

HEAD FOR THE HILLS

Ski season is upon us, but where to go? We keep you in the know with the latest and greatest from the Sierra Nevadas to the Rockies. *By Syeda Ali*

MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN

Close to home, **Mammoth Mountain** (mammothmountain.com) boasts 3,500 skiable acres and is blanketed by more than 400 inches of snowfall annually. Enjoy it all from **The Westin Monache Resort** (westinmammoth.com), the area's premier hotel, which is just a gondola ride away from all the action. For a uniquely Mammoth boutique-hotel experience, check in to **The Mammoth Creek Inn** (themammothcreek.com) and request the romance package, complete with Champagne and sweet indulgences. When it's time to fuel up, **Skadi** (skadirestaurant.com) serves hearty Scandinavian fare; think roast maple-leaf duck with Arctic lingonberries, aquavit and spätzle.

BONUS: This year Mammoth Mountain introduced a limited-sale Black Pass. A cool \$10,000 (trust us, it's worth it) will score you personalized concierge services, lift privi-

in the glory of its Olympic past. In a decidedly 21st-century move, the Riviera terrain park and superpipe have introduced expanded night hours and better lighting, letting snow bunnies stay on the slopes well past sunset. If you're a season-pass holder (from \$999), you'll get 15 percent off your stay at **PlumpJack Squaw Valley Inn** (plumpjacksquawvalleyinn.com), an intimate 58-room boutique property with stellar views. The **Olympic House** base lodge (squaw.com) is fresh off a revamp, including a complete remodeling of Bar One designed to even better showcase the awe-inspiring peaks. The overhaul extends to the Olympic House Pavilion menu, which has all-new



leges, VIP event access, private dining and other perks throughout the season.

SQUAW VALLEY

Squaw Valley USA (squaw.com), on the north shore of Lake Tahoe, doesn't just bask

offerings ranging from Asian stir-fry to gourmet pizzas.

BONUS: Kids enjoy free reign over the new mountaintop kids' zone, complete with a snow fort and a map-driven adventure designed to teach them more about the mountain.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY HANK DE VRE (SQUAW VALLEY); COURTESY OF ROSSIGNOL (SKIS); STARWOOD HOTELS (WESTIN MONACHE)



Park City

Waldorf Astoria
Park City



PARK CITY

With three major resorts—**Deer Valley Resort**, **The Canyons Resort** and **Park City Mountain Resort**—Park City (parkcityinfo.com) more than lives up to its “Greatest Snow on Earth” reputation. Lately the area has been experiencing a luxury-hotel renaissance: **Montage Deer Valley** (montagedeervalley.com), **The St. Regis Deer Valley Resort** (stregisdeervalley.com) and **Waldorf Astoria Park City** (parkcitywaldorfastoria.com) have all recently opened their grand doors, bringing with them world-class service and rarefied ambience. On the culinary front, chef John Murcko’s **Talisker on Main** (taliskeronmain.com) is the toast of Park City—and with its daily changing menu, delicious possibilities include elk-tenderloin carpaccio and short-rib shepherd’s pie with potato brûlée. New this season, Park City Mountain Resort added three new Adventure Alley runs, letting intermediates ski in the trees. **BONUS:** Night owls, rejoice: **Park City Mountain Resort** (parkcitymountain.com) has extended its hours to 9 PM daily.

ASPEN

A direct flight from LA, Aspen is far more than the celeb-laden glitzyfest many imagine it to be. Some



Aspen

of North America’s best skiing exists on the resort’s four mountains—**Aspen Mountain**, **Buttermilk Mountain**, **Aspen Highlands** and **Snowmass** (aspensnowmass.com). Check into the newly renovated **Hotel Aspen** (hotelaspen.com), where all 45 rooms were completely stripped and remodeled to feature wood floors and contemporary decor (ask for a room with a private hot tub). Get ready for your action-packed day with a coffee and the Open Face (poached eggs on flatbread with peach butter, bacon, heirloom tomatoes, arugula, extravirgin olive oil and shaved Parmesan) from **Peach’s Corner Café** (peachscornercafe.com), in the center of downtown. Choose a mountain based on what you’re looking for and your skill level. Daredevils should check out the new 12-foot halfpipe in Snowmass, built specifically for those learning how to shred in the pipe; expert riders should not miss the accessible-by-hike Highland Bowl and its more



ESPN Winter
X Games

than 2,000 vertical feet of backcountry-like terrain. Later, dinner has to be at **Casa Tua** (casatualifestyle.com), the new outpost of the popular Miami spot. Downstairs is authentic Italian cuisine, while upstairs boasts a members-only club. (Our tip: Make fast friends with a member.) Finish the night off with live music at **Belly Up Aspen** (bellyupaspen.com), where the likes of Jimmy Buffett, Ben Harper and DJ Tiësto have performed. **BONUS:** If you’re in Aspen from January 27 to 30, you can see the best action-sports athletes in the world compete in skiing, snowboarding and snowmobiling when **ESPN Winter X Games** (expn.com) takes over town for the 10th consecutive year. **LAC**

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