

Taos Ski Valley
From the Ranch to Kachina Peak in Under Three Hours

By Si Si Penaloza

Imagine waking up on the Ranch and skiing down an immaculately groomed blue diamond by lunch the same day. In a power move that makes the Rocky Mountains effortless for Southern Californians, Taos Regional Airport debuts direct charter flight service from McClellan-Palomar Airport in Carlsbad. By the time you've polished off rounds of complimentary Patagonia bison jerky and Ben and Jerry's ice cream, you've landed.

This charter experience with only a handful of fellow passengers comes at the price of a commercial airline ticket, inclusive of shuttle service directly to Taos's newest haute hotel, The Blake at Taos Ski Valley, along with complimentary ski and snowboard rentals for four days. When you have three kids in tow, this perk pretty much seals the deal.

The Ranch certainly is no stranger to social enterprise, with many of us opting to support companies that give back. Taos Ski Valley became the first and only ski resort in the world to become a Certified B Corporation by thoroughly demonstrating its commitment to deliberate and thoughtful social, economic and environmental actions. Allergic to the haughty airs of Aspen and looking for a more mindful powder destination? With sporting spirit and thriving kinship culture, Taos doesn't need misbehaving celebrities to confirm its appeal. Nestled among the pristine peaks of northern New Mexico, Taos Ski Valley is undergoing a \$300 million renaissance making it one of North America's premier vacation and adventure destinations.

With over 300 inches of average annual snowfall, 300 days of sunshine and more than 1,200 skiable acres, your family will find exhilarating terrain and a top notch ski school to boot. Warm up on Honeysuckle, a long cruiser that traverses half the mountain. Once the sun softens the bumps on Longhorn, there's no better place to hone your moguls.

The Blake as a whole offers a gateway to robust, physical vibrancy, the opportunity to live your best life in Taos. The first thing to note about uploading selfies here is that everyone will look up the geotag—this is truly a photogenic gem from every angle. The one bedroom suites feel presidential, posh enough to cater to David Lauren and Lauren Bush. After a brisk day on the slopes, a massage The Spa and Wellness Center at The Blake is a welcome reprieve. Deep bodywork releases oxytocin and other feel-good endorphins.

The best part of any ski holiday—besides the powder—are evenings spent in convivial splendor, savoring recovery proteins and decadent carbs. Culinary offerings at 192 at The Blake are top notch, especially the crispy duck wings and pork belly poutine. A short drive takes you to the best restaurant in town, Common Fire, celebrating Taos' top talents. Best bet? The wood-fire branzino is a revelation. Impossibly crispy skin floating upon pillow soft, sweet herbaceousness. Proprietor Andy Lynch is a much beloved local wine aficionado, often on hand to make divine pairings.

From perfectly groomed runs to a smashing culinary scene, Taos clearly takes its hedonistic delights very seriously. Fire up your Ikon Pass folks, Taos Ski Valley is calling.