



nileGUIDE

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



3-Day Adventure Weekend in Vail

Vail, 3 Days

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Guide Description






AUTHOR NOTE: In the summer and autumn, Vail has a ton of fun waiting for the active visitor. Vail's famous ski mountain is transformed into a mountain biker's paradise while the neighboring Gore Range mountains offer great hiking and backpacking opportunities.

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife


Day 1 - Vail







DAY NOTE: With all there is to see and do in Vail, three full days the way to do it! In the summer, the Vail Marriot Mountain Resort is a great place to "base camp" (unless of course you actually bring you tent and camp out in the nearby national forests). If you're traveling on a budget but still want a roof over your head, check out the Roose Lodge for affordable Vail rooms--chances are you'll be spending most of your time in the mountains and out on the town anyhow! If you are in town with time to hike, the Deluge Lake Trail (starting in West Vail) is a great hike into the beautiful Gore Range. The Deluge Lake Trail is 4 miles (8 miles round trip) of aspen lined beauty to the amazing Deluge Lake basin. Hearty hikers can continue the adventure by climbing the nearby peaks, including a class 2 off-trail route on 13,041 ft. Grand Traverse Peak. For more information, check out this link on Deluge Lake and Grand Traverse Peak. Eating is Vail is all part of the fun! The Red Lion and Blue Moose Pizza are both laid back with hearty and affordable meals. If you're feeling like a new experience, try bowling and a great meal (it's true!) at The Back Bowl, perhaps America's most posh bowling alley.

	Roost Lodge 1.5 miles from Vail Village and skiing
	The Red Lion Popular bar for locals and tourists
	Vail Marriott Mountain Resort Hospitality at the height of perfection

Day 2 - Vail

DAY NOTE: Saturday is your day to be in the thick of adventure! Gear up your mountain bike and get ready to head the long, winding trails on Vail Mountain! DJ's Classic Diner is a good diner to fuel up before the ride. Vail Bike Tech is a great place to rent bikes and get information on the assorted trails. You can easily spend a full day out on the mountains traversing sweet singletrack or bombing downhill runs. If you like to keep your adrenaline up, The Club and Samana Lounge are dance clubs with lots of energy and great music. Feeling more laid back? Why not try Blu's Restaurant or the bar and live music at the Red Lion?

	D.J.'s Classic Diner A favorite among locals
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	Red Lion (The) Giant portions
	Samana Lounge Hip dance club and lounge
	Blu's Restaurant Taste of traditional American cuisine
	The Club High energy party bar
	Vail Marriott Mountain Resort Hospitality at the height of perfection
	Roost Lodge 1.5 miles from Vail Village and skiing

Day 3 - Vail

DAY NOTE: On your last day of adventure, may we suggest giving the famous Vail Pass bike path a ride? This famous bike path is rideable by mountain or road bikes and starts in West Vail just past the aforementioned Deluge Lake Trailhead. Your riding options are many: climb 14 miles to the pass and return to town or drop downhill for a 32-mile one-way trip into the town of Frisco. There are also shuttle options from local companies. If you're feeling burly, complete the out-and-back to Frisco and return over the pass for an epic 64-mile tour! When the riding is done, your appetite is going to be through the roof. The Lancelot Inn offer a quiet, subdued setting to enjoy excellent alpine-style food. However, if you're in the mood for that thick, juicy steak you've been dreaming about during your ride you can't go wrong with Russell's steak house.

	Lancelot Inn Prime rib and more
	Russell's More than a steakhouse, it's a dining experience

Day 1 - Vail

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contact:
tel: 970 476-5451

1 Roost Lodge

location:
1783 N Frontage Rd W
Vail CO 81657

DESCRIPTION: This west Vail lodge is 1.5 miles from Vail Village and skiing, 10 miles from Beaver Creek Resort, and 90 miles from Denver. Roost Lodge's 72 guestrooms have nightstands, tables, and two chairs. Hair dryers are available on request. The lodge offers a heated outdoor swimming pool and spa tub, a sauna, and a complimentary breakfast. Parking is free.



Hotels.com

contact:
tel: 970-476-7676
<http://www.theredlion.com>

2 The Red Lion

location:
304 Bridge St
Vail CO 81657

DESCRIPTION: The Red Lion features classic Vail charm with incredible live music, excellent food and the perfect atmosphere any time of the year.

contact:
tel: 970 476 4444/ 800 648 0720

fax: 970 476 1647
<http://marriott.com/property/propertypage/WHRCO>

3 Vail Marriott Mountain Resort

location:
715 West Lionshead Circle
Vail CO 81657

DESCRIPTION: Not your ordinary Marriot, this Vail resort has the appearance of a German chateau and all the amenities of a fine ski lodge. Just a short walk away is a gondola to the top of the mountain and plenty of dining and shopping, while in the resort itself there are two restaurants, a spa and a fitness room. As always with the Marriot, both business and leisure travellers will find everything they desire. Call +1 800 648 0720 (Toll free). © wcities.com



wcities

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contact:
tel: 970 476 2336

1 D.J.'s Classic Diner

location:
616 West Lionshead Circle
Vail CO 81657

DESCRIPTION: D.J.'s Classic Diner is one of the best restaurants in Vail for breakfast, brunch or lunch. The menu offers eggs, omelettes, breakfast burritos, crepes and more. A favorite among the locals, this place is usually crowded. So consider yourself lucky if you get a place to sit. With a good list of meals to choose from, you can enjoy a simple but tasty food with rates that go easy on your pocket. © wcities.com

hours:
Daily 7a-1p

contact:
tel: 970 476 7676
<http://www.theredlion.com/>

2 Red Lion (The)

location:
304 Bridge Street
Vail CO 81657

DESCRIPTION: Most of the menu items at this Vail venue are made from scratch and served in huge portions. The appetizers are what put The Red Lion on the map - with 1" thick onion rings and nachos (beef or chicken) that are almost impossible to finish. The lunch and dinner menus offer Dry Smoked Ribs, Pulled Pork, and a BBQ sauce that is made in-house. Their Red and Green Chili is award-winning. They offer live entertainment, Bingo, and daily drink specials. Be sure to try their signature Lion's Bull! © wcities.com



wcities

contact:
tel: 970-476-3433
<http://www.samanalounge.com/>

3 Samana Lounge

location:
228 Bridge Street
Vail CO 81657

DESCRIPTION: Inspired by intimate dance clubs in New York, Amsterdam and Paris, Samana lounge provides a candlelit atmosphere to dance the night away or relax in style at the lounge.

contact:
tel: 970 476 3113
fax: 970 476 3115
www.blusrestaurant.com

4 Blu's Restaurant

location:
4695 Vail Racket Club Drive
Vail CO 81657

DESCRIPTION: Blu's Restaurant is one of those places which serves good food at reasonable prices. Sure the place would not be opted for fine dining but still dishes out delectable menu. Right from breakfast to dinner this place offers sumptuous traditional food in a not so fancy but comfortable ambiance. The



wcities

hours:
Daily 9a-11p

salads and pasta served here are definitely worth giving a try. ©
wcities.com

contact:
tel: 970-479-0556
<http://www.theclubvail.com/>

5 The Club

location:
304 Bridge St
Vail CO 81657

DESCRIPTION: The Club is Vail's hottest nightlife location, with the best blend of music and atmosphere. Ideal for the under 25 crowd--and older folks who like being in the mix.

contact:
tel: 970 476 4444/ 800 648
0720
fax: 970 476 1647
<http://marriott.com/property/propertypage/WHRCO>

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wcities

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tel: 970 476-5451

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Hotels.com

Day 3 - Vail

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contact:
tel: 970 476 5828
<http://www.lancelotvail.com/>

location:
201 Gore Creek Drive
Vail CO 81657

hours:
Daily 5:30p-10p

1 Lancelot Inn

DESCRIPTION: When it is prime rib that you crave, make a bee line for Lancelot. Choose from the 8-oz Knight's Cut, the 10-oz Sir Lancelot Cut, or the 12-oz King Arthur's Cut. All are served with a baked potato and a generous splash of au jus. An international array of appetizers are available, ranging from stuffed jalapenos to breaded brie and tuna sashimi. The other entrees contribute to this worldly flavor as well (try the BBQ beef ribs, wiener schnitzel, cajun style trout, or coconut-crusting seabass). Wash it all down with a selection or two from the impressive wine list. See website for full menu, wine list, group accommodations and more. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:
tel: 970 476-6700
www.russellsvail.com

location:
228 Bridge Street
Vail CO 81567

2 Russell's

DESCRIPTION: Russell's is more than a steakhouse, it is a dining experience! Serving certified Angus beef, fresh seafood, shrimp, scampi, wiener schnitzel and Alaskan king crab legs to name a few. A delightful bottle of wine will compliment your dining experience. Enjoy a friendly, relaxing atmosphere with wonderful creekside dining. Come and join us and discover your own reason to visit us again and again. Russell's combines a unique charm with great food that creates an incredible dining experience you will not forget.



Photo courtesy of Russell's

Vail Snapshot

Local Info

Long before "Dancing with the Stars," there was skiing with the stars in Vail. The resort town set in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado has always boasted of a very high celebrity population. Aside from Hollywood stars, Texas millionaires and sophisticated ladies in ultra-expensive mink coats make their way among the town streets and occasionally hit the slopes. Indeed, the alpine town has glitz and glamour that even Aspen cannot match. Yet, surprisingly, the atmosphere here is authentic, less pretentious and more genuine. Well, when the rich want to play, they certainly let their hair down. And regular mortals tend to follow suit.

Things to Do

Winter sports are, of course, the main attraction in town. With 193 trails, Vail Mountain is one of the nation's premier skiing spots. Lift-ticket prices are on the high end, so make sure you bring enough dough. If you're bringing the kids, the ski school can teach skiers as young as 3 year olds. Alternatively, you can take the children to Adventure Ridge, which features a ski-bike and a snowmobile track. Vail does not close in the summer. Take a hike on Gore Creek Trail, which leads to Gore Lake and the Eagle's Nest Wilderness Area. Rafting the Eagle River in the Vail Valley is another popular summer activity, while cycling the Vail-to-Breckenridge bike path is a good way to get your heart pumping at high altitude. Golfing at Vail Golf Club and, for the more adventurous, paragliding above the Rocky Mountains with Vail Valley Paragliding are also cool summer activities.

Dining

Dining, after skiing, is Vail's favorite sport. The town has more than 100 restaurants, bars and cafes. Lionshead Village has a fair share of restaurants, bistros and cafes. Vail Village also has a number of dining establishments. If you want to escape the hustle of the resort, you can always head to

the towns of Minturn or Edwards about 10 to 20 minutes away from Vail.

Shopping

Whether you want souvenirs to bring home, jewelry, or arts and crafts or sporting goods, there are plenty of boutiques, gift shops and stores in Vail Village and Lionshead Village. Bag and Pack supplies what you need for multiday treks, while Buzz's Ski Shop and the American Ski Exchange have some of the best ski equipment available. If you fancy handcrafted Stetson hats and Lucchese boots, head to Kemo Sabe. Golden Bear is a one-of-a-kind shop that has a line of jewelry featuring the golden bear (the city symbol). Other stores worth checking out are Charm School Boutique, Laughing Monkey and W. Couture.

© NileGuide

History

In the heart of the Rocky Mountains sits Vail, Colorado. Now a bustling winter wonderland filled with lavish chalets and world-class resorts, it is hard to imagine that this city was ever anything other than the country's top ski destination. However, Vail was once home to the Ute Native American tribe, who spent the summer months in the Vail Valley. Gold was discovered in the area in 1859, and soon miners and merchants came pouring in, hoping for a bonanza. By the end of the 19th century, the Ute Indians were displaced, and the land remained in the hands of ranchers and pioneers.

Colorado was declared a U.S. territory two years later in 1861, and as the population grew, the inhabitants of fledgling mountain towns recognized the need for a more centralized authority. Local governments were created to protect property rights and maintain order in the towns, and after an 18-year battle, Colorado gained its statehood in 1876.

The ski tradition has long been present in Colorado, and in the Vail area especially. The first trans-Alpine skiers were mail carriers who traveled to small frontier towns bringing news and letters from the outside world. By 1880, the state had upwards of 50 skiing mail carriers. These men

would travel with only simple equipment, and trekked more than 40 miles at a time to reach their destinations. Soon they became folk-heroes of sorts, and some, like Al Johnson and Father Dryer, are still renowned today for their trekking abilities. The rich competitive future of the area was foreshadowed in an 1886 race, when 25 of these skiers took to the slopes above Crested Butte.

The area remained in this state of relative isolation until 1940, when the Colorado Highway Department completed State Highway 6 (today Interstate 70) from Denver. The Valley was then named after the chief engineer of the project, Charles Vail. During World War II, the U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division used the area Southeast of Vail, called Camp Hale, for survival training. Some of the men in this elite team recognized the potential this pristine location had to become a world-class ski area. Pete Siebert and Earl Eaton, veterans of the 10th Mountain Division, were the first to begin plans to turn No-Name Mountain, a series of peaks nearby Vail Pass, into ski runs. After returning from the war, they pioneered the creation of Colorado's winter-sport industry. They saw that the very same characteristics that had made Vail a great training ground for the Army would prove to be ideal qualities for a top ski resort.

In 1962 the first resort opened for business and soon large numbers of visitors were flocking to the area, drawn by the soft snow and gentle slopes that set Vail apart from other nearby mountains. Four years later the Town of Vail was incorporated, and construction began to make the downtown as much of an attraction as the ski runs. By the 1970s, it was becoming the most popular ski resort in the country, gaining fame for its sunny slopes, miles of expansive tracks, and its famous vacationers such as President Gerald Ford.

Since that time, the industry has boomed, making Vail the country's top destination for leisure skiers, snowboarders, and Olympic hopefuls alike. The Alpine World Championships were held here in 1989 and 1999, putting the city of Vail on the map for its world-class restaurants, hotels, and spas. In 1996, Vail Resorts Inc. was formed through a series of mergers, allowing skiers to access all of the area's resorts on one

Vail Snapshot continued

ticket. In addition, new runs were opened in 2000, completing the original dream of the valley's ski industry pioneers, Pete Siebert and Earl Eaton.

Photograph provided by Jack Affleck
©

Hotel Insights

Chalet-chic is the style of choice in this alpine town. You may have a hard time finding many accommodations that won't empty your wallet, but with so much luxury extant, it's hardly surprising. After all, what better way to relax after a long day on the slopes than by a warm fireplace to call your own?

Vail

The busy downtown section of Vail Village is home to many shops and restaurants, as well as a bevy of accommodations for those in search of a central location. For a quality stay that has the stamp of time to recommend it, check out The Lodge at Vail, which has retained its pioneering spirit while still modernizing itself for new waves of visitors. Only a short walk away from the major ski lifts, The Sitzmark Lodge offers all of the amenities of a full-service hotel, including its own restaurant, complimentary wine, and full breakfast. If your tastes run to smaller and more private establishments, you'll find a haven at the Savory Inn and Cooking School. Small and intimate, it has an open kitchen that allows guests to chat with the chef and learn some tricks de cuisine before meals. To get away from the flurry of activity in the Village, book a private condo at one of the many hotels out of town, such as the Evergreen Lodge at Vail. The Evergreen Lodge also has its own free shuttle running into town, so you don't have to worry about missing out on Vail's hustle and bustle.

Lionshead

This walkabout neighborhood is full of many high-class dining and shopping options, as well as the only gondola on Vail Mountain. If you want to be within a few steps of the Eagle Bahn Gondola, check out the Vail Marriott Mountain Resort, a charming resort that fits right in to the fashionable neighborhood. Antlers at Vail is a top location for full service condominiums, with a resort that includes a fitness center, business facilities, and saunas.

Avon

Ideally situated on the outskirts of Beaver Creek Resort, this town has a variety of options for visitors. If you enjoy having the complete package available from your doorstep, then the Ritz-Carlton Bachelor Gulch is right up your alley. This resort has the best deals on all sorts of outdoor fun for both the winter and summer seasons. Take a few steps outside in January and hop on the Beaver Creek resort's premiere ski lifts, or try out your swing in July on the area's top-rated golf courses. In the heart of Avon is Nottingham Lake, and the Falcon Point Resort has a variety of condominiums located by its shore. A free shuttle will take you from the comfort of your condo to the ski lifts nearby.

Beaver Creek

This homey neighborhood is a great place to go for a family-oriented trip, and the accommodations here are designed for it as well. The Beaver Creek Lodge is centrally situated and offers rooms for large parties, with full-service suites, a fitness center, and pool. For those who are in search of some leisure time, look no further than Creekside at Beaver Creek which has a fitness area, steam rooms, and outdoor grilling area. The suites also have private kitchens and fireplaces for greater privacy. East West Resorts has a full selection of one to four bedroom houses and town homes that are ideal for catching all the activities Beaver Creek has to offer, as well as being adjacent to major golf courses, white-water rafting depots, and ski runs.

Edwards

Just past Avon and Vail sits Edwards, a town with a great hideaway location for high-end resorts and spas. Luxury is the name of the game at The Lodge & Spa at Cordillera. This complete retreat is a year-round attraction, featuring a world-class golf course, privately owned ski runs, and an opulent spa package that includes pools, saunas, and whirlpool baths.

Eagle

For those who like to experience the outdoors in private, Eagle's Sweetwater Lake is a top choice in greater Vail. There are many open-air activities to experience around Sweetwater Lake, and A.J. Brink Outfitters Sweetwater Lake Resort is your one-stop outfitter for adventures

in horseback riding, hiking, fishing, and boating. They also have a variety of rustic cabins that bring the charm of the old West to modern Colorado.

Photograph provided by Jack Affleck
©

Restaurants Insights

Vail's outdoor offerings span its seasons and geography, from chilly mountains to snow-covered peaks and cool valley springs. Take confidence that in the middle of your adventures, whether you're mountain biking in June or downhill skiing in January, you'll never be too far from a quick bite, an elegant dinner, or a simple drink.

Vail

If you've tried too many fusion or "modern" restaurants and are longing for some traditional American cuisine, you will find a few juicy morsels here in Vail. Cucina Rustica at The Lodge at Vail and Kelly Liken are top-notch restaurants that pride themselves in using fresh, local, and seasonal ingredients to create some of the most spectacular appetizers, entrées and desserts. Another sure bet is Bully Ranch, or if you're in the mood for a picnic make sure you stop at Crossroads Market before you head off on your adventure.

Eager for a romantic night after a long day? You'll find the French food and atmosphere of La Tour quite pleasing. Campo de Fiori is a great place for gourmet Italian cuisine with a warm and inviting environment. Larkspur Restaurant, which is only open during the winter season, will offer you wonderful dishes with great wine and an enchanting view.

For a family-friendly lunch or dinner Chap's Grill & Chophouse is a fun, lighthearted spot with food for everyone. Chili Willy's, is a bit different with its Tex-Mex menu, but nevertheless it makes for a satisfied stomach. If you are looking for something warm during the day then Covered Bridge Coffee will have it for you, along with mid-day pastries, hot chocolate, and of course, coffee.

Lionshead

Despite being totally landlocked, you can still reel in a fresh meal at Montauk Seafood Grill. The menu changes daily to ensure that the best and freshest seafood products

Vail Snapshot continued

are at your disposal. If hearty soul food is more your style, mosey on down to Moe's Original BBQ. With all your favorites like pulled pork sandwiches and ribs, Moe's serves up some of the great down home cooking. The Flying Burrito takes you farther down – south of the border, that is. Here, wrap your hands around these massive meals, filled with all your Mexican favorites.

Avon

Dine alfresco in the summer or by candlelight in the winter with Bivans a great place for the whole family or an intimate night for two. Grouse Mountain Grill offers rustic meals with traditional Colorado surroundings, fresh fish and meat are masterfully grilled and can be served with your choice of wine, providing a great end to a long day in the mountains.

Foods of Vail Home Catering gives you the choice of where you want to eat with its variety of take out options. Or if you're in the mood for high-class, stop in at the Ritz-Carlton Bachelor Gulch and choose from its restaurant, deli or lounge for a lunch break, dinner date or evening cocktail.

Beaver Creek

Atmosphere and food can only be exceeded by the view. Choose Allie's Cabin for stunning views of the mountains and trees while dining with loved ones. Or for a restaurant accessible by sleigh try Beano's Cabin where you'll find spectacular wine, food and décor. The Blue Moose is the perfect place for quick bite, where pies, pizza and a range of Italian favorites make this stop a local favorite. For all those hearty eaters, The Golden Eagle Inn definitely hits the spot. Large portions of steak, seafood, and even some wild game are served, quick, hot, and without the fuss.

Eagle

For some of the best burgers around, check out the Broadway Bar & Grill where big-mouthed Angus creations are standard. Eagle's Grand Avenue Grill is a longstanding favorite offering a variety of comforting creations. For a more sophisticated option, La Scala, presents authentic Italian cuisine, hinted with English favorites in a decadent atmosphere. However, The Wolcott Yacht Club, despite its name, isn't just for the well to do. Here, sample some of the finest breakfast options

in the area, but be sure to check out the hearty fish tacos as well.

4 Eagle Ranch dominates lunchtime for those coming off the slopes. Located in an authentic 19th century cabin, visitors have the choice of taking in the excellent view on the front porch after their hearty meal.

Edwards

Edwards is the place to be for all your Mexican cravings. Fiesta's Cafe & Cantina reserves only the freshest and finest ingredients, creating an array of enchiladas, tacos, and various vegetarian options as well. For a taste of pop culture, visit Moe's Southwest Grill. Despite the gigantic bowls of guacamole and sizzling fajitas, all of the wall decorations are references to movie cult classics. Maybe you're just in the area for a drink and a snack. If so, Gore Range Brewery and its famous microbrewery have a huge list of pub-style fair with not much flair.

The wine list at Charrapal is sure to please even the most selective of consumers. Located in the Cordillera Lodge & Spa, its full of a vast array of regional menu options cradled by natural architecture.

Photograph provided by Jack Affleck

©

Nightlife Insights

Vail is an outdoor enthusiasts' dreamland. If you were to doze off and have visions of a place where skiing, fishing and hiking were daily priorities, you would have a picture of Vail in your head. The mountain village is absolutely overflowing with fresh air activities that will have you gleefully gasping for another breath.

Skiing and Snowboarding

During the winter months there is no comparison to the dry powder that the Ski gods bestow upon the Vail mountaintops. And for those months when the weather is frosty, there is no skier-friendly place you'd rather be than the Vail Valley.

Normally towards the end of November and beginning of December, you'll start to see the lift lines forming as the mountains of the Vail Valley come alive with skiers and snowboarders carving down the slopes. The numerous ski resorts that surround the mountain town, such as the Vail Marriott Mountain Resort, begin to fill up during the

snow season, and for good reason. Along with the fantastic slope conditions comes the ski contests and mountain competitions.

The American Ski Classic takes place every March and turns the Vail mountains into celebrity slopes. Don't be surprised if you see such skiing legends as Billy Kid and Franz Klamer, or if you bump into some ski-enthusiast stars like Kelsey Grammer and Gloria Estefan.

If you're a snowboarder who isn't really excited by "two-planking" festivities, then you should check out The Session, a snowboard competition and party on the mountain. Today's top riders busting out high-flying tricks mixed among live music and good times make this one of those must-see Vail mountain events.

Music & Film Festivals

One of the ways that the Vail Valley kicks off its winter ski season is to throw a party that gives everyone an idea of what kind of town Vail is. This pre-season get-down is known as Snow Daze, and has been bringing headlining musicians, street parties, on-snow events, great food, good times and a festive atmosphere to the mountain.

Despite Vail being synonymous with skiing and snow, it also has a cultured art side to it as well. Each year, visitors and locals alike take part in the many festivals that celebrate music, dance and film. After hitting the world-class slopes, warm up with some sizzling tunes at the Vail Jazz Festival. Classical music lovers will also have their musical heart strings plucked when the Bravo! Music Festival rolls into Vail for six weeks of open-air concerts.

What's music without dancing? Every year the Vail International Dance Festival twirls its way into the area for several weeks of classic and contemporary performances by well-known dance ensembles, such as the Paris Opera Ballet and Dance Cuba!

Need to give your ears and legs a rest after all that skiing, live music and dancing? Well, sit back and relax at the Vail Film Festival. This four-day event incorporates feature films, shorts, documentaries, and student films. Don't worry about missing any slope-time either. The screenings are planned for the late afternoon and evenings so that you won't miss a second of the snow.

Vail Snapshot continued

If you planned your trip to Vail around the month of October, you'll be there for the right month to drink, sing and be merry, as Vail hosts their own Oktoberfest extravaganza.

Art Galleries & Museums

The Vail Village has some great little galleries and museums to entertain its visitors when they are not on the ski slopes. The Cogswell Gallery offers artwork that truly reflects the nature of Colorado, with wildlife sculptures and rustic antique furnishings. You'll find nature inspired hand-made jewelry at the J. Cotter Gallery where just about every piece of jewelry will remind you of Vail's beauty.

Vail is a ski town, and therefore what better place to find the Colorado Ski Museum. Take a walk through the hallways of this museum and see how the Vail Valley transformed from its mere beginnings as a sheep farm to the ski Mecca it is today.

Other Outdoor Activities

Don't think that because this region of Colorado was blessed with perfect ski conditions that there is only wintertime fun in Vail. Even when the snow melts in Vail, the smiles don't, and the warm sunny days bring out some of the best, with activities ranging from river-rafting to golf. There are plenty of things to see and do around Vail, as it is truly a four-season town.

There are a number of skilled tour guides in Vail that can show you the true meaning of the great outdoors. No matter what your skill level or experience, Lakota River Guides will take you on a river rafting trip that will meet your desired level of adrenaline pumping excitement. If you're looking for more than just a rafting adventure, make a stop at Nova Guides. The guides at Nova will take you on some unforgettable excursions that can include dog sledding, snowmobiling, river fishing, Jeeping or tearing up some terrain on an ATV.

Vail is also home to world-class golf links that include the Cotton Ranch Golf Club, and the Eagle Ranch Golf Club.

When the snow starts to melt in the spring, the rivers around Vail begin to rise in water height and the fly-fishing is at its best. Pack your waders and head out to the many local

streams and rivers that are full of those elusive trout that you "almost caught".

Photograph provided by Jack Affleck ©

Things to Do Insights

The winter months see the most excitement in this bustling ski town. Many visitors head directly to the slopes as soon as they reach Vail, as its resorts boast some of the best runs in the country. But before hitting the powder covered trails, stop and spend a bit of time wandering some of the city's districts.

Colorado Ski Museum In downtown Vail, visit the Cogswell Gallery and the Colorado Ski Museum. Nearby is the Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater and the Betty Ford Alpine Gardens. Dine at the contemporary French restaurant Left Bank.

Nottingham Lake Have breakfast at Loaded Joe's, then get close to nature at the Gore Range Nature Discovery Center and Nottingham Lake. Finish the day with a divine meal at Allie's Cabin.

Vail Recreation District Also in Vail is the Vail Symposium, which focuses on community education. Grab lunch at Cucina Rustica. The Vail Recreation District contains the Vail Golf Club, the Vail Nature Center and the Vail Tennis Center, if you're looking to relax.

Vail Nordic Center A trip to Adventure Ridge is popular among families with children. Browse the collection at the Claggett/Rey Gallery or Pismo Gallery, then grab a bite to eat at the Wildflower. Ski aficionados will love the Vail Nordic Center.

Imagination Station Browse the displays at the J. Cotter Gallery, then go to the Imagination Station, which offers hands-on learning experiences. Do some skating at the Dobson Ice Arena, then dine at the Bully Ranch or the Larkspur Restaurant.

There are many ways to see Vail, from riding in a balloon to white water rafting.

Balloon Tours Balloon America(+1 970 468 2473/http://www.balloonridesusa.com/) Camelot Balloons(+1 800 785 4743/http://www.camelotballoons.com/)

Adventure Tours Arkansas Valley Adventure(+1 800 370 0581/http://www.coloradorafting.net/) Beaver

Divers(+1 970 949 1012/http://www.beaverdivers.com/)

Rafting Tours Colorado River Guides, Inc.(+1 800 938 7238/http://www.raftcolorado.com/) Lakota River Guides(+1 970 845 7238/http://www.lakotariver.com/) Piney River Adventures(+1 970 477 1171/http://www.pineyriveranch.com/)

Fishing Tours Gorsuch Outfitters Fly Fishing(+1 970 926 0900/http://www.gorsuch-outfitters.com/)

Cemetery Tours Evergreen Cemetery Tour(+1 970 486 3900)

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Travel Tips

Getting There

By Air

Vail/Eagle County Airport(<http://snow.com/flyvail/>) is a small hub located about 35 miles West of Vail. The Vail/Eagle County Airport has different schedule for winter and summer, with select major carriers that include:

Continental(+1 800 523 3273/ <http://www.continental.com>)

Delta(+1 800 221 1212/ <http://www.delta.com>) American Airlines(+1 800 433 7300/ <http://www.aa.com>) Northwest(+1 800 225 2525/ <http://www.nwa.com>) United Airlines(+1 800 864 8331/ <http://www.ual.com>)

Taxi & Other Ground Transportation

Vail Valley Transportation(+1 877 829 8294) Airlink Shuttle(+1 800 554 8245) Vail Valley Taxi(+1 877 829 8294/ +1 970 476 8294) Vail Coach(+1 877 554 7433/ <http://www.vailcoach.com>) Colorado Mountain Express(+1 800 525 6363/+1 970 926 9800/ <http://www.ridecme.com/>) Vail Transportation Service(+1 800 480 9104/ <http://www.vailtransportation.com>)

Denver International Airport(DIA)(+1 303 342 2000/ <http://www.flydenver.com/>) is one of the largest and busiest airports in the world. The Denver International Airport is located 110 miles East of Vail. Airline providers include:

Frontier(+1 800 432 1359/ <http://www.frontierairlines.com>) Continental(+1 800 523 3273/ <http://www.continental.com>)

Vail Snapshot continued

jetBlue(+1 800 538 2583/ <http://www.jetblue.com>) US Airways(+1 800 428 4322/ <http://www.usairways.com>) Delta(+1 800 221 1212/ <http://www.delta.com>) American Airlines(+1 800 433 7300/ <http://www.aa.com>) United Airlines(+1 800 864 8331/ <http://www.ual.com>) Northwest/KLM(+1 800 225 2525/ <http://www.nwa.com>) Air Canada(+1 888 247 2262/ <http://www.aircanada.com>) British Airways(+1 800 403 0882/ <http://www.britishairways.com>) Lufthansa(+1 800 645 3880/ <http://cms.lufthansa.com>)

Taxi& Other Ground Transportation

Shuttle Services include:

Super Shuttle(+1 800 525 3177/ +1 303 370 1300/ <http://www.supershuttledenver.com>)

BlueSky(+1 303 300 2626/ <http://www.blueskyshuttle.net>)

Colorado Mountain Express(+1 800 525 6363/ +1 970 926 9800/ <http://www.ridecme.com/>)

Taxis are readily available outside of the airport.

By Car

Vail is centrally located in the Rocky Mountains and easily accessible by car. The city of Vail is just 35 miles East of Eagle, and 100 miles West of Denver. Besides being the major road you would take into Vail from Denver and other surrounding cities, I-70(with the help of

the Colorado countryside) is an extremely beautiful drive. Once in Vail, there will be signs for the major exits leading to lodging and other accommodations.

Getting Around Vail

You would have an easier time finding a snowball in July than you would a parking spot in Vail. Much of the city is self-contained making parking almost impossible and very expensive if you do find it. There is however, a very reliable and free bus system that provides service throughout east and west Vail Valley(+1 970 479 2358).

The Eagle Bahn Gondola(+1 970 476 9090) is one of the most comfortable and convenient ways to make your way up Vail Mountain. It is open both winter and summer, and takes you directly to some of the best ski areas and summer hiking trails.

If traveling overseas, take the safety precaution of registering your trip at <https://travelregistration.state.gov> and for helpful, practical advice about traveling technicalities and safety standards check out <http://travel.state.gov/>.

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Fun Facts

Vail

State: Colorado

Country: United States

Vail by the Numbers

Population: 4531

Elevation: 8150 ft

Average Annual Rainfall: 10 inches/ 84 centimeters

Average January Temperature: 45 degrees F/ 7 degrees C

Average July Temperature: 75 degrees F/ 25 degrees C

Quick Facts:

Major Industries: Tourism, Outdoor Recreation

Ethnicity: 94.13% White, 0.29% African American, 0.49% Native American, 1.66% Asian, 6.2% Hispanic, 0.09% Pacific Islander, 1.43% Other

Electricity: 220 volts AC, 50 Hz, standard two or three pin plugs

Time Zone: GMT-6

Country Dialing Code:+1

Area Code: 970

Did You Know?

The mountains surrounding the valley are not owned privately, but rather are public land rented to the ski resorts.

Orientation: Situated in Eagle County, CO, Vail is bisected by Gore Creek, and is surrounded by the White River National Forest.

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