

Forget Apsen, NYC boasts top ski destinations in driving distance

By [Shivani Vora](#)

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A few trees on a ski run at Stowe Mountain Resort won't deter this downhill dynamo.

Stowe Mountain Resort

You don't have to jump on a plane to Vail, Aspen, Jackson Hole or Park City to ski this winter: New York is within driving distance of several destinations that promise almost as much allure.

"The northeast has some amazing skiing," said Michael Holtz, the founder of SmartFlyer, a luxury travel company that sells upscale ski vacations.

“A lot of wealthy people don’t even know these places exist because they’re always heading to the west to hit the slopes.”

And this season, with the pandemic continuing to disrupt travel, it’s easier than ever to stay socially distant on the slopes. All of the top ski resorts are requiring skiers to wear masks and have amped up their deep cleaning protocols. They’re also spacing out riders to meet social distancing requirements.

Stowe, Vt.



Gondola is the preferred means of travel between Mountain Mansfield and Spruce Peak.
Stowe Mountain Resort

Just six hours from the city, Stowe has been a popular year-round resort spot since the 1940s and is considered by ski aficionados to be the premier destination for the sport in the northeast. Attractions include a scenic and historic downtown village with plenty of restaurants, local boutiques and craft breweries.

The area is also home to **Stowe Mountain Resort**, which has two mountains connected by a gondola: Mountain Mansfield, the state's tallest mountain with a height of 4,395 feet, and Spruce Peak. Expect 485 acres of skiable terrain, most of which are intermediate, 116 ski trails and 12 lifts. The biggest vertical drop is 2,360 feet.

Vail Resorts acquired the resort in 2017, which means frequent skiers can purchase an Epic Pass (\$133 for adults) that's valid at multiple locations including **Okemo Mountain Resort** — just two hours away.

When it comes to accommodation, the **Lodge at Spruce Peak** is the most upscale ski-in, ski-out property in Stowe. It offers deluxe rooms as well as spacious penthouses and multiple restaurants.

For travelers without budget constraints, the property boasts a new collaboration with the jet charter company **Tradewind Aviation**, which flies from both Westchester and Teterboro Airport to Stowe.

Travelers who book a flight get 15 percent off their stay of a week or more at Spruce Peak plus a \$500 property credit. Nightly room rates start at \$249. Tradewind flights start at \$10,200 round trip.

A more wallet-conscious option is **Trapp Family Lodge**, which offers a Christmas Tree Traditions package. It includes a voucher for a ski package with daily ski rentals and a 60-minute group ski lesson for each adult, breakfast and a Christmas tree to bring home. Nightly room rates start at \$175.



The Lodge at Spruce Peak is a posh as it is powdered.

The Lodge at Spruce Peak

Catskills, NY



Of the Catskills' three mountains, Hunter is king, boasting 320 skiable acres, 67 trails and 13 lifts.
Hunter Mountain/Vail Resorts

Only two hours away, the formerly cheesy and dated Catskills is experiencing a revival of its golden days in the 1950s. Today, the region has a lineup of appealing restaurants, stores and distilleries. It's a year-round destination with spectacular hiking and mountain biking in the spring, summer and fall and skiing, both cross country and downhill, in the winter.

The Catskills have three ski mountains: **Belleayre**, **Windham Mountain** and **Hunter Mountain**.

Belleayre offers 171 skiable acres, 50 trails as well as alpine skiing and eight lifts (daily rates start at \$95), while Windham Mountain has 285 skiable acres and 54 trails spread over two peaks plus 11 lifts (rates TBD).

But Hunter Mountain, also recently acquired by Vail Resorts, is the largest in the Catskills with 320 skiable acres, 67 trails and 13 lifts. The resort is known for its snowmaking ability, which allows it to open early in the season — often by Thanksgiving. Use your [Epic Pass](#) to hit the slopes.

History buffs will want to lodge at [Eastwind Hotel & Bar](#), a five-minute drive from Windham Mountain, which dates back to the 20s when it was a bunkhouse for hunters and fly fisherman. Today, it has a Scandinavia-inspired design and three new Lushna Suites — loft-style accommodations with fire pits and views of the surrounding mountains. Nightly rates start at \$279 and Lushna Suites start at \$429.

For those who want to stay near Hunter Mountain, a playful and contemporary option is Scribner's Catskill Lodge. The up-cycled 1960s motor inn has 38 rooms just five minutes from the mountain. Nightly rates start at \$225.



Eastwind was built in the 1920s as an outpost for hunters and fisherman.

Lawrence Braun

Berkshires, Mass.



The 110-acre Blantyre property has a spa and a pop-up of Café Boulud.

Blantyre

Charming towns, fantastic restaurants and excellent opportunities for both downhill and cross-country skiing await travelers in the Berkshires — around three hours from New York in western Massachusetts.

For instance, **Jiminy Peak Mountain Resort**, the largest in area, has 167 skiable acres, 45 trails and nine lifts (daily rates start at \$89), while **Butternut** —which plans to open in the new year pending on the snow fall — has 100 skiable acres, most of which are for intermediate skiers, ten lifts and ten trails (daily rates start at \$25).

And for après, head to **Blantyre**, a Relais & Chateaux property in a Tudor-style mansion. The 110-acre estate has a spa and a long-term pop-up of Café Boulud. The property can arrange for ski rentals and offers cross-country skiing onsite. Nightly rates start at \$465.



New-to-the-scene Miraval Berkshires has 380 cross-country skiing-friendly acres.

Miraval Berkshires

Those looking to try something new should pop over to [Miraval Berkshires](#), a recently opened outpost of the swanky Tucson spa. The resort's 380 acres are perfect for calorie-burning, cross-country skiing. Guests can partake in both group and private classes. Nightly rates \$576 per person, inclusive of meals, most activities and \$175 resort credit a night.

Both accommodations are 15 minutes from Butternut and 45 minutes from Jiminy Peak.