



The cool Gravity Haus will open soon in Breckenridge, Colo., with après-ski, mountain cuisine and deals available through Vail Resorts' Epic Pass. *VAIL RESORTS*

HOTEL INTEL

VAIL'S EPIC PASS OFFERS SAVINGS ON LIFTS, LODGING

Season ticket provides access to more than 45 exceptional mountains around the world



ROCHELLE LASH

Vail Resorts' options for its Epic Passes are among the best values on the downhill sports scene, especially when packaged with the company's mountain hotels. The Epic Pass is a season ticket to more than 45 exceptional areas in North America, Europe and even Japan and Australia, a remarkable amount of snow sports territory at an amazing price. As an example, with an Epic Pass you could enjoy Mont-Stee-Anne, Stowe Mountain Resort, Vail, Whistler and the French or Italian Alps throughout the season, for the set fee of US\$969 for adults and US\$509 for juniors,

five to 12, if you buy before Oct. 13. As well, the Epic Pass Club features significant discounts at member hotels, such as up to 20 per cent off at the slopeside Jackson Gore Inn in Okemo, Vt. (with some restrictions). And the Epic Season Pass includes perks at Stowe, such as discounts on ski tuning or food and beverage. New for 2019-20, the Epic Day Pass is available for between one and seven days at US\$129 for one day or US\$753 for seven days, which brings it down to US\$108 per day, also if bought before Oct. 13. With that pass for one or more days, you can mountain-hop through New England at landmark areas such as Stowe, Mt. Sunapee and Okemo in Vermont. Mt. Snow is expected to join this coming season, along with Attitash and Wildcat near Mt. Washington in New Hampshire. The Epic Local Pass also offers

IF YOU GO

Epic Pass: 970-754-0005, epicpass.com.
Okemo Mountain Resort / Jackson Gore Inn: 800-786-5366 (800-78-okemo), 802-228-1600, okemo.com. From US\$181 for a room for up, including most hotel facilities. Epic Club has discounts of 20 per cent, with some restrictions.
Breckenridge Ski Resort: breckenridge.com.
Gravity Haus: 970-547-5725, gravityhaus.com; Breckenridge, Colo. Opening in December.; rooms from approximately US\$240, including most facilities. Epic Club has discounts.

great value, starting at US\$719, with some restrictions at some mountains. Or you can expand a trip out west with glorious skiing at Whistler Blackcomb in B.C.; Vail, Keystone and Beaver Creek in Colorado; Park City, Utah; and Heavenly in Lake Tahoe, Calif.

The all-season Epic Pass and the Epic 4-7 Day Pass also are valid at partner areas: scenic Mont-Stee-Anne and edgy Stoneham in Quebec, as well as snow-laden Fernie and Kicking Horse in B.C. and impressive Nakiska, site of the 1988 Winter Olympics, in Alberta. There is a teeny catch: We're talking about snow sports in October because the passes are sold for limited periods at certain prices, and only before the season starts. Check epicpass.com for timing. The best-case scenario is to buy earlier in the year. If you search online in April for the 2020-21 season, you might score deep discounts and perks such as buddy tickets, Ski With a Friend passes and summer sightsee access. **Okemo, Vt.:** Okemo Mountain Resort and the Jackson Gore Inn are heaven-sent for families. About a four-hour drive south of Montreal, Okemo has been part of Vail Resorts for one year and upgrades abound. The Jackson Gore Inn is a picturesque New England lodge with a range of accommodations, from rooms for four up to three-bedroom suites for 12, many with kitchens, gas fireplaces and whirlpool baths. Jackson Gore is a convenient, upbeat, one-stop resort hotel with ski-in-ski-out access, fine dining, fitness classes and family swimming pools with water park features. On mountain, Okemo is known for its superb grooming, snow making on 98 per cent of terrain and its progressive Ski & Ride

School, which now offers full-day family or friends group lessons for up to six people. Winter also features Nordic skiing, snowshoeing, skating, tubing and the thrilling Timber Ripper Mountain Coaster that rockets through the forests and down the mountain. The renovated Summit Lodge will dish up food truck fare, a barbecue and healthy choices, plus cocktails and craft beer. And juniors will love the new vibe at the mid-mountain Sugar House Lodge, with a lounge, music and cool eats. **Gravity Haus, Colo.:** With non-stop flights from Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver to Denver, Colorado is do-able for a long weekend. Gravity Haus, opening in December in Breckenridge, is a slopeside lodge that will be steeped in the Rocky Mountains' outdoorsy environment. It's also going to be loads of fun. It will have a trampoline, duckpin bowling, social activities and hot and cold spa baths, as well as an eco-café and Cabin Juice for casual American fare and après-ski. Bring your pals. The 60 rooms configure for between one and four guests, with king and queen beds, bunks and pods. On-mountain, Breckenridge Ski Resort has added escalators to the lifts — a blessing! — and a sharp new base lodge. The wacky Ullr Fest, Dec. 11-15, is a 50-year Viking-inspired tradition with a parade, ski jumping and lots of food and drink. *Rochelle@rochellelash.com*

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