

WHY YOU SHOULD KNOW  
WHO TIM GILL (REALLY) IS

BY JAY BOUCHARD

A LOCAL CHEF'S RECIPES  
FOR YOUR HANUKKAH FEAST

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THE LONG-FORGOTTEN VIGILANTE  
MURDERERS OF THE SAN LUIS VALLEY

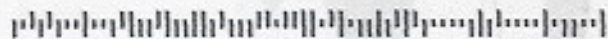
BY ROBERT SANCHEZ

# 5280

THE  
DENVER  
MAGAZINE

## Winter Escapes

The Best Places  
To Cross-Country  
Ski In Colorado



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\*\*\*\*\*CAMJET LOT\*\*008  
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## ALL-INCLUSIVE RESORTS

Three Colorado destinations where access to XC trails—and gear—is part of the deal.

### LATIGO RANCH

**WHERE:** 30 minutes from the town of Kremmling

**WHAT:** An all-inclusive hospitality ranch offering fly-fishing and packtripping in the summer and fat biking, sledging, and cross-country skiing in the winter

**XC TRAILS:** 50 kilometers of trail groomed for both classic and skate skiers

**BOOK IT:** Winter rates start at \$200; [latigotrails.com](http://latigotrails.com)



Latigo Ranch

### VISTA VERDE QUEST RANCH

**WHERE:** 40 minutes from Steamboat Springs

**WHAT:** A luxury dude ranch with cozy, hot-tub-equipped cabins, a serious focus on equestrian activities, and a welcoming-but-not-too-chummy staff

**XC TRAILS:** 15 kilometers of mostly beginner paths for classic and skate skiers

**BOOK IT:** Winter rates (three-night minimum) start at \$1,650; [vistaverde.com](http://vistaverde.com)

### C LAZY U RANCH

**WHERE:** 15 minutes from downtown Granby

**WHAT:** One of Colorado's veteran—like, more than a century old—guest ranches that knows how to split the difference between hoity-toity and down-and-dirty

**XC TRAILS:** 6.5 kilometers of groomed trail that winds through sweeping high meadows and atop beautiful mesas

**BOOK IT:** Winter rates start at \$450; [clazyu.com](http://clazyu.com)

# STEAMBOAT SPRINGS

LAKE CATAMOUNT TOURING CENTER  
[steamboatxcski.com](http://steamboatxcski.com)

**THE PLACE:** Undulating ranchlands surrounded by the rounded peaks of the Park Range deliver fantastic beginner ski terrain—and a pastoral escape from the congestion in town (the trail network sits 10 miles south of Steamboat Springs).

**VIBE:** Decidedly unhurried. Relaxed retirees cruise the flat lakeshore, while Nordic marathoners undertake lengthy afternoon workouts by stitching together all 27 kilometers of trails.

**UNIQUE FEATURE:** Monday through Thursday, certain trails (totaling nearly 10 kilometers) are open to off-leash dogs (\$3 per pooch).

**BEST BEGINNER TRAIL:** Roughly 50 percent of Lake Catamount's trails are rated for beginners, but the totally flat five-kilometer Heritage Trail skirts the cattail-lined banks of Lake Catamount and delivers Imax-size views of the surrounding peaks.

**IF YOU GET BRAVE:** The Connector Loop (nearly eight kilometers round trip from the Nordic center) crosses County Road 18 to explore the network's hinterlands, where sharp-tailed grouse conduct flamboyant mating dances in early spring. Otherwise, solitude is virtually guaranteed as you tackle the network's hilliest route.

**RENTALS:** \$22, classic and skate (\$12 for kids)

**FEES:** \$22 for adults; \$12 for seniors and youth (18 and under); kids six and younger ski free

**APRÈS OPTION:** Adjacent to the Nordic center, the Lake House Grille serves delectable turkey pot pie and offers plenty of beer options.

**WHERE TO STAY:** The private Catamount Ranch & Club only allows public access to its acreage during the winter XC ski season and offers no nightly accommodations. Bunk in Steamboat instead at the four-room, bed-and-breakfast-style Mariposa Lodge, where morning meals feature ranch-raised edibles and afternoon snacks include house-baked muffins and breads. [steamboatmariposa.com](http://steamboatmariposa.com)

### IF YOU HAVE ANOTHER DAY TO SKI:

Closer to town, Haymaker Nordic Center (pictured) grooms 10 kilometers of easy classic and skate trails that meander across the gentle fairways of the city-owned golf course with views of Emerald Mountain and the Steamboat ski area. Small hills block the sight of (and most of the sound from) nearby U.S. 40 and make this cross-country network feel surprisingly seduced. [steamboatxcski.com](http://steamboatxcski.com) —KB ▲

