURTESY PHOTO

Clean regularly with soap and water or a sanitizing spray to reduce germs on surfaces, which decreases the risk of infection.

best. In the spring, it isn't too hot or cold. Plus, the fresh air energizes me."

Having open windows can also dissipate the smells of dust or cleaning solutions that are in use during the process.

3. Begin by decluttering

Busy schedules often make it easy to have clutter pile up throughout the house. Many resources advise starting by addressing that aspect of cleaning so it won't be an obstacle to deeper cleaning efforts.

"Declutter first to streamline your cleaning process," TrueHomes.com said in its spring cleaning guide. "Make sure all your cleaning supplies are ready to go so you're not interrupted mid-task."

4. Start with the busiest room

Dyson said that experts she talked to debated whether the kitchen or the bedroom as the best place to start, but her recommendation was to start with the room that gets the most traffic.

"The methodology behind this technique is simple: tackling the busiest room in your home first eliminates the biggest hurdle between you and a visibly cleaner home," Dyson said. "Plus, the satisfaction of ticking the hardest area off your list at the beginning should be enough to motivate you to keep going."

5. Consider the benefits of steam

The goal of spring cleaning is to improve the overall cleanliness of the home, but some cleaners can make it feel like you've added harsh chemicals instead of gotten rid of them. That can be where steam can be valuable, according to Sylvane.com.

"Since steam cleaners only use hot water vapor, they're a 100% natural

and chemical-free cleaning solution," the website said. "If you don't have a steam cleaner, one of the best natural combinations for cleaning is white distilled vinegar, baking soda, and water. These ingredients are affordable, non-toxic, and have worked for ages when it comes to cleaning."

6. Cleaning lights brightens the home

It can be challenging to find or make the time to address the dirt and dust the builds up on light fixtures, but addressing can make your home feel very different.

"It amazes me how much dust accumulates on lamps, light bulbs, and overhead lights," Strobel said. "This is a good time to clean ceiling fans too. I use a damp towel to clean all our lights (and ceiling fans). Cleaning our light fixtures has made our home brighter. Plus, the air quality is cleaner."

7. Look at donating unwanted items

Trash cans will likely get filled with discarded items as you clean and declutter, but resources also recommend taking the time to donate things that might still be useful. That can be particularly true for closet-cleaning projects.

"If you have a difficult time letting go of clothing, consider pairing spring cleaning with Project 333 (also known as the Minimalist Fashion Challenge)," Strobel said. "The project is fun and will give you the tools to let go of clothes you don't need."

TrueHomes.com agreed, saying spring cleaning is a great time to "clean out wardrobes and donate items you no longer need." Other examples of items to donate could include books, old furniture or unused appliances.

8. Work from the top down

The concept of starting at the ceiling and then moving downward is all about the logical process.

"When you think about how to spring clean your home, starting from the ceiling down is important," Sylvane.com said. "This will force debris downward and keep you from having to re-dust or re-clean your space. If you have a vacuum with an extension hose, use it to get cobwebs and dust from your ceilings and fans first. Then, dust your furniture and other items before vacuuming all the dust and debris off your floors. It will save you time."

9. Don't forget fire safety

When thinking of spring cleaning, one area that may get overlooked is ensuring the risk to your home from fire is minimized.

"Change batteries in smoke detectors (this should be done twice a year) and make sure units are free of dust," Madeline Buiano said in a spring cleaning article at MarthaStewart.com. "Teach everyone in your household how to use a fire extinguisher, and review escape plans."

Use the time to check to make sure your fire extinguishers haven't expired, since the risk of failure increases after they pass the date listed.

10. Reward yourself for your effort

Having a cleaner living space is certainly a reward in its own way, but many resource encourage you to treat yourself as you finish the process to reinforce the benefits.

"After your home is tidy, treat yourself! Go out to dinner, make a sweet treat, or take a long walk in the park," Strobel said. "Do something that is fun and joyful and celebrate that you implemented these spring cleaning tips!"

GET OUT THERE

Will travel for food ... in Oklahoma City?

Oklahoma is known for a lot of things. Food isn't one of them.

Of course, locals eat food there. I know because I saw them do it and even broke

bread with them on a recent food tour of some of the most beloved restaurants and dishes in Oklahoma City, their subdued capital.

So what's the food like in the land of tornadoes, cowboys and indians, and lots of oil? I'll tell you. It exceeds expectations—sometimes fantastically so.

This is my report.

Setting the table

There is a surreal, serene, and calming beauty with the flatness of Oklahoma. I flew in from the Mountain West at sunset, which accentuated the already dramatic landscape. Like one giant table waiting to be set. I was hungry.

"First off, y'all are safe from tornadoes," a local publicist told me after being seated at our first actual dinner table. Although that was the last thing on my mind, it's obvious travel officials get asked that a lot.

It's also obvious how personable, respectful, and — while working — professional Oklahomans are. My wife and I immediately liked them. Their capital has the manners of a small town in big city clothing. Out of the dozens of friendly faces who served us, only one seemed disinterested. The service was superb without ever being pretentious or overly formal.

As for the food, you won't encounter nearly as many veggies or inventiveness in Oklahoma as you would in California or New York. But you'll definitely encounter more than you would in the Deep South or Midwest. And unlike the surrounding plains, the food is anything but flat.

Worth writing home about

Our first stop was one of the best. Dinner in the great hall of Jones Assembly, where we devoured wood-fired and perfectly proofed dough that was as crisp as it was chewy. When dipped in the accompanying hummus, tzatziki, or pimento cheese, my wife and I knew we were in for a feast.

And feast we did. Scratch biscuits with cardamom marmalade. Oxtail stew. Margherita and elote pizzas. Ten ingredient Buddha bowls. Cacio e pepe as good as any I've eaten in Italy (really). Lemon mascarpone ice cream that was a legitimate revelation.

Not to mention insane affordability for a city that regularly ranks among the top five most affordable in America. With one exception (more on that later), the food quality over the next several days was always and excitingly affordable.

That was the case at contemporary Frida Southwest, upscale Cheever's Cafe, and

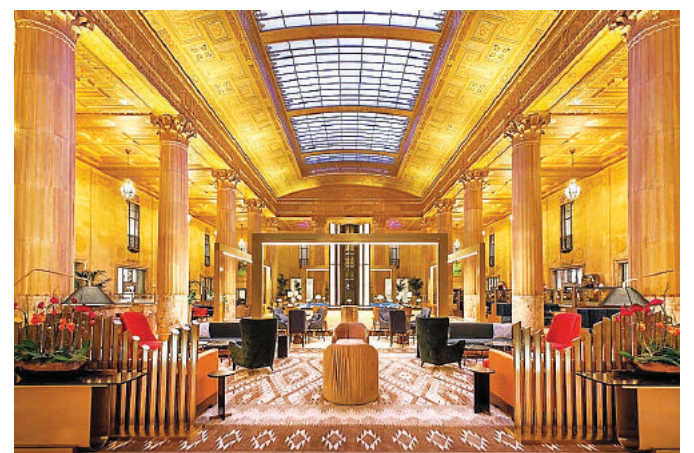
the fine dining of 39 Restaurant. Even more so at the iconic, adorable, and must-visit fast food burgers and sundaes of Braum's, a long-time and delectable Oklahoma staple.

It's all very comforting without fully succumbing to the sometimes derogatory label of comfort food. Thankfully for you and I, Oklahoma City does both.

One of the best in the nation?

Confession: I wouldn't have visited "OKC" had I not read a list that ranked The National, a truly remarkable hotel that was once an opulent bank, as having one of the best afternoon teas in America. You see, I'm a sucker for afternoon tea. Because I like feeling like royalty while sipping from tiny tea-cups (pinkies up!) and eating fancy finger foods lavishly stacked on three tiered trays.

So does Oklahoma City's The National serve one of the best afternoon teas in Amer-



COURTESY MARRIOTT HOTELS

The hotel lobby of The National in Oklahoma City.

ica, on par with The Plaza in New York, The Peninsula in Chicago, or perhaps Royal Albert Hall in London maybe?

No, it doesn't. That said, the tea is definitely served in one of the most impressive hotel lobbies I've ever seen and comes closer than I would have expected. But for \$72 per person with tax and auto gratuity, it was the only questionable value meal we ate in the city. Overall, the execution fell short, such as serving jam on everyday Bonne Maman jars (and without clotted cream — the horror!) to stingy scone portions and nary a cucumber sand-

wich in sight. It was good, not great ... in a fantastically rich setting.

But like greater Oklahoma, there is immense potential here. An unassuming place that's quietly expanding towards more sophistication and consideration than any of us expect.

And I'm hungry for more.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo with his wife, five children and one ferocious chihuahua.

GET OUT THERE

5 food hacks cruises don't want you to know

Cruise ships are floating resorts specifically engineered to separate you from your money — especially when it comes to food and drinks. Specialty steakhouses. Surcharges sushi. Cocktails that cost more than your cell phone bill.



BLAKE SNOW

And yet, some of the best food experiences at sea are already included in your fare.

After years of sailing on Royal Caribbean, Carnival, and other premium lines, I've learned a simple truth: You don't have to spend extra to eat and drink well. You just have to know how the system works.

Here are five proven food hacks cruises don't want you to know.

1. Order more than one entrée. Or three

In the main dining room, you can almost always order multiple appetizers, entrées, and desserts. Want the steak and the salmon? Done. Torn between chocolate cake and cheesecake? Get both.

Cruise dining is one of the last places in America where abundance is baked into the business model.

Now, some cruise lines have started charging for more than two entrées in the main dining room. But appetizers and desserts are typically unlimited. The key is to ask politely and order intentionally. Smaller portions of multiple dishes often beat one oversized plate anyway.

Think of it as a tasting menu you design yourself.

2. The free drinks are better than you think

Yes, beverage packages get all the marketing love. But the included drinks can be pretty great if you get creative.

Water is free and your best friend at sea. Staying hydrated improves everything — energy, digestion, mood. Coffee is included in most dining areas. So is hot cocoa. Basic juices, too.

Now here's where it gets fun. Pack flavored water packets and turn that standard-issue H₂O into tropical bliss. Add a shot of hot coffee to a cup of complimentary soft-serve ice cream and you've got a makeshift

affogato that feels downright bougie. Mix lemonade with iced tea for an Arnold Palmer. Bring a reusable bottle and create your own "spa water" with sliced fruit from the buffet.

You don't need a drink package to feel fancy.

3. Ask for hidden menus

Cruise ships offer more variety than what's printed on the main menu.

Vegetarian and vegan menus often exist but aren't prominently displayed. Kids' menus can be ordered by adults and sometimes even include comfort-food gems. Pop-up restaurants may appear on select sea days, brunch menus sometimes replace standard breakfast fare, and afternoon tea may happen once or twice per sailing. On many ships, themed lunches or late-night snacks aren't heavily advertised either.

Don't see something you like? Ask the staff to whip up something with the ingredients you want, such as a different pasta sauce or side pairing.

After all, cruise kitchens are massive operations capable of feeding thousands. Within reason, they can customize more than you think.

The best dishes at sea are some-

times hiding in plain sight.

4. Pack snacks to go

This one feels rebellious, but it's perfectly acceptable. Heading out for a shore excursion? The buffet is your friend. Cereal boxes, small sandwiches, burritos, whole fruit, cookies, folded pizza slices, and bagels all travel well. Most cruise lines allow you to take food off the ship for personal consumption, though fresh items may be restricted in certain ports due to agricultural rules.

The point isn't to hoard. It's to prepare. After all, excursion and disembarkation days can be long, and port food isn't always convenient or affordable.

Having a simple snack in your daypack keeps you energized and can be the difference between a great afternoon and a cranky one.

5. Take advantage of free in-room dining

Room service isn't always free anymore. Some lines charge delivery fees or per-item pricing. But many still offer complimentary continental breakfast.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

March 21

Twelfth Night, BYU West Campus, 7:30 p.m. (March 21-28, onstage.byu.edu)

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

A Weekend with Tony Foster, Sundance Resort, 7 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Library Adventures: Let's Go Birding, Provo Library, 9-10 a.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Gilded Paradise: Recasting Lorenzo Ghiberti's Baptistery Doors, BYU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (March 21-Oct. 24, moa.byu.edu)

Provo City School District High School Art Show, Provo Library, 3:30-8 p.m. (March 21-May 1, provolibrary.gov)

All Shapes and Sizes, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (March 21-28, jkrgallery.com)

PowHERful Group Show, The Compass Gallery, 6-9 p.m. (March 21-28, thecompassgallery.com)

March 23

"Soundsation" Percussive Footwork Concert, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

Author Event: It's More Fun to Believe, Provo Library, 7 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

March 24

BYU Forum: Jean M. Twenge, Marriott Center, 11 a.m. (calendar.byu.edu/devotionals-forums)

Victor Jones: The Construct Tour 2026, Velour, 7:30 p.m. (24tix.com)

Learn It: Equinox Intention Candles, Provo Library, 7 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Group for New Music: Reich's Music for 18 Musicians, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Honors Quartet, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

March 25

BYU Symphony Orchestra, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Jazz Legacy Band, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Introduction to Studio Production, Provo Library, 7 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Open Piano Lab, Provo Library, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

March 26

Utah Symphony with Pablo Ferrández, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Apple Blossom Live, The Rise, 6:30 p.m. (therisevenue.com)

Theatre Ballet Studio Company: Emerging Works Series, Dance Performance Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (March 26-28, onstage.byu.edu)

Woodwind Chamber Night, BYU Music Building, 5:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Brass Chamber Night, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Jazz Legacy Band, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

March 27

Percy Grainger Symposium Showcase: Chamber Music and Symphonic Band, BYU Music Building, 5:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Winter Bluebird Cafe Concert Series 2026, Sundance Resort, 7:30 p.m. (March 27-28, sundanceresort.com)

Drop-n-Decorate (March), Baking Me Crazy, 4-8 p.m. (shopbakingmecrazy.com)

Songwriters Showcase Recital Hall, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Blood Drive, Provo Library, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

The Way of the Cross: A Series by David Habben, Brigham Young University Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. (March 27-Aug. 22, moa.byu.edu)

The Afters, Arlington Hall, 10 p.m. (linktr.ee/theaftersutah)

March 28

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

Calico Bunnies Cookie Decorating Class, Baking Me Crazy, 10:30 a.m. (shopbakingmecrazy.com)

Easter Cake Pop Workshop, Baking Me Crazy, 3-5 p.m. (shopbakingmecrazy.com)

All Shapes and Sizes, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (jkrgallery.com)

Basic Audio Production, Provo Library, 2-3:30 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Orem

March 21

Hadestown: Teen Edition, SCERA Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (March 21-28, scera.org)

Thank you, Mr. Falker, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 6:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/arts)

Alpine School District High School & Jr. High Art Show, University Place Orem, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. (March 21-April 1, universityplaceorem.com)

March 23

Film: Spirited Away, Orem Library, 6-8:30 p.m. (oremilibrary.com)

March 25

An Evening of Storytelling, SCERA Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (scera.org)

Paint Night with Torgesen Murdoch, Havenlight Gallery, 6 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Open Studio 2026, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

March 26

Piano Area Recital, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7 p.m. (uvunoorda.universitytickets.com)

Orem Reading Challenge: James Book Discussion, Orem Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (oremilibrary.com)

March 27

Orem Choral "A Time for Peace" Concert, Orchard Stake Center, 7 p.m. (sites.google.com/site/oremchoralesite)

Commercial Music Showcase, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7 p.m. (uvu.edu/arts)

Film: Hidden Figures, Orem Library, 6-8:30 p.m. (oremilibrary.com)

March 28

Happy Valley Comedy, Orem Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (oremilibrary.com)

Lindon

March 28

2026 Lindon Easter Egg Hunt, Anderson Farms Park, 9 a.m. (lindonrecreation.org/events)

Vineyard

March 21

2026 Vineyard City Gold Rush 5K & Kids 1K, Grove Park, 8:30 a.m. (runsignup.com)

SOUTH

Springville

March 21

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (March 21-June 25, smofa.org)

Dungeons and Dragons, Springville Library, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

RIICHI Mahjong Club, Springville Library, 1:30-3:30 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

March 23

Irish Session, Springville Library, 7-8 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

March 24

Nebo Novelists, Springville Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

March 25

HerStory: Hat Studio, Springville Library, 7-8 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

March 27

Ultimate Egg Hunt for Grownups, Springville Library, 7-8 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

March 28

Encaustics: Over and Under with Cindy Clark, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (smofa.org)

Board Game Club, Springville Library, 1-3 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

Spanish Fork

March 21

The Lady of Sherwood, Angelus Theatre, 2/7:30 p.m. (March 21-April 4, greathall.live)

March 23

Basic Computer Skills Lab: Winter Session, Spanish Fork Library, 6-7 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

Marriage Preparation: Building a Happy Home Before It Begins, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

March 24

Poppy Book Author Event: LJ Andrews in conversation with Courtney L. Winn, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

Marriage Preparation: Building a Happy Home Before It Begins, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

Adult D&D Club, Spanish Fork Library, 6 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

March 25

Tolkien Read-In Day, Spanish Fork Library, 3 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

Mental Health Monthly Workshop, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

March 26

Plot Twists and Playpens: A

Parent Book Club, Spanish Fork Library, 10 a.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

Chess Club, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

March 27

Family Friday Movie: The Lego Batman Movie, Spanish Fork Library, 4 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

The Commonplace Society, Spanish Fork Library, 5:30 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

March 28

2026 Holi Festival of Colors Spanish Fork, Sri Sri Radha Krishna Temple, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (March 28-29, festivalofcolorusa.com)

Payson

March 22

Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

March 23

Weekly Craft Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

March 24

Live Local Music Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Chess Club, Payson Library, 6:30 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

Tuesday Night Book Club, Payson Library, 8 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

March 25

Midweek Matinee, Payson Library, 4:30-6 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

March 26

Strum Circle, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Books and Boys, Payson Library, 7 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

March 27

Library Night Out, Payson Library, 6:30 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

Dungeons and Dragons Beginners Club, Payson Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

Santaquin

March 28

2026 Rowley's Easter Celebration, Rowley's Red Barn, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (rowleysredbarn.com)

Mapleton

March 28

Splash of Color, Ira Allan Park, noon-2 p.m. (mapleton.org)

NORTH

Pleasant Grove

March 21

KPop Laser Hunters Show, Christa McAuliffe Space Center, 7:30 p.m. (March 21-28, spacecenterutah.org)

Forever Plaid, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (March 21-28, theruth.org)

Fiddler on the Roof, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (theruth.org)

Saturday Morning Movies: Shaun the Sheep, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

March 23

Twilight Tales, Pleasant Grove Library, 6:30 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

March 24

Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

March 25

BookEnders, Pleasant Grove Library, 7 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

March 28

Saturday Morning Movies: Up, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Lehi

March 27

Lehi's Easter Eggstravaganza 2026, Osier Park, 9 p.m. (March 27-28, lehi-ut.gov/event/lehi-city-easter-egg-hunt)

Kind Comedy Standup, Kiln Theater, 7:30 p.m. (tanvancomedy.com)

March 28

Super STEM Saturdays, Thanksgiving Point, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

American Fork

March 21

Ice Breaker Triathlon 2026, American Fork Recreation & Fitness Center, 7 a.m. (triutah.com)

Rug Tufting Workshop, The Rug Room, 6-9:30 p.m. (March 21-July 31, therugroomutah.com)

March 23

Family Night: Otters and Others, American Fork Library, 7-8 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

March 24

Dungeons and Dragons (Teens/Adults), American Fork Library, 4-6 p.m./6-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

March 25

Read With Me, American Fork Library, 6-7 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

March 26

Adult Writer's Club: Advanced, American Fork Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Adult Yoga, American Fork Library, 7-8 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Highland

March 21

Watercolor: Beginning, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (March 21-28, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

March 23

Introduction to Art Materials and Techniques (Ages 5-10), Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Portraits Across Media, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

March 24

Oil Painting: The Spectrum of Painting, Highland Community Center, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

March 25

Drawing & Painting: Fantasy Art (Ages 5-10), Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Drawing for Homeschoolers (Ages 8-12), Highland Community Center, noon-2 p.m. (visual-art-institute.jumbula.com

GET OUT THERE

Timeless tips for stress-free travel

Travel is one of the great privileges of being alive. It broadens our empathy, sharpens our priorities, and reminds us how beautiful the world really is. But let's be honest: in between flight delays, overstuffed itineraries, and the modern addiction to social media photography, travel can also exhaust us.



BLAKE SNOW

After decades of zigzagging across continents — from the neon buzz of Tokyo to the cobbled calm of Florence — I've learned that stress-free travel isn't about luck. It's about smart planning and trusting that humans will help you wherever you go. To help you travel lighter, better and happier, here are five, time-tested tips for stress-free travel.

1. Pack half as much as you think

Nothing sabotages a trip faster than hauling too much stuff. Overpacking slows you down, costs you money and clutters your mental space.

Instead, pack versatile clothing in neutral colors, prioritize com-

fort over fashion and embrace repetition. No one notices if you wear the same jacket three times. They do notice if you look miserable dragging a 50-pound suitcase up four flights of stairs.

If you're traveling for more than a week, plan to do laundry in your hotel sink or laundry. The freedom you gain from traveling light is worth far more than the "just in case" items you leave behind.

2. Build margin into your itinerary

Overplanning suffocates serenity and adds undue stress.

When visiting icons like the Eiffel Tower or Machu Picchu, you should secure tickets in advance. But leave breathing room between major activities — entire mornings, afternoons or nights even. A good rule of thumb: plan one "must-do" per day. Everything else is optional.

If you want to enjoy your next trip a whole lot more, embrace lots of buffers.

3. Stay where life is

Hotels matter. Neighborhoods matter more.



COURTESY PHOTO

Traveling can be stressful.

Instead of isolating yourself near airports or business districts, stay in walkable neighborhoods where daily life unfolds outside your door. The morning espresso ritual. The after-school soccer game. The elderly couple arguing lovingly over groceries.

In cities like Barcelona or Mexico City, neighborhood culture is the destination. When you embed yourself in it — even briefly — you travel deeper.

4. Protect your energy

Jet lag, dehydration and sensory overload are real.

So is burnout.

Drink water. Sleep when you can. Schedule downtime. Say no to the extra museum if your feet hurt. Skip the nightlife if you're exhausted.

You didn't cross oceans to prove something. You came to feel something.

Even in high-energy destinations like New York City, the best

travel days often include a quiet park bench, a slow breakfast or an afternoon with nowhere to be.

5. Lower the stakes

Not every meal will be transcendent. Not every landmark will move you. Not every day will feel magical. And that's OK. When you release the pressure to have the "perfect" trip, you make space for relaxing moments — the ones that don't perform well on social media but stay with you for years.

Stress-free travel isn't about eliminating every sticking point. It's about cultivating flexibility. It's about traveling light — in luggage and in expectations. It's about trust, smart pacing and embracing whatever unfolds next.

Wherever you go next, may you pack lighter, move slower and return home a little more relaxed and inspired than when you left.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

March 14

United States National Amateur Dancesport Championships, Marriott Center, all day (covey.provo.gov)

The Young Ambassadors: IMAGINE, Dance Performance Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Twelfth Night, BYU West Campus, 7:30 p.m. (March 14-28, onstage.byu.edu)

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

A Midsummer Night's Dream, Provo High School, 7 p.m. (March 14/16, provo.edu)

The Mighty Sequoyah, Ferocious Oaks, Velour, 7:30 p.m. 24tix.com)

St. Patrick's Day Cake Decorating Class, Baking Me Crazy, noon (shopbakingmecrazy.com)

Handmade Fresh Pasta Class, Baking Me Crazy, 6 p.m. (shopbakingmecrazy.com)

Gilded Paradise: Recasting Lorenzo Ghiberti's Baptistery Doors, BYU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (March 14-Oct. 24, moa.byu.edu)

All Shapes and Sizes, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (March 14-28, jkrgallery.com)

PowHERful Group Show, The Compass Gallery, 6-9 p.m. (March 14-28, thecompassgallery.com)

Provo City School District High School Art Show, Provo Library, 3:30-8 p.m. (March 14-May 1, provolibrary.gov)

March 16

Hamlet and Zombies, Provo Library, 6-7 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

All-Levels Yoga, Provo Library, 7-8 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

March 17

BYU Devotional: Sean R. Dixon, Marriott Center, 11 a.m. (calendar.byu.edu/devotionals-forums)

Owl Bar St. Patrick's Day Party, Sundance Resort, 4-10 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Ímar, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Trombone Choir, BYU Music Building, 5:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Saxophone Chamber Night, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

March 18

Jazz Lab Band, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Allen Otte and John Lane Percussion Duo, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Open Piano Lab, Provo Library, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Best Books of 2025, Provo Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

March 19

Group for Computer Music in Concert, BYU Music Building, 7 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Get Started with Bird Watching, Provo Library, 7-8 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

March 20

A Weekend with Tony Foster, Sundance Resort, 7 p.m. (March 20-21, sundanceresort.com)

Drop-n-Decorate (March), Baking Me Crazy, 4-8 p.m. (shopbakingmecrazy.com)

The Afters, Arlington Hall, 10 p.m. (linktr.ee/theaftersutah)

Ladies Park Day, Sundance Resort, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (sundanceresort.com))

March 21

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market,

Provo Towne Centre Mall, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

Library Adventures: Let's Go Birding, Provo Library, 9-10 a.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Orem

March 14

Model Train Show, University Place, all day (universityplaceorem.com)

2026 Lucky Laces 5K & Health Fair, University Place Orem, 9-11 a.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Hadestown: Teen Edition, SCERA Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (March 14-28, scera.org)

Library Hall Presents Mindy Gledhill Album Release Concert: The Phone Booth Sessions, Vol. 2, Orem Public Library, 7 p.m. (orempubliclibrary.ticketspice.com)

Art for All 2026, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount. 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Alphonse Mucha, Master of Art Nouveau, UVU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

March 16

Film: Toy Story 3, Orem Library, 6-8 p.m. (oremlibrary.com)

Makerspace Workshop: Get Hooked, Orem Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (oremlibrary.com)

March 17

Twilight in Paris: French Music for Strings and Piano, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7 p.m. (uvunoorda.universitytickets.com)

St. Patrick's Day Concert, Orem Library, 7-8 p.m. (oremlibrary.com)

March 18

Open Studio 2026, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

March 19

Active Shooter, Orem City Emergency Operations Center (EOC), 6 p.m. (orem.gov)

Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 at The Noorda, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7:30 p.m. (utahsymphony.org)

Alpine School District High School & Jr. High Art Show, University Place Orem, 4-9 p.m. (March 18-April 1, universityplaceorem.com)

March 20

Thank you, Mr. Falker, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 6:30 p.m. (March 20-21, uvu.edu/arts)

Film: School of Rock, Orem Library, 6-8 p.m. (oremlibrary.com)

Vineyard

March 21

2026 Vineyard City Gold Rush 5K & Kids 1K, Grove Park, 8:30 a.m. (runsignup.com)

SOUTH

Springville

March 14

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (March 14-June 25, smofa.org)

The Wibit, Clyde Recreation Center, 1-7 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov)

Board Game Club, Springville Library, 1-3 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

Art City Ukulele, Springville Library, 11 a.m.-noon (springvilleutah.gov/library)

March 15

Sunday Concert Series: Nebo Orchestra, Springville Museum of Art, 4:30-6 p.m. (smofa.org)

March 16

Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m.

(smofa.org)

St. Patrick's Day Party, Springville Library, 7-8 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

March 17

Irish Folktale Storytime, Springville Library, 10:30/11:30 a.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

Nebo Novelists, Springville Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

March 18

Women's History Month Craft Night, Springville Public Library, 7 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

March 19

The Page Turners Book Club, Springville Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

March 21

Dungeons and Dragons, Springville Library, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

RIICHI Mahjong Club, Springville Library, 1:30-3:30 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

Spanish Fork

March 14

Pi Day Swiss Chess Tournament, Spanish Fork Library, 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

Dragon Card Tournament, Spanish Fork Library, 1 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

March 16

Basic Computer Skills Lab: Winter Session, Spanish Fork Library, 6-7 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

March 17

Yoga Tales, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

Adult D&D Club, Spanish Fork Library, 6 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

March 19

Family Art Night: Feathers of Fire Shadow Play, Spanish Fork Library, 6 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

Chess Club, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

March 20

Bring Your Own Boardgame Night, Spanish Fork Library, 5:30 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

The Commonplace Society, Spanish Fork Library, 5:30 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

March 21

The Lady of Sherwood, Angelus Theatre, 2/7:30 p.m. (March 21-April 4, greathall.live)

Payson

March 14

Dungeons and Dragons, Payson Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (library.paysonutah.gov)

March 15

Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

March 16

"Imagine Your Library" Open House, Payson Library, 5:30-8 p.m. (library.paysonutah.gov)

Weekly Craft Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

March 17

Live Local Music Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Chess Club, Payson Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (library.paysonutah.gov)

March 18

Midweek Matinee, Payson Library, 4:30-6 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

American Fork

March 14

Rug Tufting Workshop, The Rug Room, 6-9:30 p.m. (March 14-July 31, therugroomutah.com)

March 16

Gardening: Conservation & Irrigation, American Fork Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

March 17

Celtic Crossroads - A St. Patrick's Day Musical Celebration, American Fork Library, 7 p.m. (timpanogosartsfoundation.com)

March 19

Dungeons & Dragons Beginner's Workshop, American Fork Library, 5-6:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Adult Writer's Club-Beginners, American Fork Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

March 21

Ice Breaker Triathlon 2026, American Fork Recreation & Fitness Center, 7 a.m. (triatlth.com)

Cedar Hills

March 16

Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

WEST

Saratoga Springs

March 14

Food for Fines, Saratoga Springs Library, all day (sscitty.libnet.info)

Eagle Mountain

March 14

Family Puzzle Day, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

March 16

Bingo, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 5-6 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

March 18

Arts and Crafts, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 10 a.m.-noon (eaglemountain.gov)

Eagle Mountain Academy: Enjoy the City Outdoors, Eagle Mountain City Hall, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

March 19

Arts and Crafts, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 10 a.m.-noon (eaglemountain.gov)

Senior Exercise Class, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 11-11:30 a.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

March 14

2026 St. Patrick's Day Parade and Siamsa, The Gateway, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. (irish-nutah.com)

Nostalgia Con, Salt Palace Convention Center, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. (thenostalgiacon.com)

March 21

John Mulaney: Mister Whatever, Eccles Theater, 7 p.m. (live-at-the-eccles.com)

Heber/Nephi

March 14

2026 NCAA Ski Championships, Soldier Hollow, all day (ncaa.com)

Timpanogos Archery Competition, Wasatch County Events Center, 3 p.m. (March 14-15, timpanogosarchers.com)

March 20

Luck of the Irish Team Roping, Wasatch County Events Center, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (March 20-21, zdcattlecompany.com)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jilloyd@heraldextra.com.

GET OUT THERE

Last place on Earth: My journey to Antarctica with National Geographic

I saved the best for last. After 10 years of travel writing, I recently made landfall on Antarctica, my seventh and final continent. It is the most stimulating, majestic, and unpredictable place I've ever visited.

For two weeks aboard National Geographic Explorer, my wife and I saw thousands of gleaming icebergs and pun-



BLAKE SNOW

gent penguins. We gawked at massive but nameless glaciers and snow-capped mountains that would be protected national parks anywhere else. We saw dozens of breaching whales, several calvings, and pods of orca intent on eating a distressed humpback for dinner.

We also survived 25 foot waves on the infamous Drake Passage, marital strife while kayaking ice flows, and the infamous polar plunge. We did all of this among the most professional wait staff, capable crew, and scientists sailing the Southern Ocean today—usually in between five-course meals with icebergs, wildlife, and three hour sunsets outside our window.

In short, cruising to Antarctica with National Geographic was not a “trip” as we often say. It was an expedition. It was also an amazing

privilege—although an expensive one. But if you have the means or discipline to save for such a once-in-a-lifetime adventure, sailing to, hiking on, and cruising around Antarctica is worth every penny. Here's why.

Come for the penguins, stay for the ice

Fact: Antarctica is the least photographed continent on the planet. Because of this, it's like visiting a place with no postcards. I cannot describe what that feels like other than it's the only continent you can still visit completely fresh. While many travel writers exaggerate with claims of “like nothing you've seen before,” Antarctica is the only place on Earth where this cliché is actually true—a continental-sized national park that's yet to be discovered.

While sailing around, we were flanked by giant icebergs as far as we could see. I lost count of the number of majestic mountains and glaciers we confronted. “All of these would have names and brochures on any other continent,” I said to my wife. As our ice-breaking ship navigated the content, it would often crush massive blocks of ice, which rattled but never broke our course. On short hikes up nearby peaks, I swore many of them could rival the famous hikes



COURTESY PHOTO

Antarctica

I've taken on any other of the six continents.

While the ice is the star of the show, the wildlife is equally inspiring. We saw porpoising and squawking penguins wherever we sailed or hiked. They do not fear humans, although you will fear their smell. We witnessed several pods of killer whales and a trio of humpbacks gorging on millions of krill for breakfast not 50 feet from our Zodiac. We saw well-fed elephant seals resting on ice slabs, several calving glaciers, and albatross buzzing overhead.

We saw so much I couldn't take notes fast enough, making Antarctica the most mentally stimulating place I've ever visited.

National Geographic perks

On National Geographic ships, all gourmet food, drinks, tips, scientific presentations, and excursions are included. Book it and forget it.

Our chef's daily food tour was borderline miraculous. Stunning photography plasters the ship. Below deck, there's a badass mudroom with lockers to decontam-

inate your gear and stage for wet landings, Zodiac tours, kayaks, hikes, and polar plunges. If that weren't enough, underwater divers film what goes on below the ship as you explore everything above it. Then they premier their footage just for you every night before dinner. How cool is that?

Another extra: you get access to the continent's hardest to reach spots. “Very few companies attempt the routes we take because our ships and insurance are simply better,” our expedition leader said. Indeed, we only saw three other cruise ships out of the 70 total that sail these waters. That's what you get with National Geographic.

Simply put, cruising to Antarctica with National Geographic was the greatest trip—may, expedition—I've ever been on. After traveling over 2,000 miles of its coastline and connecting waterways, it's my new favorite continent. Indeed, no place on earth requires more time, money, and planning than this. And no company provides a better experience than National Geographic.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo with his wife, five children and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

March 7

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

Living Legends: Seasons, Dance Performance Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

BYU Cougarettes in Concert, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

Broadway Revue, BYU West Campus, 7 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Daniel Aune - Organ, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Gilded Paradise: Recasting Lorenzo Ghiberti's Baptistery Doors, BYU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (March 7-Oct. 24, moa.byu.edu)

All Shapes and Sizes, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (March 7-28, jkrgallery.com)

PowHERful Group Show, The Compass Gallery, 6-9 p.m. (March 7-28, thecompassgallery.com)

Provo City School District High School Art Show, Provo Library, 3:30-8 p.m. (March 7-May 1, provolibary.gov)

March 9

Trivia Night, Provo Library, 7-8 p.m. (provolibary.gov)

March 10

BYU Devotional: Shayla Bott, Marriott Center, 11 a.m. (calendar.byu.edu/devotionals-forums)

United States National Amateur Dancesport Championships, Marriott Center, all day (March 10-14, covey.provo.gov)

Global Rhythm: Panoramic Steel and Gamelan Bintang Wahyu, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Senior Book Club - The Boys in the Boat, Provo Library, 1 p.m. (provolibary.gov)

Family yoga, Provo Library, 6 p.m. (provolibary.gov)

March 11

The Young Ambassadors: IMAGINE, Dance Performance Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (March 11-14, onstage.byu.edu)

BYU Singers: Musica electica, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Oboe Studio Recital, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Mountain Strings, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Thomas S. Kidd: Religion and the American Founding, Harman Continuing Education Building, 7-9 p.m. (eventbrite.com)

Open Piano Lab, Provo Library, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. (provolibary.gov)

Intro to Studio Production, Provo Library, 7-8 p.m. (provolibary.gov)

Disney Sing-Along Karaoke, Provo Library, 7-8 p.m. (provolibary.gov)

March 12

A Midsummer Night's Dream, Provo High School, 7 p.m. (March 12-16, provo.edu)

Noche de baile, Provo Library, 7-8 p.m. (provolibary.gov)

March 13

BYU Wind Symphony: BYU Concert Band Festival Featured Concert, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Twelfth Night, BYU West Campus, 7:30 p.m. (March 13-28, onstage.byu.edu)

Last Dinosaurs (Wellness 10YR Anni-

versary Tour), Velour, 7:30 p.m. (24tix.com)

Drop-n-Decorate (March), Baking Me Crazy, 4-8 p.m. (shopbakingmecrazy.com)

Night Owling at Sundance Nordic Center, Sundance Resort, 6:30 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

The Afters, Arlington Hall, 10 p.m. (linktr.ee/theaftersutah)

March 14

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

Provo Women's Day Luncheon 2026, Provo Recreation Center, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (provo.gov)

2026 Provo Women's Day Girls After Party - K-Pop Demon Hunters, Provo Recreation Center, 7 p.m. (provo.gov)

The Mighty Sequoyah, Ferocious Oaks, Velour, 7:30 p.m. (24tix.com)

St. Patrick's Day Cake Decorating Class, Baking Me Crazy, noon (shopbakingmecrazy.com)

Handmade Fresh Pasta Class, Baking Me Crazy, 6-7:30 p.m. (shopbakingmecrazy.com)

Orem

March 7

Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/arts)

Model Train Show, University Place, all day (March 7-14, universityplaceorem.com)

Alphonse Mucha, Master of Art Nouveau, UVU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (March 7-14, uvu.edu/museum)

March 9

Film: October Sky, Orem Library, 6-8 p.m. (oremlibrary.com)

Makerspace Workshop: Get Hooked, Orem Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (oremlibrary.com)

March 10

Tuesday Tunes, University Place Orem, 5-7 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

March 11

Open Studio 2026, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

March 12

State of the City, Library Hall, 10 a.m.-noon (orem.gov)

March 13

2026 Lucky Laces 5K and Health Fair, University Place Orem, 9-11 a.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Utah Shakespeare Festival: The Comedy of Errors, Orem Library, 7-8:15 p.m. (oremlibrary.com)

Film: Enchanted, Orem Library, 6-8 p.m. (oremlibrary.com)

March 14

Art for All 2026, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Library Hall Presents Mindy Gledhill Album Release Concert: The Phone Booth Sessions, Vol. 2, Orem Public Library, 7 p.m. (orempubliclibrary.ticketspice.com)

SOUTH

Springville

March 7

Dungeons and Dragons, Springville Library, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (March 7-June 25, smofa.org)

March 9

Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

March 10

Nebo Novelists, Springville Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

March 11

Mario Kart Tournament, Springville Library, 7-8 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

March 14

The Wubit, Clyde Recreation Center, 1-7 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov)

Board Game Club, Springville Library, 1-3 p.m. (springvilleutah.gov/library)

March 15

Sunday Concert Series: Nebo Orchestra, Springville Museum of Art, 4:30-6 p.m. (smofa.org)

Spanish Fork

March 7

Spanish Fork Arts Council Mini Masterpieces Art Show, Spanish Fork Library Hall, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (spanishfork.gov)

March 9

Basic Computer Skills Lab: Winter Session, Spanish Fork Library, 6-7 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

Debate Club, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30-8 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

March 10

Crafter's Corner, Spanish Fork Library, 6-8 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

March 11

Men's Mental Health: A Support Group for Men, Spanish Fork Library, 7-8 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

March 12

Light Reading: A Daytime Book Club for Adults, Spanish Fork Library, 11 a.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

Chess Club, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30-8 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

March 14

Pi Day Swiss Chess Tournament, Spanish Fork Library, 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

Payson

March 8

Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotu-cafe.com)

March 9

Weekly Craft Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotu-cafe.com)

March 10

Live Local Music Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotu-cafe.com)

Chess Club, Payson Library, 6:30-8 p.m. (spanishfork.libcal.com)

March 11

Midweek Matinee, Payson Library, 4:30-6 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

March 12

Authors Anonymous, Payson Library, 4:30-6 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

Mapleton

March 9

ROCK THE HALL Concert Series, Mapleton City Office, 7-8 p.m. (mapleton.org)

March 12

Senior Luncheon, Mapleton Community Center, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. (mapleton.org)

NORTH

Pleasant Grove

March 7

KPop Laser Hunters Show, Christa McAuliffe Space Center, 7:30 p.m. (March 7-28, spacecenterutah.org)

Forever Plaid, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (March 7-28, theruth.org)

Fiddler on the Roof, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (March 7-21, theruth.org)

Disney's Finding Nemo Jr., The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 4:30 p.m. (March 7-14, theruth.org)

Saturday Morning Movies: The Odd Life of Timothy Green, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

March 9

Operation Smile at the Library, Pleasant Grove Library, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

March 10

Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

March 11

Trivia Night, Pleasant Grove Library, 7-8 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

March 11

Stitchin' in the Stacks, Pleasant Grove Library, 7-8 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

March 13

Shred the House, The Soundbox, 7:30 p.m. (ccsoundhouse.com)

March 14

Saturday Morning Movies: Leap!, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Lehi

March 7

SHERoes in STEM, Museum of Natural Curiosity, 9-4 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

American Fork

March 7

Rug Tufting Workshop, The Rug Room, 6-9:30 p.m. (March 7-July 31, rugroomutah.com)

March 9

Harp Irish Dance Company, American Fork Library, 7-8 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

March 10

Dungeons and Dragons, American Fork Library, 6-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Hand Lettering Workshop, American Fork Library, 7-8 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

March 12

Adult Writer's Club: Advanced, American Fork Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

March 13

Kiss and Tell Book Club, American Fork Library, 7-8 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Highland

March 7

Watercolor: Beginning, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (March 7-28, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

March 9

Introduction to Art Materials and Techniques (Ages 5-10), Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (March 9-23, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Portraits Across Media, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (March 9-23, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

March 10

Oil Painting: The Spectrum of Painting, Highland Community Center, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (March 10-24, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

March 11

Drawing & Painting: Fantasy Art (Ages 5-10), Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (March 11-25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Drawing for Homeschoolers (Ages 8-12), Highland Community Center, noon-2 p.m. (March 11-25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Drawing: Caricature, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (March 11-25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Oil Painting: Beginning, 7-9 p.m. (March 11-25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

March 12

Oil Painting: In the Style of the Masters, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (March 12-26, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Cedar Hills

March 9

Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

WEST

Saratoga Springs

March 7

Miss Saratoga Springs Scholarship Pageant, Vista Heights Middle School, 7 p.m. (saratogaspings-ut.gov)

Eagle Mountain

March 11

Arts and Crafts, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 10 a.m.-noon (eaglemountain.gov)

March 12

Arts and Crafts, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 10 a.m.-noon (eaglemountain.gov)

Senior Exercise Class, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 11-11:30 a.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Adult Book Club, Eagle Mountain Library, 6:45-7:40 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

March 14

Family Puzzle Day, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

GET OUT THERE

Not 'the greatest' snow, but Utah's neighbors still worth skiing for

Utah's claim to "the greatest snow on Earth" isn't just marketing. Its legendary light, dry, and consistent "champagne powder" is scientifically fluffier and lower moisture than the rest of the world's wetter, denser snow. This makes for fantastic skiing in years when global warming doesn't ruin the party (like this year).

But let's be real: a powder day is a gift from on high for those who love to slide down marvelous mountains in winter. After skiing all but a few of Utah's 15 resorts, I've recently started skiing other Mountain West states, and I'm here to tell ya: the getting is good. On three separate visits to our good neighbors last month, here's how the skiing compared.

Vail, Colorado

Utah has the snow, Colorado has the terrain. That's the most objective way to distinguish the two iconic ski states. But the latter has twice as many resorts, steeper and longer runs, and decades more resort experience. No where else is that on better display than in number one ranked

Vail, where people come from all over the world to enjoy probably the most beautiful, amenity rich, and adorable German-like ski villages in the western hemisphere.

While skiing there with my daughter, we ran into countless regulars who've been coming for over 40 years. Many of those smiled upon hearing I was from Utah and spoke fondly of our resorts. But not enough to pull them away from panoramic and bougie Vail.

For those with money, no one does it better. You simply will not find better winter service, staff, ski conditions, apres activities, and lodging than in this namesake resort. Standout memories include staying at the ski in/ski out Lodge at Vail, lunching at The 10th, the best on mountain restaurant I've ever visited, and downhillling the remarkable Riva Ridge, my new, all time favorite resort run.

Jackson Hole, Wyoming

If there's one place that rivals Utah's "bouncy" snow, this is it. Bordering Grand Teton National Park, Jackson is steep (there is an abundance of black runs that are "blacker" than Utah's blacks), wide open, tree covered, and wild. I love it. The views are stunning and the skiing is fantastic.

It's also an amazing value. My boys and I stayed at the best bang



BLAKE SNOW, SPECIAL TO THE DAILY HERALD

Blake Snow, right, and his family pose for a photo while skiing in Colorado.

for your buck hotel in town at The Lodge at Jackson Hole. For not a lot of money, there are free shuttles to the resort and downtown, thoughtful amenities such as hand warmers and lip balm, apres treats like hot cocoa, candies, cookies, and popcorn; a pool, hot tub, and sauna, and its sister hotel next door is home to one of the highest rated restaurants in town, The Whistling Grizzly. Just an amazing value and friendly staff all around in one of the most smile-inducing resorts I've ever visited.

Highlights include Gros Ventre, Sundance, and Moran runs, skiing the Tetons on a bluebird day, and realizing the Wild West is still very much alive in Wyoming.

Bogus Basin, Idaho

If there's one thing yours truly doesn't like about skiing, it's the increasingly high cost of lift tickets. Even traditionally affordable Utah is pricing out the many families that call the state home. If you feel the same, head to Bogus Basin in Boise for \$60 lift tickets,

good snow, tons of terrain, several express lifts, and affordable comfort food that I haven't seen on a mountain in over 10 years — \$8 mac and cheese with fries anyone?

But a big, discounted ski resort doesn't mean budget lodging if you stay at The Avery, which is the classiest downtown boutique hotel I've ever stayed anywhere in the world. Founded by a gourmet chef and his interior designer wife, this hotel and onsite brasserie are nothing short of "wow." My daughter and I delighted in the little things like hand soap in the shape of Idaho and big things like the second story sitting room where we sat and chatted for hours after a blue bird day at Bogus.

Winning moments included realizing that there still are affordable resorts to ski, wolfing down the best burger in town at the Avery Restaurant, and devouring a gladiator sized lamb shank at Cottonwood Grille.

With neighbors this good, who would ever move?

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo with his wife, five children and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

Feb. 28

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

Contemporary Dance Theatre in Concert, Dance Performance Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

BYU Philharmonic: Evening of Concertos, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Full Moon Nordic Snowshoe, Sundance Resort, 5-9 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Winter Bluebird Cafe Concert Series 2026, Sundance Resort, 7:30 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Return to Sender, The New Nervous, Another Statistic, Velour, 7:30 p.m. (24tix.com)

The Mosaic of Christ: Let the Children Come, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (thecompassgallery.com)

Gilded Paradise: Recasting Lorenzo Ghiberti's Baptistery Doors, BYU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (Feb. 28-Oct. 24, moa.byu.edu)

The Love Art Show 2026, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (jkrgallery.com)

March 2

Utah Chinese Folk Orchestra Concert, Provo Library, 7-8 p.m. (provoliberalry.gov)

March 3

BYU Devotional: Quentin L. Cook, Marriott Center, 11 a.m. (calendar.byu.edu/devotionals-forums)

Jazz Ensemble: Rhythm After Dark, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

March 4

Living Legends: Seasons, Dance Performance Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (March 4-7, onstage.byu.edu)

BYU Cougarettes in Concert, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (March 4-7, covey.provo.gov)

Clarinet Studio Recital, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Classical Percussion: BYU Percussion Ensemble and Tangents Quartet, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Open Piano Lab, Provo Library, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. (provoliberalry.gov)

March 5

String Chamber Night, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Jazz Combo Showcase, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m./8:45 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

March 6

Broadway Revue, BYU West Campus, 7 p.m. (March 6-7, onstage.byu.edu)

Night Owling at Sundance Nordic Center, Sundance Resort, 6:30 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

PowHERful Group Show/Saintly Group Show, The Compass Gallery, 6-9 p.m. (thecompassgallery.com)

Drop-n-Decorate (March), Baking Me Crazy, 4-8 p.m. (shopbakingmecrazy.com)

2026 Provo Art Stroll, Downtown Provo, 6-9 p.m. (facebook.com/downtownprovo)

Provo City School District High School Art Show, Provo Library, 3:30-8 p.m.

(provoliberalry.gov)

Acoustic Open Mic Night, Provo Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (provoliberalry.gov)

The Afters, Arlington Hall, 10 p.m. (linktr.ee/theaftersutah)

March 7

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

Daniel Aune - Organ, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Orem

Feb. 28

Zions Indie Film Fest 2026, Scera Center for the Arts, 6 p.m. (Feb. 23-28, zionsindiefilmfest.com)

UVU Honor Band & Wind Symphony, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 5 p.m. (uvu.edu/arts)

Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7:30 p.m. (Feb. 28-March 7, uvu.edu/arts)

Alphonse Mucha, Master of Art Nouveau, UVU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Feb. 28-March 14, uvu.edu/museum)

March 2

Family Movie Night: Moana, Orem Public Library, 6-8 p.m. (oremlibrary.org)

March 3

Tuesday Tunes, University Place Orem, 5-7 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

March 4

Model Train Show, University Place, all day (March 4-14, universityplaceorem.com)

Open Studio 2026, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

March 5

STEM Like a Girl, Orem Public Library, 6-8 p.m. (oremlibrary.org)

March 6

Family Movie Night: The Secret Life of Walter Mitty, Orem Public Library, 6-8 p.m. (oremlibrary.org)

SOUTH

Springville

Feb. 28

Welcome to Hollywood - A Musical Revue by Springville Playhouse, Merit Preparatory Academy, 7:30 p.m. (Feb. 28/March 2, springvilleplayhouse.org)

Board Game Club, Springville Library, 1-3 p.m. (springville.org/library)

RIICHI Mahjong Club, Springville Library, 1:30-3:30 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Feb. 28-June 25, smofa.org)

March 2

Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

March 4

Bingo, Springville Library, 7-8 p.m. (springville.org/library)

March 5

Silent Book Club, Springville Library, 6-8 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Pawsitive Training Tips, Springville Library, 7-8 p.m. (springville.org/library)

March 7

Dungeons and Dragons, Springville Li-

brary, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Spanish Fork

March 2

Basic Computer Skills Lab: Winter Session, Spanish Fork Library, 6 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Poppy Book Author Event: Ryan Cahill, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

March 3

Shelf Indulgence Book Club, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

March 4

Community Emergency Preparedness Class, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

March 2

Spanish Fork Writer's Group, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

March 6

Master Builder's Guild, Spanish Fork Library, 4 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/liibrary)

March 7

Spanish Fork Arts Council Mini Masterpieces Art Show, Spanish Fork Library Hall, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (spanishfork.gov)

Payson

Feb. 28

A Night on Broadway: An American in Payson, Payson High School, 7:30 p.m. (Feb. 28-March 3, paysoncommunitytheatre.com)

Dungeons and Dragons, Payson Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (library.paysonutah.gov)

March 1

Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

March 2

Weekly Craft Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Chapter Chats Book Club, Payson Library, noon (library.paysonutah.gov)

March 3

Live Local Music Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Chess Club, Payson Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (library.paysonutah.gov)

March 4

Midweek Matinee, Payson Library, 4:30-6 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

March 5

Strum Circle, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Authors Anonymous, Payson Library, 4:30-6 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

March 6

Family Movie Night, Payson Library, 6:30 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

March 8

Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Santaquin

March 6

2026 Ties and Tiaras, City Hall, 7-9 p.m. (santaquin.activityreg.com)

NORTH

Pleasant Grove

Feb. 28

KPop Laser Hunters Show, Christa

McAuliffe Space Center, 7:30 p.m. (Feb. 28-March 28, spacecenterutah.org)

Disney's Finding Nemo Jr., The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 4:30 p.m. (Feb. 28-March 14, theruth.org)

Forever Plaid, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Feb.28-March 28, theruth.org)

Fiddler on the Roof, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Feb. 28-March 21, theruth.org)

Saturday Morning Movies: The BFG, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

March 2

Family Night at the Library, Pleasant Grove Library, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov)

March 3

Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

Bingo Night, Pleasant Grove Library, 7 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov)

March 4

Will Workshop, Pleasant Grove Library, 7 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov)

March 6

Hot Salsa Mardi Gras, The Soundbox, 7:30 p.m. (ccsoundhouse.com)

March 7

Saturday Morning Movies: The Odd Life of Timothy Green, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Lehi

Feb. 28

Water for Elephants: The Broadway Musical, Skyridge Theatre, 7 p.m. (Feb. 28-March 3, skyridgetheatre.com)

Curious George: Let's Get Curious!, Museum of Natural Curiosity, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

March 6

SHERoes in STEM, Museum of Natural Curiosity, 4-8 p.m. (March 6-7, thanksgivingpoint.org)

American Fork

Feb. 28

Rug Tufting Workshop, The Rug Room, 6-9:30 p.m. (<ahref="http://therugroomutah.com">therugroomutah.com)

March 5

Dungeon Master Club, American Fork Library, 5-6:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Adult Writer's Club-Beginners, American Fork Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Gardening: Landscape Design, American Fork Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

March 6

Mindful Moments Memory Cafe, American Fork Library, 1-2 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Highland

Feb. 28

Watercolor: Beginning, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (Feb. 28-March 28, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

March 2

Introduction to Art Materials and Techniques (Ages 5-10), Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (March 2-23, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Portraits Across Media, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (March 2-23, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

March 3

Oil Painting: The Spectrum of Painting, Highland Community Center, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (March 3-24, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

March 4

Drawing & Painting: Fantasy Art (Ages 5-10), Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (March 4-25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Drawing for Homeschoolers (Ages 8-12), Highland Community Center, noon-2 p.m. (March 4-25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Drawing: Caricature, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (March 4-25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Oil Painting: Beginning, 7-9 p.m. (March 4-25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Oil Painting: In the Style of the Masters, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (March 5-26, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

March 5

Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

Cedar Hills

March 2

WEST

Saratoga Springs

March 7

Miss Saratoga Springs Scholarship Pageant, Vista Heights Middle School, 7 p.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

Eagle Mountain

Feb. 28

Family Game Day, Eagle Mountain Library, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

March 4

Arts and Crafts, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 10 a.m.-noon (eaglemountain.gov)

Adult Book Bedazzling, Eagle Mountain Library, 6-7:30 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

March 5

Thread and Yarn Club, Eagle Mountain Library, 6-7:30 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

March 1

Candlelight: The Best of Hans Zimmer, Grand America Hotel, 8:30-9:45 p.m. (eventvesta.com)

March 4

2026 U.S. Synchronized Skating Championships, Maverick Center, all day (March 4-7, maverickcenter.com)

March 7

Masquerade Party 2026, Utah State Fairpark, 7-11 p.m. (uaf.org)

Heber Valley

Feb. 28

Maple Syrup Making Workshop, Wasatch Mountain State Park Visitor Center, 10-11:30 a.m. (eventbrite.com)

March 7

'80s Techno Community Dance, Timpanogos Valley Theatre, 6:30 p.m. (midwaycommunitydance.com)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jloyd@heraldextra.com.

GET OUT THERE

Think cruising is all the same? Try one of these unique itineraries

For many travelers, cruising the Caribbean conjures images of floating buffets, Broadway-style shows, and a predictable loop of sunny ports. But that version of cruising is only one chapter in a much bigger story.



BLAKE SNOW

Today's most compelling cruises are less about on-board distractions and more about where the ship can take you — often to places unreachable any other way. In fact, the following, one-of-a-kind itineraries prove that cruising can be adventurous, intimate, and genuinely transformative.

Antarctica: The ultimate expedition

Few travel experiences rival a journey to Antarctica, Earth's southernmost continent. Expedition cruises to this frozen frontier are designed not for passive sight-seeing, but for active exploration. Travelers trade deck chairs for zodiac landings, stepping onto the Antarctic Peninsula or navigating the ice-choked waters of the Weddell Sea.

The rewards are extraordinary. Penguins waddle past in improbable numbers. Whales surface

beside the ship. Seals lounge on ice floes as towering glaciers crack and calve nearby. The landscape feels untouched, vast, and humbling — an overwhelming reminder of how small we are in the grand scheme of things. This is cruising stripped down to its essence: transportation, expertise, and access to one of the most remote places on Earth.

Galapagos: Small ships, big impact

At the opposite end of the temperature spectrum lies the Galapagos Islands, where cruising is less about luxury and more about preservation. Strict regulations limit vessel size, ensuring an intimate, eco-focused experience that protects this extraordinary ecosystem.

Small-ship cruises allow travelers to encounter wildlife found nowhere else on the planet. Giant tortoises lumber across volcanic landscapes. Marine iguanas sun themselves on black lava rocks. Snorkeling reveals sea lions, sharks, and technicolor fish beneath the surface. Guided by naturalists, each landing becomes a living biology lesson and a reminder of how tourism can deepen our appreciation without diminishing what makes a place special.



COURTESY UNSPLASH

A National Geographic ship breaks through the ice in Antarctica.

Svalbard: The arctic dream

North of the Arctic Circle, Svalbard offers a cruising experience that feels almost otherworldly. This Norwegian archipelago is defined by dramatic fjords, jagged mountains, and a vast polar wilderness where humans are visitors, not residents.

Cruises here revolve around wildlife and light. Polar bears roam the ice. Walrus haul out on rocky shores. Arctic foxes dart across the tundra. In summer, the midnight sun bathes everything in an endless golden glow, stretching days into dreamlike continuity. Svalbard isn't

about checking off sights — it's about immersion in a place where nature dictates the schedule.

Kimberley Coast: Australia's wild northwest

Australia's Kimberley Coast is one of the country's last great frontiers and cruising is often the only practical way to explore it. Expedition vessels navigate this remote northwest region, revealing landscapes shaped by time, tides, and culture.

Travelers encounter towering gorges, thunderous waterfalls,

and powerful tidal phenomena like horizontal falls. Ancient Aboriginal rock art offers a profound connection to human history stretching back tens of thousands of years. Along the way, saltwater crocodiles patrol the rivers, reinforcing the sense that this is raw, untamed Australia. It's rugged, remote, and unforgettable.

Amazon River: Into the rainforest

River cruising takes on an entirely different meaning in the Amazon. Here, ships slip deep into the world's largest rainforest, navigating narrow tributaries that pulse with life.

Days are spent spotting pink river dolphins, sloths, and vibrant birdlife, or visiting indigenous communities whose cultures are intertwined with the jungle. Guided excursions reveal medicinal plants, hidden waterways, and ecosystems found nowhere else. The Amazon isn't flashy — it's immersive, alive, and endlessly fascinating.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo with his wife, five children and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

Feb. 21

Our City Beautiful, A Nauvoo Ghost Story, Covey Center for the Arts, 3 p.m.-7 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

Kalani Pe'a, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

The Winter's Tale, The Hive Collaborative, 7 p.m. (grassroots-shakespeare.com)

Family Concert Series: Lights, Music, Action, Opera!, BYU Music Building, 11 a.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Synthesis: BYU Essentially Ellington Jazz Festival Concert, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Monteverdi's The Coronation of Poppea, BYU West Campus, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Night Owling at Sundance Nordic Center, Sundance Resort, 6:30 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Sourdough Bread Class, Baking Me Crazy, 10 a.m.-noon (shopbakingmecrazy.com)

The Love Art Show 2026, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (Feb. 21-28, jkrgallery.com)

The Mosaic of Christ: Let the Children Come, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (Feb. 21-Feb. 28, thecompassgallery.com)

Gilded Paradise: Recasting Lorenzo Ghiberti's Baptistery Doors, BYU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (Feb. 21-Oct. 24, moa.byu.edu)

Feb. 23

Radiance Wasatch Ballet, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

Feb. 24

BYU Forum: Ross G. Douthat, Marriott Center, 11 a.m. (calendar.byu.edu/devotionals-forums)

Yo-Yo Ma, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Intermezzo: An Excellence Concert, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

Paint Night, Provo Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Feb. 25

Contemporary Dance Theatre in Concert, Dance Performance Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (Feb. 25-28, onstage.byu.edu)

BYU Winter Violin Showcase, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

The Afters, Arlington Hall, 10 p.m. (linktr.ee/theaftersutah)

Open Piano Lab, Provo Library, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Intro to Studio Production, Provo Library, 7-8 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Feb. 26

Lew Tabackin, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Faculty Film Showcase, WCCB Auditorium RM 1040, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Collage Art Workshop, Provo Library, 6-8:30 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Feb. 27

Full Moon Nordic Snowshoe, Sundance Resort, 5-9 p.m. (Feb. 27-28, sundanceresort.com)

Winter Bluebird Cafe Concert Series 2026, Sundance Resort, 7:30 p.m. p.m. (Feb. 27-28, sundanceresort.com)

Drop-n-Decorate, Baking Me Crazy, 4-8 p.m. (shopbakingmecrazy.com)

Student Composers Showcase, BYU

Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Feb. 28

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

BYU Philharmonic: Evening of Concertos, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Provo City Library Writing Group, Provo Library, 4-5 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Orem

Feb. 21

Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7:30 p.m. (Feb. 21-March 7, uvu.edu/arts)

Alphonse Mucha, Master of Art Nouveau, UVU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Feb. 21-March 14, uvu.edu/museum)

Feb. 23

Zions Indie Film Fest 2026, Scera Center for the Arts, 6 p.m. (Feb. 23-28, zionsindiefilmfest.com)

Film: Philadelphia Story, Orem Library, 6-8 p.m. (orem.librarycalendar.com)

Makerspace Workshop: One-Stroke Painting, Orem Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (orem.librarycalendar.com)

Grassroots Shakespeare Company: The Tempest, Orem Library, 7-9 p.m. (orem.librarycalendar.com)

Feb. 24

Tuesday Tunes, University Place Orem, 5-7 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Orem Reading Challenge: Murder in the Shire, Orem Library, 7-9 p.m. (orem.librarycalendar.com)

Feb. 25

Open Studio 2026, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Feb. 26

2026 UVU Art History Symposium, Fulton Library Auditorium, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Feb. 27

Film: Say Anything, Orem Library, 6-8 p.m. (orem.librarycalendar.com)

Art Reception: Dreams by Melissa Tshikamba, Orem Library, 6-8:45 p.m. (orem.librarycalendar.com)

Feb. 28

UVU Honor Band & Wind Symphony, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 5 p.m. (uvu.edu/arts)

SOUTH

Springville

Feb. 21

Make a Wish: Wand Workshop, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (smofa.org)

The Borderlands Tour ft. Scotty Austin, The Venue at 1750, 7 p.m. (1750venue.com)

Solar/Lunar Eclipses for Sudden Transformation + Drumming Workshop, Redefine Wellness, 7 p.m. (redefinewellnessut.com)

Dungeons and Dragons, Springville Library, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Feb. 21-June 25, smofa.org)

Feb. 23

Share the Love Blood Drive, Springville Library, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Feb. 24

Clase Gratuita de Ciudadanía - Citizenship Prep Course, Springville Library, 6-7:30 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Nebo Novelists, Springville Library, 6-7:30 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Feb. 25

Codependents Anonymous, Springville Library, 7-8 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Love to Read: Bejeweled Books, Springville Library, 7-8 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Feb. 27

Welcome to Hollywood - A Musical Revue by Springville Playhouse, Merit Preparatory Academy, 7:30 p.m. (Feb. 27-March 2, springvilleplayhouse.org)

Feb. 28

Board Game Club, Springville Library, 1-3 p.m. (springville.org/library)

RIICHI Mahjong Club, Springville Library, 1:30-3:30 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Spanish Fork

Feb. 21

Chess Tournament, Spanish Fork Library, 10 a.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Feb. 23

Basic Computer Skills Lab: Winter Session, Spanish Fork Library, 6 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Feb. 25

Mental Health Monthly Workshop, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Feb. 26

Chess Club, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Feb. 27

Popcorn Cinema, Spanish Fork Library, 4 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

The Commonplace Society, Spanish Fork Library, 5:30 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Payson

Feb. 21

Game Night: Life Sized Games, Payson Library, 4:30-6 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

Feb. 22

Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotu-cafe.com)

Feb. 23

Weekly Craft Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotu-cafe.com)

Friends and Family Night, Payson Library, 7-8 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

Feb. 24

Live Local Music Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotu-cafe.com)

Chess Club, Payson Library, 6:30-8 p.m. (library.paysonutah.gov)

Feb. 25

Tuesday Night Book Club, Payson Library, 8 p.m. (library.paysonutah.gov)

Feb. 26

Mother and Daughter Book Club, Payson Library, 7-8 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

Strum Circle, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotu-cafe.com)

Feb. 27

Love on Pages Book Club, Payson Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

Feb. 28

A Night on Broadway: An American in Payson, Payson High School, 7:30 p.m. (Feb. 28-March 3, paysoncommunitytheatre.com)

NORTH

Pleasant Grove

Feb. 21

KPop Laser Hunters Show, Christa McAuliffe Space Center, 7:30 p.m. (Feb. 21-March 28, spacecenterutah.org)

Forever Plaid, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Feb. 21-March 28, theruth.org)

Fiddler on the Roof, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Feb. 21-March 21, theruth.org)

Saturday Morning Movies: Lassie, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Feb. 23

Disney's Finding Nemo Jr., The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 4:30 p.m. (Feb. 23-March 14, theruth.org)

Twilight Tales, Pleasant Grove Library, 6:30-7:15 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Feb. 24

Finance Workshop: Special Needs Planning, Pleasant Grove Library, 7-8 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

BookEnders, Pleasant Grove Library, 7-8 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Feb. 28

Saturday Morning Movies: The BFG, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Lehi

Feb. 21

Curious George: Let's Get Curious!, Museum of Natural Curiosity, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. (Feb. 21-28, thanksgivingpoint.org)

Family Bookworm Adventures, Lehi Library, 1-2 p.m. (lehicity.libcal.com)

American Fork

Feb. 21

Hello, Dolly!, Valentine Theater, 7:30 p.m. (timparts.com)

Feb. 23

Adult Yoga, American Fork Library, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Feb. 24

Family Yoga, American Fork Library, 7-8 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Dungeons and Dragons, American Fork Library, 6-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Feb. 26

Adult Writer's Club: Advanced, American Fork Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Highland

Feb. 21

Watercolor: Beginning, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (Feb. 21-March 28, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Feb. 23

Introduction to Art Materials and Techniques (Ages 5-10), Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (Feb. 23-March 23, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Portraits Across Media, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (Feb. 23-March 23, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Feb. 24

Oil Painting: The Spectrum of Painting, Highland Community Center, 9:30-11:30

a.m. (Feb. 24-March 24, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Feb. 25

Drawing & Painting: Fantasy Art (Ages 5-10), Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (Feb. 25-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Drawing for Homeschoolers (Ages 8-12), Highland Community Center, noon-2 p.m. (Feb. 25-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Drawing: Caricature, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (Feb. 25-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Oil Painting: Beginning, 7-9 p.m. (Feb. 25-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Oil Painting: In the Style of the Masters, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (Feb. 26-March 26, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Feb. 26

Oil Painting: In the Style of the Masters, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (Feb. 26-March 26, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Cedar Hills

Feb. 23

Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

WEST

Eagle Mountain

Feb. 21

Eagle Mountain Community Theater Presents The Little Mermaid, Sage Canyon Middle School, 7 p.m. (Feb. 21/23, emctheatre.com)

Feb. 25

Arts and Crafts, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 10 a.m.-noon (eaglemountain.gov)

Crochet Class, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 10 a.m.-noon (eaglemountain.gov)

Mindful Movers, Eagle Mountain Library, 7-7:40 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Feb. 26

Arts and Crafts, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 10 a.m.-noon (eaglemountain.gov)

Feb. 28

Family Game Day, Eagle Mountain Library, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

Feb. 21

2026 Utah STEM Expo, Mountain American Expo Center, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. (utahstemexpo.org)

Feb. 22

Charlie Berens: The Lost and Found Tour, Eccles Theater, 7 p.m. (live-at-the-eccles.com)

March 1

Candlelight: The Best of Hans Zimmer, Grand America Hotel, 8:30-9:45 p.m. (eventvesta.com)

Heber

Feb. 21

National Guard Bureau Biathlon Championships, Soldier Hollow, various times (Feb. 21-25, utaholympiclegacy.org)

Princess and Pirate Train, Heber Valley Railroad, 1 p.m. (hebervalleyrr.org)

Feb. 22

Arctic Rescue Dog Skijoring Clinic, Strawberry Reservoir, 10 a.m.-noon (arctic

GET OUT THERE

Traveler's choice awards: The world's most beloved cities



COURTESY UNSPLASH

Hanoi, Vietnam

Every year, Tripadvisor quietly answers one of travel's biggest questions: where do people actually love going — not just visit, but rave about afterward? Based on hundreds of thousands of traveler reviews from around the globe, this year's list of the world's most beloved cities reads less like a checklist and more like a slideshow you never stop revisiting. From tropical islands to global capitals, these five cities earned their status not through hype alone, but through experiences that linger long after the trip ends.



BLAKE SNOW

Bali: A Living Postcard

Topping the list is Bali, a destination that feels less like a place and more like a mood. Travelers consistently describe Bali as a "living postcard," and it's easy to see why. One moment you're stretched out on fine white sand with the sun warming your shoulders; the next, you're underwater exploring coral ridges or the hauntingly beautiful wreck of a World War II ship.

On land, Bali shifts gears again. Lush jungles cradle ancient stone temples, monkeys roam freely, and incense fills the air. With many visitors basing themselves in Ubud, the island's cultural heart, Bali doesn't just welcome you — it recalibrates you.

London: Many Worlds, One City

London takes second place by being

unapologetically everything at once. From Shoreditch's swaggering creativity to Camden's punk roots and the polished charm of Portobello Road, London feels like several cities stitched together by history and ambition.

What travelers love most is the city's endless variety. You can explore centuries-old landmarks in the morning, dine at a Michelin-starred restaurant by night, and still end the evening with a pint in a centuries-old pub. Wander cobblestone streets, snap photos of icons you've known your whole life, or disappear into a neighborhood you've never heard of. In London, no two days — or trips — are ever the same.

Dubai: Bigger, Bolder, Faster

Dubai's rise on the list reflects its ability to balance extremes. It's a city where modern culture and deep-rooted history coexist effortlessly. Visitors can catch a performance at the Dubai Opera, gaze across the city from the top of the Burj Khalifa, or slow things down while exploring the gold, textile, and spice souks along Dubai Creek.

Then there's the thrill factor. Float silently over desert dunes in a hot air balloon, scream your way through IMG Worlds of Adventure, or skydive over the Palm Jumeirah. Dubai wins hearts by offering shimmering gold experiences in a towering setting.

Hanoi: Gracefully Layered

Hanoi charms travelers not by reinventing itself, but by aging gracefully. Vietnam's capital has preserved its Old Quarter, colonial architecture, and

monuments while welcoming thoughtful modern development. The result is a city that feels layered, lived-in, and deeply human.

Lakes, parks, shady boulevards, and more than 600 temples and pagodas give Hanoi a calm rhythm beneath the buzz. It's a city best explored slowly — on foot or by taxi — allowing visitors to soak in street life, history, and the quiet beauty found in between.

Paris: Effortlessly Eternal

Paris remains. It endures. And today's travelers continue to fall for its effortless blend of leisure and livability. Linger over a pain au chocolat at a sidewalk café, strolling along the Seine, and standing in awe before icons like the Eiffel Tower and Arc de Triomphe never seem to lose their luster.

The perfect Paris trip balances indulgence and curiosity: savoring long meals, wandering the Louvre, bargain hunting at the Marché aux Puces de Montreuil, and ending the night with a show at the Moulin Rouge. Paris doesn't rush you — it absorbs you.

Honorable mention: Rome

Hovering just outside the top five, Rome is eternal, irresistible, and like others on this list, a forceful reminder that the world's most beloved cities are the ones that make us feel something.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo with his wife, five children and one ferocious chihuahua.

THE CONVERSATION

Never say never

A day will come when everyone will have to face themselves at a point where no more running is possible. Being creatures of our own fate and choice, quitting is never an option for the things that matter most to us, our heart and spirit. Once we desire something for our life and bring it forth through an act, the opposite of what we desire will also commence because it has no choice but to. To demonstrate in its entirety what we wish for means all of it must show itself to us.



LETROY WOODS

Opportunities often open their doors where we least expect them. Everything we do revolves around the people business, that is, you and I and everyone that crosses our paths. People have what we desire, and life offers its riches in unexpected ways, and at times, we feel we are not ready for them.

"When things do not go your way, remember that every challenge — every adversity — contains within it the seeds of opportunity and growth."

— Roy T. Bennett

We grow up and think that we know all things about the world, which, in thinking so, does not allow us to learn anything new or grow anymore. Being alive entails growing pains and suffering. Never saying never just means we never know where the next opportunity is coming from, which seed from our past will surface that we do not remember or understand, or that the challenge right in front of us that has the prize we desire is in the difficulties we choose to move through. Each bridge burned in our life is burning a relationship, and each relationship has a prize or lesson behind it; however, some bridges need burning while others need understanding.

Life will present circumstances that will be hard to face, choices that will need to be made while you are kicking and screaming, with a door that awaits opening for those with courage.

Universally, all things are always conspiring in our favor for us to become something great, for us to stop past patterns, and for us to move into integrity once more with ourselves.

"Take chances, make mistakes. That's how you grow. Pain nourishes your courage. You have to fail in order to practice being brave."

— Mary Tyler Moore

Moving through our lives idly is another way we lie to ourselves and fail to grow from yesterday's mistakes. Never say never can only commence once we become honest with ourselves and the internal pain and suffering that we continue to choose. Surrendering at this moment is an act of courage to say no more, and that I am willing to do whatever it takes to overcome what ails me.

Are you ready to face yourself, and what are you willing to do?

The conversation is the place where one lives and dwells, and where the answers we seek in our lives are buried. With patience, diligence, and courage, I believe in your abilities as much as you believe in your own power to change. We are all in this together, for no one is exempt from this conversation. What are you willing to put a stop to in your life, and be open to when something shows up in ways not expected? Never say never or stay on the path with no destination.

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ASK DR. STEVE

Seasonal depression peaks now — not in early winter

Contrary to common belief, seasonal depression doesn't peak when winter begins — it peaks in late January through February. After months of reduced sunlight, accumulated sleep disruption, and limited outdoor activity, the body's

reserves are depleted. This is when Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) symptoms reach maximum intensity.

In Northern Utah, the situation intensifies further. Valley inversions trap cold air and pollution

for weeks, blocking even the limited winter sunlight. The result: extended periods where stepping outside provides neither light exposure nor fresh air. For the estimated 10 million Americans with SAD and 20-30 million more with milder "winter blues," February often feels like hitting a wall.

Understanding that this is the hardest stretch — not the beginning — helps calibrate expectations and intensify coping strategies precisely when they're most needed.

Understanding the issue

Q Why does seasonal depression peak in February, not December?

A SAD results from cumulative light deprivation, not immediate on-

set. The body's serotonin stores gradually deplete over months of reduced sunlight. By February, this depletion reaches its lowest point. Additionally, the holiday structure of November-December provides social connection and activity that February lacks.

Q How do Utah's inversions worsen seasonal depression?

A Winter inversions trap cold air in valleys, creating a lid that blocks sunlight and traps pollution. During inversions, even midday sun is significantly dimmed. This eliminates the primary natural intervention for SAD — light exposure — while simultaneously reducing motivation to go outside due to poor air quality and cold.

Q What's the difference between winter blues and clinical SAD?

A Winter blues cause noticeable but manageable mood dips: less energy, some irritability, craving carbohydrates. SAD significantly impairs functioning: severe fatigue, social withdrawal, difficulty working, major appetite and sleep changes, and feelings of hopelessness. If symptoms substantially interfere with daily life, it's likely beyond typical winter blues.

Q Does light therapy actually work?

A Yes, light therapy is the primary evidence-based treatment for SAD. A 10,000-lux light box used for 20-30 minutes each morning can improve symptoms within days to weeks. Timing matters: morning use helps re-

set circadian rhythms; evening use can disrupt sleep. Most people need consistent daily use throughout winter.

Q What should I look for in a light therapy box?

A Choose a 10,000-lux box (lower intensity requires longer sessions), position it at eye level about 16-24 inches away, and use it within an hour of waking. Look for UV-filtered lights. Avoid using it in the evening. Some insurance plans cover light boxes with a prescription; otherwise, effective models cost \$30-100.

Q Can vitamin D help with seasonal depression?

A Vitamin D deficiency is common in winter and may worsen mood, though research on supplementation for SAD is mixed. Many people benefit from having levels tested and supplementing if deficient. However, vitamin D alone typically doesn't resolve SAD — it works best combined with light therapy and behavioral strategies.

Q What behaviors make seasonal depression worse?

A Hibernation instincts backfire: sleeping more, isolating, reducing activity, and increasing carbohydrate intake all worsen symptoms despite feeling like natural responses. The brain interprets these behaviors as confirmation that something is wrong, deepening the depressive cycle. Fighting these urges — even minimally — helps break the pattern.

Q How do I motivate myself to exercise when I can barely get out of bed?

A Start with "movement snacks" — brief activity so minimal it doesn't require motivation. Stand up and stretch for 30 seconds. Walk to the mailbox. The goal isn't exercise; it's interrupting inertia. Often, starting tiny leads to doing more, but even if it doesn't, any movement helps. Commit only to starting, not to a full workout.

Q Should I try to maintain summer activity levels in winter?

A Adjusting expectations seasonally is healthy — humans aren't meant to maintain identical energy year-round. However, the goal is intentional adjustment, not passive surrender. Plan for reduced but consistent activity. Schedule social contact even when you don't feel like it. Accept lower energy while actively preventing complete withdrawal.

Q When should I seek professional help for seasonal depression?

A Seek evaluation if symptoms significantly impair work, relationships, or daily functioning; if light therapy and behavioral strategies aren't helping after 2-3 weeks; if you're having thoughts of self-harm; or if this pattern repeats annually despite your efforts. Antidepressants, particularly those affecting serotonin, can be effective for SAD and are sometimes used preventively.

Closing

February's difficulty isn't in your head — it's predictable biology meeting environmental challenge. Recognizing this as the peak, not the plateau, helps you deploy maximum coping precisely when needed.

The strategies that work require going against instinct: seeking light when you want darkness, moving when you want stillness, connecting when you want isolation. These feel unnatural because depression lies about what helps. The discomfort of pushing against symptoms is temporary; the improvement that follows is real.

For those whose winter struggles significantly impair functioning or repeat annually despite self-help efforts, professional intervention changes the trajectory. Evaluation can distinguish SAD from other conditions, identify optimal treatment combinations, and provide targeted strategies beyond general advice.

For those experiencing significant seasonal mood changes, professional evaluation can clarify whether symptoms indicate SAD, underlying depression, or other conditions requiring specific treatment. Comprehensive Psychological Services (WeCanHelpOut.com) offers comprehensive assessment to identify what's happening and develop targeted intervention strategies.

To celebrate love



HARRISON EPSTEIN, DAILY HERALD FILE PHOTO

Lane Smith, Tiffany Smith, Kayla Routsong and Hailey Fredericks smash items at Smash It Rage Rooms in Orem on Tuesday.

Reasons to go out or stay home for Valentine's Day

BY JARED LLOYD
Daily Herald

It's that time of year again when thoughts (and hundreds of marketing campaigns) focus on love.

Valentine's Day is now just a week away, with many either having already planned and selected gifts or in the process of frantically trying to figure out how to demonstrate to their significant other how much they care.

The holiday has a fascinating history, including — according to History.com — possible connections to Roman fertility festivals, early Christian martyrs and even avian pairing-off observations. It's been celebrated in different forms for at least hundreds of years, eventually evolving into our current rituals of celebration.

Now flowers, chocolates, decorative cards and jewelry will be exchanged. There will be corny holiday jokes (What did the paper clip say to the magnet on Valentine's Day? I find you very attractive!) and counter-culture labels for

activities like "Single Awareness Day" (for those who aren't currently in a relationship) and "Galentine's Day" (usually events just for girls).

But while there are valid reasons to grumble about the excessive commercialization and expectations of the holiday, it's generally a good thing to have another reason to go out of your way to show someone you care about them.

There can, however, be differing views on what is the best way to approach it.

One of the big questions that many couples face is whether to celebrate by going out or by staying home together.

Here are some reasons to consider both possibilities:

Going out on the town

Zoe Zhang at Party.Alibaba.com wrote in her "Should I Go Out on Valentine's Day? Pros, Cons & Tips" article that was published in late January that there are good reasons to choose an evening out, saying: "Despite the pressure, there are genuine benefits to celebrating outside the home. If you're in a relationship and both partners enjoy social settings, going out can strengthen your bond through shared novelty and excitement. Trying a new restaurant, attending a live music event, or taking a couples' cooking class introduces fresh experiences that create lasting memories."

She pointed out that having a romantic atmosphere, having the convenience of everything being planned and served, having special treats and having the affirmation of being in public with your significant other can be rewarding for those in relationship. She also added that it can support the local economy, particularly for independent local business.

If you and/or your significant other are energized by being around people, it might feel like a missed opportunity if you don't go out.

And there are many great local options in Utah Valley, including going to one of the numerous local restaurants, attending the Valentine's dances in Lehi or Provo, enrolling in a Valentine's art or cooking class or going to a film festival or concert.

Staying peacefully at home

Andrew Harris at MSN.com recently compiled a list of 10 reasons "Why more Americans are choosing low-key Valentine's Day traditions" in 2026.

His reasons included:

- Inflation and budgeting concerns
- Avoiding the restaurant rush
- Focusing on true connection
- The rise of experience gifts
- Choosing comfort over glamour
- Celebrating all kinds of love

- Nostalgia and simple gestures
- Decreasing social media pressure
- Sustainable and green gifting
- Smart tech date nights

The summary of his points is that it can be more personal and less chaotic when celebrating at home as opposed to being around others. It's a chance to be more focused and less rushed.

Tips for making the decision

Zhang suggests going through a few steps to decide which approach is right for you and your significant other, including assessing your energy level, communicating with your partner, setting a budget, considering alternatives and honoring your identity.

"Instead of asking, 'What should I do?' try asking, 'How do I want to feel?' Peaceful? Excited? Nurtured? Loved?" Zhang said. "Once you identify the desired emotional state, the logistics follow naturally."

While Valentine's Day may be the date most visibly associated with love and romance, there are 364 other days in 2026 where love and romance are also important.

The key is discovering what works best to help your relationship grow and connect, then doing those things.

That's really what Valentine's Day is all about.

GET OUT THERE

America's most wanted beaches are calling

America's beaches are having a moment — not because they've suddenly changed, but because we have. According to the latest national survey on vacation interest, where you live increasingly shapes where you long to escape. And the results read like a love letter to three very different coastlines: the sugar-soft calm of Clearwater Beach, Florida; the big, breezy expanse of Myrtle Beach, South

Carolina; and the misty, almost mythical shores of Cannon Beach, Oregon.

Together, they reveal something deeper than sand preferences. They show what different parts of the country are really craving when they dream of the sea.

Let's start in the Midwest, where winters linger, waves are optional, and serenity is king. Midwesterners overwhelmingly set their sights on Clearwater Beach, one of the most beautiful beaches in America — and perhaps its most soothing. Clearwater's sand is famously white and powdery, like it's been sifted by hand. The Gulf of Mexico laps gen-

tly at the shore, producing little to no waves most days, which makes the beach feel more like a giant, sunlit spa than an adrenaline sport.

This is a beach for floating, strolling, and exhaling. You don't come to Clearwater to conquer the ocean; you come to be held by it. For travelers who spend much of the year landlocked or bundled up, the appeal is obvious. Clearwater offers warmth without chaos, beauty without bravado, and water that feels friendly rather than feral. It's vacation as therapy, and the Midwest has spoken clearly: calm is calling.

Head east, and the vibe shifts dramatically. Northeastern states are overwhelmingly drawn to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina — a beach that doesn't whisper, but welcomes you with open arms. Myrtle is sprawling, spacious, and endlessly energetic, yet never feels cramped. There's room here to spread out, whether you're walking miles of shoreline, tossing a football, or setting up a full-day beach camp with umbrellas, chairs, snacks, and stories.

What makes Myrtle Beach so magnetic is its sense of scale and accessibility. It's picturesque without being precious, lively without



Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

being overwhelming. The Atlantic rolls in with confidence, the boardwalk buzzes, and the beach seems to stretch forever. For Northeasterners accustomed to smaller, more rugged beaches and tighter coastal towns, Myrtle offers breathing room — physically and mentally. It's the kind of place where generations vacation together, where traditions form, and where the beach feels less like an escape and more like a seasonal home.

Then there's the West and Mountain states, whose collective

imagination drifts north — to Cannon Beach, Oregon. This choice is perhaps the most telling, because Cannon Beach is, in many ways, unbeachy in the traditional sense. The water is cold. The skies are often moody. Sunbathing is optional at best.

And yet, nowhere else in the world looks or feels quite like it.

Cannon Beach is defined by Haystack Rock, sea stacks rising from the shoreline like ancient sentinels, and by a landscape that feels cin-

ematic no matter the weather. Fog rolls in. Light shifts. The ocean roars rather than shimmers. This is a beach for contemplation, photography, long walks, and moments that stay with you long after you've left.

For Western state travelers, many of whom are surrounded by dramatic natural beauty year-round, Cannon Beach doesn't compete — it complements. It's not about lounging; it's about feeling small in the best possible way. It's forever memorable because it's emotional, not just scenic.

So what are America's most wanted beaches really telling us? That travel isn't about sameness — it's about contrast. We seek what we're missing. Calm. Space. Wonder.

From Clearwater's gentle embrace to Myrtle's generous sprawl to Cannon Beach's unforgettable soul, America's coastlines are answering three very different calls. And somehow, they're all right.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

GET OUT THERE

How to visit Mexico without leaving home

If you want to visit Mexico without buying a plane ticket, all you need to do is push your shopping cart through the front doors of Rancho Markets. Utah's beloved Mexican grocery chain is as close as you can get to crossing the border without a passport. It is a sensory jolt of color, aroma, music, and culture that instantly transports you to a different place. In an age when international travel feels ever more complicated, this little regional market offers an immersive cultural experience you can access any day of the week.



BLAKE SNOW

The first thing you notice when you walk inside is the smell. It is warm, comforting, and unmistakably Mexican. Fresh tortillas puff off a rotating press. Carnitas crackle in shallow steel basins. Sweet breads and pastries scent the air like a neighborhood panadería. For travelers who love food, smell memory is one of the most powerful triggers, and Rancho Markets taps into it immediately. Even if you have never been to Mexico before, the aroma hints at stories and traditions stretching far beyond the Wasatch Front.

Next comes the color. Rancho Markets does not do bland. Produce sections explode with vibrant displays of guavas, chiles, papayas, cactus paddles, and plantains. Bulk bins brim with dried chiles in every shade of red. Shelves of imported candies and cookies glow like a sugar-coated rainbow. This kind of presentation feels different from the muted greens and browns of many American supermarkets. It is bold. It is proud. And it reminds visitors that food is not just fuel but an expression of identity.

Then there is the sound. Every Rancho Market I have visited plays music that pairs perfectly with the atmosphere. You get upbeat rancheras that make families smile as they shop and romantic ballads that soften the mood. The soundtrack alone has the power to nudge your brain into vacation mode. Somewhere between the bakery and the butcher counter you start thinking less about errands and more about enjoyment, which is something travel accomplishes so well.



COURTESY RANCHO MARKETS

Rancho Markets

The real treasure, however, is the food counter. This is where Rancho Markets becomes a true cultural bridge. You can order tacos, tamales, birria, and freshly grilled carne asada at prices that feel stuck in a more generous era. The portions

are hearty. The flavors are authentic. The sauces are homemade. If your taste buds appreciate culinary adventure, this is where your imaginary trip to Mexico gets a first class upgrade. I once stopped in for a quick snack and walked out with a bag of Al Pastor pork so flavorful it felt like a love letter from Puebla.

It's easy to forget that grocery stores can be places of discovery. Rancho Markets reminds us that culture lives in small details. In hand labeled spice jars. In churros stacked on trays. In family owned tortilla brands. In greetings exchanged at the checkout stand. These little details create an environment that feels not just Mexican but community driven. You are not just buying groceries. You are participating in a local tradition that welcomes everyone.

For families, visiting Rancho Markets can be a fun learning experience. Kids get exposed to new foods and languages. Parents get a shortcut to multicultural appreciation. And everyone gets dessert. It is hard to walk out without at least one box of pan dulce, two slices of tres leches, or a cup of horchata. That might be the truest sign that this place works. Like all good travel, it leaves you wanting more.

So the next time you crave a dose of cultural immersion but lack the time or budget for an international adventure, head to Rancho Markets. Wander slowly. Try something new. Let your senses guide you. In a world that often feels too busy to explore, this little grocery store offers an invitation to travel with your feet planted firmly at home.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo Jan. 31

International Folk Dance Ensemble: Journey, Richards Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Nine Years, BYU West Campus, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

BYU Noteworthy and Vocal Point, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

The Mosaic of Christ: Let the Children Come, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (Jan. 31-Feb. 28, thecompassgallery.com)

A New Page 2026, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (jkrgallery.com)

ImprovBroadway, 496 N. 900 E., 7:30 p.m. (improvbroadway.com)

Feb. 2
Divya School of Dance - Classical Indian and Bollywood Dance Performance, Provo Library, 7 p.m. (provolibary.gov)

Feb. 3
Faculty Trio Recital, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Take Your Child to the Library Day, Provo Library, all day (provolibary.gov)

Ballroom Book Sale, Provo Library, noon-8 p.m. (Feb. 3-4, provolibary.gov)

Author Event - Middle Grade Magic, Provo Library, 7-9 p.m. (provolibary.gov)

Feb. 4
BYU Winter Choral Showcase, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Open Piano Lab, Provo Library, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. (provolibary.gov)

Seed Swap, Provo Library, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (provolibary.gov)

Open Mic Night, The Rise, 7 p.m. (therisevenue.com)

Feb. 5
Wesley Ducote, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Teen Volunteer Board, Provo Library, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (provolibary.gov)

Feb. 6
How to Train Your Dragon in Concert, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Legend of Timpanogos, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (Feb. 6-7, covey.provo.gov)

Valentine's Day 2026 Beehive Bazaar, The Beehive, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. (Feb. 6-7, beehivebazaar.com)

2026 Provo Art Stroll, Downtown Provo, 6-9 p.m. (facebook.com/downtownprovo)

Acoustic Open Mic Night, Provo Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (provolibary.gov)

ImprovBroadway, 496 N. 900 E., 7:30 p.m. (Feb. 6-7, improvbroadway.com)

The Afters Utah, Arlington Hall, 10 p.m. (linktr.ee/theaftersutah)

Feb. 7
2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

Orem Jan. 31

Alphonse Mucha, Master of Art Nouveau, UVU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Jan. 31-March 14, uvu.edu/museum)

A Peter Rabbit Tale, SCERA Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (Jan. 31-Feb. 13, scera.org)

Feb. 2
Family Movie Night: Beauty and the Beast, Orem Public Library, 6-8:30 p.m. (oremilibrary.org)

Feb. 3
Spring Choral Showcase, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7 p.m. (uvunoorda.universitytickets.com)

Feb. 4
Open Studio 2026, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Feb. 5
Author Visit: Beth Brower, Orem Public Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (oremilibrary.org)

Feb. 6
Tango After Dark, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7:30 p.m. (uvunoorda.universitytickets.com)

Film: Ever After: A Cinderella Story, Orem Public Library, 6-8:30 p.m. (oremilibrary.org)

Feb. 7
Library Hall Presents: Hot House West, Orem Public Library, 7 p.m. (oremilibrary.org)

Lindon

Feb. 7
Lindon Country Hoedown, Lindon Community Center, 6:30-8 p.m. (lindonrecreation.org)

SOUTH

Springville

Jan. 31
Seed Swap, Springville Library, noon-2 p.m. (springville.org/library)

54th Annual Utah All-State High School Art Show Awards Ceremony and Opening Reception, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (smofa.org)

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Jan. 31-June 25, smofa.org)

Feb. 2
Winter Reading: Mini Golf Party, Springville Library, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

Feb. 7
Book Dragons vs. Book Worms, Springville Library, 1-2 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Spanish Fork

Jan. 31
Popcorn Cinema - Groundhog Day, Spanish Fork Library, 3 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Feb. 3
Shelf Indulgence Book Club, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Feb. 4
Community Emergency Preparedness Class, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Feb. 5
Spanish Fork Writer's Group, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Feb. 7
Popcorn Cinema - The Bad Guys 2, Spanish Fork Library, 3 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Take Your Child to the Library Day, Early Childhood Fair, and Community Baby Shower, Spanish Fork Library, 11 a.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Payson

Feb. 1
Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Feb. 2
Weekly Craft Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Feb. 3
Live Local Music Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Feb. 4
Midweek Matinee, Payson Library, 4:30-6 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

Feb. 5
Strum Circle, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Feb. 6
Family Movie Night, Payson Library, 6:30 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

NORTH

Pleasant Grove

Jan. 31
International LEGO Day Celebration, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m.-noon (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Forever Plaid, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Jan. 31-March 28, theruth.org)

Feb. 2
Fiddler on the Roof, The Ruth and

Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Feb. 2-March 21, theruth.org)

Family Night at the Library, Pleasant Grove Library, 6:30 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Feb. 3
Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

BINGO Night, Pleasant Grove Library, 7-8 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Feb. 6
Super Bowl Showdown, PG Recreation Center, 10 a.m.-noon (pgutah.gov)

Daddy Daughter Date Night, PG Recreation Center, 6-8 p.m. (pgutah.gov)

Feb. 7
Saturday Morning Movie: Matilda, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m.-noon (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Take Your Child to the Library Day, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Lehi

Jan. 31
Grass Roots Shakespeare, 128 North 100 East, 1-2 p.m. (lehicity.libcal.com)

Feb. 2
Safe Tech Emergency Town Hall, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (lehi-ut.gov)

Feb. 6
Night at the Museum, Hutchings Museum, 6 p.m. (Feb. 6-7, jhutchingsmuseum.com)

American Fork
Jan. 31
Rug Tufting Workshop, The Rug Room, 6-9:30 p.m. (therugroomutah.com)

Celesta Rimington Book Launch, American Fork Library, 1-3 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Feb. 5
Adult Writer's Club-Beginners, American Fork Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Feb. 6
Hello, Dolly!, Valentine Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Feb. 6-21, timparts.com)

Highland

Jan. 31
Watercolor: Beginning, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (Jan. 31-March 28, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Feb. 2
Introduction to Art Materials and Techniques (Ages 5-10), Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (Feb. 2-March 23, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Portraits Across Media, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (Feb. 2-March 23, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Feb. 3
Oil Painting: The Spectrum of Painting, Highland Community Center, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (Feb. 3-March 24, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Feb. 4
Drawing & Painting: Fantasy Art (Ages 5-10), Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (Feb. 4-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Drawing for Homeschoolers (Ages 8-12), Highland Community Center, noon-2 p.m. (Feb. 4-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Drawing: Caricature, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (Feb. 4-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Oil Painting: Beginning, 7-9 p.m. (Feb. 4-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Feb. 5
Oil Painting: In the Style of the Masters, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (Feb. 5-March 26, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Cedar Hills

Feb. 2
Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

WEST

Eagle Mountain

Feb. 4
Arts and Crafts, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 10 a.m.-noon (eaglemountain.gov)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

Jan. 31
Sundance Film Festival 2026, various Salt Lake and Park City venues and times, (festival.sundance.org)

Feb. 5
Dirty Dancing in Concert, Eccles Theater, 7:30 p.m. (live-at-the-eccles.com)

Feb. 7
Winter Roundup 2026, Downtown Salt Lake, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. (visitsaltlake.com/winter-roundup)

Heber Valley

Jan. 31
The Spirit of Aloha: Polynesian Dinner and Show, Avon Theater, 7 p.m. (hebervalleyentertainment.com)

Feb. 6
Chocolate Lovers Train, Heber Valley Railroad, 7-8:30 p.m. (hebertrain.com)

Feb. 7
The Mountain Market, The Sycamore Building, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. (thesycamorebuilding.com)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jloyd@heraldextra.com.

GET OUT THERE

Did you know Utah is home to the second highest rock face in America?

Hiking Notch Peak in western Utah feels like stumbling onto a secret that should have been famous long ago. The summit hosts the second highest vertical drop in America after El Capitan, which gives the place an undeniable Yosemite vibe.



BLAKE SNOW

Yet almost no one goes there. That criminal level of under appreciation makes the experience even better because you get grand scenery without the grand crowds.

The trailhead starts in a wide desert wash that cuts through classic basin and range country. The opening miles feel more like a casual stroll than a proper hike as you wander past sagebrush and juniper under a big open sky. The air is dry. The ground is gravelly. And the ease of movement gives you time to look around and wonder how something as dramatic as a two-thousand-foot cliff could hide beyond such a gentle beginning.

Eventually the wash narrows and leads you into a limestone canyon that feels cooler and more intimate. This section is surprisingly scenic. Vertical walls rise above the trail. Shadows cut across the path. The sound of footsteps echoes a little more. Those familiar with Utah's red rock may

be surprised by this gray, limestone world. It feels different and refreshing.

As the canyon opens again, the real climb begins. It is steady but not punishing, and it rewards you at every switchback. Here you pass through one of the most impressive bristlecone pine groves in America. Their twisted trunks and weathered branches look like sculptures shaped by centuries of exposure, adding a sense of age and permanence to an already dramatic landscape.

The higher you climb, the more the horizon widens. Mountain ridges layer in the distance. Then it happens. You reach the ridge, and the world drops away. The north face of Notch Peak falls more than two thousand feet in a single vertical sheet of limestone. It is one of the biggest sheer cliffs in North America, and it hits you with equal parts awe and nervous excitement.

You can stay well back from the edge, but if you inch close enough to peer over, be prepared for a jolt of adrenaline that might weaken your knees. The views stretch across the West Desert in all directions. Depending on the weather, you may feel strong wind on your face, which only heightens the wild vulnerability.

The solitude is another gift. On many days you might see only a few hikers or none at all. On the day my friend and I hiked last



BLAKE SNOW, SPECIAL TO THE DAILY HERALD

Blake Snow poses for a photo at Notch Peak in western Utah.

fall, we only encountered a single other hiker. While Utah's national parks regularly hum with activity, this massive place stayed quiet. That quiet changed the quality of the experience. It was less of a tourist outing and more of a personal encounter with the wilderness.

The statistics back up the challenge and reward.

The round trip clocks in at about seven miles with nearly three thousand feet of elevation gain. Most hikers finish in four to six hours. Spring and fall offer the best temperatures. Summer is hot with almost no shade. Winter can bring snow and ice to the upper trail, so come prepared.

Because the area is remote, you must carry plenty

of water. Do not count on cell service. Tell someone where you are going, and stay well back from the cliff if winds pick up.

In the end, Notch Peak delivers a rare combination of easy desert walking, a steady climb through ancient pines, and one of the most dramatic cliff views in the entire state, if not America. It feels wild. It

feels overlooked. And it deserves to be on every Utah's bucket list.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

Jan. 24

Frigid 5k and Penguin Plunge 2026, Utah Lake State Park, 9 a.m. (runtasticevents.com)

Jarica Jamison with Daniel Beddoes and Mikayla Paige, The Rise, 6:30 p.m. (therisevenue.com)

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

Introduction to Podcasting, Provo Library, 2-3 p.m. (provolib.org)

Provo City Library Writing Group, Provo Library, 4-5 p.m. (provolib.org)

The Mosaic of Christ: Let the Children Come, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (Jan. 24-Feb. 28, thecompassgallery.com)

A New Page 2026, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (Jan. 24-31, jkrgallery.com)

BYU Young Artists of Voice Competition, BYU Music Building, 7 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Twenty Year Anniversary Concert Series, Velour, 7:30 p.m. (velourlive.com)

Ballroom Dance Touring Company: Rhythm, Richards Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Utah COPA-Finding Nemo, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

ImprovBroadway, 496 N. 900 E., 7:30 p.m. (improvbroadway.com)

Jan. 26

Take 5: A Tribute to Sinatra, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

Puzzle Exchange, Provo Library, 6-7:30 p.m. (provolib.org)

Family Movie Night: Ferdinand, Provo Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (provolib.org)

Jan. 27

BYU forum: Dr. Francis Collins, Marriott Center, 11 a.m. (calendar.byu.edu)

Learn It: Year of Celebrations, Provo Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (provolib.org)

Jan. 28

Open Piano Lab, Provo Library, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. (provolib.org)

Introduction to Studio Production, Provo Library, 7-8 p.m. (provolib.org)

Jan. 29

International Folk Dance Ensemble: Journey, Richards Building, 7:30 p.m. (Jan. 29-31, onstage.byu.edu)

Nine Years, BYU West Campus, 7:30 p.m. (Jan. 29-31, onstage.byu.edu)

Jan. 30

BYU Noteworthy and Vocal Point, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (Jan. 30-31, covey.provo.gov)

BYU Blast!, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

SNOWverse "Sounds of the Underground," The Rise, 7 p.m. (therisevenue.com)

ImprovBroadway, 496 N. 900 E., 7:30 p.m. (Jan. 30-31, improvbroadway.com)

Silent Disco, The Rise, 10 p.m. (therisevenue.com)

The Afters Utah, Arlington Hall, 10 p.m. (linktr.ee/theaftersutah)

Jan. 31

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

Orem

Jan. 24

Emergence: Fine Art Photography Showcase, Gallery on 6th, 5:30-8 p.m. (Jan. 24-29, uvu.edu)

Antra Sinha: Shimmering Sunlight, UVU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Alphonse Mucha, Master of Art Nouveau, UVU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Jan. 24-March 14, uvu.edu/museum)

Jan. 26

A Peter Rabbit Tale, SCERA Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (Jan. 26-Feb. 13, scera.org)

Film: The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (Extended) Part 1, Orem Library, 6-8:30 p.m. (oremlibrary.org)

Film: The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (Extended) Part 2, Orem Library, 6-8:30 p.m. (oremlibrary.org)

Jan. 27

Tuesday Tunes, University Place, 5-7 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Jan. 28

Lego After Work, Orem Public Library, 7 p.m. (oremlibrary.org)

Open Studio 2026, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Jan. 30

Happy Valley Comedy, Orem Public Library, 7 p.m. (oremlibrary.org)

Film: The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (Extended) Part 2, Orem Library, 6-8:30 p.m. (oremlibrary.org)

SOUTH

Springville

Jan. 24

Utah Valley Toastmasters Club, Springville Library, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Board Game Club, Springville Library, 1-3 p.m. (springville.org/library)

RIICHI Mahjong Club, Springville Library, 1:30-3:30 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Jan. 24-June 25, smofa.org)

Jan. 26

Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

Garland Craft, Springville Library, 7 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Jan. 28

BookEnders, Pleasant Grove Library,

Jan. 27

Nebo Novelists, Springville Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Jan. 28

A Cozy Groundhog Day, Springville Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Jan. 31

Seed Swap, Springville Library, noon-2 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Spanish Fork

Jan. 28

Community Emergency Preparedness Class, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Jan. 31

Popcorn Cinema - Groundhog Day, Spanish Fork Library, 3 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Payson

Jan. 25

Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Jan. 26

Cardboard Kingdom, Payson Library, 7-8 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

Weekly Craft Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Jan. 27

Tuesday Night Book Club, Payson Library, 8-9 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

Live Local Music Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Jan. 28

Midweek Matinee, Payson Library, 4:30-6 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

Jan. 29

Strum Circle, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Library Night Out: Sourdough Basics, Payson Library, 6:30-8 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

NORTH

Pleasant Grove

Jan. 24

Forever Plaid, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Jan. 24-March 28, theruth.org)

Saturday Morning Movie: The Angry Birds, Pleasant Grove Library, 1-3:30 a.m.-noon (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Book Bedazzling, Pleasant Grove Library, 2-6 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Jan. 26

Twilight Tales, Pleasant Grove Library, 6:30 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Jan. 27

Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

Jan. 28

BookEnders, Pleasant Grove Library,

7-8:30 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Jan. 31

International LEGO Day Celebration, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m.-noon (pgcityutah.gov/departments/library)

Lehi

Jan. 24

Curious George: Let's Get Curious, Thanksgiving Point, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

Jan. 26

This Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, This Girl Does Nothing, Skyridge Theatre Auditorium, 7 p.m. (Jan. 26-29, skyridgetheatre.com)

American Fork

Jan. 24

Rug Tufting Workshop, The Rug Room, 6-9:30 p.m. (Jan. 24-31, therugroomutah.com)

Jan. 26

Family Yoga, American Fork Library, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Jan. 27

Adult Yoga, American Fork Library, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Jan. 29

Adult Advanced Writers Club, American Fork Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Jan. 27

Adult Yoga, American Fork Library, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Jan. 29

Adult Advanced Writers Club, American Fork Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Jan. 27

Adult Yoga, American Fork Library, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Jan. 29

Adult Advanced Writers Club, American Fork Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Jan. 27

Adult Yoga, American Fork Library, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Jan. 29

Adult Advanced Writers Club, American Fork Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Jan. 30

Well-Read Dinner, American Fork Library, 6-7:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Jan. 31

Celesta Rimington Book Launch, American Fork Library, 1-3 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Highland

Jan. 24

Watercolor: Beginning, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (Jan. 24-March 28, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Jan. 26

Introduction to Art Materials and Techniques (Ages 5-10), Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (Jan. 26-March 23, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Portraits Across Media, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (Jan. 26-March 23, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Jan. 29

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jloyd@heraldextra.com.

bula.com)

Jan. 27

Oil Painting: The Spectrum of Painting, Highland Community Center, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (Jan. 70-March 24, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Jan. 28

Drawing & Painting: Fantasy Art (Ages 5-10), Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (Jan. 28-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Drawing for Homeschoolers (Ages 8-12), Highland Community Center, noon-2 p.m. (Jan. 28-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Drawing: Caricature, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (Jan. 28-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Oil Painting: Beginning, 7-9 p.m. (Jan. 28-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Oil Painting: In the Style of the Masters, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (Jan. 29-March 26, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

WEST

Eagle Mountain

Jan. 24

Family Game Day, Eagle Mountain Library, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Arts and Crafts, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 10 a.m.-noon (eaglemountain.gov)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

Jan. 24

Three Dog Night and Ambrosia, Kingsbury Hall, 7 p.m. (artsticks.utah.edu)

A Beautiful Noise, Eccles Theater, 7 p.m. (Jan. 24-25, saltlakecity.broadway.com)

Sundance Film Festival 2026, various Salt Lake and Park City venues and times, (festival.sundance.org)

Heber Valley

Jan. 29

Jordan World Circus, Wasatch Events Center, 6:30 p.m. (jordancircus.com)

Jan. 30

Rock and Roll Train, Heber Valley Railroad, 7 p.m. (hebertrain.com)

Jan. 31

The Spirit of Aloha: Polynesian Dinner and Show, Avon Theater, 7 p.m. (hebervalleyentertainment.com)

GET OUT THERE

7 things to know after visiting every continent on Earth

After circling the globe and stepping foot on all seven continents, you start to notice patterns. Not the kind you get from



BLAKE SNOW

textbooks or documentaries, but the fuzzy, emotional, life-changing kind that only reveal themselves after tasting both the bitter and sweet, smelling the differing air of different countries, and smiling your way through miscommunications in faraway places.

What follows are the seven biggest lessons I've learned after seeing much of our planet up close. Maybe they can help along your own journey, wherever it may lead you.

1 The world is far safer than headlines suggest.

Before traveling, you imagine danger lurking around every unfamiliar corner. After traveling, you realize most of the world is made of people who want to help, not harm. In cities of millions or tiny roadside villages, strangers consistently steer you in the right direction, warn you about scams, or simply ask how your journey is going. Fear shrinks as firsthand experience grows, and the version of Earth shown on the

nightly news feels increasingly out of sync with the one you meet in real life.

2 Hospitality is often strongest in places with the least to give.

This one is counterintuitive. The lowest GDP nations often display the highest generosity. People who materially have the least routinely offer the most: a chair, a plate of food, a ride, an introduction, or a genuine, heart-melting welcome. Kindness is not evenly distributed across the globe, but it often flourishes in "poor" places like Africa, Latin America, and Asia. That said, I've been the recipient of amazing generosity in America, too, the richest country on Earth. Point is: humans are amazingly charitable, even when you least expect it.

3 People everywhere care about the same things.

Once you zoom out, it is astonishing how universal human priorities are. Family. Dignity. Safety. Meaningful work. Health. Hopes for our children. These desires transcend language, politics, wealth, and geography. What changes is the style of life, not the

substance of it. And "rich" and "poor" take on entirely different meanings once you see how abundant community, time, and happiness can be in countries that lack expensive cars or towering skylines.

4 The most difficult countries are the most memorable.

Every traveler knows this truth but tries to forget it when booking flights: the hardest trips are the ones you talk about forever. Japan's maze-like transit, Brazil's rhythm, South Africa's contrasts, India's intensity. Remote islands that take three flights to reach. Bureaucracy-heavy countries that make getting a visa feel like a spy mission. Even "do not travel" zones, when entered responsibly, can reveal the most profound human encounters. Challenge has a way of deepening experience.

5 Nature is still overwhelmingly wild.

We like to tell ourselves the world is overcrowded and picked over. It's not. Fly over Africa, and you'll see emptiness that stretches past the horizon. Sail the Pacific, and you'll understand just how big blue can feel. Hike through Patagonia, the Australian



BLAKE SNOW, SPECIAL TO THE DAILY HERALD

Blake Snow, right, poses for a photo during one of his many travel adventures.

Outback, or the American West, and you'll appreciate what scale truly is. For all our roads and crowded cities, Earth remains mostly untouched, primitive, and undeveloped.

6 You can't outrun your problems.

This is the myth many travelers secretly test. "If I change my surroundings, maybe I'll change myself." But travel is no substitute for inner peace. You can be miserable in Bali and joyful in Belgium. You carry your same

hopes, wounds, strengths, and blind spots no matter the latitude. Travel can expand your mind but will never heal a broken heart. That only happens from the inside out.

7 Wonder is renewable.

Here's the extra lesson that kept showing up, continent after continent: wonder never runs out. The world is not a checklist to complete. It is a relationship. You can return to the same city three times and notice

something new on the fourth. You can revisit a desert and marvel again at its silence. You can watch another sunset at sea and still get lost in the glow. Curiosity is a renewable resource. And if you nurture it, the world keeps on giving. Get out there, already.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

ASK DR. STEVE

Not married but have kids? Your custody rights might not be what you think

This Christmas, thousands of unmarried parents are discovering a harsh truth: the custody rights they assumed they had don't legally exist. Fathers who've



STEVEN A. SZYKULA

raised children since birth learn they have no legal standing. Mothers find out their child's dad can take the kids without permission. The law treats unmarried parents fundamentally differently than divorcing couples, and most don't realize it until crisis hits.

State laws regarding unmarried parents often reflect traditional values that can shock modern families. Living together for years doesn't create parental rights. Being on the birth certificate doesn't guarantee custody. Paying child support doesn't equal visitation rights. The assumptions unmarried parents make about their rights can lead to devastating Christmas surprises when relationships end.

As unmarried couples navigate this holiday season — many separating after the stress of another year — they're learning that "doing the right thing" morally doesn't translate to legal protection. The father blocked from Christmas morning with his kids. The mother whose ex disappeared with the children to another state. These nightmares happen because parents didn't understand their actual legal status.

Understanding unmarried parents' rights

Q What custody rights do unmarried fathers have?

A Without legal establishment of paternity and custody orders: none in many states. Being on the birth certificate creates presumption of paternity but not custody rights. Biological fathers who've lived with and supported children for years have no automatic rights to visitation or decision-making. Until courts establish legal custody, mothers often have sole physical and legal custody by default. Desperate fathers every December learn they can't enforce "their" Christmas visitation.

Q How is paternity established?

A Three typical ways: Voluntary Declaration of Paternity (signed by both parents), court order through

paternity action, or marriage to mother at conception or birth. Birth certificate listing alone doesn't establish legal paternity for custody purposes in many jurisdictions. DNA tests may be required if paternity disputed. Once established, fathers can petition for custody/visitation, but it's not automatic. The process takes months — starting now means possible resolution by next Christmas.

Q What rights do unmarried mothers have?

A Many state laws grant unmarried mothers automatic sole legal and physical custody until court orders otherwise. Mothers can make all decisions — medical, educational, religious — without father's input. They can relocate without permission. However, this power comes with sole financial responsibility unless child support is established. Mothers cannot deny visitation once court orders exist, but without orders, they control access completely.

Q Can unmarried fathers just take the children?

A If paternity is legally established but no custody orders exist, the situation becomes legally complex. Without orders, taking children could trigger immediate emergency court proceedings and damage future custody claims. If paternity isn't established, taking children is kidnapping. Police handle these situations differently depending on documentation. Never take children without court orders — judges severely punish self-help custody attempts.

Q How do custody proceedings differ for unmarried versus divorced parents?

A Unmarried parents must first establish paternity, then file separate custody/support actions. No automatic temporary orders exist during proceedings. No marital property division affects financial considerations. Courts don't presume joint custody as readily for never-married parents. The process is often longer, more complex, and more expensive. Social workers report unmarried parents face additional scrutiny about stability and commitment.

Q What if we lived together for years — doesn't that create rights?

A No in most states. Common-law marriage is recognized in very few states. Cohabitation length doesn't create parental rights. Joint purchases, shared parenting, and mutual support don't establish legal custody.

Many unmarried parents discover after decade-long relationships that they're legal strangers regarding custody. The only protection is court-ordered custody arrangements.

Q What about child support without custody orders?

A Child support and custody are separate issues. Paying support doesn't guarantee visitation. Receiving support doesn't prevent relocation. Support orders through state agencies don't address custody. Many fathers pay support for years thinking it ensures access, then discover at Christmas they have no enforceable visitation rights. Conversely, mothers can't deny visitation for unpaid support once orders exist.

Q How do unmarried parents handle this Christmas without court orders?

A Without orders, negotiate carefully in writing. Document any agreements about holiday schedules. If mother has sole custody by default, fathers must request rather than demand time. Mothers should facilitate access unless safety concerns exist — judges remember who cooperated before orders existed. Don't make promises to children without written agreement. If conflict exists, file for emergency temporary orders immediately, though December filings rarely get heard before January.

Q What's a "putative father" and why does it matter?

A A putative father is biological father who hasn't established legal paternity. Many states require putative fathers to register with the state to protect parental rights, especially regarding adoption. Unregistered putative fathers can lose children to adoption without notice. This particularly affects young fathers who don't understand the system. Registration is crucial but doesn't alone create custody rights — court action still required.

Q Can unmarried parents create their own custody agreement?

A Yes, but it must be court-approved to be enforceable. Informal agreements aren't legally binding — either parent can violate them without consequence. Proper agreements address physical custody, legal custody (decision-making), visitation schedules, holiday divisions, child support, and dispute resolution. Even cooperative parents should formalize arrangements. Courts approve reasonable agreements quickly when both parents consent.

Q What if the other parent won't acknowledge paternity?

A File paternity action forcing the issue. Courts order DNA testing if requested. Refusing testing can result in default judgment of paternity. Once established, pursue custody/support orders. Mothers sometimes resist paternity establishment to maintain control; fathers sometimes avoid it to escape support obligations. Courts prioritize children's rights to know both parents and receive support.

Q How do grandparents' rights work for unmarried parents?

A More complicated than with married parents. If paternity isn't established, paternal grandparents have no recognized relationship. Even with established paternity, grandparent rights remain limited. States typically require substantial relationship and parental unfitness or unavailability. Grandparents often become caregivers for unmarried parents' children but lack legal standing without guardianship proceedings.

Q What about unmarried parents where one isn't biological?

A Non-biological parents in same-sex relationships or where someone acted as parent without adoption have minimal rights in most states. Adoption or guardianship required for legal standing. Years of parenting, financial support, and emotional bonds don't create legal rights without formal proceedings. Recent cases increasingly recognize de facto parents, but protection isn't guaranteed. Urgent need for legal establishment before relationship problems arise.

Q Should unmarried parents stay together "for the kids"?

A No — but separate legally, not just physically. Unmarried parents often "break up" informally, creating chaos without legal structure. Children need clarity about schedules, homes, and expectations. Formal custody orders provide stability even for cooperative parents. Staying in limbo — together but not together — confuses children and prevents both parents from moving forward healthily.

Q What immediate steps should unmarried parents take?

A Establish paternity immediately if not done. File for custody/visitation orders even if currently agreeing. Document current parenting arrangements, financial contributions, and children's routines. Gather evidence of involvement: photos, school

records, medical participation. Don't wait for conflict — establish rights while cooperative. This Christmas's informal arrangement could become next year's custody battle without legal protection.

Closing

Unmarried parents live in a legal grey zone that becomes black and white when relationships end. The assumptions you've made about your parental rights — based on biology, involvement, or moral obligation — mean nothing without court orders. This Christmas, countless unmarried parents are learning this devastating lesson as they're denied access to their children or unable to prevent the other parent from disappearing.

The law's different treatment of unmarried parents isn't fair, but it's reality. Mothers' automatic sole custody and fathers' complete lack of rights create an imbalanced system ripe for abuse. Good fathers are denied access while uninvolved fathers avoid responsibility. Protective mothers can't relocate while vindictive mothers weaponize children. Only court orders level the playing field.

Don't wait for crisis to establish your legal rights. The informal arrangement working today could explode tomorrow. Every unmarried parent should have court-ordered custody arrangements, not because you expect problems but because children deserve legal protection of both relationships. The process is complex and sometimes expensive, but far less costly than losing your children.

This holiday season, give your children the gift of legal certainty. Whether you're together, separated, or somewhere in between, establish formal custody arrangements that protect everyone's rights. Your children deserve the security of knowing both parents will remain in their lives, regardless of relationship changes.

For unmarried parents needing to establish custody rights or defend against custody challenges, professional evaluation can demonstrate parenting capacity and children's best interests. This article was written by Dr. Steve Szykula and Jason Sadora at Comprehensive Psychological Services (WeCanHelpOut.com) which provides assessments that help courts understand family dynamics and create appropriate custody arrangements for unmarried parents.

GET OUT THERE

Smitten in San Diego, conflicted in Tijuana

After years of hearing close friends and good neighbors rave about it, my family recently booked a service trip to work (and sometimes play) at a Mexican orphanage over the holidays.



BLAKE SNOW

I was initially reluctant to do so, having read the controversy surrounding “voluntourism” — the global mashup of part-time volunteering with part-time vacationing — that’s exploded into a multi-million participant industry.

At its best, voluntourism fosters cultural exchange, humility, funds under-resourced programs, creates lifelong givers, and changes lives. At its worst, it’s disorganized, performative, perpetuates outdated orphanages that developed countries abandoned long ago, reinforces child abandonment once volunteers leave, and may even be unintentionally harmful.

I’ve long wondered if both can be true. Like most things in life, the truth is in the middle. But after donating a week of my time and spending over \$6,000 for my family of six (including airfare and a \$2,800 donation to the organizing charity), I won’t be volunteering again anytime soon. Here’s why.

Before I answer that, let me explain the conflicting ups and downs you’ll probably experience when voluntouring. Our family started “up” on a pre-night paradisiacal stay at Bahia Resort Hotel in San Diego. Maybe it was the rescued seals sunbathing in the onsite sanctuary. Maybe it was the swaying palms that whispered, “Relax, buddy — you’re here now.”



COURTESY BLAKE SNOW

Blake Snow’s family works with orphans in Tijuana.

Or maybe it was the 1950s throw-back charm of classic California before California got self-conscious.

Whatever the reason, Bahia has it dialed in. The place still looks fresh and is immaculately maintained. The pool sparkles. Iconic Mission Beach is five minutes away. And Dockside 1953, the hotel’s signature restaurant, is the kind of “wow” that made me put my fork down mid-bite to confirm, yes, this really is that good.

Our family fell hard for Bahia: the vibe, the food, the staff — all of it. Consider us smitten.

But travel isn’t all infinity pools and sunset dinners. Sometimes it’s messier, heavier, and harder to square — in this case, just 45 minutes south after crossing the border into Tijuana, where we spent the bulk of our trip helping (I guess?) at a top-rated but small orphanage doing its best with limited resources.

And here’s where things get complicated.

The orphan-turned-director was charismatic, hardworking, earnest, and pretty transparent about the place being a couple months from running out of money. Wonderful guy, but also a salesman — because he has to be. Once our group of seven families and 35 individuals arrived, the place was crawling with volunteers and not nearly enough purposeful work for all of us. Some days felt like controlled chaos. My own kids, plus a lot of other kids (both orphaned and parented), definitely added to the chaos.

And yet, there were moments.

An early morning visit to a church in the slums that serves free daily breakfast to hungry mouths. After handing out plates of eggs, beans, and tortillas to the community, we then served the very workers we had just volunteered beside. The director was

clearly touched by our modest efforts; even cried while saying goodbye.

We visited a nearby school and shared several games, a t-male lunch, and lots of “6-7!” exchanges that jumped the border just as quickly as we did. We painted a mural at the orphanage, nearly finished cementing a new sports court, served the orphans three meals a day, cooked, cleaned, and beautified the already colorful compound. We played soccer with the kids, jumped rope, and even held a pinewood derby race.

But there were also red flags. After a surprise government inspection one morning that caused the director to visibly panic and plead with my family to hurry and clean several classrooms and bathrooms, three sibling orphans were abruptly removed. Nothing to do with orphanage neglect, or anything. The authorities simply felt these three would do better at another location.

At other times, it was clear we were watching some sort of “impress the donors” show put on by the workers. On top of that, several staffers looked bone-tired and even discouraged by the some-times circus-like conditions our caravan of temporary travelers had introduced into their normal and probably more measured routines.

By the final night (a long one involving a bonfire, an adobo turkey, dance party, and the lights going out), some of us felt like we were at the welcome end of summer camp. Homesick. Overfed. Emotionally overloaded. “It’s still been a good experience,” one volunteer told me. Feeling unsure about how impactful her contributions were, another admitted that this might be her last trip.

So what do you make of some-

thing that’s both good and flawed? Helpful and harmful? Heartwarming and heartbreaking?

Here’s where I’ve landed. You can separate volunteer work from travel. You can combine the two. And both can be OK.

What matters is honesty — about your motives, about the system you’re stepping into, and about what you can and can’t control. Not every orphanage is the same. Not every program is ethical. Some are excellent. Some are not. Many fall somewhere in between.

On the morning we left, the orphans lovingly surrounded my family and our departing van like little Ewoks circling “golden” C-3PO in Return of the Jedi. It was heartwarming. Then we promptly abandoned those kids, never to return, like so many others have before us.

Voluntourism? It’s complicated. To decide if it’s right for you, read the pros and cons before making your choice. Consider donating all you otherwise would with a focus on funding local leaders and education programs over pop-in service visits, selfies, and soccer. Then forge ahead with all your heart and zero judgment of those who choose a different path.

Because the truth is this: The world needs our help. Orphans need love, resources, and advocacy — however imperfect the system. And travel, at its best, stretches our empathy in ways staying home never will.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

Jan. 10

BYU’s Vocal Point, BYU West Campus, 7 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

Utah COPA (Draper) - Disney On Stage, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

Snow Time Show Time: Movie & Craft, Provo Library, noon-2 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Claudine Bigelow Performance, Recital Hall, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.bye.edu)

The Second Annual Great January Jigsaw Race, Provo Library, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. (Jan. 10-17, provolibrary.gov)

The Mosaic of Christ: Let the Children Come, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (Jan. 10-Feb. 28, thecompassgallery.com)

ImprovBroadway, 496 N. 900 E., 7:30 p.m. (improvbroadway.com)

Jan. 12

Utah COPA (AF Musical Theater) - Winter Concert, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (Jan. 12-14, covey.provo.gov)

Trivia Night, Provo Library, 7-8:15 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Jan. 13

Devotional: President and Sister Reese, Marriott Center, 11 a.m. (calendar.byu.edu)

The Schtick Men, Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Senior Book Club - Edenbrooke, Provo Library, 1-1:45 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Family Yoga, Provo Library, 6-6:30 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Adult All-Abilities Yoga, Provo Library, 7-8 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Jan. 14

Mock Caldecott, Provo Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Open Piano Lab, Provo Library, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Jan. 16

BYU’s Noteworthy, BYU West Campus, 7 p.m. (Jan. 16-17, onstage.byu.edu)

Velour Slumber Party with Book On Tape Worm, Velour, 7:30 p.m. (Jan. 16-17, velourlive.com)

The Dance Conservatory Presents Wizard of Oz, Covey Center for the Arts, 4 p.m./7 p.m. (Jan. 16-17, covey.provo.gov)

ImprovBroadway, 496 N. 900 E., 7:30 p.m. (Jan. 16-17, improvbroadway.com)

The Afters Utah, Arlington Hall, 10 p.m. (linktr.ee/theaftersutah)

Goth Monthly Nights, The Rise, 9 p.m. (Jan. 16-17, therisevenue.com)

Jan. 18

Grounded: A Winter Reset Experience, Sundance Resort, 7-8:30 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Orem

Jan. 10

Faculty Recital: “Sparrows”, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7 p.m. (uvu.edu/arts)

2026 Orem Reading Challenge Kick-off: An Unexpected Party, Orem Public Library, 10 a.m. (orem.librarycalendar.com)

Hearth and Home: Domestic Depictions From the Permanent Collection, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 1-8 p.m. (Jan. 10-17, uvu.edu/museum)

Antra Sinha: Shimmering Sunlight, UVU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Jan. 10-24, uvu.edu/museum)

Alphonse Mucha, Master of Art Nouveau, UVU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Jan. 10-March 14, uvu.edu/museum)

Art for All 2026, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Jan. 12

Paw-some Party, Orem Library, 6-7:30 p.m. (oremilibrary.org)

Film: The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug, Orem Public Library, 6-9 p.m. (oremilibrary.org)

Jan. 13

Social Impact Fair, UVU SC 106 Commons, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (uvu.edu/events)

Jan. 14

Open Studio 2026, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Jan. 16

January Movie Night: The Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Ring, Orem Public Library, 6-9 p.m. (oremilibrary.org)

Jan. 17

Violinist David Park, Orem Public Library, 7 p.m. (excellenceconcerts.org)

Teen After Hours: Cinema Craft Night, Orem Public Library, 7-9 p.m. (oremilibrary.org)

SOUTH

Springville

Jan. 10

Art Workshop: Native American Beadwork with Judy Mansfield, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (smofa.org)

Board Game Club, Springville Library, 1-3 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Jan. 10-June 25, smofa.org)

Jan. 12

Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

Mythical Creatures Night, Springville Library, 7-8 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Jan. 13

Nebo Novelists, Springville Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Jan. 14

Journaling: Find Your Style, 7 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Jan. 16

CineCraft SLC Presents: Legally Blonde, Cargo Cinema, 7-9 p.m. (eventbrite.com)

Jan. 17

Art City Ukulele, Springville Library, 11 a.m.-noon (springville.org/library)

Spanish Fork

Jan. 10

2026 Seedling Festival and Seed Swap, Spanish Fork Library, 10 a.m.-noon (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Popcorn Cinema - Bee Movie, Spanish Fork Library, noon-2 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Jan. 14

Men’s Mental Health: A Support Group for Men, Spanish Fork Library, 7 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Jan. 15

Spanish Fork Writer’s Group, Spanish Fork Library, 6:30 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Jan. 17

UVSCC Swiss Chess Tournament, Spanish Fork Library, 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Jan. 3

Movie Marathon - Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 1, Spanish Fork Library, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Movie Marathon - Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2, Spanish Fork Library, 2-5 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Jan. 9

Popcorn Cinema - High School Musical, Spanish Fork Library, 4-6 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Payson

Jan. 11

Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Jan. 13

Weekly Craft Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Jan. 14

Midweek Matinee, Payson Library, 4:30-6 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

Live Local Music Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Jan. 15

Strum Circle, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Authors Anonymous, Payson Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

Jan. 17

Game Night, Payson Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (paysonutah.gov/library)

NORTH

Pleasant Grove

Jan. 10

Annual Health and Fitness Fair, Pleasant Grove Rec Center, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (pg-

cityutah.gov)

Saturday Morning Movie: Flubber, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m.-noon (pgcityutah.gov)

Jan. 13

Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

Jan. 14

Trivia Night, Pleasant Grove Library, 7-8 p.m.-noon (pgcityutah.gov)

Jan. 16

Soul Survivor, The Soundbox, 7:30 p.m. (ccsoundhouse.com)

Lehi

Jan. 10

Luminaria, Thanksgiving Point, 4 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

The Biology of Skinwalker Ranch, Hutchings Museum, 6 p.m. (jhutchingsmuseum.com)

Health and Fitness Fair, Legacy Center, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (lehi-ut.gov)

Jan. 16

Curious George: Let’s Get Curious, Thanksgiving Point, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

American Fork

Jan. 10

Rug Tufting Workshop, The Rug Room, 6-9:30 p.m. (Jan. 10-31, therugroomutah.com)

Jan. 13

Crafternoon, American Fork Library, 12:30-2:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Jan. 15

Adult Writer’s Club-Advanced, American Fork Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Jan. 17

1000 Books Before Kindergarten Celebration, American Fork Library, 12:30-2:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Highland

Jan. 12

Introduction to Art Materials and Techniques (Ages 5-10), Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (Jan. 12-March 23, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Portraits Across Media, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (Jan. 12-March 23, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Jan. 13

Oil Painting: The Spectrum of Painting, Highland Community Center, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (Jan. 13-March 24, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Jan. 14

Drawing & Painting: Fantasy Art (Ages 5-10), Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (Jan. 14-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Drawing for Homeschoolers (Ages 8-12), Highland Community Center, noon-2 p.m. (Jan. 14-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Drawing: Caricature, Highland Com-

munity Center, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (Jan. 14-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Oil Painting: Beginning, 7-9 p.m. (Jan. 14-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Jan. 15

Oil Painting: In the Style of the Masters, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (Jan. 15-March 26, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Jan. 17

Watercolor: Beginning, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (Jan. 17-March 28, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Cedar Hills

Jan. 12

Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

WEST

Eagle Mountain

Jan. 10

Family Puzzle Day, Eagle Mountain Library, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Jan. 12

Bingo, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 5-6 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Jan. 14

Arts and Crafts, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 10 a.m.-noon (eaglemountain.gov)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

Jan. 12

Les Olson IT Best of Utah Gymnastics Meet 2026 - Women’s Gymnastics, Maverick Center, 7 p.m. (maverickcenter.com)

Jan. 15

BYU Winterfest: Living Legends, Mid-Valley Performing Arts Center, 7 p.m. (Jan. 15-16, saltlakecountyarts.org)

Jan. 17

Candlelight Jazz: The Best of Frank Sinatra & Nat King Cole, Clubhouse on South Temple, 8:30-9:45 p.m. (event-vesta.com)

Heber Valley

Jan. 10

Snowshoe Tree Hike, Wasatch Mountain State Park, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (stateparks.utah.gov/parks/wasatch-mountain)

Jan. 16

Skijoring Utah, Wasatch County Events Center, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (skijoring-utah.com)

Jan. 17

Winter Animal Tracking, Wasatch Mountain State Park, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (stateparks.utah.gov/parks/wasatch-mountain)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jloyd@heraldextra.com.

GET OUT THERE

5 unexpected places to travel to this year

Every year, travel magazines publish lists of “must-see” destinations. But some of the most memorable trips come from places that are still off most travelers’ radars. For 2026, here are five unexpected spots that promise adventure, culture, and landscapes you might not find on your average Instagram feed.



BLAKE SNOW



COURTESY SLOVENIA TOURISM

1 Slovenia
Europe is overflowing with tourism, yet Slovenia somehow remains under the radar. The Soca Valley, in particular, is what happens when Switzerland and New Zealand have a beautiful, affordable baby together. Crystal-clear emerald rivers cut through Alpine villages, waterfalls tumble into quiet pools, and historic WWI sites sit tucked into the surrounding hills.

Why it’s unexpected: Most people can’t find it on a map, let alone pronounce it.

Highlights: Soca River rafting, waterfall hikes, scenic alpine villages, and easy-access light adventure for families or solo explorers alike. This is Europe without the crowds.

Slovenia.

2 Québec
Québec is the province where history, culture, and French flair meet the countryside.

From the cobblestone streets of Québec City to the vibrant arts of Montreal, this is a region that effortlessly blends old-world charm with modern adventure. Beyond the cities, the province’s forests, lakes, and rivers are calling for canoe trips, hiking, and winter sports.

Why it’s unexpected: Many travelers stick to Toronto or Vancouver, skipping the heart of French Canada.

Highlights: Old Québec’s fortifications, Montreal’s food scene, Laurentian mountains hiking, maple syrup tours, and opportunities to see the northern lights in the far north.

3 Oman
Forget Dubai. Oman is the Arabian Peninsula’s peaceful, culturally rooted, naturally stunning alternative. It feels slower, less touristy, and infinitely more relaxing. From its empty beaches to towering wadis (aka valleys), Oman is the kind of place where you can watch the desert meet

the sea without another visitor in sight.

Why it’s unexpected: Overshadowed by flashier Gulf neighbors, Oman is rarely on the mainstream radar.

Why go in 2026: The country has been expanding its national parks, turtle conservation, and adventure desert camps, making independent exploration easier and safer than ever.

Highlights: Star-filled desert nights, Bedouin hospitality, coastal escapes, and dramatic mountain villages carved out of sand.

4 Gabon
If untouched wilderness is your thing, Gabon is the African country you didn’t know you needed. Vast stretches of rainforest, coastal beaches, and wildlife-rich national parks make it a paradise for adventurers and nature lovers.

Why it’s unexpected: Central Africa is often skipped because of perceptions of political instability or remoteness, but Gabon rewards the traveler willing to go off the beaten path.

Highlights: Gorilla tracking in Loango National Park, deep jun-

gle trekking, and pristine beaches where few outsiders tread. Gabon feels like a place the planet forgot to finish developing in the best way.

5 Georgia (the country, not the state)

Georgia sits at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, and it remains one of the most underrated countries for travelers who crave mountains, history, and incredible food. Friendly locals, ancient monasteries, and rolling vineyards make it feel like a travel secret waiting to be told.

Why it’s unexpected: Most tourists focus on Western Europe, leaving Georgia largely untouched by mass tourism.

Highlights: Tbilisi’s colorful old town, trekking in Svaneti, and the Caucasus Mountains. Georgia is a country that rewards curiosity, with layers of culture, landscape, and history at every turn.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

THE CONVERSATION

The Question Equation (question = answer = reality)

No matter what we believe about the real world and our current belief systems, the questions we ask ourselves act as a transmutation of how we see ourselves. What is the one question you could ask yourself in 2026 that would elevate your life forever? Shared agonies amongst neighbors, adversaries, foes, and the monster within exist among the creator of choice. Break the cycle of violence and create something the world has never seen or felt before. The world we live in does not need to be explained or spelled out; do not turn the cheek and shoot your brother or sister in the foot.

Do not trust the thoughts of yesterday, for in your time of need, they will forsake you, and your demise will be in reflection. The world spoken of is not from bias but in front of us both to observe and choose the path for those after us. There are patterns in our conversations that leave breadcrumbs to our humble beginnings, and revelations to the questions of our spirit and intuitions. Don’t dare blame your circumstances and situations on helplessness and lack of choice. We go to work for eight hours, sleep for eight hours, and spend one to three hours on our basic needs. At best, seven hours a day are ours to build the life of our dreams.

“Choice is creation. To choose is to create. Through my choices, I create my reality. At every moment in my life, I have a choice. Moments add up to a lifetime; choices add up to a life. What kind of life do I want for myself? What choices will create this kind of life?”

— Tal Ben Shahar

The quality of our reality depends on our ability to ask better questions, to acknowledge what is shown to us, and to choose the reality that is found in the darkest corners of our silence. For the sake of mankind, this conversation cannot be understood in attainment, but in the questions our ancestors started before you and me. Universal laws govern our mind and heart that are not represented in labels and titles, that cannot have meanings from our own understanding.

“Have patience with everything unresolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves. Don’t search for the answers, which could not be given to you now, because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer.”

— Rainier Maria Rilke

Letroy Woods can be reached at Letroywoods@gmail.com.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

Jan. 3
MOMMICKED LIVE & Guests, The Rise, 6:30 p.m. (therisevenue.com)
The Sense of Beauty, BYU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (moa.byu.edu)
ImprovBroadway, 496 N. 900 E., 7:30 p.m. (improvbroadway.com)

Jan. 5
The Second Annual Great January Jigsaw Race, Provo Library, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. (Jan. 5-17, provoliblibrary.gov)
Three Kings Day, Provo Library, 5:30 p.m./7 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Jan. 7
Living from the Inside Out, Covey Center for the Arts, 4:30 p.m./7:30 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)
Open Piano Lab, Provo Library, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Jan. 8
The Mosaic of Christ: Let the Children Come, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (Jan. 8-Feb. 28, thecompassgallery.com)

Community Emergency Preparedness Classes, Provo Fire Station #2, 7-8 p.m. (provo.gov/243/Emergency-Management)
Teen Movie Night: The Wild Robot, Provo Library, 6:30 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Jan. 9
BYU’s Vocal Point, BYU West Campus, 7 p.m. (Jan. 9-10, onstage.byu.edu)
Evening of Light - CJ Madsen, Recital Hall, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.bye.edu)
ImprovBroadway, 496 N. 900 E., 7:30 p.m. (Jan. 9-10, improvbroadway.com)

Utah COPA (Draper) - Disney On Stage, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (Jan. 9-10, covey.provo.gov)

Night Owling at Sundance Nordic Center, Sundance Resort, 6:30 p.m. (sundancecenter.com)

The Afters Utah, Arlington Hall, 10 p.m. (linktr.ee/theaftersutah)

Jan. 10
2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)
Snow Time Show Time: Movie & Craft, Provo Library, noon-2 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Claudine Bigelow Performance, Recital Hall, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.bye.edu)

Orem

Jan. 3
2025 Christmas Lights in The Orchard, University Place Orem, 5-11 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Film: The Lord of the Rings: The War of the Rohirrim, Orem Public Library, 6-8:30 p.m. (orempubliclibrary.org)

Hearth and Home: Domestic Depictions From the Permanent Collection, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 1-8 p.m. (Jan. 3-17, uvu.edu/museum)

Antra Sinha: Shimmering Sunlight, UVU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Jan. 3-24, uvu.edu/museum)

Alphonse Mucha, Master of Art Nouveau, UVU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Jan. 3-March 14, uvu.edu/museum)

Jan. 5
New Candidate Oath of Office, Orem Library, 6-7:30 p.m. (orem.gov)

Jan. 6
Know Before You Go: Avalanche Awareness Training, Orem Library, 6-7 p.m. (orempubliclibrary.org)

Film: The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey, Orem Library, 6-9 p.m. (orempubliclibrary.org)

Jan. 8
Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 1 at The Noorda, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7:30 p.m. (utahsymphony.org)

Jan. 9
Benefit Concert For Marshall Moore Featuring Fleetwood Visions, Orem Public Library, 7 p.m. (eventbrite.com)

Jan. 10
2026 Orem Reading Challenge Kick-off: An Unexpected Party, Orem Public Library, 10 a.m. (orempubliclibrarycalendar.com)

SOUTH

Springville

Jan. 3
39th Annual Spiritual & Religious Art of Utah Exhibit, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Jan. 3-7, smofa.org)

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Jan. 3-June 25, smofa.org)

Annual Youth Art Competition - Opening Reception, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Jan. 3-7, smofa.org)

Jan. 5
Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

Seated Yoga, Springville Library, 7:30-8:30 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Jan. 7
Artist Round Table, Springville Museum of Art, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (smofa.org)

Vision Boards, Springville Library, 7-8 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Jan. 10
Art Workshop: Native American Beading with Judy Mansfield, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (smofa.org)

Board Game Club, Springville Library, 1-3 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Spanish Fork

Jan. 3
Movie Marathon - Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 1, Spanish Fork Library, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Movie Marathon - Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2, Spanish Fork Library, 2-5 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Jan. 9
Popcorn Cinema - High School Musical, Spanish Fork Library, 4-6 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Jan. 10
2026 Seedling Festival and Seed Swap, Spanish Fork Library, 10 a.m.-noon (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Popcorn Cinema - Bee Movie, Span-

ish Fork Library, noon-2 p.m. (spanishfork.gov/departments/library)

Payson

Jan. 4
Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Jan. 6
Weekly Craft Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Jan. 7
Live Local Music Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Jan. 8
Strum Circle, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

NORTH

Pleasant Grove

Jan. 3
Roald Dahl’s Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (theruth.org)

Saturday Morning Movie: Monsters, Inc., Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m.-noon (pgcityutah.gov)

Jan. 5
Family Night at the Library, Pleasant Grove Library, 6:30-7:30 p.m.-noon (pgcityutah.gov)

Jan. 6
Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

Jan. 10
Annual Health and Fitness Fair, Pleasant Grove Rec Center, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov)

Saturday Morning Movie: Flubber, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m.-noon (pgcityutah.gov)

Lehi

Jan. 3
Luminaria, Thanksgiving Point, 4 p.m. (Jan. 3-10, thanksgivingpoint.org)

Happy Hula Days, Thanksgiving Point, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

Jan. 10
The Biology of Skinwalker Ranch, Hutchings Museum, 6 p.m. (jhutchingsmuseum.com)
Health and Fitness Fair, Legacy Center, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (lehi-ut.gov)

American Fork

Jan. 3
Christmas in Color, Art Dye Park, 5:30-9:30 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Rug Tufting Workshop, The Rug Room, 6-9:30 p.m. (Jan. 3-31, rugroomutah.com)

Jan. 6
Reflect and Reset, American Fork Library, 7-8 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Highland

Jan. 5
Introduction to Art Materials and Techniques (Ages 5-10), Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (Jan. 5-March 23, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Portraits Across Media, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (Jan. 5-March 23, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Jan. 6
Oil Painting: The Spectrum of Painting, Highland Community Center, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (Jan. 6-March 24, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Jan. 7
Drawing & Painting: Fantasy Art (Ages 5-10), Highland Community Center, 4:30-6 p.m. (Jan. 7-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Drawing for Homeschoolers (Ages 8-12), Highland Community Center, noon-2 p.m. (Jan. 7-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Drawing: Caricature, Highland Community Center, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (Jan. 7-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Oil Painting: Beginning, 7-9 p.m. (Jan. 7-March 25, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Jan. 8
Oil Painting: In the Style of the Masters, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (Jan. 8-March 26, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Jan. 10
Watercolor: Beginning, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (Jan. 10-March 28, visual-art-institute.jumbula.com)

Cedar Hills

Jan. 5
Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

WEST

Eagle Mountain

Jan. 5
Swearing In Ceremony, City Hall, 5-6 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Jan. 7
Arts and Crafts, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 10 a.m.-noon (eaglemountain.gov)

Jan. 10
Family Puzzle Day, Eagle Mountain Library, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

Jan. 3
2025 ZooLights, Utah’s Hogle Zoo, 5:30-9 p.m. (Jan. 3-4, hoglezoo.org)
Monster Jam 2026, Delta Center, 3 p.m./6 p.m. (Jan. 3-4, deltacenter.com)

Jan. 10
2026 Sprouts Farmers Market Collegiate Quad - Women’s Gymnastics, Maverick Center, 2 p.m. (maverickcenter.com)

Heber Valley

Jan. 3
Christmas Bird Count, Wasatch Mountain State Park, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. (stateparks.utah.gov/parks/wasatch-mountain)

Wasatch Citizens Series Ski Races, Soldier Hollow Nordic Center, 10 a.m. (utahnordic.org)

Jan. 10
Snowshoe Tree Hike, Wasatch Mountain State Park, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (stateparks.utah.gov/parks/wasatch-mountain)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jilloyd@heraldextra.com.

GET OUT THERE

Ranking Utah's 'Mighty 5' national parks

Utah's "Mighty 5" national parks have long been celebrated as outdoor dreamscapes, and rightly so. With dramatic landscapes, towering cliffs, and some of the most iconic vistas in the American West, these parks offer the type of jaw-dropping scenery that leaves even seasoned travelers speechless.

But let's get one thing straight: this isn't about visitor numbers or popularity contests. It's about pure wow factor — the kind of landscapes that make you drop your camera and just stand there in awe. So buckle up, because here's how Utah's parks stack up when it comes to scenery, raw beauty, and unforgettable views.



BLAKE SNOW



RICK BOWMER, ASSOCIATED PRESS

This Sept. 15, 2015, file photo shows Zion National Park near Springdale.

1. ZION: THE KING OF THE CANYON

Zion is, without question, the showstopper. If you've ever seen a picture of Zion, chances are it made you say, "I need to go there." And for good reason. The park's 2,000 foot red cliffs, narrow slot canyons, and sweeping views of the Virgin River winding through the valley are iconic for a reason. Whether you're tackling the heart-pounding ascent of Angels Landing (no, it's not for the faint of heart) or splashing your way through the famous Narrows, Zion delivers those "wow" moments from the second you enter.

For an overlook that will leave your jaw on the ground, head to Observation Point. The Canyon Overlook is a great option too, offering a dramatic view of Zion Canyon. But really, anywhere in the park feels like stepping into a postcard. Come for the photos, stay for the hiking.

2. BRYCE CANYON: HOODOO HEAVEN

It's not often you come across a landscape like Bryce Canyon, with its thousands of sharp, jagged rock spires known as hoodoos. The park's surreal landscape is otherworldly, and the combination of light, color, and rock formations at sunrise and sunset is absolutely magical. If you think you've seen cool rock formations, think again — Bryce takes it to another level.

Sunrise and sunset are the golden hours here, casting the amphitheater in shades of orange, pink, and red, transforming it into a fiery, dreamlike maze. The hoodoos stand tall like ancient sentinels, creating a vibrant, almost mystical vibe. It's like being on another planet. And yet, it's all in Utah.

3. ARCHES: A CIRCULAR DREAM

With over 2,000 natural sandstone arches, Arches National Park is the very definition of panorama. While some parks overwhelm with sheer scale, Arches focuses on delicate, intricate beauty. From the famous Delicate Arch — best enjoyed at sunset — to the awe-inspiring Landscape Arch, the park's rock formations are intricately sculpted and provide endless photo opportunities.

The thin, graceful arches themselves, of course, are the main draw. You'll feel like you're walking through a stone museum, with each formation more unique than the last. Fiery Furnace is another highlight, a labyrinth of narrow

canyons and rock spires. But even simple tasks like walking Park Avenue or driving the famous road are exercises in awesomeness.

4. CANYONLANDS: THE WILD FRONTIER

Canyonlands may be more rugged than its counterparts, but that's what gives it its charm. The park's vast, unyielding landscapes — full of mesas, buttes, and canyon vistas — offer a sense of scale and wildness that's hard to beat. With multiple districts to explore, you'll find yourself getting lost in the backcountry, where the silence is only interrupted by the wind.

Island in the Sky offers sweeping views of both the Colorado and Green Rivers (best seen from the amazing Green River Overlook). While the Needles district is packed with incredible rock formations, and the Maze for remote only 4x4 access. My absolute favorite thing to do here: drive the Shafer to White Rim Trail up the most amazing, white knuckle switchbacks of any road in America. Uh. Maze. Ing.

5. GRAND STAIRCASE: UNTAMED WILDERNESS

Although not a national park, let's give a round of applause to Grand Staircase, the hidden gem of Utah. It may not draw the crowds like its big siblings, but that's what makes it all the more special. With slot canyons, desert plateaus, and endless views of raw, untamed terrain, this park is twice the size of the other five combined and feels

like a true escape from civilization.

Want to see the best of the best? Drive Hell's Background and Hike Lower Calf Creek Falls. Devil's Garden and Peek-a-book and Spooky Slot Canyons also come highly recommended. Make no mistake, this would be a national park in any other state that didn't already have five famous national parks.

HONORABLE MENTION: CAPITOL REEF: SUBTLE, YET STUNNING

Finally, we come to Capitol Reef. Often overshadowed by the other parks, Capitol Reef doesn't have the same dramatic cliffs or towering formations, but it's beautiful in its own way, especially from the family-friendly canyoneering hike of Sulphur Creek, or the off-road-only Cathedral Valley, which is a quasi religious experience. Panorama Point provides an outstanding view of the surrounding area, while Hickman Bridge and Cassidy Arch are iconic spots within the park.

While each of Utah's national parks brings its own brand of magic to the table, if you're chasing that unmistakable "wow factor," this is your ultimate ranking. Plan accordingly — some of these parks will leave you speechless, while others will have you chasing that perfect shot until your phone's camera rolls out of storage. Happy exploring!

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

ASK DR. STEVE

Why your New Year's resolutions keep failing — and the psychology that actually works

Every January, millions of people make resolutions with genuine intention — lose weight, exercise more, reduce stress, improve relationships. By February, most have abandoned them. This isn't a failure of willpower or character. It's a predictable result of how we've been taught to set goals versus how human psychology actually works.

The problem isn't wanting to change — it's the approach. Research shows we're not wired for dramatic, sweeping transformations. Yet that's exactly what traditional resolutions demand. We set ambitious targets, white-knuckle

through the first weeks, then collapse when motivation fades and life intervenes. The cycle of failure erodes confidence and makes future change feel increasingly impossible.

The good news: psychologists have identified what actually works. Small, specific changes aligned with personal values — pursued with self-compassion rather than self-criticism — produce lasting results. Understanding this transforms January from a setup for failure into a genuine opportunity for sustainable growth.

Understanding resolutions and change

Q Why do most New Year's resolutions fail?

A Resolutions typically fail because they're too big, too vague, or disconnected from personal values. As psychologist Terri Bly explains, "There's this idea that it's supposed to be some big, sweeping change ... but as humans we're not wired to make big, sweeping changes." People also underestimate how uncomfortable change feels and abandon goals at the first setback

rather than expecting difficulty as part of the process.

Q What's wrong with ambitious goals?

A Ambitious goals aren't inherently wrong, but they need breaking into manageable steps. "I'll lose 30 pounds" provides no daily guidance and sets up all-or-nothing thinking. When you inevitably miss a day or slip up, the entire resolution feels broken. Better: "I'll walk 20 minutes daily and eat half as much" gives you something achievable each day, and success builds momentum rather than requiring perfection.

Q How do I set goals my brain can actually achieve?

A Start remarkably small and build gradually. Clinical psychologist Sabrina Romanoff suggests something like "eating vegetables four times a week for dinner for four weeks in a row. Then in one month, reevaluate and increase the challenge." Think of resolutions as a compass you periodically check rather than a fixed destination. Small wins create neural pathways that make the next step easier.

Q Why does knowing my 'why' matter?

A Goals disconnected from personal values rarely survive difficulty. When you understand why a change matters — not because you "should" but because it connects to something you genuinely care about — motivation becomes internal rather than dependent on external pressure. Ask yourself: What would achieving this allow me to do or be? That deeper purpose sustains effort when initial enthusiasm fades.

Q What's the difference between intentions and resolutions?

A Resolutions tend to be rigid targets ("lose 20 pounds") while intentions focus on values and direction ("prioritize my health"). Setting intentions gives you opportunity to

reflect on what's important and what values you want to prioritize—without the pass/fail pressure. Research shows approach-oriented goals like "enjoy more time with friends" succeed more than avoidance goals like "stop eating sweets."

Q How does perfectionism sabotage resolutions?

A Perfectionism creates all-or-nothing thinking where one slip means total failure. Many people push themselves toward an impossible "perfect" version, leading to burnout, self-criticism, and eventually giving up entirely. The antidote is self-compassion — treating setbacks as information rather than evidence of inadequacy. Research shows self-compassion actually increases goal achievement and has longer-lasting results than focusing on willpower.

Q Why is self-compassion more effective than self-criticism?

A Self-criticism triggers threat responses that drain mental energy and motivation. Self-compassion — acknowledging difficulty while treating yourself kindly — actually improves effectiveness at changing and achieving goals. It's okay if your "best" looks different every day. Celebrating small steps and honoring your body's need for rest as part of change, not obstacles to it, produces sustainable results.

Q Should I focus on adding positive behaviors or eliminating negative ones?

A Research consistently shows approach-oriented goals outperform avoidance goals. "Read for 15 minutes before bed" works better than "stop scrolling my phone." Adding positive behaviors feels rewarding and builds identity around what you do, while avoidance goals feel like deprivation and keep attention fixed on what you're trying to eliminate.

Q How do I handle setbacks without giving up?

A Expect setbacks as normal rather than evidence of failure. Progress isn't linear — acknowledging this in advance prevents the spiral of "I already ruined it, so why bother." When you slip, ask: What got in the way? What can I learn? Then return to the next small step. Licensed therapist Michelle Turk emphasizes focusing on progress and self-compassion, treating missteps as learning experiences.

Q What role does mental health play in achieving goals?

A Mental health is the foundation everything else rests on. As psychologist Guy Winch notes, "That's the gateway to everything else ... It's the linchpin that allows you to succeed or to fail." Unaddressed anxiety, depression, or stress depletes the cognitive resources needed for behavior change. Sometimes the most important resolution is getting mental health support that enables all other goals.

Q Is it OK to not make resolutions at all?

A Absolutely. Psychologist Kyle Killian suggests that sometimes the healthiest approach is continuing what's already working rather than chasing dramatic change. "Go slow and steady, not new and exhausting." Protecting your time, maintaining self-care, and getting adequate rest might be more valuable than any ambitious new goal. The pressure of resolution culture can itself become a stressor.

Q When should I seek professional help with my goals?

A Consider professional support if you repeatedly set similar goals without progress, if perfectionism or self-criticism dominates your inner dialogue, if underlying anxiety or depression makes change feel impossible, or if relationship patterns keep undermining your efforts. Comprehensive evaluation can identify what's actually getting in the

way—sometimes the obstacle isn't willpower but unrecognized cognitive or emotional patterns.

Q Should I communicate my resolution goals to others?

A Communicating your resolutions to others adds another layer of motivation and accountability that helps lead you to goal achievement. Weekly weigh-ins with a colleague, friend, or gym attendant will increase the likelihood of your achieving a weight loss goal.

Closing

Failed resolutions aren't character flaws — they're predictable results of approaches that ignore how humans actually change. Small steps, clear values, self-compassion, and realistic expectations create sustainable transformation where willpower and ambitious targets consistently fail.

The best resolution might be resolving to change how you approach change itself. Replace rigid perfection with flexible progress. Swap self-criticism for self-compassion. Choose goals that add positive experiences rather than punishing yourself for perceived deficits. Ask a friend or colleague to monitor you.

Remember that lasting change happens through accumulation of small, consistent actions — not a dramatic January overhaul. Give yourself permission to start small, adjust as needed, and treat yourself with the kindness you'd offer a good friend pursuing the same goals.

For those whose goals are consistently undermined by anxiety, depression, perfectionism, or cognitive patterns they can't seem to change, professional evaluation can identify specific obstacles and targeted interventions. Comprehensive Psychological Services (WeCanHelpOut.com) offers assessment that clarifies what's actually getting in the way and creates personalized approaches for lasting change.

GET OUT THERE

Oh, there's no place like Europe for the holidays

My family normally doesn't travel in December because there's no place like home for the holidays. But I gladly made an exception this year on a week-long trip with my daughter to the heartwarming Christmas markets of Austria, Germany and Switzerland.



BLAKE SNOW

Every November and December, said Christmas markets turn up all over Europe. But some of the greatest, most festive, and charming ones stand supreme in German-speaking cities and towns, where the markets themselves were invented, alongside Christmas trees and snow globes.

I learned this after a remarkable eight-day, eight-city, four-country group tour with the experts at Trafalgar.com. To ensure the smoothest vacation, our seasoned guide Michael emailed to offer tips and ask if we had any questions. That type of professional and prompt service continued throughout our journey, even after boarding our return flight home.

Although traveling Europe is

known for its ease, stability, and open borders, Trafalgar makes it even more comfortable. As a "mostly inclusive" experience, our trip gave us seven nights at four-star equivalent hotels, a modern and immaculate coach bus with massive waist-to-ceiling window views, daily breakfast, four dinners and plenty of snacks in between. This worked well since sampling and enjoying the homemade food and drink at the Christmas markets is a big part of the draw.

Each day, there were also several hours of free time, this after at least one included daily tour of a city's most iconic sights and markets. This made for the ideal mix of fast-paced sightseeing and structure with "at your own pace" flexibility. My daughter and I loved this daily rhythm and left with a multi-city "taste" of Christmas in Old-World Europe.

Along the way, we enjoyed local delicacies, festive treats, historic city centers, twinkling lights and more merrymaking than I've ever seen in otherwise stoic Europe. Standout stops included Switzerland's medieval masterpiece of Lucerne (one of Europe's most beautiful cities), Austria's imperial and fanci-



BLAKE SNOW, SPECIAL TO THE DAILY HERALD

Blake Snow and his daughter pose for a photo in front of a European Christmas market in December.

ful Vienna (plus awe-inspiring Innsbruck), and Germany's Bavarian capital of Munich. In between, we lost count of how many Christmas markets we frequented. They never failed to get us in the Christmas spirit.

But it wasn't just markets and sightseeing we enjoyed. We saw one of the greatest concert performances of my life on an optional evening in Vienna, the

birthplace of classical music. We gawked at snowy German villages, Austrian countrysides and Swiss summits with sweeping views of the Alps. We tickled ourselves traveling through three countries in as many hours.

And we ate more European comfort food than our stomachs and waistlines could handle: mulled cider, lebkuchen (soft but chewy gingerbread cook-

ies), chimney cakes (Google it!), spaetzle (cheesy egg noodles), bratwurst, raclette, fondue, apricot chocolate cake, cheese pie, roasted chestnuts, fruit bread and lots of silky smooth Swiss chocolate.

We always stayed on schedule and — unlike some others — our confident and self-aware guide never talked too much. He even taught us "Try and Make the Swiss Smile" as we enthusiastically grinned and waved to locals, while Peter, our esteemed driver, navigated winding mountain roads that mere mortals would have difficulty doing in a Mini.

On our final night, my daughter and I watched a golden sunset over Lake Lucerne and Mount Pilatus, as we shared a three-course meal with new-found friends at a local farm. It was a fitting finish to a majestic Christmas experience I will never forget — sights, sounds, and smells very much included.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

Dec. 20

Utah Metropolitan Ballet Nutcracker, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

Holiday 2025 Beehive Bazaar Handmade Art and Craft Fair, The Beehive, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. (beehivebazaar.com)

Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 20-22, covey.provo.gov)

CLAS Ropes Course Christmas Cruise 2025, CLAS Ropes Course, 5:15-9:30 p.m. (Dec. 20-23, clasropes.com)

Healer Live Nativity and Christmas Market, Aptive, 6-9 p.m. (Dec. 20-23, thehealernativity.org)

Them Also I Must Bring- Brandon Gonzales, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (Dec. 20-27, thecompassgallery.com)

Alternativity Exhibit - Group Show, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (Dec. 20-27, thecompassgallery.com)

God's Grace 2025, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (Dec. 20-27, jkr-gallery.myshopify.com)

The Noun Show, Provo Library at Academy Square, 3:30 p.m. (Dec. 20-Jan. 2, provolibary.gov)

Jingle Bells Bubble Rave, Arlington Hall, 5-7 p.m. (jingle rave.com)

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall., 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

Brunch with Santa, Sundance Resort, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Ugly Sweater Party, Sundance Resort, noon-1 a.m. (sundanceresort.com)

2025 All-Star Christmas Special, Velour, 7:30 p.m. (24tix.com)

Dec. 21

Return to Light: A Winter Solstice Ritual, Sundance Resort, 6-7:30 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Church Christmas Social, Provo Community Congregational United Church of Christ, 12:15 p.m. (provocommunityucc.org)

Dec. 22

A Charlie Brown Christmas: Live on Stage, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 22-23, covey.provo.gov)

Dec. 23

Snowcat Meet n' Greet, Sundance Resort, TBA (sundanceresort.com)

Dec. 24

Christmas Eve Candlelight Family Service, Provo Community Congregational United Church of Christ, 7 p.m. (provocommunityucc.org)

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service, Provo Community Congregational United Church of Christ, 7 p.m. (provocommunityucc.org)

Dec. 25

Christmas Day Brunch, Sundance Resort, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Dec. 26

Friday Fusion, Arlington Hall, 8:30 p.m. (arlingtonhalls.com)

Night Owling, Sundance Resort, 6:30 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)



ASHLEY STILSON, DAILY HERALD FILE PHOTO

FESTIVE SIGHTS IN SPANISH FORK

Santa Claus poses with a little girl during the Winter Lights Parade in downtown Spanish Fork on Nov. 29, 2019.

Dec. 29

Johnson Files Christmas Show, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 29-30, covey.provo.gov)

Dec. 30

Snowcat Meet n' Greet, Sundance Resort, TBA (sundanceresort.com)

Dec. 31

Owl Bar New Year's Eve Party, Sundance Resort, 9 p.m.-12:30 a.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Provo's New Years Through the Decades Countdown, Provo Recreation Center, 7 p.m. (provo.gov)

Orem

Dec. 20

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever: The Musical, SCERA Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (scera.org)

Hearth and Home: Domestic Depictions From the Permanent Collection, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 1-8 p.m. (Dec. 20-Jan. 17, uvu.edu/museum)

Antra Sinha: Shimmering Sunlight, UVU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Dec. 20-Jan. 24, uvu.edu/museum)

2025 Christmas Lights in The Orchard, University Place Orem, 5-11 p.m. (Dec. 20-Jan. 3, universityplaceorem.com)

Dec. 23

The Forgotten Carols 2025 Tour, Mountain View High School, 3:30 p.m./7:30 p.m. (forgottencarols.com)

Santa and Friends, University Place Orem, 5 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Dec. 31

Open Studio in the Art Haus, UVU Museum of Art, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Lindon

Dec. 22

Pioneer Home Christmas, Harris Pioneer Home, 6-8 p.m. (lindonrecreation.org)

SOUTH

Springville

Dec. 20

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Dec. 20 into 2026, smofa.org)

Annual Youth Art Competition - Opening Reception, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Dec. 20-Jan. 7, smofa.org)

Dec. 22

Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

Dec. 29

Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

Spanish Fork

Dec. 20

Scrooge: A Christmas Carol Reimagined, Angelus Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 20-22, angelustheatre.com)

A Krampus Karol 2025, Angelus Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 20-23, angelustheatre.com)

Red Nose Ranch, Gordon's Family Farm, noon-8 p.m. (Dec. 20-27, gordonfamilyfarms.com)

Spanish Fork Festival of Lights, Canyon View Park, 6-10 p.m. (Dec. 20-Jan. 1, sfcitytix.com)

Handel's Messiah Benefit Concert, Maple Mountain High School, 7:30 p.m. (nhco.events)

Laughing All The Way: Spanish Fork, Spanish Fork High School, 7 p.m. (events.latterdaily.com)

Dec. 22

Handel's Messiah Benefit Concert, Maple Mountain High School, 7:30 p.m. (nhco.events)

Salem

Dec. 20

Christmas Story Murals Display, 70 W. Salem Canal Road, 5-11 p.m. (Dec. 20-Jan. 1, salemutah.gov)

Pond Town Christmas, Salem City Pond, 5:30-11 p.m. (Dec. 20-Jan. 1, salemutah.gov)

Payson

Dec. 20

Winter Solstice Concert, Center of the Universe Cafe, 7 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Dec. 21

Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Dec. 23

Weekly Craft Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Dec. 24

Live Local Music Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Dec. 28

Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Dec. 30

Weekly Craft Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Dec. 31

Live Local Music Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

NORTH

Pleasant Grove

Dec. 20

A Christmas Carol: The Musical, Liahona Theater for the Community, 7:30 p.m. (alpinecommunitytheater.org)

A Christmas Carol 2025, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m.

(Dec. 20-27, theruth.org)

Deck the Dome - Holiday Laser Show, Christa McAuliffe Space Center, 5:20-8:45 p.m. (Dec. 20-31, spacecenterutah.org)

Roald Dahl's Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 20-Jan. 3, theruth.org)

Dec. 23

Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

Dec. 30

Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

Lehi

Dec. 20

She Loves Me, Lehi Arts Council, 7:30 p.m. (lehiarts.org)

Luminaria, Thanksgiving Point, 4 p.m. (Dec. 20-Jan. 10, thanksgivingpoint.org)

Mistletoe and Miracles Christmas Concert, Skyridge Theatre Auditorium, 7 p.m. (buyyourtix.com)

Breakfast with Santa, Thanksgiving Point, 9 a.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

Happy Hula Days, Thanksgiving Point, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

Cedar Hills

Dec. 22

Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

Dec. 29

Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

American Fork

Dec. 20

Rug Tufting Workshop, The Rug Room, 6-9:30 p.m. (Dec. 20 into 2026, therugroomutah.com)

Christmas in the Rotunda, American Fork Library, all day (Dec. 20-31, americanforkarts.com)

Christmas in Color, Art Dye Park, 5:30-9:30 p.m. (Dec. 20-Jan. 3, americanfork.gov)

WEST

Eagle Mountain

Dec. 31

Noon Year's Eve Party, City Hall, 11 a.m.-noon (eaglemountain.gov)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

Dec. 20

2025 ZooLights, Utah's Hogle Zoo, 5:30-9 p.m. (Dec. 20-Jan. 4, hoglezoo.org)

A Kurt Bestor Christmas - 2025, Eccles Theater, 7:30 p.m. (live-at-the-eccles.com)

Heber Valley

Dec. 20

North Pole Express Christmas Train, Heber Valley Railroad, 5 p.m./7:30 p.m. (Dec. 20-30, hebertrain.com)

Holiday Lights Wagon Rides, Wasatch Mountain State Park, 5:30-9 p.m. (Dec. 20-31, rockymountainoutfitters.com)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jloyd@heraldextra.com.

GET OUT THERE

First-class bathrooms: Yes, you can use them!

You've been there. Thirty thousand feet up. The "fasten seatbelt" sign finally goes off. You stand, stretch, and — uh oh — the line for your economy-class lavatory snakes half-way down the aisle. You glance forward. The curtain to first class sways gently,

glowing like a portal to a cleaner, quieter, maybe even lavender-scented world.

And you think to yourself: Can I ... ?

Well, good news, traveler. You can. Legally speaking, there's no law stopping you from stepping through that polyester partition and answering nature's call among the champagne-sipping elite — as long as you do it for the right reasons and follow a few simple rules.

Law of the lavatory

Let's start with the basics. Despite what that stern-looking flight attendant (or your conscience) might suggest, there is no federal law in the United States — nor in most countries — that

forbids you from walking past the first-class curtain. It's not a legal barrier. It's more like a velvet rope at a party: symbolic, polite and mostly there to keep things orderly.

The curtain exists for one reason — to separate service zones. It helps the crew serve meals, manage crowds and preserve the illusion that first class is a serene, caviar-filled utopia unbothered by the rest of us sardine-packed mortals.

But when nature calls? Even first-class passengers understand. The law says you can walk through, as long as you're not breaking any other rules in the process.

When it becomes a no-no

Of course, "legal" doesn't mean "inviolable." There are ways to get yourself into trouble — and none of them end with you looking cool.

For instance, if a flight attendant specifically tells you not to go forward, and you do it anyway, that's a big deal. Ignoring crew instructions can count as interfering with a flight crew, which is a federal offense. (Translation: orange jumpsuit, not complimentary slippers.)



STOCK PHOTO

An airplane at sunrise.

You also can't hang around the galley, poke around first-class seats, or linger too close to the cockpit. Airline staff are trained to be hyperaware of anyone acting suspiciously near the flight deck. So if you're heading up front, make it a purposeful walk — in, out, done.

And yes, some airlines have policies explicitly stating that first-class lavatories are for first-class passengers only. In those cases, the crew's word is

law. If they politely ask you to wait in your own cabin, smile and comply.

When it's totally fine

Now for the good news: there are several totally legitimate reasons to pass through that curtain of privilege. You've been directed to do so by a flight attendant (maybe the rear lavatories are occupied or out of service). You're helping a child, an elderly person, or someone with limited mobility who

needs the nearest available restroom. You're disembarking at the end of the flight and the crew opens the forward door for exit. You simply have to go, ask politely, and get the green light from the crew.

In all these cases, you're golden. A polite smile, a quiet demeanor, and a quick return are the ticket to first-class restroom success.

Bottom line

Using a first-class bathroom isn't illegal,

scandalous, or grounds for exile to the cargo hold. It's simply a matter of respect and timing. The crew is in charge, and their word overrides everything — not because they're gatekeepers of glamour, but because their primary job is safety.

So the next time you find yourself eyeing that curtained-off oasis, remember: it's not forbidden fruit. It's just another door — one that occasionally swings open to those who briskly enter the void with purpose or ask nicely.

And if you're lucky enough to step inside, enjoy the fleeting moment. Notice the extra space. The folded towels. The hint of citrus air freshener that whispers, "This is what legroom smells like."

Then flush, wash and head back to your seat with a little secret smile. You just had a first-class experience... without the first-class price tag.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL**Provo****Dec. 13**

Pioneer Christmas at the Village, Provo Pioneer Village, 5-8 p.m. (Dec. 13-15, provopioneerivillage.org)

Utah Metropolitan Ballet Nutcracker, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 13-20, covey.provo.gov)

Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 13-22, covey.provo.gov)

CLAS Ropes Course Christmas Cruise 2025, CLAS Ropes Course, 5:15-9:30 p.m. (Dec. 13-23, clasropes.com)

Healer Live Nativity and Christmas Market, Aptive, 6-9 p.m. (Dec. 13-23, thehealernativity.org)

Them Also I Must Bring- Brandon Gonzales, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (Dec. 13-27, thecompassgallery.com)

The Noun Show, Provo Library at Academy Square, 3:30 p.m. (Dec. 13-Jan. 2, provoliblibrary.gov)

Winter 2025 Battle of the Bands, Velour, 7:30 p.m. (velourlive.com)

Holiday 2025 Beehive Bazaar Handmade Art and Craft Fair, The Beehive, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. (Dec. 13-20, beehivebazaar.com)

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall,, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

For The People Show, The Rise, 7 p.m. (therisevenue.com)

Brunch with Santa, Sundance Resort, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Alternativity Exhibit - Group Show, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (Dec. 13-27, thecompassgallery.com)

God's Grace 2025, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (Dec. 13-27, jkr-gallery.myshopify.com)

Skate with Santa, Peaks Ice Arena, 4-5 p.m. (provo.gov/394/Peaks-Ice-Arena)

Dec. 14
47th Annual Carols by Candlelight, 175 N University Avenue, 7 p.m. (Dec. 14-15, provocommunityucc.org)

Dec. 15
Christmas Evensong with Sound of Ages Choir, The Compass Gallery, 7:30 p.m. (thecompassgallery.com)

Swiss Chorus Edelweiss, Provo Library at Academy Square, 7 p.m. (provoliblibrary.gov)

Dec. 16
Utah Ladies Songwriter Round, Velour, 7:30 p.m. (24tix.com)

Dec. 18
Jingle Bells Bubble Rave, Arlington Hall, 5-7 p.m. (Dec. 18-20, jinglerave.com)

Dec. 19
Friday Fusion, Arlington Hall, 8:30 p.m. (arlingtonhalls.com)

Dec. 20

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall,, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

Brunch with Santa, Sundance Resort, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Ugly Sweater Party, Sundance Resort, noon-1 a.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Dec. 21
Return to Light: A Winter Solstice Ritual, Sundance Resort, 6-7:30 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Orem**Dec. 13**

Christmas Maker's Market, SCERA Center for the Arts, 5-8 p.m. (scera.org)

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever: The Musical, SCERA Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 13-20, scera.org)

Hearth and Home: Domestic Depictions From the Permanent Collection, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 1-8 p.m. (Dec. 13-Jan. 17, uvu.edu/museum)

Antra Sinha: Shimmering Sunlight, UVU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Dec. 13-Jan. 24, uvu.edu/museum)

2025 Christmas Lights in The Orchard, University Place Orem, 5-11 p.m. (Dec. 13-Jan. 3, universityplaceorem.com)

Library Hall Presents: Before Tonight, A Musical Nativity, Orem Public Library, 7 p.m. (library.orem.gov)

Dec. 14
Art for All in the Art Haus, UVU Museum of Art, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Dec. 16
Utah Symphony: Here Comes Santa Claus, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7 p.m. (uvu.edu/events)

Dec. 17
Open Studio in the Art Haus, UVU Museum of Art, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Lindon**Dec. 15**

Pioneer Home Christmas, Harris Pioneer Home, 6-8 p.m. (lindonrecreation.org)

SOUTH**Springville****Dec. 13**

Creator's Collective Springville Holiday Market 2025, The Hitching Post by Rustica, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. (creatorscollectivemarket.com)

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Dec. 13 into 2026, smofa.org)

Annual Youth Art Competition - Opening Reception, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Dec. 13-Jan. 7, smofa.org)

Dec. 14
Sunday Concert Series: Utah Bell Ringers, Springville Museum of Art, 4 p.m. (smofa.org)

Dec. 15

Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

Spanish Fork**Dec. 13**

Red Nose Ranch, Gordon's Family Farm, noon-8 p.m. (Dec. 13-27, gordonfamilyfarms.com)

Spanish Fork Festival of Lights, Canyon View Park, 6-10 p.m. (Dec. 13-Jan. 1, sfcitytix.com)

A Krampus Karol 2025, Angelus Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 13-23, angelustheatre.com)

Scooge: A Christmas Carol Reimagined, Angelus Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 13-22, angelustheatre.com)

Dec. 15

A Krampus Karol Youth, Angelus Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 15-19, angelustheatre.com)

Dec. 18

Youth Improv Comedy Show 2025, Angelus Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (angelustheatre.com)

Dec. 20

Handel's Messiah Benefit Concert, Maple Mountain High School, 7:30 p.m. (nhco.events)

Laughing All The Way: Spanish Fork, Spanish Fork High School, 7 p.m. (events.latterdaily.com)

Salem**Dec. 13**

Christmas Story Murals Display, 70 W. Salem Canal Road, 5-11 p.m. (Dec. 13-Jan. 1, SalemUtah.gov)

Pond Town Christmas, Salem City Pond, 5:30-11 p.m. (Dec. 13-Jan. 1, salemutah.gov)

Payson**Dec. 13**

Story Slam: A Night of Living Folklore, Center of the Universe Cafe, 7 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Dec. 14

Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Dec. 16

Weekly Craft Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Dec. 17

Live Local Music Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Dec. 18

Strum Circle, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Dec. 20

Winter Solstice Concert, Center of the Universe Cafe, 7 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Dec. 21

Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

NORTH**Pleasant Grove****Dec. 13**

A Christmas Carol: The Musical, Liahona Theater for the Community, 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 13-20, alpinecommunitytheater.org)

A Christmas Carol 2025, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 13-27, theruth.org)

Deck the Dome - Holiday Laser Show, Christa McAuliffe Space Center, 5:20-8:45 p.m. (Dec. 13-31, spacecenterutah.org)

Roald Dahl's Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 13-Jan. 3, theruth.org)

Winter Court: An Unseelie Fae Ball, Stone Gate Event Center, 6:30-10:30 p.m. (lunargalas.com)

Dec. 16

Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

Dec. 17

Holiday From The Holidays, The Soundbox, 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 17-18, ccsoundhouse.com)

Lehi**Dec. 13**

She Loves Me, Lehi Arts Council, 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 13-20, lehiarts.org)

Luminaria, Thanksgiving Point, 4 p.m. (Dec. 13-Jan. 10, thanksgivingpoint.org)

Breakfast with Santa, Thanksgiving Point, 9 a.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

Christmas Market and Charity Drive, Anata Studios, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. (anata.studio)

Lehi's Santa Parade Celebration 2025, Lehi Main Street, 4 p.m. (lehi-ut.gov)

Christmas Craft Day, Hutchings Museum, 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (jhutchingsmuseum.com)

Dec. 18

The Origins of Christmas Traditions with Ben Woodruff, Hutchings Museum, 7 p.m. (jhutchingsmuseum.com)

Dec. 19

Mistletoe & Miracles Christmas Concert, Skyridge Theatre Auditorium, 7 p.m. (Dec. 19-20, buyyourtix.com)

Dec. 20

Breakfast with Santa, Thanksgiving Point, 9 a.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

American Fork**Dec. 13**

Christmas in Color, Art Dye Park, 5:30-9:30 p.m. (Dec. 13-Jan. 3, americanfork.gov)

Rug Tufting Workshop, The Rug Room, 6-9:30 p.m. (Dec. 13 into 2026, therugroomutah.com)

Christmas in the Rotunda, American Fork Library, all day (Dec. 13-31, americanforkarts.com)

Dec. 14

Christmas Sing-Along, Valentine

Theater, 6-7 p.m. (americanforkarts.com)

Dec. 15

12 Songs of Christmas, American Fork Library, 7 p.m. (timpanogosarts-foundation.com)

American Fork Symphony Christmas Concert, American Fork Junior High School, 7 p.m. (americanfork-arts.com)

Dec. 18

Timpanogos Chorale Christmas Concert, American Fork Junior High School, 7 p.m. (timpanogoschorale.org)

Alpine**Dec. 13**

Highland Choral Arts Christmas Concert & Silent Auction, Timberline Middle School, 6 p.m. (highlandcity-arts.info)

Cedar Hills**Dec. 15**

Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

WEST**Saratoga Springs****Dec. 16**

The Forgotten Carols 2025 Tour, Westlake High School, 7 p.m. (forgottencarols.com)

Eagle Mountain**Dec. 18**

Senior Christmas Lights, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 5-6 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Cedar Valley**Dec. 13**

Camp Floyd Christmas, Camp Floyd State Park, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (stateparks.utah.gov/parks/camp-floyd)

NEARBY**Salt Lake City****Dec. 13**

2025 Tabernacle Choir Christmas Concert, Conference Center, 8 p.m. (thetabernaclechoir.org)

2025 ZooLights, Utah's Hogle Zoo, 5:30-9 p.m. (Dec. 13-Jan. 4, hoglezoo.org)

Dec. 18

A Kurt Bestor Christmas - 2025, Eccles Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 18-20, live-at-the-eccles.com)

Heber Valley**Dec. 13**

North Pole Express Christmas Train, Heber Valley Railroad, 5 p.m./7:30 p.m. (Dec. 13-30, hebertrain.com)

Holiday Lights Wagon Rides, Wasatch Mountain State Park, 5:30-9 p.m. (Dec. 13-31, rockymountainoutfitters.com)

Festival of Crèches (Nativity Displays), Midway Town Hall, 11 a.m.-8p.m. (Dec. 13-15, midwayboosters.net)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jl-

GET OUT THERE

Top 5 US landmarks worth traveling to see

If travel is the great American pastime, then landmarks are its punctuation marks. Bold statements that remind us who we are, what we've built, and what nature has carved on our behalf.



BLAKE SNOW

From thunderous waterfalls to colossal statues and golden bridges to Martian deserts, these five landmarks are more than photo ops. They're experiences that stir the soul and deserve a spot on any traveler's short list.

1. Niagara Falls: America's thunderous masterpiece

With a near-perfect 4.8-star rating from over 127,000 visitors, Niagara Falls isn't just America's most popular landmark — it's one of the most universally loved. And for good reason: this natural wonder humbles you the moment you hear it before you even see it. The rumble of 700,000 gallons of water per second tumbling over Horseshoe Falls feels alive, almost prehistoric.

Stand at the railing on the American side and you'll feel mist on your face and power in your chest. Patriotism too, thanks to nightly fireworks. Hop aboard the Maid of the

Mist boat tour (or better yet, Cave of the Winds hike directly into the falls), and you'll feel like you've been baptized by nature. When visiting, be sure to take in the falls from both the U.S. and Canadian side. Either way, Niagara powerfully delivers.

2. Statue of Liberty: The emblem of welcome

If Niagara Falls is nature's exclamation point, the Statue of Liberty is America's open hand. Standing tall in New York Harbor, "Lady Liberty" has greeted newcomers since 1886 — a gift from France that became a promise to the world. With over 109,000 reviews and a 4.7-star rating, the statue remains one of the most beloved landmarks anywhere.

Approaching Liberty Island by ferry (or the Staten Island ferry), the city skyline fades, and her copper-green torch comes into view like a sunrise. Climb to the pedestal for an intimate view of the folds in her robe, or go all the way to the crown (book well ahead) for a view that connects you to every hopeful soul who ever passed through Ellis Island. It's hard not to feel something profound here — pride, gratitude, and maybe a little humility that such a simple figure could embody so much.



SETH WENIG, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tourists look at Niagara Falls from Niagara Falls, N.Y., on Oct. 29, 2019.

3. The National Mall: America's front yard

If you want to feel America's story in your heart, walk the National Mall. Stretching two miles between the Capitol and the Lincoln Memorial, this corridor of monuments and museums is the nation's collective scrapbook. It's where Martin Luther King Jr. shared his dream, where generations have come to march, to mourn, and to marvel.

Start at the Washington Monument — still as elegant and commanding as ever — then stroll past the World War II and Vietnam Veterans memorials before climbing the steps to Lincoln's tow-

ering likeness. Sit there a while. Watch the reflection of the monument shimmer in the pool below. It's difficult not to be moved by the sense of unity and sacrifice these grounds represent.

See also: Mount Rushmore. Where the Mall captures patriotism in marble and words, Rushmore marries it with the wild beauty of the Black Hills — an outdoor anthem to four men who helped shape the nation.

4. Golden Gate Bridge: The span of expansion

There are bridges. And then there's the Golden

Gate. It's not the longest or the tallest. But it's undeniably the most cinematic — a glowing red ribbon arching over sea fog. Completed in 1937, it's a triumph of design that still feels futuristic nearly a century later.

Drive, bike, or better yet, walk across it. From the middle of the span, you can see the city to one side, the Pacific to the other, and Alcatraz sitting stoically in between. The wind whips your hair, the bay sparkles below, and you realize you're standing on a piece of human optimism made entirely by steel, American ingenuity, and

westward expansion.

5. Monument Valley: The spirit of the West

Few landscapes are as instantly recognizable as Monument Valley. Those rust-red buttes rising from the desert floor have framed countless Westerns and defined our cinematic sense of adventure. But standing there in person — watching the light shift across the mesas as the sun sinks low — is something else entirely.

This is sacred ground and the silence feels profound. Drive the 17-mile loop road slowly, stop often, and let the enormity of the space sink in. Monument Valley reminds you that America's landmarks aren't only about what we've built — they're about what's been here long before us.

From roaring water to silent stone, from symbols of freedom to feats of engineering, these five landmarks aren't just destinations. They're invitations — to feel small, to feel proud, and to remember just how grand the American landscape really is.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

ASK DR. STEVE

Joint custody sounds fair — until parents make this one critical mistake

Joint custody seems like the perfect solution — both parents stay involved, children maintain relationships with everyone, and it feels "fair." Courts increasingly favor 50/50 arrangements, and most parents initially agree this serves children's best interests. But there's one critical mistake that transforms joint custody from blessing



STEVEN A. SZYKULA

to nightmare, and it's probably happening at Thanksgiving dinner tables right now. This mistake isn't dramatic or obvious. It's not about schedule violations or custody interference.

It's far more insidious: treating joint custody as two separate, competing lives rather than one coordinated childhood. When parents create parallel universes with different rules, values, and expectations, children become casualties of a cold war fought through homework policies, bedtimes, and holiday traditions.

As families navigate events like Thanksgiving week — deciding whose family recipes to use, which grandparents get Thursday versus Friday, and how to explain why everything's different this year — this critical mistake is destroying joint custody arrangements everywhere. Understanding and avoiding it could save both your custody arrangement and your children's emotional wellbeing.

Understanding the critical joint custody mistake

Q What's the one critical mistake that ruins joint custody?

A Refusing to communicate and coordinate, turning joint custody into completely separate worlds. Parents who won't discuss schedules, rules, activities, or children's needs create impossible situations. Children become responsible for navigating two incompatible systems, carrying information between houses, and managing parents' emotions. This "parallel parenting taken to extremes" exhausts children and eventually collapses when they're old enough to refuse the chaos.

Q How does this mistake manifest during holidays like Thanksgiving?

A Children eat two full dinners because parents won't coordinate timing. They hear different explanations for the divorce at each table. One

house maintains traditions while the other creates entirely new ones out of spite. Extended families aren't informed of schedules, leading to duplicate or conflicting celebrations. Children can't share excitement about one parent's plans without upsetting the other. Therapists report that uncoordinated holidays create more trauma than the divorce itself.

Q Isn't parallel parenting recommended for high-conflict divorces?

A Parallel parenting — minimizing direct contact while both parenting — works temporarily for extreme conflict. But it's meant as a transition strategy, not permanent solution. True joint custody requires basic coordination about health, education, and major decisions. Parents who can't exchange essential information about children shouldn't have joint custody. Judges increasingly modify joint arrangements when communication completely breaks down.

Q What's the difference between healthy boundaries and destructive non-communication?

A Healthy boundaries mean business — like communication focused on children, not discussing personal lives or rehashing marriage issues. Destructive non-communication refuses any contact, using children as messengers, or withholding important information. You don't need to be friends, but you must be colleagues in the business of raising children. Can you text about sick child's medication? That's the minimum requirement.

Q How does this mistake affect children differently at various ages?

A Toddlers become anxious and clingy, sensing tension without understanding. Elementary children become messengers and peacekeepers, developing anxiety disorders. Teenagers often align with one parent to escape the conflict or reject both parents entirely. Adult children of non-communicative joint custody report feeling like they had no real home, just two places they stayed. The damage compounds over time.

Q What specific coordination is essential for joint custody success?

A Basic health information (illnesses, medications, appointments), educational issues (homework, tests, conferences), activity schedules, behavioral concerns, and major incidents. Not every detail needs sharing, but anything affecting children's wellbeing or requiring consistency does.

Parents must also coordinate on safety rules, screen time limits, and dating introductions. Pediatricians report medical problems when parents won't share health information.

Q How should divorced parents handle things like Thanksgiving weekend?

A Send brief, factual text about pickup/dropoff times. Share children's meal times to avoid over-feeding. Inform about any illness or medication needs. Let children call other parent to wish happy Thanksgiving without monitoring. Don't interrogate about other parent's celebration. If children are upset about missing someone, validate feelings without blame: "It's hard being in two places. Both families love you."

Q What if my ex refuses to communicate at all?

A Document all attempts at child-focused communication. Use written methods creating records. Propose using co-parenting apps like OurFamilyWizard that courts can monitor. Continue sending necessary information even without responses — it demonstrates good faith. Request court orders requiring communication about specific topics. Sometimes one parent maintaining communication standards influences the other to improve.

Q How do parents justify non-communication to themselves?

A "I don't want to deal with them," "They don't deserve to know," "The kids can tell them," "It's my time, my rules," "They should figure it out themselves." These feel protective but actually burden children. Parents convince themselves they're avoiding conflict, but silence creates more tension than businesslike exchanges. Children feel the strain of being information bridges between hostile camps.

Q What happens when children become the messengers?

A Children develop hypervigilance, constantly monitoring both parents' moods. They edit information to avoid upset, becoming skilled liars by necessity. They feel responsible for parents' emotions and reactions. Academic performance suffers from mental energy spent managing parents. Many develop anxiety, depression, or behavioral problems. Adult children report this messenger role as more damaging than the divorce itself.

Q Can joint custody work with a narcissistic or high-conflict ex?

A True joint custody requires two functional parents. If one parent

genuinely has personality disorders preventing any cooperation, parallel parenting or modified arrangements might be necessary. However, many parents label exes "narcissistic" when they're just angry and hurt. Professional evaluation can distinguish true incapacity from emotional dysfunction. Sometimes structured communication requirements help even difficult personalities cooperate minimally.

Q What tools help parents communicate without conflict?

A Co-parenting apps providing structured communication, recorded exchanges, and court access. Email for non-urgent matters, text for logistics only. Shared Google calendars for schedules. Communication notebooks traveling with young children. Key: choose one primary method and stick to it. Family courts increasingly order specific communication protocols and apps in high-conflict cases.

Q How do remarriages and step-parents affect this dynamic?

A New partners often encourage non-communication, viewing ex-spouses as threats. Step-parents may push for "separate lives" to establish new family units. This intensifies children's divided loyalty. Successful joint custody requires new partners understanding children have another home requiring respect. Biological parents must maintain direct communication — step-parents shouldn't become intermediaries or barriers.

Q What are signs joint custody is failing due to non-communication?

A Children regularly forget items between houses because parents won't coordinate. Medical or school issues surprise one parent. Children show different behaviors at each house. Frequent emergency communications through children. Duplicate purchases because parents won't discuss needs. Children express exhaustion, wanting to stay in one place. These patterns indicate need for intervention before arrangement collapses.

Q When should joint custody be modified due to communication breakdown?

A When children show symptoms of stress (anxiety, depression, behavioral problems), when non-communication endangers health or education, when children become primary communicators, or when conflicts escalate rather than improve over time. Courts prefer modifying communication requirements before

changing custody, but persistent refusal to coordinate can justify primary custody designation. Document patterns for at least six months before seeking modification.

Closing

Joint custody only works when parents commit to collaborative child-rearing despite personal animosity. The critical mistake — refusing to communicate and coordinate — transforms what should be expanded support into doubled stress for children. This Thanksgiving weekend, as you navigate the challenging dynamics of shared holidays, remember that your ability to exchange basic information with your ex directly impacts your children's mental health.

The irony is heartbreaking: parents who fight hardest for joint custody often destroy it through their refusal to cooperate. They want equal time but won't share equal responsibility for coordination. They demand rights but reject requirements. Their children pay the price, growing up as refugees shuttling between hostile territories instead of citizens of two loving homes.

You don't have to like your ex. You don't have to be friends. But if you want joint custody to benefit rather than burden your children, you must communicate about their needs. Every text ignored, every important detail withheld, every time you make children carry messages — you're documenting why joint custody isn't working.

This holiday season, give your children the gift they need most: parents who can send a civil text about pickup times, share information about their day, and coordinate enough that children feel supported rather than split. Your ability to manage basic communication determines whether joint custody becomes your children's advantage or their trauma.

For families struggling with joint custody communication and co-parenting challenges, professional intervention can establish functional protocols before arrangements fail. This article was written by Dr. Steve Szykula and Jason Sadora at Comprehensive Psychological Services (WeCanHelpOut.com) which offers co-parenting assessments, communication coaching, and court-recognized evaluations documenting how communication breakdowns affect children's wellbeing.

GET OUT THERE

Ipanema is the greatest beach in the world

“I do not want to leave this place,” I scribbled in my journal the night we flew home. I meant it.

Rio de Janeiro has that effect on you. It's not just the raw natural beauty—though the cinematic rainforest mountains kissing golden beaches is enough to leave you gobsmacked. It's the vibrant energy, the easy rhythm of life, and the warm welcome from locals who live like they're in on some wonderful secret.

That secret is Ipanema, nestled in Rio's superb South Zone, which doubles as the most relaxing and beautiful urban beach in the world. Make no mistake: It's definitely not the poshest. But it's undeniably the most iconic, distinctly beautiful, and endearing beach I've ever visited on all seven continents.

Bold claim, I know. Spend a day here, though, and I'm convinced you'll agree.

This is Brazil, but not the one you know

Unlike the flashy carnival version of Rio that often gets exported, Ipanema is surprisingly calm, safe, and—refreshingly—low on foreign tourists. In fact, my family heard very little English during our stay. But that's part of the magic. You don't visit Ipanema to be treated like a guest. You come to live like the locals do: slowly, sweetly—with saltwater in your hair and Havaianas on your feet.

Even with the language barrier, you can navigate Brazil just fine using Google Translate. That's partly because people here are kind without being pushy. Even beach vendors smile and say “boa tarde” if you decline. Better yet, tourist price gouging rarely happens. You pay what locals do. That goes for incredibly affordable food, souvenirs, and all-day beach chairs and umbrellas for a whopping \$7 total. No hassle, no hustle—just good vibes.

Days on the beach, nights on the street

During our stay, my family rented a charming Airbnb in eastern Ipanema near “Posto 8” and were within walking distance to five world-class beaches: Ipanema (5 minutes), Copacabana (10 minutes), Arpoador (10 minutes), Leblon (20 minutes), and Leme (40 minutes). Each has its own energy and is accessed from Rio's iconic black and white stone sidewalks. But Ipanema was our favorite. Electric but laid-back. Although not as bustling as Copacabana, Ipanema is the best-looking of the lot, with Vidigal “favela” in the background clinging to life on the side of the mountains.

After sunset, the energy shifts inland. Rua Visconde de Pirajá comes alive with cafes, açai bars, street vendors, grocers, boutiques, and late-night snack stops. Just a block away, Rua Barão da Torre provides a peaceful residential stretch, perfect for quiet evening strolls under giant banyan trees and filled with fine dining restaurants. In between both streets is a criss-cross network of all of the above, much of it highly-rated,

incredibly charming, and delightfully affordable.

Tastes like nowhere else

Brazilian street and beach food is a revelation. Inexpensive, inventive, and full of flavor. We fell in love with made-to-order grilled cheese sticks, fresh corn with butter and oregano, coconut tapioca cakes (“cusuz”), fried pastels and doughy coxinhas, freshly squeezed sugar cane juice with lime, plus açai bowls so good they might ruin the ones you enjoy back home.

Even everyday snacks and fresh baked goods from local grocers became highlights. Mangoes, “brigadeiro” chocolate balls, Biscoito Globo cookies, French bread, “rosquinha” cookies made with coconut, banana-cinnamon, or vanilla, and the mysterious atemoya fruit—a pear-pineapple hybrid that tastes like a tropical dream. For sit-down dining, Casa do Chef Jota quickly became our favorite, so much so we ate chef Jose's homecooked, gourmet, but still-affordable meals for three consecutive days. Had there been more time, we would have eaten there even more.

Mountains, markets, miracles

No trip to Rio is complete without a visit to the famous mountain-top statue of Cristo Redentor, one of Seven Wonders of The World that overlooks this incredible city that marries beaches with mountains, rich with poor, and Latin America with Portuguese (instead of “Hispanic”) Spanish, which you can definitely feel when visiting). I'd also



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Blake Snow and his wife take a photo in Rio de Janeiro.

recommend Sugarloaf Mountain, the colorful Selarón staircases, the Metropolitan Cathedral, the Portuguese library, and Maracanã stadium.

But on this, my family's second visit to Rio in three years (we like it that much), we followed Ipanema's lead and slowed down our sightseeing. We laid on the beach for several days. We picnicked in Parque Lage, which sits in the shadow of Cristo Redentor. We frequented farmer's markets, went to church, and relished a stunning sunset sailing with Get Your Guide. But the brightest highlight was a guided climb to the top of Dois Irmãos, which starts with a thrilling moto-taxi ride through Vidigal favela before entering a rainforest trail and finishing with what my wife called, “The best view of my entire life.”

Come confident, leave changed

“I could live here,” my daughter said only two days into our visit. “It's great for tourists but isn't touristy,” said another. That matters because

Ipanema lets you enjoy the local culture that much more.

Not that Rio is for everyone. If you want to be waited on hand and foot, don't like interacting with non-English speakers, or feel more comfortable with lots of hand-holding while traveling, Rio might not be the best fit. But I can't imagine anyone not falling in love with the incredible city if visiting with an open mind.

As my family reluctantly boarded our return flight one golden evening, hearts full and phones filled with photos, I felt sentimental saudades—that Portuguese word for deep longing. You see, Rio in general and Ipanema specifically is one of those rare places you don't just visit. You feel it.

And it stays with you.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

ASK DR. STEVE

Custody battles turn ugly fast – The 6 moves that can backfire badly

With it being the week of Thanksgiving, custody battles are about to intensify. The holidays trigger more custody emergencies than any other time of year. Parents who've maintained relative civility suddenly wage war over turkey dinner, using children as weapons in battles over “fairness” and “tradition.” The aggressive moves that feel justified in these emotional moments often become the evidence that loses custody cases months later.

When custody battles turn ugly, parents' protective instincts morph into destructive strategies. You believe you're fighting for your children, but the tactics that feel like standing your ground actually demonstrate to judges that you prioritize winning over your children's wellbeing. These six common moves—each seeming logical when emotions run high—consistently backfire in courts.

At times like Thanksgiving, the decisions about holiday schedules, family gatherings, and co-parenting conflicts will resurface in court. Judges have seen every holiday power play imaginable. They remember parents who created chaos during children's celebrations and those who sacrificed personal preferences for peaceful holidays.

The six backfiring moves

Move No. 1: The Holiday Ambush

Q What is a “holiday ambush” and why does it backfire?

A Unilaterally changing holiday plans, showing up uninvited to the other parent's celebration, or telling children about “better” plans that contradict court orders. Parents justify this as “tradition” or “what children want,” but judges see it as inability to respect boundaries and court authority. Courts report emergency hearings triple during Thanksgiving from parents attempting holiday ambushes. The parent who disrupts children's holidays often loses future holiday time entirely.

Q How should I handle unfair holiday schedules?

A Follow current orders exactly while documenting concerns for future modification. Propose detailed holiday schedules for next year in writing. Offer makeup time if you're getting extra. Never promise children something contradicting court orders.

If orders are vague, propose specific interpretation in writing before holidays. Judges reward parents who prioritize peaceful holidays over “winning” specific days.

Move No. 2: The Nuclear Option – False Emergency Allegations

Q Why do false emergency allegations explode during holidays?

A Emotional triggers peak during family celebrations. Parents catastrophize minor issues or manufacture emergencies hoping to prevent holiday visitation. Filing false emergency motions—abuse allegations without evidence, exaggerated illness claims, or manufactured safety concerns—might delay one visit but destroys long-term credibility. Judges track parents who repeatedly file pre-holiday emergencies. Pattern recognition leads to custody reversal.

Q What if I have genuine concerns during holidays?

A Document specifically with photos, witnesses, or professional opinions. Contact your attorney before taking action. If truly urgent, involve authorities who create official records. But ask yourself: Is this immediate danger or holiday emotion? Real emergencies are rare; manufactured ones are obvious. Judges distinguish between protective parents and those weaponizing the system.

Move No. 3: The Alienation Campaign

Q How do holidays accelerate alienation campaigns?

A Holidays provide maximum emotional manipulation opportunities. “Daddy won't let you spend Christmas morning with me” or “Mommy is keeping you from Grandma's Thanksgiving.” Creating competing celebrations, guilt-tripping about missing traditions, or having children “choose” between parents' events. Extended family often unknowingly participates. Child psychologists report holiday alienation causes lasting trauma exceeding the divorce itself.

Q What if my child genuinely doesn't want to go?

A Unless safety concerns exist, support the visit. Say “I know transitions are hard, but you'll have fun once you're there.” Never celebrate refused visitation. Document resistance neutrally but don't interrogate. Children often resist transitions but enjoy visits once there. True alienation shows consistent patterns beyond holidays. One refused Thanksgiving doesn't justify custody changes; patterns of interference do.

Move No. 4: The Public Shaming Strategy

Q Why does social media shaming backfire so severely?

A Holiday posts reach maximum audience when emotions run highest. “Spending Thanksgiving alone because some people only think of themselves” or posting empty chair photos generates sympathy but becomes courtroom evidence of inability to protect children from adult conflict. Family and friends' supportive comments become witnesses to your poor judgment. Judges, evaluators, and guardians ad litem see these posts.

Q How should I handle holiday social media?

A Post nothing about custody, your ex, or children's absence. Share positive moments from your time without commentary about missing children. Never respond to your ex's posts. Block or restrict access during high-conflict periods. If extended family posts inappropriately, request removal immediately. Your silence demonstrates maturity; their posts reveal instability.

Move No. 5: The Financial Weapon

Q How do parents weaponize money during holidays?

A Withholding support before holidays claiming “they won't use it for children.” Buying expensive gifts to outshine other parent. Refusing to share gift-giving plans causing duplicates. Telling children about support issues. Making holiday travel impossibly expensive. These tactics backfire because judges see financial manipulation as harming children. Parents who ensure children enjoy both households' celebrations demonstrate true child focus.

Q What about unequal gift-giving abilities?

A Communicate about significant gifts to avoid duplicates. Don't compete—children need parents, not presents. If you have less resources, focus on experiences and traditions. Never tell children you can't afford gifts because of support payments. Document if other parent undermines your gifts or claims credit for yours. Judges understand economic disparities but expect both parents to contribute within means.

Move No. 6: The Recording Trap

Q Why do secret recordings backfire?

A Many states require all-party consent for recordings. Illegal recordings can't be used in court and

may result in criminal charges. But beyond legality, recording demonstrates inability to communicate directly. Parents who record children describing visits violate therapeutic boundaries. Judges view recorders as conflict-escalators, not protective parents. The recorder often appears more problematic than recorded content.

Q How do I document concerning behavior without recording?

A Write contemporaneous notes immediately after incidents. Obtain witness statements. Use written communication (text/email) that naturally creates records. Take photos of visible concerns. Request welfare checks that create official reports. Have neutral third parties present during exchanges. Legal documentation protects you; illegal recording endangers your custody.

Additional holiday-specific guidance

Q What about introducing children to extended family or new partners during holidays?

A Holidays aren't appropriate for first introductions—too much pressure and emotion. If new partners attend, keep affection minimal and focus on children. Extended family should be briefed to avoid discussing court matters. Document if other parent brings inappropriate guests but don't interrogate children. Judges favor parents who maintain familiar, comfortable holiday experiences during transition periods.

Q How do I handle children's emotional reactions to split holidays?

A Validate feelings without feeding them: “It's hard having two celebrations, but you're lucky to be loved in two homes.” Don't promise future changes you can't guarantee. Maintain your own emotional regulation—children mirror parental anxiety. Create new traditions rather than mourning old ones. If children struggle significantly, propose family therapy rather than custody modification.

Q What if we don't have specific holiday orders?

A Default orders typically alternate major holidays yearly. Without specifics, propose detailed schedule in writing now. Include times, exchange locations, and who provides transportation. Be generous—judges notice who facilitates versus obstructs. If agreement seems impossible, file for specific orders before next year. This year, document your reasonable proposals and other parent's responses.

Q Should I skip my holiday time to avoid conflict?

A No. Surrendering court-ordered time suggests it's unimportant and sets precedent. However, be flexible about specific timing if it benefits children. Offer makeup time for accommodations you request. Document all agreements in writing. Missing ordered time without agreement can be seen as abandonment. Fight for your time appropriately—through court, not conflict.

Closing

The moves that feel powerful in custody battles—ambushes, allegations, alienation, shaming, financial manipulation, and recording—consistently backfire because they reveal your true priorities to judges. Courts recognize that parents who use these tactics will continue creating conflict regardless of custody arrangements, making them unsafe choices for primary custody.

This Thanksgiving week, you'll face situations that trigger every protective and competitive instinct. Your ex might violate agreements, manipulate children, or ruin traditions. The urge to fight fire with fire will be overwhelming. But your response in these heated moments becomes the evidence that defines your custody case.

Choose to be the parent who ensures peaceful holidays despite provocation. Document quietly, respond calmly, and prioritize children's joy over personal justice. The parent who “loses” Thanksgiving by being flexible often wins custody by demonstrating superior judgment. Judges remember who created chaos and who maintained peace during children's precious holiday memories.

Your children will remember these holidays forever—not whose house had better food or bigger presents, but which parent made them feel safe and loved despite the divorce. Be the stability they need. Your restraint this week could determine your custody next year.

For parents facing holiday custody conflicts or needing documentation of concerning behaviors during high-conflict divorces, comprehensive psychological evaluation can provide objective assessment of family dynamics. This article was written by Dr. Steve Szykula and Jason Sadora at Comprehensive Psychological Services (WeCanHelpOut.com) which offers emergency consultation for holiday custody crises and detailed evaluations that help courts understand the impact of parental conflict on children's wellbeing.

GET OUT THERE

Affordably awesome: Eagle Point is what family skiing used to be like

Skiing is awesome, no question. Few things match the thrill of gliding down snow-covered mountains surrounded by pine trees and powdery silence. But let's be honest:



BLAKE SNOW

The business of skiing has gotten ... well, a little off-putting. Thanks to mega passes and corporate consolidation, over half of U.S. ski resorts are now run by two companies — Vail and Alterra.

The result? Long lift lines, resort-town pricing, and terrain that's often tracked out by noon. That might work for some. But for families and anyone who remembers skiing before it became a luxury sport, it can be frustrating.

That's why Eagle Point Resort in Southern Utah is such a breath of fresh, high-elevation air.

Located just outside the town of Beaver, Eagle Point is one of the newest — and most refreshing — resorts in the state. It doesn't belong to the duopoly. It doesn't take itself too seriously. And it definitely doesn't charge \$200 for a lift ticket. In fact, midweek tickets are just \$64, weekends are \$84, and kids 12 and under ski free. Free!

On a recent family trip, we discovered just how rare this place really is. And we weren't alone. "People don't believe this place exists," said one stoked skier. "I kinda want to keep it that way."

Can't blame him.

With over 600 skiable acres and 40 named runs, Eagle Point packs a surprising punch for its size.



COURTESY EAGLE POINT RESORT

Eagle Point Resort.

The terrain is a mix of smooth groomers, tree-lined rollers, and steep double blacks that challenge even seasoned skiers. Our kids couldn't get enough of the beginner and intermediate trails off the Monarch lift, while I kept sneaking back to steep-and-deep laps on Lookout and Delano Drop. And because the resort only runs lifts Friday through Monday, the snow has time to stack up midweek. Translation: fresh tracks on

a Friday morning feel like a powder day secret.

But the best part? No crowds. At all. On our visit, we skied straight onto the lifts, lapped the mountain all day, and never once stood in line. Try that anywhere else in Utah.

Of course, good skiing is only part of the family trip equation. Lodging matters, too — and Eagle Point nails it. There are no high-rise hotels or busy base

villages here. Instead, you'll find cozy, ski-in/ski-out condos and mountain homes tucked into the forest. Some sleep up to 16, making them perfect for extended families or group getaways. Ours had a fireplace, full kitchen, hot tub, and stunning views of the Tushar Mountains. At night, we played games, made hot cocoa, and watched the stars shine while soaking in our jacuzzi.

No apres parties. No noise. Just

peaceful, high-alpine vibes.

Even better? The resort throws in fun freebies every weekend. Picture this: after a full day of turns, we skied down to the base and were greeted with free hot dogs and s'mores around the fire. My kids thought it was Christmas. I thought it was genius. A little gesture that adds a lot of heart.

The food scene surprised us, too. The on-mountain Canyon-side Lodge serves legit multi-course meals — think warm chili, juicy burgers, and maybe the best hot chocolate in the state. And the staff? Delightful. No jaded attitudes, no resort snobbery. Just friendly folks who genuinely want you to enjoy this hidden gem of a ski resort.

Eagle Point isn't trying to be the next Park City or Deer Valley. It's not posh. It's not polished. But that's exactly the point. It's skiing like it used to be — before everything got overbuilt and overpriced. It's a place where families can reconnect, beginners can find their confidence, and powder hounds can score fresh lines without the madness.

So yeah, skiing is awesome. But skiing at Eagle Point? It's the kind of awesome families can actually afford — and the kind mine intends on coming back to every season.

Just don't tell too many people.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

ASK DR. STEVE

Want full custody? These common mistakes could kill your chances before court day

Most custody cases are lost long before anyone enters a courtroom. Parents unknowingly sabotage their chances through actions that seem harmless or even protective at the time.



STEVEN A. SZYKULA

By the time they realize their mistakes, the damage is documented, witnessed, and often irreversible. Understanding these pitfalls before you make them could save your custody case — and your relationship with

your children.

The pursuit of "full custody" itself often becomes the first mistake. Utah courts strongly favor shared parenting when both parents are fit, and aggressive pursuit of sole custody without serious safety concerns signals unwillingness to co-parent. Parents who demand everything often end up with less than those who demonstrate reasonable flexibility and child-focused thinking.

Every text you send, social media post you make, and decision about your children creates evidence that will follow you into court. Utah family law attorneys consistently report that clients' pre-court behavior determines outcomes more than courtroom performance. The mistakes you avoid today protect the custody arrangement you need tomorrow.

Understanding pre-court custody mistakes

Q What's the biggest mistake parents make when pursuing full custody?

A Pursuing full custody without legitimate safety concerns. Utah's presumption favors shared parenting, and judges view unnecessary full custody requests as hostile co-parenting indicators. Unless there's documented abuse, neglect, or severe instability, requesting sole custody immediately positions you as the unreasonable parent. Utah judges report that parents demanding full custody often receive less time than those requesting reasonable shared arrangements.

Q How do social media posts destroy custody cases?

A Everything posted becomes potential evidence. Photos at parties suggest prioritizing social life over parenting. Complaints about your ex show inability to co-parent respectfully. New relationship photos

during separation imply moving too fast. Even "innocent" posts reveal schedule inconsistencies or financial priorities. Utah attorneys advise complete social media abstinence during custody disputes. Privacy settings don't matter — opposing counsel will find posts through mutual friends.

Q What texting mistakes hurt custody cases most?

A Angry, threatening, or sarcastic texts provide permanent evidence of poor emotional regulation. Discussing adult matters demonstrates inability to shield children. Refusing to respond about children's needs shows non-cooperation. Excessive texts appear controlling or harassing. Late-night emotional messages suggest instability. Every text should pass the "judge reading this aloud in court" test. Utah courts regularly admit text threads as primary evidence.

Q How does dating during separation affect custody?

A Introducing new partners to children during separation devastates custody cases. It suggests poor judgment, prioritizing personal needs over children's stability, and inability to help children process divorce before adding complications. Judges question parents who can't remain single during children's most vulnerable period. Even dating without introductions raises concerns if it affects parenting time or financial resources. Wait until divorce finalizes and children adjust.

Q What's "self-help" custody and why is it dangerous?

A Taking children and refusing court-ordered visitation, changing locks to prevent access, or unilaterally altering arrangements without court approval. Parents justify this as "protecting" children but judges see it as contempt of court and parental alienation. Unless there's immediate danger requiring police involvement, follow court orders while seeking emergency modifications. Self-help custody often results in custody reversal to the other parent.

Q How do parents accidentally coach their children?

A Asking leading questions: "Did daddy yell at you?" instead of "How was your visit?" Discussing court proceedings within earshot. Rewarding negative reports about the other parent with attention or comfort. Children naturally want to please and will unconsciously provide answers they think parents

want. Coached testimony is obvious to evaluators and judges, severely damaging credibility. Let children share naturally without prompting.

Q What financial mistakes impact custody?

A Hiding assets, quitting jobs to avoid support, or excessive spending on personal interests while claiming inability to provide for children. Making large purchases during separation shows financial irresponsibility. Failing to pay temporary support creates documented non-compliance. Conversely, using money to control or limit other parent's access backfires. Judges want to see financial decisions prioritizing children's stability.

Q How does bad-mouthing affect custody even if kids don't hear?

A Speaking negatively to friends, family, or new partners creates witnesses who may testify. Children sense tension even without hearing specifics. Extended family may unconsciously transmit negativity to children. Public complaints reach children through schoolmates' parents or social media. Judges recognize that parents who can't control public commentary won't shield children privately. Utah is small — assume everything gets back to court.

Q What documentation mistakes do parents make?

A Over-documenting trivial issues makes you appear conflict-seeking. Under-documenting serious concerns leaves you without evidence. Emotional journaling versus factual logs reduces credibility. Recording without consent violates Utah law. Failing to document positive exchanges creates skewed narrative. Keep businesslike logs: date, time, factual description, witnesses. Medical records and school reports carry more weight than personal documentation.

Q How do parents sabotage their own psychological evaluations?

A Attempting to "coach" answers instead of being genuine. Presenting as perfect parent without acknowledging any challenges. Focusing entire evaluation on other parent's flaws. Bringing children into adult issues during observed interactions. Missing appointments or arriving late. Arguing with evaluator's questions. Refusing psychological testing. Evaluators easily identify manipulation attempts, which become central findings against you.

Q What school-related mistakes hurt custody cases?

A Not knowing teachers' names, missing parent-teacher conferences, or being uninvolved in education suggests disengagement. Conversely, excluding other parent from school information or events demonstrates alienation. Making unilateral education decisions shows inability to co-parent. Fighting at school events traumatizes children publicly. School district personnel may be subpoenaed — assume all interactions are potential testimony.

Q How do living arrangements affect custody before court?

A Moving in with new partners or multiple roommates suggests instability. Inadequate sleeping arrangements for children reduces overnight possibilities. Living far from children's schools complicates logistics. Frequent moves indicate instability. Unsafe neighborhoods raise concerns. Judges prefer stability — maintaining family home or establishing appropriate separate residence early strengthens position. Document improvements made for children's comfort and safety.

Q What medical/therapy mistakes damage custody cases?

A Missing children's medical appointments, not following treatment recommendations, or "doctor shopping" for preferred diagnoses. Taking children to therapy without other parent's knowledge appears manipulative. Discussing custody with children's therapists violates therapeutic boundaries. Refusing to consent to needed treatment shows poor judgment. Medicating without consultation demonstrates unilateral decision-making. Medical records from providers become court evidence.

Q How does interference with visitation hurt cases?

A Scheduling activities during other parent's time, being consistently late for exchanges, or "forgetting" to pack necessary items. Creating obstacles like refusing to meet at neutral locations. Using children to communicate schedule changes. Making exchanges emotionally difficult. These patterns document non-cooperation. Even if other parent doesn't complain initially, patterns emerge in court. Document all exchanges neutrally.

Q What should I do if I've already made these mistakes?

A Stop immediately and acknowledge errors if addressed in court — judges respect honesty over

denial. Document positive changes consistently. Consider therapy to address underlying issues. Request custody evaluation to demonstrate current capacity versus past mistakes. Focus on children's needs going forward rather than justifying past behavior. Many parents recover from early mistakes through sustained positive change.

Closing

The pursuit of custody begins the moment you decide to separate, not when you file court papers. Every action, communication, and decision becomes part of the narrative judges will evaluate. The mistakes that destroy custody cases aren't usually dramatic events but patterns of behavior that reveal inability to prioritize children over personal conflicts. Parents who succeed in custody cases understand that winning isn't about defeating their ex — it's about demonstrating superior ability to support their children's overall wellbeing, including their relationship with the other parent. This requires emotional maturity, strategic thinking, and often personal sacrifice that feels unfair in the moment but serves children's long-term interests.

The mistakes outlined here are completely avoidable with awareness and self-control. Before sending that text, making that post, or taking that action, ask yourself: "How would this look to a judge?" and "Does this serve my children or my ego?" The temporary satisfaction of winning a battle with your ex isn't worth losing the custody war.

Remember, judges have seen every tactic and recognize manipulation instantly. They're looking for parents who can rise above conflict, demonstrate stability, and facilitate healthy relationships. Be the parent your children need, not the warrior your hurt demands. Your restraint today protects your custody tomorrow.

For parents concerned about custody mistakes already made or wanting evaluation before court proceedings, comprehensive psychological assessment can identify issues and demonstrate current parenting capacity. This article was written by Dr. Steve Szykula and Jason Sadora at Comprehensive Psychological Services (WeCanHelpOut.com) which provides detailed evaluation that helps courts understand your growth, stability, and commitment to your children's best interests despite past mistakes.

GET OUT THERE

Surreal and sacred: Hiking Bryce Canyon under a full moon

Years ago, a National Park ranger gave me a tip I've never forgotten. "I've worked in a bunch of parks and visited every single one," he said. "But if I had to pick a favorite experience? Hiking Bryce Canyon under a full moon."

That stuck with me. And this year, the stars (and moon) finally aligned.



BLAKE SNOW

Under one of the brightest full supermoons I've ever seen — so bright it cast shadows — we laced up our boots, packed our headlamps we mostly didn't need, and dropped into Bryce Canyon's famous hoodoos for what would become the greatest Halloween hike of my life.

Make no mistake: Bryce in daylight is already otherworldly. But Bryce in moonlight? It's another dimension entirely. It felt like walking through an ancient cathedral carved by time and lit by moonbeams. Silent. Sacred. Surreal.

Our 4-mile loop started at Sunset Point. From there, we

descended into the twisting narrows of Wall Street, where towering sandstone spires rose like skyscrapers around us. With the canyon empty and the moon hanging high, the whole place glowed a soft, silvery orange. It was like being inside an outdoor museum sculpted by Martians.

We looped up past Two Bridges, the natural stone arches connecting hoodoo walls like architectural marvels. The light was so clear we could see every detail — cracks, shadows, textures — without artificial light. Occasionally, a breeze would rush through the canyon like a whisper, and we'd stop and just listen. There was no sound but nature. No people. No crowds. Just us and the moon.

At the rim, we picked up the trail and followed it along the edge, the vast amphitheater of Bryce Canyon spreading out below like a prehistoric coliseum. From above, the hoodoos looked like silent sentinels frozen in time. And we weren't looking down at darkness. We were looking at moonlit sculpture, bright as dawn, yet still dreamlike.

From there, we dipped

back into Queen's Garden — the softest descent in the park and one of the prettiest. Under the moonlight, the formations took on different personalities. One looked like a dragon. Another resembled a castle. We half expected to run into a ghostly queen riding a moonbeam. It was October, after all.

The climb back up Wall Street was just as magical. We took our time, soaking it all in. This wasn't just a hike. It was a memory being etched in real-time. The kind you don't rush. The kind you never forget.

Bryce Canyon is famous for its clear skies and low light pollution — one of the best places in the country for stargazing. But under a super full moon, it becomes something else. The shadows dance. The rocks shimmer. And the entire landscape takes on a kind of lunar glow. But the stars came out, too — shining in tandem with the main event moon.

Even the air felt different — crisp and cool, but not cold. Just enough bite to remind you it's late October, but without the deep chill of winter. It was, in every sense, perfect.



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Bryce Canyon's hoodoo rock formations glow in the moonlight.

And we had it all to ourselves.

No buses. No selfie sticks. No park traffic. Just a quiet,

beautiful hike through a place that looked more like Mars than Earth, lit by a glowing pearl overhead.

By the time we got back to the top, we were buzzing — not from exertion, but from the experience. The kind that makes you feel small in the best possible way. The kind that makes you grateful for public lands, for wild places, and for the kind of advice that only comes from a seasoned ranger who's seen it all.

He was right, by the way.

Out of all the trails I've hiked, all the parks I've explored, and all the adventures I've been lucky enough to have, hiking Bryce Canyon under a full Halloween moon is one of the best I've ever endeavored. It's more than a hike. It's a portal to another world.

If you ever get the chance, take it.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

THE CONVERSATION

What's inside
(The beginning)

"I am losing my mind and do not know what to do. I have come to realize I need something more than myself. Today was a rough day, and maybe I am better off not being here. I need to find some value in my existence. I am losing myself, and the worst part is that I cannot even share it with anyone. No one understands me, because I do not even understand myself."



LETROY WOODS

Do you ever feel lost or misunderstood? This entry from my journal was my last written conversation before my surrender and awakening. It has not been altered in any way. You are reading word-for-word what is in my journal. This is one of the many hard conversations that we do not talk about.

Becoming what we are meant to be is not an easy path, often misunderstood by those we love, and the most rewarding endeavor you will ever embark on. The beginning of each day begins in the dark, and the willingness to endure brings the sun's horizon. We cannot understand anything without visiting its other side. The sun is only high in the sky for as long as the moon rests in the night. The point is, we need both the sun and the moon for our survival.

Having grace with oneself, forgiveness through imperfections, and silence during humility to be taught patience. I share because someone, somewhere, needs to know they are not alone, and that they also can share what is inside of themselves on their road to freedom. If not yourself, you probably know someone who is in the dark who is about to relinquish their gift of choice. We walk about our lives wearing many masks other than the one we were born with. For the person's ears and heart that this message penetrates, know that there is always a prize on the other side of adversity.

The conversation is not just a weekly column, but a place where courage exists, a place where profound conversation can surface without judgment or criticism, a place where you can finally feel safe to express yourself. The conversation is the place where one lives and dwells, and the maker and destroyer of worlds. If you need a voice, please reach out. One decision can move mountains in your life.

"You have been assigned this mountain so that you can show others it can be moved."

—Mel Robbins

Letroy Woods can be reached at Letroywoods@gmail.com.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

Nov. 15

BYU Dancesport Championships, Wilkinson Student Center, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

She Loves Me, West Campus Central Building, 7:30 p.m. (Nov. 15-22, onstage.byu.edu)

BYU Philharmonic: Great Forces, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Irritija Kuwarri Tjungu/Sense of Beauty, Brigham Young University Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (Nov. 15-Dec. 6, moa.byu.edu)

My Robot, West Campus Central Building, 7:30 p.m. (Nov. 15-22, onstage.byu.edu)

DancEnsemble in Concert, Richards Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Eclipse 6 Concert, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

Lello "EP Release," Velour, 7:30 p.m. (24tix.com)

Mountainfilm on Tour, Sundance Resort, 7 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

The \$1,000 Art Show - 2025, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (Nov. 15-29, jkr-gallery.myshopify.com)

The Robe, the Ring, and the Fatted Calf - Group Exhibit, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (Nov. 15-29, thecompassgallery.com)

Them Also I Must Bring - Brandon Gonzales, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (Nov. 15-Dec. 27, thecompassgallery.com)

IF and WHEN Live, The Rise, 7 p.m. (therisevenue.com)

Nov. 16

Utah Baroque Ensemble Christmas Concert, 1081 W 1060 N, 7:30 p.m. (facebook.com/utahbaroque)

Nov. 18

The Nutcracker by Chrysalis & CUB, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (Nov. 18-20, covey.provo.gov)

Devotional: Elder D. Todd Christofferson, Marriott Center, 11 a.m. (byu.edu)

Concert Band Confluence: BYU Symphonic Band and BYU University Band in Concert, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Mountain Strings, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Nov. 19

Saxophone Chamber Night, BYU Music Building, 5:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

String Chamber Night, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Synthesis, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Nov. 20

Theatre Ballet Studio Company: Alice, Richards Building, 7:30 p.m. (Nov. 20-22, onstage.byu.edu)

Group for Computer Music in Concert, BYU Music Building, 7 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Jazz Voices: Autumn Leaves, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Drusky, Velour, 7:30 p.m. (24tix.com)

Nov. 21

Opera Scenes, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (Nov. 21-22, onstage.byu.edu)

Friday Fusion, Arlington Hall, 8:30 p.m. (arlingtonhalls.com)

Cowboys and Indies, Velour, 7:30 p.m. (Nov. 21-22, 24tix.com)

Silent Disco, The Rise, 10 p.m. (therisevenue.com)

Lighting of Riverwoods 2025, The Shops At Riverwoods, 6-8 p.m. (shopsatriverwoods.com)

2025 Fall BYU Museums Trivia Night, Bean Life Science Museum, 7-9 p.m. (ism.byu.edu)

2025-26 Provo Winter Farmers Market, Provo Towne Centre Mall, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (provotownecentre.com)

Nov. 22

The Night Before Christmas, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

Hatchback Live, The Rise, 7 p.m. (therisevenue.com)

Bealtahful Brunch, Thead Wallet HQ, 10 a.m.-noon (beautahful.com)

Fall 2025 Mystery Dinner Night - CLUE, Bean Life Science Museum, 6-9 p.m. (ism.byu.edu)

Nov. 23

Utah Baroque Ensemble Christmas Concert, 481 E Center Street, 7:30 p.m. (facebook.com/utahbaroque)

Orem

Nov. 15

A Night of Broadway: Through the Decades, SCERA Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (scera.org)

Faculty Art Exhibition, UVU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Antra Sinha: Shimmering Sunlight, UVU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Nov. 15-Jan. 24, uvu.edu/museum)

Le Salon de Musique's Fall Salon, The Piano Gallery, 4:30-5:30 p.m. (lesalonde-musique.org)

Library Hall Presents: Ink and Bone, Orem Public Library, 1 p.m./7 p.m. (eventbrite.com)

The Revolutionists, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7:30 p.m. (uvunoorda.universitytickets.com)

Nov. 17

2025 Orchard Lighting Event, University Place Orem, 6-8 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Nov. 18

2025 Christmas Lights in The Orchard, University Place Orem, 5-11 p.m. (Nov. 18-Jan. 3, universityplaceorem.com)

8th Annual Gingerbread House Competition Display, University Place Orem, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. (Nov. 24-Dec. 1, universityplaceorem.com)

Nov. 19

Open Studio in the Art Haus, UVU Museum of Art, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Nov. 20

Far Away, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7:30 p.m. (Nov. 20-22, uvunoorda.universitytickets.com)

Lindon

Nov. 22

Lindon Turkey Trot 5K and Fun Run, Lindon City Park, 8 a.m. (lindonrecreation.org)

Vineyard

Nov. 15

Bella's Market Grand Opening, Bella's Market, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (utahcity.com)

SOUTH

Springville

Nov. 15

Hobble Creek Barn Boutique Holiday Showcase 2025, The Hitching Post, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (hobblecreekbarn.com)

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Nov. 15 into 2026, smofa.org)

39th Annual Spiritual & Religious Art of Utah Exhibit, Springville Museum of Art, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (smofa.org)

Nov. 16

Sunday Concert Series: Red Desert Ramblers, Springville Museum of Art, 4-5 p.m. (smofa.org)

Nov. 17

Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

SMA Unframed: Sound of Ages, Springville Museum of Art, 6:15-8:30 p.m. (smofa.org)

Live Action Oregon Trail, Springville Library, 7-8 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Nov. 18

Nebo Novelists Bookclub, Springville Library, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Nov. 20

Love at First Chapter: Romance Book Club, Springville Library, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Nov. 22

YAC Opening Reception, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-noon (smofa.org)

Dinovember, Springville Library, 1-2 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Annual Youth Art Competition - Opening Reception, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Nov. 22-Jan. 7, smofa.org)

Spanish Fork

Nov. 21

Sisters of the Moon Fleetwood Mac Tribute Show with Wild Hair, Angelus Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (angelustheatre.com)

Nov. 22

Red Nose Ranch, Gordon's Family Farm, noon-8 p.m. (Nov. 22-Dec. 27, gordonfamilyfarms.com)

Santaquin

Nov. 22

Blizzard 5K and Fun Run, Apple Valley Elementary, 9 a.m. (santaquin.gov)

Payson

Nov. 16

Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Nov. 18

Weekly Craft Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Nov. 19

Live Local Music Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Nov. 23

Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

NORTH

Pleasant Grove

Nov. 15

Flowers for Mrs. Harris, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (theruth.org)

Ronald Dahl's Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Nov. 15-Jan. 3, theruth.org)

Nov. 18

Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night,

Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

Lehi

Nov. 15

Dare to Dream, Lehi Arts Council, 5 p.m. (lehiarts.org)

Luminaria, Thanksgiving Point, 4 p.m. (Nov. 15-Jan. 10, thanksgivingpoint.org)

Creator's Collective x The Loft Mistletoe Market, The Loft Studio, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. (creatorcollectivemarket.com)

Lantern Light Tours, Hutchings Museum, 6-8 p.m. (jhutchingsmuseum.com)

Mamma Mia!, Skyridge Theatre Auditorium, 7 p.m. (Nov. 15-24, skyridgetheatre.com)

Nov. 20

Insights from Artifacts with Brent Ashworth: Thomas Edison, Hutchings Museum, 7 p.m. (jhutchingsmuseum.com)

Nov. 22

Sing Out Loud, Outlets at Traverse Mountain, 2-7 p.m. (outletsattraversemountain.com)

Nov. 23

Lehi Family Week, Lehi Legacy Center, TBA (Nov. 23-29, lehi-ut.gov)

American Fork

Nov. 15

Rug Tufting Workshop, The Rug Room, 6-9:30 p.m. (Nov. 15 into 2026, therugroomutah.com)

Nov. 19

Vivace Youth Orchestras Fall Concert, Valentine Theater, 6:30 p.m. (americanforkarts.com)

Cedar Hills

Nov. 17

Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

WEST

Eagle Mountain

Nov. 22

Park, Paths and Pumpkins Night, City Hall, 5-8 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

Nov. 15

Ben Rector: The Richest Man In The World Tour, Delta Center, 7:30 p.m. (deltacenter.com)

Nov. 20

John Legend: Get Lifted, Maverick Center, 8 p.m. (mverickcenter.com)

Nov. 23

Swan Lake by International Ballet Stars, Capitol Theatre, 7 p.m. (saltlake-countyarts.org)

Heber Valley

Nov. 15

S'mores & More Festival, River's Edge Resort, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (riversedgervestortutah.com)

Nov. 20

North Pole Express Christmas Train, Heber Valley Railroad, 5 p.m./7:30 p.m. (Nov. 20-Dec. 30, hebertrain.com)

Nov. 22

Heber Valley Sports Card, Collectibles and Memorabilia Show, Grand Hyatt Deer Valley, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. (Nov. 22-23, utahpremiersportscards.com)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jloyd@heraldextra.com.

GET OUT THERE

Volcano views, in-room infinity pools, 24-hour butlers: Welcome to Jade Mountain

Here are some of the once-in-a-lifetime questions I asked myself recently while staying at Jade Mountain — the No. 1 ranked resort in St. Lucia and one of the 10 best hotels in the world for its iconic, twin volcano views:

Is St. Lucia prettier than parts of Hawaii? Do I need to wear a swimsuit in my own private infinity pool? Will my butler eventually get mad at me for ordering four, made-to-order chocolate desserts every night? Should my wife and I even leave what we both consider the greatest room we've ever stayed in to experience what- ever else the resort has to offer?

The answers: Yes, no, certainly not, maybe.

I'll start with the room — aka "sanctuaries" as Jade Mountain calls them. That's not hubris. Our 1,800 square feet, open-air suite with (again!) an in-room infinity pool, high ceilings, a balcony, sectional living room, sprawling bathroom, custom Caribbean tile, vaulted jacuzzi, and a canopy bed fit for a king was precisely that. When I say my wife and I never wanted to leave our room, I wasn't kidding. Within seconds of arrival, we looked at each other as if to say, "Let's embrace this short-term gift for as long as the ticking clock will allow."

And we mostly did. Until Jade Mountain went and ruined our precious plan with all the remarkable

onsite activities they enticed us with. Chocolate-making class from their organic farm? Check. Private access to the No. 1-rated beach on the entire island? Check. World-class snorkeling and SCUBA right from the beach that everyone else on the island desires? Check. Roof-top restaurant for surreal breakfast, lunch, and dinner sunsets? Check.

This list goes on. Hiking all 2,600 feet on a guided tour of Gros Piton, the most staggering, lushest jungle hike I've ever done in a life spent hiking? Check. Mountain biking that same jungle and stopping along the way as our toothy guide fed us fresh avocados, golden apples, green oranges, purple grapefruit, cocoa beans, and herbs from the vine along the way? Check. Private beach dinners, couples massage, and sunset sailings around what many consider the most spectacular and dramatic Caribbean island by a wide margin? Check. Check. Check.

It's difficult to express, if not prioritize, just how exemplary Jade Mountain is at virtually everything. The food? Always fearless, high-risk, and fancy. That makes for some definite misses. But overall my wife and I loved the decadent, well-portioned, and multicourse, all-inclusive hits. That's especially true of the bread fruit chips with cottage cheese and chive dip, 60 minute poached eggs in gravy, spicy beet sauce, ginger braised carrots, fresh fish (all sorts), sweet potato risotto, fire roasted grilled veggies, and perfect pasta primavera.



COURTESY BLAKE SNOW

Relaxing at Jade Mountain resort in St. Lucia.

In terms of drinks and sweets, we devoured daily cups of thick, Caribbean cocoa tea, lime basil gimlets, coconut mocktails, mojito fruit bowls, made fresh daily chocolate bars and bon bons, and banana split lava cakes with homemade raisin rum ice cream. Yum.

Let's not forget the terrifically trained staff, many of whom have been with the exclusive, 29-room resort since it first opened on this captivating cliff some 20 years ago. Our regular cadre of rotating butlers — Ain, Junior, Miguel, and more. Daniel, our chocolatier instructor. Tory, our room attendant. Tory, our jungle bike guide. Kerwin and Kwame, our sunset sailing captain and first mate. If they're good enough for visiting celebrities, athletes, and dignitaries, they're more than good enough for you and me. Although it comes close, Jade

Mountain isn't perfect. It's expensive — best suited as a once-in-a-lifetime romantic getaway or special vacation for anyone with money. It's remote and hard to access over rough roads, lots of stairs, no elevators, and a physically demanding layout. And its open design means exposure to insects, wildlife, and weather without air conditioning. But as the local saying goes, "Difficult roads lead to great things."

Jade Mountain is great in every sense of the word. In fact, it's the most incredible place I've ever stayed and probably will ever stay. A romantic experience that starts and ends with its surreal, open air rooms. No catfishing photos here. The room is even better in person — a rare feat among exaggerated hotels. Simply put, it is the best view on a magical island that the French and British warred over for

several decades.

So ya know, seeing the Pitons at all hours of the day never gets old. Nor does the starry sky and Milky Way reflecting off the infinity pool. For me, staying at Jade Mountain was like seeing Antarctica for the first time — a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Again, that's not hyperbole. That's my honest review of one of the greatest resorts in the world.

I've sent a lot of astonishing photos back home over the years, including the pictured one. "But this is next-level," my friend said. You're telling me!

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

- Nov. 8**
She Loves Me, West Campus Central Building, 7:30 p.m. (Nov. 8-22, onstage.byu.edu)
BYU Noteworthy & Vocal Point, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)
BYU Women's Chorus, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)
Scott Holden, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)
Irrititja Kuwarri Tjungu/Sense of Beauty, Brigham Young University Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (Nov. 8-Dec. 6, moa.byu.edu)
Cinders + Rally, Velour, 7:30 p.m. (24tix.com)
Imanes de Animales, Provo City Library, 11 a.m.-noon (provolibrary.org)

Nov. 11

- Devotional: Elder B. Corey Cuvelier, Marriott Center, 11 a.m. (byu.edu)
BYU Wind Symphony For Heroes Proved: A Veteran's Day Celebration, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Nov. 12

- Carpenters Platinum Christmas Show, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)
My Robot, West Campus Central Building, 7:30 p.m. (Nov. 12-22, onstage.byu.edu)
Orpheus Winds, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Nov. 13

- DancEnsemble in Concert, Richards Building, 7:30 p.m. (Nov. 13-15, onstage.byu.edu)
Stand Up Comedy With Kellen Erskine, ImprovBroadway, 7:30 p.m. (improvbroadway.com)
BYU Concert Choir and BYU Men's Chorus, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)
Ladies Night: Celebrating Female Filmmakers, West Campus Central Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Nov. 14

- BYU Dancesport Championships, Wilkinson Student Center, 7:30 p.m. (Nov. 14-15, onstage.byu.edu)
BYU Singers: Musica eclectica, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)
Richard Thomas: Mark Twain Tonight!, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)
Friday Fusion, Arlington Hall, 8:30 p.m.



COURTESY THANKSGIVING POINT

HOLIDAY LIGHT DELIGHT

Each year during the holiday season, Thanksgiving Point somewhat transforms into a festive light display known as Luminaria.

Nov. 15

- Devotional: Elder John A. McCune, Marriott Center, 11 a.m. (byu.edu)
BYU Philharmonic: Great Forces, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Orem

- Nov. 8**
Celebration of Veterans 2025, Scera Center for the Arts, 10 a.m. (scera.org)
Faculty Art Exhibition, UVU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Nov. 8-15, uvu.edu/museum)
Antra Sinha: Shimmering Sunlight, UVU Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Nov. 8-Jan. 24, uvu.edu/museum)
Opera Performances: Two Treasures of Gian Carlo Menotti, Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7 p.m. (uvunoorda.universitytickets.com)
Library Hall Presents: Happy Valley Comedy, Orem Public Library, 7 p.m. (orempubliclibrary.org)
Art for All in the Art Haus, UVU Museum of Art, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Nov. 9

- Finding Peace: Free Musical Fireside, Scera Center for the Arts, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (scera.org)

Nov. 10

- Imagination, The Orchard at University Place, 11 a.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Nov. 11

- Veteran's Day Ceremony, Orem

Cemetery, 11 a.m.-noon (orem.gov)

Nov. 12

- Open Studio in the Art Haus, UVU Museum of Art, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Nov. 13

- Artist Talk: Shirin Abedinirad, UVU Museum of Art, 3:30-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Nov. 14

- Tree Lighting Celebration, UVU Museum of Art, 5-7:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Vineyard

- Nov. 8**
Blizzard 5K, Vineyard Grove Park, 8:30 a.m. (raceentry.com)

- Nov. 15**
Bella's Market Grand Opening, Bella's Market, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (utahcity.com)

SOUTH

Springville

- Nov. 8**
Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Nov. 8 into 2026, smofa.org)
Art City Ukulele Fellowship, Springville Library, 11 a.m.-noon (springville.org/library)

Nov. 10

- Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

Curtain Call At The Library: New Kid, Springville Library, 7 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Nov. 12

- Art City Band Concert, Springville Library, 7-8 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Nov. 16

- Sunday Concert Series: Red Desert Ramblers, Springville Museum of Art, 4-5 p.m. (smofa.org)

Spanish Fork

- Nov. 8**
Atomic in Concert, Angelus Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (angelustheatre.com)

Payson

- Nov. 9**
Sunday Open Mic, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotu- cafe.com)

Nov. 11

- Veterans Day, Mervyn Sharp Ben- nion Central Utah Veterans Home, 11 a.m.-noon (paysonutah.gov)
Weekly Craft Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotu- cafe.com)

Nov. 12

- Live Local Music Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotu- cafe.com)

Nov. 13

- Strum Circle, Center of the Uni- verse Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotu- cafe.com)

NORTH

Pleasant Grove

- Nov. 8**
Flowers for Mrs. Harris, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Nov. 8-15, theruth.org)
Fall Clean Up Days, Old Pipe Plant, 8 a.m.-7 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov)
Roald Dahl's Charlie and the Choc- olate Factory, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Nov. 8-Jan. 3, theruth.org)
Taste of the Arts, Pleasant Grove Library, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (pgcityutah. gov)

Nov. 11

- Veterans Day Service, Pleasant Grove Cemetery, 11 a.m. (pgutahcity.gov)
Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovesta- tionpg.com)

Nov. 12

- Employee and Community Blood Drive, Pleasant Grove Recreation Center, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (pgutahcity.gov)

Nov. 13

- PGPD Chili Cook Off, Police Station, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. (pgutahcity.gov)

Lehi

Nov. 10

Dare to Dream, Lehi Arts Council, 5 p.m. (Nov. 10-15, lehiarts.org)

Nov. 13

- Luminaria, Thanksgiving Point, 4 p.m. (Nov. 13-Jan. 10, thanksgiving- point.org)

American Fork

- Nov. 8**
Rug Tufting Workshop, The Rug Room, 6-9:30 p.m. (Nov. 8 into 2026, therugroomutah.com)
Mary Kawakami Youth Speech Con- test, Valentine Theater, 1 p.m. (ameri- canforkarts.com)

Alpine

- Nov. 13**
A.L.L. Free Class at the Workshop, The Workshop, 10:30 a.m.-noon (al- pineut.gov)

Cedar Hills

- Nov. 10**
Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

WEST

Saratoga Springs

- Nov. 8**
Veteran's Flag Ceremony, Pa- triot Park, 11 a.m.-noon (saratogas- prings-ut.gov)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

- Nov. 8**
Hogle Zoo Paint Night: Shimmer- ing Mountains, Hogle Zoo, 6-9 p.m. (hoglezoo.org)
Nov. 10
Veteran's Day Concert, Salt Lake Tabernacle, 7 p.m. (churchofjesus- christ.org)

- Nov. 15**
Ben Rector: The Richest Man In The World Tour, Delta Center, 7:30 p.m. (deltacenter.com)

Heber Valley

- Nov. 8**
Wilderness Circuit Rodeo Finals, Wasatch County Events Center, 7:30 p.m. (wasatchparkandrec.rod- eoticket.com)
Gathered With Heart Holiday Mar- ket, Sycamore Building, 4-8 p.m. (the- sycamorebuilding.com)

- Nov. 15**
S'mores & More Festival, River's Edge Resort, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (riv- ersedgervacationtutah.com)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jll-loyd@heraldextra.com.

GET OUT THERE

Believe me: This Rust Belt city is one of the prettiest in America

“Pittsburg is ugly,” said no one ever. In fact, USA Today once called it, “America’s most beautiful city.” My flight attendant sister corroborates that claim: “Seriously one of the most underrated cities in the country with some of the nicest people.”



BLAKE SNOW

They’re not wrong. Even after visiting over a rainy weekend, I’m delighted to report that the rumors are true. Despite its steely, industrial, Rust belt past, The ‘Burgh’s cozy skyscrapers, green rolling hills, and 400 bridges crossing its three scenic rivers are downright charming. If that weren’t enough, so are its original food, historic institutions, gritty but clean streets, and grizzled but kind locals.

Don’t believe me? Here’s what to know before reveling in revitalized Pittsburgh:

Dramatic entrance

I knew Pittsburgh was underrated within seconds of arriving. To get there from the airport, you drive under Mount Washington through the Fort Pitt Tunnel and ... bam! You’re hit with one of the most cinematic tunnel views this side of Yosemite. Captivating yellow suspension bridges criss-crossing three rivers at nearly every other street. Compact, if not cozy, skyscrapers that never feel overbearing. Panoramic hills on all four sides.

There is some visual scarring of a past well lived, mind you. But everyone loves a comeback story.



GENE J. PUSKAR, ASSOCIATED PRESS

This is the confluence of the Allegheny, left, and Monongahela Rivers, right, that form the Ohio River in downtown Pittsburgh on Jan. 9, 2022.

And that’s what Pittsburgh is. After transitioning from an industrial town into the innovative healthcare, robotics, and higher-educated city it is today, Pittsburgh cleaned up nicely without denying its roots. I’m smitten by this place — its historic “Mister Roger’s” neighborhoods and stunning setting.

Whatever you call it—City of Bridges, City of Champions (given its pro sports dominance), or City of Rivers—Pittsburgh demands your attention.

Best things to do

For a bird’s eye view of the picturesque skyline and bridges, start your visit with a ride up the

historic Duquesne (“doo-kane”) Incline to Mount Washington, which is really a 1,000 foot hill. But it’s also the most iconic view of the entire city, and you can walk along the appropriately-named Grandview Boulevard to several scenic overlooks, postcard perfect photos, and “some of the prettiest homes I’ve ever seen,” says my delighted wife.

The good looks don’t stop there. Point State Park at the confluence of Pittsburgh’s three rivers is wonderful. So is the Three Rivers Trail on both the north and south sides, where the highest concentration of truly “golden” gate bridges suspend over the horizon, one after another. You’ll

never see anything like it.

Along the river trail, you can easily access some of the city’s greatest institutions: Acrisure Stadium (home of the Steelers) and PNC Park (home of the Pirates), which are clearly two of the most comely stadiums in America. For history and art buffs, there’s also the Heinz Center and Andy Warhol Museum. Or you can enjoy the splendid Strip District, riverfront benches, and other historic buildings. Either way, you’re sure to enjoy copious amounts of black and gold cheering you on.

Pro Tip: Stay in downtown for walkable access to the best of everything, from sightseeing

to river walks and museums to restaurants.

Best original food

Although not well-known for its working class cuisine, Pittsburgh is home to a half dozen original dishes you should definitely try while visiting. All of them are fun, affordable, and more than half are worth writing home about.

My favorite? Pittsburgh Salad from Bigham Tavern topped with fries and honey mustard. It sounds weird, but it slaps. So does the famous Primanti Brothers pastrami and cheese sandwich stacked with coleslaw, tomatoes, and even fries, which steel workers asked for between the bread, because they didn’t have time for sides.

Other standout foods include Pamela’s thin and crispy crepe pancakes — so good you don’t even need syrup (but can if you want) — S&D Deli for the “best pierogis and haluski in Pittsburgh,” and Prantl’s decadent Burnt Almond Torte, which one food critic called, “The greatest cake America has ever made.”

They’re not wrong either. Gritty, reinvented, and underrated Pittsburgh deserves all the accolades and praise it can get. Don’t be fooled by any misconceptions. This town is totally worth your time, especially with nonstop flights from Salt Lake.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

ASK DR. STEVE

Divorce hits kids harder than parents realize

Here’s how to protect them

Parents going through divorce often believe they’re protecting their children by staying together “for the kids” or, conversely, that children are “resilient” and will quickly adjust to divorce. Both beliefs miss the complex reality: divorce profoundly impacts children in ways that

aren’t always immediately visible, but how parents handle the divorce matters more than the divorce itself.

The effects of divorce on children extend far beyond the initial separation. Academic performance, future relationships, mental health, and even physical health can be affected for years. Yet research consistently shows that children can emerge from divorce emotionally healthy when parents prioritize their wellbeing and avoid common mistakes that amplify trauma.

Understanding how divorce affects children at different developmental stages — and knowing specific protective strategies — can mean the difference between temporary adjustment difficulties and lasting psychological damage. Your marriage may be ending, but your role as protective parent is more critical than ever.

Understanding divorce’s impact on children

Q What are the hidden ways divorce affects kids that parents don’t see?

A Beyond obvious sadness, children experience invisible impacts: chronic stress that affects brain development, attachment disruptions that influence future relationships, and identity confusion about their place in restructured families. Many children hide their distress to avoid burdening parents. Academic struggles may not appear for months. Sleep and appetite changes are often attributed to “phases” rather than divorce stress. Pediatricians report increased anxiety-related physical symptoms in children of divorce.

Q At what age is divorce hardest on children?

A Each age presents unique challenges. Ages 6-12 are particularly vulnerable — old enough to understand but lacking emotional skills to process. Preschoolers (3-5) often blame themselves. Teenagers may seem to handle it better but often experience delayed reactions in young adulthood. Infants and toddlers, while not consciously aware, can develop attachment issues from disrupted caregiving patterns. There’s no “good” age; each requires age-appropriate support.

Q What’s the biggest mistake divorcing parents make?

A Using children as messengers, confidants, or weapons against the other parent.

“Tell your father...” or “Your mother is...” messages force children into impossible loyalty conflicts. Children become parentified when adults share inappropriate details or lean on them for emotional support. Second biggest mistake: believing children don’t notice conflict if parents don’t fight openly. Kids are hyper-aware of tension, cold silences, and subtle hostility.

Q How long does it take kids to adjust to divorce?

A Initial acute adjustment typically takes 2-3 years, but effects can resurface at developmental milestones — starting school, adolescence, their own relationships. Some impacts don’t manifest until adulthood. However, with proper support and low parental conflict, most children show good adjustment by year two. High-conflict divorces can create ongoing trauma that prevents adjustment indefinitely.

Q What determines whether kids will be okay after divorce?

A The level of ongoing parental conflict is the strongest predictor — higher conflict means worse outcomes. Other factors: quality of parenting from both parents, economic stability, minimal disruption to routines, and absence of parentification. Children do best when both parents remain involved (unless abuse/neglect exists), maintain consistent rules between homes, and shield children from adult conflicts. Child psychology units emphasize conflict reduction over custody arrangements.

Q Should parents stay together for the kids?

A High-conflict marriages are more damaging than divorce. Children in high-conflict intact families show worse outcomes than children of low-conflict divorces. However, low-conflict marriages that end in divorce can blindside children and cause significant distress. The key question isn’t whether to divorce but how to minimize conflict whether staying or leaving. Sometimes divorce provides relief from toxic environment; sometimes it creates new traumas.

Q How do I tell my kids about the divorce?

A Both parents should tell children together if possible. Use simple, age-appropriate language. Emphasize: it’s not their fault, both parents love them, and specific details about their life (where they’ll live, school, activities). Avoid blame, adult details, or false hope about reconciliation. Expect to have many conversations — children process information gradually. Family therapists recommend practicing the conversation beforehand to maintain composure.

Q What are signs my child isn’t coping well?

A Regression to earlier developmental stages (bedwetting, clinginess), dramatic behavior changes, declining grades, social withdrawal, anger/aggression, physical symptoms without medical cause, and statements

about self-blame or wanting to die. Subtle signs include over-achievement (trying to be perfect to fix things), premature self-sufficiency, or taking care of parents. Any significant change lasting over two weeks warrants professional evaluation.

Q How does divorce affect children’s future relationships?

A Children of divorce have 50% higher divorce rates themselves, but this isn’t inevitable. They may struggle with trust, commitment fears, or conversely, stay in unhealthy relationships fearing abandonment. Some become hyper-independent, avoiding vulnerability. However, children who see parents handle divorce maturely and possibly remarry healthily can develop stronger relationship skills than those from intact but unhappy families.

Q What’s “loyalty conflict” and how damaging is it?

A Children feel torn between parents, believing loving one betrays the other. They might refuse to enjoy time with one parent out of loyalty to the other. This creates chronic stress, identity confusion, and relationship problems. Signs include different behavior at each home, refusing to talk about the other parent, or physical symptoms during transitions. Forcing children to choose sides causes lasting psychological damage.

Q Should kids have input in custody decisions?

A Depends on age and maturity, but be cautious. Asking children to choose between parents creates enormous burden and guilt. Courts typically consider preferences of older children (12+) but shouldn’t be sole factor. Instead of asking where they want to live, ask about specific needs: “What would help you feel comfortable?” Professional evaluation can assess children’s genuine needs versus pressure-influenced statements.

Q How do I handle my ex badmouthing me to the kids?

A Don’t retaliate with counter-attacks — this escalates loyalty conflicts. Calmly acknowledge children’s feelings: “That must be confusing to hear.” Provide brief, factual corrections without emotion: “I see things differently, but your mom/dad loves you.” Document incidents for legal purposes. Focus on being the stable, mature parent. Children eventually recognize truth. Courts increasingly recognize parental alienation as abuse.

Q What about introducing new partners?

A Wait at least 6 months post-separation, ideally a year. Children need time to adjust to divorce before processing new relationships. Introduce gradually — brief, casual meetings before overnight stays. Never force relationships or expect instant bonding. Watch for loyalty conflicts — children may reject nice partners out of loyalty to other parent. Most importantly: ensure relationship is serious and stable before involving children.

Q How can I protect my kids when I’m barely coping myself?

A Your emotional regulation directly affects your children. Prioritize your own therapy and support systems — it’s not selfish but essential parenting. Children need at least one stable parent. Use respite care from trusted family/friends. Join divorce support groups. Remember: children would rather have an imperfect but emotionally present parent than a perfect but disconnected one.

Q When should children get professional help?

A Consider evaluation if symptoms persist beyond 2-3 months, interfere with daily functioning, or include concerning behaviors (self-harm, aggression, severe regression). Preventive therapy during divorce can provide coping tools before problems develop. Group therapy with other children of divorce reduces isolation. Comprehensive psychological evaluation can identify specific impacts and guide intervention strategies.

Closing

Divorce doesn’t have to destroy your children’s emotional wellbeing, but protecting them requires intentional, sustained effort during your own crisis. The way you handle this transition becomes part of their life story, influencing their beliefs about love, family, and themselves for decades.

Children can emerge from divorce resilient and emotionally healthy, but not by accident. It requires parents to set aside their own hurt and anger to prioritize children’s needs. This means swallowing pride, cooperating with someone you may despise, and maintaining stability when your world feels chaotic. It’s the hardest thing you’ll ever do, but your children’s mental health depends on it.

Remember that children don’t need perfect parents or an intact family to thrive — they need parents who protect them from adult conflicts, maintain loving relationships with both parents when safe, and model healthy coping with life’s difficulties. Your divorce is ending a marriage, not a family. How you navigate this will determine whether your children see divorce as a catastrophe that broke them or a difficult transition their parents handled with grace.

The support systems exist — therapists, divorce mediators, parenting coordinators, support groups. Use them. Your children are watching how you handle life’s hardest moments. Show them that even in pain, adults can behave with dignity, protect those they love, and rebuild after loss.

For families navigating divorce, comprehensive psychological evaluation can assess children’s adjustment and identify needed supports. This article was written by Dr. Steve Szykula and Jason Sadora at Comprehensive Psychological Services (WeCanHelpOut.com) which offers specialized assessment for children of divorce, helping parents understand impacts and implement protective strategies during this critical transition.

GET OUT THERE

More than boating: Epic off-roading, snowmobiling at beloved Bear Lake

Here's something you probably already know: Bear Lake is beautiful — a top three lake in Utah. Its turquoise-blue, see-through water, relaxing beaches, and photogenic surroundings are right up there with Flaming Gorge and just behind Lake



BLAKE SNOW

Powell. Which explains why 50,000 visitors head to Bear Lake every weekend in summer. But here's something you might not know: Bear Lake is also home to some of the best off-road and snowmobile trails in the entire state. I'm talking Moab-quality terrain — only instead of red rock, you'll be crawling through granite, tightly packed alpine forests, and summitting sweeping mountain vistas. If visiting in autumn like I recently did, the landscape turns golden yellow, crimson red, burnt orange, and tawny brown with

the changing of leaves.

I had no idea the getting was this good until after my first stay with Beaver Creek Lodge and their unbeatable Uncharted Society (unchartedsociety.com) power sports tours. In the warmer months, you can enjoy guided and unguided off-road drives on the latest Can-Am side-by-sides or cruise the stunning lake on Sea-Doos. In the winter months, the lodge opens hundreds of miles of snowmobile trails.

With no snow on the ground, my brother-in-law and I took a half and half off-road and water tour: righ-teous trail-riding across all sorts of terrain in the morning (deserts, forests, mountains, and mud pools on private land), followed by a ginor-mous sack lunch from a local bakery, a few hours of jet skiing on the lake, and one last sunset ride back to the lodge. We got dirty. We got wet. We conquered both technical and wide open trails. And we bonded with our fellow riders and expert guide (and lodge



BENJAMIN ZACK, STANDARD-EXAMINER FILE PHOTO

Bear Lake is visible from the Bear River Mountains near the Utah-Idaho border on April 26, 2018.

owner), Nate.

It was a stunning, bluebird day that almost ended my marriage. By that I mean the trails were so gnarly I temporarily lost my wedding band of 22 years. I say temporarily because after scouring my vehicle, gloves, and retracing my steps as best I could, my brother-in-law pulled a needle (aka my ring) from a park-

ing lot sized “haystack” made of gravel. “I’m still married!” I exclaimed to scattered laughter.

As for the lodge, fewer places in Northern Utah are more cozy, clean, and rustic than Bear Creek. We stayed two nights and enjoyed the ridiculously comfy beds and pillows that only someone who rides all day can appreci-

ate. With vibes like a bonafide bed and breakfast, Bear Creek Lodge looks and smells brand new. Giant showers. Spacious game and dining rooms to unwind after a long day outdoors. There's even a bonfire pit in the shadow of the surrounding trees and mountains that we didn't get to use, because we were so darn tired from a full day of fun.

Like many Utahns, I've pilgrimaged to Bear Lake for decades, exclusively for boating and occasionally those “famous” raspberry shakes. I'll will return for those. But I also have my sights set on off-road trails and epic snowmobiling now, in addition to its already proven water sports. To borrow the phrase, “I was once blind, but now I see.”

Thanks to the fine folks running Beaver Creek Lodge and the Garden City chapter of Uncharted Society, I learned that Bear Lake is so much more than the “Caribbean of the Rockies.” It's a hidden gem of top-rated off-road trails, in a state that's internationally known for its amazing off-road trails.

That's saying something.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

Oct. 25 2025 Halloween Cruise, CLAS Ropes Course, 6:15 p.m. (Oct. 25-Nov. 1, clasropes.com)

2025 Provo Haunted Half, 5K, & Kids Run, Provo Canyon, 8 a.m. (run-tasticevents.com)

King Lear, Castle Amphitheater, 7:30 p.m. (Oct. 25-31, grass-roots-shakespeare.com)

Provo Monster Mash Halloween Carnival 2025, Provo Recreation Center, 3 p.m./6:20 p.m. (provo.org)

Halloween ZipTour 2025, Sundance Resort, 7:30-10:30 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Halloween Lift Rides 2025, Sundance Resort, 8 p.m. (Oct. 25-31, sundanceresort.com)

Paranormal Percussion, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

2025 Provo Farmer's Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (provofarmersmarket.com)

Hines Mansion Halloween Tour, Hines Mansion, 1-2:30 p.m. (hinesmansion.com)

Great Expectations, West Campus Central Building, 7:30 p.m. (Oct. 25-Nov. 1, onstage.byu.edu)

Read Local Provo Day, Provo Library, 10 a.m. (utahbookfestival.org)

Trick or Treat at Provo Beach, Provo Beach Resort, noon-2 p.m. (provobeach.com)

Irrititja Kuwarri Tjungu/Sense of Beauty, Brigham Young University Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (Oct. 25-Dec. 6, moa.byu.edu)

Illustrations from Isles of the Emberdark- Exhibit by Esther Candari, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (Oct. 25-Nov. 1, thecompassgallery.com)

Utah Lake- Group Exhibit, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (Oct. 25-Nov. 1, thecompassgallery.com)

Highlights from Restore, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (Oct. 25-Nov. 1, thecompassgallery.com)

Autumn Apparitions, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (Oct. 25-Nov. 1, jkrgallery.com)

Blood Relations, The Hive Collaborative, 7:30-9:30 p.m. (Oct. 25-Nov. 1, thehivecollaborative.com)

Microburst New Play Festival, West Campus Central Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Improvised Musical Comedy, ImprovBroadway, 7:30 p.m. (improvbroadway.com)

Sophie Stanley, Adam Keith, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

The Great Carp Hunt of 2025, Utah Lake State Park, 7 a.m. (utahlake.gov)

Oct. 27 A Tribute to Simon & Garfunkel by Code Blue Revival, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

2025 Halloween Family Night, Bean Life Science Museum, 6-9 p.m. (ism.byu.edu)

Musical Monday, ImprovBroadway, 7:30 p.m. (improvbroadway.com)

Oct. 28 Forum: Catherine Ruth Pakaluk, Marriott Center, 11 a.m. (byu.edu)

Jazz Combo Showcase, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Oct. 29

Group for New Music: Compositions from BYU's First 150 Years, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (Oct. 29-30, onstage.byu.edu)

Jazz Legacy Band, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

SMASH Pro Track Showcase 2025, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

Oct. 30 Eternamente: A Dia de Los Muertos Spectacular, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

Halloween Spooky Skate, Peaks Ice Arena, 7-9 p.m. (provo.gov)

Oct. 31 Apocalypse On Halloween, Provo Towne Centre Mall, 9 p.m. (thetribebutah.com)

Owl Bar Halloween Party, Owl Bar at Sundance Resort, 9 p.m. (sundance resort.com)

Improvised Musical Comedy, ImprovBroadway, 7:30 p.m. (improvbroadway.com)

BYU Engineering Lab-o-ween, Brigham Young University Engineering, 3-5 p.m. (me.byu.edu)

Friday Fusion, Arlington Hall, 8:30 p.m. (arlingtonhalls.com)

Trunk or Treat, Calvary Mountain View Church, 6-8 p.m. (chamberorganizer.com)

Nov. 1 BODYTRAFFIC, Richards Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Global Rhythm: Panoramic Steel and Gamelan Bintang Wahyu, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

VOCAL SPORT 2025, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

BYU's Dia de Muertos Celebration, Brigham Young University Museum of Peoples and Cultures, 6-9 p.m. (mpc.byu.edu)

Orem

Oct. 25 Joshua Creek, SCERA Center for the Performing Arts, 7 p.m. (scera.org)

Monsters and Villains, Orem High School, 7 p.m. (thetso.org)

Straw Bale Slide, University Place Orem, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (Oct. 25-27, universityplaceorem.com)

2025 Pumpkins in the Orchard, University Place Orem, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. (Oct. 25-31, universityplaceorem.com)

Kids Halloween Swamp Hop, Classic Skating Orem, 4-8 p.m. (classicfun.com)

Keynote Speaker Jennifer Nielsen, Orem Public Library, 5 p.m. (utahbookfestival.org)

Oct. 27 The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs, SCERA Center for the Performing Arts, 7 p.m. (scera.org)

Oct. 29 Sherlock Holmes and the Monster Mash, Leatherby's Orem, 7:30 p.m. (saltydinnertheater.com)

Orem's Sunset Farmers Market 2025, City Center Park, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com/orem)

Oct. 30 Tricks and Treats featuring Paul Brewer, SCERA Center for the Performing Arts, 7 p.m. (scera.org)

Throwback Thursday Halloween Event, Classic Skating Orem, 4-8 p.m. (classicfun.com)

Oct. 31 Insomnia Halloween Dance 2025, UCCU Events Center, 9 p.m. (uccu-

ter.com)

Nov. 1 Día de Muertos con Elevate Utah, Orem Public Library, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (orempubliclibrary.org)

Lindon

Oct. 27 Fantastic Feast and Festival 2025, Wadley Farms, 7 p.m. (Oct. 27-30, umballet.org)

SOUTH

Springville

Oct. 25 Trunk or Treat & Car Show, Legends Motorcycle, 1-5 p.m. (legendsmotorco.com)

6th Annual Howl-O-Ween, Springville Library, 1-2 p.m. (springville.org)

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Oct. 25 into 2026, smofa.org)

39th Annual Spiritual & Religious Art of Utah Exhibit, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Oct. 25 into 2026, smofa.org)

Oct. 27 Jack-O'-Lantern Float, Bartholomew Pond, 5:30-7:30 p.m. (springville.org)

Halloween Party, Springville Museum of Art, 5-7:30 p.m. (smofa.org)

Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

Springville's Sunset Farmers Market 2025, Springville Civic Center, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com/springville)

Spanish Fork

Oct. 25 Glen Ray's Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch 2025, Glen Ray's Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch, 5-11 p.m. (Oct. 25-30, glenrayscornmaze.com)

2025 Gordon's Family Farm Fall Festival, Gordon Family Farm, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. (Oct. 25-Nov. 1, gordonfamilyfarms.com)

The Pirate Yard - 2025, 2208 East 1480 South, 6-8:30 p.m.

Duck races, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, various times (Oct. 25-Nov. 1, cornbellys.com)

Candy Cannon, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 6:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Scarecrow Sing-a-Long, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5 p.m./6 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Scales and Tails, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 2 p.m./4 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Spanish Fork Farmers Market 2025, Farmer's Market Field, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. (spanishforksaalemchamber.com)

Oct. 27 Magic Mondays, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5:30 p.m./6:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Oct. 28 2025 Utah Hauntings (Scary Storytelling) Contest, Angelus Theatre, 7 p.m. (greathall.live)

Cow Cuddling, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 6:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Oct. 30 The Venardos Circus: Decade of Dreams, Spanish Fork Fairgrounds, 7 p.m. (Oct. 30-Nov. 9, vernardoscircus.com)

Cow Cuddling, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 6:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Nov. 1 Lehi Cares Day of Dead Event 2025, Lehi Legacy Center, 6-8 p.m. (lehi-ut.gov)

cornbellys.com)

Scarecrow Sing-a-Long, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5 p.m./6 p.m. (Oct. 31-Nov. 1, cornbellys.com)

Fairy Fridays, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Nov. 1 Day of the Dead, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, all day (cornbellys.com)

Payson

Oct. 26 Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Oct. 28 Weekly Craft Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Oct. 29 Live Local Music Night, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Oct. 30 Strum Circle, Center of the Universe Cafe, 6-8 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Nov. 2 Sunday Open Mic in Payson, Center of the Universe Cafe, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (cotucafe.com)

Santaquin

Oct. 25 Rowley's Red Barn Fall Festival 2025, Rowley's Red Barn, 10:30 a.m.-9 p.m. (Oct. 25-30, rowleysredbarn.com)

Spooky Night At the Museum, Santaquin Chieftain Museum, 6:30 p.m. (santaquin.gov)

Salem

Oct. 27 2025 Salem Witches Haunted Run, Salem Pond, 6 p.m. (runnercard.com)

NORTH

Pleasant Grove

Oct. 25 Flowers for Mrs. Harris, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Oct. 25-Nov. 15, theruth.org)

Hocus Pocus Interactive Movie, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m. (pgutahcity.gov)

The Haunted Library Halloween Party, Pleasant Grove Library, 3 p.m. (pgutahcity.gov)

Oct. 28 Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

Oct. 30 Pleasant Grove Haunt on Main 2025, Historic Downtown Pleasant Grove, 6-7 p.m. (pgutahcity.gov)

Lehi

Oct. 25 The Venardos Circus: Decade of Dreams, Outlets at Traverse Mountain, 7 p.m. (Oct. 25-26, outletsattraversemountain.com)

Cornbelly's Insanity Point 2025, Thanksgiving Point, 7-11:30 p.m. (Oct. 25-31, cornbellys.com)

Big Jack's World, Outlets at Traverse Mountain, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. (Oct. 25-31, outletsattraversemountain.com)

2025 Cornbelly's Corn Maze & Pumpkin Fest, Thanksgiving Point, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. (Oct. 25-Nov. 1, cornbellys.com)

Nov. 1 Lehi Cares Day of Dead Event 2025, Lehi Legacy Center, 6-8 p.m. (lehi-ut.gov)

American Fork

Oct. 25 Rug Tufting Workshop, The Rug Room, 6-9:30 p.m. (Oct. 25 into 2026, therugroomutah.com)

2025 Haunted Forest, Haunted Forest, 7:30 p.m.-midnight (Oct. 25-Nov. 1, hauntedforestutah.com)

2025 Strangling Brothers Haunted Circus, Strangling Brothers Haunted House, 7:30 p.m. (Oct. 25-Nov. 1, stranglingbros.com)

Scary Story Contest Awards, American Fork Library, 4:30-6 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Oct. 27 Family Night - Five Nights at Freddy's, American Fork Library, 7-8 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Cedar Hills

Oct. 27 Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

Alpine

Oct. 27 Trick or Treat on Main Street, Main Street, 4-6 p.m. (alpineut.gov)

Highland

Oct. 27 Highland's Trick or Treat Street 2025, Town Center Splash Pad, 5-7 p.m. (highlandut.gov)

WEST

Eagle Mountain

Oct. 27 Senior Movie Night: The House with the Clock in its Walls, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 5-7 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Cedar Valley

Oct. 25 Ghosts of Camp Floyd, Camp Floyd State Park, 7-9 p.m. (stateparks.utah.gov/parks/camp-floyd)

Oct. 31 Ghosts of Camp Floyd, Camp Floyd State Park, 7-9 p.m. (stateparks.utah.gov/parks/camp-floyd)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

Oct. 25 Maroon 5, Delta Center, 8 p.m. (deltacenter.com)

2025 Little Haunts, This Is The Place State Park, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (thisistheplace.org)

Oct. 26 Adam Sandler: You're My Best Friend Tour, Delta Center, 7:30 p.m. (deltacenter.com)

Heber Valley

Oct. 25 Haunted Hayride, Kohler Creamery, 7:30 p.m. (Oct. 25-Nov. 1, heber-valleyhauntedhayride.com)

Oct. 27 Ghost Tours, Timpanogos Valley Theatre, 7-8 p.m. (timpvalleytheatre.com)

Oct. 29 Old Fashioned Halloween Carnival, Wasatch High School Stadium, 6-9 p.m. (wasatch.edu/whs)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jloyd@heraldextra.com.

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GET OUT THERE

North America's finest fjord rivals Norway

If you've ever stared in awe at Norway's fjords — those colossal green cliffs, cold blue waters, and cascading white waterfalls — then Western Brook Pond in Newfoundland will feel like a long-lost cousin. It's one of those places that makes you question why, when Earth still hides wonders like this, we don't talk about them more.



BLAKE SNOW

Western Brook Pond sits tucked in Gros Morne National Park on Newfoundland's west coast. It's a freshwater fjord carved by glaciers during the last Ice Age. After the ice melted, the land rebounded, the seawater flushed out, and what remains is a pristine lake encased in rock walls up to 2,000 feet high.

I first visited on a late summer morning when mist still clung to the rim of the rocks, and the only sound was splashing water, distant birdcalls, and my own breath. The journey to the start of the hike is part of the magic: a gentle two mile hike over coastal bogs, boardwalks, and ridges until the trail opens to the lake.

Then you board a small tour boat, brave the sometimes windy "pond" or lake (which can make boat landings tricky), then slip into the gorge. The cliffs rise, waterfalls cascade down slabs of gray rock, sometimes as many as half a dozen. Pissing Mare Falls, one of the highest in eastern Canada, frees its bladder from the



JOHN ANTCAK, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Western Brook Pond in Newfoundland.

upper plateau and drops the trickling contents into the fjord below.

The lake itself is extremely clear, cold, fresh, and pure. The land is mostly igneous rock, head-high vegetation, tree canopy, and rich, sticky soil. As you would expect, the entire place is shaped by stone, air, ice, and near silence. Unlike high-traffic Norwegian fjords, you will find no city noise, bright lights, or throngs of people here. But you might spot caribou, bald eagles, and sometimes

seals near the shoreline.

To get there, you have to work for it, though. There are no roads leading to the top. You must hike it. The guided Western Brook Pond day hike my brother and I booked with Bon Tours (\$235 per person) took around 10-12 hours along a well-maintained, 11 mile roundtrip trail with 1500 feet of elevation gain (plus a 10 mile roundtrip high speed boat ride). In addition to waterfalls, you'll traverse "bouncy" ground that bogs

are known for, refreshing swimming holes, and sweeping views that are among the most dramatic I've seen anywhere on Earth.

None are more staggering than the "Conqueror's Throne" overlook—a picture-perfect rock that juts from the top of the fjord and looks back from where you came. This postcard view has been etched in my mind forever—seriously.

I've stood at the edge of Norway's Geirangerfjord, its walls plunging

straight into deep waters that are ages old with modern cruise ships gliding on top like toy boats. And yes, Norway is stunning. But Western Brook Pond offers something more raw, more detached. There are no ferries here. No cafes carved into the cliffs. Just effort and reward. You hike in. You earn it.

Western Brook Pond doesn't just rival Norway's fjords. In many ways, it surpasses them. The cliffs, although less famous, are no less impressive. This is wilderness you step into and carry with you long after you leave. It's less traveled, less developed, more pristine, and proof that you don't need to cross the Atlantic to witness Earth at its most majestic.

That's just what Western Brook has always quietly been: one of the finest fjord experiences in North America, if not the most dramatic view in all of Canada. For those who venture to the summit, it's also unforgettable.

Pro Tip: If you go, be sure to try local "bakeapple" berries (also called cloudberry), which look and taste like citrus orange raspberries, which is another awesome thing Newfoundland and Norway share in common.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

Oct. 18

The Doo Wop Project, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)
2025 Halloween Cruise, CLAS Ropes Course, 6:15 p.m. (Oct. 18-Nov. 1, clasropes.com)

Halloween Lift Rides 2025, Sundance Resort, 8 p.m. (Oct. 18-31, sundanceresort.com)

Halloween ZipTour 2025, Sundance Resort, 7:30-10:30 p.m. (Oct. 18-25, sundanceresort.com)

Great Expectations, West Campus Central Building, 7:30 p.m. (Oct. 18-Nov. 1, onstage.byu.edu)

2025 Provo Farmer's Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (provofarmersmarket.com)

Irrititja Kuwarri Tjungu/Sense of Beauty, Brigham Young University Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (Oct. 18-Dec. 6, moa.byu.edu)

Illustrations from Isles of the Emberdark- Exhibit by Esther Candari, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (Oct. 18-Nov. 1, thecompassgallery.com)

Utah Lake- Group Exhibit, The Compass Gallery, noon-8 p.m. (Oct. 18-Nov. 1, thecompassgallery.com)

Improvised Musical Comedy, ImprovBroadway, 7:30 p.m. (improvbroadway.com)

Oct. 20

Musical Monday, ImprovBroadway, 7:30 p.m. (improvbroadway.com)

Oct. 21

Halloween Spectacular 2025, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

Devotional: Mike Roberts, Marriott Center, 11 a.m. (byu.edu)

Student Composers Showcase, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Faculty Art Panel Discussion, UVU Museum of Art, 6-7:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Oct. 22

Clarinet Studio Recital, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)
Open Studio, Art Haus — UVU Museum of Art, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Oct. 23

Microburst New Play Festival, West Campus Central Building, 7:30 p.m. (Oct. 23-25, onstage.byu.edu)

Neil Harmon "He Who Let's Dear God Prevail," BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Ben Sabey and Nick Bacchetto Duo, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Oct. 24

Spooky Stories in the Park, Bicentennial Park, 6-7 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Improvised Musical Comedy, ImprovBroadway, 7:30 p.m. (Oct. 24-25, improvbroadway.com)

Paranormal Percussion, Covey

Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (Oct. 24-25, covey.provo.gov)

Spanish Night with Pablo Sáinz-Villegas & Friends, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Friday Fusion, Arlington Hall, 8:30 p.m.

Oct. 25

Sophie Stanley, Adam Keith, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

2025 Provo Farmer's Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (provofarmersmarket.com)

Orem

Oct. 18

Crowded Spaces: Recent Paintings by John Sproul, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Straw Bale Slide, University Place Orem, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (Oct. 18-27, universityplaceorem.com)

2025 Pumpkins in the Orchard, University Place Orem, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. (Oct. 18-31, universityplaceorem.com)

Truck-or-Treat, University Place Orem, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Scary Movie Night: The Addams Family, University Place Orem, 6:30 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Night of Fright and Market, University Place Orem, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Oct. 20

The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs, SCERA Center for the Performing Arts, 7 p.m. (scera.org)

Oct. 22

Sherlock Holmes and the Monster Mash, Leatherby's Orem, 7:30 p.m. (saltydinnertheater.com)

Orem's Sunset Farmers Market 2025, City Center Park, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com/orem)

Oct. 24

The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs, SCERA Center for the Performing Arts, 7 p.m. (scera.org)

Vineyard

Oct. 20

Boo-A-Palooza, Vineyard Grove Park, 5:30-7:30 p.m. (vineyardutah.gov)

SOUTH

Springville

Oct. 18

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Oct. 18 into 2026, smofa.org)

Oct. 19

Sunday Concert Series, Springville Museum of Art, 4-5 p.m. (smofa.org)

John Hafen Symposium, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

Oct. 20

Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

Springville's Sunset Farmers Market 2025, Springville Civic Center, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com/springville)

Oct. 22

The Art of Pie, Springville Library, 7-8 p.m. (springville.org)

Oct. 25

6th Annual Howl-O-Ween, Springville Library, 1-2 p.m. (springville.org)

Spanish Fork

Oct. 18

Glen Ray's Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch 2025, Glen Ray's Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch, 5-11 p.m. (Oct. 18-30, glenraycornmaze.com)

2025 Gordon's Family Farm Fall Festival, Gordon Family Farm, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. (Oct. 18-Nov. 1, gordonfamilyfarms.com)

Duck races, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, various times (Oct. 18-Nov. 1, cornbellys.com)

2025 Vintage Market Days of Greater Utah, Spanish Fork Fairground, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (vintagemarketdays.com)

Candy Cannon, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 6:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Scarecrow Sing-a-Long, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5 p.m./6 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Scales and Tails, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 2 p.m./4 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Spanish Fork Farmers Market 2025, Farmer's Market Field, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. (spanishforksaalemchamber.com)

Oct. 20

Magic Mondays, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5:30 p.m./6:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Oct. 21

Cow Cuddling, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 6:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Oct. 23

Cow Cuddling, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 6:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Oct. 24

Candy Cannon, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 6:30 p.m. (Oct. 24-25, cornbellys.com)

Scarecrow Sing-a-Long, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5 p.m./6 p.m. (Oct. 24-25, cornbellys.com)

Fairy Fridays, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Oct. 25

Scales and Tails, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 2 p.m./4 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Spanish Fork Farmers Market 2025, Farmer's Market Field, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. (spanishforksaalemchamber.com)

Santaquin

Oct. 18

Rowley's Red Barn Fall Festival 2025, Rowley's Red Barn, 10:30 a.m.-9 p.m. (Oct. 18-30, rowleysredbarn.com)

Oct. 24

Spooky Night At the Museum, Santaquin Chieftain Museum, 6:30 p.m. (Oct. 24-25, santaquin.gov)

Payson

Oct. 24

Big Band Dance/Concert, Peteet-nee Museum, 7-9:30 p.m. (paysonutah.gov)

NORTH

Pleasant Grove

Oct. 18

Flowers for Mrs. Harris, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Oct. 18-Nov. 15, theruth.org)

Saturday Morning Movie: Scooby Doo!, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m. (pgutahcity.gov)

Oct. 21

Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

Oct. 22

Utah Flower Market 2025, Grove Station, 9 a.m.-noon (utahflowermarket.com)

Oct. 25

Hocus Pocus Interactive Movie, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m. (pgutahcity.gov)

The Haunted Library Halloween Party, Pleasant Grove Library, 3 p.m. (pgutahcity.gov)

Lehi

Oct. 18

The Mousetrap by Agatha Christie, Lehi Arts Center, 7:30 p.m. (lehiarts.org)

Cornbelly's Insanity Point 2025, Thanksgiving Point, 7-11:30 p.m. (Oct. 18-31, cornbellys.com)

Big Jack's World, Outlets at Traverse Mountain, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. (Oct. 18-31, outletsattraverseremountain.com)

2025 Cornbelly's Corn Maze & Pumpkin Fest, Thanksgiving Point, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. (Oct. 18-Nov. 1, cornbellys.com)

Scarecrow Festival 2025, Ashton Garden, 7:30 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

The Venardos Circus: Decade of Dreams, Outlets at Traverse Mountain, 7 p.m. (Oct. 18-26, outletsattraverseremountain.com)

Oct. 24

Lehi Halloween Party, Lehi Legacy Center, 5-8 p.m. (lehi-ut.gov)

American Fork

Oct. 18

Rug Tufting Workshop, The Rug Room, 6-9:30 p.m. (Oct. 18 into 2026, therugroomutah.com)

2025 Haunted Forest, Haunted Forest, 7:30 p.m.-midnight (Oct. 18-Nov. 1, hauntedforestutah.com)

2025 Strangling Brothers Haunted Circus, Strangling Brothers Haunted House, 7:30 p.m. (Oct. 18-Nov. 1, stranglingbros.com)

Author Event-Jeff Wheeler, American Fork Library, 10 a.m.-noon (americanfork.gov)

Oct. 20

Family Night - Haunted Terrariums, American Fork Library, 7-8 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Oct. 21

Utah County Flute Choir Halloween Concert, American Fork Library, 7-8 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Oct. 25

Scary Story Contest Awards, Amer-

ican Fork Library, 4:30-6 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Highland

Oct. 23

Trick or Treat Street, Town Center Splash Pad, 5-7 p.m. (highlandut.gov)

Cedar Hills

Oct. 20

Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

WEST

Eagle Mountain

Oct. 18

Halloween Town and Car Show, Nolen Park, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. (eagle-mountain.gov)

Oct. 21

Storytime with the Fire Department, Walden Park, 11-11:30 a.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Oct. 23

Storytime with the Fire Department, Walden Park, 11-11:30 a.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Oct. 24

Utah Humanities Book Festival, Eagle Mountain Library, 5-8 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Cedar Valley

Oct. 18

Ghosts of Camp Floyd, Camp Floyd State Park, 7-9 p.m. (stateparks.utah.gov/parks/camp-floyd)

Oct. 25

Ghosts of Camp Floyd, Camp Floyd State Park, 7-9 p.m. (stateparks.utah.gov/parks/camp-floyd)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

Oct. 18

2025 Little Haunts, This Is The Place State Park, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (thisistheplace.org)

Oct. 19

An Evening With Adam Savage, Eccles Theater, 7:30 p.m. (live-at-the-eccles.com)

Oct. 26

Adam Sandler: You're My Best Friend Tour, Delta Center, 7:30 p.m. (deltacenter.com)

Heber Valley

Oct. 18

Maple Tapping Workshop, Wasatch Mountain State Park, 10 a.m.-noon (stateparks.utah.gov/parks/wasatch-mountain)

Haunted Hayride, Kohler Creamery, 7:30 p.m. (Oct. 18-Nov. 1, heber-valleyhauntedhayride.com)

Oct. 24

Heber Halloween Fest, Main Street Park, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (gohebervalley.com)

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GET OUT THERE

Lake Powell is magic, even for first-time houseboaters

I'll go out on a limb to say Lake Powell is the greatest lake in the entire world. It's basically a flooded Grand Canyon that you can "hike" by boat. Thanks to its 2,000 miles of shoreline, protected canyon waters, and lack of



BLAKE SNOW

development, it's also the most iconic houseboating destination in the world. Every time I visit, whether from the more remote Utah marina or amenity-rich Arizona marinas, I tell myself, "This place is magic."

Up until this year, however, I had only houseboated with friends who did all the planning, navigating, and logistics themselves. When it came to beaching, anchoring, and weathering the sometimes treacherous conditions, I had no idea what I was doing. That all changed after booking a 50 foot floating hotel through LakePowell.com with another friend who had never houseboated on his own either.

First things first, I was shocked that the marina would simply hand over the keys to a multi-million dollar ship to a pair of newbs, and let us take it, our families, and a towed powerboat rental to literally anywhere on the lake. But they totally did! What could go wrong!???

A busted prop, feeling overwhelmed to anchor before sundown, more first-time stress than we bargained for, and a beached powerboat



JOHN ANTCAK, ASSOCIATED PRESS

This Sept. 11, 2019, photo shows an aerial view of Lake Powell on the Colorado River along the Arizona-Utah border.

(due to high winds) that took two families over an hour to un-beach (is that a word?). But ultimately, I've never felt a greater sense of accomplishment, freedom, and joy on this unforgettable lake than I did on my most recent, self-propelled trip.

We cliff jumped from 25-30 feet (mind you, after checking the water depth with goggles beforehand), we explored the amazing Labyrinth, Face, and West Canyons. I lost count how many times each of us uttered "wow" after nearly

every turn in these beautiful, water-filled slot canyons. We tubed but missed boat surfing after stupidly forgetting our board at home. We skipped Rainbow Bridge after learning that its gas station was closed for the season. But the boat tours were still fantastic.

We ventured into Gunsight Canyon and gawked at its wide-spanning buttes and red rock spires, only to bust the powerboat prop on an underwater and unseen-until-it-was-too-late shallow rock. Thanks to the included

houseboat insurance package, however, a roaming maintenance man fixed the problem in less than an hour, at no extra charge, which was a wonderful perk for beginners like us.

We paddleboarded to random islands on reflective glass waters. We swam the very edge of a slot canyon until we couldn't swim anymore, not because of a lack of fitness but because the slot was simply too darn narrow to swim. I said it then and I'll say it now: wow. We saw the most stunning

full moonrise of our lives on our first night. Then the stars. Then the Milky Way. My sons and friend built and lit giant bonfires on the beach every night. Their glow and radiance was just as mesmerizing as the megamoon and star-filled skies. We ate for pleasure and never tired of seeing golden sunsets from the top deck of our houseboat or reading under its canopied shade as gentle breezes constantly reminded us that we were on vacation, far from the troubles of home. We savored the air condi-

tioning on hot afternoons, the giant shower and bathroom that was bigger than many land hotels, the high ceilings and granite kitchen, the reverse floor plan, and included top deck slide. With the learning curve plus posh amenities, it felt like we were roughing it while glamping, which was a good thing.

On our final day, the notorious Lake Powell winds prevented us from boating and exploring another "hidden" canyon. But Plan B was pretty incredible: watching the surrounding canyons, buttes, and clouds as the hours slowly passed, wishing we had just one more day before returning to reality.

My math doesn't add up because I say this about so many places, but Lake Powell is a Top 5 vacation destination on all seven continents. My friend says it's her No. 2 after Rio De Janeiro, which is high praise.

While I'm usually in no hurry to immediately return to my favorite destinations, I can't wait to visit Lake Powell all over again next year. Especially with the newfound confidence that even a novice like me is capable of piloting a houseboat through such an extraordinary canyon. I'm confident the same would be true for you.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

ASK DR. STEVE

Teen mental health in the Social Media Age

Parenting teenagers has always been challenging, but today's parents face an unprecedented dilemma: protecting teens from digital dangers while respecting their need for independence and social connection. Social media isn't just part of teenage life — for many, it IS their social life. Understanding this landscape isn't



STEVEN A. SZYKULA

optional anymore; it's essential for your child's mental health and your relationship with them.

The statistics are alarming: teen depression has increased 52% since smartphones became ubiquitous.

Anxiety disorders affect 1 in 3 adolescents. Emergency room visits for teen mental health crises have doubled over the past five years. But behind these numbers are real kids struggling with pressures we never faced at their age.

This isn't about demonizing technology or nostalgic longing for simpler times. It's about understanding how social media uniquely affects developing brains and relationships, recognizing warning signs, and knowing when and how to intervene. Most importantly, it's about maintaining connection with your teen when their world feels impossibly different from yours.

Understanding teen mental health and social media

Q How exactly does social media damage teen mental health?

A Social media hijacks three critical developmental needs: identity formation, peer acceptance, and autonomy. Teens' underdeveloped prefrontal cortex can't properly evaluate social comparison, leading to distorted self-image. The dopamine hit from likes creates addiction-like patterns. Sleep disruption from late-night scrolling compounds emotional instability. Most damaging: the 24/7 nature means there's no escape from social pressure, bullying, or comparison.

Q What are the warning signs my teen is struggling with social media-related mental health issues?

A Watch for sleep changes (especially staying up late on

devices), declining grades, social withdrawal from real-world activities, extreme reactions to phone restrictions, body image concerns, mood swings after phone use, and secretive behavior about online activities. Physical symptoms include headaches, stomachaches before school, and changes in eating patterns. High school counselors report these signs often appear 3-6 months before crisis.

Q Should I just take away their phone?

A Completely removing phones often backfires, damaging trust and potentially isolating teens from support systems. It's like abstinence-only education — unrealistic and ineffective. Instead, create structured boundaries: no phones during meals, phones charge outside bedrooms at night, and designated phone-free hours. Gradual limits with explanation work better than sudden prohibition.

Q How can I monitor without invading privacy?

A Start with transparency. Tell teens you'll check their phones periodically but not read private conversations unless concerned about safety. Use parental controls for younger teens (13-15) but gradually increase privacy for older teens who demonstrate responsibility. Focus on public posts and general usage patterns rather than private messages. Trust building requires balancing safety with respect for autonomy.

Q What's the "comparison trap" and why are teens so vulnerable?

A Teens see curated highlights of hundreds of peers daily, comparing their full reality to others' best moments. The adolescent brain isn't developed enough to consistently recognize this distortion. Girls particularly compare appearance and social success; boys compare achievement and status. This constant comparison creates chronic feelings of inadequacy. Therapists report this as the primary issue in teen sessions.

Q Why does my teen panic when they can't find their phone?

A This isn't drama — it's genuine distress. Teens experience FOMO (fear of missing out) as actual pain in brain scans. Their social world exists primarily online; being

disconnected feels like social death. Additionally, phones provide emotional regulation through distraction. Without this coping mechanism, anxiety floods in. Understanding this helps parents respond with empathy rather than dismissal.

Q How do I talk to my teen about their social media use without starting World War III?

A Start with curiosity, not criticism. Ask what apps they use and why they like them. Share your concerns using "I" statements: "I worry about your sleep" rather than "You're always on that phone." Pick calm moments, not during conflicts. Acknowledge the importance of their online relationships. Most importantly, listen more than you talk. Teens shut down when feeling judged.

Q What's "digital self-harm" and how common is it?

A Digital self-harm involves posting negative content about oneself or seeking out cyberbullying. About 9% of teens engage in this behavior, often as a cry for help or to control the narrative of their pain. They might create anonymous accounts to bully themselves or visit sites that reinforce negative self-image. It's a red flag requiring immediate professional intervention.

Q Should I be worried about specific apps?

A Focus less on specific apps (they constantly change) and more on usage patterns. However, be aware that apps with disappearing messages, anonymous features, or adult content pose higher risks. Location-sharing features can enable stalking or bullying. Ask your teen to explain their apps to you — their willingness to share indicates healthy usage.

Q How can I tell if my teen is being cyberbullied?

A Signs include sudden social media avoidance, emotional distress after phone use, declining school attendance, loss of friends, and destroyed self-esteem. Teens rarely report cyberbullying, fearing phone removal or escalation. Create regular check-ins about online experiences. School districts report 40% of students experience cyberbullying, but only 10% tell adults.

Q What's the connection between social media and eating disorders?

A Social media significantly increases eating disorder risk through appearance comparison, pro-ana/pro-mia content, and filtered reality. Algorithms often push diet content to teens who engage with fitness posts. Warning signs include following many fitness/diet accounts, taking multiple photos before posting, and anxiety about appearance in photos. Early intervention is crucial — eating disorders have highest mortality of all mental illnesses.

Q When is therapy necessary versus normal teen angst?

A Seek professional help if symptoms persist over 2 weeks, interfere with daily functioning, include self-harm thoughts, or involve significant behavior changes. Don't wait for crisis — early intervention is most effective. Normal teen moodiness fluctuates; mental health issues are persistent. If you're questioning whether it's serious enough, it probably is. Professional evaluation can differentiate normal development from clinical concerns.

Q How do I find teen-appropriate mental health help?

A Look for providers specializing in adolescents who understand social media's impact. Teens often resist traditional therapy but respond to approaches incorporating their digital reality. Consider comprehensive evaluation to identify specific issues — anxiety, depression, ADHD, or trauma. Many teens benefit from group therapy with peers facing similar challenges.

Q Can improving family relationships protect against social media damage?

A Yes. Strong family connections are the best protective factor against mental health issues. Prioritize device-free family time, show genuine interest in their lives (online and offline), and maintain open communication without judgment. Teens with secure family attachments show greater resilience to online negativity. Regular family dinners reduce teen mental health issues by 25%.

Q What if my teen refuses all help?

A Start with environmental changes you can control: improve family dynamics, model healthy technology use, and maintain consistent boundaries. Consider your own therapy to learn strategies. Sometimes teens accept help after

seeing parents work on themselves. For immediate safety concerns, don't wait for consent — access crisis services. Mobile crisis units are specifically trained for teen intervention.

Closing

Navigating teen mental health in the social media age feels impossible because you're parenting through challenges that didn't exist in your adolescence. You can't eliminate social media from your teen's life, nor should you try. But you can provide the guidance, boundaries, and support they desperately need but won't ask for.

Remember that beneath the eye rolls and slammed doors is a young person struggling with unprecedented pressures. They're navigating identity formation while being constantly observed, judged, and compared online. They need your stability more than ever, even as they push you away.

The goal isn't perfection — it's connection. Small improvements in communication, reasonable boundaries consistently enforced, and professional help when needed can prevent crisis and build resilience. Your teen's relationship with technology will shape their adult life; your guidance now matters more than you know.

Don't wait for problems to become crises. If your instincts say something's wrong, trust them. Whether through family changes, therapy, or comprehensive evaluation, taking action shows your teen that their mental health matters. In a world of virtual connections, your real presence and concern might be the anchor they need.

For parents concerned about their teen's mental health and social media impact, professional evaluation can clarify whether struggles are normal development or require intervention. This article was written by Dr. Steve Szykula and Jason Sadora at Comprehensive Psychological Services (WeCanHelpOut.com) which offers specialized adolescent assessment and family guidance, helping navigate the complex intersection of teen development and digital life.

About the authors: Dr. Steve and Jason Sadora, M.S., are mental health professionals at Comprehensive Psychological Services: WeCanHelpOut.com.

GET OUT THERE

Celebrate that special occasion in one of Utah's fanciest hotels

Not every getaway requires a flight or a full tank of gas. Sometimes the best vacations can happen in our own backyards — especially when that backyard happens to be Utah. If you're celebrating something



BLAKE SNOW

big, your latest anniversary, or just treating yourself because you're worth it, here's a roundup of three of the state's most luxurious and staycation-worthy hotels. All bring the wow factor. But each serves a slightly different flavor of fancy.

Grand Hyatt: New and contemporary cool

As the new face of Deer Valley's East Village expansion, the Grand Hyatt Deer Valley looks and feels every bit like a high-end mountain escape. It's sleek. It's scenic. And for folks escaping the Wasatch Front for a weekend, it's refreshingly accessible without being too close to home.

The rooms? Huge. Brand new. Immaculately clean. You'll find comfy beds, bougie decor, and a vibe that leans more "Park City penthouse" than "cozy cabin in the woods." During a recent stay with family, my kids loved the arcade, the several hot tubs and outdoor heated pool, and (like my wife and I) felt like a big deal walking through the property.

Grand Hyatt is also the slightly more affordable of the three, at least during the times I check in the summer. Which



MARC ESTABROOK, MONTAGE DEER VALLEY VIA AP

This November 2010 photo shows the exterior of Montage Deer Valley in Park City.

is great because you get the latest contemporary property for less. That said, the Grand Hyatt is still working out some kinks. Service was a little slow and the "High Chocolate" afternoon tea was laughably overpriced when compared to others on this list.

Still, for a five-star hotel with serious style, Grand Hyatt is a solid splurge.

Montage: High on a mountain top luxury

Of the three resorts I recently visited, Montage Deer Valley is the one that feels most like you're living

in a luxury outdoor lifestyle ad. The natural setting is as calming and impressive as they come, whether in summer or winter. Ski-in/ski-out? Check. Gourmet hot chocolate in the lounge? Check. World-class servers to answer your every beck and call at every turn of your stay? Double check.

What sets Montage apart — besides its jaw-dropping views — is its service. In my experience, it's the best of the bunch: warm, responsive, not too stuffy. It's an upscale mountain lodge with California-like hospitality. My family adored the mas-

sively cozy Vista Lounge, free arcade, and firepit with s'mores and hot cocoa every night.

The food, pool, and room service were all top-notch. The plush rooms were tastefully updated, modern, and comfortable. Especially those with a back porch fireplace. There is serenity in spades, here. And yes, it's the most expensive option here. But with more inclusions, better dining, and a world-class spa, it mostly earns the price tag.

If you're looking to drop serious coin on a staycation that actually feels like an

out-of-state getaway, this is your place.

Grand America: Utah's billion dollar hotel

Now for the icon. The legend. The Grand America Hotel in downtown Salt Lake City. This place doesn't whisper luxury — it announces it with million-dollar chandeliers, Italian marble, and custom French furniture that would make Marie Antoinette proud. And it does all of this with enough European refinement to make you feel as though you've traveled overseas.

This 24-story palace is, quite literally, Utah's only Five Diamond hotel — and it deserves every one of those gems. From the moment you step into the soaring lobby with live music and ornate decor, it's clear this isn't your typical hotel. When you bite into your first macaron or oversized croissant, you'll wonder if you're not in Paris (which makes sense because it was made by a French pastry chef who moved to Utah just a few years ago).

The rooms? Lavishly large — some of the biggest in that state. Floor-to-ceiling windows. And marble bathrooms big enough to throw a party in. As for the service, everyone here seems to love their job, and it shows. Whether you're sipping tea in the lobby lounge, strolling through the garden courtyard, or pretending to be a foreign dignitary in the spa or elegant pool, Grand America hits all the right notes.

And yet for all its grandeur, Grand America is surprisingly affordable. Rooms start at just a few hundred bucks, letting you live out your billionaire dreams without torching your retirement account. It's hands-down the classiest, most elegant hotel in Utah — and a must for any special occasion or even routine staycation.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

ASK DR. STEVE

ADHD isn't just for kids; Adults also suffer with ADHD

ADHD doesn't disappear at 18. Millions of adults are walking around with undiagnosed ADHD, explaining their struggles as character flaws, laziness, or just "being scattered." They've spent decades developing exhausting coping mechanisms,



STEVEN A. SZYKULA

never realizing there's a neurological explanation for why everything feels harder than it should.

Adult ADHD looks different than the hyperactive child bouncing off walls. It's the executive who's brilliant in crisis but can't handle routine paperwork. The parent who starts twenty projects but finishes none. The professional who thrives on deadline adrenaline but can't remember where they put their keys — again. These aren't personality quirks; they're symptoms of a treatable condition.

The tragedy isn't having ADHD — it's not knowing you have it. Adults diagnosed later in life often grieve the years spent believing they were fundamentally flawed. Understanding ADHD explains not just current struggles but a lifetime of patterns, failed relationships, and untapped potential.

Understanding adult ADHD

Q What are the shocking signs of adult ADHD people don't expect?

A Time blindness — consistently underestimating how long tasks take, always running late despite trying not to. Rejection sensitive dysphoria — extreme emotional pain from perceived criticism. "Waiting mode" — inability to do anything productive when you have an appointment later. Hyperfocus so intense you forget to eat or do your responsibilities. These aren't character flaws; they're neurological symptoms.

Q How is adult ADHD different from childhood ADHD?

A Hyperactivity often transforms into internal restlessness — racing thoughts rather than racing bodies. Adults develop masking behav-

iors that hide symptoms but exhaust mental energy. Instead of obvious disruption, you see chronic underachievement, relationship problems, and anxiety/depression from years of struggling. Utah adult ADHD diagnoses have increased 400% over the past ten years as awareness of this condition has grown.

Q Why do so many adults not realize they have ADHD?

A They've been told they're "lazy," "unmotivated," or "not living up to potential" since childhood. Women especially go undiagnosed because they typically present with inattentive type, not hyperactive. High intelligence often masks ADHD until life complexity exceeds coping capacity — usually in college, parenthood, or career advancement. Utah's universities and colleges and graduate programs see many students discovering ADHD when their academic demands increase.

Q What's "ADHD paralysis" and why is it so misunderstood?

A It's being unable to start tasks despite desperately wanting to, knowing the consequences of not doing them. You're not lazy — your brain literally cannot initiate the task without sufficient dopamine. It feels like being trapped watching yourself not do things. This executive dysfunction is ADHD's most disabling yet invisible symptom.

Q Can you develop ADHD as an adult or was it always there?

A ADHD is neurodevelopmental — you're born with it. However, symptoms might not become apparent until environmental demands exceed your coping capacity. Many adults functioned adequately with external structure (school, parents) but struggle when self-management becomes necessary. Trauma or stress can also unmask previously compensated ADHD.

Q What's the connection between ADHD and addiction?

A Adults with untreated ADHD are 3 times more likely to develop substance use disorders. They're unconsciously self-medicating — using stimulants for focus, alcohol for racing thoughts, or cannabis for restlessness. The dopamine deficit in ADHD drives seeking activities that provide quick dopamine hits. Proper ADHD treatment reduces addiction risk by 60%.

Q Why do people with ADHD struggle with "simple" tasks but excel at complex ones?

A ADHD brains need stimulation to produce adequate dopamine. Complex, novel, urgent tasks provide this stimulation. Routine tasks don't generate enough dopamine for executive function engagement. This is why someone might run a successful business but can't remember to pay their bills. Employers increasingly recognize this pattern in high-performing employees.

Q What's "masking" and why is it harmful?

A Masking involves hiding ADHD symptoms through exhausting compensatory strategies — excessive list-making, arriving extremely early to avoid lateness, over-preparing for everything. While appearing functional, masking depletes mental energy, leading to burnout, anxiety, and depression. Many adults don't realize they're masking until diagnosis reveals how hard they've been working to appear "normal."

Q How does ADHD affect relationships?

A ADHD impacts emotional regulation, causing intense reactions to minor conflicts. Inattention during conversations seems like not caring. Forgetfulness breaks trust. Impulsivity leads to interrupting or oversharing or anger outbursts that are disproportionate. Partners feel neglected while the ADHD adult feels constantly criticized. Without understanding ADHD's role, relationships suffer unnecessarily.

Q What's the link between ADHD and anxiety/depression?

A 70% of adults with ADHD have comorbid anxiety or depression, often from years of ADHD-related struggles. Constant failure despite effort creates learned helplessness. Social rejection from ADHD behaviors causes anxiety. Many are misdiagnosed with only anxiety/depression, receiving treatment that doesn't address underlying ADHD.

Q Can ADHD be diagnosed accurately in adults?

A Yes, through comprehensive evaluation including childhood history, current symptoms, and often neuropsychological testing. Adult diagnosis is complex because

symptoms overlap with other conditions and adults develop coping mechanisms. Proper evaluation distinguishes ADHD from anxiety, depression, or bipolar disorder. Self-diagnosis via social media is unreliable.

Q What happens to women with undiagnosed ADHD?

A They're often misdiagnosed with anxiety, depression, or bipolar disorder. Hormonal fluctuations affect ADHD symptoms — many women first seek help during perimenopause when estrogen drops worsen symptoms. They internalize struggles as personal failure, developing perfectionism and people-pleasing to compensate. Women are diagnosed with ADHD on average 5 years later than men.

Q Is adult ADHD overdiagnosed now?

A While awareness has increased diagnoses, research suggests ADHD remains under-diagnosed, especially in women and minorities. The appearance of over diagnosis comes from catching previously missed cases. However, proper diagnosis requires comprehensive evaluation, not just relating to social media posts. Professional assessment distinguishes ADHD from normal attention variations.

Q How effective is medication for adult ADHD?

A Stimulant medications show 70-80% response rates, often providing dramatic improvement within days. Adults describe it as "putting on glasses for the first time." However, medication alone isn't sufficient — behavioral strategies, therapy, and lifestyle modifications optimize outcomes. Some adults function well with non-medication approaches after learning management strategies. Stimulant medication therapies should be used only as directed. Neuro-feedback is a proven method of reducing the symptoms of ADHD without medication or as an adjunct to medication.

Q When should an adult seek ADHD evaluation?

A Seek evaluation if you consistently struggle with organization, time management, completing tasks, or maintaining relationships despite genuine effort. If anxiety/depression treatment hasn't fully helped, underlying ADHD might be why. Comprehensive neuropsycholog-

ical evaluation can differentiate ADHD from other conditions and identify specific executive function deficits.

Closing

Adult ADHD isn't a trendy diagnosis or excuse — it's a legitimate neurological condition that explains why life feels unnecessarily hard for millions of people. Those shocking symptoms you've been hiding, compensating for, or beating yourself up about might not be character flaws but treatable manifestations of differently wired brain.

The relief experienced by an adult diagnosed with ADHD is profound. Finally understanding why you've always struggled with "simple" things others do easily. Realizing you're not lazy, stupid, or broken — your brain just needs different strategies and possibly medication to function optimally. Years of self-blame can lift in an instant of recognition.

Don't dismiss your struggles because you've "managed this long." The exhaustion of constant compensation isn't sustainable. What seems like managing might actually be surviving. Proper diagnosis and treatment can transform life from constant struggle to finally working with your brain instead of against it.

If these symptoms resonate, don't wait years wondering. Professional evaluation can provide clarity, whether it confirms ADHD or identifies other explanations for your challenges. You deserve to understand your brain and access appropriate support. Your struggles are real, valid, and most importantly, treatable.

For adults in Utah wondering about ADHD, comprehensive neuropsychological evaluation provides accurate diagnosis and detailed understanding of executive function strengths and challenges. Comprehensive Psychological Services (WeCanHelpOut.com) at nearby offices offers specialized adult ADHD assessment, distinguishing ADHD from other conditions and creating personalized treatment recommendations for optimal functioning.

About the authors: Dr. Steve and Jason Sadora, M.S., are mental health professionals at Comprehensive Psychological Services: WeCanHelpOut.com.

GET OUT THERE

Surprise! Carnival cruise food has no business being this good

Let's get one thing straight: I did not board a Carnival cruise expecting to be impressed by the food. In fact, I expected what most skeptics do — endless heat-lamp buffets, mystery meat tacos, and pizza that tastes like regret at 2 a.m. I figured I'd be ingesting just enough calories to survive while counting down the hours to my next on-shore meal.



BLAKE SNOW

But I was wrong. Like, surprisingly, repeatedly wrong. To be clear, Carnival's food isn't perfect. There were a few soggy salads. A sad doughnut that looked like it had seen some things. A seafood dish that I swear whispered, "I used to be frozen." But on the whole, Carnival's food has no business being this good.

Let's start with the best surprise on board: Guy's Burger Joint. Yes, that Guy — the frost-ed-tipped, donkey-sauce-slinging mayor of Flavortown. I expected gimmicks. I got greatness. Simple burgers seared to perfection on soft buns with fresh toppings, caramelized onions, and just enough cheese to juice your cholesterol.

Carnival also wins major points for BlueIguana Cantina, which serves up breakfast and lunch burritos so good they could broker world peace. You pick the tortilla. Then eggs. Then meats. Then potatoes. Then all the toppings. It's like being handed the controls to your own happiness machine. For a ship floating in



AMY HARRIS, INVISION/AP

Food Network star and longtime Carnival partner Guy Fieri, center, celebrates the opening of his new restaurant Guy Fieri's Pig & Anchor Bar-B-Que Smokehouse/Brewhouse, available exclusively aboard Carnival Horizon following its arrival on May 23, 2018, in New York.

international waters with limited kitchen space? These are better than they need to be. Far better.

As for the buffet? This is usually the place where flavor goes to die. But Carnival's Lido Marketplace occasionally flirts with excellence. The carved meats are solid. The Indian food? Weirdly on point. The bread pudding with vanilla sauce? A dangerous, gooey masterpiece. One night, I had a rice dish that made me audibly say, "OK, who back there knows so much about fine dining?"

It's not perfect — some dishes clearly come from the "bulk frozen foods" aisle — but Carnival makes a visible effort to keep things fresh and rotating. Which, in buffet terms, is like winning a Michelin star.

Moving on, the main dining room is where Carnival quietly flexes. You get three courses, including seconds and unlimited desserts. Real tablecloths. Servers that remember your name, drink, and potentially even your blood type by the end of the cruise.

Dishes range from "solid wedding reception fare" to "Hey, this would cost \$28 on land."

One night I had the braised beef short ribs that were tender enough to make me suspicious. Another night, I tried the Indian chana masala because I was feeling fancy and mildly reckless. It was ... good? Tasted like something from a well-rated restaurant, in fact.

Despite the occasional dud (a pasta with all the flavor of a DMV waiting room), most of the included foods and dishes were

well-seasoned, well plated, and legitimately satisfying. I say that for the sea day brunch, afternoon tea, and the ungodly amount of gooey, melting chocolate cakes I consumed that are the best I've ever had ... anywhere.

Then there were the almost all-hours and late-night eats. Pizza, unlimited soft serve, and questionable quantities. These aren't just "good for 2 a.m." They're good, period. Are they gourmet? No. Did I eat more servings than an overgrown 10-year-old should? You bet I did.

Here's the kicker: When you consider that many Carnival Cruises end up costing less than \$100 per person per night with all meals, snacks, hotel, entertainment, and travel included, the food simply should not be this good. Especially in the middle of the ocean. But it is. That's a minor miracle.

Carnival may market itself as the "fun" cruise line, but their food deserves serious respect. Not because it's flawless, but because it consistently overdelivers for the price. If you're considering a cruise with them, come hungry. Come ready to be surprised by how often you'll say, "Wait ... this is actually really good." And for the love of all that's holy: get the melting chocolate cake. Your waistline will hate me for the multiple helpings you'll inevitably order. But your soul will thank me.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

Sept. 27

A Little Murder Never Hurt Anybody, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (Sept. 27-Oct. 11, provo.gov)

BYU's World of Dance, Marriott Center, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

2025 Halloween Cruise, CLAS Ropes Course, 6:15 p.m. (Sept. 27-Nov. 1, clasropes.com)

Harvest Market 2025, Sundance Resort, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (Sept. 27-28, sundanceresort.com)

The Great Carp Hunt of 2025, Utah Lake State Park, 7 a.m. (Sept. 27-28, utahlake.gov)

2025 Provo Farmer's Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (provofarmersmarket.com)

Big Tribute: Weezer, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (provo.gov)

Family Concert Series: Musical Imagination!, BYU Music Building, 11 a.m./1:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Business Card Art Show 2025, JKR Gallery, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (jkrgallery.com)

Come Thou Fount- J. Kirk Richards Show, The Compass Gallery, Noon-8 p.m. (thecompassgallery.com)

Irritija Kuwarri Tjungu/Sense of Beauty, Brigham Young University Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (Sept. 27-Dec. 6, moa.byu.edu)

Sept. 28

Mountain Top Yoga 2025, Sundance Resort, 9-11:30 a.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Sept. 29

Tony Danza: Standards and Stories, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (tonydanza.com)

Tee Up Against Hunger, Riverside Country Club, 7 a.m. (e.givesmart.com/events/llp/)

Sept. 30

Forum: Jane Clayson Johnson, Marriott Center, 11 a.m. (byu.edu)

Oct. 3

Friday Fusion, Arlington Hall, 8:30 p.m.

Oct. 4

2025 Provo Farmer's Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (provofarmersmarket.com)

Orem

Sept. 27

The Hunchback of Notre Dame, SCERA Center for the Performing Arts, 7:30 p.m. (Sept. 27-Oct. 4, scera.org)

Healing Waters, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Crowded Spaces: Recent Paintings by John Sproul, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Sept. 27-Oct. 18, uvu.edu/museum)

Oct. 1

Orem's Sunset Farmers Market



DAILY HERALD FILE PHOTO

FARMERS MARKETS OFFER SEASONAL DELIGHTS

Alisha Revoir and Alison McKinnon pick out some plants from Woodhead Gardens at the Provo Farmer's Market at Pioneer Park on July 6, 2013.

2025, City Center Park, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com/orem)

Lindon

Oct. 2

Lindon's Sunset Farmers Market 2025, Lindon City Center Park, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com/lindon)

SOUTH

Springville

Sept. 27

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Sept. 27 into 2026, smofa.org)

Sept. 29

Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

Springville's Sunset Farmers Market 2025, Springville Civic Center, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com/springville)

Oct. 2

Learn to Square Dance! Beginner Class, Utah Valley Square Dance, 8 p.m.

Spanish Fork

Sept. 27

2025 Wings and Wheels Airshow, Spanish Fork Airport, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (spanishfork.gov)

The Adventures of Simon Bilius Conrad: Demon Negotiator, Angelus Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (greathall.live/simon)

2025 Cornbelly's Sunflower Festival, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. (Sept. 27-30, cornbellys.com)

2025 Gordon's Family Farm Fall Festival, Gordon Family Farm, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. (Sept. 27-Nov. 1, gordonfamilyfarms.com)

Glen Ray's Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch 2025, Glen Ray's Corn Maze and

Pumpkin Patch, 5-11 p.m. (Sept. 27-Oct. 30, glenraycornmaze.com)

Bird Show, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 6 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Spanish Fork Farmers Market 2025, Farmer's Market Field, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. (spanishforksaalemchamber.com)

Sept. 29

Duck races, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, various times (Sept. 29-Nov. 1, cornbellys.com)

Magic Mondays, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5:30 p.m./6:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Sept. 30

Cow Cuddling, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 6:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Oct. 2

Cow Cuddling, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 6:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Oct. 3

Scarecrow Sing-a-Long, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5 p.m./6 p.m. (Oct. 3-4, cornbellys.com)

Candy Cannon, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 6:30 p.m. (Oct. 3-4, cornbellys.com)

Fairy Fridays, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

The Adventures of Walter Ergo, Angelus Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (angelustheatre.com)

Oct. 4

Scales and Tails, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 2 p.m./4 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Spanish Fork Farmers Market 2025, Farmer's Market Field, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. (spanishforksaalemchamber.com)

Santaquin

Sept. 27

Rowley's Red Barn Apple Harvest Festival 2025, Rowley's Red Barn, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. (Sept. 27-Oct. 11, row-

leysredbarn.com)

Rowley's Red Barn Fall Festival 2025, Rowley's Red Barn, 10:30 a.m.-9 p.m. (Sept. 27-Oct. 30, rowleysredbarn.com)

Salem

Sept. 29

Salem Farmers/Mini Makers Market 2025, 173 E 750 N, 5 p.m.-dusk (spanishforksaalemchamber.com)

Payson

Sept. 27

Payson's 2025 Quilt Show, Peteet-neet Museum, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (paysonquiltshow.com)

Mapleton

Sept. 29

Mapleton Farmers Market 2025, Mapleton City Park, 6-8:30 p.m. (mapletonfarmersmarket.com)

NORTH

Pleasant Grove

Sept. 27

Flowers for Mrs. Harris, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Sept. 27-Nov. 15, theruth.org)

Something Rotten!, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Sept. 27-Oct. 4, theruth.org)

Sept. 30

Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

Oct. 1

Utah Flower Market 2025, Grove Station, 9 a.m.-noon (utahflowermarket.com)

Lehi

Sept. 27

2025 Cornbelly's Corn Maze & Pumpkin Fest, Thanksgiving Point, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. (Sept. 27-Nov. 1, cornbellys.com)

Cornbelly's Insanity Point 2025, Thanksgiving Point, 7-11:30 p.m. (Sept. 27-Oct. 31, cornbellys.com)

American Fork

Sept. 27

2025 Haunted Forest, Haunted Forest, 7:30 p.m.-midnight (Sept. 27-Nov. 1, hauntedforestutah.com)

Highland

Oct. 2

2025 Highland Farmers Market, Highland Heritage Park, 4-8 p.m. (good4lifemarkets.com/highland)

Cedar Hills

Sept. 29

Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

WEST

Eagle Mountain

Sept. 27

Farmer's Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

PrepFest, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, noon-5 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Oct. 4

Farmer's Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Cedar Valley

Oct. 4

Ghosts of Camp Floyd, Camp Floyd State Park, 7-9 p.m. (stateparks.utah.gov/parks/camp-floyd)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

Sept. 27

Breaking Benjamin and Three Days Grace, Utah First Credit Union Amphitheater, 7 p.m. (breakingbenjamin.com)

Gardner Village Witchfest 2025, Gardner Village, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. (Sept. 27-Oct. 31, gardnervillage.com)

Oct. 4

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints General Conference, Conference Center, 10 a.m. (Oct. 4-5, churchofjesuschrist.org)

Heber Valley

Sept. 27

2025 US Adult Sailing Championship, Jordanelle Reservoir, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. (Sept. 27-28, sailpc.org)

Wasatch Half Marathon and 10k, Soldier Hollow, 8 a.m. (triuah.com)

Oct. 2

Schutzenski Festival, Soldier Hollow, 10 a.m. (Oct. 2-4, utaholympiclegacy.org)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jilloyd@heraldextra.com.

GET OUT THERE

Route 66: A supposedly American thing that mostly foreigners do

Cruising along Route 66 — the iconic ribbon of asphalt that runs from Chicago to Los Angeles — primes most Americans for a nostalgic, “National road trip.” But the reality? This beloved slice of Americana has become something of a pilgrimage for overseas tourists. In fact, international travelers on the “Mother Road” vastly outnumber domestic visitors today.

Indeed, over 72% of Route 66 visitors are from overseas, especially the UK, Germany, and Australia, according to the University of Illinois. Local shops confirm this annual trend, with one store reporting that international visitors outnumber Americans 5 to 1. Why is that? For many, Route 66 offers a taste of “real Americana” — one rooted in rural towns and quirky roadside attractions, far removed from urban landscapes.

Route 66 is also capturing the hearts of foreign photographers and culture enthusiasts. The ghost town of Amboy, California, for instance, still draws massive amounts of foreign visitors, despite a population of zero. This is because Amboy’s fade-from-glory aesthetic encapsulates a romanticized “lost America.”

Route 66 also fosters real cultural exchange. Many long stretches lie within Native American lands, from Oklahoma to New Mexico. Many organizations work to accurately tell those stories, balancing nostalgia with living cultures. Meanwhile, Europe-



SUSAN MONTOYA BRYAN, ASSOCIATED PRESS

In this June 21, 2016, file photo, cars make their way along historic Route 66 in downtown Albuquerque, N.M.

an-style Route 66 festivals in Germany, Japan, and Australia celebrate the legend — proof the road’s identity has truly become global.

Many Americans view Route 66 as tourist kitsch, however. It’s something fun to drive for an afternoon, rather than a long, multi-state road trip. Our innovative interstates in the 1950s made travel faster, after all, and Route 66 is slower, more winding, and less visible on modern GPS.

But for international fans, that slower pace is the point — it’s American freedom in motion.

To this day, the legend thrives thanks to songs (“Get Your Kicks”), TV (“Route 66”), films (Pixar’s “Cars”), and real-life advocates like Angel Delgadillo, dubbed the “Guardian Angel” of the highway for his efforts to preserve the road’s legacy. These cultural touchpoints amplify

the myth worldwide, turning Route 66 into an international bucket list item, not just a highway.

Here’s the twist: while foreign travelers flock to experience Route 66 as a cultural curiosity, Americans arguably belong on it. Few vacations offer such a concentrated dose of Americana — every mile packed with neon signs, tarot-card motels, diners, tribal art, and sepia-toned nostalgia.

Whether you’re from rural Oklahoma or suburban Ohio, Route 66 mirrors your own history — dusty roads your grandparents might’ve driven, gas stations they stopped at, road signs they recognized. It isn’t just kitsch — it’s family history.

Yes, Route 66 is evolving into a global phenomenon embraced predominantly by foreign tourists. But perhaps

that’s just the jolt of perspective it needed. The Mother Road deserves more than postcard fame; it needs American explorers who value its lore and appeal for more than an afternoon drive.

So next time you’re itching for a getaway, consider Route 66. It’s cultural heritage, living memory, and a highway filled with human stories just waiting to be told. And yes, expect to hear accents from Great Britain, Germany, and Australia. But if enough drivers answer the call, Americans might just outnumber them again someday.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

THE CONVERSATION

The spoken word

“Speech has power,
Words do not fade.
What starts out as a sound,
Ends in a deed.”

— Abraham Joshua Herschel

Words are spiritual truths that are imprinted within the blueprint of our DNA, and the bridge between the inner and outer worlds.

The spoken word travels through an ocean of waves and energy that never ceases to exist. In emotional irresponsibility, words can make us weak, holding us captive until we free ourselves. During our silent conversations with words, we are offered suggestions tied to emotions that need to be deciphered and interpreted to unlock their understanding and power.

The spoken word is only the beginning of human communication. Body language and silence also hold within them the spoken word. The spoken word can be translated as the spoken word.

Every thought, feeling, and emotion becomes a creation. Without clear intentions and obtaining awareness, a person cannot move into the first stage of creation and become the maker of worlds. The other side of the coin is that we can also become the destroyers of worlds. Family and culture gift language to us in a box with labels, titles, and preconceived notions of authenticity.

The spoken word is divine and a direct link to our higher power. Language is not subjective because it is not something that we have

created ourselves. There are consequences to being irresponsible with words. Every word gets stored in our cells with a signature that holds a vibrational frequency. When we open our mouths to speak, a command is uttered and an agreement is made. Words summon a sacred and ancient sovereignty.

Words alchemize, forming vibrations and frequencies. A baby in the womb receives vibrations from the mother and the surrounding environment. The infant who does not speak yet understands the language being spoken, but does not know its intention. The source of the spoken word is not revealed in its definition, our bias, or from higher learning, but in the very structure of its incantation alone.

“Language is the foundation of civilization. It is the glue that holds a people together. It is the first weapon drawn in a conflict.” — Arrival (2016 movie)

The spoken word transforms and evolves the human species and enrolls us in a new school of thought and becoming. Allow your words to take your life to places you never thought possible. Learning how to use our power not only will save our own lives, but those around us also. The conversation is the place where one lives and dwells and cannot be escaped, but only in surrender and intentionality. Every word we choose can be tailored to offer liberation.

Be responsible starting today with the words that come out of your mouth.

Letroy Woods can be reached at Letroywoods@gmail.com.



LETRUY WOODS

ASK DR. STEVE

Small changes can create profound shifts in emotional well-being

Research shows that small daily habits, practiced consistently, can be as effective in reducing symptoms of mild to moderate mental health conditions.

The habits that most impact mental health take less than five minutes each. They work by gradually rewiring neural pathways, shifting hormone balance, and creating positive feedback loops that compound over time. The challenge isn’t complexity—it’s consistency. Your brain needs 21-66 days of repetition before new behaviors become automatic.

These aren’t feel-good suggestions or popular psychology trends. These are evidence-based practices

shown in controlled studies to significantly improve mood, reduce anxiety, and enhance overall psychological well-being. The key is starting small enough, so that you follow through and stick to it.

The five game-changing habits

Q What’s the single most powerful 2-minute habit for mental health?

A The “three good things” practice. Every night, write three specific positive events from your day, no matter how small. Research shows this simple practice increases satisfaction and reduces depression symptoms within two weeks. It works by retraining your brain’s negativity bias—you start unconsciously scanning for positive experiences throughout the day.

Q How exactly should I do the three good things practice?

A Be specific. Instead of “had a good day,” write “enjoyed the warmth of morning sun on a walk” or “coworker complimented my presentation.” Include why it felt good. Studies show adding the “why” deepens the neural impact. Keep a dedicated notebook—the physical act of writing (not typing) activates different brain regions. Therapists report clients who maintain this practice for 6 weeks show measurable mood improvements.

Q What’s the morning habit that sets mental health for the entire day?

A Morning light exposure within 30 minutes of waking. Step outside for just 2-3 minutes, even if cloudy. This anchors your circadian rhythm, improving sleep, mood, and energy. Morning light triggers cortisol release (when you want it) and sets melatonin production for evening. No sunglasses—the light needs to reach your retinal ganglion cells.

Q Why is morning light more important than other habits?

A Light is the master regulator of biological rhythms. Disrupted circadian rhythms are implicated in depression, anxiety, and bipolar disorder. Studies show morning light exposure can be as effective as antidepressants for seasonal depression. Utah’s winter inversions make this especially crucial—even filtered sunlight through clouds works.

Q What’s the 30-second breathing technique that stops anxiety?

A Physiological sighing: Two or three ... 2 second inhales through the nose followed by one long exhale through the mouth. This specific pattern maximally activates your parasympathetic nervous system, immediately reducing anxiety. Research from Stanford shows this technique, done for just a few minutes daily, reduces anxiety more effectively than meditation.

Q Is there such a thing as “breathe a sigh of relief?”

A Use it reactively when stressed, but also practice proactively—set three phone alarms daily for 1-minute breathing sessions. This builds stress resilience before you need it. The regular practice makes the technique more effective during actual anxiety. Local stress management programs teach this as a primary intervention.

Q What’s the physical habit that most impacts mental health?

A The “movement snack”—one minute of movement every hour. Stand, stretch, do jumping jacks, or walk to the water fountain. This isn’t exercise; it’s breaking sedentary patterns. Prolonged sitting increases depression risk by 25%. These micro-movements improve mood immediately through increased blood flow and neurotrophic factors.

Q Is one minute really enough to make a difference?

A Yes. Research shows that movement and taking a break from sitting every hour improves mood independent of regular exercise. It’s about frequency, not intensity. Set hourly phone reminders initially. After 2-3 weeks, you’ll naturally feel restless when sitting too long. Office workers using this technique report improved afternoon energy and mood.

Q What’s the evening habit that protects mental health?

A The “phone sunset”—placing your phone in another room 30 minutes before bed. This single change improves sleep quality more than any sleep aid. The psychological

separation from constant connectivity allows your nervous system to down-regulate. Better sleep directly correlates with improved mood, reduced anxiety, and better emotional regulation.

Q Why is putting the phone away so powerful?

A It addresses multiple mental health disruptors simultaneously: blue light suppression of melatonin, cognitive stimulation preventing mental wind-down, and social comparison/FOMO that triggers anxiety. Studies show people who charge phones outside their bedroom get 48 minutes more sleep weekly and report 23% lower anxiety levels.

Q How long before these habits show results?

A Some of these habit changes take effect immediately (breathing, movement), while others build over time. Most people notice changes within 7-10 days, with significant improvements by week 3. Brain imaging shows structural changes beginning at 2 weeks of consistent practice. The key is consistency over perfection—missing one day doesn’t erase progress, but you do need to stick to it.

Q What if I can only commit to one habit?

A Start with morning light. It requires no equipment, takes minimal time, and impacts multiple systems. Once established (about 2 weeks), add another. Success with one habit creates momentum for others. Comprehensive evaluations often reveal which habits would be most impactful for individual situations.

Q Can these really replace therapy or medication?

A For mild symptoms, sometimes yes. For moderate to severe conditions, they’re powerful adjuncts but not replacements. Think of them as foundation—necessary but sometimes not sufficient. These habits make other treatments more effective. Professional assessment can determine if habits alone are adequate for your situation.

Q What’s the biggest mistake people make with habit formation?

A Starting too big. “I’ll meditate 20 minutes daily” fails; “I’ll take three deep breaths” succeeds. Make habits so small that not doing them almost feels silly. Once established, you can expand. Wellness programs using this “tiny habits” approach show 80% adherence versus 20% for traditional more heavy requirement approaches.

Q How do I maintain habits during stressful periods?

A That’s when you need them most but are most likely to abandon them. Create “minimum viable” versions—if you can’t do three good things, do one. Can’t go outside? Look out window for 30 seconds. Maintaining any version of the habit preserves the neural pathway.

Q Should I track these habits?

A Simple tracking increases success rates by 40%. Use a basic calendar, marking X for completed days. Don’t track multiple metrics—just track and mark whether you did it or didn’t. The visual chain of X’s becomes motivating. After 50 to 60 days, habits typically become automatic and tracking becomes unnecessary.

Closing

Mental health transformation doesn’t require life upheaval—it requires tiny, consistent actions that gradually shift your brain’s default patterns. These five habits take less than 15 minutes total daily but can fundamentally change how you feel, think, and respond to life’s challenges.

The power isn’t in the habits themselves but in their compound effect. Morning light improves sleep, which enhances mood, which motivates movement, which reduces anxiety, which improves relationships—creating an upward spiral that builds momentum over time.

Start with just one habit today. Not tomorrow, not Monday—today. Choose the one that seems easiest or most appealing. Do it imperfectly but consistently. Your brain doesn’t care about perfection; it responds to repetition.

Remember: massive change comes from tiny actions repeated daily. You don’t need more information or the perfect plan. You need to start. These simple habits can be the foundation for lasting mental health improvement, whether used alone or alongside professional treatment.

For those in Utah seeking comprehensive mental health support, professional evaluation can identify which habits and interventions would be most beneficial for your specific situation. Comprehensive Psychological Services (WeCanHelpOut.com) offers personalized assessment and evidence-based treatment planning to optimize your mental health journey.

About the authors: Dr. Steve and Jason Sadora, M.S., are mental health professionals at Comprehensive Psychological Services: WeCanHelpOut.com.

GET OUT THERE

5 reasons to visit Europe in shoulder season

If you've ever stood in a two-hour line for the Eiffel Tower, paid \$500 for a mediocre hotel in Rome, or played full-body Tetris on a packed Greek ferry in July, you already know: peak season travel in Europe can be a special kind of madness.

Enter shoulder season — the golden travel window that falls between the high-flying summer crowds and the darker, colder off-season. Think spring (April to early June) and fall (September to mid-November). It's Europe, but less sweaty, less spendy, and way more satisfying.

Here are five reasons why shoulder season is the smart traveler's secret weapon:

1. More affordable rates

Let's talk money. Peak summer rates in Europe can make you question your life choices. But in shoulder season? Hotel prices drop. Flights are more reasonable. Even restaurant menus (especially away from tourist traps) are a little more down-to-earth.

According to recent data from booking sites, airfare to major European hubs like Paris, Barcelona, and Rome can be 20-40% cheaper in spring and fall than in peak summer. Hotels? Sometimes even half the price. That charming Parisian boutique hotel you saw for \$400

a night in July? Probably closer to \$200 in May.

That's better for your budget and experience.

2. Fewer crowds, happier locals

Europe is wonderful. Europe with 5,000 other tourists in the same plaza trying to take the same selfie? Less so.

In shoulder season, you'll experience something magical: space. You can actually walk around Florence without playing bumper bodies. You can hear yourself think in the Louvre. And the locals? They're no longer overwhelmed and overworked. They actually have time to chat, smile, and give you directions without that 10,000-yard summer server stare.

They're still reserved Europeans, mind you. But a lot more at ease. And a lot funner to interact with.

3. Better weather

Not too hot, not too cold. Shoulder season is perfect. You get spring blooms or autumn leaves, crisp mornings and mild afternoons. Perfect for walking cities, hiking vineyards, and avoiding sweat-soaked shirts before noon.

In southern Europe, September often means beach weather without the summer crowds. In central and northern regions, April and May are lush, green, and ideal for sightseeing. Pack a light jacket, and



PETROS GIANNAKOURIS, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tourists walk in Lindos, on the Aegean Sea island of Rhodes, southeastern Greece, on July 27, 2023.

you're golden.

Plus, let's be honest: summer heat in cities like Rome, Madrid, or Athens can feel like walking through a convection oven. But shoulder season keeps it breezy.

4. More access to top attractions

Want to see the Sistine Chapel without the crush? Or actually spend more than 12 seconds in front of a Van Gogh painting in Amsterdam? Shoulder season gives you the breathing room to do just that.

Lines are shorter. Tickets are easier to snag. Dinner reservations are easy peasy. Batter yet, many lo-

cal festivals and open-air markets thrive in spring and fall, something you won't get during peak tourist season. In that way you get a more everyday, less touristy taste of local culture.

5. Feel like a genius

There's something deeply satisfying about outsmarting the system. While the rest of the world crowds into overpriced hostels and overheated tour buses in July, you're enjoying a peaceful Venetian square in May, basking in your own brilliance.

Although savvy travelers have known this for years, shoulder season is a bonafide travel hack. It saves a ton of time, money, and

many of the frustrations associated with peak travel season. When that happens, you'll be in a much better position to make lasting memories and deeper connections to the places you visit.

In short: shoulder season is Europe's — nay, the world's — best open secret. Now that you know, don't wait. Your smarter, better, less sweaty European adventure is calling.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

Sept. 13

2025 Provo Farmer's Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (provofarmersmarket.com)

Fall 2025 Beehive Bazaar Handmade Art and Craft Fair, The Boulevard, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. (beehivebazaar.com)

Provo Polygamous Wives Bicycle Tour, Downtown Provo, 4-5:30 p.m. (preservationutah.org)

A Little Murder Never Hurt Anybody, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (Sept. 13-Oct. 11, provo.gov)

Memento, The Compass Gallery, Noon-8 p.m. (Sept. 13-20, thecompassgallery.com)

Business Card Art Show 2025, JKR Gallery, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (Sept. 13-27, jkrgallery.com)

Come Thou Fount - J. Kirk Richards Show, The Compass Gallery, Noon-8 p.m. (Sept. 13-27, thecompassgallery.com)

Irritija Kuwarri Tjungu/Sense of Beauty, Brigham Young University Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (Sept. 13-Dec. 6, moa.byu.edu)

Author Event - Amanda & Kolton Rackham, Provo Library, 3-5 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Sept. 14

Mountain Top Yoga 2025, Sundance Resort, 9-11:30 a.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Sept. 16

Fall 2025 Beehive Bazaar Handmade Art and Craft Fair, The Boulevard, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. (Sept. 16-20, beehivebazaar.com)

Project Read Spelling Bee, Provo City Library, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. (projectreadutah.org)

Devotional: President and Sister Reese, Marriott Center, 11 a.m. (byu.edu)

Sept. 18

Suzzallo, Velour, 7:30 p.m. (24tix.com)

Sept. 19

Friday Fusion, Arlington Hall, 8:30 p.m.

Song of the North, BYU West Campus, 7:30 p.m. (Sept. 19-20, onstage.byu.edu)

Downtown Provo Car show, Downtown Provo, 5-8 p.m. (provo.gov)

Sept. 20

2025 Provo Farmer's Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (provofarmersmarket.com)

American Piano Quartet, BYU Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Recovery Day Utah County, Riverside Park, Noon-3 p.m. (recoveryday.org/utah-county)

Orem

Sept. 13

9/11 Healing Field & Remembrance Display, University Place Orem, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

The Hunchback of Notre Dame, SCERA Center for the Performing Arts, 7:30 p.m.

(Sept. 13-Oct. 4, scera.org)

Healing Waters, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Sept. 13-27, uvu.edu/museum)

Crowded Spaces: Recent Paintings by John Sproul, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Sept. 13-Oct. 18, uvu.edu/museum)

Sept. 17

Constitution Day Conference 2025, UVU Clarke Building, 10 a.m. (uvu.edu/ccs/events)

Open Studio, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Orem's Sunset Farmers Market 2025, City Center Park, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com/orem)

Sept. 19

2025 Taste of Orem, City Center Park, 5-10 p.m. (Sept. 19-20, orem.gov/taste)

Sept. 20

2025 Native Nations Festival, University Place Orem, 3-6 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Lindon

Sept. 18

Lindon's Sunset Farmers Market 2025, Lindon City Center Park, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com/lindon)

Vineyard

Sept. 13

Lakeshore Cleanup, Vineyard Public Works Building, 9-11 a.m. (vineyardutah.gov)

SOUTH

Springville

Sept. 13

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Sept. 13 into 2026, smofa.org)

51st Annual Utah Quilt Show, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Sept. 13-20, smofa.org)

In Search of Ourselves: Soviet Art and the Shared Human Spirit, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Sept. 13-20, smofa.org)

Pieced Together: The Art and Meaning of Carol Ford's Quilts, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Sept. 13-20, smofa.org)

Art City Ukulele Fellowship, Springville Library, 11 a.m.-noon (springville.org)

Sept. 15

Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

Springville's Sunset Farmers Market 2025, Springville Civic Center, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com/springville)

Sept. 18

Learn to Square Dance! Beginner Class, Utah Valley Square Dance, 8 p.m.

Sept. 19

Springville Art Festival, Civic Center Park, 5-9 p.m. (Sept. 19-20, springville.org)

Sept. 20

Playback Party Band, Spring Acres Arts Park, 8 p.m. (springville.org)

Sept. 21

Recital: Brushstrokes & Ballads, Springville Museum of Art, 4:30 p.m. (smofa.org)

Spanish Fork

Sept. 13

The 9/11 Project: Utah County Remembers, Spanish Fork Fairgrounds, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. (majorbrenttaylor.com)

2025 Cornbelly's Sunflower Festival, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. (Sept. 13-30, cornbellys.com)

Painting in the Petals, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Bird Show, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 6 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Spanish Fork Farmers Market 2025, Farmer's Market Field, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. (spanishforksaalemchamber.com)

2025 Gordon's Family Farm Fall Festival, Gordon Family Farm, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. (Sept. 13-Nov. 1, gordonfamilyfarms.com)

Sept. 15

Magic Mondays, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5:30 p.m./6:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

The Adventures of Simon Bilius Conrad: Demon Negotiator, Angelus Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (Sept. 15-27, greathall.live/simon)

Sept. 16

Cow Cuddling, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 6:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Sept. 18

Cow Cuddling, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 6:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Sept. 19

Scarecrow Sing-a-Long, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5 p.m./6 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Fairy Fridays, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Glen Ray's Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch 2025, Glen Ray's Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch, 5-11 p.m. (Sept. 19-Oct. 30, glenrayscornmaze.com)

Sept. 20

Bird Show, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 6 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Spanish Fork Farmers Market 2025, Farmer's Market Field, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. (spanishforksaalemchamber.com)

Santaquin

Sept. 13

Rowley's Red Barn Apple Harvest Festival 2025, Rowley's Red Barn, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. (Sept. 13-Oct. 11, rowleysredbarn.com)

2025 Santaquin Golf Tournament, Canyon Hills Golf Course, 8:30 a.m. (santaquin.gov)

Sept. 15

Hispanic Celebration, Centennial Park, 6 p.m. (santaquin.gov)

Sept. 18

2025 Harvest Pickleball Showdown, Harvest View Sports Complex, 5-10:30 p.m. (Sept. 18-20, santaquin.gov)

Sept. 20

Rowley's Red Barn Fall Festival 2025, Rowley's Red Barn, 10:30 a.m.-9 p.m. (Sept. 20-Oct. 30, rowleysredbarn.com)

Salem

Sept. 15

Salem Farmers Market 2025, 173 E 750 N, 5 p.m.-dusk (spanishforksaalemchamber.com)

Payson

Sept. 20

Festival Latino de Payson 2025, Peeteet Museum, 11 a.m.-9 p.m. (paysonutah.gov)

Mapleton

Sept. 15

Mapleton Farmers Market 2025, Mapleton City Park, 6-8:30 p.m. (mapletonfarmersmarket.com)

NORTH

Pleasant Grove

Sept. 13

Flowers for Mrs. Harris, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Sept. 13-Nov. 15, theruth.org)

Something Rotten!, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Sept. 13-Oct. 4, theruth.org)

Sept. 16

Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

Sept. 17

Utah Flower Market 2025, Grove Station, 9 a.m.-noon (utahflowermarket.com)

Lehi

Sept. 13

Garden of Quilts 2025, Thanksgiving Point, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

Sept. 15

Light Out Park Event, Hidden Canyon Trailhead, 7 p.m. (lehi-ut.gov)

Sept. 19

2025 Cornbelly's Corn Maze & Pumpkin Fest, Thanksgiving Point, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. (Sept. 19-Nov. 1, cornbellys.com)

Dahlia Days, Ashton Gardens, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. (Sept. 19-20, thanksgivingpoint.org)

American Fork

Sept. 13

2025 Haunted Forest, Haunted Forest, 7:30 p.m.-midnight (Sept. 13-Nov. 1, hauntedforestutah.com)

The Trout Quintet, Christenson Residence, 7 p.m. (timpchamber.org)

Highland

Sept. 17

Watercolor Classes by Rachele, Highland Community Center, 9:30 a.m./11:30 a.m. (highlandcityarts.info)

Sept. 18

2025 Highland Farmers Market, Highland Heritage Park, 4-8 p.m. (good4lifemarkets.com/highland)

Sept. 19

Sew 'n Sews, Highland Community Center, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (highlandcityarts.info)

Cedar Hills

Sept. 15

Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11 a.m. (cedarhills.org)

Alpine

Sept. 20

Paper Shredding & eWaste Recycling Event, Alpine City Hall, 10 a.m.-noon (alpineut.gov)

WEST

Saratoga Springs

Sept. 13

Run for Heroes 5K, Saratoga Springs Public Safety Building, 8 a.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

Eagle Mountain

Sept. 13

Farmer's Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Breakfast at the Firehouse, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 8-11 a.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Sept. 18

Food Truck Rally, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 6-9 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Sept. 19

Movie in the Park: The Minecraft Movie, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Sept. 20

Farmer's Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Cedar Valley

Sept. 20

Fairfield Historical Sites Driving Tour, Camp Floyd State Park, 9 a.m. (stateparks.utah.gov/parks/camp-floyd)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

Sept. 13

Utah State Fair, Utah State Fairpark, noon (Sept. 13-14, utahstatefair.com)

Festa Italiana SLC - 2025, The Gateway, 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m. (Sept. 13-14, festaitalianaslcc.com)

Sept. 19

Utah Hot Air Balloon Palooza 2025, Cottonwood High School, 6:15-10 a.m. (Sept. 19-21, utahhotairballoonpalooza.com)

Heber Valley

Sept. 13

Park City Sailing Association Annual Fall Regatta, 8 a.m. (Sept. 13-14, sailpc.org)

Sept. 17

Plein Air Rendezvous, Midway Town Square, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. (Sept. 17-20, pleinairutah.com)

Sept. 18

Wasatch EuroFest Car Show, Midway Town Square, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (Sept. 18-20, rotersteineuro.com)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jilloyd@heraldextra.com.

GET OUT THERE

See European-like Alps, Patagonia-like views at Glacier National Park

You don't have to fly to Switzerland or hike through South America to see jaw-dropping glaciers, jagged mountains, sparkling lakes, and rare wildlife. Just go to Montana. Specifically, Glacier National Park — an absolute showstopper that feels like a window into some of Earth's most dramatic landscapes.

On a recent summer trip, I found myself dumbfounded, floored, and awe-struck. Not only that, but Glacier National Park—an American treasure tucked under Montana's sprawling Big Sky—ranks among the most visually stunning places I've ever visited. And that includes trips to Iceland, the Andes, the Alps, Africa, and even Antarctica.

This park is like someone carved up the best parts of Patagonia and dropped them into our own American backyard, complete with ice-cut valleys that resemble inland "fjords," turquoise lakes, hidden waterfalls, and soaring, triangular peaks. Many call this the heart of the Rockies, and for good

reason — it feels like the heart. It pulses with grandeur. It humbles you.

Consider my luck: I've traveled the world chasing glaciers and rugged wilderness, and somehow, shamefully, I overlooked this national gem for years. But standing before Grinnell Glacier, I felt deeply honored to witness something millions of years old. Maybe the last of the park's glaciers before they all melt away. I'm grateful I got to see it before I melt away someday.

Indeed, Glacier National Park is easily a top five national park. As I rank them, there's basically Yosemite, a bunch of Utah National Parks (ask me later which), and this. That's because these are some of the most massive mountains I've seen in the Lower 48, if not all of North America (including Alaska).

When I first heard of the park's famous thoroughfare, aka "Going-to-the-Sun Road," I thought to myself: Really? That seems like a stretch. I'm happy to report: it's not. My family towered and tunneled through Glacier's sensational scenery along this iconic byway for several hours. My kids took turns standing through the moonroof of our Hyundai



MATT VOLZ, ASSOCIATED PRESS

In this Sept. 6, 2013, file photo, Ingrid Forsmark kayaks on Kintla Lake in Glacier National Park, Mont.

Santa Fe, beaming like they did riding roller coasters for the first time.

Every turn in this park brings a moving view. It's stunning in the truest sense: "causing a strong emotional reaction because of unexpectedness." That's exactly what Glacier does. It offers adventure, and somehow — through the awe, the sweat,

the aching feet after three days and 25 miles of hiking — it brought my family closer.

In between hiking to Grinnell and driving the seriously sky-high road, my brood loved the sweet-smelling wildflowers along the St. Mary's and Virginia Falls trail. All of us hiked (and some of us swam) the surprisingly warmer-than-ex-

pected waters of Hidden Lake. And all of us agreed that the crowds at Logan Pass, Avalanche Lake, and the Redwood-like Trail of the Cedars were all worth it. As were distant encounters with bears, rams, mountain goats, and marmots along the way.

As for me, this was my second Montana moment. The first one changed my

life. I wrote a best-selling book about it called Log Off. You should totally read it. This second visit, though, cemented my love for this great state.

On our final day in the park, I overheard an exhausted toddler exclaim to his mother, "I wanna be done with this dumb place!" I'm here to tell you: that kid is wrong. Glacier National Park is outstanding and never gets old. It exceeded my expectations of what's possible after just a day's drive north in the marvelous Mountain West.

Pro Tip: End your Glacier trip with a few relaxing days at nearby Flathead Lake. Clear waters, charming communities, and plenty of room to decompress after the mind-blowing spectacle you just survived.

In short, Glacier National Park isn't just a pretty park. It's proof that many of the world's wonders can be found right in our own backyard. You just have to look up.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

Sept. 6

MyHometown National Day of Service, various locations, 8-11 a.m. (provo.gov)

2025 Provo Farmer's Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (provofarmersmarket.com)

A Little Murder Never Hurt Nobody, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (Sept. 6-Oct. 11, provo.gov)

BYU football vs. Stanford, LaVell Edwards Stadium, 8:15 p.m. (byucougars.com)

Full Moon Lift Rides, Sundance Resort, 8 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Business Card Art Show 2025, JKR Gallery, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (Sept. 6-27, jkrgallery.com)

Come Thou Fount - J. Kirk Richards Show, The Compass Gallery, Noon-8 p.m. (Sept. 6-27, thecompassgallery.com)

Irrititja Kuwarri Tjungu/Sense of Beauty, Brigham Young University Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (Sept. 6-Dec. 6, moa.byu.edu)

Memento, The Compass Gallery, Noon-8 p.m. (Sept. 6-20, thecompassgallery.com)

Sept. 8

Rushadicus the Cello Goblin, Java Junkie, 10 a.m. (rushadicus.com)

Sept. 9

Fall 2025 Beehive Bazaar Handmade Art and Craft Fair, The Boulevard, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. (Sept. 9-13, beehivebazaar.com)

Sesquicentennial Kickoff, Marriott Center, 11 a.m. (byu.edu)

The Schtick Men, Recital Hall, Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Stephen Beus, Recital Hall, Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Light with Alex Woods and Rex Woods, Recital Hall, Music Building, 7:30 p.m. (onstage.byu.edu)

Sept. 10

Peacemaker Fair, Wilkinson Center, 4-6 p.m. (byu.edu)

Sept. 11

Teen Movie Night - How to Train Your Dragon, Provo Library, 6:30 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Sept. 12

Friday Fusion, Arlington Hall, 8:30 p.m.

Sept. 13

2025 Provo Farmer's Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (provofarmersmarket.com)

Provo Polygamous Wives Bicycle Tour, Downtown Provo, 4-5:30 p.m. (preservationutah.org)

Author Event - Amanda & Kolton Rackham, Provo Library, 3-5 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Sept. 14

Mountain Top Yoga 2025, Sundance Resort, 9-11:30 a.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Orem

Sept. 6

Utah Brazilian Festival 2025, University Place Orem, Noon-7 p.m. (utahbrazilianfestival.com)

Crowded Spaces: Recent Paintings by John Sproul, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Sept. 6-Oct. 18, uvu.edu/museum)

Healing Waters, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Sept. 6-27, uvu.edu/museum)

Sept. 8

9/11 Healing Field & Remembrance Display, University Place Orem, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. (Sept. 8-13, universityplaceorem.com)

Family Movie Night: Elemental, Orem Public Library, 6 p.m. (library.orem.gov)

Latter-day Saint Earth Stewardship Fall Forum and Art Show, Orem Public Library, 7-8 p.m. (library.orem.gov)

Film: Behind Enemy Lines, Orem Public Library, 6 p.m. (library.orem.gov)

Sept. 10

Constitution Day Conference 2025, UVU Clarke Building, 11 a.m. (uvu.edu/ccs/events)

Open Studio, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Orem's Sunset Farmers Market 2025, City Center Park, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com/orem)

Sept. 11

First Responders Celebration, University Place Orem, 6-8 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Health Professions Job Fair, Health Professions Building, 1-2:30 p.m. (uvu.edu)

Sept. 12

The Hunchback of Notre Dame, SCERA Center for the Performing Arts, 7:30 p.m. (Sept. 12-Oct. 4, scera.org)

The Wailin' Jennys, Noorda Concert Hall, 7:30 p.m. (uvu.edu)

Vineyard

Sept. 6

Food Bank & Eyeglass Drive, Vineyard City Hall, 9-11 a.m. (vineyardutah.gov)

Sept. 11

9/11 Patriot Day Event, Vineyard Grove Park, 7 p.m. (vineyardutah.gov)

Sept. 13

Lakeshore Cleanup, Vineyard Public Works Building, 9-11 a.m. (vineyardutah.gov)

Lindon

Sept. 11

Lindon's Sunset Farmers Market 2025, Lindon City Center Park, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com/lindon)

SOUTH

Springville

Sept. 6

51st Annual Utah Quilt Show, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Sept. 6-20, smofa.org)

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Sept. 6 into 2026, smofa.org)

In Search of Ourselves: Soviet Art and the Shared Human Spirit,

Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Sept. 6-20, smofa.org)

Pieced Together: The Art and Meaning of Carol Ford's Quilts, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Sept. 6-20, smofa.org)

Sept. 8

Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

Springville's Sunset Farmers Market 2025, Springville Civic Center, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com/springville)

Sept. 11

Learn to Square Dance! Beginner Class, Utah Valley Square Dance, 8 p.m.

Family Night: Lego Building Challenge, Springville Library, 6:30-8 p.m. (springville.org)

Sept. 13

Art City Ukulele Fellowship, Springville Library, 11 a.m.-noon (springville.org)

Spanish Fork

Sept. 6

2025 Cornbelly's Sunflower Festival, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. (Sept. 6-30, cornbellys.com)

Scales and Tails, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 2 p.m./4 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Scarecrow Sing-a-Long, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5 p.m./6 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Spanish Fork Farmers Market 2025, Farmer's Market Field, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. (spanishforksaalemchamber.com)

Sept. 8

Magic Mondays, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5:30 p.m./6:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Sept. 9

Cow Cuddling, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 6:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Sept. 10

The 9/11 Project: Utah County Remembers, Spanish Fork Fairgrounds, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. (Sept. 10-13, majorbrenttaylor.com)

Sept. 11

Cow Cuddling, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 6:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Sept. 12

Scarecrow Sing-a-Long, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5 p.m./6 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Sept. 13

Fairy Fridays, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5:30 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Sept. 13

Painting in the Petals, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 5 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Bird Show, Cornbelly's - Spanish Fork, 6 p.m. (cornbellys.com)

Spanish Fork Farmers Market 2025, Farmer's Market Field, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. (spanishforksaalemchamber.com)

2025 Gordon's Family Farm Fall Festival, Gordon Family Farm, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. (Sept. 13-Nov. 1, gordonfamilyfarms.com)

Mapleton

Sept. 8

Mapleton Farmers Market 2025, Mapleton City Park, 6-8:30 p.m. (ma-

pletonfarmersmarket.com)

Payson

Sept. 6

2025 Mt. Nebo Marathon and Half, Memorial Park, Payson, 6 a.m. (run-tasticevents.com)

Salem

Sept. 8

Salem Farmers Market 2025, 173 E 750 N, 5 p.m.-dusk (spanishforksaalemchamber.com)

Santaquin

Sept. 6

Rowley's Red Barn Apple Harvest Festival 2025, Rowley's Red Barn, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. (Sept. 6-Oct. 11, rowleysredbarn.com)

Sept. 13

2025 Santaquin Golf Tournament, Canyon Hills Golf Course, 8:30 a.m. (santaquin.gov)

NORTH

Lehi

Sept. 6

Big Dig Utah 2025, Mountainland Applied Technology College, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (e.givesmart.com/events/HKY)

Timpanogos Storytelling Festival 2025, Thanksgiving Point, 9:30 a.m.-10 p.m. (timpfest.org)

Sept. 12

Garden of Quilts 2025, Thanksgiving Point, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. (Sept. 12-13, thanksgivingpoint.org)

Sept. 14

Light Out Park Event, Hidden Canyon Trailhead, 7 p.m. (lehi-ut.gov)

American Fork

Sept. 12

2025 Haunted Forest, Haunted Forest, 7:30 p.m.-midnight (Sept. 12-Nov. 1, hauntedforestutah.com)

Movie in the Park: McFarland USA, Hunter Park, 8 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Sept. 13

The Trout Quintet, Christenson Residence, 7 p.m. (timpchamber.org)

Pleasant Grove

Sept. 6

Flowers for Mrs. Harris, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Sept. 6-Nov. 15, theruth.org)

Something Rotten!, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 7:30 p.m. (Sept. 6-Oct. 4, theruth.org)

Sept. 9

Tuesday Trucks and Trivia Night, Grove Station, 6-8 p.m. (grovestationpg.com)

Sept. 10

Utah Flower Market 2025, Grove Station, 9 a.m.-noon (utahflowermarket.com)

Alpine

Sept. 11

A.L.L. Free Class at the Workshop, Alpine Workshop, 10:30 a.m.-noon (alpineut.gov)

Cedar Hills

Sept. 8

Meet the Mayor, City Hall, 10-11

a.m. (cedarhills.org)

Highland

Sept. 8

Senior Dinner, Highland Family Park Pavilion, 5-7 p.m. (highlandut.gov)

Sept. 10

Watercolor Classes by Rachelle, Highland Community Center, 9:30 a.m./11:30 a.m. (highlandcityarts.info)

Sept. 11

2025 Highland Farmers Market, Highland Heritage Park, 4-8 p.m. (good4lifemarkets.com/highland)

WEST

Eagle Mountain

Sept. 6

ShopFest, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Farmer's Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Sept. 11

Food Truck Rally, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 6-9 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Sept. 13

Farmer's Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Breakfast at the Firehouse, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 8-11 a.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Saratoga Springs

Sept. 11

9/11 Day of Service, various locations, 6 p.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

Sept. 13

Run for Heroes 5K, Saratoga Springs Public Safety Building, 8 a.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

Sept. 6

Utah State Fair, Utah State Fairpark, noon (Sept. 6-14, utahstatefair.com)

Hot Wheels Monster Trucks Live Glow-N-Fire, Maverick Center, 12:30 p.m./7:30 p.m. (Sept. 6-7, maverick-center.com)

Sept. 10

Third Eye Blind, Utah State Fair Grounds, 7 p.m. (utahstatefair.com)

Heber Valley/Price

Sept. 6

2025 Carbon County Sheriff's Search and Rescue Demolition Derby, Carbon County Event Center, 4-11 p.m. (carbon.utah.gov)

Sept. 11

Patriot Day, Jordanelle State Park, 8 a.m. (stateparks.utah.gov/parks/jordanelle)

Sept. 13

Park City Sailing Association Annual Fall Regatta, 8 a.m. (Sept. 13-14, sailpc.org)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jllloyd@heraldextra.com.

GET OUT THERE

Kids menus: A well-intentioned but bad idea

Picture this. It's the Roaring '20s, Prohibition is in full swing, and restaurants are scrambling. They lost booze revenue, and suddenly a bright idea emerges: "Kids menus." Cue the crayons, nursery-rhyme headings, and pint-sized, bland plates to bring in families.

Over the past century, however, what sounded like a good idea has devolved into a dubious excuse to feed our children less nutritious, more watered-down, and pacifying, if not lazy, comfort food.

Culinary historian Adrienne Bitar of Cornell explains to me that as yesteryear's saloon-turned-restaurants needed new patrons, they rebranded with a family-friendly turn. Yes, the kids menu was less about culinary innovation and more about marketing survival.

By the late 1950s and '60s, family-friendly restaurant chains featured illustrated kids' menus with dishes like "Jack Horner" PB&J, "Tommy Tucker" turkey and gravy, and "Happy Clown" spaghetti — each paired with Jello or ice cream. These playful menus often doubled as games or col-

oring pages and solidified kids as a powerful marketing demographic when it came to capturing the hearts and wallets of income-earning Americans.

By the 1970s, fast-food giants took kids menus to the next level. Burger Chef launched the "Funmeal" in 1973, followed by the McDonald's Happy Meal in 1978, replete with included toys to induce collective loyalty. At first, kids' menus served nutrition-first intentions, Bitner says. Pieces of lamb chops, creamed chicken, mashed potatoes — simple, unseasoned, affordable.

Today, however, you can expect lots of deep-fried chicken fingers, indulgent mac & cheese, limp pizza on a bread crust, and supersized fries. Bitar laments that far more health could be packed into smaller portions of normal menu fare, but instead restaurants opt for "highly-processed, bland, high-calorie meals to boost their profits."

In addition to lacking nutrition, UNLV's Elizabeth Nelson notes another downside to kids menus: "Limiting children to narrow palettes means missed moments of discovery." On the contrary, she recalls her five-year-old son delightfully eating beet-and-goat-cheese salad for lunch — much to the serv-



COURTESY PHOTO

Restaurants are now offering healthier food options for kids to keep them interested in their food.

er's surprise. Her kids now eat anything, she says. But reliance on kids' menus leaves most kids unprepared for broader food experiences, especially when it comes to "eating our veggies."

Of course, kids menus serve a clear business purpose. They bring families in, keep prices low, boost loyalty, and increase profits.

But change is happening. Both Bitar and Nelson have noticed that today's parents increasingly want their kids to eat the same way — or at least the same flavors — as adults. That means bypassing kids' menus and ordering smaller or shared portions from the "adult" menu to expose their children to better ingredients, food combinations, and overall health. And parents are doing this both at home and while eating out.

Bitar calls this approach the ultimate food education: flavor exploration, nutritional liter-

acy, and no marketing gauntlet. "Eating out should be a treat, not a daily diet," Nelson says. "A better approach is to teach kids something that lasts through rotating tastes, not just nostalgia dishes."

As a father of five, I get it. Encouraging kids to eat their dinner can be a pain. Like iPad babysitting, ordering from the kids menu is definitely the path of least resistance. But like Nelson, my wife and I have tried, fought for, and mostly succeeded in exposing our children to a wide range of foods and palates that, as predicted, has contributed to their adventurous spirit. Like parenting, I believe the effort is worth it.

If you feel the same, Bitar suggests letting infants explore grown-up tastes early on, instead of relying on what's branded for them. Like the French have found since they

invented modern cooking, if you raise a child on what grown-ups eat, they'll eat almost anything at a young age and continue exploring as they mature.

By all means, eating out should be fun and inclusive. And there's no shame in eating junk food once in a while. But that doesn't mean our families need two separate menus when dining together.

After all, food has and should always be a shared experience. Maybe, just maybe, persuading kids to savor real, grown-up food may do more for them than any toy-focused Happy Meal ever could.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

Aug. 30
Festival Latinoamericano Provo 2025, Utah County Historic Courthouse, 6 p.m. (Aug. 30-Sept. 1, festivalprovo.com)

2025 Provo Farmer's Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (Aug. 30-Oct. 25 [Saturdays], provofarmersmarket.com)

The Great Carp Hunt of 2025, Utah Lake State Park, 8 a.m. (Aug. 30-31, utahlake.gov)

Aug. 31
Mountain Top Yoga 2025, Sundance Resort, 9-11 a.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Sept. 1
Labor Day BBQ, Sundance Resort, 11:30 a.m.-4 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Sept. 2
Author Event - Charlie N. Holmberg, Provo Library, 7-9 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Sept. 3
A Little Murder Never Hurt Anybody, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (Sept. 3-Oct. 11, provo.gov)

Sept. 4
Full Moon Lift Rides and Zip Tour, Sundance Resort, 8 p.m. (Sept. 4-6, sundanceresort.com)

Friday Fusion, Arlington Hall, 8:30 p.m.-2 a.m.
Bluebird Cafe Concert Series, Sundance Resort, 8 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Sept. 5
An Evening of Broadway with Nola Richardson, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (provo.gov)

Acoustic Open Mic Night, Provo City Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)
2025 Provo Art Stroll, Downtown Provo, 6 p.m.

Business Card Art Show 2025, JKR Gallery, 6 p.m. (Sept. 5-27, jkr-gallery.myshopify.com)

FOAM Party Provo 2025, The Village, 8 p.m.
UTOPIA - Utah's Largest Back to School Party, The Belvedere Provo, 8:30 p.m. (thetribebutah.tickettsauce.com/e/utopia-18)

Sept. 6
MyHometown National Day of Service, various locations, 8-11 a.m. (provo.gov)

Sept. 7
Mountain Top Yoga 2025, Sundance Resort, 9-11 a.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Orem

Aug. 30
From The Vault Original Art Show, Frameworks Gallery by RC Willey, 10 a.m. (Aug. 30-31, universityplaceorem.com)

Sept. 1
1964: THE BEATLES TRIBUTE, SCERA Shell Outdoor Theatre, 7 p.m. (scera.org)

The Great Pottery Throwdown, Scera Park, 5 p.m. (scera.org)

Sept. 3
Faith and Film, Reflection Center, 5-7:30 p.m. (uvu.campusgroups.com)

Sept. 6
Utah Brazilian Festival 2025, University Place Orem, 4 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Lindon

Aug. 30
Lindon's Sounds of Summer: The Greg Simpson Band, Lindon City Center Park, 7 p.m. (lindonrecreation.org)

Sept. 4
Lindon's Sunset Farmers Market 2025, Lindon City Center Park, 5 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

Sept. 5
Lindon's Sounds of Summer: Exit Strategy, Lindon City Center Park, 7 p.m. (lindonrecreation.org)

SOUTH

Springville

Aug. 30
Sunset Farmers Markets, Springville Civic Center, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

Little Shop of Horrors, Merit Academy, 7:30 p.m. (springvilleplayhouse.org)

51st annual Utah Quilt Show, Springville Museum of Art (Aug. 30-Sept. 20, smofa.org)

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art

Sept. 1
Sunset Farmers Markets, Springville Civic Center, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

Sept. 3
Tea Leaf Art Night, Springville Library, 7-8 p.m. (springville.org)

Sept. 4
Meet the Authors: Kerry Owen and Lisa Knowlton, Springville Library, 7-8 p.m. (springville.org)

Learn to Square Dance! Beginner Class, Utah Valley Square Dance, 8 p.m.

Spanish Fork

Aug. 30
Cornbelly's 2025 Sunflower Festival, Cornbelly's Spanish Fork, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. (Aug. 30-Sept. 30, cornbellys.com)

Sept. 5

2025 Harvest Moon Hurrah, Spanish Fork City Park, 4-8 p.m. (spanishfork.gov)

Real Rock Band End of Summer Concert Night 1, Angelus Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (angelustheatre.com)

Payson

Aug. 30
Golden Onion Days, Payson Memorial Park (Aug. 30-Sept. 1, paysonutah.gov)

- Art show
- Flower show
- Treasure hunt
- 5K/10K race
- Breakfasts
- Pickleball tournament
- Children's parade
- Talent show
- Cornhole tournament
- Carnival
- Vendors
- Soap box racing
- Concerts and dance
- Night golf
- Grand parade
- Duck race

Used Book Sale, Payson City Library, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Aug. 30-Sept. 1, paysonlibrary.org)

Sept. 6
2025 Mt. Nebo Marathon and Half, Memorial Park, 6 a.m. (runtasticevents.com)

Salem

Aug. 30
Newsies, Salem Hills High School, 7:30 p.m. (Aug. 30-Sept. 1, paysoncommunitytheatre.com)

Sept. 1
Salem Farmer's Market, Salem Fire Station, 5 p.m. (spanishfork-chamber.com)

Mapleton

Sept. 1
Mapleton Farmers Market 2025, Mapleton City Park, 6-8:30 p.m. (mapletonfarmersmarket.com)

Sept. 5
Mapleton's Moonlight Half Marathon 2025, Ira Allan Sports Park, evening (mapleton.org)

Santaquin

Aug. 31
Rowley's Red Barn Apple Harvest Festival 2025, Rowley's Red Barn (Aug. 31-Oct. 12, rowleysredbarn.com)

NORTH

American Fork

Aug. 30
Camp Rock Auditions, TAF Arts Center, 1:30 p.m. (americanforkarts.com)

Sept. 3
Portrait Painting, TAF Arts Center, 10 a.m. (americanforkarts.com)

Sept. 4

Adult Writer's Club, Library Community Room, 7 p.m. (aflibrary.eventbrite.com)

Sept. 5
Mortem Astraque, American Fork Amphitheater, 6 p.m. (beyond-the-gates.org)

Sept. 6
Dog Days of Summer Event, American Fork Leisure Pool, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Lehi

Aug. 30
Seleny Joanne OPEN Karate Championship 2025 - Where Angels Kick, Utah Military Academy of Lehi, 8:45 a.m. (sjkarate.com)

Sept. 1
2025 Labor Day Luau, Thanksgiving Point, 6 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

Sept. 4
Timpanogos Storytelling Festival 2025, Thanksgiving Point (Sept. 4-6, timpfest.org)

Sept. 6
Big Dig Utah 2025, Mountainland Applied Technology College, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (e.givesmart.com)

Pleasant Grove

Aug. 30
Something Rotten!, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 4/7:30 p.m. (Aug. 30-Oct. 4, theruth.org)

Sept. 3
2025 Utah Flower Market, 11 a.m.-noon (utahflowermarket.com)

Sept. 5
Flowers for Mrs. Harris, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 4/7:30 p.m. (Sept. 5-Nov. 15, theruth.org)

Sept. 6
Saturday Morning Movie: Anastasia, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m. (pgcityutah.gov)

Cedar Hills

Sept. 1
Meet the Mayor, Cedar Hills City Offices, 10-11 a.m.

Highland

Sept. 4
2025 Highland Farmers Market, Highland Heritage Park, 4-8 p.m.
Friends of Art, Highland City Community Center, 10 a.m. (highlandcityarts.info)

WEST

Eagle Mountain

Aug. 30
Ties and Tiaras, The Barn at Overland, 7-9 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)
Farmer's Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Sept. 3
Produce Swap, Eagle Mountain Li-

brary, 11 a.m.-7:30 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Sept. 4
Food Truck Rally, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 6-9 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Sept. 6
ShopFest/Farmer's Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Saratoga Springs

Sept. 1
Firefighter Breakfast, South Fire Station, 8-11 a.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

Saratoga Springs Farmers Market, Neptune Park, 5-9 p.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

Sept. 6
Train Rides, Shay Park, 9 a.m.-noon (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

Cedar Valley

Sept. 1
Camp Floyd Days 2025, Camp Floyd State Park and Stagecoach Inn Museum, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (https://stateparks.utah.gov/parks/camp-floyd)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

Aug. 30
Salt Lake Fall Home Expo 2025, Mountain America Expo Center, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (Aug. 30-31, saltlakehomeexpo.com)

Sept. 1
Get to the River Festival 2025, Jordan River Off-Highway Vehicle Park, various times (Sept. 1-30, jordanrivercommission.gov)

Sept. 4
Utah State Fair, Utah State Fairpark, noon (Sept. 4-14, utahstatefair.com)

Heber Valley/Price

Aug. 30
Midway Swiss Days Festival, Downtown Midway (midwayswissdays.org)

- 10k race
- Parade
- Live entertainment
- Vendors
- Swiss Bells
- Swiss Chorus
- William Tell Play
- Swiss Miss Royalty
- Chuckwagon Breakfast
- Wasatch Alpenhorns
- BBQ dinner

Sept. 6
2025 Carbon County Sheriff's Search and Rescue Demolition Derby, Carbon County Event Center, 4-11 p.m. (carbon.utah.gov)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jloyd@heraldextra.com.

GET OUT THERE

The oldest trees on Earth are just a few hour's drive from Utah

Picture this: twisted, self-protecting, desert-magic pine trees that are older than the pyramids, older than civilization as we know it. Believe it or not, I've seen several of them that sprouted 2,000 years before Jesus walked the Earth. I'm not kidding.



BLAKE SNOW

The best part? You can hike, stand and marvel in a sacred grove full of these truly ancient trees after just a few hours' drive east from central Utah.

More specifically, you'll find them in Nevada's Great Basin National Park — just beyond Utah's border. And unlike the vast majority of national parks, this highly underrated and nearby national park is free to enter.

Now, I won't fault you, kind reader, for thinking trees are boring. They're certainly commonplace, I'll grant you that. But I challenge you to think that way after visiting Great Basin's Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest, where some of the oldest living organisms walk — err, stand — among us. I've seen the tallest trees in the world at Redwood National Park in North-

ern California and the widest in the world at Sequoia National Park in Central California. And I can honestly say that Great Basin's bristlecones are just as special, if not more reverent. Like looking into the soul of the universe.

OK, maybe not that deep. But it sure does feel close by mortal standards.

One legendary tree found on Wheeler Peak was estimated to have lived over 5,000 years before being felled in 1964 to count its rings. Although the 3-mile round-trip hike to Great Basin's ancient grove only has trees up to 4,000 years old, experts and park rangers admit to several that are over 5,000 years old. They just won't tell you where in a gracious act to protect and preserve them.

Back in 2020, I made a personal pilgrimage to see Great Basin's bristlecone forest for the first time while reporting for Lonely Planet. The hike to get there is relatively easy, starting near Wheeler Peak Campground and winding up 600 feet in elevation gain past alpine lakes before reaching the ancient grove.

Not at all what I expected, the trees themselves are twisting, stoic, alive — each trunk a sculpture molded by millennia of wind, ice,



BRIAN MAFFLY, THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE VIA AP

A bristlecone pine is shown under Nevada's Wheeler Peak in Great Basin National Park. The bristlecone pine is not only the world's longest-lived organism, but it is also virtually immune to the pine beetle attacks that are decimating conifer forests around the West, according to new research from Utah State University and the U.S. Forest Service.

drought and cosmic rays. As you can see in pictures, the trees can survive this long after using their dead outer trunks as protection. Either way, I swear they looked at me with contempt for modern life. I soaked up interpretive signs that told the tale of several trees that were thousands and thousands of years old. Blew my mind.

As Nevada's only national park, Great Basin is actually closer to Utah Valley than it is to Las Vegas. And unlike Bryce Canyon, Zion or Arches (all of which charge admission), this park lets you wander in without handing over a dime at the gate. In addition to free views of the ancient trees, you'll also find unmatched dark skies at Great Basin

— one of the best spots in the lower 48 really to take in the sky-sweeping Milky Way.

If you're starting in Utah, gather supplies and fuel up early. Baker, Nevada — the park's closest town — is charming but sparse on services. For best hiking weather, visit between June and September, though even then you might see snow at elevation. Also, plan ahead or show up early for Lehman Cave tours. These paid tours sell out fast, especially on weekends.

As for me and my house, though, the ancient bristlecone pines are the real stars of Great Basin National Park. Just like there's no excuse for anyone in Utah not to visit our five national parks at least once

in their life (since so many others travel halfway around the world to see these parks), there is simply no excuse for any Utahn not to drive the three or four hours it takes to see the oldest trees on Earth.

In short, Great Basin is a nearby gem that finds itself at the intersection of time and space. It's profound. It's reverent. And it just might change how you see the world.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

Aug. 23
2025 Splash Summit Summer Triathlon, Splash Summit Waterpark, 7 a.m. (runsignup.com)

Chalk the Block For Charity Utah, Shops at Riverwoods (chalktheblockutah.org)

The Great Carp Hunt of 2025, Utah Lake State Park, 8 a.m. (Aug. 23-24, utahlake.gov)

Art Appreciation, a Presentation by Jorge Cocco, The Compass Gallery, 7-8 p.m. (thecompassgallery.com)

Mom Dad & Me "Album Release", Velour (velourlive.com)

2025 Provo Farmer's Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (Aug. 23-Oct. 25 [Saturdays], provofarmersmarket.com)

Family Arts Festival 2025, Brigham Young University Museum of Art (moa.byu.edu)

Landscapes and Handscapes 2025, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (jkr-gallery.myshopify.com)

Mario Cookie Class, Baking Me Crazy, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (shopbakingmecrazy.com)

Enduring Beauty: John Hafen and the Power of Art, Springville Museum of Art

Aug. 24
Mountain Top Yoga 2025, Sundance Resort, 9-11 a.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Aug. 25
Storytelling Mondays: Paige Funk, The Provo Pioneer Village, 6:30 p.m. (provopioneervillage.org)

Ballroom Book Sale, Provo Library, noon-8 p.m. (Aug. 25-26, provolibrary.gov)

Aug. 26
Utah Valley Job Fair, Utah Valley Convention Center, 2-5 p.m. (utahvalleyjobfair.com)

Provo High Jr Cheer Clinic, Provo High School, 4-5:30 p.m. (Aug. 26-28, provohigh.provo.edu)

Aug. 27
Orem Classic Fun Center Back To School Bash, Classic Skating Orem, 4-9 p.m. (classicfun.com)

Aug. 28
Bluebird Bands: A Plugged In Concert Experience with William Beckmann, Sundance Resort, 7 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

New Band Showcase, Velour (velourlive.com)

Aug. 29
Festival Latinoamericano Provo 2025, Utah County Historic Courthouse, 6 p.m. (Aug. 29-Sept. 1, festivalprovo.com)

Friday Fusion, Arlington Hall, 8:30 p.m.-2 a.m.

Bluebird Cafe Concert Series, Sundance Resort, 8 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Aug. 31
Mountain Top Yoga 2025, Sundance Resort, 9-11 a.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Orem

Aug. 23
Carnaval Boliviano, The Orchard at University Place, 4 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

20th Annual DANCING UNDER THE STARS, SCERA Shell Outdoor Theatre, 7 p.m. (scera.org)

From The Vault Original Art Show, Frameworks Gallery by RC Willey, 10 a.m. (Aug. 23-31, universityplaceorem.com)

Aug. 25
Aaron Tveit with Utah Valley Symphony, SCERA Shell Outdoor Theatre, 7 p.m. (scera.org)

American Red Cross Blood Drive, UVU Science Building Atrium, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. (uvu.edu)

Aug. 27
Open Studio: Bird Relief Print, UVU Museum of Art at Lakemount, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Aug. 29
The Commodores, SCERA Shell Outdoor Theatre, 8 p.m. (scera.org)

Orem Classic Fun Center Summer Concert Series, Classic Skating Orem, 7-10 p.m. (classicfun.com)

Lindon

Aug. 23
Lindon's Sounds of Summer: John Denver Tribute Night, Lindon City Center Park, 7 p.m. (lindonrecreation.org)

Aug. 26
Lindon Heritage Trail ribbon cutting, Vineyard Public Works Building, 11 a.m. (lindonrecreation.org)

Aug. 28
Lindon's Sunset Farmers Market 2025, Lindon City Center Park, 5 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

Aug. 30
Lindon's Sounds of Summer: The Greg Simpson Band, Lindon City Center Park, 7 p.m. (lindonrecreation.org)

SOUTH

Springville

Aug. 23
Sunset Farmers Markets, Springville Civic Center, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

Little Shop of Horrors, Merit Academy, 7:30 p.m. (Aug. 23-30, springvilleplayhouse.org)

51st annual Utah Quilt Show, Springville Museum of Art (Aug. 23-Sept. 20, smofa.org)

Country Line Dancing, The Venue at 1750, 7/10 p.m. (1750venue.com)

Aug. 25
Mindful Mondays at the Museum, Springville Museum of Art, 6-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

Aug. 27
Quilt Show Lecture: You Gotta (Re)start Somewhere, Springville Museum of Art, 6:30-8 p.m. (smofa.org)

Love Connections Authors Event, Springville Public Library, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (springville.org)

Spanish Fork

Aug. 23
The Thief and the Lady, Angelus Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (Aug. 23-25, angelustheatre.com)

Aug. 29
Cornbelly's 2025 Sunflower Festival, Cornbelly's Spanish Fork, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. (Aug. 29-Sept. 30, cornbellys.com)

Salem

Aug. 23
Newsies, Salem Hills High School, 7:30 p.m. (Aug. 23-Sept. 1, paysoncommunitytheatre.com)

Aug. 25
Salem Farmer's Market, Salem Fire Station, 5 p.m. (spanishfork-chamber.com)

Mapleton

Aug. 25
Mapleton Farmers Market 2025, Mapleton City Park, 6-8:30 p.m. (mapletonfarmersmarket.com)

Mapleton Summer Concerts in the Park 2025: Art City Jazz, Mapleton City Park, 7 p.m. (mapleton.org)

Santaquin

Aug. 23
Rowley's Red Barn Sunflower Festival 2025, Rowley's Red Barn, 5:30-8:30 p.m. (Aug. 23-24, rowleysredbarn.com)

Aug. 25
Santaquin Hometown Market and Sounds of Santaquin: Pets in the Park, Centennial Park, 5 p.m. (Mondays from Aug. 25-Sept. 15, payson-santaquinarea.com)

Mona

Aug. 23
13th annual Utah Renaissance Faire, Mount Nebo Botanical Farm, 9:30 a.m.-10 p.m. (utahrenfaire.utahvalleyarts.com)

NORTH

American Fork

Aug. 23
Maker's Table: Art Workshop, Library Community Room, noon-4 p.m. (aflibrary.eventbrite.com)

Aug. 26
Discovering Watercolors with Taraleigh Bennett, TAF Arts Center, 6 p.m. (americanforkarts.com)

Table Time - Ongoing Open Art Studio, Timpanogos Arts Foundation, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. (americanforkarts.org)

Aug. 28
Adult Writer's Club, Library Community Room, 7 p.m. (aflibrary.eventbrite.com)

Aug. 29
Portrait Painting, TAF Arts Center, 10 a.m. (americanforkarts.com)

Aug. 30
Camp Rock Auditions, TAF Arts Center, 1:30 p.m. (americanforkarts.com)

Lehi

Aug. 23
Imaginaria Kids Summer Fest, Ashton Gardens, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

Aug. 30
Seleny Joanne OPEN Karate Championship 2025 - Where Angels Kick, Utah Military Academy of Lehi, 8:45 a.m. (sjkarate.com)

Pleasant Grove

Aug. 23
Something Rotten!, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 4/7:30 p.m. (theruth.org)

Summeration Used Book Sale, Pleasant Grove Library, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. (pgcityutah.gov)

Aug. 27
2025 Utah Flower Market, 11 a.m.-noon (utahflowermarket.com)

Cedar Hills

Aug. 25
Meet the Mayor, Cedar Hills City Offices, 10-11 a.m.

Highland

Aug. 23
2025 Highland Farmers Market, Highland Heritage Park, 4-8 p.m.

Aug. 25
Senior Dinner, Highland City Building, 5:30-7:30 p.m. (highlandut.gov)

Aug. 30
2025 Highland Farmers Market, Highland Heritage Park, 4-8 p.m.

WEST

Eagle Mountain

Aug. 23
Farmer's Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Aug. 25
Seniors Meet the Candidates, Eagle Mountain Senior Center, 5-6 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Aug. 30
Ties and Tiaras, The Barn at Overland, 7-9 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Farmer's Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Saratoga Springs

Aug. 25
Saratoga Springs Farmers Market, Neptune Park, 5-9 p.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

Cedar Valley

Aug. 16
Star Party, Camp Floyd State Park and Stagecoach Inn Museum, 9 p.m. (stateparks.utah.gov/parks/camp-floyd)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

Aug. 23
2025 Climbing North American Cup, 552 W. Broadway, 9 a.m. (Aug. 23-24, usaclimbing.org)

Aug. 26
Goo Goo Dolls with Dashboard Confessional Summer Anthem Tour 2025, Utah First Credit Union Amphitheatre, 7:30 p.m. (NowPlayingUtah.com)

Aug. 28
Little Big Town: Summer Tour 2025, Utah First Credit Union Amphitheatre, 7 p.m. (NowPlayingUtah.com)

Heber Valley/Nephi

Aug. 23
Wasatch Boomerfest Music Festival, RW Erickson Foundation, Wallsburg, 10 a.m. (Aug. 23-24, richardericksonfoundation.org)

Aug. 29
Midway Swiss Days Festival, Downtown Midway (Aug 29-30, midwayswissdays.org)

- 10k race
- Parade
- Live entertainment
- Vendors
- Swiss Bells
- Swiss Chorus
- William Tell Play
- Swiss Miss Royalty
- Chuckwagon Breakfast
- Wasatch Alpenhorns
- BBQ dinner

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jllloyd@heraldextra.com.

GET OUT THERE

5 ways to save big on your next cruise

Let's get this out of the way: cruises are a screaming deal. You're basically getting a floating resort, all-you-can-eat meals, Broadway-style shows, and a front-row seat to some of the most exotic ports on the planet — often for less per night than a decent hotel on dry land.



BLAKE SNOW

That said, the cruise industry is very good at tempting you into spending more than necessary once you're aboard. Fortunately,

there are easy ways to dodge the upcharges and save thousands without skimping on the fun.

Here's how to cruise like a seasoned sailor without sinking your wallet:

1. Skip the drink package

Drink packages can be alluring. Unlimited soda! Fancy coffee! Boozy mojitos from sunrise to sundown! But unless you're truly committed to drinking like a fish, these packages rarely pay off — often costing \$60–\$100 per person per day.

The good news: most ships offer a surprising array of drinks for free. I'm talking filtered water, iced and herbal teas, basic juices, standard coffee, and even hot cocoa for the kiddos or cool-weather cruisers. That's plenty to keep you hydrated and happy.

But if you're still craving the occasional cocktail or alcoholic beverage, just pay per drink. Provided you're not an alcoholic, you'll probably still come out ahead of all-you-can-drink plans.



COURTESY CONRAD SCHUTT, MSC

An MSC cruise ship docks at Ocean Cay MSC Marine Reserve in the Bahamas.

2. Stick with the free stuff

You don't need specialty restaurants to eat like a king. Every cruise ship I've ever sailed has multiple free (and frankly delicious) dining options. Main dining room? Fantastic. Buffet? Surprisingly solid. Pizza window, burger grill, late-night snack stations? All included.

The same goes for entertainment. The shows, live music, trivia contests, karaoke, outdoor movie nights, water slides, ropes courses — all free. Why pay extra for escape rooms or fitness classes when the complimentary options are genuinely fun and abundant?

The value is in the variety — and it's already baked into your fare.

3. Book excursions with third-parties

Here's a little-known secret: many of the same tour companies that operate the cruise ship's off-

cial excursions also take bookings directly — for a lot less.

Third-party vendors are easy to find online and often have glowing reviews on TripAdvisor or cruise forums. They'll usually guarantee you're back at the ship on time, and many offer smaller group sizes than the cruise line's excursions.

The savings can be dramatic: a \$100 zip line tour from the cruise line might cost \$60 when booked direct. Just do your research, book early, and triple-check the meeting point.

4. Put your smartphone in airplane mode

Cruise ship Wi-Fi is notoriously expensive and painfully slow. Unless you're a remote worker or influencer who needs to upload poolside selfies in real time, skip the internet package altogether.

Instead, switch your phone to

airplane mode as soon as you set sail (to avoid roaming charges), then connect to the ship's free app for things like the daily schedule, dining reservations, and even chat with fellow passengers or iMessage users in some cases.

On port days, you can then check email or post photos with free or affordable land Wi-Fi.

5. Book early (or last minute) for the best deals

Cruise pricing is a bit like airfare: it fluctuates. But one thing's certain — booking early (as in 6-12 months out) often nets you the lowest base fares and best cabin choices. Interior rooms, especially, offer killer deals for travelers who care more about adventures than ocean views.

On the flip side, if you're flexible with your dates and destinations, you can sometimes score last-minute deals within 30 days of sailing. These "fill-the-boat" fares can be shockingly low — but choice is limited and airfare might offset the savings. Either way, the middle ground (booking 3–4 months out) tends to be the most expensive.

Saving money on a cruise isn't about deprivation — it's about being deliberate. Traveling smarter, not poorer. So skip the unnecessary extras, embrace the included perks, and remember: the ocean view, the warm breeze, and that soft-serve swirl at 10 p.m. are all free.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

THE CONVERSATION

Integrity is woven into our DNA

The end of the work week has reached its height amongst untouched resolutions, innocent ignorance's, and all in search of the light within the dark of our weekend displays.



LETROY WOODS

Our teacher patiently waits for us to slow down, and in the silence, we are spoken to by our advocate who greets us with a whisper that cascades off the tongue and says hello I am integrity. Integrity invites us to have a relationship so that we may free ourselves. Potential rests on the road less traveled.

We are born with integrity but have fallen from grace and our friend integrity influences us through adversity and self-reflection to come back home to ourselves, so that the stars may align once more. There is always a helping hand to rescue the heart that cries out. However, in order to understand what is to come next has a price tag with it. There is a voice other than the one who we associate with as ourself, that vibrates with a soundness that listens and sends us subtle messages. To ignore this investigation has dire consequences. Turning our back on ourselves sends a message to every cell in our body that conflicts against the nature of what humans are. Integrity is everything because when we are not in integrity we are in separation and division, and completeness of our potential can no longer pursue its destination.

For the ears and hearts that are open the rest of this conversation will speak to those who need its message. At the gate we meet our unadulterated selves as adversity guides us to paradise through self-reliance. With the compilation of titles and labels manipulating our modern society, the arrangements of identities alchemically creates separation, division, and confusion in our communities. The first step in our divine journey is honesty. This involves a unification of our past, present, and future. Building an unbreakable bond and relationship with integrity is key to unlocking our powers and legacy.

When the lies leave our mouth, or we choose to not listen to the voice that guides us to truth, the structure of our DNA begins to lose integrity, resulting in a lesser version of ourselves and ultimately our demise and destruction if not given attention to. Integrity is no judge of persons and waits patiently in life or in death to have its conversation with us. With great compassion and understanding you are being offered an opportunity to free your soul from the enduring intentional suffering resulting from external fallacies. Integrity is kind, difficult, painful, and a gift for whom ever is brave enough for its reward.

*"I must not Fear.
Fear is the mind killer.
Fear is the little-death that
Brings total obliteration.
I will face my fear.*

*I will permit it to pass over me
And through me.
And when it has gone past
I will turn the inner eye
To see its path.
Where the fear has gone
There will be nothing.
Only I will remain."*

— Frank Herbert, Dune

Trust yourself and the community that is being built with these conversations. The conversation is the place where one lives and dwells, and hand-in-hand integrity will walk with you into your freedom. With each new day what will you choose as the sun rises with eyes open and feet on the ground? Will you hear the voice of integrity or turn the cheek?

Letroy Woods can be reached at Letroywoods@gmail.com

ASK DR. STEVE

Mental health therapy: Is it for you?

In this Ask Dr. Steve two-part series, we will cover when to contact a mental health therapist, how to select a therapist, what are the typical number of sessions needed per episode care and cost, what elements in mental health therapy affect positive change, symptom reduction, and return to "normal" functioning.



STEVEN A. SZYKULA

The opinions expressed in the answers provided are based on 30 years of experience and psychotherapy outcome research.

Q How common is the need for mental health counseling or psychotherapy?

A Over a lifetime, over 80% of the adult population will exhibit symptoms or problems that would benefit from mental health services. Only half of those in need will access mental health services.

Q So, it's normal to need mental health services?

A That is correct. Think of mental health services as being similar to dental or primary care medical services. Eventually, almost everyone is in need.

Q How do you know when to call and schedule for mental health services?

A When you are "stuck", it is the time for mental health services. You could be stuck in a negative emotional pattern, a negative relationship pattern, or a pattern of behavior (drinking, gambling, procrastination) that does not match your goals or values or your desire for satisfaction in your life.

Q How do you locate or select a therapist?

A To find a therapist, your primary care physician or clergy may have recommendations. Your health insurance company has a list of providers in your area. Google search engines like "Psychology Today" can provide you with options. Sometimes friends will have a recommendation.

Q How do you choose from all of those options?

A Therapists typically have credentials and licenses to practice. They usually list what conditions they are accustomed to treating. Honestly, the choices pretty much look similar "online."

Q What does a therapy session cost?

A 2025 insurance discounted costs for therapy run between \$90 to \$120 per session. Private cash only providers may charge as much as \$200 per session. Insurances cover most of this cost, if it is a covered benefit, and after deductibles are met.

Q What is a deductible?

A Health insurers sometimes require subscribers to pay for their own health care services for up to a certain limit, such as \$500 or even as high as \$3,000 as a deductible. All plans are different and can change every year. Please call your health insurer before you schedule with a mental

health provider to find out about your co-pay and providers listed on your insurance.

Q Should I pay attention to Google reviews?

A No. Do not depend on Google reviews to select a therapist. Google reviews (mostly negative) are the ones posted and most are left by individuals who did not understand the cost or therapy process. Patients who are pleased with their therapy and their providers seldom leave Google reviews.

Q Does the number of years of experience of a therapist matter?

A Research shows that less experienced therapists also get good results. Age and sex of the therapist is a preference, but not a requirement for effective therapy or counseling.

Q How many sessions of therapy do most people participate in when obtaining good results?

A Between 8 and 12 sessions of therapy are needed to be effective for many if not most mental health problems. After that, follow up check ups are recommended. Frequently, other problems arise and people get back to therapy quicker and without hesitation.

Q How do you know that the therapist you picked and are seeing is the right one?

A You should like and respect your therapist. They should demonstrate good questions, compassion, professional demeanor, and ideas for you to explore.

Q What are the ingredients to effective therapy or counseling?

A These are a few key ingredients to effective therapy or therapists:

1. The therapy and client relationship needs to be positive and respectful. This is referred to by therapists as the "therapeutic alliance." Research shows that this accounts for 60% of positive change, leaving 40% to other factors.

2. In most cases, the therapist should match the techniques with the problems and the client's beliefs. There are many evidence-based therapies with a variety of techniques.

3. Continuous assessment and problem goal targeting. It is my opinion that every session, after small talk, should begin with "what do you want to accomplish in the 45-50 minutes that we have together today?" Also important is to ask the client if they experienced any upsetting events since the last session, including sleep deprivation, suicidal thoughts, uncontrollable anger or other emotions or life events like divorce, deaths, job trouble or loss, etc.

Q What are some of the things that are associated with negative experiences in psychotherapy?

A Boundary violations permitted by the therapist and dual relationships are ethical problems that lead to negative therapy experiences. Your therapist cares about you and your progress. However, they are not a friend, and certainly not a lover. They are a professionals providing a service. If that boundary is crossed there are potential big

problems for both the therapist and client. Men and an approximately an equal number of women therapists are brought before the licensing board each year for having inappropriate, mostly sexual, relationships with clients.

Q What are boundary violations?

A Meeting for lunch or coffee with your therapist is likely a boundary violation. Texting, emailing, or calling your therapist at times other than therapy appointment times can be a boundary violation. I once had a therapist selling "healthy" water machines to their clients. This is a dual relationship that can cause problems. — Don't buy a machine and then you might get less focus and attention in the therapy.

Q What are some other complaints that people have about their past therapists?

A Many people complain that their therapist talks too much about themselves, their life, and the therapist's own problems. Many people also complain that their therapist, even though they like the therapist, did not offer any methods to address the problems, symptoms and negative patterns that they were seeing help for. They would lament: "The therapist just listened."

Q When should you stop going to therapy?

A Some therapist schedule weekly sessions and do not identify specific goals to be achieved or a timeline. With this in mind, if your improvements have plateaued, it may be time to go into a follow up phase versus a weekly session phase of treatment.

For some individuals, the goal might be to help the person with serious mental illness from needing emergency hospital services, thus justifying once a week therapy or even more for longer.

For most people seeking outpatient counseling, 8-12 sessions and some follow up is what is needed and is statistically reported. Like your dentist and primary care physician attendance, your mental health services participation will start and temporarily discontinue over the years.

In upcoming articles, Dr. Steve Szykula and colleague Jason Sadora, M.S. and licensed clinical mental health therapist, will detail accessing medication therapies and alternatives to traditional medications including direct brain interventions (Spravato therapy), neuro-feedback therapy, trans-cranial stimulation therapies and others. Also detailed will be the many of the available psychological and neuropsychological evaluation services which are helpful in determining diagnoses and the course of treatment.

Dr. Steve Szykula has provided psychotherapy services for four generations of family members, grandparent, adult child, adult child's children, adult child's grandchildren, most often with one or two episodes of care occurring each year for 8-12 sessions. Much like patients who rely on a primary care medical doctor over many years, the effective therapist builds the same type of practice and trust.

Dr. Steve Szykula and his colleagues at Comprehensive Psychological Services (WeCanHelpOut.com) offer a variety of therapy and medication options at their clinics.

GET OUT THERE

Do not follow this wretched travel advice

I recently stumbled upon a piece of travel “advice” that’s as bad as seeing a passenger walk into an airplane bathroom while barefoot. It went something like this: “While it may be tempting to buy an ethnic shirt or dress that reflects a country’s heritage, it probably isn’t a good idea. Doing so may be seen as cultural appropriation, even if no one accuses you of it directly.”

Excuse me? “Seen as”? “Even if no one accuses you”? Are we just preemptively assuming guilt now? If not, are there cultural fashion police I’m not aware of, checking non-existent ethnic identity cards whenever they see someone of a certain race not conforming to what that race should or should not be wearing?



BLAKE SNOW

Of course not.

So let me put this plainly: If you’re legally able to buy something abroad — be it a colorful kimono, a dashing dashiki, a cool piece of kente, or alpaca socks so cozy they whisper sweet nothings to your feet — you totally can.

That’s how buying things works. It’s literally commerce. Trade. Global participation. A bazaar of cultural appreciation, not a courtroom.

Let’s get one thing straight. The majority of artisans around the world aren’t sitting in their workshops hoping no one buys their stuff. They want you to buy their wares. That beautiful embroidered blouse? Hand-stitched by someone’s abuela who’s trying to pay her bills and maybe, just maybe, send her kid to school with shoes that match. She’s not worried about your “appropriation.” She’s hoping you pick the red one because it brings out your eyes and



TATAN SYUFLANA, ASSOCIATED PRESS

People browse for clothings at Tanah Abang textile market in Jakarta, Indonesia, on April 10.

makes you smell like foreign currency.

Now, sure, you don’t want to be that tourist. You know the one — dancing through a sacred temple in a feathered headdress like they’re auditioning for Coachella. Yes, there’s a line between appreciation and disrespect, and no, that line isn’t always bright neon with road signs. So do a little homework. Don’t treat someone’s cultural symbol like it’s a novelty wig.

But if you see a stunning garment made locally, sold legally, and worn joyfully by the people around you? Buy the dang thing. Wear it. Love it. Tell people where it’s from. That’s not stealing — that’s sharing. That’s what travel is.

Also, if we’re going to clutch our pearls over people wearing things from cultures not their own, what exactly do we do with half of Western fashion? Denim? Not American (although jeans are). Scarves? Middle Eastern origin. T-shirts? German engineering, baby. Flip-flops? Japanese zori. Should

we just wear beige jumpsuits now to avoid offending the ghost of global textiles past?

No thanks. I’ll take the risk. And so should you.

So next time you’re in Morocco and that buttery-soft leather jacket is calling your name, don’t hesitate. Buy it. When you’re in India and a silk sari makes you gasp audibly, buy it. When in Mexico, if that colorful serape or sombrero makes you smile like you just tasted churros for the first time — buy it.

You don’t need permission to enjoy the world. You just need respect, curiosity, and maybe a little room in your carry-on. Happy shopping, world citizen.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

Aug. 9

2025 Provo Farmer’s Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (Aug. 9-Oct. 25 [Saturdays], provofarmersmarket.com)

Craft Supply Swap, Provo City Library, noon-1:30 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Family Arts Festival 2025, Brigham Young University Museum of Art (Aug. 9-23, moa.byu.edu)

Landscapes and Handscapes 2025, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (Aug. 9-23, jkr-gallery.myshopify.com)

A Broken Heart & A Contrite Spirit Exhibit - Lovetta Reyes-Cairo, The Compass Gallery, 6 p.m. (Aug. 9-16, thecompassgallery.com)

Aug. 10

Mountain Top Yoga 2025, Sundance Resort, 9-11 a.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Aug. 11

Storytelling Mondays: Mary Hokanson, The Provo Pioneer Village, 6:30 p.m. (provopioneervillage.org)

Aug. 12

Full Moon Lift Rides, Sundance Resort, 8 p.m. (Aug. 12-13, sundanceresort.com)

Aug. 14

Teen Movie Night: The Incredibles, Provo Library, 6:30 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Aug. 15

Utah Open, Riverside Country Club, 8 a.m. (Aug. 15-17, utahpga.com/utahopen)

Friday Fusion, Arlington Hall, 8:30 p.m.-2 a.m.

Bluebird Cafe Concert Series, Sundance Resort, 8 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Orem

Aug. 9

Hello, Dolly!, SCERA Shell Outdoor Theatre, 8 p.m. (Aug. 9-19, scera.org)

Back to School Concert Bash, The Orchard at University Place, 5:30 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Art for All, UVU Museum of Art, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (uvu.edu/museum)

Aug. 11

Back to School Luau, The Orchard at University Place, 7 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Aug. 13

Outdoor Movie at the SCERA: Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone, SCERA Shell Outdoor Theatre, dusk (scera.org)

Orem Farmers Market, Orem City Center Park, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

Aug. 15

Summer Concert Series, Classic Skating Orem, 7 p.m. (classicsun.com)

SLI Summer Movie Series: Kung Fu Panda, Student Center Courtyard, 9 p.m. (uvu.edu)



FAIRWAYS MEDIA

TOP GOLFERS HEAD TO UTAH OPEN

BYU golfer Kelton Hirsch reacts after making a shot during the final round of the 2019 Siegfried and Jensen Utah Open at Riverside Country Club in Provo on Aug. 18, 2019.

Orchard Country Dancin’, The Orchard at University Place, 7 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Aug. 16

Utah Valley Symphony Concert at The Orchard: Alex Boye, The Orchard at University Place, 7 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Lindon

Aug. 14

Lindon’s Sunset Farmers Market 2025, Lindon City Center Park, 5 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

Aug. 15

Lindon’s Movies in the Park: Moana 2, Fryer Park, dusk (lindonrecreation.org)

Aug. 16

2025 Provo Canyon Half Marathon, Oak Canyon Junior High School, 7 a.m. (runsignup.com)

Lindon’s Sounds of Summer: Molly in the Mineshaft, Lindon City Center Park, 7 p.m. (lindonrecreation.org)

Vineyard

Aug. 13

Movie in the Park: High School Musical, Vineyard Grove Park, dusk (vineyardutah.gov)

SOUTH

Springville

Aug. 9

Springville Summer Send-Off, various location (springville.org)

■ Foam party, Public safety fair, Beach party, Cardboard Regatta, Movie in the Park, Concert in the Park

Sunset Farmers Markets, Springville Civic Center, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

Little Shop of Horrors, Merit Academy, 7:30 p.m. (Aug. 9-30, springville-playhouse.org)

51st annual Utah Quilt Show, Springville Museum of Art (Aug. 9-Sept. 20, smofa.org)

Aug. 14

Pirate Night, Springville Library, 6-8 p.m. (springville.org)

Aug. 16

The Flying Coffee Beans, The Venue at 1750, 7 p.m. (1750venue.com)

Springville 2025 Summer Concert Series: The Long Run, Springville Arts Park, 8 p.m. (springville.org)

Aug. 17

Sunday Concert Series: Saltairs, Springville Museum of Art, 4 p.m. (smofa.org)

Spanish Fork

Aug. 9

Spanish Fork Children’s Market, Spanish Fork City Park, 10 a.m. (spanishfork.gov)

Aug. 14

The Thief and the Lady, Angelus Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (Aug. 14-25, angelustheatre.com)

Salem

Aug. 9

Salem Days, various locations (salem.utah.gov)

■ Breakfast in the Park, Calendar Photo Contest, Car Show, Cardboard Duct Tape Regatta, Chalk the Block, Children’s Parade, City Tours, Cornhole Tournament, Disc Golf Tournament, Dutch Oven Cook-Off, Fair in the Square, Family Fun Run, Family Movie in the Park, Friday Night Concert, Fireworks, Food Drive, Golf Tournament, Grand Parade, Kick-Off Family Party, Library Auction, Little Buckaroo Rodeo, Monday Night Concert, Mud Volleyball, Pickleball Tournament, Quilt Show, Rock, Paper, Scissors Tournament, Saturday Night Entertainment, Senior Dinner, Summer Musical, Tractor Pull, Treasure Hunt

Aug. 11

Salem Farmer’s Market, Salem Fire Station, 5 p.m. (spanishfork-chamber.com)

Mapleton

Aug. 11

Mapleton Farmers Market 2025, Mapleton City Park, 6-8:30 p.m. (mapletonfarmersmarket.com)

Mapleton Summer Concerts in the Park 2025: Lunch at Lue’s, Mapleton City Park, 7 p.m. (mapleton.org)

Santaquin

Aug. 9

Rowley’s Red Barn Sunflower Festival 2025, Rowley’s Red Barn, 5:30-8:30 p.m. (Aug. 9-24, rowleysredbarn.com)

Aug. 11

Santaquin Hometown Market and Sounds of Santaquin, Centennial Park, 5 p.m. (Mondays from Aug. 4-Sept. 15, paysonssantaquinarea.com)

NORTH

American Fork

Aug. 9

Auditions for Something’s Afoot, Timpanogos Arts Foundation - Arts Center, 6-9 p.m. (americanforkarts.com)

Aug. 16

FantaSci Con, American Fork Library, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

Lehi

Aug. 9

Social Dance Date Night - Country Swing, Lehi Legacy Center, 7-9 p.m. (lehi-ut.gov)

High School Musical 2, Lehi Arts Council, 7 p.m. (Aug. 9-12, lehiarts.org)

Aug. 10

Lehi Arts in the Park: Wasatch Show Band, Wines Park, 7:30 p.m. (lehiarts.org)

Aug. 15

Outdoor Movie Series: The Wild Robot, Ashton Gardens, 8 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

Pleasant Grove

Aug. 9

The Play That Goes Wrong, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 4/7:30 p.m. (Aug. 9-16, theruth.org)

Aug. 13

2025 Utah Flower Market, 11 a.m.-noon (utahflowermarket.com)

Alpine

Aug. 9

Alpine Days, various locations (Aug. 9, alpinedays.com)

■ Rodeo, Golf tournament, 5K race, Pickleball tournament, Mountain bike race, Spikeball tournament, Auto show, Fireman’s BBQ, Chalk the Walk, Storytime, Yoga in the Park, Service project, Blue Ribbon Bake Off, Kickball, Home Run Derby, Senior dinner, Pet show, Alpine’s Past in Paint, Movie in the Park, Family dance, Hike, Carnival, Boutiques, Music in the Park, Parade, Quilt show, Fireworks

Aug. 12

Trucks & Tunes, Legacy Park, 5-8 p.m.

Cedar Hills

Aug. 11

Meet the Mayor, Cedar Hills City Offices, 10-11 a.m.

Highland

Aug. 9

2025 Highland Farmers Market, Highland Heritage Park, 4-8 p.m.

Aug. 15

Sew’N Sews, Highland Community Center, 9-4 p.m. (highlandcityarts.info)

WEST

Eagle Mountain

Aug. 9

Farmer’s Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eagle-mountain.gov)

Aug. 15

Movie in the Park: Wild Robot, Silverlake Amphitheater, 9 p.m. (eagle-mountain.gov)

Aug. 16

Farmer’s Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eagle-mountain.gov)

Saratoga Springs

Aug. 9

Train Rides, Shay Park, 9 a.m.-noon (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

Aug. 11

Saratoga Springs Farmers Market, Neptune Park, 5-9 p.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

Summer Monday Fundays: Saratoga Shows Off!, Neptune Park, 7:30 p.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

Cedar Valley

Aug. 9

Military Appreciation Day 2025, Camp Floyd State Park and Stagecoach Inn Museum, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (state-parks.utah.gov/parks/camp-floyd)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

Aug. 9

Salt Lake Parade of Homes, various locations, noon-9 p.m. (Aug. 9-16, saltlakeparade.com)

Craft Lake City, Utah State Fairpark, 5-10 p.m. (Aug. 9-10, craftlake-city.com)

Aug. 13

Red Butte Outdoor Concert Series 2025: ZZ Top, Red Butte Garden, 7:30 p.m. (redbuttegarden.org)

Heber Valley/Nephi

Aug. 9

Muddy Dash Mud Run, Soldier Hollow Nordic Center, 7 a.m. (muddydash.com)

Juab County Fair, Juab County Fairground, Nephi (juabcountyfair.com)

■ Blue Ribbon breakfast, 3-D archer shoot, Hometown Showdown battle, Train rides, Cornhole tournament, Juab’s Got Talent, Diaper Derby, Car parade, Demolition Derby

Aug. 15

Heber Valley Railroad Friday Night Train, Heber Valley Railroad Depot, 7-8:30 p.m. (hebertrain.com)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jloyd@heraldextra.com.

ASK DR. STEVE

When worry takes over: Understanding childhood anxiety

The children in our care today seem to carry heavier emotional burdens than previous generations. While childhood has always included worries and fears, the scale and intensity of anxiety we're seeing now is unprecedented. Understanding these challenges isn't about creating alarm or dwelling on problems—it's about recognizing what our young people are facing so we can better support their emotional well-being.

Remember, recognizing these challenges isn't about blaming anyone or anything. It's about understanding how modern stressors uniquely affect developing minds so we can guide young people toward healthier coping strategies and emotional regulation skills.

Q Why does my child seem so much more anxious than the kids I grew up with?

A Today's children face several unique stressors that previous generations didn't experience. They're exposed to unfiltered global information through 24-hour news cycles, social media comparisons, and less unstructured play time to naturally work through worries. Additionally, well-meaning parents often remove obstacles from children's paths, which prevents them from learning that they can handle difficult situations.

Q How do I know if my child's worry is normal or something to be concerned about?

A Clinical anxiety affects about 1 in 8 children today. Normal worry is temporary and specific to a situation, while anxiety tends to be persistent and interferes with daily functioning.

Look for physical symptoms like frequent stomach aches or sleep problems, avoidance of age-appropriate activities, or worry that seems disproportionate to the situation. If anxiety is limiting your child's life or causing significant distress, it's worth seeking professional guidance.

Q Why is my young child complaining of stomach aches when nothing seems to be wrong physically?

A Children under 10 often express anxiety through physical complaints, particularly stomach aches and sleep disturbances, because they don't yet have the vocabulary to describe emotional states. Their bodies are responding to stress, but they can't identify it as anxiety. This is completely normal and doesn't mean they're making it up—their distress is real, even if the cause is emotional rather than physical.

Q At what age do children start to worry about abstract things they can't control?

A Children typically develop the cognitive capacity for abstract worry around 8-10 years old. This explains why exposure to adult social media platforms and news at this age can be particularly problematic—they can understand enough to worry about global events or social situations, but they don't yet have the coping skills to process these concerns appropriately.

Q Why does my child need constant reassurance about everything?

A If your child's world feels unpredictable or overwhelming, their nervous system learns to stay alert for danger. Seeking reassurance is their way of trying to feel safe. This makes complete sense from their perspective—they're trying to gather information to determine if they're okay. The challenge is that too much reassurance can

actually increase anxiety over time by confirming that there's something to worry about.

Q How can I provide comfort without feeding my child's anxiety?

A Instead of immediately reassuring them that everything will be fine, try reflecting their feelings first: "You're really worried about this." Then help them problem-solve: "What do you think you could do if that happened?" This validates their experience while building their confidence in handling uncertainty. Sometimes the most helpful thing you can do is sit with their discomfort rather than trying to fix it immediately.

Q Why does my child avoid activities they used to enjoy?

A Avoidance is anxiety's main strategy for feeling safe. If your child has had a negative experience or even imagined one, their brain might decide that avoiding the situation entirely is the safest option. While this reduces anxiety in the short term, it actually strengthens it over time because they never learn that they can handle the situation.

Q How do I help my child face their fears without forcing them?

A The key is gradual exposure combined with support. Start with very small steps toward the feared situation and celebrate each small success. For example, if they're afraid of dogs, start by looking at pictures of dogs, then watching dogs from a distance, then maybe petting a very calm dog. Let them set the pace while encouraging small steps forward.

Q Which part of the brain is most affected by chronic anxiety in children?

A The amygdala, which processes fear and threat detection, shows the most significant changes in children with

chronic anxiety. It becomes enlarged and hyperactive, leading to heightened fear responses and difficulty distinguishing between real and imagined threats. This is why anxious children often react strongly to situations that seem minor to adults.

Q What happens if childhood anxiety isn't addressed?

A Research shows that 60-70% of children with untreated anxiety disorders develop secondary depression by adolescence. Early intervention is crucial because anxiety patterns can become deeply ingrained over time. However, evidence-based treatments like cognitive-behavioral therapy are highly effective, especially when started early. The goal isn't to eliminate all worry—it's to help children develop healthy coping strategies.

Q How long does effective anxiety treatment usually take?

A Evidence-based treatments like cognitive-behavioral therapy show optimal effectiveness with 12-16 weeks of intervention. This duration allows sufficient time for children to learn new skills and for their brains to develop new neural pathways. Shorter interventions may provide some relief, but longer treatment periods typically lead to more lasting change.

Q How can I tell if my child's anxiety is related to school or social pressures?

A School-related anxiety often shows up as physical complaints on school mornings, reluctance to attend, or meltdowns around homework time. Social anxiety might manifest as avoiding playdates, not wanting to speak up in class, or seeming different after social interactions. Pay attention to when symptoms are worse—if they improve dramatically on weekends

or school breaks, environmental factors are likely contributing significantly.

Q What role does social media play in childhood anxiety?

A Social media exposes children to constant comparison with others, cyberbullying, and information their brains aren't ready to process. Children as young as 8 are accessing platforms designed for adults, leading to exposure to unrealistic standards and social dynamics they can't yet understand. The fear of missing out (FOMO) and pressure to maintain an online image can create persistent low-level stress.

Q How can I build my child's resilience without making them tough?

A Resilience comes from experiencing manageable challenges with support, not from toughening up. Let your child struggle a bit with age-appropriate problems while staying emotionally available. Teach them that feelings are temporary and manageable. Help them identify their strengths and past successes. The goal is helping them trust that they can handle difficult situations, not that they have to handle them alone.

Q When should I seek professional help for my child's anxiety?

A Consider professional help if anxiety interferes with your child's daily functioning for more than a few weeks, if they're avoiding important activities like school or friendships, if physical symptoms persist despite medical evaluation, or if your family life is significantly disrupted. Trust your instincts—if you're concerned, it's worth having a professional assessment.

Closing

The anxiety challenges facing today's children are real and significant, but they're

also highly treatable when recognized and addressed appropriately. Understanding that childhood anxiety often stems from environmental and social factors rather than personal failings helps us respond with compassion rather than frustration. These aren't character flaws in our young people; they're predictable responses to genuinely overwhelming circumstances.

The good news is that anxiety is one of the most successfully treated mental health conditions in children. Small, consistent changes in how we support anxious children can lead to significant improvements in their emotional regulation and overall well-being. Whether it's teaching coping strategies, creating calmer environments, or seeking professional support, every step toward understanding and addressing anxiety matters.

Remember that building emotional resilience is a gradual process. Start with small changes that feel manageable for your family, and build from there. Celebrate your child's brave moments—every time they face a fear or try a new coping strategy, they're building stronger neural pathways for managing anxiety. Be patient with setbacks, and remember that seeking help from professionals is often the most loving thing you can do.

Your child's anxiety makes sense given their world, and with understanding, evidence-based strategies, and patience, they can learn to manage their worries and develop the emotional tools they need to thrive. The care and concern you're showing by learning about anxiety is already an important step in supporting their emotional development.

This article authored by: Jason Sadora MS and Steven Szykula PhD

GET OUT THERE

Niagara Falls is the summer vacation every American needs

"I respectfully disagree with Eleanor Roosevelt," my wife said to me. The former First Lady famously exclaimed, "Poor Niagara!" upon seeing South America's Iguazu Falls for the first time — the largest in the world, which dwarf the number, height, and power of North America's biggest falls.



BLAKE SNOW

"This place (Niagara Falls) has major Mount Rushmore vibes," my wife added. "Super patriotic and beautiful."

She's not wrong.

Having visited both Niagara and Iguazu, I'm happy to report that the latter takes nothing away from the former. On top of that, Niagara Falls, New York, is certifiably charming and my new favorite East Coast town — one that's filled with incredibly kind and generous people, family-friendly streets dotted with games and delightful landscaping, and the oldest state park in the nation that's as free as it was the inspiration for the many National Parks that followed.

Having experienced Niagara Falls in every way possible — by helicopter, by boat, by hot air balloon, on foot, and from both the American and Canadian sides — here's what my smitten family enjoyed most after our weeklong visit.

Most powerful: Cave of The Winds Boardwalk

For \$23 per adult (\$18 for children), you can step into the basin of one of Niagara's three thrilling waterfalls at Cave of The Winds, located in Niagara State Park. Even with the provided ponchos, you'll probably still get drenched in the "Hurricane Zone." But the powerful payoff, elated laughter, and once in a lifetime memories are something I'll never forget. Heck, I'd pay double to do it again — it was the family favorite.

Like the impressive introductory movie foretold, the world really did change here. Not only is Niagara Falls the impetus of protected public parks, it was the birthplace of electricity, if not the idea that beauty and power can coexist when we work together.

The Classic: Maid of The Mist Boat Ride

If you want the legendary falls experience — into the roar and spray of the cascades — go with Maid of the Mist. This large barge motors right into the center of Horseshoe



SETH WENIG, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tourists look at Niagara Falls from Niagara Falls, N.Y., on Oct. 29, 2019.

Falls, the largest of Niagara. Ponchos are provided but you'll still get wet.

Along the way, you'll be treated to up close views and stunning vistas from both sides of the border. On top of that, admission grants access to the best observation deck on the American side, which extends out over the river for impressive stacked views of all three falls.

The Splurge: Rainbow Air Helicopter Tour

At \$180 per person, this 15 minute helicopter tour that flies into both American and Canadian airspace ain't cheap. But it's an exhilarating experience in brand new Airbus helicopters that seat up to six passengers at a time. It also offers a bird's eye view of the falls you'll get no where else.

My family loved it. What's more, the new hanger offers 11 virtual reality simulators that let you paraglide into the falls using the same impressive technology that both Disney and Universal use in their parks. It was an overall

great experience, my family's second favorite of the trip.

The Unsung: Niagara State Park Proximity

Located right in downtown, Niagara Falls State Park gives you stunning, close-up views of American Falls, Bridal Veil Falls, and part of Horseshoe Falls with better proximity and access to the edge, more trails, picnics, and walkways, and more serenity when compared to the louder and overdeveloped Canadian side, which gives of some major "Vegas Lite" vibes.

Every night at 10 pm, there's a short but potent fireworks show over the river as the falls are lit in red, white, and blue. These are best seen from Prospect Point or rim walkway. Either way, there's no better way to experience the 12,000 year old fans than from the superior state park. ProTip: Ride the scenic trolley if you want or need a break from the many flowered and concession lined walkways.

The Kitschy: All That Glitters in Canada

America has the falls, Canada has the view. That's the best way to distinguish the two sides of Niagara. While I definitely recommend walking across Rainbow Bridge for a sunset stroll along the falls view parkway and twinkling, if not carnival-like Clifton Hill road in Canada, I wouldn't spend more than an evening and night doing so.

For a more peaceful, tranquil, and less crowded experience, I prefer staying and enjoying the American side quite a bit more. If you have a passport, you should definitely do both as the pedestrian walkway is quick and easy. But for me and my house, we biasly prefer the American side for being less developed, calmer, and closer to the falls.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

GET OUT THERE

5 things you don't know about Utah

You think you know Utah? You certainly know our famous ski resorts, red rocks, and “Mighty Five” National Parks. But do you know about our secret wonders, hidden gems, cosmic nights, and Martian landscapes hiding in plain sight sometimes, the very ones millions of people travel halfway around the world for?

BLAKE SNOW

In my two and half decades of devoted residence, this is real Utah — unfiltered, unforgettable, utterly underrated. The places where lesser-known adventures meet originality — no crowds, no ticket lines, no “Seen it before.” Just wonder.

1. A secret slot canyon that out-narrows The Wave

Zion’s Narrows and Antelope Canyon may hog the spotlight. But tucked deep within the bowels of Grand Staircase National Monument you’ll find Peek-A-Boo

and Spooky Gulch — an off-the-beaten-path pair of slot canyons that are wild, narrow, and often crowd-free. Both form a thrilling loop. You crawl into Peek-A-Boo, scramble over slickrock, then worm through Spooky’s jaw-tight passages — some just 10-15 inches wide. Think of it as an adult playground molded by nature. And because it’s less advertised, you won’t feel like cattle in a tourist corral. Pro-tip: go early, bring water, and wear a small pack — you’ll thank yourself in those tight squeezes.

2. The longest stretch of interstate without services

Most folks know I-70 links coast to coast. But did you know Utah contains the longest service-free stretch of interstate in the country? Between Green River and Salina spans over 100 miles of desert road with no gas stations, cafés, or bathrooms. Even locals might forget how vast and deserted this section is — until their tank hits “E.” While I-70 may not be as “lonely” as Nevada’s Highway 50 — aka “The



DOUGLAS C. PIZAC, ASSOCIATED PRESS

This Aug. 6, 2003, file photo shows the Spiral Jetty west of Brigham City.

Loneliest Road in America,” which runs an even more intimidating 287 miles “without services” — the former is the longest stretch of interstate and no joke when it comes to planning gas and potty breaks.

3. Spiral Jetty: world-famous, rarely visited

Here’s another: The Spiral Jetty is a massive 1,500-foot land art installation that juts into the Great Salt Lake. It was created in 1970 by artist Robert Smithson and considered to be his most important work, if not cultural icon. Yet it still flies under the radar for many Utah residents. The lake’s dry spell of the 2000s exposed the Jetty and revived some global interest. But the free public site remains mostly rugged and devoid of visitors. Want to get up close and personal? Pack a picnic, snap some surreal photos, and revel in solitude. But be on the watch for flying insects. They can get out of hand real fast.

4. “Dark Sky” tourism that’s out of this world

Sure, winter lights up Park City. But Utah’s night skies also belong in the global hall of fame. In fact, the state boasts more International Dark-Sky Parks than any other place in the Lower 48. These include Bryce Canyon, Capitol Reef, and Natural Bridges — spots with little to no light pollution. The getting is so good here that astro-tourists from Europe and Asia regularly show up with telescopes and DSLRs to witness the Milky Way’s sky-spanning splendor, something many Utahns are just waking up to. You don’t know how beautiful your own skies are until you’ve seen them from a Dark Sky Park.

5. The most Martian landscape on Earth

Out near Hanksville hosts the Mars Desert Research Station — a

bona fide simulated Martian habitat run by the Mars Society. Since its founding in 2002, the station has been used by NASA researchers, sci-fi filmmakers, and National Geographic television crews to imitate the “Red Planet.” Make no mistake: the research station isn’t a theme-park gimmick. It’s a serious operations hub where people live, work, and experiment under harsh desert conditions that mimic those found on Mars. And it’s right here, among Utah’s crimson canyons.

BONUS: The only warm-water scuba diving in the Mountain West, aka “Midway Crater,” a 95 degree hot spring inside a limestone dome that you can swim, snorkel, and dive year-round.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

COUNTYWIDE

July 30

Utah County Fair, Spanish Fork Fairgrounds, Spanish Fork (July 30-Aug. 2, utahcountyfair.org)

- Attractions include: Makers Market, Food booths, Open Horse Show, Western Night Rodeo, Monster Trucks, Car Show, Scales and Tails, Antique Tractor Pull, UTC Demolition Derby, LEGO Display, Kids games, Music festival, 4H events, and Displays

CENTRAL

Provo

July 26

2025 Provo Farmer’s Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (July 19-Oct. 25 [Saturdays], provofarmersmarket.com)

The Wizard of Oz, Sundance Resort, 7 p.m. (July 26/28/31, sundanceresort.com)

Family Arts Festival 2025, Brigham Young University Museum of Art (July 19-26, moa.byu.edu)

Landscapes and Handscapes 2025, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (July 26-Aug. 23, jkr-gallery.myshopify.com)

A Broken Heart & A Contrite Spirit Exhibit - Lovetta Reyes-Cairo, The Compass Gallery, 6 p.m. (July 26-Aug. 16, thecompassgallery.com)

July 27

Mountain Top Yoga 2025, Sundance Resort, 9-11 a.m. (sundanceresort.com)

July 28

Storytelling Mondays: Karla Huntsman, The Provo Pioneer Village, 6:30 p.m. (provopioneerivillage.org)

July 30

Wicked Sing-Along: Movie in the Ballroom, Provo City Library, 6-9 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Aug. 1

The Wizard of Oz, Sundance Resort, 7 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Miss Greater Salt Lake’s Teen Scholarship Competition, Covey Center for the Performing Arts, 7-9:30 p.m. (Aug. 1-2, covey.provo.gov)

Acoustic Open Mic Night, Provo City Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (provolibrary.gov)

Downtown Provo Art Stroll, Center Street (downtownprovo.org)

Friday Fusion, Arlington Hall, 8:30 p.m.-2 a.m.

Bluebird Cafe Concert Series, Sundance Resort, 8 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Aug. 2

2025 Provo Farmer’s Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (July 26-Oct. 25 [Saturdays], provofarmersmarket.com)

Family Arts Festival 2025, Brigham Young University Museum of Art (moa.byu.edu)

Landscapes and Handscapes 2025, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (Aug. 2-23, jkr-gallery.myshopify.com)

A Broken Heart & A Contrite Spirit Exhibit - Lovetta Reyes-Cairo, The Compass Gallery, 6 p.m. (Aug. 3-16, thecompassgallery.com)

Orem

July 26

Honey Jar pottery lesson, Villa Ceramic Pottery studio, 4 p.m. (villaceramics.com)

July 28

2025 Summer Matinee Series: The

Peanuts Movie, SCERA Center for the Arts, 10:30 a.m./1 p.m. (July 28-31, scera.org)

Library Hall Presents: Family Concert, Orem Library, 7 p.m. (library.orem.gov)

July 29

World Folkfest Community Extravaganza, University Place Orem, 6 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

July 30

Orem Farmers Market, Orem City Center Park, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

Orem Community Police Picnic, Orem Community Park, 6-7 p.m. (orem.gov)

July 31

2025 Deborah Voigt and Friends Gala, The Noorda Center for the Performing Arts, 7 p.m. (utahvalleyoperafest.org)

Aug. 1

Hello, Dolly!, SCERA Shell Outdoor Theatre, 8 p.m. (Aug. 1-19, scera.org)

Orchard Country Dancin’, University Place Orem, 7 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Summer Reading Finale: SCERA Pool Party, SCERA Pool, 6-9 p.m. (oremlibrary.org)

Summer concert series, Classic Skating, 7-10 p.m. (classicfun.com)

Lindon

July 28

Lindon Days, various locations (July 28-Aug. 2, lindonrecreation.org/lindon-days)

- Attractions include: Car show, Cowgirl Clinic, Bingo, Harris Pioneer Home Tour, Night Out Against Crime, Ice cream social, Movie in the Park, Chess tournament, Huck Finn Fishing, Star Party, Junior rodeo, Mayor’s Candy Scramble, Dirt Dance, Video game tournament, Grand parade, 5K and fun run, Public Safety Breakfast, Cardboard Boat Regatta, Dime Dive, KenDucky Derby, Market and games, Food vendors, Concert, and Fireworks

July 29

2025 Lindon Summer Movies: Sonic the Hedgehog 3, Fryer Park, dusk (lindonrecreation.org)

July 31

Lindon’s Sunset Farmers Market 2025, Lindon City Center Park, 5 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

SOUTH

Springville

July 26

Concert for Carl: Ronstadt Live and Carpenters Platinum, Spring Acres Arts Park, 7 p.m. (ronstadt.live/concert-for-carl)

51st annual Utah Quilt Show, Springville Museum of Art (July 26-Sept. 20, smofa.org)

July 28

Sunset Farmers Markets, Springville Civic Center, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

July 29

Meet the Author: Doug Wing, Springville Public Library, 6-8 p.m. (springville.org/library)

July 30

World Folkfest, Springville Arts Park, 5:30 p.m. (July 30-Aug. 2, worldfolkfest.org)

Attractions include: Folk storytelling, International art, India Rangoli, Mat weaving
Donizetti’s The Elixir of Love, Springville Museum of Art, 7 p.m. (utahvalleyoperafest.org)

July 31

Wizard School Tournament, Springville Public Library, 6-8 p.m. (springville.org/library)

Spanish Fork

July 26

Fiesta Days (July 26-27, spanishfork.gov)

- Attractions include: Kickball challenge, Cornhole tournament, Softball tournament, Pickleball tournament, Disc golf tournament, Flag retirement, Baby contest, Golf tournament, Tennis tournament, Carnival, Craft fair, Food in the Park, Car show, Miss and Mr. Extraordinaire Pageant, Rodeo, Street dance, Spanish Fork’s Got Talent, Speedy Spaniard River Trail 10k/Kids mile run, Parade, Quilt show, Adopt-a-duck race, Fireworks, ATA Shoot

Shrek: The Musical, Spanish Fork High School Auditorium, 2/7 p.m. (spanishfork.gov)

July 29

Secret Garden, Angelus Theatre, 2 p.m. (angelustheatre.com)

Aug. 1

Classic Country, Angelus Theatre, 7 p.m. (angelustheatre.com)

Aug. 2

Peace Revolution, Angelus Theatre, 7:30 p.m. (angelustheatre.com)

Payson

Aug. 1

Payson Salmon Supper, Payson Memorial Park, 4-9 p.m. (paysonutah.gov)

Salem

July 26

Little Women: The Broadway Musical, Salem Hills High School, 7 p.m. (July 26-27, salemcommunitytheater.org)

Aug. 1

Salem Days, various locations (Aug. 1-9, salem.utah.gov)

- Attractions include: Breakfast in the Park, Calendar Photo Contest, Car Show, Cardboard Duct Tape Regatta, Chalk the Block, Children’s Parade, City Tours, Cornhole Tournament, Disc Golf Tournament, Dutch Oven Cook-Off, Fair in the Square, Family Fun Run, Family Movie in the Park, Friday Night Concert, Fireworks, Food Drive, Golf Tournament, Grand Parade, Kick-Off Family Party, Library Auction, Little Buckaroo Rodeo, Monday Night Concert, Mud Volleyball, Pickleball Tournament, Quilt Show, Rock, Paper, Scissors Tournament, Saturday Night Entertainment, Senior Dinner, Summer Musical, Tractor Pull, and Treasure Hunt

Mapleton

July 28

Mapleton Farmers Market 2025, Mapleton City Park, 6-8:30 p.m. (mapletonfarmersmarket.com)

Mapleton Summer Concerts in the Park 2025: Papa Dewey and the Pistons, Mapleton City Park, 7 p.m. (mapleton.org)

Santaquin

July 26

Santaquin Orchard Days and Rodeo, various locations (July 26-Aug. 2, santaquin.gov)

- Attractions include: Scavenger hunt, 5k and fun run, Flag ceremony, Little Buck-A-Roo Rodeo, Concessions, Shows, Museum tours, Inflatables and obstacle course, Unicorn, horse and pony rides, Train rides, Craft show, Chil-

dren’s parade, Concert, Swing dance, Tea party, Pickleball tournaments, 3v3 basketball tournament, Cornhole tournament, Horseshoe tournament, Quilt show, Book sale, Rodeo, Grand parade, Car show, and Fireworks

July 28

Santaquin Hometown Market and Sounds of Santaquin, Centennial Park, 5 p.m. (Mondays from July 24-Sept. 15, paysonsantaquinarea.com)

NORTH

American Fork

July 28

Family Night with the American Fork Fire Department, Library Community Room, 6-7 p.m. (americanfork.gov)

July 30

Portrait Painting from Photo to Oils with Kathy Bruner, Timpanogos Arts Foundation - Arts Center, 10 a.m.-noon, (americanforkarts.com)

Lehi

July 26

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Skyridge Theatre Auditorium, 7:30 p.m. (lehiarts.org)

Summer Splash Concert, Family Park Amphitheater, 6-10 p.m. (lehi-ut.gov)

July 27

Lehi Arts in the Park: Joshua Creek, Wines Park, 7:30 p.m. (lehiarts.org)

July 28

Dinos After Dark, Mountain America Museum of Ancient Life, 6- 8 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

Aug. 1

Outdoor Movie Series: A Minecraft Movie, Ashton Gardens, 8 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

Aug. 2

Imaginarium Summer 5K, Ashton Gardens, 7:30 a.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

Pleasant Grove

July 26

The Play That Goes Wrong, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 4/7:30 p.m. (July 26-Aug. 16, theruth.org)

Saturday Morning Movie: Raya and the Last Dragon, Pleasant Grove Libaray, 10:30 a.m.-noon (pgcityutah.gov)

July 30

2025 Utah Flower Market, 11 a.m.-noon (utahflowermarket.com)

Alpine

July 29

Trucks & Tunes, Legacy Park, 5-8 p.m.

Aug. 2

Alpine Days, various locations (Aug. 2-9, alpinedays.com)

- Attractions include: Rodeo, Golf tournament, 5K race, Pickleball tournament, Mountain bike race, Spikeball tournament, Auto show, Fireman’s BBQ, Chalk the Walk, Storytime, Yoga in the Park, Service project, Blue Ribbon Bake Off, Kickball, Home Run Derby, Senior dinner, Pet show, Alpine’s Past in Paint, Movie in the Park, Family dance, Hike, Carnival, Boutiques, Music in the Park, Parade, Quilt show, and Fireworks

Cedar Hills

July 28

Meet the Mayor, Cedar Hills City Offices, 10-11 a.m.

Highland

July 31

2025 Highland Fling, Highland Heritage Park, (July 31-Aug. 2, highlandut.gov)

- Attractions include: Bird show, Celtic dancing, Car show, Blacksmith demonstration, Battle of the Bands, Highland’s Got Talent, Fine art show, Strongman competition, Antique tractor display, Parade, Highland games, Vendors and food trucks, Horseshoe tournament, and Fireworks

2025 Highland Farmers Market, Highland Heritage Park, 4-8 p.m.

WEST

Eagle Mountain

July 26

Summer Bash and Laser Show, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 4-10 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Farmer’s Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

July 31

Food Truck Rally, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 6-9 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Aug. 2

Farmer’s Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Saratoga Springs

July 28

Saratoga Springs Farmers Market, Neptune Park, 5-9 p.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

Summer Monday Fundays: Blue Note Big Band and Streetlight Syndicate, 7:30 p.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

July 30

Marina Party, Marina Park, 5-9 p.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

Aug. 2

Train Rides, Shay Park, 9 a.m.-noon (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

Cedar Valley

July 26

Camp Floyd State Park’s Pioneer Day Celebration, Camp Floyd State Park, 10 a.m.-4 p.m

GET OUT THERE

5 travel hacks that actually work

After more than a decade exploring every continent, I've learned a thing or two about traveling smarter, not harder.

That is, proven travel hacks that actually save time, money, and make long distance adventures smoother, lighter, and more enjoyable. More than just social media fluff, here are five time-tested travel tips to help you overcome any unexpected turbulence.

1. Order a free dietary meal on intercontinental flights

Here's a little-known secret: ordering a free specialty meal (think vegetarian, gluten-free, kosher, low-sodium, vegan, etc) on international flights doesn't just cater to your dietary quirks — it gets you served first. That means you eat before the rest of the plane — sometimes by as much as an hour or more and usually before first-class even — giving you a head start on digestion and dozing off. Better yet, these meals are often lighter,

healthier, and easier on your gut, which is a blessing when trying to sleep in a cramped metal tube for 10 hours. Win-win, people.

2. Take sleeping pills on long-haul flights

Full disclosure: I'm no doctor, but when used responsibly, short-term sleep aids (such as prescription Ambien or over the counter melatonin and Tylonal PM) can mean the difference between zombified jet-lag and a refreshing arrival. Pair these with your fast-acting special meal, dim the lights and sound with an eye mask and noise canceling headphones, and you'll be sleeping soundly way faster than otherwise. Pro-tip: test any medication beforehand to see how your body reacts. The last thing you need is a mid-flight meltdown somewhere over the Arctic.

3. Stay up until 9 p.m. local time (aka jet lag's quickest fix)

The fastest way to murder jet lag? Muscle your way to 9 pm local time on Day 1, no matter how wrecked you feel. That's no napping, no crashing on arrival, and

no excuses. Walk around, eat a big meal, and get as much sunlight as possible to reset your internal clock. You'll be exhausted, to be sure, but should have no trouble collapsing into a deep sleep when the time comes to let your system sync to a new time zone. Trust me, power through and your future self will thank you.

4. For maximum savings, book with Google Flights & Hotels

More than any other fare and hotel finder, Google Flights and Google Hotels let you compare dozens of airlines, fare types, cancellation policies, and even price trends — all in one slick interface. The flexible date grids, email alerts, and policy filters mean you're not just booking cheap — you're booking smart. You can even search for “no change fee” fares, refundable bookings, and even pay-later hotel deals. It's the ultimate toolkit for travelers who don't want to be locked into anything.

5. Pack a carry-on only — sink laundry forever

Dragging a giant suitcase



JOSE LUIS MAGANA, ASSOCIATED PRESS

An airplane lifts off from Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport as the sun rises Feb. 3 in Arlington, Va.

through cobblestone alleys? That's a form of punishment no one wants. Traveling with just a carry-on? Freedom. The trick is minimalism. Pack layers, roll your clothes, and embrace dual or even triple purpose outfits. Then on Day 3 or 4, hit the sink for a quick wash with a little soap, a lot of rinse, then “burrito roll” in a hotel towel to wring dry before hanging your clothes overnight. Pro travelers like Rick Steves swear by this hack, and so do Reddit warriors who've mastered the “laundry burrito.” I once did two weeks in Japan with a backpack and a sink. You can, too.

BONUS HACK: Always carry a water bottle, because dehydrated people make bad decisions. You don't need

that while traveling abroad. Most airports and cities have drinking stations to save you from \$5 water bottles and plastic pollution. To avoid a painful crisis in the middle of a foreign city, don't forget to save free restrooms on your map app before you arrive.

Travel can be chaotic. But with these already-in-your-suitcase strategies, you'll feel more like a seasoned nomad than frazzled tourist. Now cram that carry-on, sleep smart, and bon voyage!

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

July 19

2025 Provo Farmer's Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (July 19-Oct. 25 [Saturdays], provofarmersmarket.com)

The Wizard of Oz, Sundance Resort, 7 p.m. (July 19/21/24/25/26/28/31, sundanceresort.com)

Family Arts Festival 2025, Brigham Young University Museum of Art (July 19-26, moa.byu.edu)

Landscapes and Handscapes 2025, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (July 19-Aug. 23, jkr-gallery.myshopify.com)

A Broken Heart & A Contribute Spirit Exhibit - Lovetta Reyes-Cairo, The Compass Gallery, 6 p.m. (July 19-Aug. 16, thecompassgallery.com)

July 20

Mountain Top Yoga 2025, Sundance Resort, 9-11 a.m. (sundanceresort.com)

July 21

Storytelling Mondays: Janine Evans, The Provo Pioneer Village, 6:30 p.m. (provopioneerivillage.org)

Donizetti's The Elixir of Love, Provo Library at Academy Square, 7 p.m. (utahvalleyoperafest.org)

July 25

Friday Fusion, Arlington Hall, 8:30 p.m.-2 a.m.

Bluebird Cafe Concert Series, Sundance Resort, 8 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

July 26

2025 Provo Farmer's Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (July 26-Oct. 25 [Saturdays], provofarmersmarket.com)

Family Arts Festival 2025, Brigham Young University Museum of Art (moa.byu.edu)

Landscapes and Handscapes 2025, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (July 26-Aug. 23, jkr-gallery.myshopify.com)

A Broken Heart & A Contribute Spirit Exhibit - Lovetta Reyes-Cairo, The Compass Gallery, 6 p.m. (July 26-Aug. 16, thecompassgallery.com)

Orem

July 19

Annie, SCERA Shell Outdoor Theatre, 8 p.m. (scera.org)

Honey Jar pottery lesson, Villa Ceramic Pottery studio, 4 p.m. (July 19/26, villaceramics.com)

July 21

Hunter Hayes, SCERA Shell Outdoor Theatre, 8 p.m. (scera.org)

2025 Summer Matinee Series: Spy Kids, SCERA Center for the Arts, 10:30 a.m./1 p.m. (July 21-24, scera.org)

Happiest Night on Earth, University Place Orem, 6 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

July 22

Meet the Candidates Night, Orem Library Hall, 6-8 p.m. (orem.gov)

July 23

Orem Farmers Market, Orem City Center Park, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

Westmore Police Picnic, Westmore Park, 6-7:30 p.m. (orem.gov)

July 24

Pioneer Day Celebration/market/

fireworks, University Place Orem, 5 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

July 25

Movie Night: National Treasure, University Place Orem, 8:30 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

July 26

Honey Jar pottery lesson, Villa Ceramic Pottery studio, 4 p.m. (villaceramics.com)

Lindon

July 24

Lindon's Sunset Farmers Market 2025, Lindon City Center Park, 5 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

Vineyard

July 21

Movie in the Park, Vineyard Grove Park, dusk (vineyard.lib.utah.gov)

SOUTH

Springville

July 19

Music Man Jr., Springville High School, 7 p.m. (springvilleplayhouse.org)

51st annual Utah Quilt Show, Springville Museum of Art (July 19-Sept. 20, smofa.org)

It's All Fun and Games, Springville Museum of Art (smofa.org)

July 21

Sunset Farmers Markets, Springville Civic Center, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

July 23

Donizetti's The Elixir of Love, Springville Museum of Art, 7 p.m. (July 23/30, utahvalleyoperafest.org)

July 25

Quilting Bee, Springville Museum of Art, 10 a.m.-noon (smofa.org)

July 26

Concert for Carl: Ronstadt Live and Carpenters Platinum, Spring Acres Arts Park, 7 p.m. (ronstadt.live/concert-for-carl)

Spanish Fork

July 19

Fiesta Days (July 19-27, spanishfork.gov)

- Kickball challenge
- Cornhole tournament
- Softball tournament
- Pickleball tournament
- Disc golf tournament
- Flag retirement
- Baby contest
- Golf tournament
- Carnival
- Craft fair
- Food in the Park
- Car show
- Miss and Mr. Extraordinaire Pageant
- Rodeo
- Street dance
- Spanish Fork's Got Talent
- Speedy Spaniard River Trail

10k/Kids mile run

- Parade
- Quilt show
- Adopt-a-duck race
- Fireworks
- ATA Shoot

Shrek: The Musical, Spanish Fork High School Auditorium, 2/7 p.m. (July 19/21/24/25/26, spanishfork.gov)

July 20

Sunday Night in the Park: Lunch

at Lew's, City Park Stage, 7:30 p.m. (spanishfork.gov)

July 25

Spanish Fork Sounds of Summer: Stranded at Home, Spanish Fork City Park, 6 p.m. (spanishfork.gov)

Mapleton

July 19

2025 Mapleton Pioneer Days, Mapleton City Park (mapleton.org)

- Pickleball tournaments
- Family disc golf night
- Glow-in-the-dark disc golf tournament
- Cornhole tournament
- Spikeball tournament
- Historic programs
- Mapleton's Got Talent
- 5K and Fun Run
- Parade
- Helicopter ping-pong drop
- Live entertainment
- Fireworks

July 21

Mapleton Farmers Market 2025, Mapleton City Park, 6-8:30 p.m. (mapletonfarmersmarket.com)

Mapleton Summer Concerts in the Park 2025: Karaoke Variety Night, Mapleton City Park, 7 p.m. (mapleton.org)

Salem

July 19

Water Lantern Festival, Knoll Park, 6 p.m. (waterlanternfestival.com)

Little Women: The Broadway Musical, Salem Hills High School, 7 p.m. (July 19-27, salemcommunitytheater.org)

Santaquin

July 21

Santaquin Hometown Market and Sounds of Santaquin: Young Entrepreneur and Talent, Centennial Park, 5 p.m. (Mondays from July 24-Sept. 15, paysonsaquinarea.com)

July 26

Santaquin Orchard Days and Rodeo, various locations (July 26-Aug. 2, santaquin.gov)

- Scavenger hunt
- 5k and fun run
- Flag ceremony
- Little Buck-A-Roo Rodeo
- Concessions
- Shows
- Museum tours
- Inflatables and obstacle course
- Unicorn, horse and pony rides
- Train rides
- Craft show
- Children's parade
- Concert
- Swing dance
- Tea party
- Pickleball tournaments
- 3v3 basketball tournament
- Cornhole tournament
- Horseshoe tournament
- Quilt show
- Book sale
- Rodeo
- Grand parade
- Car show
- Fireworks

NORTH

American Fork

July 19

American Fork Steel Days (steeldaysaf.com)

- Car show, cruise and burnout
- Fair

- Drone show
- Golf tournament
- Mario Kart tournament
- Concerts
- Pickleball glowdown/tournament

- Art show
- Splash night
- Horseshoe tournament
- Wiffle ball tournament
- Fitness festival
- Kickball tournament
- Carnival
- Quilt show
- Cornhole tournament
- Guns vs. Hoses home run derby/softball game
- Garden tour
- American Fork's Got Talent
- Movies in the Park
- Marching band breakfast
- Steel Days Run
- Parade
- Fireworks

July 21

Footloose: The Musical, Valentine Theater, 5:30/7:30 p.m. (July 21-23, americanforkarts.com)

July 23

Portrait Painting from Photo to Oils with Kathy Bruner, Timpanogos Arts Foundation - Arts Center, 10 a.m.-noon, (americanforkarts.com)

Lehi

July 19

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Skyridge Theatre Auditorium, 7:30 p.m. (July 19-26, lehiarts.org)

Social Dance Date Night - Cha Cha, Lehi Legacy Center, 7 p.m. (lehi-ut.gov)

July 20

Lehi Arts in the Park: Revill Family, Wines Park, 7:30 p.m. (lehiarts.org)

July 21

Dinos After Dark, Mountain America Museum of Ancient Life, 6- 8 p.m. (July 21, 28, thanksgivingpoint.org)

Dairy Days, Museum of Natural Curiosity, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. (July 21-26, thanksgivingpoint.org)

July 25

Outdoor Movie Series: Wicked, Ashton Gardens, 8 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

Pleasant Grove

July 19

The Play That Goes Wrong, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 4/7:30 p.m. (July 19-Aug. 16, theruth.org)

An American in Paris, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 4/7:30 p.m. (theruth.org)

Prince of Egypt, Liahona Theater for the Community (July 19-21, alpinecommunitytheater.org)

July 23

2025 Utah Flower Market, 11 a.m.-noon (utahflowermarket.com)

Alpine

July 22

Trucks & Tunes, Legacy Park, 5-8 p.m.

Cedar Hills

July 21

Meet the Mayor, Cedar Hills City Offices, 10-11 a.m.

Highland

July 21

3D Art: Pop-ups, paper mache and

more, Highland Community Center, 9 a.m.-noon (July 21-25, visualartinstitute.org)

July 24

2025 Highland Farmers Market, Highland Heritage Park, 4-8 p.m.????

WEST

Eagle Mountain

July 19

Farmer's Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eagle-mountain.gov)

July 24

Food Truck Rally, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 6-9 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

July 26

Farmer's Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eagle-mountain.gov)

Saratoga Springs

July 21

Saratoga Springs Farmers Market, Neptune Park, 5-9 p.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

Summer Monday Fundays: Beck Brother's Band and pop-up car show, 7:30 p.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

Cedar Valley

July 19

Star Party, Camp Floyd State Park, 9 p.m. (stateparks.utah.gov/parks/camp-floyd/events)

July 26

Pioneer Day Celebration, Camp Floyd State Park, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (stateparks.utah.gov/parks/camp-floyd/events)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

July 19

Disney in Concert with the Utah Symphony: '80s and '90s Celebration, Sandy Amphitheater, 7:30 p.m. (sandyamp.com)

July 21

2025 Days of '47 Float Preview Party, Mountain America Expo Center, 11 a.m.-9 p.m. (July 21-22, daysof47.com)

July 26

Jason Aldean: Full Throttle Tour, Utah First Credit Union Amphitheatre, 7:30 p.m. (utahfirststamp.com)

Heber Valley

July 19

TedFest Music Festival, 50 Starks Lane, Wallsburg (July 19-20, tedfest-music.com)

July 24

Wasatch County Fair, Wasatch County Fairgrounds (July 24-Aug. 2, wasatchparksandrec.com)

- Demolition Derby
- Party in the Park
- Talent find
- Pool party
- Carnival
- Market
- BBQ
- Outdoor movie
- Exhibits
- Rodeo
- Charley Jenkins concert
- Balloon launch

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jloyd@heraldextra.com.

GET OUT THERE

How to hike the Narrows without a permit

Many years ago, National Geographic published a list of the “10 best day hikes in the world.” Two of those hikes are found in America. Both of them are in Utah. And would you believe it, both are within two miles of each other in a single National Park — the one Utahns call “Zi-In,” but everyone else calls “Zi-On.” I’m not sure if there’s an official pronunciation, but I prefer the former and always chuckle when I hear the latter.

Those two world-class hikes are named Angel’s Landing and the Narrows. Both hikes are permitted and since the pandemic, increasingly harder to come by. While I can’t help you win the lottery for the breathtaking Angel’s Landing, there’s a great way to hike the famous Narrows without a permit, and I think it’s something every Utahn should do once in their life if they’re fit and able. It’s informally called the “bottoms up” route and it works like this:

When to hike

While you’re certainly free to hike the Narrows in winter, I don’t like sludging through ice-cold water all day, so I would advise against it. Hence, the best time to hike the bottoms up route is in the summer — no sooner than May or June to let

the Virgin River warm up from the chilly spring runoff. When done in early summer, the river will still be “refreshing” if not cold for the first hour or so, but it feels great after that as the summer heat kicks in.

Start with the rising sun

Since Zion is the smallest and second most-visited National Park in the country (more than Grand Canyon even!), things get crowded real fast. In order to beat the crowds and secure limited parking, you’ll need to start your hike no later than 7–8 a.m. More specifically, you’ll want to be in the visitor center parking lot by then to catch the first wave of free shuttles, which are the only way to access the canyon road in summer.

Note: I once rolled into the parking lot at 7:55 a.m. and got the last remaining parking spot. If you arrive too late, you’ll be forced to drive back to Springdale, park there, catch a different shuttle to the visitor center, then board the canyon shuttle to the start of the hike — a process that can double, if not triple, your commute time.

Pack a lunch

While you’re free to hike bottoms up route as little or as long as you like before turning around, I recommend hiking all the way up to Big Springs and back (10 miles roundtrip). Trekking in the river and gawking at the 2,000 foot tall canyon walls with hanging gardens will surely slow you down, so plan

on a full day hike if you go all the way. Your reward for doing so will be fewer crowds (since many hikers turn around after a few miles), better swimming holes, more dramatic views of this amazing slot canyon, and a lot fewer frustrations when exploring the second-most visited National Park in the country. So pack a waterproof lunch and enjoy.

No fancy footwear

While hiking the Narrows, you’ll encounter people from all over the world who have traveled thousands of miles to access something that’s only a few hours drive for locals like us. That’s how special, if not sacred, this place is. You’ll also see many of these people wearing fancy water socks and hiking boots that are rented out locally. You don’t need these, however. Closed-toed athletic shoes (or even vans) work fine and are better than either Tevas or Chacos since open toe sandals don’t protect your feet as well from the slippery rocks. Either way, everyone slips a little regardless of footwear, so tread lightly and consider bringing hiking poles if you want extra grip.

Stay safe

Since flash floods are a very real possibility here, only hike the Narrows on sunny days, which will only enhance your enjoyment of the canyon, since swimming and playing in the water is a big part of the fun. Oh, and pack at least a gallon of water per person, if not



ROSS D. FRANKLIN, ASSOCIATED PRESS

In this Sept. 5, 2009, file photo, hikers wade through the cold Virgin River along the Narrows in Zion National Park.

more, depending on your size and duration of the hike. Happy trails!

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 com-

panies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

July 12
Fantastically Human, The Compass Gallery (thecompassgallery.com)
2025 Provo Farmer’s Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (July 12-Oct. 25 [Saturdays], provofarmersmarket.com)

Family Arts Festival 2025, Brigham Young University Museum of Art (July 12-26, moa.byu.edu)

Bluebird Cafe Concert Series, Sundance Resort, 8 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Landscapes and Handscapes 2025, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (July 12-Aug. 23, jkr-gallery.myshopify.com)

July 13
Mountain Top Yoga 2025, Sundance Resort, 9-11 a.m. (sundanceresort.com)

July 14
Storytelling Mondays: Renee Spencer, The Provo Pioneer Village, 6:30 p.m. (provopioneerivillage.org)
Book Trivia Night, Provo City Library, 7 p.m. (provoliberal.org)

July 15
Best Books Lite: Our Favorite Literary Characters, Provo City Library, 7 p.m. (provoliberal.org)

July 17
The Wizard of Oz, Sundance Resort, 7 p.m. (July 17/18/19/21/24/25/26/28/31, sundanceresort.com)

July 18
A Broken Heart & A Contrite Spirit Exhibit - Lovetta Reyes-Cairo, The Compass Gallery, 6 p.m. (July 18-Aug. 16, thecompassgallery.com)
Friday Fusion, Arlington Hall, 8:30 p.m.-2 a.m.

July 19
2025 Provo Farmer’s Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (July 19-Oct. 25 [Saturdays], provofarmersmarket.com)

Family Arts Festival 2025, Brigham Young University Museum of Art (July 19-26, moa.byu.edu)
Landscapes and Handscapes 2025, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. (July 19-Aug. 23, jkr-gallery.myshopify.com)

Orem

July 12
3rd annual Native Market Days, UVU Science Building Courtyard (americanindianservices.org)

- Hoop competition
- Native artists
- Food booths
- Fashion show

European Cultural Festival, The Orchard at University Place, 5-9 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)
Annie, SCERA Shell Outdoor Theatre, 8 p.m. (July 12-19, scera.org)
Honey Jar pottery lesson, Villa Ceramic Pottery studio, 4 p.m. (July 12/19/26, villaceramics.com)

July 14

2025 Summer Matinee Series: Night of the Zoopocalypse, SCERA Center for the Arts, 10:30 a.m./1 p.m. (July 14-17, scera.org)

July 16
Orem Farmers Market, Orem City Center Park, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)
Outdoor Movies: Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade, SCERA Shell Outdoor Theatre, dusk (scera.org)

July 18
Orchard Country Dancin’, University Place Orem, 7 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

July 19
Annie, SCERA Shell Outdoor Theatre, 8 p.m. (scera.org)
Honey Jar pottery lesson, Villa Ceramic Pottery studio, 4 p.m. (July 19/26, villaceramics.com)

Lindon

July 17
Lindon’s Sunset Farmers Market 2025, Lindon City Center Park, 5 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

July 18
2025 Lindon Summer Movies: Moana 2, Fryer Park, dusk (lindonrecreation.org)

Vineyard

July 21
Movie in the Park, Vineyard Grove Park, 7 p.m. (vineyardutah.gov)

SOUTH

Springville

July 12
Summer Concert Series: You Should Be Dancing (A Tribute to the Bee Gees), Spring Acres Arts Park, 8 p.m. (springville.org)

Music Man Jr., Springville High School, 7 p.m. (July 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, springvilleplayhouse.org)
It’s All Fun and Games, Springville Museum of Art (July 12-July 19, smofa.org)

July 14
Sunset Farmers Markets, Springville Civic Center, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

51st annual Utah Quilt Show, Springville Museum of Art (July 19-Sept. 20, smofa.org)

July 17
Touch-a-Truck, Springville Library, 10:30 a.m. (springville.org/library)

July 18
Movies in the Park: Moana 2, Arts Park, dusk (springville.org)

Spanish Fork

July 12
Fiesta Days (July 12-27, spanishfork.gov)

- Kickball challenge
- Cornhole tournament
- Softball tournament
- Pickleball tournament
- Disc golf tournament
- Flag retirement
- Baby contest
- Golf tournament
- Carnival
- Craft fair

- Food in the Park
- Car show
- Miss and Mr. Extraordinaire Pageant
- Rodeo
- Street dance
- Spanish Fork’s Got Talent
- Speedy Spaniard River Trail 10k/Kids mile run
- Parade
- Quilt show
- Adopt-a-duck race
- Fireworks
- ATA Shoot

July 17
Shrek: The Musical, Spanish Fork High School Auditorium, 2/7 p.m. (July 17/18/19/21/24/25/26, spanishfork.gov)

July 18
2025 PyroMusical, Spanish Fork Soccer Fields, 6 p.m. (spanishfork.gov)

Payson

July 12
2025 Payson Scottish Festival, Payson Memorial Park (paysonscottishfestival.org)

- Strongman competition
- Bagpiping
- Live music
- Irish dancers
- Parade
- Scottish heavy athletics

Mapleton

July 12
2025 Mapleton Pioneer Days, Mapleton City Park (July 12-19, mapleton.org)

- Pickleball tournaments
- Family disc golf night
- Glow-in-the-dark disc golf tournament
- Cornhole tournament
- Spikeball tournament
- Historic programs
- Mapleton’s Got Talent
- 5K and Fun Run
- Parade
- Helicopter ping-pong drop
- Live entertainment
- Fireworks

July 14
Mapleton Farmers Market 2025, Mapleton City Park, 6-8:30 p.m. (mapletonfarmersmarket.com)

Mapleton Summer Concerts in the Park 2025: Shane Lee Band, Mapleton City Park, 7 p.m. (mapleton.org)

Salem

July 19
Water Lantern Festival, Knoll Park, 6 p.m. (waterlanternfestival.com)

Santaquin

July 14
Santaquin Hometown Market and Sounds of Santaquin: Science and Superheroes, Centennial Park, 5 p.m. (Mondays from July 24-Sept. 15, paysonsantaquinarea.com)

NORTH

American Fork

July 12
American Fork Steel Days (July 12-19, steeldaysaf.com)

- Car show, cruise and burnout
- Fair
- Drone show
- Golf tournament
- Mario Kart tournament
- Concerts
- Pickleball glowdown/tournament

- Art show
- Splash night
- Horseshoe tournament
- Wiffle ball tournament
- Fitness festival
- Kickball tournament
- Carnival
- Quilt show
- Cornhole tournament
- Guns vs. Hoses home run derby/softball game
- Garden tour
- American Fork’s Got Talent
- Movies in the Park
- Marching band breakfast
- Steel Days Run
- Parade
- Fireworks

Lehi

July 12
Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Skyridge Theatre Auditorium, 7:30 p.m. (July 12-26, lehiarts.org)

July 13
Lehi Arts in the Park: Broadway in the Park, Wines Park, 7:30 p.m. (lehiarts.org)

July 14
Dinos After Dark, Mountain America Museum of Ancient Life, 6- 8 p.m. (July 14, 21, 28, thanksgivingpoint.org)

July 16
Cosmo in the Park, Olympic Park, 10-11 a.m. (byucougars.com/juniorcougs)

July 18
Outdoor Movie Series: The Wild Robot, Ashton Gardens, 8 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

July 19
Social Dance Date Night - Cha Cha, Lehi Legacy Center, 7 p.m. (lehi-ut.gov)

Pleasant Grove

July 12
The Play That Goes Wrong, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 4/7:30 p.m. (July 12-Aug. 16, theruth.org)

An American in Paris, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 4/7:30 p.m. (July 12-July 19, theruth.org)
Prince of Egypt, Liahona Theater for the Community (July 12-21, alpinecommunitytheater.org)

July 14
Summer Monday Movie: Rata-touille, Pleasant Grove Library, 10:30 a.m. (pgcity.org)

July 16
2025 Utah Flower Market, 11 a.m.-noon (utahflowermarket.com)

Alpine

July 15
Trucks & Tunes, Legacy Park, 5-8 p.m.

Cedar Hills

July 14
Meet the Mayor, Cedar Hills City Offices, 10-11 a.m.

Highland

July 12
Into the Woods, Highland Community Center (highlandcityarts.info)
Art Safari, Highland Community Center, 9 a.m. (July 14-18, visualart-institute.org)

July 17
2025 Highland Farmers Market, Highland Heritage Park, 4-8 p.m.

WEST

Eagle Mountain

July 12
Farmer’s Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eagle-mountain.gov)

July 17
Food Truck Rally, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 6-9 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

July 18
Movie in the Park: Minecraft, Silverlake Amphitheater, 9 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

July 19
Farmer’s Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Saratoga Springs

July 14
Saratoga Springs Farmers Market, Neptune Park, 5-9 p.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

Summer Monday Fundays: Line dancing with Swingin’ Dance Co., 7:30 p.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

July 12
KUTV Days of ‘47 Pops Concert, Maurice Abravanel Hall, 7:30 p.m. (casu.org)

July 14
Manilow: The Last West Valley City Concert, Maverik Center, 7 p.m. (maverikcenter.com)

July 18
Keith Urban: High and Alive World Tour, Utah First Credit Union Amphitheatre, 7 p.m. (ticketmaster.com)

Heber Valley

July 12
Deer Creek Half Marathon, Soldier Hollow Campground, 6 a.m. (happytrails.com)

July 18
TedFest Music Festival, 50 Starks Lane, Wallsburg (July 18-20, tedfest-music.com)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jloyd@heraldextra.com.

GET OUT THERE

Cruise a new mega ship for less on MSC World America

Cruising is a big deal. Over half of Americans have either been or expressed strong interest in cruises. After all, today's ships are bigger (and tastier!) than ever, are more affordable, and sail to over 2400 ports around the world.

What makes cruising so compelling for families and individuals alike? Your hotel travels with you, exploring different countries is as easy as scanning your "sea card," and you never have to worry about your next meal, since the food is unlimited. I once ate four soft serves in the hot Caribbean sun because I could.

In recent years, however, newer "mega ships" that hold up to 10,000 people and are a destination to themselves can start between \$200-300 per person per night. Unless, of course, you sail the new MSC World America, which starts around half of that, making it a best value for those hoping to sail the newest and biggest ships available for less. On a recent sailing with my wife, here's what stood out:

Life onboard

MSC World America is massive with 20 passenger decks, the biggest cruise pool I've ever seen, plus five auxiliary pools and 14 Jacuzzis. There is a water park on board (really), ropes course, bumper cars, and two arcades. There are 19 restaurants, 18 bars (including a "secret" speakeasy), an 11-deck tall dry slide, and penguin coat-wearing butlers for passengers who upgrade to suites in the Yacht Club, which most agree is the best VIP service of any cruise line.

Despite their affordability, the rooms and bathrooms are the most spacious I've enjoyed in over 20 years of cruising on every major line. The 12-deck World Promenade feels



COURTESY CONRAD SCHUTT, MSC

An MSC cruise ship docks at Ocean Cay MSC Marine Reserve in the Bahamas.

as though you're walking downtown with shops on either side. The three level World Galleria feels like a small 1980s indoor mall with chrome and white decor underneath an LED ceiling. On top of that, the ship has one of the best spas and thermal therapies I've ever relaxed in at sea. Both saunas have big, ocean-view windows. The "wow" factor is definitely here.

As with all cruises, ports are a large part of the draw. Currently World America sails from Miami to the Caribbean. Key ports include Roatan (Honduras), San Juan (Puerto Rico), Puerto Plata (Dominican Republic), Cozumel (Mexico), and my favorite: Ocean Cay (Bahamas). Privately owned by MSC, it's the most relaxing private island of any cruise

line. Think palm-filled heaven with eight, white-sand beaches, two buffets, one lagoon, and more chairs, umbrellas, and cabanas than anyone would ever need. It's seriously amazing and could easily double as a soothing Corona commercial.

While the attending staff overall did an amazing job making my wife and I feel like bigger deals than we really are, we did experience some excruciatingly slow and rigid customer service on three occasions — once in the main dining room for dinner, once during sea day brunch, and once while trying to sample as many desserts as we could on our final night. On that note, the food was similarly mixed, whether at one of six complimentary restaurants and buffets, or

the many specialty restaurants. Granted, you'll definitely find some amazing dishes on board, including the best pizza of any cruise, which isn't a surprise since MSC is owned by Italians. But overall I would argue the food was more underwhelming than I'm accustomed to on any other line.

As for the entertainment, I found it short and shallow. Those who are easily entertained will likely enjoy the bevy of daily and nightly options. But I don't cruise for onboard shows, and I'm betting most people don't either, so this isn't a deal-breaker. Same goes for the MSC app, which is difficult to see, read, and navigate when it comes to discovering what's onboard. But again, no one cruises for the app, so this isn't a huge stumbling block.

Ordering priorities

Is MSC World America right for you? With the right priorities and expectations, it might be. It's definitely a terrific value, exciting mega ship, and step in the right direction for rapidly expanding MSC. It's both the most affordable and — thanks to its industry-leading Yacht Club — VIP cruise sailing today, combining a best of both worlds approach.

But if you're not sailing on Yacht Club, you should expect some slow service. And with exception to the phenomenal fudge brownies, banana date cake, and a handful of savory dishes like the pork belly, southwest mac salad, and shakshuka, you probably won't find many dishes worth writing home about. You won't go hungry, though. You'll probably come home smiling, too.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

CENTRAL

Provo

July 5

2025 Balloon Fest, Fox Field, 6-8 p.m. (freedomfestival.org)

2025 Freedom Days, Downtown Provo (freedomfestival.org)

2025 Fine Art Show, Utah County Historic Courthouse, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (freedomfestival.org)

New Deal Swing Band and Friends, Covey Center for the Arts, 7:30 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

Fantastically Human, The Compass Gallery (July 5-12, thecompassgallery.com)

2025 Provo Farmer's Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (July 5-Oct. 25 [Saturdays], provofarmersmarket.com)

Open Studio — Water, Brigham Young University Museum of Art, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (moa.byu.edu)

July 6

Mountain Top Yoga 2025, Sundance Resort, 9-11 a.m. (sundanceresort.com)

July 7

Family Arts Festival 2025, Brigham Young University Museum of Art (July 7-26, moa.byu.edu)

July 8

Bearclaw Supper Club 2025: Soiree, Sundance Resort, 6-9 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

July 9

Introduction to Birding with FeatherQuest, Provo City Library, 7-8:30 p.m. (provolibary.gov)

Full moon lift rides, Sundance Resort, 8 p.m.-midnight (July 9-10, sundanceresort.com)

July 10

Fantasy Trivia, Fat Daddy's Pizzeria, 7:30 p.m. (fatdaddypizzeria.com)

The History of the Fantastic Arts, The Compass Gallery, 7-8 p.m. (thecompassgallery.com)

Drinks with the Distillers: Holystone Distillery, Sundance Resort, 4:30-7 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

July 11

Dive-In Movie: The Little Mermaid, Recreation Center, 8:30-10 p.m. (provo.gov)

Friday Fusion, Arlington Hall, 8:30 p.m.-2 a.m.

Bluebird Cafe Concert Series, Sundance Resort, 8 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

July 12

Fantastically Human, The Compass Gallery (thecompassgallery.com)

2025 Provo Farmer's Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (July 12-Oct. 25 [Saturdays], provofarmersmarket.com)

July 13

Mountain Top Yoga 2025, Sundance Resort, 9-11 a.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Orem

July 5

2025 Colonial Fest, Scera Park, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. (freedomfestival.org)

Cries of Freedom, The Musical, SCERA Center for the Arts, 1/4/7 p.m. (freedomfestival.org)

Annie, SCERA Shell Outdoor Theatre, 8 p.m. (July 5-19, scera.org)

July 7

Shakespeare in the Orchard, University Place Orem, 5-8:30 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

2025 Summer Matinee Series: Dog Man, SCERA Center for the Arts, 10:30 a.m./1 p.m. (July 7-10, scera.org)

Northridge Pickleball/Tennis Courts Grand Opening, Northridge Park, 4-5 p.m. (orem.gov)

Summer Skate Camp, Classic Skating (July 7-10, classicfun.com)

July 9

Orem Farmers Market, Orem City Center Park, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

Outdoor Movies: Disney's Inside Out 2, SCERA Shell Outdoor Theatre, dusk (scera.org)

July 11

3rd annual Native Market Days, UVU Science Building Courtyard (July 11-12, americanindianservices.org)

- Hoop competition
- Native artists
- Food booths
- Fashion show

Summer concert series, Classic Skating, 7-10 p.m. (classicfun.com)

July 12

European Cultural Festival, The Orchard at University Place, 5-9 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

SOUTH

Springville

July 5

It's All Fun and Games, Springville Museum of Art (July 5-July 19, smofa.org)

101st Annual Spring Salon, Springville Museum of Art (smofa.org)

July 7

Sunset Farmers Markets, Springville Civic Center, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

July 11

Music Man Jr., Springville High School, 7 p.m. (July 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, springvilleplayhouse.org)

July 12

Summer Concert Series: You Should Be Dancing, a Tribute to the Bee Gees, Spring Acres Arts Park, 8 p.m. (springville.org)

Spanish Fork

July 9

Fiesta Days (July 9-27, spanishfork.gov)

- Kickball challenge
- Cornhole tournament
- Softball tournament
- Pickleball tournament
- Disc golf tournament
- Flag retirement
- Baby contest

- Golf tournament
- Carnival
- Craft fair
- Food in the Park
- Car show
- Miss and Mr. Extraordinaire Pageant

- Rodeo
- Street dance
- Spanish Fork's Got Talent
- Speedy Spaniard River Trail 10k/Kids mile run
- Parade
- Quilt show
- Adopt-a-duck race
- Fireworks
- ATA Shoot

July 11

Spanish Fork Sounds of Summer: The Shane Lee Band/Moana 2, Spanish Fork City Park, 6 p.m. (spanishfork.gov)

Payson

July 11

2025 Payson Scottish Festival, Payson Memorial Park (July 11-12, paysonscottishfestival.org)

- Strongman competition
- Bagpiping
- Live music
- Irish dancers
- Parade
- Scottish heavy athletics

Mapleton

July 7

Mapleton Farmers Market 2025, Mapleton City Park, 6-8:30 p.m. (mapletonfarmersmarket.com)

Mapleton Summer Concerts in the Park 2025: Sone Stone, Mapleton City Park, 7 p.m. (mapleton.org)

July 11

2025 Mapleton Pioneer Days, Mapleton City Park (July 11-19, mapleton.org)

- Pickleball tournaments
- Family disc golf night
- Glow-in-the-dark disc golf tournament

- Cornhole tournament
- Spikeball tournament
- Historic programs
- Mapleton's Got Talent
- 5K and Fun Run
- Parade
- Helicopter ping-pong drop
- Live entertainment
- Fireworks

Santaquin

July 7

Santaquin Hometown Market and Sounds of Santaquin: Polynesian Luau, Centennial Park, 5 p.m. (Mondays from June 30-Sept. 15, payson-santaquinarea.com)

NORTH

American Fork

July 11

Art From Life with Katherine Bruner, Timpanogos Arts Foundation - Arts Center, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. (timpanogosartsfoundation.ticketspice.com)

July 12

American Fork Steel Days (July 12-19, steeldaysaf.com)

- Car show, cruise and burnout
- Fair
- Drone show
- Golf tournament
- Mario Kart tournament
- Concerts
- Pickleball glowdown/tournament
- Art show
- Splash night
- Horseshoe tournament
- Wiffle ball tournament
- Fitness festival
- Kickball tournament
- Carnival
- Quilt show
- Cornhole tournament
- Guns vs. Hoses home run derby/softball game
- Garden tour
- American Fork's Got Talent
- Movies in the Park
- Marching band breakfast
- Steel Days Run
- Parade
- Fireworks

Lehi

July 6

Lehi Arts in the Park: Shane Lee Band, Wines Park, 7:30 p.m. (lehiarts.org)

July 7

Dinos After Dark, Mountain America Museum of Ancient Life, 6-8 p.m. (July 7, 14, 21, 28, thanksgivingpoint.org)

July 8

Explorers League Summer Camp, Hutchings Museum, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (July 8-11, jhutchingsmuseum.com)

July 11

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Skyridge Theatre Auditorium, 7:30 p.m. (July 11-26, lehiarts.org)

Outdoor Movie Series: Inside Out 2, Ashton Gardens, 8 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

Pleasant Grove

July 5

The Play That Goes Wrong, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 4/7:30 p.m. (July 5-Aug. 16, theruth.org)

An American in Paris, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 4/7:30 p.m. (July 5-July 19, theruth.org)

July 9

2025 Utah Flower Market, 11 a.m.-noon (utahflowermarket.com)

July 10

Soul Survivor Concert, The Soundbox, 7-9 p.m. (ccsoundhouse.com)

July 11

Cosmo in the Park, Pleasant Grove Community Center, 10-11 a.m. (byucougars.com/juniorcougs)

Prince of Egypt, Liahona Theater for the Community (July 11-21, alpine-communitytheater.org)

Alpine

July 8

Trucks & Tunes, Legacy Park, 5-8 p.m.

Cedar Hills

July 7

Meet the Mayor, Cedar Hills City Offices, 10-11 a.m.

Highland

July 7

Out of this World, Highland Community Center, 9 a.m.-noon (July 7-11, visualartsinstitute.org)

July 10

2025 Highland Farmers Market, Highland Heritage Park, 4-8 p.m.

WEST

Eagle Mountain

July 5

Farmer's Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eagle-mountain.gov)

July 10

Food Truck Rally, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 6-9 p.m. (eagle-mountain.gov)

Meet the Candidates, The Barn at Overland, 6-8 p.m. (eagle-mountain.gov)

July 12

Farmer's Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eagle-mountain.gov)

Saratoga Springs

July 5

Remembrance Roll, Shay Park, 9 a.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

July 7

Saratoga Springs Farmers Market, Neptune Park, 5-9 p.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

Summer Monday Fundays: Danza y Color Utah (Mexican Folk Dancers), 7:30 p.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

July 5

Monster Jam World Finals, Rice-Eccles Stadium, 6:30 p.m. (monsterjam.com)

July 9

Lyle Lovett and His Large Band, Sandy City Amphitheater, 7 p.m. (thetateroompresents.com)

July 11

KUTV Days of '47 Pops Concert, Maurice Abravanel Hall, 7:30 p.m. (July 11-12, casu.org)

Heber Valley

July 5

Plein Air Art Festival, Midway Town Hall (midwayartassociation.com)

July 11

Princess and Pirate Train, Heber Valley Railroad, 7 p.m. (hebertrain.com)

July 12

Deer Creek Half Marathon, Soldier Hollow Campground, 6 a.m. (happy-trails.com)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jloyd@heraldextra.com.

GET OUT THERE

Best international destinations for Utah families

I'm fortunate to have visited all seven continents, over 50 countries, and all but a dozen states. The more I travel the more I discover how safe, kind, and uplifting the vast majority of people are. We really agree on and value a whole lot more than 24-hour news would have you believe, human decency and goodness very much included.

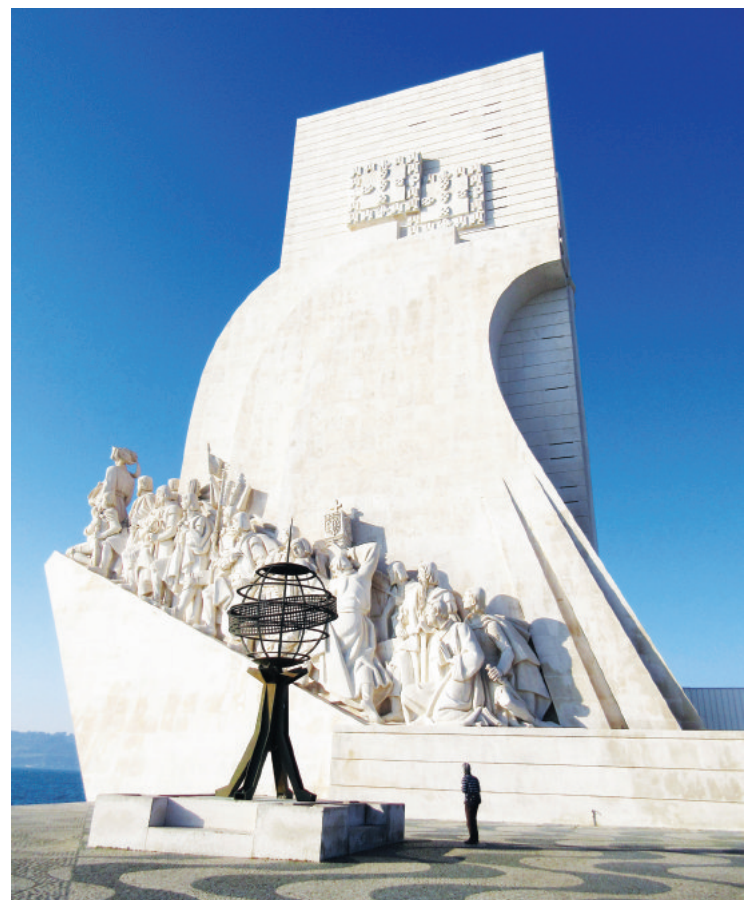
But not only is the world a mostly safe place, it's inspiring. If your family has the means, I highly recommend the investment in foreign travel. I'm often asked which places I recommend visiting. That, of course, depends on

who's asking. After all, a twenty-something, energetic youngling has very different tastes and budget than a moneyed retiree who wants to take it easy.

What do I recommend, then, to lovable Utah families that cherish affordability, safety, and family-friendliness over nightlife and swanky hotels? In terms of compelling culture and natural attractions, here are some of the best international destinations for Utah families.



BLAKE SNOW



This Jan. 20, 2017 photo shows the Discoveries on the Lisbon waterfront in Portugal. The stone ship memorializes the Age of Exploration, beginning in the 15th century, when Portuguese seafarers sailed the globe, establishing a colonial empire that stretched from Asia to Africa to South America.

BETH J. HARPAZ, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lisbon, Portugal

Americans travel to Europe more than any other continent by far. It's in our blood, and it's a convenient way to expose ourselves to lots of different countries in a short amount of time. While I highly recommend Rome, Paris, and Berlin, they're not as affordable or as welcoming as underrated Lisbon. Here you'll find lots of sun, charming castles, beautiful beaches, cobblestone streets, and red-roofed towns that are as safe as they are dreamy. On top of that, Lisbon is highly walkable, relaxing, and basically the starting point of our ancestors westward expansion.

Flight time from SLC: 14–18 hours (with connections)

Tokyo, Japan

If you really want to go foreign, it's hard to get any more foreign, exotic, and even safer than Tokyo, the world's largest city. It's so safe you'll literally see unaccompanied five year olds riding public transit as late as 9 or 10 pm (really!). You probably won't speak the language

and neither will most Japanese, but they'll go out of their way to help you or find someone who can speak English. Lastly, the Japanese adore Americans and will bend over backwards to ensure you feel welcome, are well taken care of, and get the most out of their exceptionally clean, culturally rich, and child-friendly capital. Oh, and Tokyo Disney is a steal!

Flight time from SLC: 11–13 hours (with connections)

Puerto Vallarta, Mexico

Although Cancun is the all-inclusive capital of the world, Puerto Vallarta offers more authentic Mexican culture, food, and walkable sight-seeing, as I've reported before. Plus its home to lots of humpbacks and free entertainment along its famous Malecon boardwalk. Granted, the Hawaii-like ocean and ancient adventure opportunities near Cancun are better—think swimmable sinkholes (called “cenotes”) and Chichen Itza, a Seven Wonder of the World. But overall, I give the slight edge to endearing, more affordable, still stunning, and slightly

closer Vallarta.

Flight time from SLC: 4 hours (nonstop)

Athens, Greece

Not only is Greece's capital the origin point of modern history, Athens is highly affordable, kid-friendly, and drowning in delicious food. Although Rome is equally rich in culture and family-friendliness, Athens is cheaper and closer to sunny Mediterranean beaches and even friendlier locals. I smile just thinking about our recent family trip to the Acropolis, through two downtown food tours, and swimming the timeless Greek coastline. I can't imagine any Utah family not enjoying this place.

Flight time from SLC: 15–18 hours (with connections)

San Jose, Costa Rica

I had a tough time choosing between this and Thailand, as both are safe for families, rich in natural wildlife, and affordable. But given that the latter is over 21 hours (with connections)

from Salt Lake, I'd recommend tiny Costa Rica first for its nature-focused activities, such as ziplining, volcano tours, and crazy animal sightings like poisonous dart frogs, slow-moving sloths, and colorful birds which you can observe from store parking lots. Top attractions include Arenal Volcano, Monteverde Cloud Forest, and the exceptional beaches of Manuel Antonio National Park.

Flight time from SLC: 7–9 hours (with connections)

HONORABLE MENTIONS: Ljubljana, Slovenia (compact charm), Budapest, Hungary (dazzling rivertown and palace), Old San Juan, Puerto Rico (Spain without a passport), and Sydney, Australia (surprisingly affordable right now).

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

Utah Valley

June 21
2025 Utah Valley Parade of Homes (uvparade.com)

CENTRAL

Provo

June 21
Family Arts Festival 2025, Brigham Young University Museum of Art (June 21-28)

2025 America's Pickleball Classic, Provo's Rotary Park, 6 p.m. (June 21, 27-28, freedomfestival.org)

2025 Firecracker Softball Tournaments, Footprinter Softball Complex, 6 p.m. (June 21, 27-28, freedomfestival.org)

Bluebird Cafe Concert Series, Sundance Resort, 8 p.m. (June 21, sundanceresort.com)

Abstracted & Architected 2025, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. Wed.-Sat. (June 21-28)

Renaissance Now Theatre and Film: Shakespeare Festival, Castle Amphitheater, 7:30 p.m. (June 21-29, renaissancenow.com)

Rise up Rival and the Filibusters, The Rise, 7 p.m. (therisevenue.com)

June 22
2025 Summer Band Concert Series with Utah Premiere Brass, North Park, 7 p.m.
Mountain Top Yoga 2025, Sundance Resort, 9-11 a.m. (sundanceresort.com)

June 23
Velour Summer 2025 Battle of the Bands, Velour Live Music Gallery, 7:30 p.m. (June 23-28, velourlive.com)

June 24
Lights, Camera, Dance!, Covey Center for the Arts 5:15/8 p.m. (June 24-26, covey.provo.gov)

June 26
Belong Youth Conference, Provo Marriott Hotel and Conference Center (June 26-28, belongyouthconference.org)

June 27
Friday Fusion, Arlington Hall, 8:30 p.m.-2 a.m.

June 28
2025 Children's Parade, Provo Veterans Memorial Park, 10:30 a.m. (freedomfestival.org)

The Great Carp Hunt of 2025, Utah Lake State Park, 8 a.m. (June 28-29, utahlake.gov)

JK! LIVE - Spring Show, Covey Center for the Arts, 3 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

Ropes Course Couple's Retreat,

CLAS Ropes Course, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (clasropes.com)

June 29
2025 Patriotic Service, Marriott Center, 7 p.m. (freedomfestival.org)

Orem

June 21
Disney's Newsies, SCERA, 8 p.m. (June 21, scera.org)

The Little Mermaid, SCERA Shell, 8 p.m. (June 21-22, scera.org)

American Folk Ensemble and Market, University Place, 5-9 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

Outdoor Movie Night, University Place, dusk (about 9 p.m.)

June 22
Bluegrass: Timpanogos Folk Festival, Orem City Center Park, 2-8 p.m.

June 23
Pottery 5-week course, Villa Ceramics Pottery Studio (villaceramics.com)

June 25
Orem Farmers Market, Orem City Center Park, 5-9 p.m.

Fitness in the Orchard, The Orchard at University Place, 8 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

June 26
Library Hall Presents: Writing Workshop with Kim Weitkamp, Orem Public Library, 6-8 p.m. (oremlibrary.org)

June 27
Library Hall Presents: Kim Weitkamp – Storyteller, Orem Public Library, 6-8 p.m. (oremlibrary.org)

Summer Concert Series, Classic Skating Orem, 7 p.m. (classicfun.com/concerts)

June 28
2025 African Heritage Festival, University Place Orem, 2-8 p.m. (universityplaceorem.com)

2025 Bluegrassroots - Timpanogos Folk Festival, City Center Park, 1 p.m. (bluegrassroots.utahvalleyarts.com)

Vineyard

June 23
Movies in the Park, Vineyard Grove Park, dusk

SOUTH

Springville

June 21
101st Annual Spring Salon, Springville Museum of Art (smofa.org)

It's All Fun and Games, Springville Museum of Art (June 21-July 19, smofa.org)

Lend Me a Tenor, Merit Prep Academy, 7:30 p.m. (June 21, 27, 28, 30, springvilleplayhouse.com)

June 23

Sunset Farmers Markets, Springville Civic Center, 5-9 p.m. (sunsetfarmersmarkets.com)

Spanish Fork

June 21
Treasure Island the Musical, Angelus Theatre, 7:30-10 p.m. (June 21-28, angelustheatre.com)

June 27
Sounds of Summer, City Park, 6 p.m. (spanishfork.gov)

Payson

June 21
Summer Camp on Stage, Spring Lake Elementary, 9 a.m.-noon (June 21-27, paysoncommunitytheatre.com)

June 27
2025 Here Comes the Sun Rock Festival, Payson Memorial Park, 2:30 p.m. (June 27-28, paysonutah.gov)

NORTH

American Fork

June 21
2025 Runtastic TIMP Half Marathon, 6 a.m. Art Dye Park, (runtasticevents.com)

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Valentine Theater, 7:30 p.m. (June 21-July 1, americanforkarts.com)

June 28
Seven Songs of the Sea: A World Premiere, The Falls at Mount Timpanogos Village, 7 p.m. (timpchamber.org)

Lehi

June 21
2025 Lehi Round-Up Celebration, various locations (June 21-29, lehi-ut.gov/roundup)

- Tennis tournament
- Pickleball tournament
- Miss Lehi competition
- Concerts
- 3-on-3 basketball tournament
- Paws and Perform
- Outdoor movie
- Rodeo
- Horseshoe tournament
- Comedy shows
- Parades
- Chalk It Up
- Round-up Market
- Raise the Mic
- Chuck Wagon breakfast
- Family Fun Day

Rose Month, Ashton Gardens, Thanksgiving Point (June 21-30, thanksgivingpoint.org)

2025 Fairy Tale Tea Party, Thanksgiving Point Ashton Gardens (June 21, thanksgivingpoint.org)

June 22
Lehi Arts in the Park: Daniel Beck, Wines Park, 7:30 p.m. (lehiarts.org)

June 23

2025 Utah Symphony Concert, Thanksgiving Point Ashton Gardens, 8:30 p.m. (thanksgivingpoint.org)

Pleasant Grove

June 21
Pleasant Grove 2025 Strawberry Days, Historic Downtown Pleasant Grove (strawberryydays.org)

- Pickleball tournament
- Spikeball tournament
- Fireman's Breakfast
- Car show
- Street party food trucks
- Concerts
- Strawberries and Stories
- Parades
- Chalk the Block
- Golf tournament
- Baby contest
- Quilt show
- Carnival
- Princess Party
- Berry Special festival
- Pie-eating contest
- Dirt dance
- Guns and Hoses 5k
- Esport tournament
- 2-vs-2 volleyball tournament

2025 Strawberry Days Rodeo, Pleasant Grove Rodeo Grounds (strawberryydaysrodeo.com)

The Play That Goes Wrong, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 4/7:30 p.m. (June 21-Aug. 16, theruth.org)
An American in Paris, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 4/7:30 p.m. (June 21-July 19, theruth.org)

June 25
2025 Utah Flower Market, 11 a.m.-noon (utahflowermarket.com)

Alpine

June 21
Weed Abatement Service Day, 8 a.m. (alpineut.gov)

June 24
Trucks & Tunes, Legacy Park, 5-8 p.m.

Cedar Hills

June 23
Meet the Mayor, Cedar Hills City Offices, 10-11 a.m.

Highland

June 23
Stop Motion Animation, Highland Community Center, 9 a.m.-noon (June 23-27, visualartinstitute.org)

June 26
2025 Highland Farmers Market, Highland Heritage Park, 4-8 p.m.

WEST

Eagle Mountain

June 21
Teen TechnaBLAST drone show,

Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 7 a.m.-9 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Farmer's Market, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

June 26

Chalk the Walk, Eagle Valley Elementary School, 10:15-11:15 a.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Food Truck Rally, Cory B. Wride Memorial Park, 6-9 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

June 27

Movie in the Park: Inside Out, Silverlake Amphitheater, 9 p.m. (eaglemountain.gov)

Saratoga Springs

June 21
Train Rides, Shay Park, 9 a.m.-noon (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

June 23

Saratoga Springs Farmers Market, Neptune Park, 5-9 p.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

Summer Monday Fundays: Sonic Duke Rock Band, 7 p.m. (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

June 24
Halsey: For My Last Trick, Utah First Credit Union Amphitheatre, 7 p.m. (concerts.livenation.com)

June 27
X Games Salt Lake City, Utah State Fairpark (June 27-29, xgames.com)
2025 Utah Arts Festival, Salt Lake City and County Building, 5 p.m. (June 21-22, uaf.org)

June 28
SLC Children's Day 2025, Meadows Park, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. (slc.gov)

Heber Valley

June 21
RW Erickson Antique Power Show, Richard W. Erickson Foundation in Wallsburg, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. (June 21-22, richarderricksonfoundation.org)

The Wasatch 50 Race, Soldier Hollow, 7 a.m. (redrockevents.racecentry.com/wasatch-50)

June 27
Soldier Hollow Mountain Bike Festival, Soldier Hollow, 8 a.m. (June 27-29, sohobikefest.com)

Nephi

June 21
Monster Truck Insanity Next Level Tour, Young Living Lavender Farms, noon (insanitytour.com/mona)

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jloyd@heraldextra.com.

ASK DR. STEVE

Childhood experiences impact our self-worth

The patterns we carry into adulthood often have their roots in childhood. This doesn't mean we're destined to repeat the past, but understanding where our responses come from can be the first step toward creating the changes we want. The strategies you developed as a child made sense given what you were dealing with—they helped you survive and cope. Now, as an adult with more

choices and resources, you have the opportunity to expand your repertoire of responses.

Remember, recognizing these patterns isn't about blaming your parents or dwelling on the past. It's about understanding yourself with compassion and giving yourself permission to grow.

Here is the last of three columns focusing on answering some of the questions surrounding this topic:

Self-worth and inner critic

Q Why do I feel like there's something fundamentally wrong with me?

A Children absorb messages about themselves from their environment. If you experienced criticism, neglect, or inconsistent care, you might have concluded that you were the problem. What started as 'I did something wrong' became 'I am wrong.' This deep sense of being flawed is shame, and it's not based on truth about who you are.

Q How do I quiet the voice that tells me I'm not good enough?

A That voice developed to protect you from further hurt by keeping you hyperaware of potential flaws. Start by recognizing it as an old protective mechanism, not truth. When you hear it, try responding with curiosity rather than belief: 'There's that old voice again. What is it trying to protect me from right now?' Gradually, you can develop a kinder in-

ternal voice to balance it out.

Q Why can't I ever feel satisfied with my achievements?

A If you carry shame, you might work incredibly hard to prove your worth, but success never feels real or lasting. Every achievement feels temporary, and every mistake feels like proof of your deep-down 'badness.' You're trying to earn something—your own acceptance—that you already deserve simply by existing.

Q How can I actually enjoy my successes instead of immediately worrying about the next thing?

A Practice pausing when good things happen. Literally stop and notice: 'This is a moment of success.' Let yourself feel it in your body, even if it's uncomfortable. Share good news with people who can genuinely celebrate with you. The goal isn't to become arrogant—it's to let positive experiences actually register instead of immediately dismissing them.

Q Why do I sabotage good things in my life?

A If shame is part of your identity, success can feel foreign and even dangerous. It contradicts what you believe about yourself. Sometimes people unconsciously create situations that confirm their unworthiness because that feels more familiar than believing good things can last.

Q How do I stop sabotaging opportunities and relationships?

A Start by recognizing the pattern without judgment. When you notice yourself about to sabotage something good, pause and ask: 'What am I afraid will happen if this goes well?' Often there's a fear underneath—like 'people will expect too much' or 'I'll eventually disappoint them anyway.' Once you identify the fear, you can address it directly rather than acting it out.

Q Why do compliments make me so uncomfortable?

A When someone sees you positively but you see yourself negatively, it creates internal conflict. Accepting compliments would mean updating your self-image, and that can feel scary. It's not modesty—it's protection of a familiar,

even if painful, way of seeing yourself.

Q How can I learn to accept compliments gracefully?

A Start simple—just say 'thank you' without deflecting or explaining why the compliment isn't deserved. You don't have to believe it fully at first, but practice receiving it. Notice what happens in your body when someone says something positive about you. Over time, try to collect these positive messages rather than immediately discarding them.

Q How do I overcome shame?

A Shame heals through experiences of being truly seen and accepted. This might happen in therapy, close friendships, or other caring relationships. The key is learning to separate what you do from who you are. You can feel regret about actions without condemning your entire self. Your worth isn't something you earn—it's something you inherently have.

Q How do I develop self-compassion when I make mistakes?

A Treat yourself like you would treat a good friend who made the same mistake. What would you say to them? Mistakes are part of being human, not evidence of your unworthiness. Try asking: 'What do I need right now?' instead of 'How could I be so stupid?' Self-compassion isn't about lowering standards—it's about motivating yourself through kindness rather than cruelty.

Q What's the difference between shame and guilt?

A Guilt says 'I did something wrong'—it's about behavior and can motivate positive change. Shame says 'I am wrong'—it's about your core self and tends to be paralyzing. Learning this difference is powerful because it helps you address problems without attacking yourself.

Q How do I know when shame is driving my behavior?

A Shame-driven behavior often feels compulsive and leaves you feeling worse about yourself afterward. You might find yourself overworking to prove your worth, staying small to avoid crit-

icism, or lashing out when you feel exposed. There's usually an underlying fear of being 'found out' as flawed. Healthy motivation, by contrast, comes from values and desires rather than from trying to avoid being seen as bad.

Closing

Your childhood strategies were intelligent responses to difficult situations. They helped you survive and cope with circumstances beyond your control. The fact that you're reading this and thinking about these patterns shows tremendous courage and self-awareness.

Remember that healing doesn't mean forgetting the past or pretending it didn't matter. It means giving yourself permission to grow beyond the limitations those early experiences may have created. You now have choices you didn't have as a child. You have the power to create new patterns, new relationships, and new ways of being in the world.

Change takes time, and it's rarely linear. Be patient with yourself as you practice new ways of thinking and responding. Every small step toward understanding and self-compassion is meaningful progress.

You are worthy of love, belonging, and all the good things life has to offer—not because you've earned it, but simply because you exist. This truth doesn't change based on your past, your mistakes, or your struggles. It's a constant, and it's yours to claim.

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The questions and answers above are presented as opinions of Jason Sadora and Steven Szykula, Licensed Mental Health Professionals at Comprehensive Psychological Services. These opinions are not a substitute for counseling with a professional or for medication therapies that may be needed.

THE CONVERSATION

Who are you?

The voice within a person is always trying to get their attention to guide them into unknown avenues of potential that the mind cannot yet fully comprehend. The question of who you are is elementary, or at least a

LETROY WOODS

conversation that should be visited often, and the starting point for

this dialogue. Generations pass down belief systems, as societies and cultures have expectations of who we should be. Try stepping outside of this box and the tug of the ball and chain will tighten its influence and grip, pulling those who do not possess strength yet back into the confines of mediocrity and conformity.

Who are you is the curiosity begins, but asking oneself this question long enough the labels and titles will have little importance, and a new question will emerge. What are we is a better investigation to embark on. Courage awaits for the person who embraces the new journey, but do not be fooled because stirring the pot will put a target on your back. Being misunderstood is justified in the pursuit of one's purpose and greatness. The road is often paved by those who say they have their best interest in mind. However, what does the gut suggest?

Take the wheel of your own life. Otherwise, a conversation you may not want to face will be waiting for you in full reflection. Dig deep first for the person you desire to become and then for the life you would love. The pen is in your hands and the cosmos are waiting for the next chapter to be written in your book of life. What kind of story do you want to experience and express?

What is being spoken about is explicit to true freedom at its core, and the road to its discovery lies within the individual who has the capacity to go within themselves and stay there. Being in the presence of greatness resides at the center of each person and should never be feared.

Identity represents the external world we navigate through, but the expression most individuals are seeking is that treasure deep in their hearts. With honesty and integrity, ask yourself if you are choosing the version of yourself that you are willing to take to the grave. If not, then there may be an internal obstacle that has not been addressed or observed.

Under the sun and stars of this planet, we are filled with inspiration and life. To be inspired is to have life breathed into you. Paying close attention to all that surrounds us will reveal that life is always conspiring in our favor all the time. Not some of the time, but all the time. The conversation is intended to breathe life into the hearts of the people looking for their truth and purpose.

Remember that the conversation is the place where one lives and dwells. Who you choose to become is for you to decide and your choice alone, because this will be something each person will have to live with.

Letroy Woods can be reached at Letroywoods@gmail.com

GET OUT THERE

5 ways to respect the great (but sometimes deadly) outdoors

I treasure the great outdoors but am by no means a boy scout. I'm not proud to admit it, but my sense of direction is horrible, despite my experience. I've gotten lost on wilderness trails all over the state, not to mention multi-day hikes all

over the world. I was clearly absent the day God gave out "orientation" skills.

That hasn't stopped me from seeing the majestic, lively, and blue-green spinning ball we call home. It's wonderful. But it's also downright deadly, especially when away from the creature comforts of shelter, modern society, and lots of people who can lend a helping hand.

But you don't have to be an outdoor expert to stay safe in the backcountry. But you do need to respect it. Here's how:

1. Excessively hydrate

Do this way more than you think. If hiking all day, pack and plan on drinking at least a gallon, if not more. Of course, this guideline varies by climate, current temperatures, and activity level. But if a reported 75% of Americans are already dehydrated at home with working plumbing, the risk of life-threatening dehydration is even higher in the desert.

2. Conserve energy

I can't tell you the number of times I've seen inexperienced hikers stop whenever they tire, as opposed to when it makes the most sense. For example, how many times have you stopped to catch your breath in the sun on uneven ground?



ANTONIOGUILLEM VIA ADOBE

The amount of water you drink should be guided by thirst but you'll likely need more during hot weather.

How many times have you ventured outdoors in midday when the temperatures and sun are at their peak? Instead, always make an effort to rest in the shade on level ground, and start your journey in the morning or late afternoon if you can make it back to shelter in time.

3. Shelter yourself

Obviously this includes actual outdoor shelter like tents, tree shade, and makeshift sleeping quarters. But since most of us won't get caught in the wild unexpectedly overnight, what I really mean by this is using sunscreen, skin protection, head cover, rain coats, and appropriate clothing for the activity you're engaged in. So check the weather before venturing out, and carry the right gear with you to stay protected.

4. Don't underestimate wildlife

Just last month my family happened upon a rattlesnake digesting a rabbit while hiking the Glen Canyon Loop in Provo. Although the debilitated snake had its mouth full—like really full—our party steered well clear of highly venomous reptile just in case. Regardless if you're familiar with any animals or plants you encounter in the wild, please keep your distance since you never really know how something will react when threatened or surprised. These are not domestic pets, after all. Never sacrifice your safety for cuteness or beauty.

5. Use lifelines

If you're heading out all day, overnight, or for an extended period of time, let your family and

friends know where you are going and when you'll be back. This simple act has saved an untold number of lives when things go wrong. As a bonus, consider packing a simple first-aid kit with emergency supplies you may need.

Last but not least, tread lightly. For example, a wet foot is better than a broken ankle when crossing a river or stream. Never sacrifice your immediate health for short-term comfort, especially when medical assistance is miles, hours, or even days away on foot.

That said, get out there and enjoy those great outdoors! It's good for the soul and your health.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo, Utah with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

ASK DR. STEVE

Childhood experiences shape who you are as an adult

The patterns we carry into adulthood often have their roots in childhood. This doesn't mean we're destined to repeat the past, but understanding where our responses come from can be the first step toward creating the changes we want. The strategies you developed as a child made sense given what you were dealing with—they helped you survive and cope. Now, as an adult with more choices and resources, you have the



STEVEN A. SZYKULA

opportunity to expand your repertoire of responses.

Remember, recognizing these patterns isn't about blaming your parents or dwelling on the past. It's about understanding yourself with compassion and giving yourself permission to grow.

Here is the first of three columns focusing on answering some of the questions surrounding this topic:

Childhood matters in adulthood

Q Why do I still react to stress the same way I did as a child?

A Your brain learned certain patterns early on that helped you survive difficult situations. These patterns don't just disappear—they stay with you into

adulthood. What protected you then, might feel limiting now.

Q How can I tell when I'm falling into old patterns?

A Your body often knows first. You might notice your shoulders tensing, your breathing getting shallow, or feeling that familiar knot in your stomach. Emotionally, you might feel suddenly like a kid, mostly powerless. Pay attention to moments when your reaction feels bigger than the situation, or when you're responding to what you think might happen rather than what's actually happening.

Q I always feel responsible for everyone else's emotions. Where does this come from?

A Many people learned as children to be the 'emotional barometer' or 'peace maker' of their family—always watching for signs of distress and trying to fix things. If your parents were struggling, you might have felt it was your job to help them feel better. This creates a pattern of putting others' needs before your own.

Q How do I stop trying to fix everyone's problems?

A Start small. Notice when you're about to jump in to solve someone's else's emotions. Pause. Ask yourself: 'Is this actually my responsibility?' or 'What would happen if I just listened instead of fixing?' It might feel selfish at first, but allowing others to handle their own emotions is actually more respectful and helps them grow stronger too.

Q Why is it so hard for me to express my own needs?

A Some children learn early on that their feelings are 'too much' for their parents to handle. Maybe your parents were overwhelmed or couldn't respond consistently to your needs or emotions. So you learned to make yourself 'smaller', to need less. This was smart survival thinking then, but it can make adult relationships difficult.

Q What if people reject me when I express my needs?

A People who truly care about you want to know what you need. If someone consistently reacts poorly to your reasonable needs, that tells you something important about them, not about you. Start with small requests with safe people to build your confidence.

Q Can these patterns actually change?

A Yes. Your brain can form new pathways at any age. Understanding where these patterns came from is the first step. When you recognize you're operating from an old survival map and strategy, you can start choosing different responses. It takes time and patience with yourself, but change is absolutely possible.

Q How long does it take to change these deep patterns?

A There's no set timeline—it depends on many factors like how ingrained the patterns are and how much support you have. Some people notice small shifts

within weeks, while deeper changes often take months or years. The key is celebrating small progress rather than expecting dramatic overnight transformation. Every time you choose a new response, you're building new neural pathways. Take note of that.

Q What if my family doesn't like it when I change?

A Family systems often resist change, even positive change. I can disrupt familiar family dynamics. If you stop being the family peacekeeper or problem-solver, others might push back. This is normal and doesn't mean you're doing anything wrong. Sometimes your growth challenges others to look at their own patterns, which can be uncomfortable for them.

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Dr. Steve is a psychologist, Steven A. Szykula, Ph.D. Visit: WeCanHelpOut.com

THE CONVERSATION

The growing season

The coming of a new season involves the dying of its predecessor. With each cycle of the sun and moon, we are offered new beginnings and opportunities. There are two sides to bringing anything full circle; one cannot exist without the other for we must experience growth in its entirety. Growth has many faces and is a part of our lives whether we want it to be or not.

Change is inevitable and not always in our control. However, the choice to move and transition through adversity offers many benefits in hindsight. Course correction of the GPS is often ignored and something many people choose not to confront. Because change is uncomfortable, we double-down on what is comfortable by spending a considerable amount of our life hiding, protecting, and defending the path of least resistance. The seasons stand still for no one and can be highly suggestive to get us on the ride. It is not in animals' nature to resist what they are, so why do humans? As the seasons change so does the animal, or death may occur. Whatever season you are moving through, know that there is information in it that is waiting for you to choose it, and that much closer to freedom. The seasons can teach us the attribute of patience and to slow down so that we may see what is presenting itself around us.

All seasons are equally important, especially those we do not favor. You and I are connected to the seasons. Our composition and chemical makeup are composed of the elements of the earth. The bond between the seasons and humans is deep rooted, with patterns and connections that intertwine between us. We do not have the option to choose whether we play the game of life. If we are breathing, then we are in the game of life. And if we are in the game of life, it is important to know the rules. Our emotions often guide us away from our nature and can be false indicators of information.

Everything around us is trying to get our attention to show us something. Take a moment to pause each day and observe how effortless the flow of nature is. Human beings are the only creatures on the planet that try to be something that they are not. All seasons have growth even if you cannot see it with your own eyes. As the dormant ground breaks in the spring and all life seems to be vacant, I tell myself to not trust what my physical senses are trying to suggest to me.

There is hidden information in silence, observation, and action. The season begins and ends with learning to do the small things well. Each season lends a helping hand to our relationships, finances, careers, and self-esteem. There is a natural law and cycle that exists within our environment which wants us to cooperate with it. The seasons offer us life through sowing seeds, presenting occasions for opportunities, and the patience to know that the right moment to act is in the present. Growth requires expansion, increase, advancement, stretching, and tenacity to be a student of each season. Do not allow your current conversation to keep you in a season you do not belong in and be ready for the change of the new season to come.

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GET OUT THERE

5 ways you're wasting money on travel



DAVID ZALUBOWSKI, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Travelers gather to wait for their flights in the main terminal of Denver International Airport on May 23 in Denver.

I recently booked a \$6 Uber in a foreign city. Once it arrived, I hopped in the car. The chipper driver said "Hi," then flipped a U-turn. Seconds later, he pulled over. "Did you know you were only two blocks when you booked this ride?" he asked with a smile. I did not and was pretty embarrassed by my goof.



BLAKE SNOW

Oops. Had I taken a few extra seconds to see just how close my destination was, I would have saved a few bucks, not to mention my embarrassment. Thankfully I didn't lose too much on the deal. But there are actually a lot of ways travelers routinely waste money when venturing abroad, whether domestically or internationally.

Let me count the ways:

1 Visiting in peak season.

I get it — many people only get time off or vacation days on nights, weekends, in summer, or when it's generally convenient for everyone else

(such as Christmas break for skiing). But this has a nasty effect of high demand and low supply, which can double or even triple the price of travel in some cases. If you can be flexible or ask work for time off in low or shoulder seasons, you can stretch your dollar by a wide margin.

2 Paying for baggage.

You may think you need all of that stuff. But you don't. If Rick Steves can pack everything he needs into a single backpack for his annual five-month visit to Europe (which he really does), you can pack one or two weeks of clothes in only a small carry-on. Heck, I only took a large fanny pack the first time I visited the Middle East! Point is, if you want to save hundreds of dollars in added baggage fees, stop telling yourself you can't pack that light. Everybody can. You just have to only wear one pair of shoes and get used to doing sink laundry.

3 Dining at tourist traps.

Not only does this mistake cost you

dozens, if not hundreds, of dollars, it's actually a horrible waste of food, since touristy restaurants don't offer the same quality as cooks and chefs that truly take pride in the food they serve. Remember: tourist restaurants are businesses first, eating establishments second, which results in mediocre dining that costs a lot more than you'll pay for better food elsewhere. The extra walk or drive is worth it. If you absolutely must, consider grabbing a snack until you can get to a proper eatery.

4 Buying too much car.

I'm talking taxis, rental cars, or Ubers for short walks like the mistake I made. In many cases, public transport, courtesy hotel shuttles, limited ride shares, and even bike and scooter shares can get you everywhere you want to be without a costly rental car. Another big mistake is pre-booking an expensive airport transfer in advance, only to realize you could have saved a lot of money just calling an Uber upon arrival. So before you pay for unnecessary or

extra ground transportation, check all available options and distances.

5 Failing to pre-book tickets.

Booking online before you arrive not only saves you time at the ticket counter, but it can save you serious cash. This is especially true in Europe, which often promotes "skip the line" tours, which are really just online tickets that let you avoid the long ticket counters that plague popular attractions. Again, a little extra planning goes a long way to saving precious dollars, time, and headaches waiting in long lines, instead of—you know—actually seeing cool stuff.

Don't make the same mistake I did. Try the above. The savings might just fund your next great vacation.

Blake Snow contributes to fancy publications and Fortune 500 companies as a bodacious writer-for-hire and seasoned travel journalist to all seven continents. He lives in Provo with his wife, five children, and one ferocious chihuahua.

GET OUT THERE

Utah outdoors that rival national parks

Most Utahns know our “Mighty Five” National Parks—Zion, Bryce, Capitol Reef, Canyonlands, and Arches. Many are also familiar with our other “great outdoors” such as Goblin Valley, Grand Staircase, and Bonneville Salt Flats.

But have you ever heard of Fantasy Canyon? Have you actually visited Dinosaur National Monument? Have you ever hiked Kodachrome, Little Wild Horse, or driven up the treacherous Moki Dugway to take in the beautiful expanse of Goosenecks

State Park?

If not, I’ve got news for you: these and other hidden gems are nearly as good, if not better, than some of our state’s most iconic National Parks. Having traveled to every corner of Utah for the last two decades—not to mention all seven continents—I deeply believe we live in the most disproportionately state in America. God was clearly in a good mood the day he made Utah.

Looking to get off the beaten path while staying close to home this summer? Either way, I highly recommend the following:



Sunset hike in Kodachrome Basin State Park. DAILY HERALD FILE PHOTO

Kodachrome Basin

If Zion and Colorado’s Garden of the Gods had a baby, it might look something like this. Although small and compact, Kodachrome is a delight. Located just 30 minutes from Bryce National Park, it can easily be done in a single day. Angels Palace Trail (1.5 miles) is the best (if not funnest) way to take it all in. It even resembles a mini Angel’s Landing. I saw that loosely, but for any who have hiked both, you know exactly what I mean. Either way, Kodachrome is sublime.

Little Grand Canyon

Believe it or not, there is a place only an hour and a half from Provo that legitimately rivals Arizona’s Grand Canyon. They call it Little Grand Canyon and it truly lives up to its name. The first time I visited many years ago, specifically the Wedge Overlook, I couldn’t believe what I saw. Yes, the cliffs aren’t as dramatic as the actual Grand Canyon. But Little Grand Canyon is truly a sight to behold, and the starting point of what all of Southern Utah is known for.

Red Fleet State Park

Located just outside of Dinosaur National Monument (which you should definitely pair this visit with), Red Fleet State Park is best described as “Mini Lake Powell” without the crowds and commute times. There is legalized (and thrilling) cliff jumping up to 20 feet right near the entrance, an amazing Dinosaur Track Trail, and terrific boating and swimming. That and Red Fleet is only an hour away from Fantasy Canyon, which is the coolest Utah rock maze you’ve never heard of—like something out of Star Wars.

Little Wild Horse Canyon

Folks, I’ve hiked virtually every slot canyon in Utah. I’m drawn to them like a moth to flame and can’t get enough of them. But Little Wild Horse is the best, the creme de la creme. It feels like a hidden gem and still doesn’t attract the numbers that other slot canyons do. Which keeps it special.

Snow Canyon

Were it not located in a state that has more National Parks per capita than any other state not named Alaska, I’m convinced Snow Canyon would be a National Park. But since Utah already has five National Parks and because politics matter, Snow Canyon will forever remain a state park. And she’s better because for it, since National Park designations always bring in more crowds. Simply put, Snow Canyon is an absolute beauty. And the best way to see it is at the end of the Snow Canyon Overlook Trail (5 miles roundtrip).

Honorable mentions: Forrest Gump Point, Dead Horse Point, Cathedral Valley, Corona Arch, Little Sahara, Valley of the Gods, and a dozen more that word counts won’t permit.

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PLACES TO GO, THINGS TO DO

Here is a look at many of the events going on in Utah Valley and beyond in the next week:

Utah Valley

June 5-21

2025 Utah Valley Parade of Homes (uvparade.com)

CENTRAL

Provo

June 7

2025 Utah Valley Marathon, Wall-sburg to Utah County Courthouse, 6 a.m. start (utahvalleymarathon.com)
Disney’s High School Musical, BYU west campus, 2/7:30 p.m. (June 7-14, onstage.byu.edu)

2025 Provo Farmer’s Market, Pioneer Park, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Luau & Pig Roast at Mandan Summit, Sundance Resort, 4-7:30 p.m. (sundanceresort.com)

Abstracted & Architected 2025, JKR Gallery, 4-8 p.m. Wed.-Sat. (June 7-28)

Book Talk: John Turner and Patrick Mason, The Compass Gallery, 6-7 p.m.

Family Arts Festival 2025, Brigham Young University Museum of Art (June 7-28)

June 8

2025 Summer Band Concert Series, North Park, 7 p.m.

Mountain Top Yoga 2025, Sundance Resort, 9-11 a.m. (sundanceresort.com)

June 9

Rise Up Children’s Choir in Concert, Covey Center for the Arts, 7 p.m. (June 9-10, covey.provo.gov)

June 10

Lumify - Amplify and Lumina in Concert, Covey Center for the Arts, 4 p.m. (covey.provo.gov)

June 12

Cosplay and Costume Community Work Day, The Compass Gallery, noon-7 p.m.

June 13

Wonderland, Covey Center for the Arts, 1:30/6:30 p.m. (June 13-14, covey.provo.gov)

Full Moon Lift Rides, Sundance Resort, 8 p.m.-midnight (sundanceresort.com)

Friday Fusion, Arlington Hall, 8:30 p.m.-2 a.m.

June 14

2025 Flag Retirement Ceremony, Provo Veterans Memorial Park, 7-8 p.m. (freedomfestival.org)

Orem

June 7

Disney’s Newsies, SCERA, 8 p.m. (June 7-21, scera.org)

Oremfest 2025, City Center Park (oremfest.org)

- Rotary Club Pancake Breakfast
- Baby Contest
- Yoga At The Park
- Food Vendors
- Carnival Rides & Games
- Boutiques
- Grand Parade
- Fireworks

NJP Utah Regional Pickleball Tournament, Club Pickleball USA

June 9



CHRISTI BABBITT, SPECIAL TO THE DAILY HERALD

CITY CELEBRATIONS GALORE

The Art City Days Balloon Fest was held in the field behind Art City Elementary School in Springville early June 9, 2023. Springville is among the numerous Utah Valley cities holding city celebrations this weekend.

2025 Freedom’s Melody: A Celebration of American Composers, University Place Orem, 7 p.m.

2025 Summer Matinee Series, SCERA Center for the Arts

June 11

Orem’s Sunset Farmers Market 2025, City Center Park

June 13

2025 Outdoor Movie Nights in The Orchard: The Wizard of Oz, University Place Orem, 8:30 p.m.

June 14

The Singing in Regret Tour - Valhalla, Inversion, Second Hand Smoke, The Boardwalk Sound, 6:30 p.m. (theboardwalksound.com)

Lindon

June 13

2025 Lindon Summer Movies: The Wild Robot, Pheasant Brook Park, dusk

Vineyard

June 7

Vineyard Days 2025, Vineyard Grove Park (vineyarddays.org)

- 5K & 1K Race
- Craft Stations
- Art Show
- Lawn Games
- Interactive Rides
- Vendor Show
- Food Trucks
- Candy Cannon
- Battle of the Bands
- Bingo
- Concert: Music City Groove
- Firework show

Mapleton

Senior luncheon, Mapleton City Building, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Payson

June 7

Payson’s Adventure Day/Gran Fondo 2025, Memorial Park (paysonutah.gov)

June 14

2025 Payson Orchards Triathlon and 5K, Payson Community Pool, 7 a.m. (trisignup.com)

Santaquin

June 7

Family Fitness Festival, Centennial Park, 8-10:30 a.m. (santaquin.gov)

Spanish Fork

June 7

Valhalla | A Viking Rock Opera 2025, Angelus Theatre, 7:30 p.m.

June 13

2025 Spanish Fork Sounds of Summer, Spanish Fork City Park, 6 p.m. (spanishfork.gov)

Springville

June 7

Art City Days (June 7-14, springville.org)

- 5K Color Run
 - ¡Celebrate! ARTE!
 - Rodeo
 - Outdoor Movie
 - Carnival
 - Booths
 - Fun-A-Rama
 - Children’s Art Fest
 - Balloon Glow
 - Balloon Fest
 - Fireman’s Breakfast
 - Parades
 - Car Show
 - Duck Tape Regatta
 - Concerts
 - Fireworks
- 101st Annual Spring Salon, Springville Museum of Art
Lend Me a Tenor, Merit College Preparatory Academy

June 11

¡Celebrate! ARTE! 2025, Civic Center Park

June 13

2025 Children’s Art Festival,

Springville Museum of Art

NORTH

Alpine

June 10

Trucks and Tunes Tuesday, Legacy Park, 5-8 p.m.

American Fork

June 7

Fork Fest 2025: Music & Arts Festival, Art Dye Park, 11:45 a.m.-10:30 p.m. (forkfest.org)

June 9

Family Night at the Library: Chemistry in Action!, Library Community Room, 6-7 p.m.

Cedar Hills

June 9

Meet the Mayor, Cedar Hills City Offices, 10-11 a.m.

Highland

June 9

Brandon Mull Author Visit, Highland Library, 6-8 p.m.

June 12

2025 Highland Farmers Market, Highland Heritage Park, 4-8 p.m.

Lehi

June 7

Rose Month, Ashton, Gardens, Thanksgiving Point (June 7-30, thanksgivingpoint.org)

2025 Pony Express Demolition Derby, rodeo grounds, 7 p.m. (pony-expresssevents.com)

Pleasant Grove

June 7

Cook Family Park grand opening, Cook Family Park, 10 a.m.

Taste of the Arts: Create Art & Art Swap Meet, Pleasant Grove Public Library, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

The Play That Goes Wrong, The

Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 4/7:30 p.m. (June 7-Aug. 16, theruth.org)

June 8

Concerts in the Park: UCC, Downtown Park, 7:30-9 p.m.

June 11

Utah Flower Market 2025, Grove Station, 11 a.m.-noon

June 13

An American in Paris, The Ruth and Nathan Hale Theater, 4/7:30 p.m. (June 7-July 19, theruth.org)

June 14

Pleasant Grove 2025 Strawberry Days, Historic Downtown Pleasant Grove

Big Noise Music Festival, Caleb Chapman’s Soundhouse, 4-10 p.m. (ccsoundhouse.com)

WEST

Fairfield

June 14

Cowboy Way of Life Festival 2025, Camp Floyd State Park and Stagecoach Inn Museum, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.

Eagle Mountain

June 12

Pony Express PRCA Rodeo 2025, Pony Express Memorial Arena, 7 p.m. (June 12-14, ponyexpresssevents.com)

Saratoga Springs

June 9

2025 Summer Monday Fundays, Neptune Park (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

June 11-14

Saratoga Springs Splash Days 2025, Neptune Park (saratogasprings-ut.gov)

NEARBY

Salt Lake City

June 7

Holi Festival of Color, Krishna Temple, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Saillfest 2025, Great Salt Lake State Park, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

June 8

2025 Utah Pride Parade, 450 S. 200 E., 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

June 10

They Might Be Giants: The Big Show Tour, The Depot, 7 p.m. (June 10-11)

June 13

2025 Mountain Man Camp, This Is The Place Heritage Park, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (June 13-14)

The 50th Utah Scottish Festival and Highland Games, Utah State Fairpark (June 13-15, utahscots.org)

Heber Valley

June 7

Heber Valley Baby Animal Celebration, Local Historic Farm, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

Nephi

June 21

Sawyer Brown Concert, Juab County Fairgrounds, 8 p.m.

Know of an event that should be listed? Let us know by emailing jilloyd@heraldextra.com.