

TRAVEL AND OUTDOORS

Summer: Colorado's Other High Season

Summer tourism to the high country's most sought-after winter destinations is experiencing an unprecedented boom. If you haven't made plans to head for the hills when the weather warms, you should do so right away. Here's why.

BY **LINDSEY B. KOEHLER**

APRIL 17 2015, 11:17 AM



Stand-up paddleboarding on the Slate River near Crested Butte. —Photo courtesy of Irwin Guides

BRECKENRIDGE

MUSH » SUMMER DOG SLEDDING

Orion Paiement will say almost anything to convince you *not* to try the scooter tour (\$75 per person) at **Snow Cap Sled Dogs**, an activity he began offering six years ago at his Breckenridge dog-sledding operation. And although it's weird having to persuade a business owner to take your money, Paiement has good reason to be cautious: This is a pursuit designed solely for thrill-seekers. If you can demonstrate some fundamental skills like skidding, stopping, and starting, he'll let you loose with his best sled dogs. Here's how it works: The scooter is basically a jacked-up version of a Razor. The dogs—purebred Siberian huskies—are hooked to a rope, which runs into a recoil system on the scooter. As soon as you push off and get both feet on your ride, the dogs are running at full tilt on a muddy trail through the forest. For 45 minutes, you'll splash through puddles, skid around turns, speed down hills (thank you, God, for brakes), and try to calm your racing heart while your four-legged friends lap water. It's electrifying. When you return to the kennel, you'll be grimy, covered in paw prints, and raring to go again.



Percent increase in summer lodging occupancy rates in Breckenridge over the past three years





BRECKENRIDGE MUSIC FESTIVAL'S CHAMPAGNE SERIES

Musical notes—originating from violins and cellos—reverberate through the open-format living room. But these beautiful sounds aren't coming from a Bose speaker: Instead, four musicians from the **Breckenridge Music Festival** are creating an old-fashioned version of surround sound in a private home.

It's an intimate experience that chamber music aficionados rarely encounter, which is why BMF organizers launched the summer **Champagne Series** brunch concerts five years ago. For \$65, music fans mingle over mimosas and catered eats before sitting down to enjoy 90 minutes of music (the selections rotate every Sunday during the mid-July through August run) played by visiting musicians in the cozy confines of a different host home each week. Tickets go on sale in early spring, and limited seating means they won't be available for long.

GUIDED HIKES

Introduce your kids to the vast world of hiking the easy way: with a chairlift replacing the uphill climb. **The Guided Hiking Program's** scenic chair and nature hike packages (\$29 per person), which the resort began offering in 2011, include guided one-mile walks that reveal peeks at the resort's high-alpine garden—featuring more than 80 species of wildflowers—offer insight into the region's history and ecology, and provide all-encompassing views of town, the Continental Divide, and Mt. Baldy. Lasting approximately two hours, these outdoor full-family excursions are just short enough to keep your kiddos' attention (kids age five and older are welcome) and just long enough to make them ready for bed a bit early.



WHERE TO STAY

The Bivvi Hostel

Inside Scoop: Don't be dissuaded by the name: This charming log cabin, which opened in November 2013, is nothing like that dusty hostel where you stayed during your European

backpacking trip. Beautifully appointed private rooms—the two-person supersuite has a king bed made of pine, an en suite bathroom, and a balcony—and lovely shared bunk rooms are both available at reasonable prices (rates vary). If that’s not enough to rid the “hostel” image from your mind, consider this: The Bivvi also has a fire pit, a bar, an outdoor hot tub, and complimentary breakfast.

One Ski Hill Place

Inside Scoop: Convenience is the word at this luxury lodge—as in walk out the door to reach Peak 8’s Summer Fun Park (mini-golf, an alpine slide, and a zip line, which typically open in June). Room options range from a studio to a four-bedroom condo; prices start at \$200 per night. Plus, there’s a hotel bowling alley, and guests can hitch rides into town on a free shuttle. Find out more at visitbreck.com.

WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK



The Warming Hut Restaurant & Bar

You Should Order: An edamame and chickpea burger (a flavor-packed take on the veggie burger) with sweet potato fries.

You Should Sit: Near the Colorado flag–painted cornhole boards on the outdoor patio at this three-year-old spot.

Relish

You Should Order: The cocktail of the day (it was pomegranate lemonade with vodka when we

were there) to pair with an app from the seasonal menu.

You Should Sit: On the patio for the two-for-\$10 happy hour (one drink, one appetizer) from 4 to 6 p.m.

Broken Compass Brewing

You Should Order: The spicy Chili Pepper Pale Ale—five peppers make appearances in the year-old brewery’s suds—which is sure to wake you up just in time for dinner.

You Should Sit: In one of the old lift chairs turned into bench seating.

Après Handcrafted Libations

You Should Order: Any of the 30 beers on tap at this one-and-a-half-year-old bar—or, if you’re not driving, a Buffalo Trace Distillery flight of three spirits (\$16).

You Should Sit: At the bar for a nightcap.

—Images courtesy of: Daliah Singer; Breckenridge Music Festival; iStock, Loko Ltd.

VAIL, BRECKENRIDGE, ASPEN, WINTER PARK, STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, CRESTED BUTTE, TELLURIDE, KEYSTONE, SUMMER, TOURISM, RESORTS

← PREVIOUS

1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8

NEXT →

SINGLE PAGE VIEW

5280.COM STORIES

FIND A... RESTAURANT, EVENT, ETC.

SUBSCRIBE