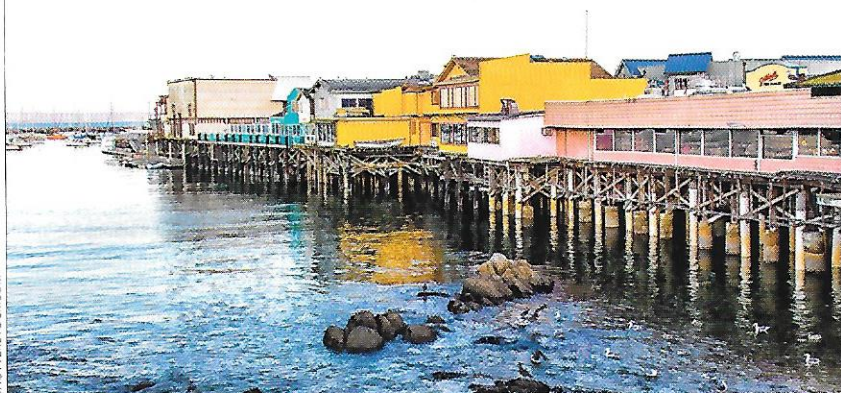


MONTEREY, CA

Whale tales



SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

View migrating gray whales and other marine life during **Whalefest Monterey**, Jan. 28-29. The festival celebrates the species' migration through Monterey Bay, the self-proclaimed "Whale Watching Capital of the World."

The gray whales are among the **15 species of whales**, including humpback and minke, that frequent the bay in January. Dolphins, seals and sea otters also may be spotted. Several whale-watching boat tours will be available at a discounted rate during the fest.

tors. Learn how to turn plastics into fuel, or climb inside Humphrey the Humpback Whale, a 60-foot-long whale model.

Inside the Museum of Monterey, visitors can learn how to protect marine animals by attending a festival symposium that features documentaries and lectures by experts in the fields of sustainability and marine life, such as Jeremy Goldbogen of Stanford University's Hopkins Marine Station.

Contact: 831-238-0777; montereywharf.com.

—Kaitlynn Mann

KETCHUM-SUN VALLEY, ID

Cross-country ski event



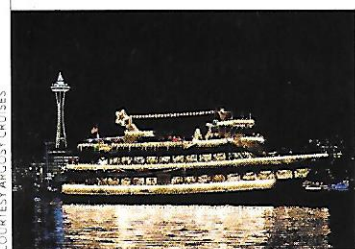
GLEN ALLISON

Visitors to Sun Valley, also known as "Nordic Town USA," can participate in one of the country's premier Nordic ski races during the **Sun Valley Nordic Festival**, Feb. 2-5. Registered racers will also have the opportunity to enjoy four free days of Nordic skiing.

The festival will include an opening ceremony, sprints, an expo, and the main event, the **Boulder Mountain Tour**, Feb. 4. Skiers will start at Galena Lodge and race 34 km down the Harriman Trail. A Half-Boulder Mountain Tour is offered for those who prefer to race 15 km. For both distances, the terrain is gently rolling and suitable for varying abilities and ages, with previous participants ranging from 9 to 90 years of age. Celebrate the race later that evening at a lively awards ceremony.

Contact for information and registration: nordictownusa.com; bouldermountaintour.com.

—Jeevika Varma



COURTESY ARGOSY CRUISES

SEATTLE, WA

Enjoy a night sail on a Seattle-area waterway while listening to singers performing holiday music during the **Argosy Cruises Christmas Ship Festival**, on various dates through Dec. 23. A different local choir will be on board each night, and nightly routes also will vary, with stops to broadcast performances to people on shore at sites such as public docks and parks. Alaska Airlines is a sponsor of the

Argosy Cruises Christmas Ship Festival (argosycruises.com).

SONOMA VALLEY, CA

Wineries participating in the **Sonoma Valley Winery Gingerbread Contest** are showcasing their unique gingerbread creations in their tasting rooms, with visitors casting ballots for the best houses through Dec. 31. This year has the theme "In Sonoma Valley, the Roots Run Deep—with a Holiday Twist" (sonomavalleywine.com).

EDMONTON, AB

Deep Freeze: A Byzantine Winter Festival kicks off the Russian "Old New Year" Jan. 14-15 with an artisan village,



deep-freezer races (in which deep freezers are repurposed as winter sleds), an ice slide, and an art gallery highlighting local Ukrainian, French Canadian and Indigenous artists (deepfreezefest.ca).

SEATTLE, WA

Theo Chocolate, celebrating its **10-year anniversary** this year, offers daily guided tours and tastings in its Fremont-neighborhood factory (theochocolate.com).