

ROCKY RIDGE

February 2026

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Buffalo Mac And Cheese

INGREDIENTS

- Kosher salt, for the pot and seasoning
- 12 oz. elbow macaroni
- 2 Tbsp. salted butter
- 1 small yellow onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- 1 mounded Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 2 1/2 cups whole milk
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1 1/2 cups grated sharp cheddar cheese (about 6 oz.)
- 1 1/2 cups grated pepper jack cheese (about 6 oz.)
- 1 generous c. shredded rotisserie chicken
- 1/4 cup Buffalo-style hot sauce, such as Frank's Red Hot, plus more for serving
- 2 Tbsp. buttermilk ranch dressing
- 1/2 cup crumbled blue cheese (about 2 oz.), for serving (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta and cook until al dente, about 8 minutes. Drain and set aside.
2. Meanwhile, melt the butter in a large skillet or saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic. Season with the pepper and a good pinch of salt and cook until the onion and garlic are softened, 3 to 4 mins.
3. Sprinkle the flour over the onion and garlic and stir to make a roux. Let cook 2 to 3 minutes before slowly stirring in the milk and then the heavy cream. Bring to a gentle boil, allowing the mixture to thicken slightly, 2 to 3 minutes.
4. Reduce the heat to low and stir in the cheddar and pepper jack a handful at a time, allowing each addition to melt before adding the next. Stir in the chicken, hot sauce, and ranch dressing and cook until the chicken is heated through, 1 to 2 minutes. Taste and adjust seasonings as needed. Add the cooked pasta to the sauce and toss well to combine.
5. Serve topped with blue cheese, celery leaves, & a drizzle of hot sauce (optional).

– PioneerWomen

Fun Indoor Activities For Long Winter Evenings

Winter evenings offer a wonderful opportunity to slow down, enjoy cozy time indoors, and strengthen your bond with loved ones. Whether you're looking for laughter, creativity, or relaxation, there's no shortage of ways to make those chilly nights warm and memorable. Here are 15 creative indoor activities to help your family make the most of those long winter evenings.



1. Cook an International Feast.

Spice up your dinner routine by picking a country and cooking a meal inspired by its cuisine. Make sushi rolls for a Japanese night, prepare Italian pasta from scratch, or try Mexican tamales. Get the whole family involved in chopping, mixing, and tasting. Add an educational twist by looking up fun facts about the country while you cook.

2. Plan a Themed Movie Marathon.

Nothing beats curling up for a movie night when it's frosty outside. Make it extra special by choosing a theme—holiday classics, adventure films, or animated favorites—and matching snacks to the theme. For example, hot cocoa for winter-themed movies or nachos for an action-packed flick.

3. Turn Game Night into a Tournament. Whether it's classic board games, card games, or trivia challenges, a family game night is a recipe for laughs and good-natured competition. Create a mini-tournament, complete with a scoreboard and small prizes for the winners. For added excitement, have everyone bring their "A game" with silly team names or costumes.

4. Bake Your Family Favorites. There's something about winter that calls for baking. From gooey chocolate chip cookies to warm banana bread, baking together is both fun and delicious. Let each family member choose a favorite recipe, or try something new each week. Don't forget to sample your creations fresh out of the oven with a glass of milk or a cup of tea!

5. Create a Family Vision Board. Gather old magazines, scissors, and glue for a night of dreaming and planning. Encourage everyone to cut out pictures and words that represent their goals, hopes, and dreams for the year ahead. Share your boards with each other and talk about how you can support one another in reaching those aspirations.

6. Build a Blanket Fort and Have a Storytelling Session. Transform your living room into a magical hideaway by building a blanket fort. Pile it high with pillows, string up fairy lights, and settle in for an evening of storytelling. You could share memories, tell favorite family tales, or invent silly stories together. It's a nostalgic activity that's just as fun for adults as it is for kids.

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Indoor Activities, *continued from front page*

7. Take a Virtual Adventure Together. Travel might not be on the agenda, but virtual adventures are just a click away. Explore online tours of famous landmarks, museums, or even space! Let each family member pick a “destination” and guide the group through a virtual journey. It’s an educational and inspiring way to explore the world from your couch.

8. Have a DIY Karaoke Night. Unleash your inner superstar with a karaoke session at home. Use a karaoke app or find instrumental versions of your favorite songs online. Whether you’re belting out classics, crooning to love songs, or having a dance-off, the energy and laughter are guaranteed to warm up any winter night.

9. Have a Puzzle Marathon. There’s nothing more satisfying than finishing a big jigsaw puzzle as a family. Set up a cozy puzzle station, make some hot chocolate, and spend the evening working together to fit the pieces. For an extra challenge, try a puzzle with a winter scene or a holiday theme.

—By Kari Owens

Winter Movies To Watch When It’s Too Cold To Go Outside

Coming to America (1988)

Coming to America goes from the fictional country of Zamunda to the snowy streets of N.Y.C., as Prince Akeem (Eddie Murphy) travels to Queens to find his queen (pun absolutely intended). These days, it’s not just a throwback; it’s also peak New York winter in the ‘80s.

Cool Runnings (1993)

Feel the rhythm, feel the rhyme...Yes, this is the movie about the Jamaican bobsled team, and what’s even better is that it’s based on truth. When a Jamaican sprinter (Leon Robinson) is disqualified from the Olympic Games, he and a disgraced coach (John Candy) work together to form the first Jamaican Olympic Bobsled Team.

Force Majeure (2014)

Telling the story of familial tension after the patriarch attempts to abandon them during an avalanche, this film hits hard. For good reason, of course. Watch this Swedish film solo (and not with a partner you’ve been fighting with).

Frozen (2013)

Let it go, let it gooooooooooooo...this is the animated film that birthed the earworm of a century. Frozen is a force, producing spin-offs and a Broadway musical, but the OG is always a great choice. Watch this one with the youngest members of your family and ask them, “Do you want to build a snowman?”

Groundhog Day (1993)

Groundhog Day is one of those film concepts that takes an idea—inexplicably living the same day over again—and shows you what its real-life application would be like. Note: It wouldn’t be fun. Bill Murray is at his comedic best, the plot is universally acclaimed, and honestly? The message at the end makes the movie. This one is meant to be enjoyed with a nice cup of tea, and without worry that Punxsutawney Phil will see his shadow.

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The deadline for advertisements is the 15th of the month for the next month’s issue, except for the Jan. issue which is Dec. 6th.

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*If January is the month of change,
February is the month of lasting
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February is for doers.*

—Marc Parent

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Winter Movies To Watch, *continued from page 2*

Planes, Trains & Automobiles (1987)

Steve Martin? John Candy? A road trip comedy? Perfection. What's the movie about, you ask? Steve Martin plays Neal Page, an advertising executive on a trip to New York, trying to return to Chicago to be with his family on Thanksgiving. He meets Del Griffith (Candy), a traveling salesman, when Griffith steals his cab, and the two wind up on the same plane to Chicago, which is diverted to Wichita. They decide to try to get to Chicago by train, but that doesn't work out either. What's the last choice, you wonder?

Anatomy of a Fall (2023)

A cold drama (in more ways than one!), this award-winning film centers around the mysterious death of a man (Samuel Theis) who's found lying in the snow underneath his office window. Much of the drama takes place in a courtroom, where the man's wife (Sandra Hüller) is on trial for his murder, and where their visually impaired son (Milo Machado-Graner) must serve as the case's main witness.

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THE EARLY BIRD DOESN'T JUST GET THE WORM. THEY GET THE MOST COMPETITIVE OFFERS AND A CLEANER PATH TO CLOSING.

The most strategic sellers are moving now. Late February and early March are currently the most advantageous times to list your home here in Rocky Ridge

We are seeing a normalization of the market. While more homes are expected to hit the market this spring. Listing sooner allows you to stand out while the inventory is still relatively low. You aren't competing with 50 other houses

The buyers out early aren't your typical buyers. Serious buyers will be eager to lock in their next chapter before the spring competition drives prices. You'll appreciate the shorter time on market. A cleaner path to closing is always the most convenient

- Week 1** **The Big Declutter** Clear kitchen counters and storage spaces. Buyers aren't just buying room counts. They are buying storage and space to grow. Show them they have space to.
- Week 2** **Lighting Overhaul** Replace old, mismatched bulbs with "Warm White" LEDs. A bright, warmly lit home feels like a sanctuary. When it's not uniform, that's all they'll see.
- Week 3** **The Obvious Fixes** Tighten that loose handrail and fix that cabinet door. The little fixes will signal to a buyer that the home has been meticulously maintained.
- Week 4** **The Entrance** The First 30 Seconds is where the sale is won or lost. A crisp, clean entry sets a high-value tone before the buyer even steps inside.

It's time for your Personalized Home Strategy Session. Don't wait for the spring crowds. Let's create a strategic plan to maximize your home's value and secure your next financial goal.



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