

Navigator

The Getaway

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A skier tackles the famous Big Couloir at Big Sky Resort



Go Big

Montana's Big Sky Resort celebrates its 50th anniversary by getting even bigger—and better

The Getaway



Clockwise from above: guided headlamp night skiing on Andesite Mountain; a guest room at the Summit Hotel; dining with a view at Everett's 8800; sesame-crusted ahi at Peaks Chophouse

For 50 years, Montana's Big Sky Resort has lured skiers more interested in its formidable terrain than a rollicking après scene or plush accommodations. Now, as the resort wraps up a reported \$150 million redevelopment plan that includes an array of elevated amenities, Big Sky is poised to rival North America's most polished mountain destinations. For all the mod upgrades, though, the ski area feels refreshingly old-school, and its main draws remain the same as ever: soaring Rocky Mountain views, a generous acre-plus of terrain per skier, and 400 annual inches of that lighter-than-air powder aficionados call "cold smoke." Here's our guide to the bigger, better Big Sky.

See & Do

With 5,850 acres of terrain connected by 38 lifts, Big Sky Resort is the closest thing to the Alps you'll find stateside. Grab some warm-up runs off the Swift Current 6—the fastest six-person chair in North America—before cruising over to the Powder Seeker lift for a spin around The Bowl. Then hit the summit: A new, state-of-the-art Lone Peak Tram debuts this season, with supersize cabins that zip 75 skiers up Lone Mountain in less than four minutes. The easiest way down is Liberty

Bowl, but experts test their mettle on the Big Couloir, a bucket-list chute that dives 1,400 vertical feet. If your quads aren't begging for mercy come sunset, try guided headlamp night skiing on Andesite Mountain's gorgeous groomers. Nordic types, meanwhile, will find sublime cross-country skiing a short drive away at **Lone Mountain Ranch**, where roughly 50 miles of pristine, track-set trails wind through snowy meadows and fir forest. Either way, you'll want to set aside time for some R&R at Montage Big Sky's **Spa Montage**. (The 90-minute Pure Bliss body treatment lives up to its name.)

Eat & Drink

Big Sky's culinary scene has risen to new heights both on and off the slopes. Atop Andesite Mountain, tuck into decadent grilled-cheese sandwiches and Wagyu burgers with tomato bacon jam at **Everett's 8800**. In the Mountain

Village, check out the sleek new food court, **Vista Hall**, for stone-fired pizzas, steaming bowls of ramen, and creative tacos. The area's hottest après scene is at the Montage's indoor-outdoor **Backcast Bar & Grill**, where guests sip adult boba and other fun drinks. The Summit Hotel's signature dining venue, **Peaks Chophouse**, serves succulent cuts of Montana beef with shareable sides. For Asian-inspired fare made with local ingredients, head to Big Sky's vibrant town center and chef Alex Omania's **Lotus Pad**, where traditional ski-slope difficulty ratings indicate the spiciness of each dish.

Stay



You won't find lodging closer to the slopes than at the aptly named **Summit Hotel**. Fresh off a top-to-bottom renovation, the property's 213 guest rooms and suites exude a chic, alpine aesthetic—think gas fireplaces, pillow-strewn settees, and sweeping mountain views. Guests can avail themselves of door-to-door shuttle service, an on-site ski concierge, and a complimentary cocktail at the reimagined slopeside Carabiner Lounge.



Courtesy of Big Sky Resort (all photos)