

Jackson Hole

Wyoming's premier ski resort boasts dazzling scenery and great shopping to boot

By Steven Stolman



Grand Teton National Park in Jackson Hole.

Everyone seems headed for the mountains these days. But while Sun Valley has been deemed by some as too out of the way, Telluride as too trendy, and Vail as just too too, Jackson Hole, Wyoming, has been drawing A-listers and everyday folks alike for decades. More laid-back than its sisters to the East and West, this alpine valley offers a refuge from ordinary life in a breathtaking high-country setting of shimmering evergreens, majestic mountains, and crystal lakes and streams.

Jackson Hole, which lies between the monumental Teton and Gros Ventre ranges, was a minor fur-trading center from the 1820s through the '40s. The area then languished for almost half a century and was largely uninhabited aside from the Native American tribes that traveled through in summer and the few government expeditions that visited in the 1870s. In the 1890s, however, settlers began arriving in force. The

town of Jackson was established in 1897 and flourished thanks to cattle ranching and elk hunting.

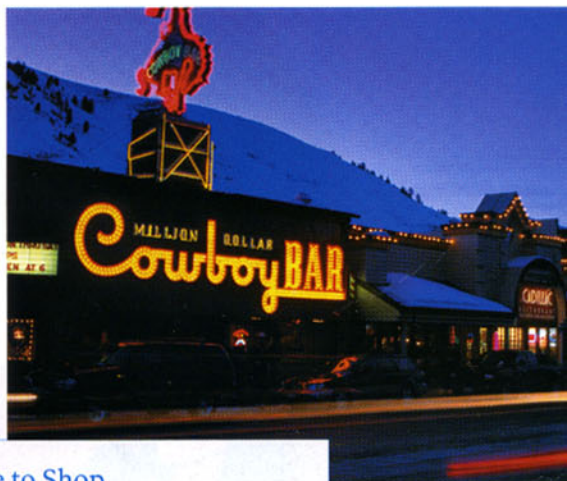
Given its proximity to Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks, Jackson Hole eventually developed into a prime tourist destination, especially for outdoor enthusiasts. But it has started appearing on tony radar screens, too—fans include Harrison Ford and Julia Louis-Dreyfus, along with Dick Cheney and World Bank head James Wolfensohn. Even the most hard-line city slickers are leaving their urban pretensions at home and giving in to the open, earnest spirit that permeates every square inch of Jackson Hole.

The winter months, of course, are dominated by downhill skiing. Since the 1930s, thrill-seeking skiers have headed to the region, which has more expert slopes (read: terrifying double black diamond) and >



wide-open snow bowls than any other place in America. The Jackson Hole Mountain Resort, which is located a few miles from Jackson in the small town of Teton Village, has around 2,500 acres of slopes and the tallest continuous vertical rise in the U.S. (4,139 feet). Other activities include cross-country skiing, snowboarding, and dog sledding, plus snowmobiling in Yellowstone, though it's constantly on the verge of being banned. A visit to Jackson Hole's National Elk Refuge, akin to entering a *National Geographic* special, is a must in the winter. The 25,000-acre reserve, where one can get up-close views of elk herds (as well as the occasional roving wolf, mountain lion or coyote), can be reached by horse-drawn sleigh—and the ride is a treat in itself. In warmer weather, a hot-air balloon flight is essential. More lyrical than thrilling, these hour-long excursions typically begin at dawn and involve hovering over mountain ranges and cattle pastures. Water worshippers will want to try a float trip or rafting excursion on the Snake River, while hikers should head for the trails at Grand Teton National Park. ▷

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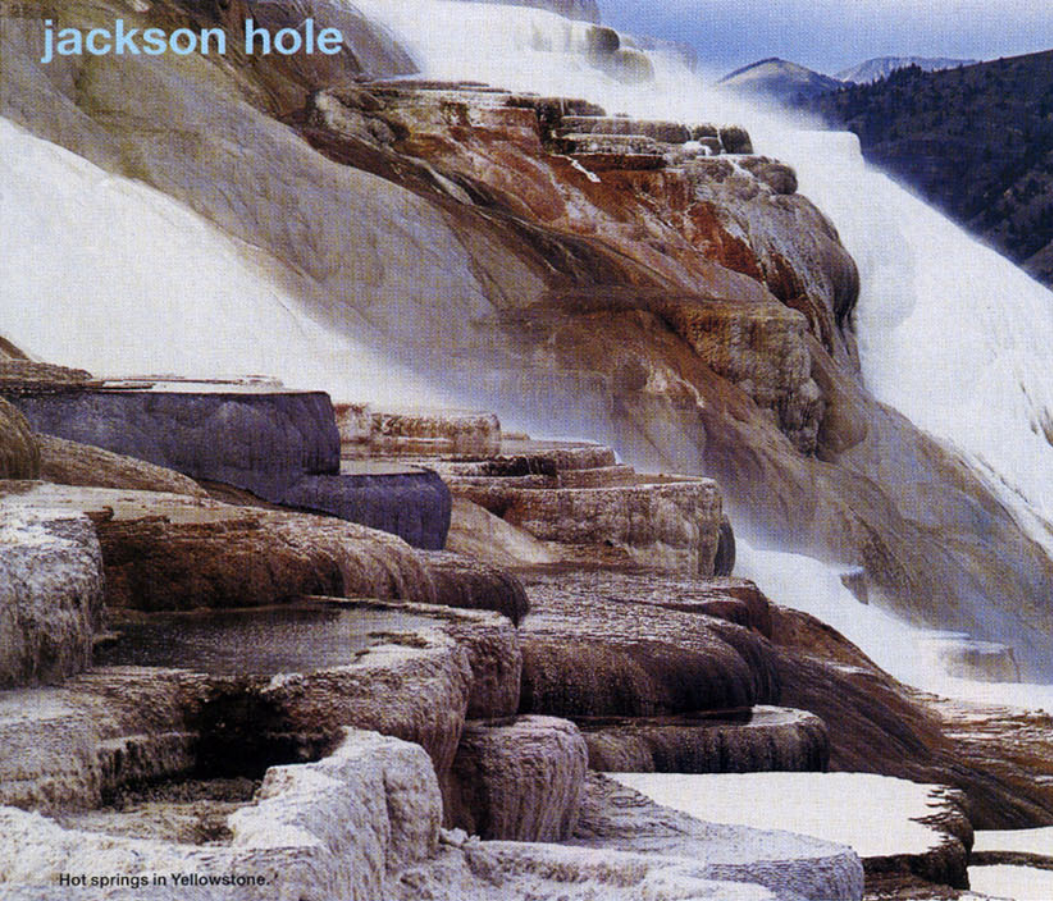
Where to Shop

The area code is 307. All addresses are in Jackson unless otherwise noted.

- Altitude, 35 W. Deloney Ave., 733-4719: trendy women's clothing
- Buffalo Trail Gallery, 98 Center St., 734-6904: contemporary jewelry and wildlife paintings
- Elkhorn Industries, 36 E. Broadway, 733-0067: antler light fixtures and other crafts by local artisans
- Fighting Bear Antiques, 375 S. Cache Dr., 733-2669
- Game Trail Gatherings, 65 S. Glenwood St., 732-2112
- Jack Dennis Outdoor Shop, 50 E. Broadway, 733-3270: top-notch sporting-goods center
- Jackson Hole Book Trader, 970 W. Broadway, 734-6001: fantastic stock of new, used, and rare books
- Jackson Moore, 130 E. Broadway, 734-2425; jacksonmoore.com: Western-style leather and upholstered furniture, pewter accessories, and lighting
- Legacy Gallery, 75 N. Cache Dr., 733-2353; legacygallery.com: paintings and sculpture from the 1800s to today
- Trailside Galleries, 105 N. Center St., 733-3186; trailsidegalleries.com: source for landscape and wildlife art
- Two Grey Hills Indian Art and Jewelry, 110 E. Broadway, 733-2677; fineindianart.com: Native American jewelry, pottery, and textiles



Clockwise from top left: Old Faithful. Million Dollar Cowboy Bar. Snake River Lodge & Spa. A hot-air balloon ride over the mountains. A cowboy-hat shop.



Hot springs in Yellowstone.

What to See

The area code is 307. All addresses are in Jackson unless otherwise noted.

- Aerial Tram, Teton Village, 739-2753; jacksonhole.com/tram: ride to the top of Rendezvous Mountain
- Jackson Hole Golf & Tennis Club, 5000 Spring Gulch Rd., north of Jackson, 733-3111; jhgtc.com: one of the best golf courses in the country
- Jackson Hole Mountain Resort, 3395 McAllister Dr., Teton Village, 733-2292; jacksonhole.com
- National Elk Refuge, north of Jackson, 733-9212; nationalelkrefuge.fws.gov/
- National Museum of Wildlife Art, 2820 Rungius Rd., 733-5771; wildlifeart.org: premier paintings and sculpture
- Triangle X Float Trips, 2 Triangle X Ranch Rd., Moose, 733-5500: for river excursions within Grand Teton National Park
- Wyoming Balloon Co., south of Teton Village, 739-0900; wyomingballoon.com
- Yellowstone National Park; nps.gov/yell/: the country's oldest national park is just 55 miles northeast of Jackson

Where to Eat

- Blue Lion, 160 N. Millward St., 733-3912; bluelionrestaurant.com: this bistro is popular among locals for its lamb and seafood served in a casual setting
- Jenny Lake Lodge, Inner Park Rd., Grand Teton National Park, Moran, 733-4647: the atmosphere is rather formal (jackets are requested), the Western cuisine sublime
- Moos Gourmet Ice Cream, 36 E. Broadway, 733-1998, moosgourmet.com: homemade ice cream
- Nora's Fish Creek Inn, 5600 W. Hwy. 22, Wilson, 733-8288
- Shades Café, 75 S. King St., 733-2015: gourmet coffees, breakfast burritos, and sandwiches in a log cabin
- SilverDollar Grill, Wort Hotel, 50 N. Glenwood St., 733-2190: traditional chop house offering meat dishes and fresh fish
- Snake River Grill, 84 E. Broadway, 733-0557; snakerivergrill.com

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