

6 U.S. Ski Resorts That Are Arguably Even Better In Summer

By [Jill Schildhouse](#),

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Mountain bikers and ski lift at sunset, Tamarack Resort
SHERRI HARKIN

Not all ski resorts just slip into hibernation mode after the last patch of snow melts. In fact, many come alive in the summer, swapping chairlifts full of skiers for hikers, and welcoming mountain bikers, paddlers and families eager to make the most of long daylight hours. Scenic gondola rides replace powder runs, alpine lakes become playgrounds for kayaking and boating, and trails that spent months buried beneath snow reveal spectacular hiking and biking terrain. And investments in bike parks, marinas, mountain coasters, spas, festivals and other warm-weather attractions have turned many ski areas into year-round havens, giving travelers a compelling reason to visit in the “offseason.”

Tamarack Resort, Donnelly, Idaho Best mountain-lake escape



The Village, Tamarack Resort
TAMARACK RESORT

Winter may have put Tamarack Resort on the map, but summer is when Idaho's only ski, golf and lake resort really shows its range. Located about two hours north of Boise along one of the state's most scenic drives—following the Payette River through forests, canyons and small mountain towns—the four-season destination feels worlds away from the city before guests even arrive.

Once there, Lake Cascade becomes the centerpiece of the experience. The resort's new marina buzzes with families renting kayaks and paddleboards, taking boats out on the water, relaxing in private cabanas on the beach, and grabbing lunch at the waterfront Hawaiian food truck. Scenic chairlift rides climb to Tamarack's new Mid-Mountain Lodge, where panoramic views stretch across the surrounding mountains and lake, making it as worthwhile for lunch as for the ride itself. Hiking, mountain biking, golf, spa treatments and village dining round out the on-property offerings, making it easy to fill several days without leaving the resort. Accommodations range from well-appointed condos with full kitchens and separate living spaces right in the heart of the walkable village to spacious mountain chalets and five-bedroom estate homes, with some residences sleeping up to 12 guests—ideal for multigenerational vacations or groups traveling together.

Tamarack also serves as an ideal base camp for exploring Idaho's mountain playground. Self-guided UTV excursions climb deep into the backcountry to historic Burgdorf Hot Springs, where rustic, [mineral-rich pools](#) have welcomed soakers for more than a century. About 30 minutes away, neighboring McCall offers another memorable outing: an evening cruise aboard Payette Lake, where long summer sunsets cast the surrounding mountains in golden light. Together, the resort and its surroundings deliver an epic mountain vacation that appeals to anyone seeking a relaxing alpine escape.