

Colorado's Vail Wins National Forest Foundation Award

Vail Ski Resorts in Vail Colorado operates one of the largest recycling programs of any ski resort in North America and their on-mountain recycling program is the largest of its kind in North America.

Vail Resorts consists of five mountain resorts. Each resort receives monetary contributions of \$1 from each skier per season pass, online lift ticket transaction and night spent at the resort in the Colorado and California locations.

Since the program began, Vail has received more than \$550,000 in guest contributions. The National Forest Foundation (NFF) has matched the contributions by more than \$275,000. All funds are used for projects that aim to restore, improve and protect Vail's neighboring National Forests.

The effort put forth by Vail Resorts owners, employees and skiers alike gives a glimpse into the number of skiers who are concerned about the environment. The preservation of National Forests is a major factor in the success of not only Vail Resorts but other ski resorts worldwide. The environment skiers are helping protect is the same environment that attracts them to Vail Resorts to begin with.

Vail's five major resorts are some of the most visited and most family friendly resorts in North America.

Families can learn very valuable lessons about wildlife preservation, recycling and environmental issues. Currently, Vail's recycling program recycles about 70 percent of on-mountain waste. The amount of waste recycled equals nearly one pound per guest, and about 100 tons of material per month are recycled during an average ski season.

Some of the most notably environment friendly parts of the resorts are:

* Beaver Creek's Spruce Saddle Lodge. The lodge is the first ski resort restaurant to become a Certified Green Restaurant by the Green Restaurant Association. The GRA is a national non-profit organization that dedicates its time to setting sustainable environmental standards within the restaurant industry.

Spruce Saddle Lodge is one of the first resort restaurants to be recognized by the GRA for multiple environmental breakthroughs. The restaurant uses recycled, tree-free, biodegradable and organic products throughout the lodge. It also maintains impressive water efficiency, energy and conservation levels and recycling and composting programs.

* Keystone Composting at Keystone Ranch Restaurant. Keystone's composting program began in 2002 and has grown immensely over the years. More than 500 pounds of kitchen waste per week is being diverted from the landfill.

Combined with efforts from the Keystone Conference Center, food scraps and wood shavings create the soil used in landscaping throughout the resort. Similar composting programs are being established by other [ski holiday](#) resorts.

* Heavenly Waste Reduction, in partnership with California's El Dorado County, diverts about 482 tons of recyclable waste from landfills each year.

Surrounding communities are also encouraged to keep yard wastes out of local landfills. An annual event, Compost Your Combustibles, educates and encourages citizens to participate in recycling and composting efforts.

* Vail Resorts and RockResorts. Recycling programs are in place for all employees and guests of any Vail Resorts or RockResorts.

They promote water conservation to guests by promoting the reuse of towels and linens for multi-night stays.

Restaurants on the resorts use biodegradable, compostable and recycled food and beverage containers and flatware. The resorts recycle beverage and food containers and paper items used in all resort operations.

All areas of the resorts use environment-friendly cleaning products that are not only safer for the environment, but for guests and employees as well.

Resorts worldwide are becoming more environmentally aware and passing their knowledge on to their guests. With the help of their guests, they are able to conserve more water and recycle and compost more waste in a broader range of areas of resort operations.

The efforts put forth by these resorts and others around the world help protect the environment and wildlife that attracts their visitors.

About the Author

Tribune Properties produce a ski travel internet site for [Andorra](#) at yourandorra.com

They include ski resorts such as [Soldeu](#) who have their own environmentally aware programmes for skiers.

Source: <http://www.spivo.com/articles>