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An Insider's Guide to U.S. Ski Destinations

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Travel Advisor

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Image courtesy of The Ritz-Carlton, Bachelor Gulch

If you're a skier, the falling leaves and chill in the air mean only one thing: ski season is just around the corner. And now is the perfect time to plan a ski getaway in the U.S. Whether

you're an East Coast skier or prefer the wide open powder out West, these destinations are our top-booked ski resorts year after year.

Discover these favorites that are not only conveniently located, but offer ski amenities to make your trip one to remember. From ski concierges to the après-ski scene, connect with me to learn which hotels pair perfectly with your ski trip goals.

Need to know

Many ski resorts are reachable within an hour or two of major airports, and a few more destinations have smaller airports, perfect for regional connecting flights or private jets (like Aspen-Pitkin County Airport).

Plan on buying tickets and signing up for lessons (group or private) ahead of time, particularly during peak holidays. And don't forget to dress in layers! The top of the mountain can be much windier and colder than the base.

- **Best time to visit:** In the western states, ski season is longer, running between November and March, with weather-dependent spring skiing possible in April. Northeastern skiing's prime months are December through March.
- **Ideal length of stay:** 4–6 days is a good range to experience most mountain resorts.
- **What to wear:** Layers are key. Start with a moisture-wicking base layer, an insulating mid-layer and waterproof outerwear. Don't forget warm gloves, helmets and goggles. Sunscreen is essential due to high UV reflection off the snow.
- **Ski School:** Most major ski resorts in the U.S. offer excellent ski schools with options for beginners, intermediates and advanced skiers. Popular resorts like Aspen, Vail and Stowe provide private and group lessons for both children and adults.
- **Parking:** Resorts usually have a mix of paid and free parking. Paid parking is typically closer to the lifts, while free lots may require a short shuttle ride. During the busy season, parking lots can fill up quickly, so arriving early is recommended.
- **Lift Tickets and Passes:** Purchasing lift tickets ahead of time online saves time and money. Many resorts offer significant discounts for pre-purchased multi-day tickets. Consider buying the Ikon or Epic Pass if you're skiing multiple times per season.
- **Transportation:** Renting a car is preferable in some ski destinations. In-town ski resorts, like Vail, Aspen and Park City, are walkable and many hotels provide shuttles to the mountains if needed.

Western airports

- **Denver International Airport (DEN):** 4 hours to Aspen, 2 hours to Vail. Ideal for flexibility but requires a longer drive. Also, bad weather can close some roads.
- **Aspen/Pitkin County Airport (ASE):** 10 minutes from Aspen, be mindful that flights often face weather delays.
- **Eagle County Regional Airport (EGE):** 1.5 hours from Aspen, closer to Vail and Beaver Creek.
- **Montrose Regional Airport (MTJ):** 1.5 hrs from Telluride.
- **Salt Lake City International Airport (SLC):** Located 40 minutes away by car.
- **Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport (BZN):** Located about an hour away.
- **Jackson Hole Airport (JAC):** Only a 15-minute drive from the town and resort area.
- **San Francisco International Airport (SFO):** A major hub for travelers to Lake Tahoe. It's a 3.5 to 4-hour drive from SFO to Tahoe.
- **Reno-Tahoe International Airport (RNO):** The closest airport to Lake Tahoe, located about 1–1.5 hours away by car, with direct flights from Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle

Northeastern airports

- **Burlington International Airport (BTV):** A 45-minute drive from Stowe.
- **Boston Logan International Airport (BOS):** A key hub for travelers to Stowe, Vermont. The drive from BOS to Stowe is around 3 hours by car.
- **New York City airports (JFK & LGA)** are an option, but your drive will be longer, 5.5–6 hours.

Colorado

Aspen



Image Courtesy of The Little Nell

Inspired by glamorous European ski towns, Aspen combines world-class skiing with a sophisticated social scene. Skiing here is intertwined with style and luxury, meaning people want to see and be seen, which doesn't at all diminish the incredible terrain.

Aspen Mountain, or Ajax, is for advanced skiers, with steep and challenging runs. The luxe après-ski scene is strong here — think sipping champagne and fine dining — making it a favorite for high-profile guests seeking elite skiing. In contrast, Aspen Highlands has a more local feel, with the famous Highland Bowl attracting experts with its extreme terrain.

For families and beginners, Buttermilk offers gentle slopes and a welcoming vibe. Buttermilk also hosts the X Games, making it a favorite with the younger crowd. Snowmass rounds out the offerings with ski runs for all skill levels, plus a variety of ski-in/out resorts, making it a convenient choice.

Vail

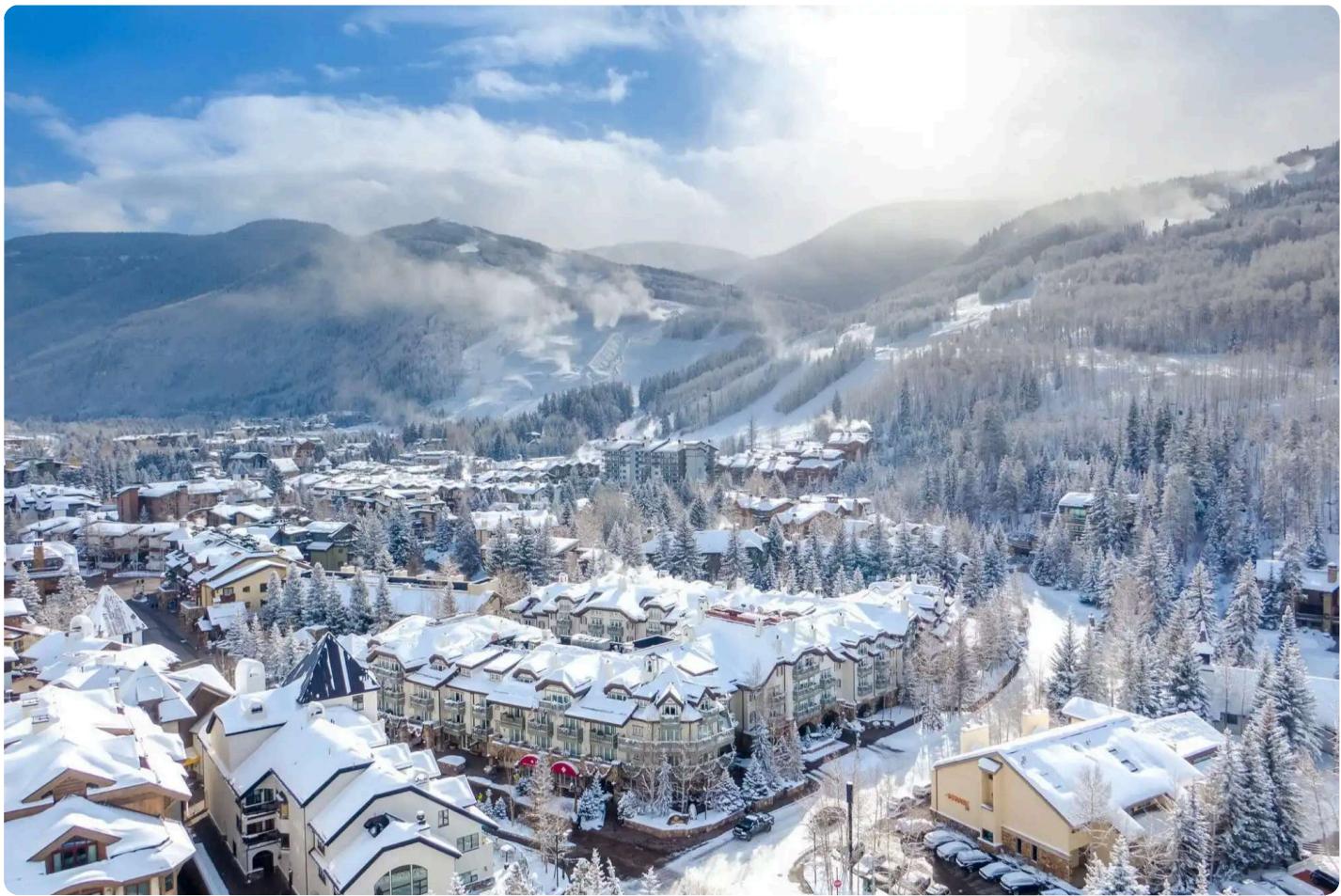


Image courtesy of Sonnenalp Hotel

With its pedestrian-only town center and chalet-style architecture, Vail is reminiscent of a charming Alpine village. Unlike ski-in/ski-out resorts, Vail encourages visitors to drop their gear and explore its two main areas: Vail Village, with a lively après-ski scene, and Lionshead, which is a more family-friendly and relaxed area.

The Front Side of Vail features wide, groomed trails for beginners and intermediates, with runs that lead directly to both Vail Village and Lionshead — ideal for families. For more advanced skiers, the Back Bowls have vast, open powder, offering a rugged, off-piste experience with stunning views.

Blue Sky Basin is for expert skiers in search of adventure, untouched snow and tree skiing. This area has a remote, backcountry feel while still being lift-accessible, with steep runs and challenging glades. Because of these diverse ski areas, Vail is a popular choice for groups and families with different ski levels.

Telluride



Image courtesy of Madeline Hotel & Residences, Auberge Resorts Collection

Telluride's rugged mountain beauty and historic, small-town feel appeals to skiers who want a ski-in/ski-out experience in a relaxed, unpretentious destination.

Telluride Mountain has a mix of terrain suitable for all ski levels. The front side includes long, groomed runs for beginners and intermediates (great for families). For more of a challenge, Gold Hill and Palmyra Peak offer steep runs with excellent views and a more rugged, off-piste feel. Revelation Bowl has high-alpine terrain accessible via lift, specifically for advanced skiers.

Telluride's après-ski scene is more laid-back, with intimate boutiques, art galleries and fine dining, making it perfect for those who prefer a quieter, upscale experience.

Beaver Creek



Beaver Creek is the place to go for a low-key vibe popular with families and those looking for a less intense ski experience. Bachelor Gulch is where beginners learn to ski, with well-groomed, easy slopes that aren't intimidating.

While Beaver Creek is known for being family-friendly, advanced skiers can still find a challenge on the Birds of Prey course, used for World Cup races. Arrowhead Mountain touts wide, scenic runs, which gives skiers time to take in the gorgeous scenery.

The down-to-earth vibe extends to Beaver Creek Village, which offers boutique shops and casual après-ski spots. Stay here for a more intimate and friendly feel compared to larger, busier resorts.

Where to stay



Image Courtesy of Little Nell

Viceroy Snowmass, Aspen: This luxury resort features modern mountain design and a serene atmosphere with ski-in/ski-out access in Snowmass Village. Ideal for families and couples, it offers an expansive wellness center, gourmet dining and a heated outdoor pool with stunning views of the Rockies.

- **Fora Perks** include a \$100 resort credit, breakfast daily, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Hotel Jerome, Auberge Resorts Collection, Aspen: A landmark in downtown Aspen, known for its stylish decor and lively bar scene, it's a favorite for those looking to immerse themselves in Aspen's rich history while enjoying modern amenities like a full-service spa and outdoor heated pool.

- **Fora Reserve** perks include a \$100 resort credit, breakfast daily, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

The Little Nell, Aspen: Aspen's only five-star five-diamond ski-in/out hotel renowned for its personalized service and exclusive access to Aspen Mountain. The property features fine dining at Element 47, a curated wine program and luxurious suites with breathtaking views.

- **Fora Perks** such as a \$100 food and beverage credit, breakfast daily, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Sonnenalp Hotel, Vail: With a charming Bavarian design, Sonnenalp blends European elegance with Rocky Mountain adventure. Its cozy suites, award-winning spa, and gourmet dining make it perfect for couples or families seeking an intimate warm setting.

- **Fora Perks** include a \$100 resort credit, breakfast daily, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Four Seasons Resort And Residences, Vail: Located in the heart of Vail Village, this resort offers spacious suites with fireplaces and mountain views, perfect for families and larger groups. After skiing, relax in the heated outdoor pool or indulge in treatments at the Forbes five-star spa.

- *When you book Four Seasons with me, you will enjoy exclusive Four Seasons Preferred Partner amenities. I will be pleased to give you more details.*

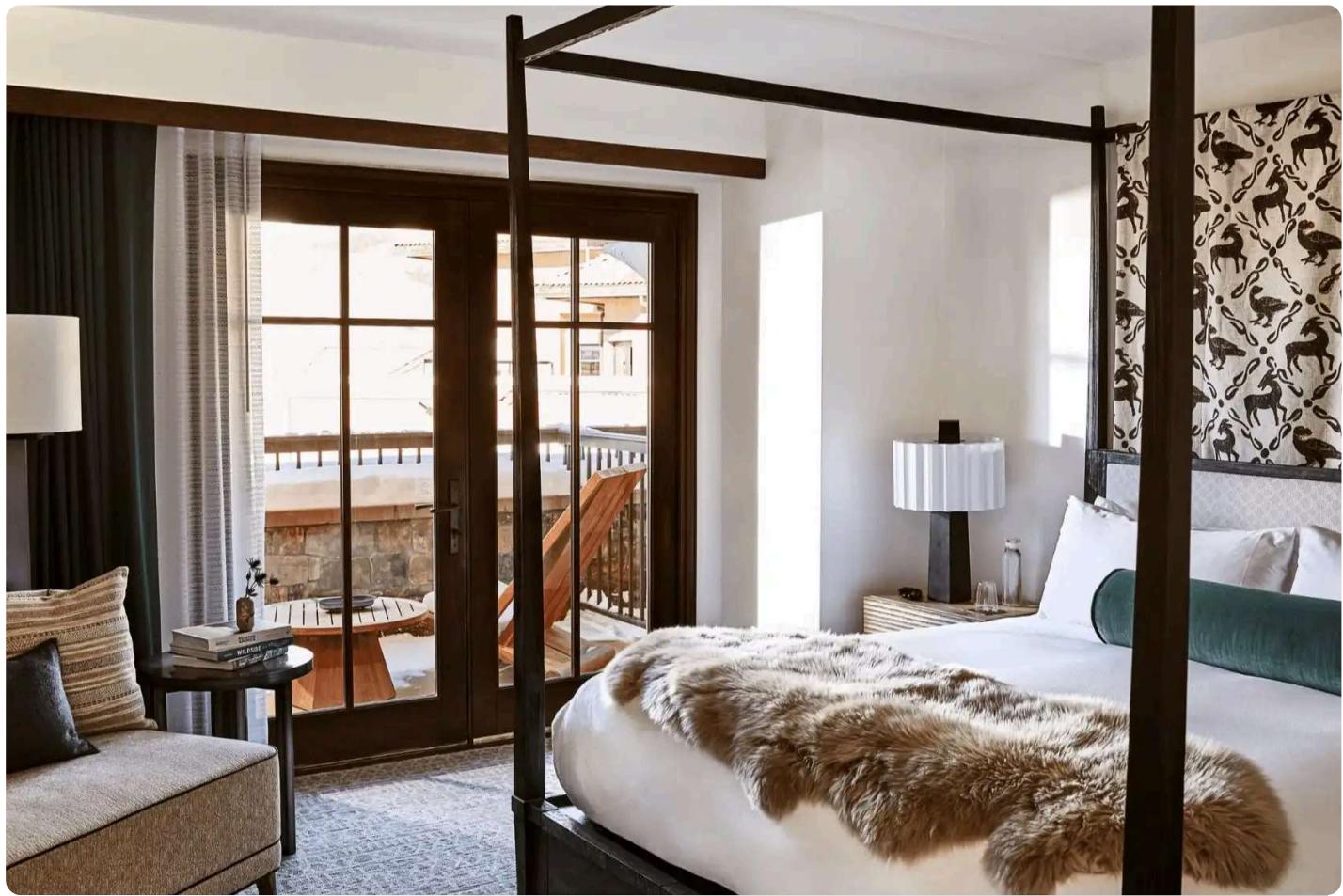


Image courtesy of Madeline Hotel & Residences, Auberge Resorts Collection

Madeline Hotel & Residences, Auberge Resorts Collection, Telluride: Set at the base of Telluride's slopes, this resort offers stunning mountain views and ski-in/ski-out convenience. With posh rooms, a world-class spa and rooftop ice skating, it's perfect for both families and couples.

- **Fora Reserve** perks include a \$100 resort credit, breakfast daily, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Auberge Residences at Element 52, Telluride: These luxury residences provide a more private experience with ski-in/ski-out access, spacious living areas, and full kitchens, ideal for families or extended stays. Enjoy personalized service, a private funicular, and access to Element 52's fitness center and spa.

Park Hyatt Beaver Creek Resort: Located steps from Beaver Creek's main chairlift, this family-friendly resort offers spacious accommodations, a kid's camp, and a luxurious spa. Guests can enjoy heated outdoor pools, fire pits, and slopeside dining.

- **Fora Perks** include a \$100 resort credit, breakfast daily, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

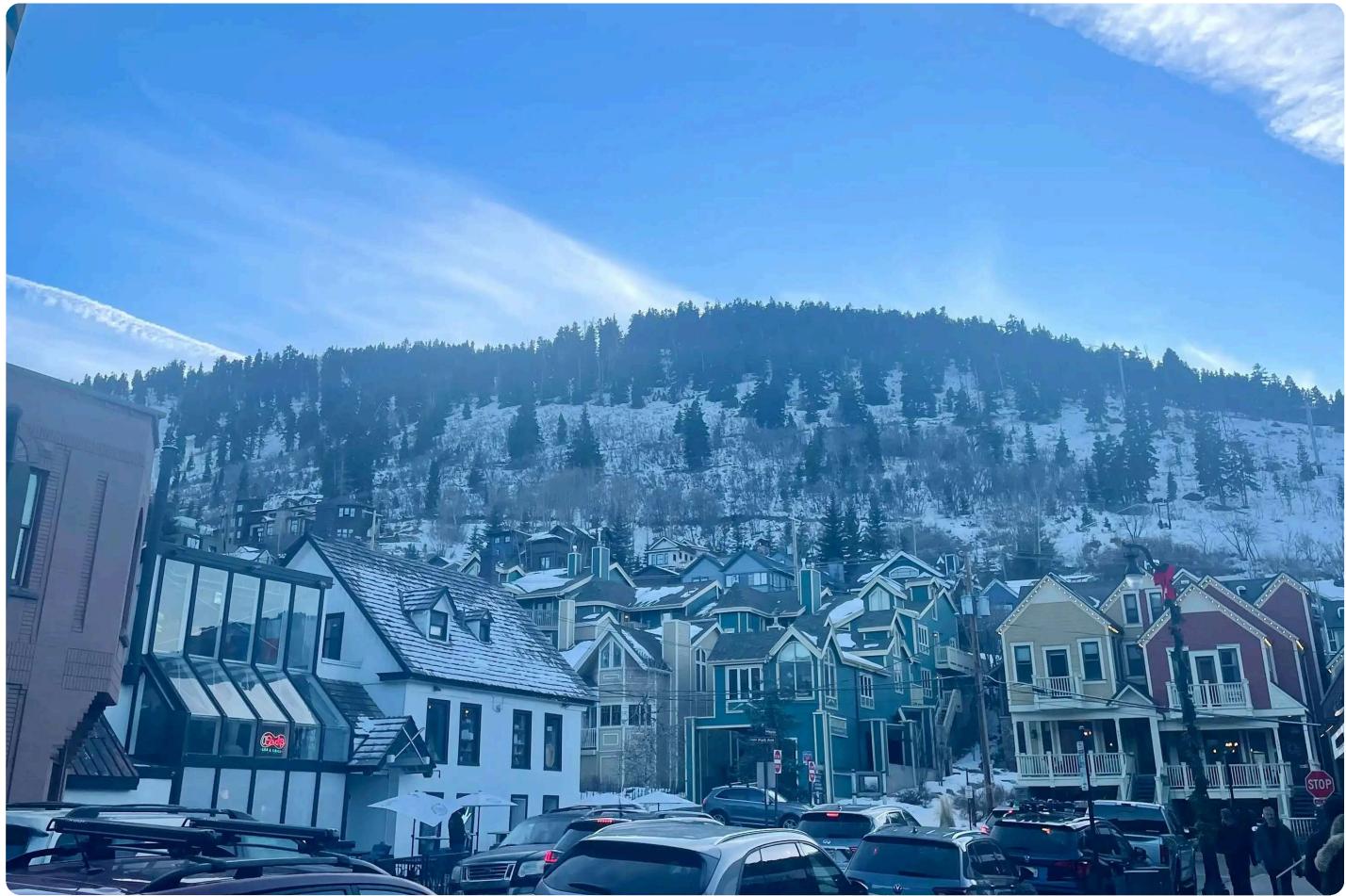
The Ritz-Carlton, Bachelor Gulch, Beaver Creek: Located on the slopes, this resort has a rustic elegance with ski-in/ski-out access. The property features a spa, gourmet dining and private club-level service.

- **Fora perks** include a \$100 resort credit, breakfast daily, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Beaver Creek Lodge, Autograph Collection: Combines rustic elegance with ski-in/ski-out access in the center of Beaver Creek.

- **Marriott LUMINOUS** perks include a welcome amenity, breakfast daily, upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Utah



Park City and Deer Valley both are prime choices for skiers of all levels; plus, because they are right next to each other, you can choose to ski both in one trip.

Expert skiers adore Park City's Jupiter Peak for its challenging runs, while over on Deer Valley, Bald Mountain is the place to go for steep trails. Both resorts have wide, well-groomed slopes and ski school for beginners, making them great for all ages. Canyons Village in Park City also offers intermediate and tree skiing for adventurous skiers.

Park City is known for its lively après-ski scene, historic Main Street and cultural attractions, like the Sundance Film Festival. This adds a dynamic element to the ski experience, attracting those who appreciate winter sports, as well as a thriving dining and art scene.

Where to stay



Image courtesy of Pendry Park City

The Goldener Hirsch, Auberge Resorts Collection: A blend of European alpine charm and modern luxury, The Goldener Hirsch is nestled in Deer Valley's exclusive Silver Lake Village. With ski-in/ski-out access, cozy suites and a rooftop pool, it's ideal for couples or families seeking both elegance and adventure.

- **Fora Reserve** perks include a \$100 resort credit, breakfast daily, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Pendry Park City: Located in the heart of Canyons Village, Pendry Park City offers modern luxury with ski-in/ski-out access. The resort features a rooftop pool, multiple dining options and a full-service spa, perfect for those looking for a chic mountain escape.

- **Fora Perks** include a \$100 resort credit, breakfast daily, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

The St. Regis Deer Valley: Nestled in the mountains with ski-in/ski-out access via a private funicular, The St. Regis offers refined luxury, with its renowned butler service, elegant dining at RIME and a heated infinity pool. Ideal for both couples and families, it's a perfect base for a luxury ski getaway.

- **Marriott STARS** perks include a \$100 hotel credit, a customized amenity, breakfast daily, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Montage Deer Valley: A luxurious retreat offering ski-in/ski-out access, Montage Deer Valley is perfect for families and couples alike. It features a 35,000-square-foot spa, fine dining, and a cozy après-ski lounge with stunning mountain views.

- **Fora Perks** include a \$100 resort credit, breakfast daily, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Stein Eriksen Lodge, Deer Valley: Known for its impeccable service and classic alpine luxury, Stein Eriksen Lodge offers ski-in/ski-out access, a 23,000-square-foot spa and fine dining. With a warm, chalet-style atmosphere, it's perfect for couples, families or groups.

- **Marriott STARS** perks include a \$100 hotel credit, a customizable amenity, breakfast daily, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Montana and Wyoming



Image courtesy of Montage Big Sky

For winter sports and the accompanying snowy weather, both Wyoming and Montana are outstanding choices, with each offering different experiences. Expect wide open terrain and fewer crowds than their Colorado counterparts.

In Montana, Big Sky's Lone Peak features 5,850 acres of skiable terrain for all skill levels. It's renowned for advanced runs like Liberty Bowl and Big Couloir, making it a top choice for thrill-seekers. And for a more family-friendly experience, Moonlight Basin at Big Sky has a more relaxed vibe with a dedicated area for beginners.

Wyoming's Jackson Hole Resort is well-known for its thrilling runs, including the legendary Corbet's Couloir (a double black diamond). But intermediate and beginner skiers are happy here too, with areas like Casper Bowl. Backcountry skiers will be happy at either resort, with private guides available for hire.

Both Big Sky and Jackson Hole are close to national parks and offer off-piste activities, like snowshoeing and snowmobiling, so guests can explore beyond the slopes.

Where to stay



Image courtesy of Four Seasons Resort and Residences Jackson Hole

Montage Big Sky: A luxury gem with ski-in/out access, spacious suites, a 10,000-square-foot spa and upscale dining. Gorgeous alpine views and proximity to Yellowstone make it a popular choice year round.

- **Fora Perks** include a \$100 resort credit, breakfast daily, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Residence Inn Big Sky / The Wilson Hotel: Located in Big Sky's town center, offering modern, extended-stay options with kitchenettes, ideal for families and longer stays. With easy access to skiing, restaurants and shopping, it's a convenient and comfortable base for exploring the area.

Four Seasons Resort Jackson Hole: A blend of mountain luxury and adventure, Four Seasons Jackson Hole offers ski-in/ski-out access, plush accommodations, a spa and dining at

Westbank Grill. Ideal for families or couples and those seeking both luxury and outdoor activities.

- *When you book Four Seasons with me, you will enjoy exclusive Four Seasons Preferred Partner amenities. I will be pleased to give you more details.*

Amangani (Jackson Hole): Exclusive retreat positioned on a butte with spectacular Teton views. Highlights are a holistic spa, refined suites with fireplaces and five-star dining.

- **Fora Perks** include a \$100 food and beverage credit, breakfast daily, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

California

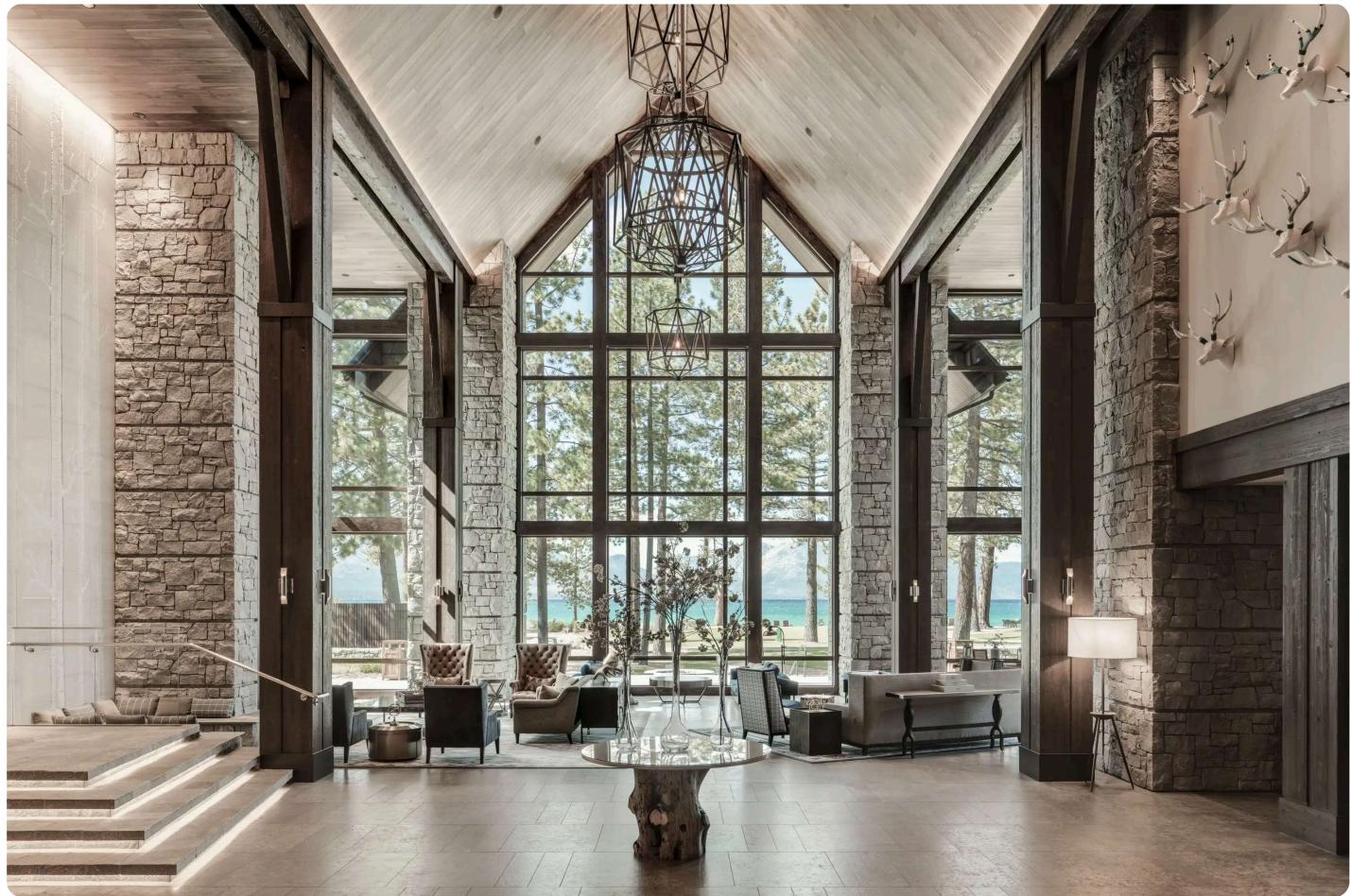


Image courtesy of Edgewood Tahoe Resort

Set in northern California on the Nevada line, Lake Tahoe is a good option for skiers of all levels. Advanced skiers can tackle steeper slopes at higher elevations, while beginners and

intermediates will find relaxed, scenic terrain at lower elevations. Some fan favorites include Heavenly's Milky Way Bowl and Northstar's Backside.

For adventurous skiers, guided backcountry skiing tours are available in Mount Tallac and Echo Peak. These tours provide advanced skiers access to untouched powder and remote terrain, adding an element of exploration to their trip.

Beyond skiing, Tahoe has extensive snowshoeing trails, with scenic paths like Tahoe Meadows and Chickadee Ridge. Snowmobiling tours are popular at Zephyr Cove and Hope Valley and allow you to access remote mountain areas. There's also ice skating at Northstar Village and of course, the après-ski scene, which is decidedly laid-back at the area's lakeside bars and restaurants.

Where to stay



Image courtesy of The Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe

Edgewood Tahoe Resort: A lakeside retreat featuring spacious suites, a golf course and a full-service spa. Located on Lake Tahoe, it delivers lovely views, fine dining and easy access to

skiing. Ideal for couples or families looking for a peaceful escape with a focus on outdoor adventure.

- **Fora Reserve** perks include a \$100 resort credit, breakfast daily, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

The Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe: A luxe retreat with ski-in/ski-out access, plus a full-service spa and fine dining. Ideal for families or couples, the resort is convenient for skiers and adds upscale amenities and a lively après-ski scene. Kid-friendly programs make it great for families.

- **Marriott STARS** perks include a \$100 hotel credit, a welcome amenity, breakfast daily, upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Vermont



Image courtesy of The Lodge at Spruce Peak

Stowe Mountain Resort is divided into two ski mountains: Mount Mansfield and Spruce Peak. Mount Mansfield is the state's highest peak and the primary choice for advanced skiers, with steep and technical runs. In contrast, Spruce Peak has gentler slopes for beginners and intermediates.

Stowe's Ski and Snowboard School is a good place to start at any age, with both private and group lessons available. Advanced skiers should check out Stowe's guided backcountry tours — a great way to explore remote areas of the Green Mountains with untouched powder.

Off the slopes, expect Stowe's village to have a relaxed feel, with cozy taverns offering craft beers and locally sourced ingredients. Non-skiers can opt for activities like snowshoeing and ice skating.

Where to stay

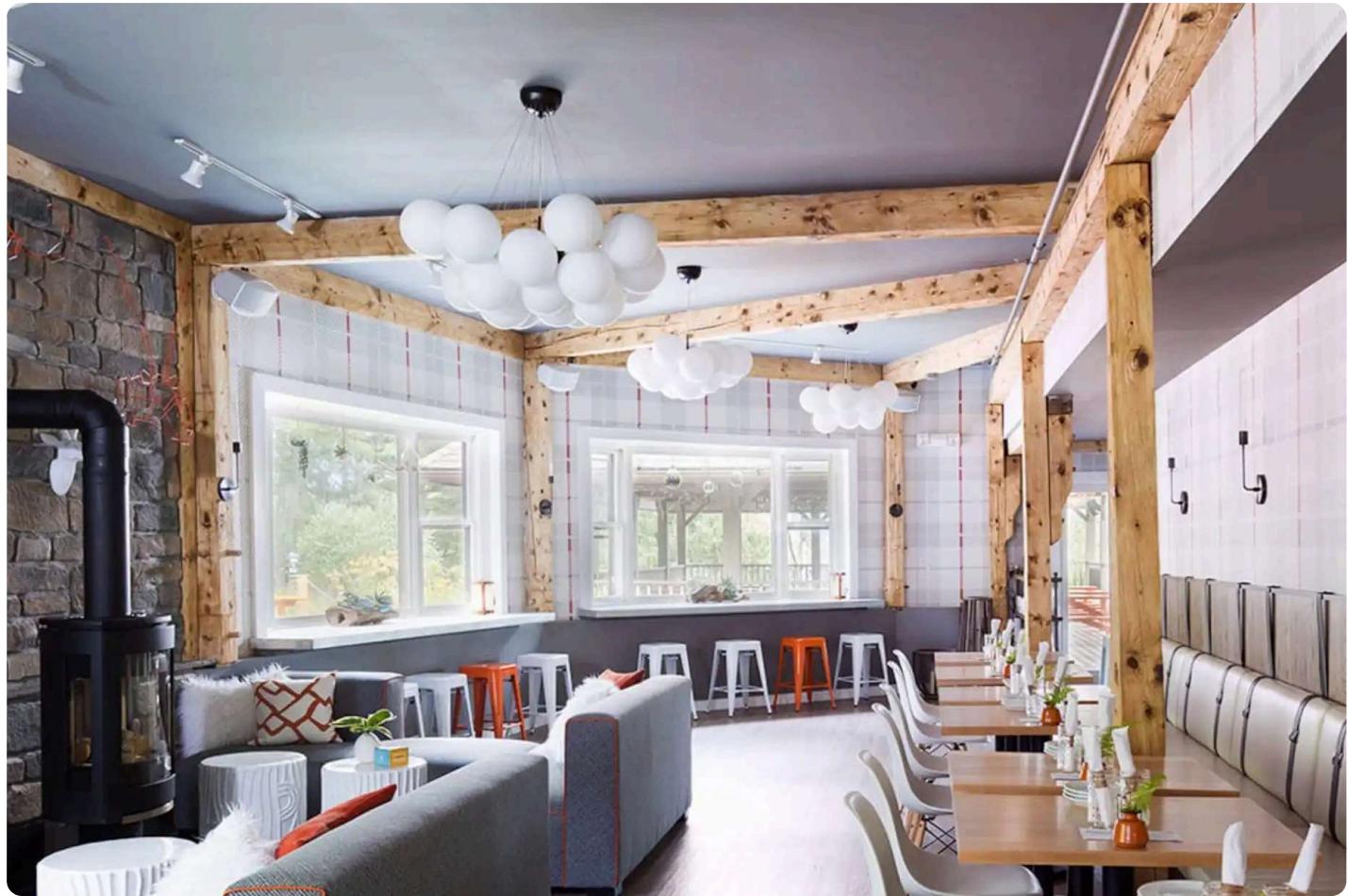


Image courtesy of Field Guide Stowe

The Lodge at Spruce Peak: A luxury mountain lodge offering elegant accommodations, a full-service spa and fine dining with locally sourced ingredients. Located at the base of Stowe

Mountain Resort, it provides easy access to skiing, ideal for families or couples seeking a blend of adventure and relaxation. After a day on the slopes, enjoy the cozy après-ski scene or unwind in the spa.

- **Fora Perks** include a \$100 food and beverage credit, breakfast daily, an upgrade and extended check-in/out whenever possible.

Field Guide Stowe: A modern, boutique hotel in the heart of Stowe village, Field Guide offers rustic-chic rooms. About 10 minutes from Stowe Mountain Resort, the hotel has a cozy feel with fire pits, faux fur throws and lots of wood finishes. Ideal for couples or small groups looking for a stylish stay.

For expert advice and insider recommendations, connect with me to start planning your ski getaway.

Get in touch with Gregory

Reach out for travel inspiration, hotel bookings or customized itineraries.

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