

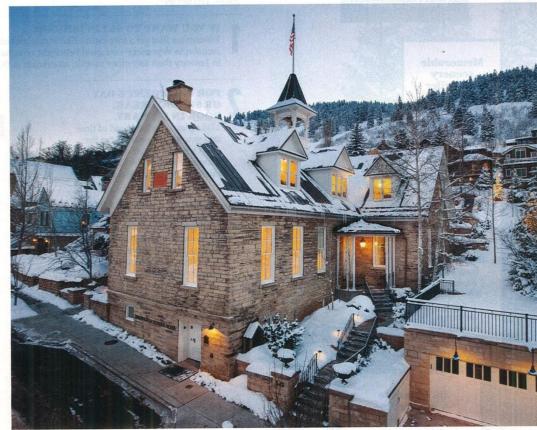
THE NEW CLASSIC LODGES

Know where the snow is amazing? Outside the frosted window of a fire-warmed inn. Here are our top five base camps this winter.

WASHINGTON SCHOOL HOUSE Hotel

Park City, Utah, has grown over-the-top posh in recent years, and our favorite spot to splurge is the Washington School House Hotel. Hidden just off Main Street is a newly renovated stone schoolhouse turned hushed inn that's well worth the sticker shock. Your stay includes everything from omelets in the morning to warm cookies at night, access to the rooftop heated pool-and, believe it or not, all alcohol. Then there's the space itself: 16-foot-high ceilings, 100-year-old crystal chandeliers, and white marble bathroom floors (heated, of course). From \$1,125; washington schoolhouse.com.

SLEEP ON THIS Every winter, the Sundance Film Festival draws 45,000 attendees to Park Citymore than eight times the town's population.





BASECAMP

South Lake Tahoe, California, has always been known more for casino buffets and highrise hotels than for hipness. But when Basecamp opened in 2012, young, budget-minded snow chasers were first in line, ready to scout the revamped '50s motel within boot-stomping distance of Heavenly. What they found was a high-style crash pad straight out of a Wes Anderson movie. The 50 guest rooms all come with comfy Pendleton blankets, walk-in showers, and rustic lanterns to help you find your way to the outdoor firepits for a s'moresathon. New this season: a 20-person hot tub and a beer garden with Texas-style barbecue. From \$109; basecamphotels.com.

SLEEP ON THIS The nearby Heavenly Mountain Resort opened in 1955, 10 years before South Lake Tahoe existed as a town.

SNOW HALL OF FAME

THE WOOD SLED-MADE BETTER

Consider it rideable art. The heirloom-quality Ultimate Flyer, from Colorado-based Mountain Boy Sledworks, is handcrafted from birch, with willow handrails, stainless steel hardware, and customized skids on the bottom for increased speed. The entire front section pivots for added control and steering. *\$180; mountainboysleds.com.*

THE SNOWPINE LODGE

Built in 1938, The Snowpine Lodge in Alta, Utah, is the oldest of the resort's five ski-in/ski-out inns—and after years of neglect, it began looking like it. But a couple of years ago, new owners gave this intimate, 21-room lodge the love, care, and cozy couches it deserves. Plus: an outdoor hot tub, plush beds, and a relaxed dining room with four-course suppers where slippers are acceptable and the chef takes requests. From \$130 for bunk, \$339 for private room, including meals; thesnowpinelodge.com.

SLEEP ON THIS After a controversial 2014 decision to ban snowboarders, Alta is one of three ski-only resorts in the country.

KNOB HILL INN

For years, Knob Hill Inn was too frilly and pink, desperately playing the part of the only luxury hotel in Sun Valley. Then in 2011, new owners swooped in with \$1.2 million to give a town steeped in tradition something fresh. The contemporary hotel is home to just 29 rooms—some with wood-burning fireplaces, others with prime views of Mt. Baldy, all with heated marble bathroom floors. Best of all: It's within walking distance of downtown Ketchum. From \$329; knobhillinn.com.

SLEEP ON THIS The first two chairlifts in the country were built in Sun Valley in 1936.

LODGE AT VAIL

Back in 1962, when Vail Mountain first opened with one rickety gondola and \$5 lift tickets, there was just one 30-room hotel in Vail. Now, that hotel is a 165-room resort, which sparkles this season after a big-deal, multiphase renovation: 56 newly redone rooms with fireplaces and panoramic views of the peaks. The pool is fresh off a million-dollar facelift too, with two new hot tubs and gas firepits. From \$547; lodge atvail.rockresorts.com.

SLEEP ON THIS Vail Ski Resort was established by three WWII vets who had trained for alpine combat in a nearby valley.

SNOW-SPEAK SLUSH Halfway to melting, very heavy and wet.

VOICES OF THE SNOW

YES, THERE'S SNOW IN HAWAII

"A couple of days after a big front moves in, we might open the road to Mauna Kea's summit. Then you'll see them, 4x4s full of locals hauling snowboards, inner tubes, Boogie boards. There are no lifts, so one person goes down, then waits to get driven back to the top. It's no place for a beginner. We're at 14,000 feet above sea level, with very steep slopes and hard lava rock underneath the snow. I've never done it—no way. I know my limits."

-RANGER SCOTTY PAIVA ON DOWNHILLING THE WORLD'S TALLEST VOLCANO

SUNSET & JANUARY 2015 57