



News

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Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad Plays Santa Claus By Teaming with Durango Business Improvement District, Purgatory Resort, Strater Hotel, and Other Local Travel Brands to Transform Durango into Christmas Town USA for 2018 Holiday Season

Historic 137-Year-Old Railroad's THE POLAR EXPRESS Train Ride Just One of Many Enjoyable, Family-Friendly Holiday Activities Available in Christmas Town USA

DURANGO, Colo. — September 21, 2018 — The [Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad \(D&SNRR\)](#), which offers distinctive year-round rail experiences and special events to passengers of all ages in the remote, scenic wilderness and high-mountain landscape of Colorado's San Juan National Forest, today announced it is teaming up with the [Durango Business Improvement District \(DBID\)](#), [Purgatory Resort](#), [the Strater Hotel](#), and dozens of other regional travel and hospitality brands to transform Durango into Christmas Town USA for the 2018 holiday season.

Consistently named by multiple publications as one of the best small towns in the United States, and one of America's most attractive Christmas destinations, Durango's Christmas Town USA initiative is the centerpiece of a comprehensive integrated marketing campaign specifically designed to promote the broad spectrum of enjoyable holiday activities, including THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride, extended-stay hotel accommodations, shopping, fine dining, winter sports, special events, and other attractions, available in November and December throughout the greater Durango area. The concerted effort, backed by scores of Durango-based travel and hospitality businesses across numerous categories, seeks to reinforce the city's well-known global status and reputation as a major holiday travel destination for the entire family.

"This creative program underscores what we Durango residents have known for years: Durango is a fun, affordable, and family-friendly holiday destination with a wealth of enjoyable Christmas-themed and seasonal activities for visitors of all ages," said Allen C. Harper, co-founder, chairman, and chief executive officer of the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad. "By cementing and aggressively promoting the city's positioning as Christmas Town USA, we hope to bring significant, well-deserved attention to its many holiday charms available to visitors from around the world. From incredible skiing, thrilling snowmobiling, and gorgeous historic hotels, to gourmet cuisine, delightful Christmas shopping, and an amazing craft beer scene, Durango possesses a rich, vibrant economy that offers something to everyone, especially during this magical time of year."

"With the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, the Strater Hotel, dozens of intriguing local retailers, and its many fantastic bistros and tasting rooms, Downtown Durango is the ideal spot for an enjoyable afternoon of holiday shopping, get-togethers with friends and family, and Christmas merriment," said Tim Walsworth, executive director of the Durango Business Improvement District, which promotes economic vitality and business development activity in the historic downtown corridor through www.downtowndurango.org. "As the epicenter of Christmas Town USA, Downtown Durango offers visitors a distinctive holiday experience that simply cannot be replicated anywhere else in the world."

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Here is a breakdown of the many Christmas-oriented activities and attractions available in Durango:

Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad | THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride

Already one of the premiere Christmas train special events in the world, the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad's presentation of [THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride](#) is an immersive theatrical experience based on the best-selling children's book and Academy Award® winning animated film of the same name. The event series begins on Friday, Nov. 16, and runs most days through Thursday, Jan. 3, 2019.

Hit the Slopes: World-Class Skiing at Purgatory Resort

With many meteorologists predicting Southwest Colorado will receive record snowfall this winter, Durango's [Purgatory Resort](#) is the ideal ski area for family members of all skill levels, plus kids ages 10 and younger ski free with the Power Kids Pass, no purchase required. With few crowds, short lines, affordable lift tickets, plenty of free parking, and miles and miles of varied terrain and scenic trails, Purgatory is slated to open its 2018-19 season on Saturday, Nov. 17, and it is located just a short 20-minute drive from downtown Durango.

Enjoyable Christmas Shopping and Revelry in Downtown Durango

Downtown Durango features a diverse collection of independent, locally-owned businesses which offer unique, creative Christmas gifts for friends, colleagues, and family members. Don't want to deal with the headache of wrapping and shipping your gifts? The beautifully-decorated [Strater Hotel](#), the official hotel of Christmas Town USA, has visitors covered with free gift-wrapping and affordable shipping options featuring Durango's very own Christmas Town USA seal!

Stay and Play at the Strater Hotel: A Pre-Christmas Vacation!

The official hotel of Christmas Town USA, the historic [Strater Hotel](#) is the perfect place to stay to enjoy all of Durango's holiday activities, including the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, Christmas shopping in downtown Durango, and the many sights and sounds of the holiday season. Beautifully decorated inside and out for Christmas, the Strater is offering a stay-and-play Christmas package with a \$114.00 per night room rate and a special gift upon arrival. Additionally, guests have the option to upgrade this package with Purgatory Resort lift tickets and passes to the D&SNGRR's [THE POLAR EXPRESS™ Train Ride](#). While staying at the Strater, guests can visit with Santa Claus right in the hotel; take a horse-drawn carriage around the quaint business district; enjoy a locally-produced craft beer or artisan cocktail at the hotel or in one of the city's award-winning bistros; take the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad through a winter wonderland to Cascade Canyon; have their Christmas gifts wrapped and shipped at the hotel's wrapping station; or simply walk around town and marvel in the beautiful scenery.

Savor Durango's Award-Winning Food and Beverage Scene

Durango offers visitors incredible culinary experiences, with a wide variety of cuisines to suit every palate and budget level. From wild game at [Eolus Bar & Dining](#) and the Strater Hotel's [Mahogany Grille](#), and handcrafted cocktails at speakeasy [The Bookcase & Barber](#), to award-winning craft beer at five Durango-area breweries and exquisite gift baskets, house-made holiday treats, and hot chocolate at [Animas Chocolate Company](#), Durango's food and beverage scene is second to none.

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About The Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad

Established in 1881 as the Denver & Rio Grande Railway, and based in beautiful Durango, Colorado, the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad (D&SNGRR) has been transporting passengers, young and old alike, through the remote, scenic wilderness and high-mountain landscape of the San Juan National Forest for 137 years. Now owned and operated by American Heritage Railways, the D&SNGRR provides distinctive year-round rail experiences and exceptional special events via its fleet of vintage coal-fired, steam-operated locomotives and coaches which have been updated with modern conveniences to accommodate today's discerning travelers. The D&SNGRR offers consumers a unique, enjoyable, and affordable family-friendly travel experience which combines the state's colorful pioneering and mining histories with the unparalleled beauty of the Colorado backcountry. For more information, please visit www.durangotrain.com; like the company on Facebook at www.facebook.com/DSNGRR; and follow the railroad on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) at @DSNGRR.