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# Happy Hauntings

Ditch the costume this season and get spooked in your own clothes.

BY JULIE BIELENBERG



When your state is steeped in history, you are going to find loads of hauntings. Here are some of our favorite spooky yet hospitable hotels to explore this season, but not before we dole out some scary tips.

What to do on a ghost hunt? Please do not run around the hotel with a flashlight calling names. Rather, be respectful and historical Coloradoans may greet you to say hello. Many of today's modern cameras and cellphones can capture photos that include an orb, or a circular effect that happens when using a flash. It's often an indication of motion and warmth, such as a ghost, but many times, it's just the common impact of today's technology. Regardless, take

photos during your stay and don't review them until you return home for the ultimate hair-raising experience.

## THE BROWN PALACE, DENVER

A pillar of downtown Denver, The Brown Palace's triangular architectural spot in the Mile High City's history is cemented just as thickly with its ghoulish activity. Ghosts are modern and tech-savvy at The Brown Palace. One incident tells a tale of a Denver socialite who occupied room 904 from 1940 to 1955. Once the hotel began to offer tours—and with the incorporation of her life and love lost—the switchboard alarmingly began to receive phone calls from



Public tours of The Brown Palace take place every Wednesday and Saturday at 3 p.m. Private tours for groups of five or more people are also available and need to be booked at least one week in advance; these tours can be ghost-themed upon request.

room 904, but this couldn't be correct as the room was stripped bare at the time, undergoing a renovation. Once her story was cut from the tour, the phone from room 904 stopped ringing.

Allegedly Ellyngton's has been visited by a string quartet that solely wanted to practice each time they were questioned. Hotel employees often mention a uniformed waiter in the service elevator who appears and then disappears. Of course, guests have noted the sounds of The Brown Palace's iconic ghostly children laughing and playing in the hallways, hop-scotching and skipping. And the mortar of the hotel's haunting history is a true Wild West love story that ended in a double murder in 1911. The Brown Palace offers both public and private tours of the hauntings and history for guests and non-guests alike. [brownpalace.com](http://brownpalace.com)

## THE STANLEY HOTEL, ESTES PARK

There are movies, books and enormous amounts of literature dedicated to The Stanley Hotel's hauntings, both proving the stories and debunking the myths. Noted as one of Colorado's most historical, creepy and iconic hotels, The Stanley will certainly have you seeing or feeling little ghosts throughout the night.

Here's how to get the most out of The Shining's crown glory. On your way to the hotel, buy some old-fashioned candy, such as butterscotch or root beer barrels. Book a room in either the main lodge or the Inn not more than 100 yards from the main lodge. You get a complimentary

THE BROWN PALACE

### GHOUlish FUN

No time for an overnight stay? Take on a spooky history tour or ghostly film fest.

### Banjo Billy's Bus Tours

Funky guided tours of downtown Boulder and Denver are offered on this zany shack-on-wheels. From Thursdays to Sundays in October, you can hear haunting ghost stories, folklore, history and humor. [banjobilly.com](http://banjobilly.com)

### Historic Ghost Walk through Linwood Cemetery

Presented by the Frontier Historical Museum, guides take participants by lantern through the pioneer graveyard where actors eerily portray Glenwood Springs' early inhabitants including John "Doc" Holliday. The spooky, yet educational outings take place on October 17, 18, 24, 25 and 31, as well as November 1. [glenwoodhistory.com/events.htm](http://glenwoodhistory.com/events.htm)

### Blue Moon Haunted History Tours

Manitou Springs' Haunted Cemetery Ghost Hunt in Victor, five miles from Cripple Creek, is back on the roster every Friday night this fall. [manitoulegends.com/blackcoffee/index.html](http://manitoulegends.com/blackcoffee/index.html)

### Denver Haunted October 2014 Tours

Phil Goodstein offers a couple downtown walking tours loaded with history and haunted facts. Visit the website for dates and times. [leonardleonard.com/neighborhoods/walking-tours.shtml](http://leonardleonard.com/neighborhoods/walking-tours.shtml)

### Halfmoon Packing & Outfitting, LLC, Leadville, Colorado

After 100 years, a stagecoach service has returned to the town of Leadville. Tour the historic downtown stretch, beginning in front of the iconic Hotel Delaware. [halfmoonpacking.com/stagecoach](http://halfmoonpacking.com/stagecoach)

### The Stanley Film Festival

The third annual fest, from April 30 - May 3, 2015, showcases classic and contemporary independent horror cinema all set at the haunted and historic Stanley Hotel in Estes Park. [stanleyfilmfest.com](http://stanleyfilmfest.com)



The Stanley Hotel's 90-minute Night Ghost Tours include an introduction to paranormal activity and a guided walk through some of the most paranormal areas of the property. Advance reservations for this popular tour are required.

breakfast with a stay at the Inn; do not miss Midge's baked delicacies in the morning. After a night of ghost hunting, her breakfast in the Manor Hall with the Long's Peak backdrop brings out everyone's warm spirits.

Much of The Stanley has outrageous stories. Book a nighttime history tour of the hotel and grounds. (You don't have to be a hotel guest to book a tour.) You will learn about the ghosts, famous hotel guests and geological attributes that many hauntings are based upon with this jam-packed tour. Then, do as I did, and take out your old-fashioned candy. Walk to the fourth floor of the main hotel and sit on the couch in the East Wing. Place the candy in your fist and

close your eyes to tempt the little children with the treats. Many people can feel their fingers being pulled back as a child reaches for the candy. Go by yourself; it makes the children less intimidated! I wouldn't be writing about this if it didn't happen to me last November on a quiet Thursday evening.

When The Stanley was built, the original intention for the fourth floor was nearly a child's summer camp. The adults would stay on the bottom floors and children and nannies on the top floor. The kids loved The Stanley and the grounds so much that after they would pass away, they would return to The Stanley to be where they were happiest! [stanleyhotel.com](http://stanleyhotel.com)



Guests such as Theodore Roosevelt, the Dalai Lama, Bill Cosby and Hillary Clinton have experienced the historic ambiance of The Oxford Hotel.

### THE OXFORD HOTEL, DENVER

Dating back to 1891, Denver's oldest boutique hotel has a legendary ballroom, downtown lobby and oodles more historical gems. If you can only make it for the day, I suggest walking down the stairs from the main lobby into the original restrooms on the bottom level. Bathroom stalls will lock themselves from the inside and sinks will turn on and off mysteriously.

However, to really feel The Oxford's presence, you will need to be a bachelor and book Room 320. Single, male guests who stay in this room have long reported feeling their arms being pulled and having the covers ripped off the bed by the spirit of Florence Montague, a young woman who shot and killed her married lover before turning the gun on herself in 1898. The murder-suicide was attributed to another lover and Montague does not like single suitors in her space.

Also, stop by the hotel's Cruise Room martini bar on December 5, the day Prohibition was repealed in 1933. Bartenders often tell of a ghost dressed as a postman. He orders a beer and then mutters, "The children, I have to get the gifts to the children." He then drinks his beer and leaves. When the bartender picks up his bottle, it's always completely full. A little research will reveal the story of a postal worker from the 1930s who was on his way to deliver Christmas presents to Central City, 35 miles away. When he never showed up, the townsfolk assumed he sold the gifts and pocketed the cash. That spring, they found his body on the way to Central City with all of the Christmas gifts still in his possession. Did he stop in the Cruise Room for one last drink before he ventured out that night? [theoxfordhotel.com](http://theoxfordhotel.com)

### ONALEGGE BED & BREAKFAST, MANITOU SPRINGS

Christmas in October, why not? When walking onto this property—one of three from Red Craggs Estates—it's like walking into a 1969 Christmas Party that never ended. It's spotless, authentic and, yes, a bit creepy in a mischievous sense. Behind its sprawling gates lies some surprise magic, and not just the St. Nicholas type.

The bed and breakfast has a couple guests who never seem to leave. There is a young child playing on the stairs. He is a sweet lad dressed in a blue suit and was said to have once lived in the house. Another story involves a woman hearing five different voices in her room around 3 a.m. These were not terrifying screams, but she was traveling alone and left the lodge in her pajamas right away, saying she felt that if she didn't leave that instant she never would. The local Colorado Springs TV station, News First Channel 5, did an investigation a few years ago after some of these incidents started garnering attention and allegedly found some other hauntings as well.

Owner and Innkeeper Bret Maddox tells guests about a couple other residents who can't keep their hands out of the bread jar in the kitchen and don't want to leave The Craft Wood room. The B&B even runs a special for ghost-seeking travelers. The Spooky Specials include discounted room rates; make sure to ask about the two-night Ghostbusters Weekend! [onalegge.net](http://onalegge.net)

THE OXFORD HOTEL



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