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A fly fisherman in a blue cap, dark jacket, and waders stands in a shallow river, casting a fly. The background features a rocky, layered cliffside with sparse trees and green grass along the banks.

THE NORTH AMERICA ISSUE



Snow Days

Get out for winter fun at North America's family-friendly ski destinations. BY ALLIE MOORE

Winter Wonderland:
(Left to right)
Snow-tubing and snowboarding at Camelback Resort, and kids enjoying a wagon ride at Keystone Resort in Colorado

PHOTOS
© CAMELBACK RESORT
© KEYSTONE RESORT

Winter breezes in, temperatures drop, and humans retreat indoors to Netflix-and-hibernate until spring. But 2020 has left us scrambling for any excuse to get *out* of the house and into a safe, socially distanced environment. Luckily, North America is littered with ski resorts that are no longer just for skiing. Nationwide, winter-wonderland theme parks invite families to not only explore the magic of a snow-covered mountain but also retreat inside for hot cocoa, board games or a run-of-the-mill wintertime visit to an indoor waterpark.

Most of North America's winter sports resorts will open for the 2020–2021 season, but due to capacity limitations, some resorts encourage purchasing lift tickets in advance. Whether you're keen for a long weekend away or a couple of months in an entirely new environment, here are some of the continent's top resorts for cold-weather cheer.

ACCORDING TO A SUBSET of skiers, East Coast skiing doesn't necessarily hold the same regard as Rocky Mountain skiing, but the snowy scenery in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania can be just as enchanting and the resorts just as enticing.

An hour and a half outside New York City, Camelback Mountain Resort is home to the country's largest snow-tubing park, while skiers and snowboarders can choose from 34 trails.

If the chill is too much for you, head inside to Aquatopia, an indoor waterpark with the longest "water coaster" in the country, called the Storm Chaser. Adults can have their own happy hour at Flyboys swim-up bar or rent a private cabana. Access to Aquatopia is included when you stay overnight at the resort.

Camelback Resort's closest airports are Pocono Mountains Municipal Airport (10 miles), Lehigh Valley International Airport (38 miles) and Wilkes-Barre Scranton International Airport (40 miles).



A rental car or private transfer is recommended to reach Camelback Resort. Buses depart from Port Authority in New York and drop passengers off at Mt. Pocono or Mt. Airy Casino, and taxi services are available for the onward trip.

JAY PEAK, VERMONT, is not a big name (yet), but this ski resort on the U.S.–Canada border is a rising star in North America, touting the most snow on the East Coast, with an average annual snowfall of 359 inches.

Jay Peak boasts 81 trails, but as the website intimates, the trail edges are only suggestions — skiers are encouraged to go off the beaten track.

After a day on the slopes, retire to Jay Peak Resort's Pump House Water Park for a float around the lazy river or a soak in one of the indoor or outdoor hot tubs, or opt for an adrenaline-pumping ride down La Chute water slide. Athletically inclined vacationers can test their abilities on the FlowRider, a combination of skateboarding, surfing and snowboarding.

Jay Peak, located in the Green Mountains of

Vermont, sits about 15 miles from the Canadian border. The nearest airports are Northeast Kingdom International Airport (23 miles) and Burlington International Airport (60 miles). Guests can book airport shuttles from six local airports or from the St. Albans Amtrak station, starting at \$60 per person for a one-way trip.

ABOUT 90 MINUTES southwest of Denver, Colorado, Keystone Resort invites families for playcations where kids under age 12 ski for free when families stay for two nights or more. Kids can get lost in the world's largest snow fort or test their detective skills with scavenger hunts. To schlep the kids from the hotel or lodge to the slopes, Keystone offers free gear wagons to haul equipment through the village to the mountain.

Keystone officially opens for the winter season Nov. 6, with lift ticket sales to begin Dec. 8. Because of limited demand for the upcoming season, the resort recommends purchasing the Epic Day Pass, giving skiers priority access to reservations on the days of their choice.

LODGING

Fairmont Tremblant

Hotel offers include Just Like Home with a 30 percent discount on luxury suites with kitchens, or Office with a View, including private lounge access and unlimited coffee.

3045 Chemin de la Chapelle
Mont-Tremblant, Québec
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Four Seasons Resort and Residences Whistler

Bask in the luxury and hospitality you've come to expect from Four Seasons. All rooms, suites and residences have a cozy fireplace and a balcony with mountain views.

4591 Blackcomb Way
Whistler, British Columbia
\$\$\$\$

Great Wolf Lodge – Pocono Mountains

The Great Wolf Lodge is packed with plenty of kid-friendly indoor activities like nightly story times, PJ parties, visits with Great Wolf characters and an indoor waterpark.

1 Great Wolf Drive
Scotrun, Pennsylvania
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DINING

The Foundry Pub & Grille

Warm up with a bowl of New England clam chowder or sample the famous Vermont flatbread: bacon, spiced apple chutney, Cheddar and maple mustard garlic, cooked in a ceramic oven.

830 Jay Peak Road
Jay, Vermont
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Kartrite's Summit House

Ski into and out of the Poconos' highest restaurant (at an elevation of 2,133 feet). Contemporary American dishes pair perfectly with craft beverages, and the space is also available for private events.

Big Pocono State Park
Tannersville, Pennsylvania
\$\$

Sleigh Ride Dinner

Hop into a private, horse-drawn sleigh for a 20-minute ride through the woods to a cabin restaurant. Book through Keystone Resort. The price includes dinner and live folk music.

Lakeside Village
Keystone, Colorado
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