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# PastE

## American Ski Resorts You Need to Visit in the Summer

By Jay Gentile | July 17, 2017 | 3:00pm

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So you've done the family Christmas trip to Aspen and indulged in New Year's debauchery in Whistler. Congratulations, we're sure you had a good time. But as fun as carving fresh tracks in the snow and drinking Irish coffee huddled besides the lodge fireplace is, ski resorts should not be overlooked in summer. Traditionally offering pricing well below peak season and increasingly looking to lure summer travelers with an ever-expanding slate of summer activities and events, these ski towns in the U.S. are worth rescheduling your upcoming ski trips to sometime between [Memorial Day](#) and Labor Day for.

## North Lake Tahoe, California

For a more relaxing alternative to the tourist-populated and casino-heavy vibe of South Lake Tahoe, visit the laid-back shores of North Lake Tahoe (pictured above). Here, two dozen beaches, 12 ski resorts and hundreds of miles of biking trails unfold in a picturesque setting beside the deep blue waters of North America's largest alpine lake. Following a historic winter season that dumped 728 inches of snow on the resort, the world-famous [Squaw Valley](#) is hosting its first-ever "endless summer" with skiing and snowboarding available through late summer. The record-breaking precipitation is also helping make the area's scenic waterfalls and wildflower hikes even more brilliant than ever.

For a more low-impact experience, ride Squaw Valley's breathtaking aerial tram 2,000 feet over Tahoe to the 8,200-foot High Camp Pool & Hot Tub where DJs and themed parties keep the vibe fun and lively. Meanwhile, [Northstar California Resort](#) is a mountain biking paradise with a world-class selection of lift-accessed bike trails in addition to stargazing tours, monthly wine walks and a luxurious golf course enabling you to ski and golf the same day. What else do you need? Yacht charters? Helicopter tours? Roller skating under the stars? A bar at the end of a 275-foot floating pier? A historic lakeside castle? No problem, they have all of that too.

## Stowe, Vermont

This peaceful little town of less than 5,000 souls situated in a lush valley less than an hour west of Burlington is one of the more popular winter ski destinations in the East. But it's gaining a reputation as a summer must-see as well. The top of Mount Mansfield, the highest peak in the Green Mountain State, can be accessed via the zig-zagging historic Toll Road offering wide-open panoramic views of Lake Champlain and the surrounding Adirondack Mountains. You can also tour the nearby Ben & Jerry's factory, take a horse-drawn carriage ride amidst the covered bridges and gentle running brooks along the Westbrook River, or relax with a world-class spa treatment at the romantic [Stoweflake Mountain Resort & Spa](#).

Meanwhile at the bustling [Stowe Mountain Resort](#), there's a 150-foot zipline and aerial treetop adventure course calling your name, plus a laid-back gondola ride taking you to the top of Mount Mansfield for lunch at the Cliff House Restaurant. Make sure you're in town for the Stowe Balloon Fest every July, as dozens of colorful hot air balloons take to the sky at sunrise and sunset, as well as the Stowe Brewer's Festival later in the month. Grab a picnic and a free concert in the Trapp Family Lodge Concert Meadow outdoor amphitheatre throughout the summer, or just explore the charming historic village after strolling along the 5.3-mile Stowe Recreation Path greenway.

## Park City, Utah

The historic mining town of Park City may be most famous for celebrity sightings during winter's [Sundance Film Festival](#) or for hosting the 2002 Olympics, but during summer it's a laid-back mountain paradise just waiting to be explored. Enjoy highly discounted off-peak season rates in addition to the usual assortment of summer activities such as chairlift rides and stand-up paddleboarding at [Deer Valley](#) plus alpine coaster rides and disc golf at [Park City Mountain Resort](#).

But the heart of Park City beats in its unimaginably adorable Main Street, where free trolleys take you up and down the hilly main drag full of lively local spots like the No Name Saloon—there is perhaps no finer experience than hoisting a few pints with friendly locals on its sunny rooftop deck overlooking town. Once you've had your fill of "city" life, head out into the vast expanses of the surrounding Wasatch Mountains and lose yourself in pure natural solitude. Head back to town to bobsled the track at Olympic Park before kicking up your heels for a free concert at the gorgeous Snow Park Outdoor Amphitheatre.

## Telluride, Colorado

From Aspen and Breckenridge to Vail and Steamboat, Colorado has no shortage of world-class resorts that easily could have filled up this entire list. But standing head and shoulders above the rest is the uniquely stunning mountain village of Telluride, situated at the end of the road in a box canyon surrounded by the towering peaks of the San Juan Mountains. As anyone who has been there can tell you, it is simply one of the most beautiful places in the world—where, if all you did was sit downtown and stare at your surroundings, you'd still have a pretty decent vacation. But of course, there's way too much to do for that.

One of the most unique features of the town is the year-round free gondola service. It transports you between the eye-popping historic downtown and Mountain Village, home of [Telluride Ski Resort](#) and its packed roster of summer fun including 4WD tours, whitewater rafting and paragliding excursions. Grab a cocktail on the rooftop of downtown's New Sheridan Hotel before hitting local haunts like the Last Dollar Saloon to get in the mood for a ridiculously packed lineup of summer festivals including July's The Ride (with Beck and Ben Harper) and September's Telluride Blues & Brews (with [Steve Winwood](#) and Drive-By Truckers).

## Big Sky, Montana

Montana is famously known as Big Sky Country and in this tiny unincorporated community halfway between Bozeman and Yellowstone, they take the phrase literally. Unlike most ski resorts, Big Sky takes summer seriously. The sprawling “Basecamp to Yellowstone” known as [Big Sky Resort](#) is overflowing with activities from skeet shooting and archery to paintball and bungee trampolining. Grab a high-class meal at the top of Andesite Mountain at Everett’s 8800 then pamper yourself at their 3,000-square-foot spa, or relax with a good book at Lake Levinsky Marina. Before all this, take the aerial tram/chair lift/expedition vehicle adventure to the top of the 11,166-foot Lone Peak offering panoramic views of three states and two national parks.

There’s also no shortage of events from golf tournaments and group mountain biking trips to the upscale Vine & Dine food fest every August and the more down-to-earth (literally) Big Sky PBR professional bull-riding event in late July. The weekly farmer’s market is also kind of a big deal around these parts, while the surrounding Gallatin National Forest offers plenty of space to spread out a camping tent and observe the elk, deer, bighorn sheep and (maybe) bears who call this area home. Oh, and did we mention that Yellowstone is less than an hour away? Because it is.

*Lead photo by Ryan Salm*

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*[Jay Gentile](#) is a world traveler and freelance writer whose work has appeared in a variety of publications including [SPIN](#), [VICE](#), [Chicago Tribune](#), [Thrillist](#) and [Consequence of Sound](#).*