

SundayTravel

WITH: NEW ENGLAND DESTINATIONS

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White Castle sliders? Pac-Man?

Logan looks to boost customer satisfaction in unusual ways



CHRISTOPHER MUTHER



CHRISTOPHER MUTHER/GLOBE STAFF

There's an odd feeling of anticipation waiting for a vending machine to heat and serve a burger. Particularly when you've never tasted an airport vending machine hamburger, and it's from White Castle. A vending machine slider from White Castle truly sounds like the last thing you should eat before boarding a flight, but shockingly, the burger was not terrible.

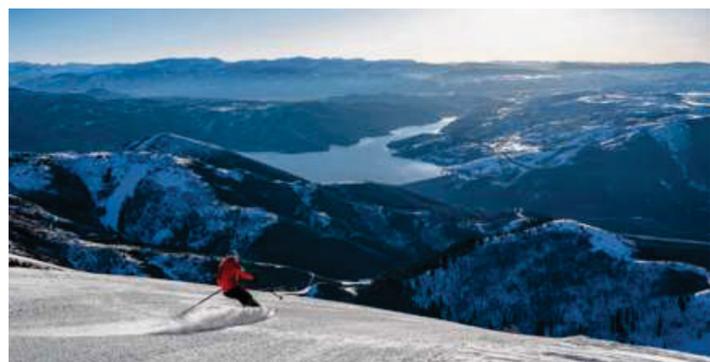
What was terrible, at least the day I was at Logan to enjoy a vending machine buffet, was the pizza that came out of the California Pizza Kitchen vending machine. You can find that next to the White Castle vending machine in Terminal A. If you're still hungry after sliders and pizza, head over to The Cheesecake Factory vending machine for a slice of original.

If you're not going to be in Terminal A anytime soon, fear not. Four more machines are being deployed to other areas of the airport. The White Castle machine is the restaurant's first New England outpost.

If you need something to keep you occupied while waiting for your flight, aside from eating cheesecake, Logan has installed free, no-quarter-needed retro arcade games throughout the airport. It's a Gen-X dream to play Donkey Kong, Pac-Man, or Millipede, and a great way to destress. The largest concentration of games is in Terminal C, in an area dubbed "Logan Arcade."

Vending machines serving hot meals and arcade
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Top: The White Castle and California Pizza Kitchen vending machines at Logan Airport are located in Terminal A. Four more will be installed. Above: Retro arcade games are now available throughout the airport. The games are free.



RE WIKSTROM PHOTOGRAPHY

A skier on new terrain at Deer Valley East Village in Park City, looking toward the Jordanelle Reservoir and Uinta Mountains to the east.

Deer Valley in Utah unveils biggest-ever ski resort expansion

By Kari Bodnarchuk
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

PARK CITY, Utah — Just off Route 189, about 15 minutes from Park City to the north and Heber City to the south, lies a new access point to Deer Valley Resort. This portal leads skiers to a huge swath of terrain open for the first time this year as part of the ski resort — well, not entirely open yet, but it will be as soon as Mother Nature cooperates.

This massive expansion more than doubles the size of Deer Valley Resort, adding close to 2,700 acres (bringing the overall terrain to 4,300 acres) with about 100 new runs and 10 new chairlifts, including a 10-person gondola that whisks people from the new Deer Valley East Village to the top of Park Peak. Deer Valley claims it's the largest-ever ski resort expansion in North America.

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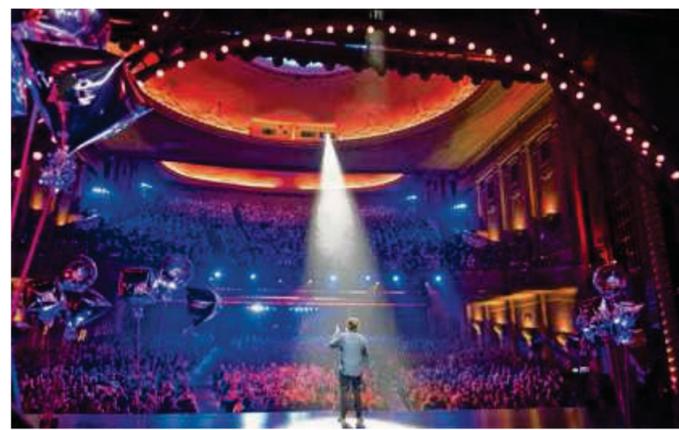
What's hot in 2026 (and why to book now)

By Diane Bair and Pamela Wright
GLOBE CORRESPONDENTS

Thinking about where to go for your 2026 vacation? It's not too early. Katy Nastro of www.going.com (formerly Scott's Cheap Flights) recommends booking during the "Goldilocks Window" (just-right timing!) to get the lowest airfare. "A good rule of thumb is to book your peak season trips in the opposite season, so *now* really is the time when people should start booking their summer flights," she says.

Looking to travel sooner than later? "Use timing as your superpower," Nastro advises. For example, the months of January and February (other than school holidays) are considered low

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The Melbourne International Comedy Festival is Australia's largest ticketed event.

Inside

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EDWARD JUVIER

The 'Some Like It Hot' actor discusses road trips, self-help books, pork rinds, and chicharrón

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Utah ski resort's expansion unveiled

►DEER VALLEY
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Locals, property owners with slopeside homes, and those in the know have accessed Deer Valley from this quieter side for years — hopping on the nearby Jordanelle Express Gondola up to Little Baldy Peak and beyond — to avoid the Park City morning bustle (I've used this access point myself while staying in the town of Midway or Heber City). Now, visitors can make the East Village their home base for exploring a whole new side of the resort while still being able to connect to Deer Valley's existing terrain.

You can reach the East Village from Salt Lake City International Airport in about 45 minutes — and, as locals like to say, without hitting one stop light. Bring your Ikon Pass, if you have one, and ski at Deer Valley for seven days, but make reservations in advance (the Ikon Pass works at nine New England resorts, including Stratton, Sugarbush, Killington, Sunday River, Sugarloaf, and Loon).

Alterra Mountain Company purchased the new terrain for Deer Valley in 2023 and set to work installing new lifts, planning the base village area, and creating and naming the new trails. Since Park City got its start as a silver and lead mining town, most of the new runs were named after mining claims or mining terms. Trails in the Pinyon kids' area are named after historic mining claims with playful names such as Clipper Junebug, and Straddlebug, while the Deep Enuf run off Park Peak is named in honor of the general manager of the Mayflower Mine, who signed his emails "Deep enuf and well timbered," meaning the tunnels were dug deep enough for mining and well supported, or "well timbered." The Green Monster name dates back well before Fenway's scoreboard wall was painted green in 1947. Deer Valley's Green Monster trail reportedly gets its name from an early 1900s Wasatch County mine that had a streak of green malachite (a copper ore) on its cliff face.

From the East Village, beginner skiers can lap the new Hoodoo Express at the base area to gain



Above: From the Homeward Bound run on Bald Mountain, visitors can look toward Deer Valley Resort's new terrain.

Left: Visitors make s'mores at an outdoor fire pit at the Grand Hyatt Deer Valley, the first completed hotel in the new Deer Valley East Village.

Below: The geothermal-fed pool inside a natural dome in the town of Midway, about 25 minutes from Park City.

PHOTOS (ABOVE AND BELOW) BY KARI BODNARCHUK



confidence and basic skills (ski school will run all its beginner lessons in this area); hop the Pioche Express up to Pioche Point and enjoy longer, meandering green runs (with a couple of short intermediate blue trails as optional alternatives); or load onto the gondola (which has individual heated seats) and ride 3,000 feet up to Park Peak where they can access multiple green runs off the summit, including the 4.85-mile-long Green Monster — now the longest ski run in Utah — which takes skiers back to the base area.

What's special about Park Peak: Beginners can ride up to 9,350 feet — the second-tallest summit in the resort, behind the intermediate- and expert-only Empire Peak, at 9,570 feet — for sweeping views across the Wasatch Mountains. Also, all levels can ski 360 degrees off Park Peak's summit — it's open and skiable in every direction.

Intermediate skiers have plenty of options from the gondola's midway point at Big Dutch Peak, from Park Peak's summit, and off the new Keetley Express, while expert skiers can enjoy the challenging black diamond chutes off Redemption Ridge east of Park Peak's summit. The new 6-per-

son heated bubble chairlift, Pinyon Express, connects the new terrain (from just below Park Peak summit) to the existing ski area (just above Ontario Bowl on Flagstaff Mountain).

Currently, the East Village has a temporary structure serving as a base lodge where — as soon as everything is up and running — you can get hot lunches (elk chili, the resort's renowned turkey chili, burgers, and more), rent ski gear, and sign up for lessons. The village's only open hotel, the 381-room Grand Hyatt Deer Valley, has a restaurant, a speakeasy, a game room with old-school arcade games (think Ms. Pac-Man), a spa, outdoor hot tubs next to a heated pool, and outdoor fire pits for roasting s'mores. Its view of the ski area will disappear once the new Four Seasons Private Residences are complete, but honestly, it's the Grand Hyatt's expansive, million-dollar view of the Jordanelle Reservoir and Uinta Mountain Range to the east that you won't forget.

Eventually, the village will have two five-star hotels, private homes, and condos that will be part of Deer Valley's rental pool, an outdoor ice-skating rink, and a full-fledged base lodge. All of that is still in the works, so it's currently a construction zone with one hotel, a temporary base lodge, and plenty of day parking with space for 1,200 cars.

My daughter and I traveled to Park City right before the holidays for a mother-daughter ski getaway and a visit with local relatives. Even though the new terrain wasn't open yet (not enough snow), we still found decent snow on Bald Mountain for a couple of hours of skiing each morning (thanks to the resort's snowmaking efforts) and plenty to do in the afternoons off the slopes.

One of the area highlights included a visit to what locals call the Homestead Crater, a geothermal mineral pool inside a beehive-shaped dome at The Homestead property in Midway, a town about 25 minutes from Park City. (Midway is often referred to as Little Switzerland because of the dramatic mountain views and its Swiss architecture and heritage.) The natural limestone dome measures 400 feet in diameter and 55 feet tall, and it has a natural hole in the top. Follow the steps up the outside of the dome and peer down into it, or walk through a short tunnel inside the dome and go for a swim in the mineral-rich waters. The 66-foot-deep pool and toasty (95-degree) waters draw SCUBA divers who come here to get their SCUBA certification.

Utah Olympic Park near Kimball Junction (15 to 20 minutes from both the East Village and Park City) is worth a several-hour stop to visit the small ski and Olympic museums, tour the ski jump and bobsled tracks, go for a real bobsled run (it's dramatic, but over within 50 seconds), and learn about Park City's Olympic past and future — it hosted the 2002 Winter Olympics and will again host the Winter Olympics in 2034. The free museums display historic ski and snowboard gear, showcase Olympic heroes, and have a mountain sport simulator that lets you experience virtual bobsled and ski runs.

Go on a one-hour shuttle tour of Olympic Park, and you can stand at the top of the ski jumps and bobsled track and learn about the locals and Olympic hopefuls who train here. Then climb into a bobsled with a professional pilot who will steer you and two other riders — wearing helmets — through five turns on the track — one of only three operational bobsled tracks in North America (in addition to Lake Placid and Whistler).

Finally, you can't visit the area without a stop at the Park City Museum on Main Street, where you can learn about the city's early settlement and mining history (a cool diorama with a light display shows you where the different mines existed underground, with more than 1,000 miles of tunnels). Sit in an old rai car and learn about the electric mine train that carried skiers and their gear three miles into the mountain through an old mining tunnel and then hoisted them 1,800 feet to the surface on "the world's first underground ski lift" — a clever but short-lived operation due to the cold, wet conditions.

Hopefully, the new trails will be open by the time you read this — or soon thereafter — but you'll still find plenty of good skiing on Deer Valley's "OG" slopes and unique activities around this historic region.

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Looking to boost satisfaction at Logan

►LOGAN
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games are two of the airport's unusual ways to boost customer satisfaction ratings. Last year, Logan finally cracked the top 10 of J.D. Power's North American airport customer satisfaction ranking. It's a quick rise for an airport that was 16th on the list in 2023 and 11th in 2024.

Massport CEO Rich Davies is pleased, but not content. He wants Logan to rank in the top five of airport customer satisfaction ratings. The current top five consists of Minneapolis, Detroit, Phoenix, Dallas/Fort Worth, and Las Vegas. He knows hamburger and pizza vending machines alone will not put Logan in the top five, which is why Logan has been rolling out programs such as live music in baggage claim and therapy dogs to help soothe anxious travelers.

"We've been encouraging employees to just think about things differently," Davies said last week on a walk through Logan. "And really putting the customer first. There is now an internal committee working on ideas like this."

One idea coming to fruition soon is an update to wayfinding signage throughout the airport. According to Davies, wayfinding signs are among the most frequently complained-about features at Logan. Beginning this week,

Logan is asking travelers to vote on one of three designs that would unify and make finding where you're going easier. You can vote on Logan's Instagram account (@flylogan) to pick which is your favorite.

"We want to make it consistent with the international signage trend," Davies said. "But also potentially provide you with a little bit more information, like 'Baggage claim, two minutes that way' or that type of thing."

A persistent complaint at Logan is the wait for luggage. An idea in the early exploratory stage is to install countdown clocks in the baggage claim area to indicate how long passengers' suitcases will take to reach the belt.

"It's all about giving customers information," he said. "So being able to have the displays, a kind of countdown clock, that tells people that their bags are seven minutes away, or 10 minutes away, or 15 minutes away. Then people can determine, 'All right, am I going to call my Uber yet, or do I have time to get a cup of coffee?'"

There will also be soundproof booths installed after security in C and B for people who need to make phone calls without noise or announcements.

Many of the updates will focus on Terminal C, one of the airport's oldest areas, dating to the 1960s. That means everything from updating the children's

area to modernizing the terminal's security checkpoint.

Also coming to C soon are new lounge offerings. A JetBlue lounge will open this year, and in 2027, an American Express Lounge, complete with a rooftop bar, patio, and other premium amenities, will open. You can already see the rooftop bar taking shape.

Shake Shack opened at the end of 2024 in C, and in its first year, served 1,100 passengers a day who consumed a total of 308,187 burgers and 78,869 shakes. Davies said travelers have indicated they want more familiar offerings, which is why the Chick-fil-A in Terminal A serves 1,800 passengers a day. Since opening in October, it has sold 97,439 sandwiches.

While walking through Terminal C, Davies teased the possibility that a North End establishment known for packaging takeaway in white boxes with blue string may be coming to the airport, but at this point, it's more an idea than reality.

By far the airport's most ambitious project is a Terminal E parking garage and transportation center with 4,000 spaces, making entry to Terminal E much more pleasant. New moving walkways in E will connect gates to Customs and Border Protection, providing expanded queue space and additional inspection booths. The project is sched-



MASSPORT

Massport is asking the public to vote on new signage designs for Logan.

uled for completion in 2027.

One of Davies' pet peeves is out-of-date, unclean bathrooms. It's become an obsession for him.

"When I got here last year, one of the top five customer complaints was about the bathrooms," he said. "We're renovating our 10 [worst] bathrooms over the next three years. The bathrooms that get the most complaints about."

There will be no more stainless steel. Instead, they'll be more modern: stalls will have lights indicating when they're occupied, doors will drop closer to the

floor, and there will be room for luggage.

"It may not seem like a lot, but taken as a whole, it really shows that we're trying to step up our game across the board. Whether it means petting a therapy dog or walking into a spotless bathroom, the whole point is to make the experience go as smoothly as possible."

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