

8 Delicious Restaurants To Experience In Boulder, Colorado



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Margherita pizza at Pizzeria Locale in Boulder
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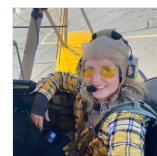


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Boulder has an eclectic culinary scene that astutely addresses the diverse needs of college students, residents, and visitors. Foodies will be delighted by the number of top-notch ethnic restaurants and quality farm-to-table options available in this pedestrian-friendly city nestled at the base of the foothills. With so many great places to eat, it is challenging to



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create a list of “x delicious restaurants” to sample.

To accomplish this feat, I focused on moderately priced menus that appealed to a sophisticated palate. Even with this limitation, I had to leave out many delectable options. Keep in mind that since I do not thrive on meat, my list may not adequately address selections for carnivores and that my numbering is in alphabetic order and does not reflect my preferences.



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Wood-roasted carrots with herbed labneh, pistachio duke, pickled red onions, and carrot sprouts

1. Ash’Kara

If you love authentic Mediterranean cuisine and enjoy sharing small plates to maximize your dining pleasure, [Ash’Kara](#) is a great option. Visitors can choose to dine inside or outside of this trendy restaurant that opened during the pandemic on Pearl Street. Chef Daniel Asher draws upon his heritage to create his version of modern Israeli cuisine with predominantly plant-based ingredients.

What To Order At Ash’Kara

Diners who prefer not to consume alcoholic beverages will be intrigued by the Turmeric Colada, a mixture of pineapple, coconut, turmeric, and ras el hanout (a Middle East spice blend). The depth of flavor from the drink’s Middle East spice blend will complement most of the restaurant’s food choices.

As a die-hard hummus fan, I am content with the basic Holy Land hummus. This plate comes with plenty of hummus but only one pita. If you are sharing with someone who loves pita, consider ordering more. To enhance this selection, consider adding a traditional Israeli salad, one or two plates of falafel, the date-glazed eggplant dish, and the wood-roasted carrots. After eating a nutrient-dense meal, health-conscious individuals may simply walk away content. For those willing to entertain a sweet treat, consider the chocolate-tahini panna cotta or the sufganiyot, jelly-filled donuts traditionally eaten during Hanukkah.



Falafel plate at Boychik, inside Avanti F&B
PHOTO CREDIT: SANDY BORNSTEIN

2. Avanti Food & Beverage

Have you ever selected a restaurant for a group of friends and then realized after sitting down that your guests didn't like the menu? Sophisticated food courts, like Boulder's [Avanti Food & Beverage](#), address this issue by having multi-dining options under one roof. At Avanti, there are seven places — Au Shucks Oyster and Raw Bar, Boychik, Lost City, New Yorksee, Pig and Tiger, Rooted American Craft Kitchen, and Rye Society. The ethnic smorgasbord of tasty dishes can be complemented by a refreshing drink at two bars.

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What To Order At Avanti Food & Beverage

Since my husband and I gravitate toward plant-based health-conscious cuisine, we focused our attention on Boychik, a middle eastern inspired restaurant, the nutrient-dense salads at Rooted Craft American Kitchen, and Dr. Rosen's Feel Good Bowl at Rye Society. Our mid-day appetites were easily satisfied by sharing a generous salad and the bowl. Our guests loved the Taiwanese buns at Pig and Tiger as well as the handmade forager pizza filled with maitake mushrooms, truffles, and mozzarella cheese. To round out their meals, they sipped coffee and enjoyed Little Man ice cream from the Lost City.



3. Bramble & Hare

[Bramble & Hare](#) offers an authentic farm-to-table experience in the heart of downtown Boulder. Chef Eric Skokan and his wife Jill operate a 425-acre organic farm on the outskirts of Boulder. This endeavor is the source for many of the carnivore entrees as well as the ingredients for the seasonal entrees at both Bramble & Hare and their other restaurant, Black Cat Bistro. Few restaurants have the advantage of harvesting fresh produce every day.

What To Order At Bramble & Hare

Since the price-fixed three-course menu changes daily, visitors cannot rely on reviews or suggestions. What may have appeared on an earlier menu may not be available. With only a few options in the appetizer, entrée, and dessert categories, it is best to ask about the menu, especially if you have diet limitations or allergies.



Open-faced dessert crepe with strawberries and bananas
PHOTO CREDIT: SANDY BORNSTEIN

4. Carelli's Of Boulder

Foodies who are in the mood for a selection of northern and southern Italian cuisine will find [Carelli's of Boulder](#) a great choice. First-time visitors may be overwhelmed by the assortment of appetizers, salads, pasta entrees, poultry dishes, pescatarian and veal treasures, pizza options, calzones, and hot paninis. These made-from-scratch entrees are consistently good. The no-hassle, free parking in the William's Village Shopping Center is a bonus.

What To Order At Carelli's Of Boulder

Many opt to nibble on the restaurant's homemade garlic bread while starting their meal with a bowl of vegetarian minestrone or with a generously sized salad. Please note that some of the salads are ample enough to be ordered as an entrée. Pescatarians cannot go wrong with any of the fish entrees. While my preference is geared toward seafood, fellow guests have yet to be disappointed with any of the other choices.

Daily specials tend to be creative and include seasonal ingredients. One time, we enjoyed a cauliflower risotto and lemon garlic shrimp special made with roasted poblano peppers, corn, sundried tomato, garlic, basil, and parmesan cheese. Dessert options include a selection of items arranged on a silver platter along with an appealing assortment of open-faced crepes.



Assortment of sushi at Japango
PHOTO CREDIT: SANDY BORNSTEIN

5. Japango

Even though Boulder is far away from a coastline, it has many noteworthy sushi restaurants. [Japango](#) is a top choice for traditional and innovative sushi creations along with an indoor and outdoor ambience that is hard to match.

What To Order At Japango

While similar items are available for lunch and dinner, the best bet for midday dining is a bento box for lunch. With almost a dozen varieties, diners can be confident to find a great match. Each bento box selection includes miso soup, mixed green salad, rice, plus an entrée. Some come with both a California roll and vegetable tempura while others come with only

one of these items. Happy Hour offers great deals daily from 3 to 6 p.m. and all day on Mondays.



Pan-seared Verlasso salmon served at Jill's
PHOTO CREDIT: SANDY BORNSTEIN

6. Jill's Restaurant & Bistro

Hotel restaurants are usually not at the top of my list. However, we have been pleasantly surprised by the contemporary cuisine at [Jill's](#) in the St. Julien Hotel & Spa in downtown Boulder. The dining experience is enhanced at certain times when live music is played. Even though the menu is relatively small, it offers organic options for carnivores, pescatarians, and vegetarians.

Likewise, the weekend brunch menu with extended hours from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. has a cross-section of tasty foods. Categories include starters, brunch entrees, salads & sandwiches, and wood stone flatbreads. After a hiatus during COVID, the popular vegan lunch buffets were reinstated on Fridays.

What To Order At Jill's

As we patiently waited for our dinner selections, many guests nearby were eating the Snake River Wagyu Burger or were sharing a wood-stone pizza. Instead, we opted for a more extensive selection by taking advantage of Jill's emphasis on farm-to-table foods. We thoroughly enjoyed our crispy brussels sprouts starter, the Yakisoba noodle salad made with cucumber, carrot, ginger, scallions & crispy wontons, and pan-seared, teriyaki-glazed salmon entrees accompanied by wild rice and pea shoots.



Lobster roll at The Kitchen
PHOTO CREDIT: SANDY BORNSTEIN

7. The Kitchen

[The Kitchen](#) offers another popular farm-to-table option for lunch, brunch, and dinner in downtown Boulder. Most of the menu is filled with creative shareable plates catering to gluten-free and vegan diners. Pescatarians and carnivores will be equally pleased with larger plates addressing these diets. Creative desserts add a finishing touch for those who indulge in sweet treats.

What To Order At The Kitchen

Popular items — crispy cauliflower, lobster rolls, hand-cut French/garlic fries, crab-fried rice, and tagliatelle — appear on more than one menu. Guests wanting to experience a medley of flavors can share several small plates as well as a heartier fish or meat entree.



Misticanza salad at Pizzeria Locale
PHOTO CREDIT: SANDY BORNSTEIN

8. Pizzeria Locale

Quality restaurants with limited seating require advanced planning. Such is the case with Boulder's [Pizzeria Locale](#), which has only a small number of tables. While college towns usually have no shortage of pizza places in town, few offer a version that rivals what can be tasted in Naples, Italy. Considerable care was taken to import authentic Italian pizza-making techniques and equipment. This restaurant boasts the first Stefano Ferrara wood-fired oven in Colorado and an attentive and personable waitstaff.

What To Order At Pizzeria Locale

Purists will come simply for the restaurant's piping hot pizzas which come in two versions — pizze bianche and pizze rosse. Unless you are a purist who always orders marinara or Margherita pizzas, it will take a few moments to peruse the other choices listed in the two versions. Appetizers create more texture to the meal while shareable salads add healthy greens to the diet.

Boulder Restaurants Pro Tip

Restaurants will be more crowded when the University of Colorado is hosting school and sporting events and when students' parents are in town. Reservations will be a necessity during these peak times.

For more on [Boulder](#), explore these articles:

- [9 Amazing Outdoor Activities To Experience In Boulder, Colorado](#)

- [Weekend Getaway In Boulder: The Best Things To See And Do](#)
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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...
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