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# 5 Fabulous Places In Boulder For Brunch And Breakfast, According To A Local



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A seasonal favorite — Pumpkin pancakes at the Greenbriar Inn in Boulder, Colorado  
PHOTO CREDIT: SANDY BORNSTEIN

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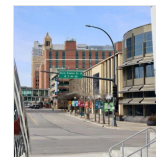


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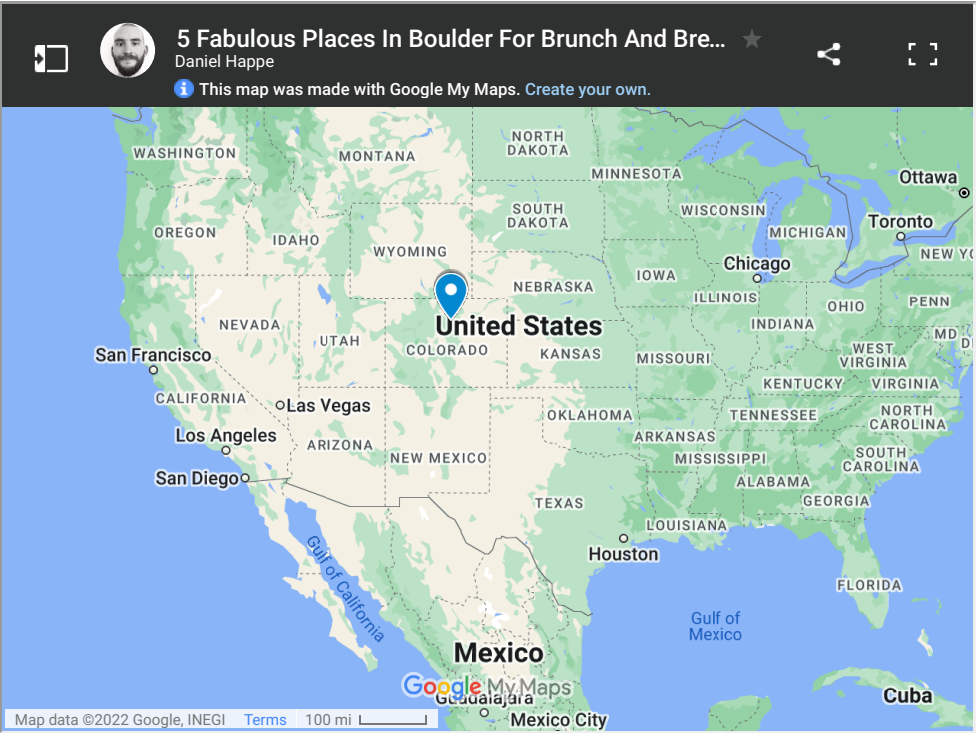


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For more than two decades, I have enjoyed Boulder, Colorado's evolving food scene. Most of Boulder's popular restaurants were able to withstand the ill effects of the pandemic. While a

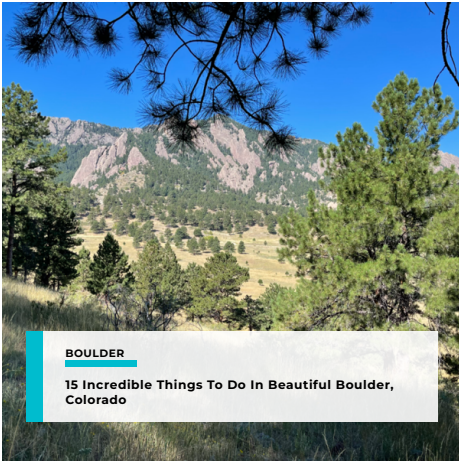
few local favorites shuttered their doors, all the places where I eat breakfast and brunch in Boulder are still open for business.

I am sharing five of these fabulous restaurants so you can indulge in a delicious breakfast or brunch before you start your day exploring some of Boulder's top sites — hiking trails at Chautauqua, the Flatirons, Flagstaff Mountain, the Pearl Street Mall, and the University of Colorado campus.




Since I no longer eat meat, the restaurants in this story showcase menus with a variety of vegetarian and pescatarian options. Carnivores will be equally satisfied by the diverse menu selections. However, I'm not the local you'd look to for advice on the best bacon or sausage options.


In all instances, the menus on my list include both breakfast and lunch entrees. Two of the places only serve brunch on the weekends. The remaining three are open for breakfast/lunch seven days a week. While the quality of the food and the presentation are at the top of my list, service and ambience are close seconds. If I am going to leave the comfort of my home for breakfast or brunch, I need to be traveling to a place with a special atmosphere.



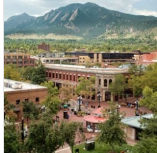
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Harvest Homestead skillet filled with nutrient-dense veggies at The Buff in Boulder, Colorado  
PHOTO CREDIT: SANDY BORNSTEIN

## 1. The Buff Restaurant

This family-owned restaurant with a down-to-earth feeling has been serving breakfast and lunch since 1995. The original location was replaced by the current restaurant adjacent to the Marriott Hotel on Canyon Boulevard. Efforts were made to repurpose the wood from the original location to maintain continuity. Weather permitting, seating is available both inside and outside. On a sunny day in the spring or fall, I prefer to be outside. During peak times, a long wait time is to be expected at this popular place.

### What To Order At The Buff Restaurant

The lengthy two-sided menu will please everyone at the table. Breakfast basics like eggs, omelets, Benedicts, French toast, and pancakes are tasty. Homestead skilletes come in six different ways. The lunch crowd loves the soups, salads, and sandwiches as well as Southwestern foods with a kick. Some of my past dining partners only order entrees from the last category.

Most of my visits to The Buff have been during the morning hours when my appetite is less robust. My “go-to” breakfast entrée is the homestead skillet called Harvest. This dish doesn't skimp on a wide assortment of fresh vegetables and potatoes. I usually ask for my eggs to be scrambled and I rotate between rye and wheat toast. From the coffee bar, I select my daily cup of cappuccino with oat milk.

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Handcrafted exterior ceramic tiles are the focal point at Boulder's Dushanbe Teahouse.  
PHOTO CREDIT: SANDY BORNSTEIN

## 2. Boulder Dushanbe Teahouse

Since 1998, visitors to Boulder and locals have visited and dined in a teahouse structure created by Tajikistan artisans in Asia that showcases historic elements of the Persian Empire. From the outside, visitors can gaze at colorful ceramic panels designed and created by Victor Zabolotnikov in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, one of Boulder's sister cities. Each of the eight panels has a Tree of Life panel.

While eating inside, most people look up at the carved and painted ceiling panels, which were created without the use of power tools, and scan the interior to admire the plastered carved walls illustrating Persian Ganch, along with the 12 individually carved cedar columns. While outdoor seating is available, this is one place that I recommend coming early so you can dine inside. Reservations are not taken for brunch.

If you're in the mood for a unique weekend brunch experience infused with organic produce harvested from a local farm, the Boulder Dushanbe Teahouse should be put at the top of your list. The eclectic menu includes an abundance of Asian cuisine as well as a few Mediterranean, European, and American favorites.





Kookoo Sabzi, a Persian herb omelet with naan, at Boulder Dushanbe Teahouse  
PHOTO CREDIT: SANDY BORNSTEIN

## What To Order At Boulder Dushanbe Teahouse

Adventuresome diners will be intrigued by the diverse menu with three sections — Entrees, Small Plates, and Soups & Salads — that includes a wide assortment of spices and nutrient-dense foods. Tea lovers will likewise be in heaven as they peruse the multi-page menu that showcases over 100 options. A general beverage menu lists several tea cocktails and a couple of tea mocktails.

Instead of spending time analyzing the tea options, my husband and I usually select the house chai with soy milk or the golden milk from the simpler drink menu. When we are interested in sharing a starter, we gravitate toward the Thai shrimp cakes.

If you're game for something a bit different, try either *kookoo sabzi* or Indian *dosa*. Kookoo sabzi is a Persian herb omelet with baba ghanoush, crispy rice, and walnuts. The omelet is cut into segments and served with thick pieces of naan. The Indian dosa or crepe has curried scrambled eggs, spinach, potato, onion, mango lassi, and apricot-cherry chutney. Fresh fruit accompanies this entrée.



Sample Middle Eastern cuisine with an innovative hummus plater at Boulder's Greenbriar Inn  
PHOTO CREDIT: SANDY BORNSTEIN

### 3. The Greenbriar Inn

Visitors who have the flexibility and the time to drive 15-20 minutes north of downtown Boulder can be pampered by the Greenbriar Inn's Sunday brunch menu. While many select this countryside location at the base of the foothills for elegant special occasions, locals often set aside time on Sundays to drive to this restaurant that has been operating for more than 50 years.

Whenever possible, I try to reserve a table in the Sunroom so I can gaze at the lovely grounds. Long before the farm-to-table movement gained popularity, the Greenbriar Inn started its first garden and started harvesting seasonal produce. The eggs used for the Sunday brunch menu come from chickens raised on the restaurant's farm.

#### What To Order At The Greenbriar Inn

We usually skip breakfast and arrive close to lunchtime so we can savor both a starter and a main course. During our latest visit, we shared the Hummus Trio for Two. Even though the platter presented totally different from the menu description, we thoroughly enjoyed the chef's innovative approach to Middle Eastern cuisine. This version had two dollops — red and orange — along with a mound of couscous. The red hummus was made from beets and garnished with pistachios, while the orange hummus was derived from mashed-up squash sprinkled with pomegranate seeds. The assortment of olives, along with a few sliced cucumbers, and numerous wedges of pita were used to scoop up the dips.

To maintain a Middle Eastern theme, I tried one of the newer menu options that was inaugurated earlier in the year. The Greenbriar Inn version of shakshuka has an abundance



of chickpeas in a spicy tomato sauce garnished with a small amount of feta cheese. The toasted buttered baguette adds texture and flavor to this dish. My husband chose the seasonal pumpkin spice pancakes that were served with an apple pecan and maple compote. The mound of thick pancakes looked like a round tower. I occasionally reached across the table and used my fork to snag samples of this scrumptious treat.



One of Tangerine's healthy breakfast options — Veggie Hash with pumpkin puree served with multi-grain bread  
PHOTO CREDIT: SANDY BORNSTEIN

## 4. Tangerine

Every day, Tangerine's menu offers a mix of vegetarian and gluten-free options along with a selection of Tex-Mex and Mediterranean-inspired recipes. Chef Alex Schuler successfully creates an inspiring menu that appeals to a health-conscious audience who is seeking a variety of breakfast and lunch options. With an emphasis on made-to-order entrees, almost everything is made from scratch. Since Tangerine opened in 2011, my dining experiences have been in the north Boulder location. I have yet to visit the Lafayette or Longmont restaurants which share the same menu.

The breakfast menu favors house specialties that are mostly gluten-free. Eggs Benedict, pancakes and waffles, and omelets have their own categories. Lunch goers can order from a choice of 10 sandwiches or six salads.

### What To Order At Tangerine

When I am looking for a healthy start to my day, I select the Veggie Hash. This gluten-free dish has a delicious mix of carrots, caramelized onions, mushrooms, spinach, red peppers, and potatoes served on top of a pumpkin puree and topped with balsamic reduction and cumin-spiced pepitas. The dish also has two eggs and a choice of gluten or gluten-free

toast. If you enjoy a cup of coffee with your breakfast, make sure to select one of the coffee drinks that uses locally roasted coffee from Salto, a woman-run business.



Dana's Tempeh Skillet with a chunk of corn bread at the Walnut Cafe in Boulder, Colorado  
PHOTO CREDIT: SANDY BORNSTEIN

## 5. Walnut Café

I have always visited the original location on Walnut Street, but I know many people who dine at the south side restaurant on Broadway. Former managers of these breakfast and lunch eateries took over ownership earlier this year. The restaurant on Walnut opened in 1983, and the second one was added in 2005. At the present time, the new owners do not anticipate making any major changes.

When the weather permits, I ask to be seated at one of the tables outside. Even though the small patio area runs adjacent to the strip mall's parking lot, I enjoy looking at the mountains. The restaurant's favorites include more than a dozen ways to prepare eggs. Most of these entrees come with one or two sides that range from fresh fruit to grits to French toast. Other categories focus on omelets, pancakes, waffles, bakery items, soups, salads, sandwiches, and burgers. An entire page is set aside for a long list of espresso bar drinks as well as tea, juices, milk, sodas, and kombucha.

### What To Order At The Walnut Cafe

I was told that the Eggs Marcos and the Big Dill Eggs are the restaurant's top sellers. I have



not tried either so I cannot comment. Instead, I tend to reorder Dana's Tempeh Skillet. The menu claims it was one of Boulder's first vegetarian meals. Instead of using eggs, the skillet uses tempeh as its major ingredient. A bountiful assortment of breakfast potatoes, onions, tomatoes, mushrooms, and spinach add color and taste to this healthy breakfast. I always select the thick wedge of blueberry cornbread to complement my skillet.

It is hard to resist ordering something from their list of espresso bar creations. I frequently select the Boulder latte, which has a double shot of espresso with steamed milk, vanilla, honey, and cinnamon, or the Sherpa Chai. Since I try to minimize my dairy and sugar consumption, I substitute soy milk for the milk and ask to go light on the honey.

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Sandy Bornstein is a Colorado-based, award-winning travel and lifestyle writer who focuses on active adventure, food and beverages, history and culture, cruises, luxury boomer travel, family travel, health and wellness, worldwide Jewish culture, and the importance of...  
After living as an expat international teacher in Bangalore, India, Sandy wrote [May This Be the Best Year of Your Life: A Memoir](#) as a

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