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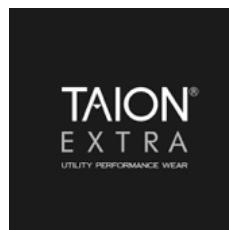




Photo Courtesy of Matt Harrington

Après & Chill: Where to Go and What to Pack in Lake Tahoe, Aspen, and Park City

In partnership with our friends at



It's usually around August that we start dreaming of fresh

powder and après cocktails, so we're thrilled that ski season is almost here. In anticipation, we created a handy cheat sheet of long-weekend escapes to three of our favorite mountain towns—and of course, the packing-list essentials for the skiing, the cocktailing, and the everything-in-betweening.

———— ASPEN, COLORADO ————

There's a reason why [Aspen](#) has so many repeat visitors: There are four world-class mountains that offer some of the world's best skiing. Then there's the town, which is worth a trip all its own, with some serious cultural bona fides, like the Aspen Art Museum, excellent galleries, and food and wine festivals. Coupled with some great restaurants (including, for the first time, Daniel Humm's EMP Winter House) and enough shopping to while away an afternoon, it's no wonder this Rocky Mountain escape is as popular in the summer as it is in ski season. Speaking of which, this year, Snowmass is getting its moment in the limelight (literally) thanks to a hefty \$600 million investment from the Aspen Skiing Company to develop its base village. Up first is the ninety-nine-room [Limelight Hotel](#), which will include a five-story rock-climbing wall, a spa, and the Snowmass Mountain Club, a private members' space with ski valet, easy slopeside

parking, and an après-ready lounge.



Stay





HOTEL JEROME, AUBERGE RESORTS COLLECTION

There's no shortage of great (albeit pricey) hotels in Aspen. [Hotel Jerome](#) has been part of Aspen's story since it opened —as the town's first hotel—more than 120 years ago. Still in its original building, it retains its late-nineteenth-century charm but now offers amenities like the clubby, cozy Bad Harriett, a new underground bar in the basement of the

renovated *Aspen Times* building; in-house ski rentals through Gorsuch; and arguably the best spa in Aspen. The location is perfect, situated between the base of Ajax Mountain and the Roaring Fork River.



THE LITTLE NELL

The [Little Nell](#), meanwhile, is the glitzy, see-and-be-seen spot and recently refreshed its fifty-two guest rooms and gave a sleek makeover to Ajax Tavern, the hotel's fine-dining restaurant. And the epic contemporary art collection is scattered throughout the hotel's guest rooms and hallways.





ST. REGIS

Over at the [St. Regis](#), guests get custom leather bed frames, faux-fur throws, and marble fireplaces (be sure to request a room with one—it makes all the difference). The fifteen-treatment-room Remède Spa is a super decadent spot to recharge after a day on the slopes. We're partial to the Rocky Mountain Ritual, which moisturizes wind-whipped skin. A \$75 day pass grants non-hotel guests access to the cold plunge pools, oxygen lounge, and steam room.

Eat/Après

Post-skiing fun usually starts at Cloud 9 on Aspen Highlands, where it feels like the entire town congregates in ski boots at the end of the day. Over on Aspen Mountain, [Chair 9](#) at the

Little Nell is a lively spot to pregame with a spiked hot cocoa as the sun goes down.



Photo: Matt Harrington

CLARK'S OYSTER BAR

The recently opened [Clark's Aspen](#) is the latest from Austin restaurateurs Larry McGuire and Tom Moorman, and it's quickly becoming the go-to place for a burger and a martini once the clock strikes 3 p.m. For dinner, both [Casa Tua](#) (with its lively bar scene and Northern Italian fare) and [Grey Lady](#) (for Nantucket vibes and fresh seafood flown in daily) are surefire hits, especially with a group.



EMP WINTER HOUSE

The season's most hyped opening is the [EMP Winter House](#), chef Daniel Humm's ode to his Swiss upbringing. The dinner menu hits all the decadent high notes: beef Stroganoff, cavatelli topped with black truffle, trout toast, and oysters. If the East Hampton iteration is any indication, a reservation will be hard to come by.



THE CULINISTAS

If you're posting up in a house right in town, the Manhattan-based [Culinistas](#) are heading West just in time for ski season. From December 14 through January 6, a team of chefs from NYC will be on hand to assist with meal prep for big groups or for those hosting parties over the holidays. A sample menu includes a delicate kale salad with hazelnuts, sea bass with winter citrus, and roasted carrots with a cilantro pesto. Also: a special, just-for-Aspen raclette and caviar menu that feeds up to sixteen.

Don't Miss



ASPEN ART MUSEUM

If you're not a skier—or just taking a day off the slopes—head to the Shigeru Ban–designed [Aspen Art Museum](#). Its latest performance piece, *It's Never Too Late to Say Sorry*, by Scandinavian artists Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset, is on view through May.



BOESKY WEST

Boesky West, run by New York gallerist Marianne Boesky, has been generating buzz since it opened in a converted nineteenth-century cabin. Currently on view: Berlin-based artist Matthias Bitzer's drawings, paintings, and installations,

many of which take inspiration from early-twentieth-century historical figures, like Emily Dickinson.



FORTY FIVE TEN

Some may argue that Aspen is known for its shopping as much as its snow (Prada, Ralph Lauren, and even Kith have stores here). We're especially excited about the arrival of Dallas import [Forty Five Ten](#), which will bring its sharp edit of Saks Potts coats and cozy, Brock Collection knits to a stately corner of East Hyman Avenue. Also of note: Nacho Figueras will be in town from December 18 to 21 for the Snow Polo Championship, which is held at the [Aspen Polo Club](#). (It also happens to be the only place in the US to catch the sport.)

PARK CITY AND DEER VALLEY, UTAH

Utah's skiing conditions are hard to find fault with: wide-open terrain, more bluebird days than we can count, and some seriously good, consistent powder. Then there's the proximity to the airport—New Yorkers can leave in the morning and be on the mountain by 1 p.m., and West Coasters can be on a lift before lunch. And now, thanks to an alliance with mountain behemoth Vail Resorts, which owns Beaver Creek, Vail, Heavenly, and more, it seems that [Park City](#)—the laid-back mining town that many have known (and loved) for years—is really getting the attention it deserves. The 2015 Park City Mountain Resort and Canyons merger resulted in a 7,300-acre mountain complete with a high-speed gondola. Park City's Main Street is as picturesque as ever, with new restaurants and shops constantly popping up.

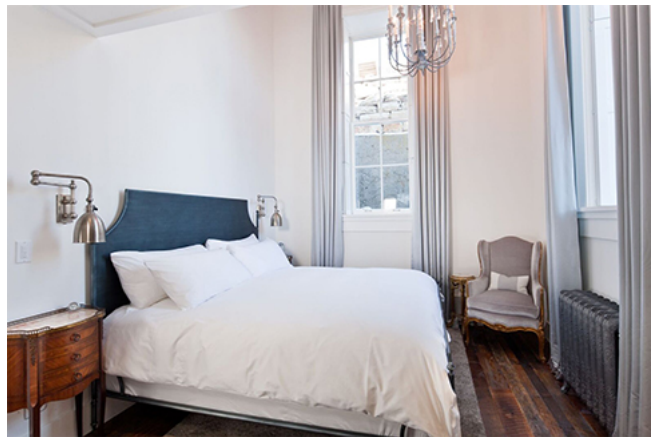


Stay



WASHINGTON SCHOOL HOUSE

[Washington School House](#) feels like the exact opposite of what you'd think lodging in a ski town should be. Tucked into the center of lower Main Street near the Town Lift, it's just twelve rooms strong. The charmingly refurbished 1889 former (you guessed it) schoolhouse is outfitted with reclaimed-oak floors, all-white interiors, antique furnishings, and plenty of vintage rugs.



The overall vibe reads much more Parisian pied-à-terre than rustic chalet, and the outdoor terrace pool, which seems to hover above a sea of aspen trees, is positively Narnia-esque.



MONTAGE DEER VALLEY

Over in Deer Valley, the [Montage Deer Valley](#) is really the main event—save for the mountain itself. The property is palatial and ideal for families or big groups traveling together. There's an indoor kids' club for little ones who are snow-averse, plus snowshoeing, snowmobiling, and ice-

skating available on the property. The hotel has a variety of very good dining options, too. Apex serves a hearty skier's brunch buffet daily (don't miss the gluten-free banana bread), while Yama Sushi, overlooking the Empire lift, serves a solid mix of rolls, sashimi, and sake.

Eat/Après



FIVESEEDS

It was only a matter of time before the Australian brekkie craze hit Park City. At [Five5eeds](#), Andrew and Tiffany Percy serve nourishing plates of Moroccan shakshuka and a superfood grain salad (wild rice, quinoa, farro, BBQ-charred corn, chai-soaked goji berries, and arugula) that pairs well

with a turmeric latte.



HIGH WEST SALOON

If you can pry yourself off the mountain for lunch, [High West Saloon](#) is so worth it (ski-in/ski-out). Warm up at the bar (made of reclaimed wood from a 1904 Salt Lake bridge) and order the chicken potpie and a warming Manhattan. If you're feeling extra indulgent, the mac 'n' cheese—made with smoked Cheddar, jalapeño, and bacon—is as good as it sounds, as is the sweet potato gratin. You can burn it all off on the mountain after.



RIVERHORSE

For dinner, [Riverhorse](#) is great for a special-occasion, white-tablecloth kind of meal: The old-school menu features several cuts of steak, local rainbow trout, scallops, and vegetable-heavy side dishes that change with the seasons.



CHIMAYO

Chimayo is something of a Main Street institution, and chef Arturo Flores and his team keep things exciting by using seasonal ingredients and riffing on classic Southwestern cuisine. Of particular note: the guacamole Azteca, served with snow crab, stuffed avocado, and roasted vegetables. And be sure to ask your server to keep the house's signature Chimayo margaritas coming.



FIREWOOD

Over at [Firewood](#), local son John Murcko cooks everything from the acorn-roasted squash and coal-roasted carrots to Kobe brisket on an open flame. The frequently changing menu sources its ingredients from local purveyors, like Beehive Cheese, Bear Lake Beef, and Slide Ridge Honey. Cap off the night with a Smoke Show (High West Rendezvous Rye, charred blood orange, bitters, and rosemary) at the Nickel Bar downstairs.

Don't Miss



GORSUCH

For nonskiers, wandering up and down Main Street is enough to keep you occupied for hours. If you forgot any cold-weather gear, head to [Gorsuch](#), as it's got plenty of Moncler, Bogner, and Dale of Norway in stock.



PARK CITY MERCANTILE

[Park City Mercantile](#) is one of those stores you walk into without intending to buy a thing—but walk out of with your entire Christmas list solved. Its wooden shelves are packed with Farmhouse pottery, Faribault woolen blankets, and woody scented soaps from Juniper Ridge.



C|TWO BY CAKE

And if you forgot your Rodin lip balm or Grown Alchemist hand cream, shop owner Katie Hammond of [c|two](#) has you covered. She has ton of clean beauty products, and many goop-favorite brands, in TSA-approved sizes, too.

LAKE TAHOE

Sprawling across both California and Nevada, Lake Tahoe is the largest alpine lake in North America. It hosted the 1960 Winter Olympics (technically, at Squaw Valley Ski Resort) and remains the premiere winter sports destination in

California, thanks to a couple of things. First, the skiing is world-class, with a huge variety of slopes at resorts like Alpine Meadows, Sugar Bowl, Squaw Valley, Northstar, Kirkwood, and Heavenly. Convenience is another draw—it's a three-hour drive from San Francisco and an hour-and-a-half flight from LA, and there are nonstop flights from New York and Chicago. And of course, there's all that natural beauty: The snow-capped peaks form a cinematic backdrop to the lake and dense pine forests, and even the big-name hotels somehow manage to feel like rustic chalets in the woods. Come for the skiing, and then come back in the summer for the alpine hikes and brisk swims in the crystal-clear water. It's a place that's a rare combination of being totally accessible and feeling like you've landed in another world.



Stay



COACHMAN HOTEL

There are a handful of solid options here, starting with the [Coachman Hotel](#), which sits at the base of Heavenly Mountain in South Lake Tahoe. Formerly a 1960s motel, it's now a souped-up summer camp with Frette linens, Apple TV, Stumptown Coffee, and outdoor firepits.





THE RITZ-CARLTON

Over at Northstar, the kid-friendly [Ritz-Carlton](#) is a self-contained wonderland of outdoor activities (cross-country trails, snowshoeing, ice-skating, tubing), nightly s'mores roasts, and supremely hikeable forest, which goes on as far as the eye can see. What's more, you can surprise your little one with an in-room camping experience, tent and all—just reach out to the Ritz Kids concierge and they'll take it from there.



BASECAMP HOTEL

Kids will also go nuts for the [Basecamp Hotel](#), a hip, affordable little spot in South Lake Tahoe, and for good reason: You'll find forest wallpaper, fake campfires, tented beds, Coleman-style lanterns, steel bunk beds, and (for better or worse) Xboxes.



Each of the fifty rooms has a different look, but they all revolve around a cabin-like theme with plenty of modern and natural flourishes. The emphasis is on shared experiences here, as many of the rooms come with bunks, and you're encouraged to mingle with the other guests at communal dinners and at the firepits.



Rooms start at \$89 a night, which tends to attract a younger crowd. Definitely pack ski gear, as it's a few short paces to the Heavenly Gondola; and a Swiss Army knife, for hikes, adventures, and getting lost (a *Worst-Case Scenario Survival Handbook* comes with every room).

Eat/Après





SPROUTS

For a fuel-up, pre- or après-ski, it's worth swinging by [Sprouts](#), a local favorite for its healthy options and locally sourced ingredients (we're partial to the tempeh burger and freshly squeezed carrot juice).





BELT ROOM BAR

A little more decadent (and definitely only for après-ski) is the [Belt Room Bar at Sugar Bowl](#), for the best Bloody Mary you'll find for miles. About half an hour from the lake, it's worth exploring Truckee, a history-steeped railroad town that looks, in parts, totally untouched by time.





MOODY'S BISTRO

[Moody's Bistro](#) is a buzzy, good-time-guaranteed option for lunch or dinner in town with the best veggie burger and most decadent truffle fries; [Full Belly Deli](#) is convenient and has great sandwiches and grab-and-go items that are satisfyingly filling on cold days—get the Veggie Press (marinated portobello mushroom, roasted red pepper, pepperoncini, and provolone on focaccia) or a cup of the house-made chili.

After dark, it's all about [Bar of America](#), a Truckee institution that's currently going strong in its third decade. There's live music (ranging from reggae to rock cover bands) every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, and the whole place has a welcoming small-town atmosphere. For something a little fancier, [PlumpJack Café](#) in Squaw Valley is where you want to be. The Korean-influenced gochujang-marinated chicken with chap chae (rice noodles), charred cabbage, and green beans is one of our favorite meals in Tahoe.

Don't Miss





BESPOKE

Pop into [Bespoke](#), a tiny, loaded-to-the-rafters shop that has a little something for everyone: pretty letterpress cards for

the most dutiful letter writers, Juniper Ridge toiletries and flasks for the guys, embroidered napkins and Jacobson Salt Co. caramels.



TAHOE SPORTS HUB

For ski and outdoor-recreation gear, [Tahoe Sports Hub](#) in Truckee has everything you could possibly want: skis, bindings, boots, snowboards, snowshoes, plus rentals. And ask the staff for their recommendations in the area—they are true Tahoe experts.

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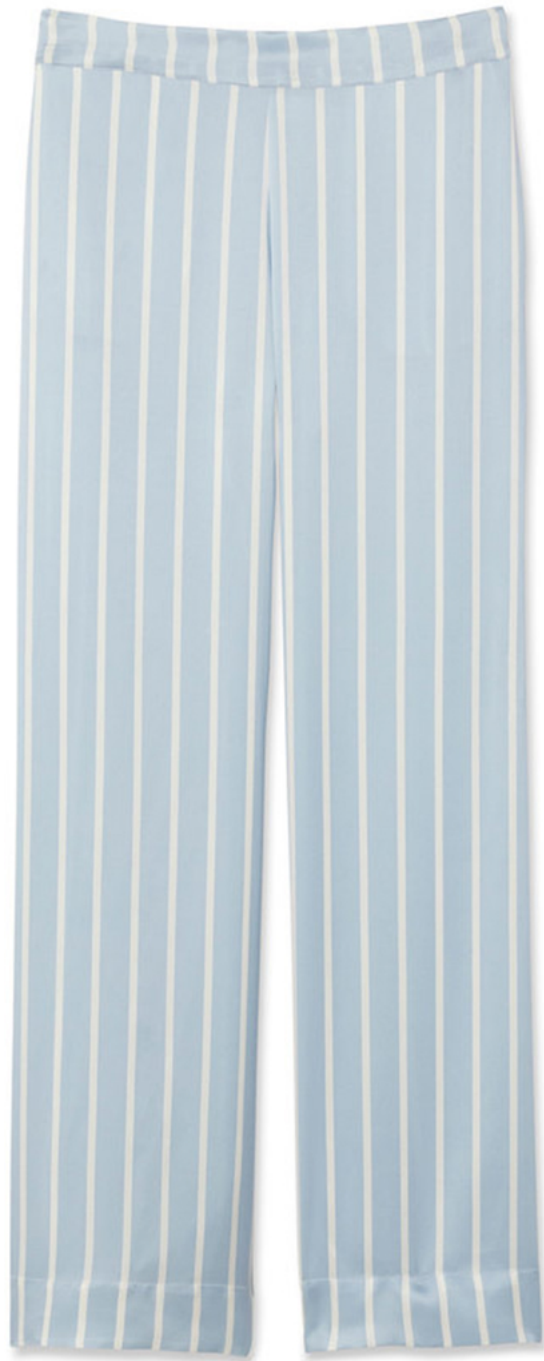
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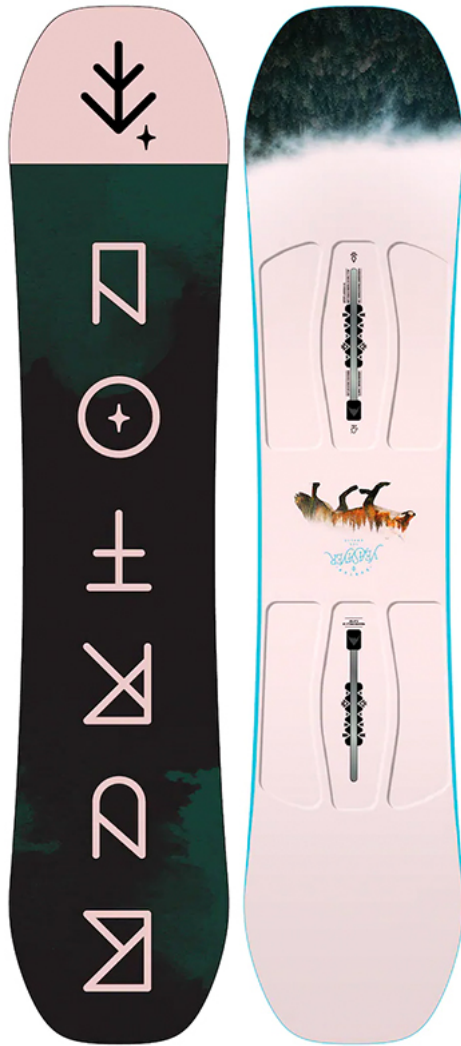


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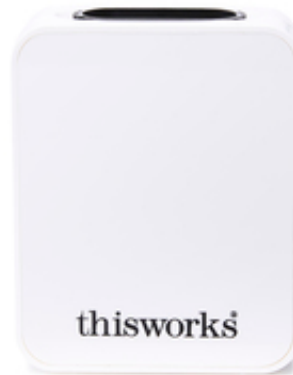
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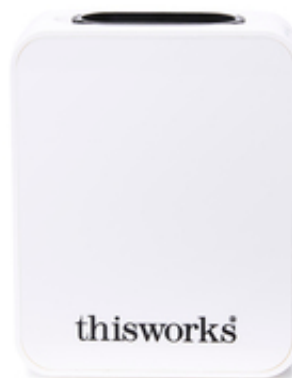
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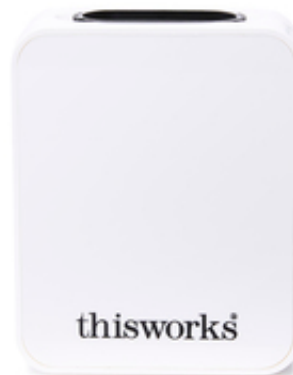
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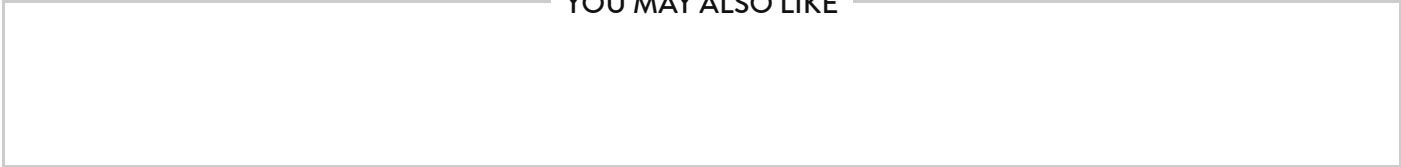
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