

# FREE FUN THINGS TO DO

## VAIL SUMMER 2020

Update: January 24

### Parking, Transportation & Resort Information

#### **FREE Parking & FREE Bus Transportation all Summer**

Parking during the summer is free in the Vail Village and Lionshead parking structures during the day. **There is a \$25 overnight fee for vehicles parked in the structures between 4 a.m. and 5 a.m.** Free Overflow parking on the South Frontage Road is allowed once both parking structures are full.

#### **Free Charging Stations in Parking Garages**

To accommodate the growing interest in low/zero emissions vehicles, the town has equipped the parking structures with free charging stations. The six multi-port stations (five in Vail Village and one in Lionshead Village) accommodate the newest generation of electric, plug-in electric and electric extended range vehicles.

#### **The Town of Vail Bus System provides free year-round service throughout Vail**

In fact, the town's bus service is considered to be among the largest free transportation systems in the country offering its residents and guests timely service to and from Vail Villages and throughout town, from East Vail to West Vail. Additionally, regional bus service with modest fares is provided daily by ECO Transit with service to Vail, Leadville, Minturn, Eagle-Vail, Avon, Edwards, Eagle and Gypsum.

#### **The Vail App**

Download the FREE Vail App to access updated information prior to and during your stay in Vail! From events, to shopping and dining and parking information, everything will be at the touch of your fingertips!

#### **Vail Welcome Centers**

Located on the top deck (level 4) of the Vail Village parking garage and in the Welcome Center on the lower level at the southwest corner of the Lionshead parking garage, the welcome centers have numerous FREE publications, maps and information on Vail.

### ART

#### **FREE Wednesday Art Walks, Mid June through Late August 11:00 a.m.**

Meet each Wednesday at the Vail Village Visitor Information Center on the top level of the parking structure for a free guided tour of Vail Village and the public art collection. After an introduction to the Colorado Ski & Snowboard Museum, the tour winds its way through the Village with discussions of the history of the Vail Valley, the founding of Vail mountain, the master planning of the Village, and the importance of site-specific art. The Town's public art collection includes 45 works ranging from painting, sculptures, murals, playground components, to site-integrated art. The tour lasts approximately 1 hour. A new fully color printed map of the town of Vail's public art collection is now available at the Vail Village and Lionshead Welcome Centers. Featuring 45 works of art in a walkable map of Vail Village and Lionshead, as well as the art beyond town center, the map is a good resource for enjoying Vail's abundance of public art. The town's art collection may now also be viewed on a Google map on [www.artinvail.com](http://www.artinvail.com).

## **NATURE & OUTDOOR ADVENTURES**

### **Season Passholders Enjoy FREE Gondola Access!**

2019/2020 and newly renewed 2020/21 Epic Season pass holders can ride the Eagle Bahn Gondola and Gondola One up Vail Mountain for FREE. Please visit the Summer Ticket Office across from the gondola to purchase or renew your season pass or head to [Vail.com](http://Vail.com). Children 12 & under can ride the gondola for a fee of \$5 per child with an adult.

### **Nature Discovery Center: & Free Guided Nature Walks Mid-June 18 – Labor Day, Open Daily 10am – 6pm; Fridays 10am – 8pm**

Explore an array of regional wildlife exhibits and speak with naturalists about the flora and fauna of Vail at The Nature Discovery Center with free admission. Join us to experience the interactive exhibits inside! The Nature Discovery Center is located in a yurt atop Vail Mountain, adjacent to the Eagle's Nest building. It is accessed via the Eagle Bahn Gondola (with lift ticket) out of Lionshead. All ages welcome.

Join a Walking Mountains naturalist for an educational hike through the forest atop Vail Mountain with FREE Guided Nature Walks daily. Learn about summer ecology and animal adaptations as you gaze at the majestic mountain views. Please come prepared with appropriate clothing, hiking boots and water. Suitable for most ages and abilities.

### **Vail Nature Center**

A 1940s homestead 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 to explore the web of trails along Gore Creek or come inside to learn from the exhibits and knowledgeable staff. Programs include: hiking, birding tours, beaver pond tours, wildflower viewing, stargazing, and creekside nature tours. All ages, donations accepted. The Nature Center is open seven days per week, Memorial Day weekend through the end of September. For More information visit the [Vail Nature Center Website](#) or call 970-479-2291.

### **Enjoy the beautiful Betty Ford Alpine Gardens & Education Center**

The highest botanical gardens in the world at 8,200 feet with a unique collection of alpine, sub-alpine and other mountain plants and flowers. Open from dawn to dusk daily with tours, children's programs and many other daily activities. Be sure to visit the Education Center, located next to the Gardens and Gore Creek in Ford Park, this is the best place to start your visit. Discover and learn about the alpine environment and its plants through self-guided informational displays, drop-in activities for children and a state of the art alpine house featuring plants from around the world. For more information, please call (970) 476-0103.

## **FAMILY & KIDS ACTIVITIES**

### **Explore the Recreation Path Through Vail**

The Vail Recreation Path is the perfect way to have fun with your entire family. Located right in the middle of town, the trail winds from West Vail to East Vail, following Gore Creek and has 1,100 acres of open space available to the public. The path stretches for 15 miles and is surrounded by 350,000 acres of national forest. Sections of the path are “improved gravel” and parts are completely paved. Strollers can be pushed along all parts! Enjoy nature and the sound of the creek, just steps away from the village life! Vail’s recreation path system is a multi-use (bike, walk) recreation path with connections to numerous soft surface hiking and mountain biking trails. In addition, Vail’s Gore Valley Trail connects to the Vail Pass Trail into Summit County to the East, and to the Eagle Valley Trail towards Glenwood Springs to the west.

### **Stroll The Bavarian Villages of Vail and Lionshead, Grab a Bench and Relax!**

There’s no better place to just relax and enjoy your surroundings than Vail – with benches and beautiful sitting areas all around to breathe in the fresh air and enjoy the summer time flowers and surrounding landscapes. If you've ever seen a picture of Vail, you've likely caught a glimpse of the iconic pedestrian village. Many of its buildings were originally built by Vail's founders in the early 60s with a nod to classic European alpine architecture. Vail Village retains a peaceful, small-town ambiance even with its world-class restaurants, shopping, cafes and late night hot spots.

### **Take the Family into the Mountains with a Hike!**

Vail Mountain is a great place to enjoy a hike, with trails starting from the base areas (for FREE) and trails starting from the top of the Eagle Bahn Gondola (accessed with lift ticket).

There are also many incredibly beautiful hikes in National Forest Service land that are close to Vail listed below. Most are easily accessible through the free bus system – grab a Bus to Hike map from the Welcome Center. For more information call the U.S. Forest Service 970-827-5715 or visit the [White River National Forest hiking trails website](#).

**East Vail Area Hikes:** Bighorn Creek, Booth Creek, Deluge Lake, Gore Creek, Pitkin Creek

**North Trail Sections:** Cortina Lane to Buffehr Creek, Buffehr Creek to Red Sandstone, Red Sandstone to Son of Middle Creek, Trappers Run

**Red Sandstone Road Accessed Hikes** (*Not on bus route, require short drive up Red Sandstone Rd.*): Upper Piney River, Lost Lake

### **Biking Adventures for All Ages & Abilities!**

Bring your bike - Vail is an amazing destination for road, recreational and mountain biking and with plenty of trails for every type of bike rider, Vail offers up adventure, challenge, and enjoyment for families, first timers, experts, and everyone in between. For the more casual, recreational riders, the Gore Creek paved recreational trail offers miles and miles off fun flat to rolling hills from East Vail to West Vail and beyond if you choose! The scenery along the river is stunning – make sure to look around at the surrounding peaks!

Miles of scenic dirt trails are accessible on Vail Mountain via the Eagle Bahn and Gondola One (with lift ticket) - and the adventurous can always mountain bike up the mountain roads or trails for free. Plus, there are many incredible mountain bike trails in the National Forest Service land that are close to Vail, including the North Trail system. For more information, visit any bike shop!

If you do need to rent a bike, there are MANY bike rental retailers throughout the villages!

### **Lionshead Family Fun Club: Saturdays: Mid June – Mid August, 3:00pm to 6:00pm**

Come out for a fun and exciting afternoon full of engaging activities and educational presentations. The fun includes a variety of activities such as a "Kids' Fun Zone & Creative Crafts Corner", face-painting, a Hula Hoop Zone, a 60ft inflatable obstacle course and more! Each week at the "Kids' Discovery Zone" features a special presentation with Topics such as Colorado Rocks! (geology), Your Green Footprint (ecology), The Colorado Sky at Night (astronomy), Healthy You and Hobbypalooza Expo. Many of these special themes will feature visits by experts like the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, The Denver Butterfly Pavilion, The Birds of Prey and the Town of Vail Environmental Sustainability Department.

### **Children's Fountains – Cool the Kids off!!**

There are two wonderful water features especially designed for the kids to get wet! The Children's Fountain in Vail Village (between Axel's and Pepi's) is perfect place for babies up to teens to splash around and cool off! There even ice cream and candy at the near-by Fuzziwigs! Bring a swim suit or just roll up their pants and see what happens! In Lionshead, the Sunbird Park above the Arrabelle Lodge features spouting spray fountains that seem to go off at just the right time!

### **Get Wet Playing in Gore Creek**

Once the winter run off has subsided, kids and adults of all ages can enjoy dipping their toes (or more) into Gore Creek! The best places to access the creek are along the grass in front of Mountain Plaza, below Ford Park, in front of the Vail Library and along the bike path in front of the Lionsquare Lodge. Please be CAREFUL and make sure the current is not running fast – it is always best to stay on the edges and keep children close!!

### **Vail Library – Come inside and relax while the kids engage!**

Kids love story time and arts & crafts. Enjoy FREE Toddler Story Time (ages 18-30 months) on Wednesdays from 10am - 11am and Preschool Story Time (ages 2-5 yrs.) on Tuesdays & Wednesdays from 11am-12pm.

The Vail Public Library not only offers over 52,000 volumes of fiction & non-fiction, it also offers a fireplace lounge for sitting and relaxing; DVDs, books & music on CD for checkout; just under 300 magazine subscriptions; downloadable Audio, eBooks, eMagazines, Music and Video; word processing & Internet computers; free wireless internet access; a separate children's area; a state-of-the-art Community Room; and special programs for all ages such as adventurers, authors, artists, musicians and technology-related topics.

The Vail Public Library is open seven days a week from 10am to 8pm Monday through Thursday and 11am to 6pm Friday through Sunday. The library is located on the town's bus route across from Dobson Ice Arena at the east end of Lionshead

### **Imagination Station Made for Kids**

A thoughtful play space, featuring a Thoughts Flow to inspire experimental play, a play wall to integrate physical and cognitive learning, a hyperbolic funnel that models the planetary motion, and a health clinic that promotes imaginative play where children can provide care for dogs, cats and babies. Children under two are FREE (as well as parents) and older kiddos are just \$8. Located at Lionshead Parking Structure

## Town Parks

### **Burn off the kid's energy at the many town Parks in and around town!**

Ford Park, Pirateship Park, Donovan Park, Bighorn Park, Booth Creek Park, Buffehr Creek Park, Ellefson Park, Red Sandstone Park, Stephens Park and Sunbird Park – each is different – check them all out and bring a smile to your kiddo's faces! Vail is one of only a few communities that still custom designs and custom builds our play areas. In most cases, Vail's playground designers include an artist as part of the design team to inspire new ideas. The artistic concepts evolve into play structures, equipment and whimsical elements and help Vail's play areas stand out above the rest.

### **Vail Parks Available for Gatherings, Events and Programs**

If you're looking to host a gathering in any of Vail's parks, they are available for your use on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Ford Park:** For a multitude of activities, Ford Park includes amenities such as the Betty Ford Alpine Gardens, Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater, Tennis Center, athletic field, picnic areas, half-court basketball and a custom play area. In addition, you can enjoy the open space next to the playground, the picnic tables under the shelter and the Moroles sculpture area, all located at the lower bench of Ford Park. There are many recreation and event opportunities to take advantage of in Ford Park as well.

**Donovan Park** includes the Donovan Pavilion, Vail Waterwise Demonstration Garden, athletic fields, picnic areas, basketball court and a custom play area.

### **Off-leash Dog Friendly Parks & Dog Safety**

Dogs are allowed on leashes in all town parks, except for Ford Park or within 100 feet of an athletic field. An "off-leash" program has been established at Bighorn Park in East Vail and at Stephens Park in West Vail. Dogs are a big part of the mountain lifestyle and are considered a member of the family by many. When you're out enjoying Vail, please remember to control your dog. Within the Town of Vail, dogs must be on a leash in Vail Village, Lionshead Mall, on all bike paths and in all the town parks except for Bighorn and Stephens parks. Both Bighorn and Stephens parks are dog friendly parks and dogs may be off their leash and controlled by voice command, with the exception of the playground areas. Remember to always clean up after your dog. Dog waste left in the environment transmits bacteria such as E. coli into Gore Creek. Pet pickup bags are provided throughout town for your convenience, but never leave home without one! Also, never leave a dog left unattended, especially inside a vehicle. During the warmer months, that temperature can rapidly increase threatening the health and safety of your animal. Even with the windows down, the temperature can be up to 20 degrees hotter than the outside. Please leave your pet at home rather than risk a dangerous and regrettable circumstance.

## MUSIC & DANCE

### **Hot Summer Nights Concert Series: Tuesdays June - August**

This annual free summer concert series is hosted at the Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater Tuesday evenings (6:30pm) throughout the summer months. With shows ranging from rock to country to bluegrass to funk and beyond, Hot Summer Nights has become synonymous with summer for locals and visitors alike. Throngs of music lovers gather at the Amphitheater each week to enjoy sunshine, picnics, friends and incredible free music.

### **Friday Afternoon Club (FAC) atop Vail Mountain: Fridays, Mid June – Late August**

Guests and locals alike kick-off the weekend with Vail's Friday Afternoon Club (FAC) at Eagle's Nest, high atop Vail Mountain. FAC on the Talon's Deck features the best views in the valley with amazing sunsets, free live music and activities, food and drink specials, and more. \*Lift ticket or pass required for Gondola ride.

### **BRAVO! Music Festival Offers Free Music Opportunities for Adults & Children**

Programs like the Free Concert Series, Family Concerts, and Little Listeners @ the Library, along with collaborative partnerships with community-serving organizations, ensure that great music is easily accessible to diverse audiences of all ages and abilities.

- Free, hour long chamber music concerts are performed by Festival artists in beautiful community venues throughout the Vail Valley.
- Bravo! Vail's annual Free Family Concert is a fun-filled orchestral adventures for music-lovers of all ages. These programs are designed to delight and engage young listeners with Instrument Petting Zoos and other activities for a fun introduction to the exciting world of symphonic music.
- Instrument petting zoos are an integral part of our kids programming. They provide a fun atmosphere for kids to interact with an array of musical instruments. Hosted by special musical artists and our talented professional staff, kids are encouraged to touch, hold, play and explore making their own music. These events also enrich the experience of listening to the same instruments during a live performance. All ages welcome!
- Enjoy free, fun, and informative performances by Festival musicians in area libraries. Library performances will include a musical activity or mini instrument petting zoo for the kids.

### **Sounds of Free Jazz All Summer!**

#### **Jazz @ The Vail Farmers' Market: Sundays, June 30 through August 25, Noon to 3pm**

A summer Sunday tradition, Vail Jazz @ The Market ensures that musical appetites are well slaked with an abundance of savory sonic sweets. A must-stop destination at the popular Vail Farmers' Market in the heart of Vail Village, it's a cool spot to catch a little shade or grab a seat in the breezy open-sided tent. Kick your shoes off to enjoy the eclectic lineup, which varies from week to week—from traditional jazz trios to violin, organ, and guitar-focused groups, to sax-heavy jazz fare, saucy American Songbook vocals and pulsing Latin rhythms. While you're sampling the best of the Farmers' Market comestibles and the colorful work of local artisans, complete the experience with the best in energetic Colorado-grown jazz.

### **Vail Dance Festival FREE Fringe Events!**

Master classes with festival artists and choreographers, free performances, young patron's events, and more to be announced around town for 2020's festival!

## HISTORY

### **Visit the Snow Sports Museum**

Enjoy an interactive exhibit of skiing and snowboarding history displays featuring exhibits including: The 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division, Vail's DNA & Climate, the evolution of snowboarding, competition timeline, 100 years of ski fashion and function and more! The museum is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily and offers free admission. It's located at the Vail Village Transportation Center. Please call 970-476-1876 for more information or visit [www.skimuseum.net](http://www.skimuseum.net).

## RECREATION

### **FREE for All at Epic Discovery! Slackline Park, Horseshoes, Bean Bag Toss and Dino Dig**

Grab your friends and family and try your luck at horseshoes, bean bag toss or the new slackline park where kids and adults can test their balance at a variety of levels. Children age four and up are invited to dig through sand to uncover dinosaur bones and learn about prehistoric creatures through an educational display. Digging tools and a map are provided. \*Lift ticket or pass required for Gondola rides.

### **Hiking around Vail and atop Vail Mountain is always FREE!**

Enjoy spectacular wildflowers and wildlife as you explore the nature and forests of Vail. Pack a picnic and your camera!

### **Go for a run with the Vail Rec District's FREE Summer Running Club**

Residents and visitors are encouraged to join the VRD for its free, weekly, summer running club taking place at 5:30 p.m. on Thursdays at the base of the Vista Bahn in Vail Village. The club is led by local runner Greg Decent and variety of other athletes and takes participants running on and around Vail's scenic recreation paths. For more information on the club, contact the VRD at 970-479-2446,

### **FREE Fly Fishing Casting Clinics!**

Gore Creek Fly Fisherman is pleased to offer complimentary daily casting clinics at 10:30 am in LionsHead at the base of the Gondola. The clinics are perfect for those who have never fly fished before and are considering trying the sport. They are also perfect for those just wanting to brush up on their technique. One of our expert staff will lead the demonstration, and he or she will be able to answer any general fly fishing questions.

### **Vail's FREE Skate park**

Head to the LionsHead parking structure and check out Vail's FREE skate park. Open dawn to dusk daily, the FREE skate park features a half-pipe, pyramid, multiple ramps, transitions, rails and banks, plus a street course area for younger or less experienced riders.

### **Play a FREE Tennis Match**

Enjoy a FREE tennis match at the hard courts at Booth Creek Park (first-come/first-served) Vail Tennis Center at Golden Peak offers court rental for \$20/hr (VRD resident), \$25/hr (non-resident); Tennis activities are available for men, women, seniors singles and doubles and cardio tennis for just \$15/person.

### **Read Set Spike!**

Free volleyball courts at Vail Athletic Fields are available for some sand volleyball fun! (first-come, first-

## **Vail Recreation District Summer Sports & Activities!**

The Vail Recreation District offers many sports and summer activities in Vail for extremely reasonable prices that are sure to bring smiles to kids and adults of all ages!! Visit [vailrec.com](http://vailrec.com) for more details!

- Vail Gymnastics Center: Open Gym (different sessions for children, teens and adults): \$10/person
- Vail Golf Club: Driving range, bucket of balls - \$6 small, \$8 medium, \$12 large
- Dobson Ice Arena: 15-minute ice bumper car ride \$10; Public skate - \$7 adults, \$6 youth, \$3 skate rentals
- Trail running races on weekends throughout the summer - \$26-48 pre-registered (depending on length);
- Mountain bike races on Wednesdays through the summer - \$26 adults/\$12 youth pre-registered; Spring short track bike races \$15 adults/\$6 youth preregistered;
- Vail Tennis Center: Court rental - \$20/hr (VRD resident), \$25/hr (non-resident); Tennis activities (men's, women's, senior's singles and doubles, cardio tennis) \$15/person
- Golden Peak Pickleball Center: Drop-in fee - \$5 VRD resident, \$8 non-resident
- Kids Camps all summer – starting from \$45/day

### **FREE Events**

#### **Whitewater Kayak Demos: May 5 – June 12, Tuesdays from 5-7pm**

Alpine Kayak School will be on hand at the Gore Creek Whitewater Park in Vail Village. Experienced kayakers will have the opportunity to demo kayaks and gear free of charge. Spectators will be able to observe local & visiting kayakers taking advantage of the world class features in Vail's Whitewater Park. Come down and check out the kayak demos to experience fun for the whole family!

#### **GoPro Mountain Games, June 4 – 7**

The GoPro Mountain Games are the country's largest celebration of adventure sports, art and music in the mountains. Jam pack your weekend with your favorite events, SWAG from our partners, nightly concerts, and more. And the best part? It's all 100% FREE. The GoPro Mountain Games will feature three nights of FREE concerts at the iconic Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater in Vail for GoPro Mountains of Music. Beginning at 6pm, The Amp will come alive with bands, winding down from a day of outdoor sport and lifestyle in the Colorado Rocky Mountains

#### **Vail Farmers Market & Art Show, Sundays June 21 – October 4**

The Vail Farmers Market is entering its 19th year in Vail on Meadow Drive. The event has grown to over 135 tents for 17 Sundays of the summer. Stroll the street full of food, art and entertainment for everyone to enjoy!

#### **Vail Summer Bluegrass Festival, June 24 – July 22, Wednesdays**

Vail Bluegrass is set in the scenic Solaris Plaza and features an incredible line up over the 5 weeks of today's hottest Bluegrass groups! Get your jam on with your friends and enjoy libations from Vail Brewing Company! All shows are from 6-9pm and are free to attend.

#### **Kids Adventure Games, August 7 - 11**

The Kids Adventure Games is a nationwide, multi-discipline obstacle adventure race for kids ages 6 to 14. In teams of two participants compete together on bike, in water and on foot through a 2.5-4 mile course featuring up to 15 man-made and natural obstacles. Whether you choose to pay to register your kids or participate in the Family Mud Run, this is a fantastic time to be in Vail and watch and cheer on these young enthusiastic racers as they wind throughout Vail! A fun interactive expo village with free swag and activities is open daily at the Mountain Plaza lawn area! Check it out!!



**Vail Automotive Classic Show, September 10 - 13**

The Vail Automotive Classic is a multi-day, annual automotive event, hosted in beautiful Vail, Colorado. Since 2009, the Vail Automotive Classic draws a diverse group of automotive enthusiasts from across the United States and Canada. Entries range from vintage collector cars and motorcycles to contemporary supercars.

**Outlier Offroad & Van Festival, September 24 – 27**

Bike enthusiasts get ready for this incredible 4 day festival with Enduro racing, a new gravel component, gear demos and the new Van Show! Best of all, everything is FREE to spectators!

**Sporting Events – Throughout the spring, summer and fall!**

Vail is home to several incredible world-class fields and sporting facilities. Throughout the spring, summer and fall months you can catch lacrosse, volleyball and soccer tournaments playing out for free!