

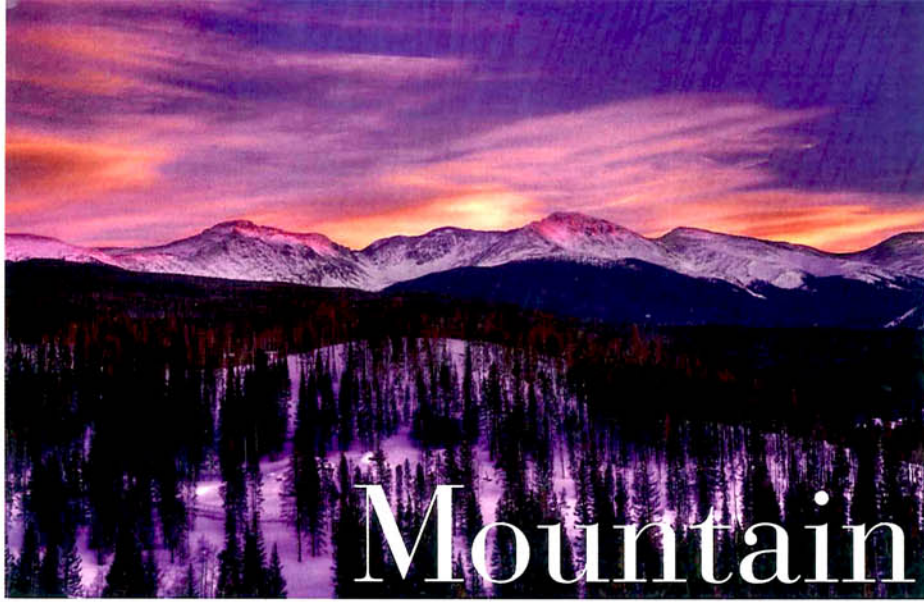
THE PERFECT GIFT: IDEAS TO SPARK YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING

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Mountain

High

Our guide to the Steamboat Springs and Grand County real estate markets.

By **CHERYL MEYERS**

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR LOCAL CHARM, low-key living and plenty of space to play all year long, head to Steamboat Springs, Winter Park and Fraser. Some of Colorado's best-kept secrets, these towns lack Vail-style glitz—which is just how they like it. If you're looking to buy in the mountains but want to be just off the beaten path (or the I-70 corridor), don't overlook these destinations. Here's why.

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

EXPERT: Cameron Boyd, broker and co-owner of Prudential Steamboat Realty, (970) 879-8100, steamboatagent.com.

HISTORY: The region was founded as a ranching and agricultural community. Later, the natural hot springs attracted tourists. In the 1960s, the skiers arrived.

GOOD FOR: Cowboys, ski bums, retirees and young families.

THE DRAW: "People see the laid-back atmosphere and how friendly it is, and they start thinking about living up here full time. We're a small, tight-knit community with all the amenities of a decent-sized town—good restaurants, great schools, low crime rate, good arts community and outdoor recreation. As an added bonus, we're only at 6,800 feet, which means we have really nice, longer summers."

FORECAST: "Our market is going to stay fairly quiet for a year or so until we see consumer confidence and financing pick up. That being said, we'll see people who want to move up here full-time continue to buy." ▶



GRAND PARK



HOWELSEN PLACE



WHERE ARE THE DEALS? “There are deals to be found everywhere. But particularly in the rural properties—on acreage a half-hour outside of town—which were hit hardest by the market downturn. Overall, we have very motivated sellers.”

GRAND COUNTY

EXPERT: Stuart Huster, broker-owner and managing broker of Coldwell Banker Mountain Properties, (970) 726-5500, cbwinterpark.com.

HISTORY: Ranchers and lumbermen settled in Winter Park and the Fraser Valley in the 1880s, lured by abundant timber and wide meadows. Skiers discovered the area 50 years later, when the Moffat Tunnel made Grand County much easier to access by rail.

GOOD FOR: Second-home owners with an interest in skiing, mountain biking and golfing.

THE DRAW: “It’s predominately been a second-home community and really appeals to the Front Range buyer due to our proximity to Denver. We’re the mountain-bike capital of Colorado with more than 600 miles of trails; we also have four golf courses, plus the ski resorts. Grand County has more lakes and water than any other area of Colorado, and no I-70 running right through the middle. Winter Park is more affordable than the other mountain towns of Colorado.”

REALTOR’S FORECAST: “Just like the rest of the country, we experienced a dramatic slowdown in Sept 2008 (home prices dropped 20-30 percent from 2007), and we were very slow for 14 to 16 months. We’re seeing a steady increase, not dramatic, but certainly more activity—inventory is decreasing, which is the first sign of prices rebounding.”



**HOT PROPERTIES
...in Steamboat Springs**

THE OLYMPIAN

Location: On the corner of 5th and Yampa streets in downtown Steamboat Springs

Completion Date: 2009

Details: 41,000-square-foot, mixed-use project with 23 residential units (average size: 1,600 square feet). Brick and stone construction. Underground parking spaces. Walking distance to shops and trails.

Fun Fact: For each sale, .5 percent is donated to the Steamboat Springs Winter Sports Club, which has sent 65 athletes to the Winter Olympics.

Price: \$300,000-\$1,600,000

More Info: theolympiansteamboat.com

mountain-modern finishes. Private courtyard.

Fun Fact: Named for the famed Steamboat Springs ski jumper Carl Howelsen, who is credited with introducing skiing to the area.

Price: \$315,000-\$1,950,000

More Info: skitownlp.com

ONE STEAMBOAT PLACE

Location: At the base of Mt. Werner in the Steamboat Springs Mountain Village

Completion Date: January 2010

Details: A Timbers Resorts development, featuring 80 ski-in, ski-out residences available for fractional and whole ownership (3,500-4,700 square feet). Includes an on-site restaurant, spa and workout facilities, outdoor heated pool, and membership to the Catamount Ranch & Club for golf and boating.

Price: \$370,000-\$3.15 million

More Info: onesteamboatplace.com

HOWELSEN PLACE

Location: On the corner of 7th and Lincoln streets in downtown Steamboat Springs

Completion Date: 2009

Details: A two-building, new-urbanism project featuring 42 units with up to three bedrooms. Open floorplans with

...in Grand County

RENDEZVOUS

Location: Off Hwy 40, between Winter Park and Fraser in the Fraser Valley

Completion Date: Ongoing

Details: 750-acre master-planned, mountain-living community, featuring homesites, cabins, townhomes and custom luxury homes. Extensive open space and trail system, plus access to Fraser River.

Price: \$200,000-\$1,000,000 for homesites; \$730,000-\$1,600,000 for cabins;

\$400,000-\$500,000 for townhomes

More Info: rendezvouscolorado.com

GRAND PARK

Location: Off Hwy 40 in the Fraser Valley

Completion Date: Ongoing

Details: A master-planned community with single-family homes, condominiums and townhomes on 1,700 acres in the Fraser Valley. 500 acres dedicated to open space. New recreation center and forthcoming pedestrian village center.

Price: Single-family homes starting at

\$550,000; townhomes starting at

\$500,000; condos starting at \$330,000

More Info: grandparkco.com □