



We Are the World: Climbers from across the globe converge on this tiny town.

"Ice Tools are for Fools"

where route angles are the smallest. She also likes Schoolroom for beginners, as well as intermediates. Pick up the *Ouray Ice Park Guide Book* (\$25) by Vince Anderson and Cindy Williams for comprehensive coverage of the park's 200 named routes. Or snag a map for \$5 at the park entrance.

► **LEADING THE BALANCE SPORT REVOLUTION**

Reynolds isn't the only chick making ripples beneath Ouray's icy exterior. Californian Libby Sauter will return to the festival this year, drawn by the 82-foot slackline to be rigged across Ouray's box canyon. Topping out at almost 100 feet, the small, flat nylon cord draws some of the best slackliners in the country.

Or in the case of Sauter, *the* best in the world. The 25-year-old is the reigning female world slacker, having walked a 130-foot line at the Moab Fruitbowl last Thanksgiving. She also conquered slacklining's marquee route, the 128-foot Yosemite Falls line, this past summer, the only woman to do so.

The Ouray Ice Festival added slacklining six years ago. "It's always been around the climbing scene, but recently there's been a bit of resurgence," explains Eddy. This year, he expects the crew from Slackline.com to again rig a beautiful line across the canyon, as well as a lowline for spectators and first timers itching to try.

The 15th annual Ouray Ice Festival will take place January 7-10 (ourayicefestival.com).

Hunker Down Victorian Style

Ouray's hotels hit capacity during the Ice Fest, so book early. The most popular choices are located on Main Street, which is within walking distance of all the town's shops and restaurants, as well as the Ice Park itself. Two-thirds of Ouray's original Victorian structures still stand, so there's no loss for turn-of-the-century charm or spectacular views. We're captivated by the elegant 120-year old Beaumont Hotel and Spa (beaumont-hotel.com), which serves up ample amounts of both. Or consider one of Ouray's dozen bed and breakfasts. If all else fails, portions of the Ridgeway State Park campground remain open in the winter, as well as both of Ouray's RV parks. See all lodging options at ouraycolorado.com.

Eat & Drink

Chow down like a bandit at the Outlaw Restaurant (outlawrestaurant.com), an Ouray institution since 1937. Before you leave, fork over \$15 for a shingle to decorate and add to the restaurant's display wall. The price includes four shots to help get your creative juices flowing. Next, head down the street to local favorite Buen Tiempo Mexican Restaurant & Cantina (970-325-4544) for 10 different margaritas and microbrews on tap. If you want to climb, we don't recommend sampling all 10.

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