

# Mountain and More

On the mountain or adventuring beyond its boundaries, Beaver Creek offers exceptional hiking experiences

M

**MILES OF TRAILS CLIMB** and traverse between Beaver Creek, Bachelor Gulch and Arrowhead, and if you're looking to ascend on foot, it's possible to begin from all three base areas. If you're not used to elevation, keep in mind that Beaver Creek's base is 8,100 feet; set your pace accordingly. Hiking even those green roads — which make you pole for

alternative, you can cruise on wide, gentle roads like Cinch or Dally.

**THE HIKING CENTER**  
The aforementioned options are for independent spirits, but for those seeking a more enriching experience, a guide or a no-worries adventure beyond Beaver Creek's boundaries, the Beaver Creek Hiking Center — located at

have lots of experience." When it comes to longer adventures, the Hiking Center offers a "Lift and Lunch Hike," which is six hours and treks to Beaver Lake, or Vail's Grand Traverse (which serves up tremendous views as it spans Vail's back bowls). Or go beyond the ski area boundaries with the eight-hour "Colorado Adventure Hike," which tackles East Vail, East Homestake or Leadville areas. An action-packed day for experienced hikers is the "Colorado 14'er" hike. This adventure summits Colorado's highest peaks, often tackling up to 4,000 feet. New in 2007 are "Historic Excursions," which explore Colorado history within an 80-mile radius via a driving and walking tour.

**NORDIC WALKING**  
All the rage in Europe, the BC Hiking Center has embraced Nordic walking by offering daily classes. "It's a great way to get fit," Goldberg says. "It's a low impact, full-body workout which burns 30-40 percent more calories than basic walking. Special Nordic walking poles are used, allowing a full range of motion as they are released behind you."

No gear? Everything you need is available for rental at the Hiking Center, which features Solomon all-weather wear, boots and packs, LEKI poles and Smartwool socks. They also rent child-carrying backpacks. All equipment is available in adult and little tyke sizes. Reservations for hikes or gear are accepted during winter via e-mail at [www.beavercreek.org](http://www.beavercreek.org) and during the summer by calling 970.754.5373.



speed in winter — requires vigorous breathing and offers a giddy perspective on the steepness of favorite ski runs. Once up to mid-mountain, the Village to Village trail is a mellow traverse virtually tunneled in lush aspen, wild flowers and native grasses.

If you're yearning for an easier route up, the Centennial Express chair at Beaver Creek is your destination. From its summit, the views of Beaver Creek Village, Avon, Wildridge and the Gore Range are stunning as you wind down on a variety of trails — or, if you need a more sedate

the top of the first escalator — is the ticket. "We're not your average hiking center," says Program Director Nate Goldberg, and the center's extensive offering of guided on-mountain hikes as well as regional adventures backs him up.

"We cater to all different ability levels of hiking," Goldberg says. "We have everything from our easy guided hike offered at the top of the Centennial Express chairlift, to six- and eight-hour intermediate hikes. Our guides who are trained for backcountry emergencies, who know the area, the flora and fauna, the history. They

## GOOD TO KNOW

**Nate Goldberg**, Director of the Beaver Creek Hiking Center offers these tips to help ensure a positive hiking experience.

**EQUIP YOURSELF** well with sun block, eye protection and a hat with a brim.

**BRING A PACK** with rain gear, water and snacks.

**MAKE SURE YOUR** footwear is appropriate for the hike — a short hike can be done in running shoes or low hiking boots, however long hikes, especially Fourteeners, require stiff boots to avoid foot bruising and to provide ankle protection and support.

**TREKKING POLES** can turn the average hiker into a rock star. They are two more points of contact with the ground, lessening impact on joints and reducing ankle twisting, sprains and falling.

**CARRY A MAP** and a compass. Know your route.

**TELL SOMEONE** where you are headed in case of a problem.

Find you love hiking, are committed, and want to purchase equipment? No problem: The shops at Beaver Creek are heaven for finding the best and latest technology.

— H. E. SAPPENFIELD