

The Holy VAIL

A favourite of Britney Spears, Justin Timberlake and Michelle Obama, Vail is the ultimate alpine holiday destination

Vail, Colorado, is only a two-hour flight from Los Angeles and a two-hour drive from Denver International Airport. With over 300 days of blue skies each year, insane snow conditions, a local community that welcomes you with

open arms and a list of restaurants and bars so long you'd need to stay a year to visit them all, this is the ultimate alpine playground. This year has seen record snowfalls, with an average of more than 50cm of fresh powder falling each week. March/April is when you want to be there, with sweet spring ski deals on offer!

STAY IN STYLE

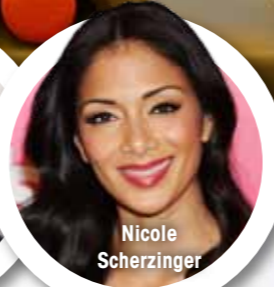
From April 10, accommodation prices drop dramatically until the end of the season. Boutique hotel Austria Haus is amazing value. It's located just a few steps away from Vail Village and has a five-star feel at a three-star price. The Lodge at Vail is seconds to the slopes and so beautiful. Over in Lionshead Village, you'll find the luxury Arrabelle Resort. It's a little more pricey, but sometimes has almost half-price deals. Visit snowusa.com.au to plan your trip.

APRIL SKIPASS

Vail Resort's April ski pass is only \$199 and allows unrestricted skiing and boarding at Vail, Breckenridge, Keystone and Beaver Creek resorts in Colorado from April 10 until the close of season, and Heavenly resort in California from March 28. To buy, visit snowusa.com.au for a list of preferred tour operators

STRIKE IT LUCKY

Actress/singer Taryn Manning chilled at Bol Vail on New Year's Eve, a super-sleek, high-energy bar/restaurant/bowling alley that sees world-class DJs spin sets while you strike. Hilary Duff has also been spotted hanging there, as has Formula One race-car driver Lewis Hamilton, with his ex-Pussycat Dolls girlfriend, Nicole Scherzinger.



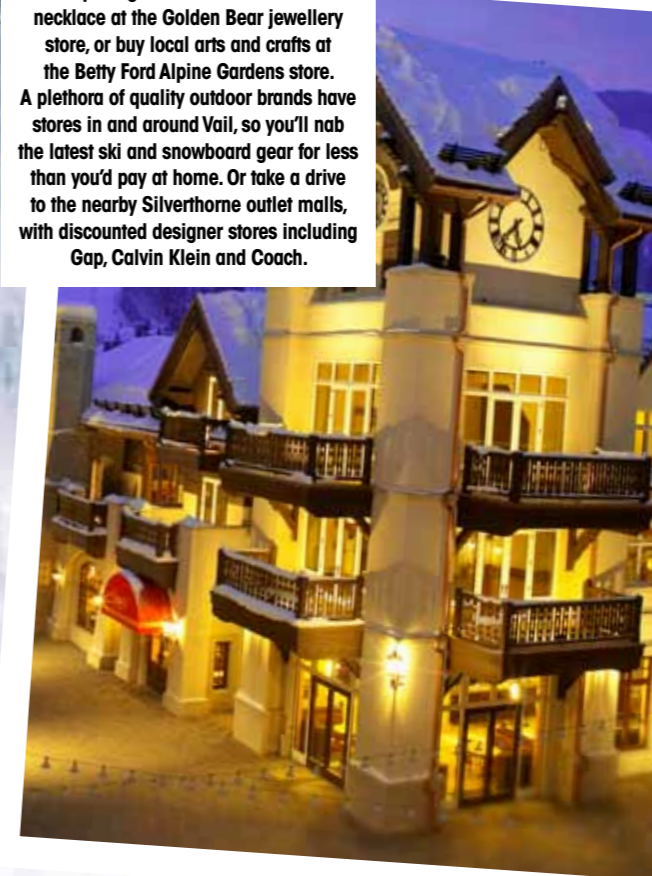
Hilary Duff

Lewis Hamilton

Nicole Scherzinger

SHOP UP A STORM

Pick up a signature Vail bear charm or necklace at the Golden Bear jewellery store, or buy local arts and crafts at the Betty Ford Alpine Gardens store. A plethora of quality outdoor brands have stores in and around Vail, so you'll nab the latest ski and snowboard gear for less than you'd pay at home. Or take a drive to the nearby Silverthorne outlet malls, with discounted designer stores including Gap, Calvin Klein and Coach.



DINE



GAME CREEK RESTAURANT
One of Cameron Diaz's faves. Catch the gondola to Eagles Nest, where a snowcat will transfer you to the cabin in the middle of Game Creek Bowl for your five-course dinner!



PAZZO'S PIZZA
Pazzo's Pizza on Meadow Drive serves mouth-watering slices amid a Grateful Dead-themed decor and, interestingly, is one of the only places in Vail to serve Coca-Cola (most serve Pepsi).



LA BOTTEGA
Looking for traditional Italian cuisine to satisfy your ravenous post-skiing appetite? La Bottega on Meadow Drive will be certain to tick all the right boxes.



THE BULLY RANCH
The Bully Ranch at the Sonnenalp Resort is unbeatable for its ribs and burgers. Try the Mudslide cocktail – they have a limit of two per customer for good reason!



BLOCK 16 AT THE SEBASTIAN HOTEL
Don't miss the chance to taste Block 16's mouth-watering menu. Try the Colorado lamb with a delicious pinot noir perfectly matched by the restaurant's sommelier.

WHERE TO DRINK

Vail has more après-ski venues than you can poke a swizzle stick at – just rehydrate first with plenty of water after a hard day on the slopes! R Kelly was spotted with a cute blonde recently at the Sebastian Hotel's swanky Frost Bar. Sam Worthington prefers the vibe at The Red Lion, with live music and the friendliest staff in town. And The George has a killer happy hour, with \$4 food and drinks.



Sam Worthington

HIT THE SLOPES

Vail Sports has four slope-side locations to get you kitted out and among some of the most skiable snow in the world. Beginners will love Vail's front side, with its long, wide, cruisy runs. Those edging towards intermediate can develop their skills at Game Creek Bowl. Intermediate and advanced skiers should hit Blue Sky Basin for its tree runs and waist-deep powder. Extreme skiers and boarders will get a thrill out of Sun Up, Sun Down and Mongolian Bowls, where tricky terrain will raise your heart rate. And mogul-lovers can spend all day riding Highline Express lift and not get bored – just be prepared to feel it the next day!

