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THE DENVER MAGAZINE

2022

Hot Chicken

Top of the

ICE CREAM

HAPPY HOUR

SPA

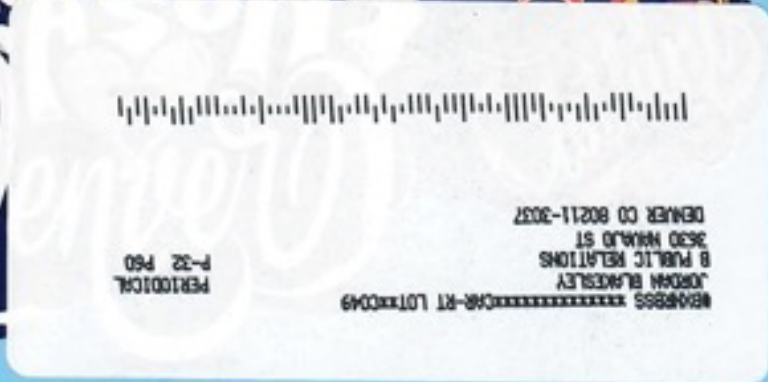
TACO'S

Bike Shop

Patio

OUTDOOR GEAR

111 REASONS @Denver



SIX MONTHS LATER: MARSHALL FIRE SURVIVORS SHARE THEIR STORIES
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TOP



2022



After a two-year pandemic hiatus, Top of the Town is back with the best places to eat, drink, play, and shop. We dispatched our reporters across the region to find business owners, creatives, and other local luminaries who deserve extra attention. The result is a curated list of editors' choice selections that elevate our 80 readers' choice winners. **EDITED BY SPENCER CAMPBELL**

OF THE

TOWN



TOP ARTIST

Editors' Choice

KYLIE JENKINS

After she moved from Ohio to Arizona in 2016 to pursue a tattoo apprenticeship, Jenkins tried to inject some warmth into the cold, often-hostile studio she joined. Her bosses responded with belittlement, racism, sexism, and ableism. So, three years later, when Jenkins became a full-time tattoo artist at Sol Tribe Tattoo and Piercing on Broadway, she was determined to create an environment that made her clients feel safe, heard, and cared for. She succeeded. Now with some 40,000 Instagram followers and bookings that are snatched up in seconds, Jenkins has become one of the most coveted tattoo artists in Denver—and not only because of her welcoming disposition. The 29-year-old artist's designs are intricately detailed, featuring strong linework and vibrant colors. Perhaps even more noteworthy: Jenkins is an expert at tattooing vivid colors on darker skin. "If an artist says someone is 'too dark' to tattoo," Jenkins says, "they just aren't a good tattooer, simple as that." But don't take our word for it. Who better to critique an artist, after all, than her canvases? —*Barbara Urzua*

JANIE MORAWKA

"Kylie's art style is so fun and colorful and trippy, which is exactly what I was looking for. I love how open she is in terms of being neurodivergent and having ADHD.... I'm a nurse and a big advocate for mental health, so seeing how vocal she is about it is such a big deal to me."



HADIYAH WATTS

"One of my favorite art pieces is a painting by Gustav Klimt called 'The Kiss.' Kylie created a gorgeous design of my cats in that art style, which seems like a really tough task to take on. As a Black person and a queer person, I feel like I connect with Kylie on a deeper level."



BIRDI BAINEZ

"When I was looking for an artist to design my tattoo, I was really looking for a Black artist, and that was, unfortunately, difficult to find. When I did find [Jenkins], I gave her a number of different elements I liked and wanted in a tattoo, and she just created the most visually stunning custom piece."



This spread: Ivan Lutz; David Williams (4); Chayce Longshore; Courtesy of So So So; Courtesy of Ellen Ashby

COCKTAIL MENU Create Cooking School 2501 N. Dallas St., Suite 128 (inside Stanley Marketplace), Aurora, 720-573-9949 **BAR** The Red Barber 3770 Walnut St., 720-707-4040 **BREWERY** Barquentine Brewing 5505 W. 20th Ave., Suite 178 (inside Edgewater Public Market), Edgewater, 303-955-1238 **HAPPY HOUR** The Red Barber 3770 Walnut St., 720-707-4040 **WINE BAR** Noble Riot 1336 27th St., 303-993-5330

TOP HAPPY HOUR

Editors' Choice THE BROKEN CAGE

As Layla Friend prepared to open the Broken Cage in January 2020, the first purchase she made—even before booze—was houseplants. While the pandemic stunted the LoHi bar's initial growth, the greenery flourished: In those days, Friend made more money selling flora to socially distanced patrons than sling-ing beer. Now, with thirsty cube-dwellers returning to the office, happy hour is also alive and thriving in her chic jungle bar off Platte Street. From 4 to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 4 to 6 p.m. on Fridays, most of Broken Cage's signature cocktails, usually \$12 to \$14, can be sipped for \$8 apiece. Catch up with your co-workers over the Divine Aviation (pictured)—a floral, just-sweet-enough concoction of Loveland's Spring44 gin, Luxardo cherry liqueur, lavender butterfly pea flower tea, and lemon juice—before moving on to the short but diverse lineup of \$6 glasses of wine or the \$5 lager on tap. Fancy the jar of plant cuttings on your table? Add that to your tab, as well. —Jessica LaRusso



TOP PLACE TO WATCH THE GAME

Editors' Choice THE DNVR BAR

Many Denver sports bars have made names for themselves by catering to transplants. (Seriously: How many Cubs bars does a city that's not Chicago really need?) The DNVR Bar, however, is dedicated to Mile High City sports—which is, you know, nice. Opened in 2020, the East Colfax tavern is an extension of DNVR, an online community that began covering local teams in 2015 and has since attracted more than 20,000 YouTube followers. Here's how the watering hole is positioned to become the central hive for the brand. —Shane Monaghan

RAISING THE BAR

During big games, the DNVR Bar is likely to be standing-room only, but that doesn't mean it's difficult to watch the action: With more than 20 TVs and speakers around the room, you'll catch every Russell Wilson dime. Drink deals—including a tower of Bud Light (about eight beers) for \$10—and regular T-shirt and food giveaways only stoke Mile High City pride.

YOUR HEART'S CONTENT

A \$60 annual subscription to the DNVR website grants Denver sports fans coverage of every major area pro franchise from beat reporters who are starting to gain national prominence. (Adam Mares, who reports on the Nuggets, has been a regular guest on ESPN.) Supporters can also listen to free, team-specific podcasts, which are recorded in the DNVR Bar's upstairs studios.

CLOTHES MAKE THE FAN

Anyone can buy a jersey. True diehards' drips are as distinctive as their passion for the team. The DNVR Locker, a gear store located right next to the bar, stocks a multitude of unique T-shirts (starting around \$30), all of which are created by locally based D-Line Co. and include designs such as a Hall of Fame bust of former Rockies player Larry Walker wearing the backward helmet that made him a meme.

This spread, from left: Layla Friend/Courtesy of the Broken Cage; Courtesy of the DNVR Bar; Clayton Longman/Courtesy of the DNVR Bar

PLACE TO WATCH THE GAME Stanley Beer Hall 2501 N. Dallas St., Suite 100 (inside Stanley Marketplace), Aurora, 720-749-5098 **THEATER COMPANY** Denver Center for the Performing Arts 1101 13th St., 303-893-4100 **SERVICES** ▶ **NEW HOTEL** Catbird Hotel 3770 Walnut St., 720-990-5555 **SPA** The Beer Spa 3004 N. Downing St., 720-810-1484 **MASSAGE** Ella Bliss Beauty Bar multiple locations **PET STORE/SERVICES** Goodheart Animal