

MODERN **LUXURY**

ASPEN

MAGAZINE

INSIDER'S GUIDE 2016

ASPEN
SNOWMASS VILLAGE
BASALT
CARBONDALE
& THE SURROUNDING AREA

THE DEFINITIVE LOCAL GUIDE TO ASPEN

Find the Perfect Runs

Party Time: Hot Après-Ski Spots

Aspen Arts: Go-To Galleries

Mountain-Chic Shopping

PLUS: Spas, Lodges, Events, Performances & More

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MODERN **LUXURY**

ASPEN

MAGAZINE

HAPPENINGS

INSIDER'S GUIDE 2015-16

By Misty Milioto and Barbara Platts

Annual events in Aspen and Snowmass range from foodie favorites to pro sports competitions to the renowned summer music festival. Here's what's on our radar.

NOVEMBER

Nature

Valley Aspen

Winternational

Ski racing has a storied heritage in Aspen, and the legacy continues when the world's best women skiers come to Aspen Mountain Thanksgiving weekend (Nov. 28-29) to race giant slalom and slalom in the Audi FIS Ski World Cup. Cheer on superstars like Lindsey Vonn, Mikaela Shiffrin and Tina Maze from the grandstands by the base of Lift 1A. 970.925.1220, aspensnowmass.com



gallery-hopping), the Downhill Costume Competition and Parade, and much more. *Passes from \$250, 970.925.4123, gayskiweek.com*

ESPN Winter X Games

Aspen's biggest party returns to Buttermilk Mountain Jan. 28-31 for four days of intense competition. Kids and adults catch the thrill of watching more than 200 world-class action-sports athletes vie for coveted medals and prize money in freestyle snowboarding, skiing and snowmobiling. There will also be top-notch musical acts (tickets from \$25) and interactive exhibits at the base area. Spectating is free, but VIP packages (\$1,799) come with perks like catered suites with open bars and special-access viewing areas. xgames.espn.go.com

DECEMBER

Summit for Life

Take a hike to the top of Aspen Mountain in a nighttime race that covers 2.5 miles and 3,267 vertical feet. This weekend celebration Dec. 4-5 benefits the Chris Klug Foundation (dedicated to promoting organ and tissue donation) and is the organization's largest fundraiser. By participating, you'll help raise awareness while also helping to make a difference for the 122,000-plus people waiting for a lifesaving organ transplant. *From \$150, 970.205.9176, summitforlife.org*

USPA World Snow Polo Championship

Taking place this year Dec. 16-19, the World Snow Polo Championship is a classic spectator sport—but with an icy twist. You'll enjoy rubbing elbows with an A-list crowd while watching the game in heated tents and taking part in glam resto- and hotel-held parties afterward. 305.409.4211, aspensnowpolo.com

12 Days of Aspen

Dec. 20-31, downtown Aspen is transformed into a winter wonderland with everything from ice

skating and carriage rides to concerts and carolers. Santa will also join the festivities. The weeklong celebration concludes with a fireworks extravaganza over Aspen Mountain. 970.925.1940, aspenchamber.org

JANUARY

Wintersköl

Aspen's "toast to winter" features four days of jam-packed activities. The 65th annual event takes place Jan. 14-17 and, as always, will include Anderson Ranch Arts Center's ever-popular Wintersculpt along the pedestrian mall area; Soupsköl (a

soup-making cook-off judged by the public to determine which restaurant has the best soup in the valley); the Canine Fashion Show; fireworks; and more. 970.925.1940, aspenchamber.org

Aspen Gay Ski Week

Held in January each year (Jan. 17-24), this is Colorado's premier LGBT winter event. Festivities include skiing and snowboarding, après-ski hot tub parties at the Limelight Hotel, friendship dinners, late-night dance parties, a Fashion & Art Night Out (boutique- and

FEBRUARY

Audi Power of Four Race Series

Get ready to test your mettle on each of the four Aspen/Snowmass mountains. This endurance series consists of a ski mountaineering race (Feb. 27, from \$200 for teams of two) and,

in summer, a mountain bike race and a trail 50K/22K (registration from \$40). Each race is open to both elite and recreational athletes who wish to test their limits and skills. Grab a teammate and get ready to explore the area—and your aerobic capacity—like never before. 970.925.1220, aspensnowmass.com

MARCH

Bud Light Spring Jam

This jam-packed festival returns to Aspen and Snowmass for its 16th annual celebration **March 18-27**. It includes two weekends of competitions, benefits, downtown concerts and parties. **March 18**, head over to Aspen Mountain Gondola Plaza for KickAspen Big Air—when the best regional skiers and snowboarders show off under the lights on a 70-foot jump. 970.925.1220, aspensnowmass.com

APRIL

Aspen Shortsfest

Taking place **April 5-10**, Aspen Shortsfest is a premier international showcase for short films. This Oscar-qualifying competition includes everything from drama and comedy to animation and documentaries—all at 40 minutes or less. The program will be announced in early March. 970.925.6882, aspenfilm.org

Sun Dog's K-9 Uphill

Always held the Saturday after the ski season ends at Buttermilk Mountain (**April 9**), this one-of-a-kind benefit has become a favorite local fundraiser over the past 20 years. Bring your dog (or borrow a “demo dog” from the Aspen Animal Shelter), and hike, snowshoe or ski the 2,000 vertical feet up the ski area. Entry fees benefit local animal shelters. Both recreational and competitive divisions are available, plus a hot dog barbecue and raffle takes place after the race. *Registration from \$30, 970.925.1069, sundogathletics.com*

JUNE

Snowmass Mammoth Fest

This favorite local event, formerly known as the Snowmass Chili Pepper and Brew Fest, returns to Snowmass for its

13th year. The three-day festival, always held at the beginning of summer, includes on-site camping, live music from national touring bands, the free International Chili Society tasting (on Friday and Saturday on the Snowmass Village Mall) and a grand beer tasting with more than 25 microbreweries in attendance. Concerts take place in Snowmass Town Park on Saturday and Sunday, with the grand tasting kicking off on Saturday. *snowmassmammothfest.com*

Snowmass Rodeo

Celebrating its 43rd year in 2016, the Snowmass Rodeo will be held every Wednesday **June 8-Aug. 17**. This is the longest-running rodeo in Colorado, and the event features saddle bronc and bull riding, team roping, barrel racing and more. While you're there, be sure to get your hands

on a terrific barbecue dinner or a libation from the full bar. After the rodeo, stay for the campfire, singalong and marshmallow roast. *Adults \$20, kids \$15, 2735 Brush Creek Road, Snowmass Village, snowmassrodeo.org*

Heritage Fire and Grand Cochon

Two of Cochon 555's signature foodiecentric events return to Snowmass. Heritage Fire, the whole-animal wood-fired cooking extravaganza that got its legs in Napa, Calif., takes place **June 17** at Base Village. The final stop of a 10-city national culinary competition, Grand Cochon is held **June 18**. Taste the delicious results as 10 finalists duke it out for the title of King or Queen of Porc. *From \$100, cochon555.com*

Food & Wine Classic in Aspen

Aspen's most

anticipated event, the Food & Wine Classic, also happens to be the nation's premier culinary event. It returns to Aspen **June 17-19**, with celebrity chefs, wine experts and culinary luminaries from across the country—all showcasing their passion for food, wine and entertaining. But don't delay; passes usually sell out by March. *foodandwine.com/classic*

AREDAY Summit

Embrace sustainability during the nation's premier renewable energy summit, presented by the American Renewable Energy Institute, **June 18-23**. The summit includes leaders from the public and the private sectors in science, finance, investment, government and diverse technology development and deployment. Presentations on sustainability run the gamut from solar and wind energy to biofuels and geothermal approaches. *Snowmass Village, 970.948.9929, areday.net*

Aspen Summer Words

Celebrate the written word **June 19-24**. As one of the nation's top literary festivals, this multiday event, held at The Gant, features writing workshops, author readings and panel discussions with some of the most renowned





FINDING BALANCE
Yogis warm up during the Wanderlust Festival at Snowmass in July.

contemporary authors and teachers. Details on workshops and the application process will be released in December. *Individual events from \$14, 610 W. End St., 970.925.3122, aspenwriters.org*

Aspen Ideas Festival

One of summer's blockbuster events, the Aspen Ideas Festival (June 23-July 2 at the Aspen Institute) features dialogue and conversation with leading thinkers, policymakers, artists and business people from around the globe. Presentations include panel discussions, performances, talks, art exhibits and even small-group roundtables with unprecedented access to today's influencers. Passes go on sale Nov. 19 for the general public (and sell out well before the event), while individual tickets to some 100 events are available mid-June. *From \$3,500 per*

session, 970.544.7916, aspenideas.org

Snowmass Summer of Free Music Series

This ever-popular concert series (June 23-Aug. 11), produced by Jazz Aspen Snowmass, features a great lineup of nationally touring musical acts performing Thursdays on Fanny Hill at the Snowmass ski area. Bring a blanket and a picnic meal to enjoy (alcohol must be purchased on site) and catch up with friends old and new. *Fanny Hill, 800.679.3151, gosnowmass.com*

Jazz Aspen Snowmass June Experience

Enjoy four days of music during the JAS June Experience, June 24-26 and July 2. The lineup will be announced in spring, but past acts have included Chicago, Steve Winwood and the Count Basie Orchestra. *Benedict Music Tent, 970.920.4996,*

jazzaspensnowmass.org

Wanderlust Festival

Embark on an all-out adventure during the world's largest multiday yoga event, which returns to Snowmass June 30-July 3. Expect to find top-notch yoga teachers, speakers, musicians and other performers throughout this four-day, nature- and art-minded festival that encompasses everything from yoga and meditation to hiking, and organic food and wine. *Snowmass Village, 855.926.3375, wanderlustfestival.com*

Aspen Music Festival and School

The country's premier classical music festival runs for eight weeks each summer (June 30-Aug. 21), with more than 300 events on the schedule. Some 600 music students attend each summer, performing alongside such luminaries as Joshua Bell, Sarah Chang, Gil Shaham, Vladimir Feltsman, Wu Han, Yefim Bronfman and more. The 2016 theme, Invitation to Dance, will show how dance has been worked into musical performances through the centuries. The centerpiece of the summer season will be Kaija Saariaho's *L'Amour de loin*. *970.925.3254, aspenmusicfestival.com*

JULY

Aspen's Old-Fashioned Fourth of July Celebration

Don your red, white and blue, and join in the festivities in downtown Aspen for the Old-Fashioned Fourth of July Celebration. This

annual event features a lively parade, a kids' carnival, live music, picnics, a fireworks spectacular and more. *970.925.1940, aspenchamber.org*

Boogie's Buddy Race

This annual running race starts and ends in downtown Aspen, on the morning of July 4, as a benefit for the Buddy Program (an organization that supports local youth through mentoring programs). The 5-mile race is followed by a 1-mile Family and Canine Walk. Registered participants receive a free T-shirt (dogs get a special bandana) and a chance to win raffle prizes. *From \$50 for adult, \$15 for kids, 970.920.2130, buddyprogram.org*

AspenBrainLab

This day of enlightened exploration at the Aspen Institute (July 23) features nationally known speakers (past presenters have included Deepak Chopra and best-selling author Steven Kotler)



ARTISTICALLY MINDED
Guests mingle at ArtCrush, the Aspen Art Museum's annual August gala.

WANDERLUST PHOTO BY JANE LAUB FOR WANDERLUST FESTIVAL; ARTCRUSH PHOTO BY ROSS DANIELS

who tackle topics related to cutting-edge brain research in terms accessible to the general public. aspenbrainlab.com

Aspen Arts Festival

Enjoy a weekend of visual inspiration at the 14th annual Aspen Arts Festival. It will take place **July 23-24**, showcasing an all-star lineup. Join other art lovers while perusing and purchasing one-of-a-kind artwork, with everything from sculptures, photography and glass works to paintings, ceramics and handmade jewelry on offer. 970.925.1940, aspenchamber.org

AUGUST ArtCrush

Join prominent artists, art collectors, curators, gallery owners, celebrities and philanthropists from around the world for ArtCrush, **Aug. 3-5**—the Aspen Art Museum's annual glam summer benefit. The three days of events include WineCrush (**Aug. 3**), PreviewCrush (**Aug. 4**) and the main ArtCrush event (**Aug. 5**). 970.925.8050, aspenartmuseum.org

ArtAspen

The seventh annual ArtAspen (**Aug. 4-7**) transforms the Aspen Ice Garden into a high-end pop-up contemporary art fair. Rub elbows with A-list collectors while browsing pieces offered by some 30 galleries from across



the country. Panel discussions and cocktail parties round out the weekend. 631.283.5505, art-aspen.com

Anderson Ranch Art Auction & Community Picnic

On **Aug. 6**, join Anderson Ranch Arts Center, which celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2016, at its scenic campus in Snowmass Village for its largest fundraiser and community event of the year. A highlight of the summer season, it's a time when art lovers unite for a picnic lunch, live music and plenty of art on offer in both silent and live auctions. 5263 Owl Creek Road, Snowmass Village, 970.923.3181, andersonranch.org

USA Pro Cycling Challenge

While the course and exact dates are still to be determined, Aspen has been a part of this race's first five years—and is likely to be included again. In 2015, the town

hosted the finish of Stage 3 and the start of Stage 4. It's free to watch; just pick your spot curbside. 888.223.3351, usapro-cyclingchallenge.com

MotherLode Volleyball Classic

This epic volleyball event, which is celebrating its 44th year (**Aug. 30-Sept. 5**), is one of the most competitive amateur-division tournaments in the United States. Past years' events have included 18 different divisions (more than 700 teams from all over the country) playing at seven different sites throughout Aspen. motherlodevolleyball.com

SEPTEMBER JAS Labor Day Experience

This much-anticipated event **Sept. 2-4** includes world-class concerts at Snowmass Town Park, food and beverage vendors and lots more. Past acts have included Hozier, No Doubt, Lenny Kravitz, Jimmy Cliff,

Carrie Underwood and OneRepublic. VIP tickets give you access to a separate viewing area with catered meals, an open bar and a thriving social scene. 2000 Brush Creek Road, Snowmass Village, 970.920.4996, jazzaspensnowmass.org

Ruggerfest

Get in on the action at the Gentlemen of Aspen Rugby Football Club's Ruggerfest. Since it first began in 1967, the Gentlemen, Aspen's local team, have hosted more than 1,000 players from all over the world for this full-contact competition. The event takes place **Sept. 15-18** at Wagner Park and Rio Grande Park. aspenrugby.com

Snowmass Balloon Festival

Get a glimpse of one of the highest altitude hot air balloon events in the country at the Snowmass Balloon Festival, which is celebrating its 41st year **Sept. 16-18**. Over the course of the three-

day event, 30 pilots compete in challenges (such as a distance race that covers the entire Roaring Fork Valley). Other highlights include Saturday Evening Glow (when brightly lit balloons line Fanny Hill) and Glow Show (featuring free music and balloons lighting up the night sky). 970.922.2233, gosnowmass.com

Aspen Filmfest

Be among the first to see full-length features and documentaries from around the world during the 37th annual Aspen Filmfest. Typically held at the end of September (at the Wheeler Opera House and other locations), this big-screen celebration boasts premieres, sneak previews, post-screening dialogues and opportunities to interact with filmmakers. 970.925.6882, aspenfilm.org

The Meeting

Held at the end of September or in early October, The Meeting brings together an impressive collection of snowsports professionals for ski and snowboard movie screenings, video awards, live music, panel discussions, presentations, fashion shows and more. Many events are open to the public too. 970.925.1220, aspensnowmass.com



ADVENTURE

ADVENTURE & FUN

No ambition is too big at this altitude. Just pick your season, sport and terrain.

By Barbara Platts and Cindy Hirschfeld

The Roaring Fork Valley offers unlimited potential for outdoor recreation. Whether you're an avid cyclist looking to up your endurance, an enthusiastic skier itching to explore the backcountry or a golfer wanting to play the local links, there's an opportunity to do it here. We've tapped into local knowledge to guide you on everything from finding the best powder stashes at our four ski areas to hiking through wildflower-studded meadows. And don't miss the kid-friendly listings for additional ways to entertain and educate young explorers.

**ALPINE/
BACKCOUNTRY/
CROSS-COUNTRY
SKIING AND
SNOWSHOEING
10th Mountain Division
Hut Association**

This not-for-profit organization manages 34 huts in the Colorado backcountry, including several near Aspen. Plan a weekend with friends and ski or snowshoe to a hut of your choice for a few blissful days off the grid. But plan



GOLDEN DAYS
Castle Creek Road is
a favorite ride for
bikers, especially in fall.

your trip far in advance. The huts fill up quickly. *From \$33, 1280 Ute Ave., Ste. 21, 970.925.5775, huts.org*

Ashcroft Ski Touring

For a historic and scenic cross-country experience, head to this Nordic center 12 miles up Castle Creek Valley near the ghost town of Ashcroft. Opened in 1971, it was the first self-sustaining cross-country ski area in the United States. Today, the center grooms approximately

22 miles of trails for skiing and snowshoeing on 600 acres near the head of this jaw-droppingly beautiful valley. Rentals, lessons and guided tours are available, and a lunch stop at the nearby Pine Creek Cookhouse is a must-do. *Day pass \$25, 970.925.1044, pinecreekcookhouse.com*

Aspen Alpine Guides

Given the frequent avalanche danger in the Rockies, it's smart to head out with a guide. This local service offers backcountry ski tours, overnight hut trips, cross-country and snowshoe excursions and lift-served out-of-bounds skiing, as well as avalanche courses. The Leave the Boys Behind program features women's hut trips. *From \$265, 210 S. Galena St., 970.925.6618, aspenalpine.com*

Aspen Center for Environmental Studies

From mid-December on, this environmental nonprofit offers twice-daily naturalist-led snowshoe tours at Snowmass ski area and the top of Aspen Mountain, plus daily tours at the Ashcroft ghost town (including a stellar lunch at the Pine Creek Cookhouse) and on the Aspen Meadows campus of the Aspen Institute. The twice-daily guided 45-minute ski tours from the Wapiti Wildlife Center at the top of Snowmass' Elk Camp lift are a great way to put a different perspective on your run. And they're free. *970.925.5756, aspenature.org*

Aspen Cross Country Center

In winter, the Aspen golf course gets transformed into a Nordic center, with beginner trails for skiers and snowshoers that can be combined in various loops.

Trail access is free, and rentals are available at the clubhouse, as are lessons. If you're a dedicated Nord, check out the weekly clinics on technique and waxing, and the lunchtime interval training sessions. *39551 Highway 82, 970.925.2145, utemountaineer.com*

Aspen Expeditions

Founded in 1976 by internationally certified mountain guide Dick Jackson, Aspen Expeditions has a team of guides who lead backcountry ski tours, overnight hut trips and ski mountaineering outings. In addition, a series of two-day backcountry ski camps are offered from January to April, as well as avalanche safety clinics. *From \$325, 133 Prospector Road, 970.925.7625, aspenexpeditions.com*

Aspen Powder Tours

Can't get enough freshies? If you're an intermediate or better skier or snowboarder, load up on a snowcat at the top of Aspen Mountain with 11 other lucky guests, plus guides from Aspen Powder Tours, and head out along Richmond Ridge to ply the open bowls that spill off to each side. A day of skiing includes a gourmet lunch in a rustic log cabin. *\$449 per person, 970.920.0720, aspensnowmass.com*

Snowmass Cross Country Center

The groomed trail system on the Snowmass Club's golf course encompasses 5 miles of free beginner and intermediate routes for skiers and snowshoers. Rent gear or book a lesson at the clubhouse. *0446 Clubhouse Drive, Snowmass Village, 970.923.5700, snowmassclub.com*

Dog Days

Aspen has lots of great trails, but because many go into the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness, dogs must be leashed on them. If you're looking for a place for your pup to have a little more freedom, check out one of these leash-free alternatives. Just remember to reinforce good trail manners through voice control. —CH

If your dog wants an instant in with Aspen's canine social scene, take him up **Smuggler Mountain Road** (pitkinoutside.com). A steady parade of hikers, mountain bikers and dogs heads up and down this dirt road year-round. The most popular destination is a viewing platform about 1.5 miles up, from which you can catch your breath and enjoy a vista of Aspen.

The **Sunnyside Trail** (pitkinoutside.com) begins right off McLain Flats Road and snakes its way up an open, south-facing slope of Red Mountain (hence the name). Because of the exposure, dogs will enjoy the trail most in the early morning or evening on hot days (or anytime on cooler days). You will pass some irrigation ditches partway up, allowing four-legged hikers to cool off. A good turnaround spot is the radio tower that's in a large aspen grove about 2 miles up.

Near Basalt, **Crown Mountain Park** (crownmtn.org) has a generously sized dedicated **dog park** with two grassy side-by-side enclosures, each individually fenced. Water for both people and pups is readily available.

Midvalley residents bring their pups to the dirt roads and trails on the backside of **Basalt Mountain**, accessed via El Jebel Road and Upper Cattle Creek Road in Missouri Heights. In summer, hikers (and mountain bikers) start at a large parking area along Forest Road 509. In winter, the road isn't plowed, so cars must park at the beginning (where Upper Cattle Creek Road turns sharply left and FS Road 509 starts to the north). From there, the snow is often packed down enough to hike, though the road is also popular for cross-country skiing.



SWEET SMELLS Tansy and Piper enjoy a romp among the wildflowers.

"I'm a mountain biker. I live in Basalt, so I can ride through November sometimes. Sky Mountain [near Snowmass Village] is a great park—they did an amazing job there. I also like the more technical stuff like Mushroom Rock in Carbondale."

—TIZIANO GORTAN, OWNER, L'HOSTARIA

Spring Gulch Trail System

It's a bit farther afield, but locals love the 12 miles of groomed trails and relative solitude of this cross-country ski spot seven miles west of Carbondale. Trails range from beginner to expert and are maintained by the Mount Sopris Nordic Council. Access is free. No services are on-site, so you'll need to rent gear before arriving. Note that snowshoes and dogs are not allowed on the trails. *County Road 108, springgulch.org*

Sun Dog Athletics

The fully customized snowshoe tours (minimum two hours) in the Aspen backcountry, led by enthusiastic owner Erik Skarvan or his guides, include high-performance gear, trail snacks and transportation from your doorstep. *\$95 per hour, 970.925.1069, sundogathletics.com*

BIKING

Aspen Alpine Guides

In summer, full- and half-day guided bike rides are available, as well as high-altitude training for cyclists. *From \$295, 210 S. Galena St., 970.925.6618, aspenalpine.com*

Aspen Bike Tours and Rentals

After outfitting you with the ride of your choice, the company will take you for

a downhill cruise on Castle Creek Road. *From \$33, 430 S. Spring St., 970.925.9169, aspenbikerentals.com*

Blazing Adventures

Full- and half-day guided bike trips range from riding downhill from the Maroon Bells or pedaling the Rio Grande Trail to single-track in Snowmass. *From \$71, 555 E. Durant Ave., 970.923.4544; 48 Upper Village Mall, Snowmass Village, blazingadventures.com*

Pros in Motion

Specializing in private and semi-private custom bike tours, as well as road and mountain biking training and coaching, this group of longtime local athletes will help you attain a personal riding best. *\$150 per hour, 970.948.7387, aspenprosinmotion.com*

Sun Dog Athletics

Book a private lesson for road or mountain biking with owner Erik Skarvan or one of his guides, and watch your skills soar. Sun Dog is also the only local outfitter to run fat bike tours in winter; these bikes with oversize tires allow you to ride on packed-down snow. *From \$55, 970.925.1069, sundogathletics.com*

Timberline Bike Tours

The company is best known for overnight mountain-biking hut trips, which involve single-track tours

in the backcountry to one of the nearby 10th Mountain Division huts. Guided day trips for all skill levels are also available. *From \$85, 730 E. Cooper St., 970.274.6076, timberlinebike.com*

WE-cycle

Aspen's community bike share program, WE-cycle is convenient and easy to use. Visit one of the 14 bike stations around town; slide your credit card or pass, and get use of a bike for up to 30 minutes at a time. Bikes are available from May through October. *Passes from \$9 for 24 hours, 970.205.9222, we-cycle.org*

BOWLING

El Jebowl

This 16-lane venue in the midvalley offers better than the typical bowling alley fare to nosh on during strikes—try the rib-eye steak or rack of lamb. There's also a full-service bar and arcade games. *280 Favre Lane, El Jebel, 970.963.1978*

Slopeside Lanes

Offering après ski at its finest, Slopeside Lanes is the perfect place to settle in on a leather couch with a few beers and tasty wood-fired pizzas. The bowling alley is small, with only eight lanes, but the cozy environment is part of the charm. And the playlist is always rocking. *From \$10 an hour, Snowmass*

Village Mall, 970.429.8839, slopesidelanes.com

CLIMBING

Aspen Alpine Guides

Learn to climb or improve your skills through custom half- or full-day courses or tackle one of the area's 14,000- or 13,000-foot peaks with a guide. Indoor climbing instruction is also available. The women's Leave the Boys Behind program includes a two-day intro to mountaineering and 14er summit clinic. *From \$379, 210 S. Galena St., 970.925.6618, aspenalpine.com*

Aspen Expeditions

Guides certified by the American Mountain Guide Association will teach you to climb on the crags of Independence Pass, help you attempt a 14er summit or improve your technical mountaineering skills. For group bookings, Aspen Expeditions also offers an adventure course that includes climbing, rappelling, ziplining and slacklining. *From \$180, 133 Prospector Road, 970.925.7625, aspenexpeditions.com*

Aspen Recreation Center

The 32-foot climbing tower has a variety of routes for all abilities, and four auto belay devices let you climb on your own. Climbing shoes and a harness are included in the rec center admission, and a climbing instructor supervises the tower. *Day pass \$18, 0861 Maroon Creek Road, 970.544.4100, aspenrecreation.com*

Red Brick

Recreation Center

The Red Brick has an indoor climbing wall with 3,100 square feet of

Fit to Be Tied

Local artist, chef and comedian **Glenn Smith** has been a fly-fishing guide with Basalt's Taylor Creek Fly Shop (183 Basalt Center Circle, 970.927.4374) for 21 years. Here, he offers up his top five local fishing spots. For maps, stop by Taylor Creek or other local fishing stores.

—Todd Hartley

1. Fryingpan River below Ruedi Dam. "The upper 4 miles of the Fryingpan below the dam are great for dry flies. The river can be crowded here in the summer, but it fishes well."

2. Lower Fryingpan River. "The boulders and pockets on the first public water coming upstream from Basalt are really fun. It's like hit-and-run fishing."

3. Colorado River, Glenwood Springs to Silt. "For big trout, float the Colorado below Glenwood. You might not catch as many, but there are some nice fish."

4. Roaring Fork River, Aspen Airport Business Center to Smith Hill Way bridge. "There's pressure on Wilton Jaffee Sr. Park, but most people don't walk to get to the rest of it. Go in the fall or early spring."

5. Roaring Fork River, Hooks Lane bridge to Highway 133 bridge. "There's not much public access. Float from Willits to Carbondale, and you can get fish most wade fishermen can't get to."

PHOTO COURTESY OF TAYLOR CREEK FLY SHOP



CAST AWAY
A beautiful fall day on the Fryingpan River

climbing surface. Lessons are available for kids, adults and seniors, including Chicks Rock, a women's class on Tuesday evenings from October to April. Day pass \$17.50, 110 E. Hallam St., 970.920.5140, aspenrecreation.com

FISHING

Alpine Angling

Book a guided float or wade fly-fishing trip (year-round) on one of four local rivers: the Colorado, the Roaring Fork River, the Fryingpan or the Crystal. Trips to lakes and streams, including some private waters, are also available.

From \$120, 995 Cowen Drive, Ste. 102, Carbondale, 970.963.9245, alpineangling.com

Aspen

Flyfishing

Trips range from wade fly-fishing (year-round) on the Roaring Fork River and float trips on the Roaring Fork and Colorado to fishing a private lake on the BarZX Ranch and kids' trips at a private pond. From \$250, 601 E. Dean St., 970.920.6886, aspenflyfishing.com

Aspen Outfitting

With leases on a variety of private waters, this outfitter at The St. Regis Aspen offers family trips to a private pond, wade fly-

Chapman Campground

29 miles from Basalt

This popular family-favorite camping spot nestled in the lodgepole pines adjacent to Chapman Reservoir offers 83 campsites, including creekside spots, and one group site divided into seven sections. recreation.gov

Harry Gates Hut

26 miles to the winter trailhead

At 9,700 feet, Harry Gates is the lowest elevation 10th Mountain Hut. In winter, it's accessed via a 7-mile ski or snowshoe; in summer, you can drive to within about a quarter-mile of the hut. The cozy cabin sleeps 16 and offers spectacular views of Avalanche Ridge and the surrounding peaks. huts.org

Lyle/Mormon Lakes Trail

43 miles to the trailhead

Hiking 6.6 miles (round trip) along this Sound of Music-like scenic trail rewards you with access to two spectacular high-alpine lakes: Lyle, about 1 1/2 miles from the trailhead, followed by Mormon. In midsummer, wildflowers abound too. basaltchamber.org

Savage Lakes Trail

About 35 miles to the trailhead

If this trail was closer to Aspen, it would be one of the area's most crowded—the granite boulder-lined, crystal-clear lake, accessed in 2 moderately steep miles of hiking, is one of the most beautiful in Colorado. The upper lake, reached in another 10 or so minutes of hiking, is even more secluded. basaltchamber.org



fishing

year-round and float trips on the Roaring Fork and the Gunnison. From \$295, 315 E. Dean St., 970.925.3406, aspenoutfitting.com

Aspen Trout Guides

Since 1981, the company has offered a variety of fishing trips, including full-day dory boat trips on the Roaring Fork, outings to lakes and streams both public and private, family trips and

overnight excursions.

From \$250, 520 E. Durant Ave., 970.379.7963, aspenroutguides.com

Frying Pan Anglers

Located in Basalt, these guides will have you out on the Fryingpan, Roaring Fork or Colorado rivers. Along with half- and full-day float and wade trips, they also offer a daily kids' camp in summer. Call for prices, 231 Midland Ave., Basalt, 970.927.3441, fryingpananglers.com

Independence Pass Outfitting Company

This outfitter focuses on angling in Weller and Lost Man lakes, two pools of water on Independence

Pass that abound with trout because they're not often fished. From \$350, 970.948.4868, ipocllc.com

The Little Nell Adventure Shop

Among the customizable fishing trips are several out-of-the-ordinary options: bike-accessed fishing along the Roaring Fork River; horseback-accessed fishing in the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness; angling for trophy trout on a private ranch reached by helicopter; and the Whiskey Fly Experience, which includes a rafting and fishing trip down the Roaring Fork to the tasting room at Woody Creek Distillers, followed by dinner at the hotel. There's also a custom dory for float fishing trips down the Roaring Fork or Colorado rivers. Call for prices, 675 E. Durant Ave., 970.920.6315, thelittlenell.com

Taylor Creek Fly Shop

With permits for more than 60 miles of water along the Fryingpan,

Roaring Fork, Colorado and Crystal rivers, Taylor Creek's guides can give you the full local fishing experience. From \$275, 408 E. Cooper St., 970.927.4374; 183 Basalt Center Circle, Basalt, 970.927.4374, taylorcreek.com

GOLF

Aspen Glen

Running alongside and across the Roaring Fork River off Highway 82 between Carbondale and Glenwood Springs, this 7,400-yard Nicklaus-designed course has stunning views of Mount Sopris. Accompanying member price from \$105, 545 Bald Eagle Way, Carbondale, 970.704.1905, clubcorp.com

Aspen Golf Club

Known as one of the best municipal courses in Colorado, this walkable track is located right outside of Aspen. Water comes into play on most holes, making the course play longer than its 7,156 yards. Top-notch practice facilities

"On a good groomer day, lapping Golden Horn and Thunder Bowl at Aspen Highlands is as fun a piece of corduroy as I've ever skied. There's a reason the [local] race team sets up each weekend over there. The fall line is unique and the grade is steep!"

—NICOLE BIRKHOLO, TV HOST, ASPEN 82

PHOTO BY BOBACAPPHENHEIM

will help you get ready for a round. *Peak season from \$199, 39551 Highway 82, 970.429.1949, aspengolf.com*

Ironbridge

Considered one of the toughest golf courses in Colorado, Ironbridge received a recent makeover to soften its 7,224-yard layout. The course is situated right next to the Roaring Fork River in Glenwood Springs with dramatic mountain views. *Public rates from \$49, 430 Ironbridge Drive, Glenwood Springs, 970.384.0630, ironbridgeclub.com*

The Ranch at Roaring Fork

This nine-hole, par-3

course is the ideal spot for beginners, but it can also help seasoned experts work on their short games. *From \$14, 14913 Highway 82, Carbondale, 970.963.4410, ranchatroaringfork.com*

River Valley Ranch Golf Club

Located near the base of Mount Sopris in the Crystal River Valley, RVR has 18 unique, challenging holes and some of the most breathtaking views of any course in the area. *From \$69, 303 River Valley Ranch Road, Carbondale, 970.963.3625, rvrgolf.com*

Roaring Fork Club

Basalt's Roaring Fork Club features a 7,130-yard

Jack Nicklaus signature course, numerous holes along the Roaring Fork River, and several ponds with distractingly large trout. *Accompanying member price from \$85, 100 Arbaney Ranch Road, Basalt, 970.927.9100, roaringforkclub.net*

Snowmass Club

The sprawling green hills of the golf course are one of the first sites visitors see when entering Snowmass Village. Redesigned by Colorado-based architect Jim Engh, the course features large changes in elevation and reclaimed wetlands. *From \$45, 239 Snowmass Club Circle, Snowmass*



DRIVING FORCE
Hole No. 16 at the Aspen Golf Club

Links Love

With some eight golf courses, the Roaring Fork Valley offers plenty of opportunities to work on your game. We asked several avid local duffers to name their favorite holes. —Sarah Chase Shaw

"Hole No. 16 at the Aspen Golf Club (aspengolf.com) requires a long, accurate drive followed by a longer-than-expected second shot to an elevated green with a tricky right-hand bunker. Difficult pin placements with subtle to severe breaks are available to the greenskeeper, who can make life difficult or not." —Rick Newton, former owner, Walnut House Films

"At 324 yards, hole No. 18 at the Aspen Golf Club is one of the best finishing holes around, but only if you can keep your head on the course and your eyes on the hole. Look up, and the view will

completely upset your game." —Dominic Lanese, assistant golf superintendent, Aspen Golf Club

"River Valley Ranch hole No. 15 (rvrgolf.com) is a long drive followed by a long iron shot. Trouble to the left and short, but what a view before the second shot!" —Bill Hegberg, owner, Wildcat Land Company

"Hole No. 12 at Aspen Glen (clubcorp.com) is 610 yards long. Some people don't go that far on vacation." —Bill Kane, land planner

"For the best autumn hole, pick No. 9 at the Glenwood Springs Golf Club (glenwoodspringsgolf.com). Locals call this course 'Little Augusta' for its small and wicked fast greens. Watch for apples dropping from the colorful trees up the left side of the fairway and sink your putt on this incredibly difficult green." —Mary Woulfe, Aspen High School boys' varsity golf coach

(Quick) Hit the Trails

Aspen has enough hiking trails for years of exploration, but what about when time is more limited? These five scenic trails deliver when you have only an hour or so to get your outdoors fix. —Brook Sutton

Lower Hunter Creek Trail

An all-season favorite, this is a gorgeous streamside hike through aspen groves. Turn around at the Benedict Bridge (and the intersection with the Hunter Valley Trail) to keep the round-trip distance at about 2 miles. Access is via the trailhead off the Rio Grande Trail or the trailhead off Lone Pine Road. *pitkinoutside.org*



SURE-FOOTED
The Ute Trail switchbacks up lower Aspen Mountain.

Ute Trail To get your heart rate up in short order, head east on Ute Avenue to this route up the lower slopes of Aspen Mountain. Climb 1,165 feet in elevation in less than 1 mile to a rock outcropping with a bird's-eye view of Aspen where you can catch your breath before heading back down. *pitkinoutside.org*

Nature Trail to Ditch Trail

This out-and-back in Snowmass Village is ideal for spectacular views without much elevation gain. Access the Nature Trail from parking lot 8. After 0.85 miles, pick up the 2-mile-long Ditch Trail and head out as long as time allows before turning around. *snowmassrecreation.com*

Rim Trail South

A short but challenging climb is well worth the effort along this buffed-out trail, where the reward is a sweeping vista of Snowmass Village. About 30 minutes into the hike is a marble terrace with a yin-yang pattern that makes a good turnaround point. Access is off of Divide Road. *snowmassrecreation.com*

Red Hill

The sienna-colored landscape of this trail network lies just off Highway 82 in Carbondale. Several loops, each less than 3 miles, lead to spectacular views of Mount Sopris and the lower Roaring Fork Valley. *blm.gov*

"If I'm short on time, my favorite thing is to take a quick run to the top of the Ute Trail and just spend a few minutes overlooking our amazing little town. If I have a little longer, I jump on my mountain bike and ride to the top of Buttermilk and then connect into the Government Trail for an amazing ride down."

—MICHAEL FOX, OWNER, THE ASPEN CLUB

UTE TRAIL PHOTO BY CHRIS COURICE AND TERRY CHAMBERLIN

Village, 970.923.5600,
snowmassclub.com

HORSEBACK RIDING

Aspen Wilderness Outfitters/Capitol Peak Outfitters

These two companies that operate under the same umbrella stage trail rides, from two hours to full day, and pack trips all over the Aspen area, including up the gorgeous Capitol Creek Valley near Old

Snowmass. The guides and horses will meet up with you at a convenient spot en route to the trailhead. From \$85, 970.928.0723, capitolpeak.com

Independence Pass Outfitting Company

Explore the area around Independence Pass on a half- or full-day trail ride, or venture farther into the wilderness on an overnight pack trip. From \$150, 970.948.4868, ipocllc.com

Maroon Bells Guide and Outfitters

Based out of the T Lazy 7 Ranch, the stables offer trail rides ranging from one hour to full day (the longer rides afford views of the famous Maroon Bells), as well as dinner rides, an overnight ride to Crested Butte and other pack trips. In winter, sleigh rides are available. From \$65, 3133 Maroon Creek Road, 970.920.4677, maroonbellsaspen.com



LEADER OF THE
PACK Mike Maple, in
red, during an Aspen
Cycling Club race

Spokes Person

As president of the Aspen Cycling Club (and a former competitive ski racer), **Mike Maple** gets a good view of local byways from the saddle of his Trek Domane 6 Series. He shared some of his favorite road rides with us. —Leah Fielding

McLain Flats Road to Woody Creek Road

"This is one of my top rides," says Maple. The 25-mile round-trip route (from downtown Aspen) features 1,700 feet of climbing—just a bit less than going up to the Maroon Bells. The distinguishing factor, he adds, is that the descent is not continuous, but rather occurs on portions of the route. "Parts of W/J Hill hit 14 percent grade, albeit briefly," Maple notes. At the top of the climb, you're rewarded with expansive views of the ski areas and Independence Pass. Make the ride 7 miles longer and more rugged by continuing up the dirt road to the rural town of Lenado before turning around.

Castle Creek Road

Though Maple appreciates the classic ride up to the Maroon Bells—especially since auto traffic is limited—he prefers heading up Castle Creek Road instead. "It's about 7 miles longer and offers a bit more elevation gain and variety of terrain."

Pro Challenge Loop

Maple also recommends following the same route as riders lapped during local stages of the 2013 and 2014 USA Pro Challenge cycling race. It's about 22 miles, with 1,700 feet of climbing. From downtown Aspen, head west to Owl Creek Road and ride up the road toward Snowmass Village. Take a right on Highline Road, then descend to the roundabout and stay right on Brush Creek Road. Toward the end of the descent, go left onto Medicine Bow Road, then right on Upper Ranch Road and descend via Juniper Hill Road. From there, cross Highway 82, and ride Smith Hill Way and McLain Flats Road back to Aspen.



TAKING A STAND
Jordan Curet races
downriver.

Paddling Through Paradise

Local stand-up paddleboarder (and pro photographer) **Jordan Curet** got her start six years ago and dove right in, immediately setting out on a self-supported overnight trip. She has now been racing competitively on Colorado's rivers for five years, including at the annual GoPro Mountain Games. Here are three of Curet's top local picks for paddlers of all levels. —Katie Shapiro

Carbondale

"The Pink to Black section [as the locals call it] of the Roaring Fork River is a 7-mile stretch great for beginners," says Curet. If you're coming from Aspen, the easiest put-in is at the Bob Terrell State Wildlife Area. Drive on Highway 82 for 1 mile downvalley from its intersection with Highway 133; then turn left on County Road 106.

"The Cemetery section of the Roaring Fork has stunning scenery and is perfect for intermediate paddlers," she says. From the Highway 133 intersection, drive Highway 82 downvalley for 5 miles. Turn left on Old Highway 82; drive County Road 154 for 1 mile; and park on the left just before the bridge.

Glenwood Springs

"At the confluence of the Roaring Fork and Colorado rivers, there are tons of great rapids. Most areas are better for intermediate to advanced paddlers, but there's also a great whitewater park (glenwoodwhitewaterpark.org). My favorite spot for bigger rapids is the South Canyon section," offers Curet.

Gear up at the Aspen Kayak & SUP Academy (aspenkayakacademy.com), owned by Charlie MacArthur, whom Curet credits as her mentor. MacArthur also teaches classes (from \$85), which Curet considers a must, noting that, "even in the shallowest or calmest of waters, the river can be a dangerous place."

ASPIR PHOTO BY JEREMY SWANSON; BIKE PHOTO BY STEVE KELLER



PUP PULL
Skiing is a great workout for you and your dog.

Beyond the Slopes

Sure, winter in Aspen is primarily about the skiing, but the following snowcentric activities are worth a detour.

—Laurel Miller

Think jumping off a mountain is only for crazed adrenaline junkies? Not when you're flying tandem with an instructor from **Aspen Paragliding** (aspenparagliding.com). Opt for a ski launch at Snowmass or a traditional running start off Aspen Mountain (from \$250). "It's the experience of a lifetime," says local TV host and producer **Ramona Bruland**. "You literally ski off the side of a mountain and watch the ground disappear from under your feet. Ask to pull some Gs on the way down, and they'll send you spiraling horizontally for a rush like no other."

Cross-country skiing is a favorite social activity among locals. **Ben Dodge**, executive director of the 10th Mountain Hut Association, recommends getting started on the free groomed tracks at the Aspen Cross Country Center, which is among 60-plus miles of trail maintained by the Aspen/Snowmass Nordic Council (aspennordic.com). Also check out the peaceful North Star Nature Preserve, the Snowmass Cross Country Center and Ashcroft Ski Touring (pinecreekcookhouse.com). Rentals are available at the cross-country center shops, which are operated by the Ute Mountaineer, and at the Ute's location in town (from \$25, 210 S. Galena St.).

With killer traction and stability, thanks to superwide tires, **fat bikes** allow you to experience winter from a totally different vantage point, no experience required. Says local enthusiast **Troy Miller**, a radiographer at Aspen Valley Hospital, "It's like a rolling gigglefest. I do the Smuggler-Hunter Creek [loop] about three times a week, but I also love Independence Pass because I can bring my dog." Take a tour with Sun Dog Athletics (from \$120, sundogathletics.com) or rent a cutting-edge aluminum-frame bike by 9:Zero:7 at Stapleton Ski (from \$50, stapletonski.com).

Harness your hound, step into a pair of cross-country skis and hit the trail for **skijoring**. **Louisa Morrissey** of High Country Dogs (highcountrydogs.com) offers private and group lessons from January to mid-April (from \$40 per person). "It's a fun and healthy way to bond with your dog," says Aspen Animal Shelter Executive Director **Seth Sachson**, citing the Rio Grande Trail west of Cemetery Lane as a favorite spot. The shelter also offers classes (from \$40 per person, 970.544.0206), which you can take with an adoptable dog.

Snowshoeing lets you "enjoy the mountains in a low-impact, affordable way," says **Erik Skarvan**, owner of Sun Dog Athletics, which offers guided tours (from \$120 an hour). "I love exploring Four Corners—try the Hobbit, Secret and Sunnyside Plunge trails." Or explore the trails at Ashcroft Ski Touring (trail passes from \$15), with a stop for lunch at the rustic gourmet Pine Creek Cookhouse (pinecreekcookhouse.com).

ADVENTURE

Snowmass Creek Outfitters

Two-hour to full-day rides go out on trails above Snowmass Village; on the Snowmass Creek and West Snowmass Creek trails; and on the outfitter's own ranch in Old Snowmass. The company also teaches private riding lessons at the Snowmass Rodeo arena and offers overnight pack trips. From \$95, 3610 Capitol Creek Road, 970.704.0707, snowmasscreekoutfitters.com

HUNTING

Aspen Outfitting

With more than 40 years of experience, the company offers wild and released hunts for partridge and pheasants on 28,000 acres of land about 1 ½ hours from Aspen. It also has a nearby private facility for clay target shooting for all skill levels. From \$1,200 for two people, 315 E. Dean St., 970.925.3406, aspenoutfitting.com

Independence Pass Outfitting Company

Hunt for deer, elk, bear, mountain goats and more in the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness. Or, for a slightly smaller prize, set out with a guide and dogs to track down blue grouse and ptarmigan. From \$3,000, 970.948.4868, ipocllc.com

ICE SKATING

Aspen Ice Garden

This indoor rink has accommodated local skaters for more than 50 years. It provides ice time for figure skating clubs, local hockey leagues and the popular Aspen Curling Club, but there's no public free skating. Drop-in hockey \$13.50, 233 W. Hyman Ave., 970.429.1728, aspenrecreation.com

Aspen Recreation Center

The Lewis Ice Arena contains an NHL

regulation-size indoor rink that's open daily for public skates. Just outside, the ARC-tic Pond has free access and stays open under the lights Monday through Saturday evenings. Skate rentals (\$3) are available inside the rec center. Day pass \$17.50, 0861 Maroon Creek Road, 970.544.4117, aspenrecreation.com

Silver Circle Ice Rink

Located outside CP Burger, the Silver Circle's free outdoor rink is the perfect place for the whole family to take a spin. Skates (\$8) can be rented on site. 433 E. Durant Ave., 970.925.3056, cpburger.com

Snowmass Ice Rink

Free outdoor skating is available at the rodeo arena; bring your own skates. Snowmass Village Rodeo Grounds, Brush Creek Road, gosnowmass.com

KID-FRIENDLY

Ajax Adventure Camp

Get 'Em While They're Young!

World champion adventure racer and youth Nordic ski coach **Sari Anderson** follows the start-'em-young ethos. Both her kids (Juniper, 8; Axel, 5) started riding Strider bikes and alpine skiing before 2 years of age, and Nordic skiing by 5. To keep kids engaged, Anderson recommends setting realistic goals and hosting scavenger hunts with treats along the trail. "Mornings are always crazy," she adds, "so packing clothing and lunches, and having gear organized the night before ensures getting out to have fun." Here are Anderson's local go-to kid-friendly adventures. —TWS

Mushroom Rock Trail, Carbondale

"The hike is less than a mile to the peak, where you're rewarded with amazing views of Mount Sopris and Carbondale." blm.gov

Avalanche Creek Trail, Redstone

"There's a beautiful alpine trail winding along the creek, and it's gorgeous in the fall as the aspens change colors. After the hike, take a dip in

nearby Penny Hot Springs (Highway 133, 100 feet north of mile marker 55) or the Avalanche Ranch Hot Springs (reservations required; avalancheranch.com)." fs.usda.gov

Verde Trail, Snowmass Village

"Completed in 2014, this is a 3.8-mile purpose-built beginner mountain-bike trail with banked turns for smooth, flowy fun." pitkinoutside.org

Spring Gulch Trail System, Carbondale

"The donation-based, community-run cross-country ski area just above Carbondale is quiet and peaceful, with a wide variety of terrain [on more than 13 miles] of groomed trails. Hot chocolate is a great reward for the kids to look forward to afterward." springgulch.org



FUN TIMES
Sari Anderson with Axel

Based out of the Aspen Middle School, this day camp runs seven days a week from mid-June to mid-August, offering a full slate of outdoor activities like rafting, archery, fishing, horseback riding, climbing and biking. *\$104 per day, 235 High School Road, 970.205.9392, ajsxadventurecamp.com*

Aspen Center for Environmental Studies

All summer and during local winter and spring school breaks, ACES offers a slew of outdoor-oriented day camps for kids ages 4 through teens at its Hallam Lake nature preserve and Rock Bottom Ranch locations. Topics range from learning about farm animals and hiking to building

snow caves and exploring wildlife habitats. *From \$30 per day, 100 Puppy Smith St., 970.925.5756, aspenature.org*

Aspen Recreation Center

With a large indoor pool that includes a water slide and lazy river, a climbing tower and an indoor ice skating rink, the ARC, as it's called locally, is the perfect spot for a rainy or frigid day. Outside, the Whoa Nelly sledding hill, with free access, is a favorite among local kids. Sled rentals (\$5) are available at the ARC. *Kids' day pass \$15.50, 0861 Maroon Creek Road, 970.544.4100, aspenrecreation.com*

Aspen Recreation Summer Camp

This drop-in day camp for kids 5 through 11 goes from mid-June through the end of August and meets at the Aspen Elementary School or High School. Each week has a theme and may include swimming, hiking, outings to local parks or the top of Aspen Mountain, crafts and games. *Resident day pass \$40, non-resident day pass \$66, 970.920.5140, aspenrecreation.com*

Aspen T.R.E.E.

With summer classes and camps on subjects ranging from organic gardening to nature discovery days, this farm and livestock cooperative just outside of Aspen aims to educate the next generation about the importance of producing food locally through sustainable methods.



IT'S A BLOWOUT
Day campers at the
Snowmass Recreation
Center create a
volcano experiment.

210 Juniper Hill Road, 970.379.2323, aspen-tree.org

Aspen Youth Center

Located in the Aspen Recreation Center, the youth center hosts after-school activities like dodgeball, flag football and cooking classes throughout the school year for kids grades four through 12. *Free, 861 Maroon Creek Road, 970.544.4130, aspenyouthcenter.org*

Camp Aspen/Snowmass

Kids as young as 1 up through teens can participate in this weekday camp at the Treehouse Kids' Adventure Center at Snowmass' Base Village. Activities may include biking, swimming, paintball, mountainboarding, golf and even rocket building. Overnight campouts take place several times a summer. Camp runs from early June through the end of August. *\$124 per day, 970.923.1227, aspensnowmass.com*

Minigolf at CP Burger

From June through September, the ice rink adjacent to this casual restaurant features 18

holes to challenge young (and young at heart) putters. *\$8, 433 E. Durant Ave., 970.925.3056, cpburger.com*

Red Brick Recreation Center

In addition to an indoor climbing wall, this gym offers daily playhouse sessions for toddlers on the spring-loaded floor; gymnastics lessons; and, for kids 9 and up, private trapeze lessons. *Day pass \$9.75, 110 E. Hallam St., Ste. 135, 970.920.5140, aspenrecreation.com*

Snowmass Recreation Center

The center has four outdoor saline pools, three of which stay open year-round, as does the hot tub. Inside, kids will want to check out the climbing wall and bouldering cave. Day camps for kids ages 5 to 14 are offered throughout the summer too. *Day pass \$10, 2835 Brush Creek Road, Snowmass Village, 970.922.2240, tosv.com*

Treehouse Kids' Adventure Center

If your young ones aren't as eager to hit the slopes as you are, bring them to the Treehouse, which

"The Ditch Trail in Snowmass is a great place for families to enjoy a hike without feeling like they have to do anything hard. It's wide and flat, and you can pretty much let the kids lead the way."

—GEORGINA LEVEY, FIFTH-GRADE TEACHER AND FOUNDER, KIDKONNECTOR.COM



TYKES ON BIKES
Kids love riding snow
bikes during Ullr
Nights at Snowmass.



SMILES IN THE SAGE
Smooth singletrack is
yours for the riding.

Mountain Bike Nirvana

With a mix of classic and new trails, mountain biking in the Roaring Fork Valley has never been more varied. Locals are taking advantage of the increased access and customizing routes to accommodate their styles and available time. Here, three avid riders share some favorites. —LF

"My go-to route is to [ride] up Smuggler Mountain Road to BTS, Tootsie Roll, Lollipop and the new Lollipop extension to Iowa Shaft, then mach through Hunter Creek Valley and down Red Mountain Road back into town (pitkinoutside.org). Each trail has its own personality and challenges, and you can make it short or long." —Lauren Bullard, broker, Aspen Associates Realty Group

"One of my favorites is what I call lift-served cross-country. From the top of [Snowmass] Elk Camp Gondola, hop on the Valhalla Trail; [then take it] to the Government Trail to Anaerobic Nightmare to Highline to Sky Mountain Park (pitkinoutside.org). You get a lot of descending, about 4,400 feet, and you only need to climb about 2,000 feet." —Tyler Lindsay, event marketing coordinator/athlete program manager, Aspen Skiing Company, and bike pro, Bike Snowmass

"Prince Creek (mtbproject.com) is one of my favorite rides after work. The route I take is 13.7 miles and starts and ends in the West Sopris parking lot, which accesses the top of Prince Creek Road. I ride Skull Buckets and Creek Side along Prince Creek and then head to the top of the Crown to enjoy playful, manicured downhill trails like Upper Father of Ginormous to Upper and Lower Ginormous." —Greg Strokes, ski sports marketing manager, Oakley

offers child care for kids ages 8 weeks to 4 years old. Interactive play features and age-appropriate themed rooms, each devoted to an aspect of the mountain ecosystem, keep kids engaged. \$159 per day, Snowmass Base Village, Snowmass Village, 970.923.8733, aspensnowmass.com

Tubing

Lift-served tubing returned to Snowmass last winter for the first time in more than a decade. Four lanes at Elk Camp are served by a Magic Carpet, and tubing is offered in one-hour sessions daily as well as during Ullr Nights. \$33, 970.923.1227,

aspensnowmass.com

Ullr Nights

On Friday nights from late December through the end of March, the Elk Camp Gondola at Snowmass runs until 9PM for Ullr Nights, named after the Norse god of snow. After eating dinner at the Elk Camp cafeteria-style restaurant, with live music, head out with the family for tubing (\$33 per person per hour; reserve in advance, as it often sells out), snowbike tours (\$69 per person), ice skating on a small pond (free skate rentals) and snowshoe tours. There's always a massive snow sculpture for kids to climb and slide on too.

Warm up by the bonfire (bring or purchase s'mores fixings). \$9, 970.923.1227, aspensnowmass.com

MISCELLANEOUS Aspen Motorsports Park

From mid-June to mid-September, learn to handle a sleek Toyota Spec Racer on this eight-cornered, mile-long race track built in 1963. From \$995 per person, 550 Raceway Road, Woody Creek, 970.923.0713, aspenmotorsports.com

The Cooking School of Aspen

Expand your culinary knowledge at this new venue, slated to open in

early 2016, with classes for all skill levels. Instructors include culinary team members from Rustique Bistro, local chefs and the occasional celeb toque. Keep an eye out for themed events and pop-up restaurant nights. 305 E. Hopkins Ave., 970.920.2002, cookingsschoolofaspen.com

Disc Golf

Both Aspen Mountain and Snowmass ski areas have disc golf courses; Snowmass, in fact, has two. And the one at Aspen is the highest official disc golf course in the world. You'll need to buy a gondola ticket to access any of the

Make a Run for It

When he's not presiding over services at St. Peter's of the Valley Episcopal Church in Basalt, Father **Will Fisher** (aka "the Faster Pastor") trains on local trails for ultrarunning events like the Leadville 100 and the Angeles Crest 100. He shares three of his favorites, short and long. For maps, check in at the Ute Mountaineer (210 S. Galena St., Aspen) or Independence Run and Hike (586 Highway 133, Carbondale). —CH

Arbaney Kittle Trail, Basalt

"The first 2 miles are almost all steeply uphill, but past that, the slope mellows out significantly, undulating through sage flats, alpine meadows and aspen groves. You get views of Capitol [Peak] and Mount Sopris, and of Basalt Mountain too. I turn around after another couple of miles [along the ridgeline]."

Red Hill, Carbondale

"From late fall through early spring, I'll run up the Three Gulch Trail, then do the Bogus Trail/Faerie Trail loop. It's about a 6-mile lollipop-shaped route. This is classic Southwestern juniper-pinyon woodland with red sandstone formations. It almost feels like you've traveled to Utah."

Four Pass Loop, Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness outside of Aspen

"This is an epic run. Most people do it as a backpack trip, but a fit, tough runner can do it in a day. The physical challenge is amazing. It's a little over the distance of a marathon but with 8,000 feet of climbing, so take your marathon time and double it. Start at the Maroon Lake trailhead, then go up Buckskin Pass and do the loop counterclockwise. That gives you relatively steeper uphill and gentler downhill. Bring lots of food, a way to purify water, a rain jacket, warm clothes and a headlamp. Start early and don't go by yourself."



BIRCH PHOTO BY ANCHIE CARDANO/CH

"I love the mindfulness of skinning [up the ski area], that whole idea of being very center and focused. It's the first time in my entire life where I've felt connected to the mountain. Last winter I skinned up Ajax every Sunday. It never gets easier. I think that's why it's my favorite."

—ALBERT SANFORD, OWNER, GALERIE MAXIMILLIAN

courses (unless you hike up). Discs are available to rent at Four Mountain Sports in Snowmass; at Aspen, borrow a disc at the ski patrol's top-of-mountain headquarters. Free, aspensnowmass.com

Krabloonik

This dog-sledding kennel was under fire the past several years as the longtime owner was indicted for animal cruelty, but an ownership change in summer 2014 brings a brighter future. Morning and afternoon dog-sled rides, with 10 hearty huskies pulling the way, include lunch at Krabloonik's fine-dining log cabin restaurant, while twilight rides end with dinner. In summer, kennel tours are available. From \$285, 4250 Divide Road, Snowmass Village, 970.923.3953, krabloonik.com

Segway Aspen

From June through September, tour the West End neighborhood or the area near the base of Red Mountain via this unique two-wheeled motorized option. From \$75, 520 E. Durant Ave. (inside Surefoot), 970.319.6387, aspengliders.com

Ultimate Taxi

For more than 30 years, the Ultimate Taxi has provided not just a ride, but an experience. Imagine a

1978 yellow Checker cab that practically pulses as it slowly cruises through downtown Aspen. Owner Jon Barnes has decked out the interior with neon lights, lasers, strobes, 3-D effects, a fog machine and a kicking sound system (he plays along on an electronic keyboard, sax and drum kit), all livestreamed on the Web. \$200 for a 45-minute ride, 970.404.1290, ultimatetaxi.com

RODEO

Carbondale Wild West Rodeo

Held on Thursday nights from early June through mid-August, this quintessential small-town rodeo carries on Carbondale's ranching heritage, with bull and bronco riding, barrel racing, team roping, kids' mutton bustin' and more. \$10, Gus Darien Riding Arena, County Road 100, carbondalerodeo.com

Snowmass Rodeo

More touristy than the Carbondale rodeo but still a lot of fun, the 40-plus-year-old Snowmass rodeo runs Wednesday nights from mid-June through mid-August and includes kids' activities, Westernwear vendors and a pre-rodeo barbecue dinner. Tickets from \$20, 2735 Brush Creek Road, Snowmass Village, 970.923.8898, snowmassrodeo.org

UP IN THE AIR

Above It All Balloon Company

Wake up early and get carried away over the Elk Mountains on an hourlong hot air balloon ride, followed by a Champagne picnic brunch. \$295, 970.963.6148, aboveitallballoon.com

Aspen Heli Charter

Book a scenic flight on the Eurocopter 130B4 and see the Rocky Mountains like never before. The heli holds six and has a range of 300 miles. Call for pricing, 970.948.4354, aspenheli charter.com

Aspen Paragliding

Get the true bird's-eye view of Aspen. Tandem flights with certified pilots are available multiple times a day (depending on weather) summer and winter. If you're hooked and want to learn how to fly solo, Aspen Paragliding offers instruction and certification. \$250, 426 S. Spring St., 970.925.6975, aspenparagliding.com

Unicorn Balloon Company

An hourlong balloon ride through the skies above Aspen is capped off with a Champagne brunch. \$295, 970.925.5752, unicornballoon.com

WATER SPORTS

Aspen Kayak & SUP Academy



UPHILL FAST
Lindsay Plant at the Skimo
World Championships

The Skinny on Skinning

Carbondale native **Lindsay Plant** is one of the fastest female ski mountaineering (or skimo) racers in the country. Last winter, she placed sixth with her partner at the International Ski Mountaineering Federation World Championships in Verbier, Switzerland. Why skin uphill as well as ski down? "I love having something to train for, and I love a challenge," says Plant. Here, her tips for getting started. —TWS

What tricks have you learned to make skinning uphill more enjoyable?

The lighter the gear, the easier you fly uphill—and the more fun it becomes!

Favorite uphill routes?

I really enjoy training and skinning up Aspen Highlands. It's such a great mountain, and getting to ski the Bowl never gets old. I also love the "Three-Pass Loop" that includes Pearl Pass, Star Pass and Taylor Pass.

What gear do you recommend for the recreational uphiller?

Lightweight, midpriced [alpine touring] gear such as La Sportiva Syborg skis and boots (sportiva.com), or Dynafit PDGs (dynafit.com).

What's a good first event for an aspiring skimo racer?

The Heathen Challenge at Sunlight Mountain Resort (sunlightmtn.com) is a great place to start. It's a good distance—still hard and technical—but doable, and the course gives you a taste of what skimo racing is all about.

Aspen's four ski areas allow uphillers—with alpine touring or telemark gear, snowshoes or traction devices attached to hiking boots or shoes—but each mountain's policy differs slightly. At Aspen Mountain, you must summit via the designated uphill route by 9AM (or turn around). Aspen Highlands uphillers must follow the designated route and pass the Merry-Go-Round restaurant by 9AM. Buttermilk allows uphillers all day on two designated routes. Snowmass allows uphillers all day everywhere except Adams Avenue. You can even bring your dog—as long as he's leashed both uphill and down. aspensnowmass.com

Run by ace kayaker and SUP pioneer Charlie MacArthur, the school offers instruction on the Roaring Fork and Colorado rivers, plus pool rolling sessions for kids and adults. From \$220, 970.925.4433, aspenkayakacademy.com

Aspen Whitewater Rafting

With a solid group of longtime guides, the company offers morning and afternoon raft trips on the Roaring Fork and

"I love taking wildflower hikes, particularly on the Capitol Creek Trail in Old Snowmass."

—MISH TWORKOWSKI, CUSTOM JEWELER

Colorado rivers, as well as inflatable kayak trips on a fun section of the Roaring Fork and rafting on the nearby Arkansas River. From \$81, 520 E. Durant Ave., 970.920.3511, aspenwhitewater.com

Blazing Adventures

Among the rafting and inflatable kayak trips on the Roaring Fork, the Colorado and the Arkansas is the triple Shoshone—which lets you "lap" these Class 3 rapids on the Colorado. Blazing also runs half-day SUP trips. From \$90, 555 E. Durant Ave., 970.923.6605; Snowmass Village Mall, 970.923.6605, blazingadventures.com

Elk Mountain Expeditions

Run by three young locals,

Elk Mountain specializes in rafting, inflatable kayak and late-season adventure tubing trips on the Roaring Fork. From \$80, 510 E. Durant Ave., 970.456.6287, elkmtexpeditions.com

Kiwi Adventure Ko.

These small-raft trips (two guests and a guide) on the Roaring Fork include full-moon outings. \$95, 970.948.4818, kiwiadventureko.com

Shaboomee Paddleboards

Say yes to adventure with Shaine Ebrahimi, owner of the Carbondale-based company responsible for creating the innovative SplitSUP. His array of lessons includes SUP yoga and fitness. From \$150, 970.315.2224, shaboomee.com



PRETTY IN PINK
Fireweed blooms in abundance near West Maroon Pass.

Nature's Fireworks

Avid hiker **Karin Teague**, executive director of the Independence Pass Foundation, knows where to find summer's most vibrant wildflower displays. She shares three favorites near Aspen, noting that blooms will be at their best from the beginning to the middle of each month, depending on when winter snows melt away. —CH

JUNE

Sunnyside Trail: "Go for the early sun-loving flowers, including huge patches of cheery yellow balsamroot, spring bluebells and all three colors of violets—white, purple and yellow."

JULY

Cathedral Lake/Electric Pass Trail: "Look for tall bouquets of our state flower, columbine, and the delightful tassel-flowered meadow rue in the lower aspen groves. Near the lake and higher up toward the pass, look for rosy and yellow paintbrush and hybrids of both; large-flowered old man of the mountain; and a huge variety of ground-hugging, brightly colored alpine flowers, including pink moss campion and rosy dwarf clover."

AUGUST

Upper Lost Man Trail: "This high-alpine basin filled with lakes, tarns and crisscrossing streams stays wet into late summer and therefore holds the flowers well into August. Look for late-blooming gentian—including the deep-purple fringed gentian, blue bottle gentian and dusky star gentian—as well as the lovely water-loving queen's crown and hard-to-find alpine lousewort."

Socially Active

Locals know that when it comes to working out, it's more fun with friends. Whether you ride, run or skin uphill, there's a local active meet-up for you. —TWS

Maroon Belles Trail Club

This local trail running club geared mostly to female runners meets three to four times per week for track workouts, early morning and post-work trail runs, and long weekend epics. Come winter, the group transitions to uphill ski activity. Request to join the Maroon Belles Trail Club Facebook page for weekly updates.

Aspen Trailheads

Led by a local running coach and a guide for Aspen Alpine Guides, Aspen Trailheads meets for Track Tuesdays (6:30AM at the Aspen School District track, 235 High School Road); Thirsty Thursdays (6:30PM at the Old Power House, 590 N. Mill St., for a run followed by brews and food); and Saturday morning runs. Join the Aspen Trailheads Facebook page for more info.

Run, Bend, Brew

From June through early September, Lululemon Athletica and the Aspen Brewing Company host a 3-mile run followed by 30 minutes of yoga and free pizza and beer on the second, third and fourth Wednesdays of the month. Meet at Lululemon (204 S. Galena St.) at 6:30PM.

Girls Outside

These intermediate to advanced group mountain-bike rides take place at 6PM every Tuesday during bike season, with evening tailgate festivities following. The group switches to weekly skins up Buttermilk's Tiehack in winter (same day/time). Request to join the Girls Outside Facebook page for weekly location info.



RUNNING START
The Maroon Belles Trail Club gets some scenic inspiration.

FLOWER PHOTO BY CINDY HIRSCH; RUNNING PHOTO BY ANH DROGERS