

# Telluride's Summer of Love

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Glimmering shades of purple, orange, and pink danced off the stage floating into a night sky still awash in similar hues provided by Mother Nature as the sun dipped behind the San Juan Mountains and the rhythm of the 31st Telluride Jazz Celebration filled the crystal air.

Although the ground was slightly damp from welcomed early afternoon rain showers, jazz lovers filled Telluride Town Park in the Colorado mountain community for the better part of August 3 - 5. For those three days, the park was renamed John Scofield Town Park in recognition of the festival's guest of honor. Considered one of the world's top three modern jazz guitarists, Sco's performances on Friday and Saturday nights were the highlight of the festival.



Other headliners included the Dr. Lonnie Smith Trio, Sharon Jones & the Dap Kings, and the Roy Hargrove Quintet. Late night performances in area theatres and afternoon concerts in Elks Park kept the beat in Telluride for an energetic three days. The Jazz Celebration is one of more than 30 festivals held each year in “the festival capital of the southwest.” Events run the gamut from blues, beer and balloons to original film and original food. There are events that celebrate chamber music, regional authors, and environmental resources. All summer long, visitors enjoy science lectures called “Pinhead Town Talks,” a wonderful farmers market each Friday, and Thursday night Fireside Chats about the history of the region.

But my favorite festival: the Nothing Festival held in July and celebrating not much at all. The event originated when some locals, delighted with a break in the many summer activities, decided they must celebrate nothing happening. Locals, and any other willing participants, get down to their bare nothings and streak through the park, ride a bike in the buff and otherwise wear nothing while doing nothing.

That's the flavor of Telluride, a community of 2,400 residents greatly influenced by nature, the 60s and the lack of oxygen at nearly 10,000 feet above sea level. Once a thriving mining community, Telluride all but disappeared off the maps until hippies discovered the mountain town in the 60s, followed by snow skiing enthusiasts in the 80s.

The Telluride Ski Resort averages about 300 inches of snow a year on its 1700 acres of skiable terrain. The Telluride Helitrax is the only helicopter skiing provider in Colorado and the Telluride Gondola is North America's only free gondola serving as public transportation for its community.

For more information about Telluride, visit [www.visittelluride.com](http://www.visittelluride.com) .

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Photo by Bruce N. Meyer