

# DISCOVER VAIL

## 2020 Vail Family Tip Sheet

A family trip to Vail in the summer means something for everyone. From special events to free daily offerings, the whole family will find something fun to do. Here is a snapshot of activities and places for families to experience during a summer stay in Vail.

### OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

#### Epic Discovery

Summer in the mountains has taken on a whole new feel with Epic Discovery. Vail Resorts' Epic Discovery program, in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service and Nature Conservancy, encourages "learn through play," promoting environmental education and forest stewardship through a variety of outdoor activities and interpretive programming. The company works closely with the Nature Conservancy to bring scientific content to the eco-discovery experiences and contributes one percent of all summer lift ticket and activity revenue toward forest restoration projects. Vail Mountain was the first destination in the Vail Resorts family to launch Epic Discovery in 2016. The primary components include:

- Learn-through-Play Elements: Integrated with trails and activities around the mountain, these interpretive experiential elements provide guests with hands-on information and activities about forest health, wildlife and the mountain geography of the White River National Forest.
- Game Creek Zip Line Tour: The ultimate outdoor experience, this guided tour immerses guests in the forest habitat with an array of zip lines and aerial bridges. Guests learn about the mountain ecosystem while working their way through the course's challenges.
- Forest Flyer™: An alpine coaster that runs on raised rails, the Forest Flyer™ winds its way down the mountain, following the natural contours of the landscape through the forest.
- Expanded Trail System: Comprehensive interpretive and directional signage has been integrated to encourage more hiking and trail exploration across Vail Mountain.



Epic Discovery is designed to connect both kids and adults with our national forests in an active, fun and engaging way, offering guests a unique opportunity to try new outdoor activities, challenge themselves physically, discover an appreciation for nature and create lasting family memories. [For more information click here.](#)

## Lionshead Skate Park

The \$1.9 million Lionshead Skate Park includes a half pipe and mini bowl, rails and other skating features. The park, originally proposed by local high school sophomore Cameron Chaney and designed by California Skateparks, also showcases four mosaic murals by artist Valerie Theberge. She created large compositions inspired by skating, which are installed on each side of both stair towers. The skate park is an attractive and inviting space for all guests and residents of Vail.

## Hike with a Llama

Paragon Guides' participatory approach to guiding provides individuals and families a true sense of personal



involvement in their adventure experience. Paragon's guides are carefully chosen on the basis of their outdoor background, personalities, and genuine love of the wilderness. Explore Colorado's high country, from Paragon Guides' unique Take a Llama to Lunch to extended hikes into the surrounding mountain valleys. Alpine views, waterfalls and wildflowers await outdoor enthusiasts. Trails can be found throughout the Vail Valley including the Eagle's Nest and Holy Cross Wilderness Areas. More aggressive hiking to a spectacular Colorado peak or a high alpine ridge are great options. All hikes are designed with each group's interests and ability levels in mind.

## Vail Kids Adventure Games - August 5-9, 2020

The Kids Adventure Games will return to Vail for its 11th summer, offering kids ages 6-14 a race of a lifetime featuring river tubing, ziplines, cargo nets, obstacles, rappelling, mud-pits, hiking, biking and more. The games are considered to be one of the coolest kids races on the planet. Featuring an obstacle-adventure course set in picturesque locations around the country, in teams of two, kids bike and trek a 3+ mile course while encountering both natural and manmade obstacles. In addition to the race, there is a Family Adventure Zone with interactive recreational activities put on by sponsors, including climbing walls, slack lines, cheer card stations, and more. Prior to the race, a skills clinic is offered by local experts giving participants the opportunity to learn skills necessary for the race and build confidence with their teammates. Registration for is still open.

## INTERACTIVE NATURE ACTIVITIES

### Vail Nature Center

A farmhouse perched between a mountain meadow and the forested bank of Gore Creek houses the Vail Nature Center. This seven-acre facility in the heart of Vail is a tranquil gem filled with easy walking trails, bird-watching, and beautiful scenery. Visit the interpretive center for hands-on nature exhibits or to join the many programs guided by knowledgeable naturalists. From bird walks, wildflower walks and beaver pond tours to full and half-day backcountry hikes, there is something for every age and interest. Camp Eco Fun is heaven for children ages four to 11 while they learn and explore Vail's flora and fauna. Classes covering special topics such as nature art, stargazing, photography and fly fishing are available every week throughout the summer. The Vail Nature Center is open seven days per week Memorial Day weekend through the end of September.

### Walking Mountains Science Center Interactive Programs, Camps and Outings

The mission of Walking Mountains Science Center is to awaken a sense of wonder and inspire environmental stewardship and sustainability through natural science education. As a 501-3c non-profit science learning center, the Center offers innovative school programs, summer youth science camps, adult seminars and year-round interpretive programs. Summer 2020 programming includes:

- **Backcountry Hikes** - Join a trained Certified Interpretive Guide and Wilderness First Responder to discover some of the most beautiful destinations in the Vail area that are only accessible via two feet. Join the hiking club to get unlimited hikes all summer and make new friends. New this coming summer Walking Mountains is planning to conquer Mt. of the Holy Cross, one of Colorado's most breathtaking 14ers at 14,005 feet high.
- **Summer Science Camp** - Science, exploration, and fun await kids this summer. Walking Mountains' Summer Science Camps offer both day camp and residential options for children entering 1st-12th grade. Who knows what kids will discover? Below is just a taste of some of the camps offered.
  - **Mini Monets** - Be inspired by the natural world as you explore the surrounding mountains, collect materials, and create your own eco-art.
  - **Steward Superheros** – Reduce, reuse and recycle! Discover nature’s way of breaking down materials and create art out of recycled materials while learning the importance of caring for the earth as a steward superhero.
  - **Beavers and Buildings** – Get ready to explore the mysteries of architecture in nature! Learn how beavers build lodges, birds make nests, spiders spin webs, bees construct hives and more.
  - **Volcanoes, Caves and Canyons** – Build a volcano and explore a cave. Journey to some of Colorado’s most exciting geological creations and discover what makes them rock!
  - **Water Wizards** – Splash your way through a week investigating water and its many wonders! Students explore the art, science and the importance of water in our lives through daily field trips to local aquatic locations.
  - **Farm to Table (Sowing Seeds)** – Experience the path of local food as it travels from the farm to your table! Come join us as we explore what goes into making our food at every step from seed to salsa, salad or smoothie.
  - **STEM Discovery: Solar Solutions** – Discover the amazing world of renewable energy. Over the week you will design and build structures powered solely by the sun and investigate the inner workings of solar energy.

### The Betty Ford Alpine Gardens

Enjoy the highest botanical gardens in the world with a unique collection of alpine, sub-alpine and other mountain plants and flowers. Open from dawn to dusk daily through September with tours, children's programs and many other daily activities.

- **Garden’s Treasure Hunt** - A self-guided treasure hunt leads you from letterbox to letterbox through the garden. Pick up treasure hunt cards at the Schoolhouse between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. and stamp your card at each station until you have completed all the clues.
- **Learn & Grow Children’s Discovery Cart Activities** - Children’s activities are offered Monday -Thursday, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. from mid-June through mid-August. Programs are intended for children ages five to 10 years old. Hands on crafts and guided activities teach children about various aspects of the natural world. Classes are drop in and are located in the Children’s Garden amphitheater. A \$5 donation is suggested.
- **Kids Gardening** - Children’s tools are available in the children’s tool shed adjacent to the Schoolhouse. We invite you to water some plants or get into the dirt with rakes and shovels.

## ARTS, MUSIC & DANCE

### BRAVO! Vail Programming

Celebrating 33 years in the Vail Valley, the Bravo! Vail is a hallmark cultural attraction in Colorado. The seven-week festival touts the highest quality classical musicians in the world today. Bravo! Vail is the only festival in North America to host four of the world’s finest orchestras in a single season. Each summer, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, and the New York Philharmonic take up residence in Vail, featured in programs of the great classics, plus jazz and pops. In addition, world-renowned chamber music artists perform a diverse and eclectic chamber music series throughout the Valley.

- **Instrument Petting Zoo**

The Instrument Petting Zoo is a traveling, hands-on exhibit. Children experiment with real orchestral instruments - woodwinds, percussion, brass and strings. Bravo's interns, master students from different arts programs throughout the country, teach the young children how to play these instruments. Sometimes, parents even take part in learning to play. The zoo is a complimentary event and travels around the Vail Valley to several community events.



## RAINY DAY ACTIVITIES

### **The Imagination Station**

Open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday - Friday, the Imagination Station is for children ages two to 12 and their families. Features include a play wall to integrate physical and cognitive learning; a light table and builder boards that inspire problem-solving development and dexterity, a hyperbolic funnel that models planetary motion and a new Mad Scientist's Lab where children can make slime, "gak" and other messy projects. More fun-filled activities include an Art Studio and two HTC Vive virtual rooms. Vail's Imagination Station is conveniently located above the Vail Welcome Center at the southwest end of the Lionshead parking structure. It is accessible via the Lionshead stop on the in-town Vail Village/Lionshead bus.

### **Colorado Snowsports Museum**

Located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> level of the Vail Village parking structure adjacent to the famous Covered Bridge, the museum is a wonderful opportunity to learn more about topics like the Winter Olympics, the history of Vail and the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division.

## SPORTS

### **Youth Mountain Bike Series**

The Vail Recreation District offers children eight and older an opportunity to race with some of the best racers in the Vail Valley and beyond. The Youth Mountain Bike Series takes place on select Wednesdays throughout the summer. Children must bring their own bicycle and wear a helmet.

### **Vail Summer Sports Camps**

Throughout the summer, the Vail Recreation District hosts an array of youth sports camps including volleyball, lacrosse, golf, ice hockey, soccer, gymnastics, figure skating, baseball and basketball, plus sports training camps. Additionally, during the spring and fall, the VRD manages a youth soccer league for ages four through 13.

## JUST FOR FUN

### **Children's Fountain**

Children of all ages can be found splashing around in their swimsuits cooling off after a hot summer afternoon. The Children's Fountain is located in front of Fuzzywig's Candy Factory in the heart of Vail Village.

### **Playgrounds**

Burn off energy at one of many Vail playgrounds such as Ford Park, Pirate Ship Park, Donovan Park, Bighorn Park – each is different. Each playground has a signature piece of interactive art created by a variety of artists. Recently, *Travel + Leisure Online* recognized Lionshead's Sunbird Park for its architecture and design in the "World's Coolest Playgrounds" article.

For a full list of family-friendly activities and events in Vail, please visit [www.vail.com](http://www.vail.com).

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