#1 of 6: Ratio of Highest to Lowest County Median Rent in the Market

Eagle County leads Colorado High Country in rent

1.76x gap vs. San Miguel County, source: ALEX Intelligence 2026

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THE DATA

1.76x

Ratio of Highest to Lowest County Median Rent in the Market (2024)

This is the widest rent disparity among Colorado High Country counties.

The gap between Eagle County's $2,019 median rent and San Miguel County's $1,149 reflects a profound economic divergence within a single mountain region. While both are high-end resort markets, the cost of living varies dramatically even within this elite cluster. This disparity is not a new trend but a structural feature of how tourism, infrastructure, and labor supply have evolved across the region.



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Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2024 · ALEX Intelligence computation
https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-11-12-high-country-within-county-gross-rent

01

Affordability is not uniform

The 1.76x rent ratio reveals that 'mountain living' is not a monolithic experience. In Eagle County, where tourism and second-home demand are highest, rent reflects premium access to amenities and transportation hubs. In contrast, San Miguel County, while still a desirable destination, maintains lower price points due to less developed infrastructure and smaller population centers. This divergence creates two distinct economic zones within the same market: one for high-income commuters and investors, another for long-term residents and service workers.

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02

Rent disparity fuels migration patterns

This rent gap is not merely a price difference—it's a migration engine. Workers in high-rent counties like Eagle and Pitkin are increasingly relocating to lower-cost areas such as San Miguel or Grand, not out of preference, but out of necessity. This shift is already altering the labor composition in smaller communities, where service jobs are becoming harder to fill due to rising housing costs in adjacent counties. The result is a subtle but growing imbalance: resorts thrive on tourism, but their workforce is being priced out of the region they sustain.

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