

# SUMMER REIGNS IN VAIL VALLEY

Ask folks who live in Vail, Colorado why they moved to this gorgeous stretch of the Rocky Mountains—an easy two-hour drive west of the Denver International Airport—and the answer is almost always, “For the skiing.” But if you ask them why they stayed, the answer is unanimous: “For the summer.” That’s because there’s even more to do in the mountains when the snow has melted and the crowds have disappeared. Mountain biking, hiking, river rafting, horseback riding, hanging by the pool—what’s your pleasure? You’ll find it all here. And with hotel and condominium rates at roughly half what they cost in the winter, you’ll have money to do them all.

## DO

- **Sage Outdoor Adventures** (970-476-3700) offers guided river-rafting trips on the Colorado River that range from “float” to “roar.” See the 14,000-foot peaks of Sawatch Mountain Range by horseback on a trail ride at **4 Eagle Ranch** (970-926-3372), 20 minutes from Vail. Or climb onto a mountain bike and learn the difference between an endo and a biff—and how to not do either—with a private family lesson at **Vail Mountain Bike Camps** (970-470-3431).
- **The Eagle Bahn Gondola** carries you to the top of Vail Mountain from Lionshead Place, where you’ll be treated to dizzying mountain and valley views. Bring a picnic and take a sunset hike before you dig in (there are restaurants at the peak, too). Kids under 12 ride free all summer with one paid adult; Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays everyone rides for free from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. (970-476-9090).
- Get muddy in the **Teva MXT Mud Run**. An event that’s part of the rowdy Teva Mountain Games (June 3–6). The run has kids plow through a one-mile lap around Golden Peak base—

adults do three. Over the action-packed weekend, there are 21 events such as trail running, mountain biking and kayaking open to amateur and professional athletes.

[www.tevamountaingames.com](http://www.tevamountaingames.com).

- Be inspired by dancers from around the world performing at the **Vail International Dance Festival** (July 27–August 10). This year the festival opens with a performance by the King of Tap, Savion Glover (this show sells out, so reserve tickets ASAP). Some events are free. Tickets for others start at \$10. [www.vaildance.org](http://www.vaildance.org).

## EAT

- **Blue Moose Pizza** is a local’s favorite partly because it’s affordable, but also because its specialty pizzas are delicious. Try the Cowboy Pizza with diced chicken and smoked gouda cheese (675 Lionshead Place, 970-476-8666).
- Got a hankering for some barbecue? The grill-masters at **Moe’s Original Bar B Que** have brought a taste of Alabama to the Rockies (675 W Lionshead Cir, 970-479-7888).

## STAY

- The **Manor Vail Lodge**, renovated in 2009, is family friendly, with two heated swimming pools, four hot tubs and a fitness center. Rooms start at \$199/night (595 E Vail Valley Dr, 800-950-8245).
- **Vail Marriott Mountain Resort and Spa** is a three-minute walk from the Eagle Bahn Gondola and has rooms starting at \$230/night (715 W. Lionshead Circle, 800-648-0720).

For even more fun, go to [www.visitvailvalley.com](http://www.visitvailvalley.com)

## A la Carte Family Fun

### Colorado

Fly across a gorge on a zip-line from **Lost Canyon Zipline Tours** near Salida (877-947-5463)... raft the Arkansas River through the Royal Gorge with **Arkansas River Tours** (800-321-4352)... climb Mount Bierstadt near Georgetown, a 14,000-foot peak and six mile round-trip hike.

### Lake Tahoe

Look a fish in the eye without getting wet at the **Taylor Creek Stream Profile Chamber** in South Lake Tahoe (530-543-2674)... paddle Tahoe with kayaks from **Timber Cove Beach Marina** (530-544-2011)... fly over Tahoe in a hot air balloon (530-544-4004)... take a spectacular hike on the Rim Trail.