

TRACKS TO TRY

CALIFORNIA

Bear Valley Cross Country

Nestled in the super scenic High Sierra and surrounded by two wilderness areas, Bear Valley Cross Country offers some of the finest striding and skating anywhere! With impeccable grooming, expansive meadows, scenic ridge tops, snowshoeing, sledding, telemarking, backcountry, alpine skiing and lodging within walking distance, Bear Valley offers incredible adventures for everyone. 209/753-2834, www.bearvalleyxc.com.

Kirkwood Cross Country Center

Above all the rest with a base elevation of 7,800 feet and 80 km of machine groomed trails, Kirkwood offers unsurpassed scenery and the most exciting terrain in the west. The day lodge houses the ski school, a retail and rental shop including standard track, skate and backcountry skis as well as snowshoes and pulks. Kirkwood Mountain Resort is a full service destination resort. Lodging: 800/967-7500, Cross Country: 209/258-7248, www.kirkwood.com.

Sorensen's and Hope Valley Resorts

Your resort for all seasons in the Sierra Nevada. Sorensen's offers cozy housekeeping cabins, many with wood burning stoves, and delicious, homemade cuisine in the Country Café, serving 7 days per week. Located on the eastern edge of beautiful Hope Valley, a perfect spot for XC skiing, snowshoeing, fishing, hiking, biking or just plain relaxing. Conveniently close to Grover Hot Springs State Park, east of Kirkwood and 20 minutes South of Lake Tahoe. For reservations or more information, 800/423-9949, www.sorensensresort.com.

Tahoe Donner

Recipient of the Sierra Sun's "Best Place to Ski Award" for 2005. 115 km of groomed trails. Day lodge with rentals, clothing, accessories and freshly baked goods. Weekends and holidays—baked goods, soups and sandwiches are available at the Cookhouse, one of our

five on-trail warming huts. Ski school with PSIA certified instructors to help you with your technique. Night skiing on Wednesdays, 5 – 7 p.m. from December 29 – February 23. For more information call 530/587-9484 or visit www.tdxc.com.

COLORADO

Devil's Thumb Ranch

A 2003 Fischer Nordic Poll of avid cross-country enthusiasts rated Devil's Thumb Ranch #1 for scenery, #4 for grooming, and #7 overall out of all Nordic resorts in North America. With more than 125 km of groomed trails nestled in the pristine and private Ranch Creek valley at the base of the Continental Divide, we're the premiere Nordic center in Colorado for skate or classic Nordic skiing. Take a group lesson from one of our friendly instructors or an advanced technique clinic. A wide variety of quality equipment is available for purchase or rental, including infant sleds and skijoring rigs. Call 800-933-4339 or visit www.devilsthumbbranch.com.

Glen Eden Resort

Surrounded by high country cattle ranches and National Forest, this small resort north of Steamboat Springs offers the best lodging value in NW Colorado. More than 80 km of perfectly groomed skiing. Unlimited backcountry trails and world class deep powder Telemark skiing. Beautiful views and sunshine. Average snowfall 400 inches. Hot tubs, sleigh rides, snowshoeing and guide service available. Clean, quiet, modern two-bedroom, two-bath cabins with kitchen and all of the comforts of home. Experience a true Colorado Nordic secret. 800/882-0854; www.glenedenresort.com.

Snow Mountain Ranch

Near Winter Park, Colorado—100+ km of groomed Nordic trails, ice skating, indoor swimming pool, sledding and tubing for kids of all ages. Cabins, lodge rooms, meals and activities—you'll find it all at Snow Mountain Ranch. For more information and

reservations: 970/887-2152, www.ymcarockies.org

MAINE

Aroostook County

Aroostook County in Northern Maine is the home of two Olympic caliber biathlon venues, has hosted World Cup Events, and has more than 200 kilometers of groomed Nordic ski trails all free to the public. These meticulously groomed trails offer quality skiing throughout the region. Many trails are lighted offering night skiing. There are currently 20 community Nordic trail systems offering an affordable getaway with amazing skiing opportunities. To learn more visit www.mainewsc.org or www.visitAroostook.com or call 888/216-2463.

MINNESOTA

Cascade Lodge

Located in the midst of Cascade River State Park overlooking Lake Superior. Historic main lodge, log cabins with fireplaces, some with kitchenette and whirlpool bath. Distinctive northwoods family restaurant. Great scenery on 50 km of groomed trails shared with the state park starting from our door. Trails groomed with state-of-the-art equipment. XC ski and snowshoe rentals available at the front desk. 3719 W. Hwy 61, Lutsen, MN 55612; 800/322-9543, www.cascadelodgemn.com.

Grand Rapids

The Grand Rapids area in northeastern Minnesota offers a wide variety of relatively undiscovered cross country ski trails. The area's 22 sets of ski trails offer challenge and variety for all skill levels. Standouts in this winter wonderland include the famed Suomi Hills that wind through the Chippewa National Forest and the Sugar Hills trails that traverse the newly designated Forest Legacy Lands. Ski trail information and updated grooming reports are available online all season long at www.visitgrandrapids.com.

**Gunflint Ski Trail System:
Boundary Country Trekking—
Banadad Ski Trail**

Ski the Gunflint's Banadad Trail—the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness' (BWCA) longest tracked trail and part of the 180km Gunflint Nordic Ski Trail System. Exclusive silent sport lodging along Banadad at Poplar Creek Guesthouse B&B, Ski-in Cabins and Wilderness Yurts. Snowshoeing and skijoring trails. Adventure trips including lodge to lodge and yurt skiing, dogsledding and other year round adventures. 800/322-8327, www.boundarycountry.com/portal.html.

**Central Gunflint Ski Trail System:
Bearskin Lodge—Golden Eagle Lodge**
Nationally renowned skiing on 77km of snowcat-groomed trails with a dependable average snowfall of 120 inches. Groomed for traditional and skate skiing accommodating all levels of difficulties. Night skiing, snowshoe trails, sauna, heated waxing room, ski lessons, ski & snowshoe rentals, ice skating rink and lit trail for night skiing can all be enjoyed while staying in modern lakeside cabins with fireplace, some deluxe with whirlpools. Early and off-season specials. Skiing right from your cabin door. Bearskin Lodge—800/338-4170. www.bearskin.com. Golden Eagle Lodge—800/346-2203, www.golden-eagle.com.

**Upper Gunflint Ski Trail System:
Gunflint Lodge—Heston's Lodge—
Gunflint Pines Resort**

Ski deep snow of the Laurentian Highlands November to April in NE Minnesota. 10+ feet annual snowfall, 80+ km groomed forest trails winding through cedar swamps and aspen ridges. Frequent wildlife encounters. Large A-frames, honeymoon suites, many with fireplace, hot tub, sauna. Breakfasts, packed lunches, gourmet dinners, pizza & beverages. Dog sledding, ski, snowshoe & snowmobile rentals, gift shops, ice fishing, sledding & nearby sleigh rides. Gunflint Lodge—800/328-3325, www.gunflint.com. Heston's Lodge—800/338-7230, www.hestons.com. Gunflint Pines Resort—800/533-5814, www.gunflintpines.com.

Maplelag Resort

Voted the #1 XC Ski Resort in North America 2002/2003 readers poll. Maplelag Resort offers 65km of custom groomed trail for all types of skiers. 46,000 sq. ft. lodge features folk art from around the world. Serving all-you-can-eat, made from scratch family style meals and four bottomless cookie jars. Ice skating rink, sledding hill, Nordic Terrain Park, saunas, steam room and state's largest spa make Maplelag a must-see Nordic destination. 800/654-7711, www.maplelag.com.

MONTANA

Lone Mountain Ranch

Experience western hospitality at this award winning guest ranch in the heart of Yellowstone Country. Over 80 km groomed trails, snowshoe trails and naturalist guided ski tours into Yellowstone Park. For downhill skiers, Big Sky Ski Resort is just six miles away. Cozy, comfortable log cabins, renowned cuisine and an old fashioned sleigh ride dinner are all a part of the vacation package. P.O. Box 160069, Big Sky, MT 59716 800/514-4644, lmr@lmranch.com, www.lmranch.com.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Waterville Valley Nordic Center

Ski over 70km of trails of pristine back country wilderness in the scenic splendor of the White Mountain National Forest. Wide trails, expertly groomed by Pisten Bully for both classic and skate. WVNC is located in an alpine village with shops, restaurants, lodging and entertainment. PSIA coaching, childcare, fully-stocked retail shop, rentals, repairs and child sleds. Ten minute shuttle ride from Waterville Valley Ski Area, with alpine skiing, snowboarding and tubing. Summer biking and hiking. Bring a copy of this ad and receive a 2-for-1 trail deal. 603/236-8311, mseeger.wv@boothcreek.com, www.waterville.com.

VERMONT

**The Mountain Top Inn & Resort
Nordic Ski & Snowshoe Center**

With a setting of "breathtaking natural beauty" the Mountain Top Inn boasts 80km of Nordic ski trails with 40km groomed, and 350 acres of pristine backcountry for skiing or snowshoeing. Varied terrain for all skill and age levels. Elevation up to 2,100 ft. Snowmaking on limited trails ensures great conditions. Private or group lessons, ski shop, rentals, café fare. Seasonal packages. Luxurious accommodations and great cuisine. Host site for the New England Women's Cross Country Ski Day on February 3, 2008. Only 11 miles from Killington. 800/445-2100, www.mountaintopinn.com/ccskiprogram.html.

Trapp Family Lodge

Home to the country's first and finest cross country ski center and the family who inspired "The Sound of Music." Over 100 km of trails wind through 2,700 acres with magnificent mountain views. 700 Trapp Hill Road, Stowe, VT 05672, 800/826-7000, www.trappfamily.com.

WASHINGTON

Sun Mountain Lodge

Spectacular mountaintop resort on 3,000 acres. Ski from your door on the famous Methow Valley trail system with 200 km of groomed magic. PSIA fully certified ski school. Full service ski shop with complete rentals. DiRoNA Award winning restaurant. Wine Spectator Award winning wine cellar. AAA Four Diamond Award winning guest rooms. Full-service spa. Two hot tubs, ice skating and sleigh rides. 800/572-0493, www.sunmountainlodge.com.

WISCONSIN

Minocqua Winter Park

Dare we say, "The best?" You bet! With 6,500 acres and 75 kilometers of expertly-groomed trails for all skill levels, every day is a great day at Minocqua Winter Park. Because of amenities like a heated chalet that serves hot food, great kids programs, top level instruction and coaching and a full service ski shop Minocqua Winter Park is the best cross country skiing in the Midwest. Visit us at www.minocquawinterpark.org or 715/538-7364.