

Elko

Contributed by Administrator
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One of the few Nevada towns worth aiming for, if you're here at the right time of year, is ELKO , a straggling highway town a hundred miles from the Utah border. The self-proclaimed last real cowtown in the West is the center of one of the largest open-range cattle ranching regions in the US, and the fitting home of the annual Cowboy Poetry Gathering , held here every January. People get together in a sort of celebration of folk culture, telling stories around campfires, singing about the lonesome life on the range, and keeping alive the dying traditions and tales of the Wild West.

During the 72-hour party of the National Basque Festival , each Fourth of July weekend, hulking men throw huge logs at each other amid a whole lot of carousing and downing platefuls of Basque food. The food is available year-round in restaurants like the Star Hotel , two blocks south of the main drag at 246 Silver St (tel 775/738-9925). Greyhound and Amtrak both stop in Elko, and there are dozens of budget motels, such as the Holiday Motel , 1276 Idaho St (tel 775/738-7187; \$35-50). Elko's visitor center is at 700 Moren Way (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm; tel 775/738-4091 or 1-800/248-ELKO,).