

THE BEST PLACES TO

SKI & STAY

IN NORTH AMERICA



Hobnobbing at Telluride, which garnered the highest score for local ambience on North America's mountains

WE SHARE THE TOP SKI EXPERIENCES, AS VOTED BY READERS IN OUR **FIFTEENTH ANNUAL SURVEY**—FROM THE MOUNTAIN RESORTS THAT LET POWDER HOUNDS PLAY HARD TO THE HOTEL HAVENS THAT ENABLE YOU TO REST EVEN HARDER

TOP 20 SKI RESORTS

	●	■	◆	★	⚡	⚙️	🍷	🍴	☀️
1 Whistler Blackcomb, B.C.	15%	55%	30%	91.2	93.4	85.0	93.6	90.3	93.6
2 Telluride, Colo.	23%	36%	41%	89.9	94.3	90.3	85.4	85.6	94.0
3 Beaver Creek, Colo.	19%	43%	38%	89.4	91.9	90.7	86.3	87.8	90.2
4 Deer Valley, Utah	27%	41%	32%	89.0	92.1	91.0	83.1	88.3	90.4
5 Vail, Colo.	18%	29%	53%	88.4	94.7	76.5	91.6	90.2	88.8
6 Jackson Hole, Wyo.	10%	40%	50%	87.8	90.7	82.0	86.6	85.6	93.9
7 Aspen, Colo.	0%	48%	52%	87.5	89.1	79.1	90.2	90.4	88.8
7 Sun Valley, Idaho	36%	42%	22%	87.5	85.9	90.4	82.1	87.9	91.2
9 Park City, Utah	17%	50%	33%	83.4	87.4	76.7	82.6	83.6	86.4
10 Stowe, Vt.	16%	59%	25%	82.4	85.4	75.4	82.7	81.9	86.0
11 Steamboat, Colo.	14%	42%	44%	81.7	90.8	84.1	76.8	72.9	84.1
12 Crested Butte, Colo.	23%	57%	20%	80.9	89.8	84.4	71.2	72.9	85.9
13 Sun Peaks, B.C.	10%	58%	32%	80.3	91.3	90.0	75.9	66.7	76.9
14 Aspen Highlands, Colo.	18%	30%	52%	79.6	89.0	85.0	73.0	74.3	77.0
14 Mont Tremblant, Quebec	17%	33%	50%	79.6	79.7	70.8	83.9	77.6	86.1
16 Snowmass, Colo.	6%	50%	44%	78.7	93.7	84.1	69.9	70.6	74.9
17 Breckenridge, Colo.	14%	31%	55%	77.1	82.1	67.9	78.5	74.1	82.8
17 Squaw Valley, Calif.	25%	45%	30%	77.1	86.6	74.3	77.2	69.8	77.5
19 Sundance, Utah	20%	40%	40%	74.6	73.6	70.5	67.4	77.5	83.5
20 Mt. Bachelor, Ore.	15%	25%	60%	74.5	86.4	78.3	62.5	67.5	77.5

Bold-faced scores are the highest for their criterion.

● Beginner Trails ■ Intermediate Trails ◆ Expert Trails ★ Overall Score ⚡ Terrain & Conditions ⚙️ Lifts & Lines 🍷 Après-Ski/Activities 🍴 Local Dining ☀️ Local Ambience

METHODOLOGY The results of this Condé Nast Traveler poll were derived from our annual Readers' Choice Survey. The questionnaire was available to all readers through a secure Web site. The final tabulation of 25,916 responses was done by Global Market Insights, Inc., of Boston. Ski resorts were rated on a five-point scale: excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor on the criteria of Terrain and Conditions, Lifts and Lines, Après-Ski/Activities, Local Dining, and Local Ambience; ski hotels were rated excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor on the criteria of Rooms, Service, Dining/Food, Location, Overall Design, and Activities/Facilities. Criterion scores, which represent the percentage of respondents rating a ski resort or hotel excellent or very good, were averaged to determine the overall score. Only ski resorts and hotels that received a required minimum number of responses were eligible for inclusion in these rankings.

TOP 50 SKI HOTELS

	★	🛏️	🍴	🍷	🏠	🏆	🏠	📍
1 Westin Riverfront Resort & Spa, Avon, Colo.	96.9	98.5	95.2	94.7	97.6	97.9	97.3	\$179-\$499
2 Hotel Terra, Jackson Hole, Wyo.	95.4	95.5	90.9	100	95.5	95.5	95.2	\$139-\$359
3 Four Seasons Resort, Jackson Hole, Wyo.	94.7	95.1	92.7	92.7	95.1	92.7	100	\$275-\$525
4 Arabelle at Vail Square, Vail, Colo.	94.4	97.0	93.9	87.1	100	97.0	90.6	\$350-\$750
5 Amangani, Jackson Hole, Wyo.	94.1	95.0	95.0	95.0	90.0	100	89.5	\$565-\$1,700
6 Stowe Mountain Lodge, Stowe, Vt.	93.4	94.7	91.2	90.2	94.7	93.0	96.4	\$299-\$629
7 Little Nell, Aspen, Colo.	92.3	88.8	91.3	90.0	100	91.1	92.4	\$355-\$644
8 Sundance Resort, Sundance, Utah	92.2	89.3	89.3	92.9	89.3	96.4	96.3	\$159-\$399
9 Fairmont Chateau Whistler, Whistler, B.C.	91.0	87.2	90.4	87.8	94.7	90.4	95.5	\$259-\$799
10 Four Seasons Resort, Whistler, B.C.	90.9	93.2	94.9	87.9	83.1	91.5	94.8	\$300-\$1,020
11 Stein Eriksen Lodge, Park City, Utah	90.6	87.3	87.3	90.9	94.5	89.1	94.4	\$420-\$835
12 Mirror Lake Inn, Resort & Spa, Lake Placid, N.Y.	89.3	86.2	87.9	86.0	96.6	93.1	86.2	\$215-\$360
12 Teton Mountain Lodge & Spa, Jackson Hole, Wyo.	89.3	87.9	87.9	81.3	97.0	90.9	90.6	\$139-\$349
14 Ritz-Carlton, Bachelor Gulch, Avon, Colo.	89.2	89.8	85.4	85.4	91.5	90.8	92.2	\$299-\$699
15 Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise, Lake Louise, Alberta	89.0	88.1	87.5	83.8	97.1	91.9	85.2	\$275-\$393
15 Pitcher Inn, Warren, Vt.	89.0	90.0	85.7	95.0	85.7	85.7	100	\$425-\$650
17 St. Regis Aspen Resort, Aspen, Colo.	88.9	89.8	89.6	82.6	93.0	89.7	88.4	\$309-\$1,919
18 Hotel Telluride, Telluride, Colo.	87.6	88.5	88.5	88.0	96.2	80.8	83.3	\$261-\$330
19 Sonnenalp Resort of Vail, Vail, Colo.	87.4	87.5	90.0	76.9	90.0	90.0	90.0	\$230-\$900
20 Rimrock Resort Hotel, Banff, Alberta	87.1	87.5	85.0	84.6	85.0	92.5	88.2	\$178-\$198
21 Woodstock Inn & Resort, Woodstock, Vt.	87.0	87.5	80.0	87.5	92.5	87.5	87.2	\$210-\$459
22 Equinox Golf Resort & Spa, Manchester, Vt.	86.6	83.1	92.2	78.1	93.8	87.7	84.5	\$179-\$399
23 Mountain Lodge, Telluride, Colo.	86.5	92.0	92.0	65.0	92.0	88.0	85.7	\$119-\$259
23 Pan Pacific Whistler Mountainside, Whistler, B.C.	86.5	88.0	84.0	62.5	96.0	96.0	91.7	\$199-\$349
25 Fairmont Banff Springs, Banff, Alberta	86.1	73.6	85.1	80.9	97.5	91.1	88.1	\$279-\$409

Bold-faced scores are the highest for their criterion. Rates quoted are for doubles during the month of December.

★ Overall Score 🛏️ Rooms 🍴 Service 🍷 Dining/Food 🏠 Location 🏠 Overall Design 🏆 Activities/Facilities 📍 Rates for doubles

AFTER THE GOLD RUSH

Skiers can capitalize on the upgrades put in place for Whistler Blackcomb's recent Olympics-hosting duties. Thanks to \$17.6 million in new snowmaking, classic runs such as the Dave Murray Downhill (on which Lindsey Vonn won gold) are skiable even earlier and later into the season. The bobsled and skeleton tracks at the Whistler Sliding Centre are open to the fearless, and there's a wider, more scenic Sea-to-Sky Highway from Vancouver to the resort. Hail a Whistler Taxi at the airport—you won't need a car in the pedestrian-friendly village (604-932-3333; one-way from Vancouver, \$240-\$260).



COLD COMFORT

The days of freezing your tuckus off on the lift may be going the way of the dodo, starting at The Canyons in Park City, Utah, which debuts North America's first heated chairlift this season. Seats warmed to about 55 degrees keep you toasty, while a transparent overhead bubble swings down to protect you from the elements. The high-speed quad lift connects the Grand Summit Hotel with the Sun Peak lift.



The Canyons' new bubble lift lets riders stay snug.



EVERGREEN GEAR

Make Swany's Eco-Pipe your gloves always and forever. Created from a polyester manufactured by Japanese textile giant Teijin, they can be recycled over and over again via a chemical process that uses 84 percent less energy than is required to produce the original petroleum-based product. Wear them out (these are high-quality gloves, so it will take a while), and then send them back to Swany in the included envelope; the company recycles them and gives you a 10 percent discount on a new pair (swanyamerica.com; \$55).

921

Total skiable acres at Maine's Sugarloaf for the 2010-11 season, including 270 new gladed acres opening in Brackett Basin. The expansion makes the resort the largest east of the Rockies.

752

Total skiable acres at Vermont's Killington, formerly the largest resort in the East. Killington still has the region's most trails (141) and lifts (22, with a system capacity of 37,535 people per hour).

SOFT LANDING

A new 121-room Four Seasons Resort debuts this month in Colorado's Vail Village (416-445-5031; doubles, \$375-\$575).

TOP 50 SKI HOTELS

	★	🛏️	👤	🍴	🌐	🏠	✔️	💰
26 Marriott's Timber Lodge, Lake Tahoe, Calif.	86.0	89.8	84.7	63.5	94.9	88.1	92.9	\$129-\$319
27 Rusty Parrot Lodge, Jackson Hole, Wyo.	85.1	85.7	95.2	90.5	81.0	81.0	75.0	\$205-\$970
28 Park Hyatt Beaver Creek Resort and Spa, Avon, Colo.	85.0	78.5	82.6	75.2	96.7	86.9	89.9	\$179-\$849
29 Lodge & Spa at Cordillera, Vail Valley, Colo.	84.9	90.5	81.0	85.7	81.0	81.0	90.5	\$179-\$376
30 Timberline Lodge, Timberline, Ore.	84.7	68.8	84.4	84.4	93.8	93.5	83.9	\$135-\$320
31 Sunriver Resort, Sunriver, Ore.	84.3	79.2	79.2	74.5	92.5	84.9	96.0	\$149-\$284
32 Resort at Squaw Creek, Lake Tahoe, Calif.	84.2	85.3	79.4	70.6	91.2	91.2	87.5	\$179-\$359
33 Westin Resort & Spa, Whistler, B.C.	83.6	87.7	78.5	72.1	92.3	87.7	82.3	\$208-\$462
34 Green Mountain Inn, Stowe, Vt.	83.3	75.0	87.5	75.0	95.8	91.7	75.0	\$99-\$409
34 Sun Valley Lodge, Sun Valley, Idaho	83.3	73.7	84.2	80.4	93.0	80.7	87.7	\$189-\$359
36 Stoweflake Mountain Resort & Spa, Stowe, Vt.	83.2	82.5	87.1	74.7	87.7	81.9	85.0	\$199-\$359
37 The Canyons Grand Summit Hotel, Park City, Utah	83.1	90.4	80.4	68.0	86.5	82.7	90.2	\$153-\$513
38 Sugarbush Inn, Warren, Vt.	82.6	69.0	82.8	82.8	96.6	72.4	92.6	\$132-\$197
39 Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe Resort, Spa & Casino, Incline Village, Nev.	82.5	83.3	81.3	78.7	89.6	83.3	78.3	\$225-\$1,100
40 The Charter at Beaver Creek, Beaver Creek, Colo.	82.4	84.0	92.0	65.2	96.0	76.0	80.0	\$240-\$795
41 Beaver Creek Lodge, Beaver Creek, Colo.	81.8	81.2	85.1	67.7	92.0	80.2	84.5	\$294-\$984
42 Vail Cascade Resort & Spa, Vail, Colo.	81.5	80.8	82.1	71.8	83.5	81.0	89.7	\$199-\$589
43 Hilton Whistler Resort & Spa, Whistler, B.C.	81.0	88.9	85.2	42.3	100	85.2	83.3	\$158-\$309
44 Snake River Lodge & Spa, Jackson Hole, Wyo.	80.9	80.0	71.1	72.1	93.3	82.2	86.4	\$175-\$500
45 Lodge at Vail, Vail, Colo.	80.8	74.2	83.9	79.3	93.5	74.2	79.3	\$229-\$1,020
46 Peaks Resort & Golden Door Spa, Telluride, Colo.	80.7	72.1	78.6	59.5	92.9	90.7	90.5	\$189-\$499
47 Summit at Big Sky, Big Sky, Mont.	79.7	75.0	75.0	57.9	95.0	85.0	89.5	\$183-\$470
48 Trapp Family Lodge, Stowe, Vt.	78.8	72.9	78.0	72.0	83.7	83.7	83.0	\$268-\$409
49 Alyeska Resort, Girdwood, Alaska	78.5	85.2	72.6	62.9	87.1	82.3	81.4	\$169-\$190
50 Lodges at Deer Valley, Park City, Utah	78.0	84.0	88.0	60.0	84.0	75.0	72.7	\$290-\$760

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MOUNTAIN CONNECTIONS

Vail Resorts' new EpicMix app allows riders at Vail, Beaver Creek, Breckenridge, Keystone, and Heavenly not only to capture their mountain mojo but to share it with others. Using radio-frequency identification, the app can track the vertical feet skied over the course of a day—data that you can post on Facebook and Twitter. And like location-tracking social networks Foursquare and Gowalla, EpicMix hands out virtual "awards" for dedication: Ten runs in one day on the same lift at any of the five resorts gets you The Monogamist pin; 25 days at Heavenly earns an Archangel pin. The app has more practical uses too: It can track down friends and family on the mountain and allows users to message them (epicmix.com; free for iPhone and Android).

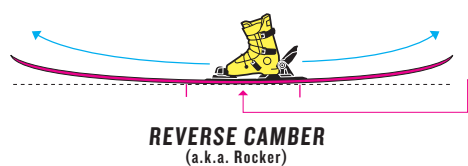


SHAPE UP

The evolution in ski and snowboard design puts the spotlight on camber—the curvature from the contact points of tip and tail with the snow. Here's what you need to know about contour variation in order to carve the perfect turn.



The skis you've been arching turns on for decades cooperate because of the **convex rise that peaks at the ski's midpoint**. The pressure exerted when camber is flexed under your weight results in full edge contact on snow and pop when released for transition to the next turn. Best for: Frontside groomers, packed powder, crud. Ski it: **Völkl Mantra** (\$825).



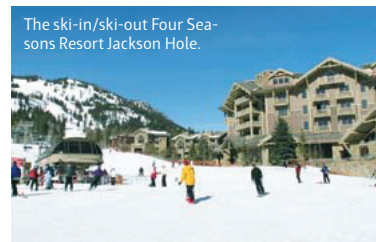
The concave shape of skis with rocker is exactly opposite the traditional shape. The U bend moves the **contact point with snow closer to your feet**, while maintaining less edge contact. The elevated tip and tail allow the ski to surf above the fluff, eliminating the need to sit back on your sticks. Best for: Powder, glades. Ski it: **Salomon Rocker** (\$1,175).

57

Percent of skiers and snowboarders wearing helmets at U.S. ski areas last season (19 percent more than in the 2008-09 season and 39 percent more than in 2002-03).

59.7 MILLION

Total snowboarder/skier visits in the U.S. last winter, a 4.2 percent increase over the previous season.



The ski-in/ski-out Four Seasons Resort Jackson Hole.

FANCY FOOTWORK

If you're in the market for a new pair of skis, consider the Four Seasons Resort Jackson Hole's **Ticket to the Tetons** package. The four-night stay includes a pair of custom, handmade skis by Igneous, mounted with Look Pivot bindings, whose turntable heel helps curb knee injuries. Igneous has been pressing skis since 1994, mostly for locals seeking fat powder sticks that can survive a full winter in the Tetons. Be sure to book and connect with Igneous to design your skis at least 60 days in advance of your trip. The package also includes a three-day lift ticket and a full-day private guide to help you find the powder stashes (307-732-5000; four-night package, \$2,135).

NEW BED SPREAD

In Utah, the ski-in/ski-out Montage Deer Valley opens mid-mountain this month (435-604-1300; doubles, \$845-\$1,045).

Reported by Alex C. Pasquariello