

## The 2011 North Carolina

# Ski Guide

N.C. Department of Tourism

**B**efore you drive around or fly over the North Carolina mountains for winter sports elsewhere, take a look at what your state's mountains offer for a place to plant your ski poles, ride your snowboard or join a snow tubing race this winter—you'll be pleasantly surprised.

Snowfall in our mountains began in November 2010, and all the resorts opened with high hopes of another crowd-pleasing year. The North Carolina mountains have the highest elevation and coldest climates in the South, so if Mother Nature isn't cooperating (the average yearly snowfall is 60 inches), the ski areas have the latest snowmaking capabilities to cover 100 percent of the slopes. Last year's snowfall and made snow combined for 100-plus inches of base in most of the state's ski areas.

The ski season usually lasts until late March or early April, depending on conditions. North Carolina ski areas offer ski and snowboarding acreage, snow tubing, ice skating, even snowshoeing and zip lines. The best part? Enjoying a day or weekend of winter fun within driving range.

—Renee Gannon



### Appalachian Ski Mountain

Blowing Rock  
www.appskimtn.com  
(800) 322-2373

#### STATS

PEAK ELEVATION: 4,000 ft.  
VERTICAL DROP: 365 ft.  
BASE ELEVATION: 3,635 ft.  
LONGEST RUN: 2,640 ft. (½ mile)  
12 TRAILS (3 easiest, 6 more difficult, 3 most difficult, 3 freestyle)

LIFTS: 2 quads, 1 double, 2 carpet conveyors, 1 handle pull

Equipment and clothing rentals available

First opened in 1962, Appalachian Ski Mountain features the French Swiss Ski College, the South's largest independent ski school, and SKIwee. For snowboarders, Appalachian Ski Mountain has the state's only Burton Learn to

Ride Center. Offers three terrain parks and a refrigerated outdoor ice skating rink. The trails and terrain parks are lighted for night skiing and Midnight Blast weekends.

### Beech Mountain Resort

Beech Mountain  
www.skibeech.com  
(800) 438-2093

#### STATS

PEAK ELEVATION: 5,506 ft.  
VERTICAL DROP: 830 ft.  
BASE ELEVATION: 4,675 ft.  
LONGEST RUN: 5,280 ft. (1 mile)

15 TRAILS (2 easiest, 7 more difficult, 4 most difficult, 2 freestyle)

LIFTS: 1 high-speed quad, 1 fixed-grip quad, 5 doubles, 1 J-bar, 2 handle pulls

Equipment and clothing rentals available

At 5,506 feet in elevation, Ski Beech remains the highest ski area in the East. The high-speed quad list is the only one in the area that offers a panoramic vista of the mountains. Ski Beech also offers two terrain parks for skiing and snowboarding, snow tubing, and skating on an outdoor ice rink. A large area of skiable acreage, including a terrain park, is lighted for night skiing. Certified skiing and snowboarding instructions are available for all ability levels, and also a program for youths that includes equipment rental.

### Cataloochee Ski Area

Maggie Valley  
www.cataloochee.com  
(800) 768-0285

#### STATS

PEAK ELEVATION: 5,400 ft.  
VERTICAL DROP: 740 ft.

BASE ELEVATION: 4,660 ft.

LONGEST RUN: 3,500 ft.

16 TRAILS (4 easiest, 8 more difficult, 4 most difficult)

LIFTS: 1 double, 1 triple, 1 quad, 3 carpet conveyors

Equipment and clothing rentals available

Cataloochee is one of the first ski areas to open on the East Coast each winter and offers a certified Snowsports School for all ages and abilities. The resort also features snow tubing and two terrain parks. All 16 trails are lighted for night skiing.

### Hawksnest Resort

Seven Devils  
www.hawksnest-resort.com  
Lifts: 2 carpet conveyors  
(800) 822-4295

Hawksnest offers tubing and zip lining. Recognized for having the largest snow tubing park on the East Coast with 20 lanes, the resort added the longest zip line tour as well as 1½ miles, featuring 10 cables, two of which are known in the zip line industry as super or mega zips. In winter, zippers fly over the tubing lanes.

### Sapphire Valley Ski Resort

Sapphire  
www.skisapphire.com  
(828) 743-7663

#### STATS

Peak Elevation: 4,300 ft.  
Vertical Drop: 200 ft.  
Base Elevation: 4,100 ft.  
Longest Run: 1,100 ft.  
2 Trails (1 easiest, 1 harder)  
Lifts: 1 double, 1 rope tow

Equipment rentals available

Sapphire Valley Ski Resort is the state's southernmost ski destination. The resort also offers skiing, snowboarding and tubing, as well as a snow cub camp for kids. Built last year, the Frozen Falls Tube Park features 500 feet of frozen fun and a 60-foot vertical drop.

## Sugar Mountain Resort

Banner Elk  
www.skisugar.com  
(800) SUGARMT (800-784-2768)

### STATS

PEAK ELEVATION: 5,300 ft.  
VERTICAL DROP: 1,200 ft.  
BASE ELEVATION: 4,100 ft.  
LONGEST RUN: 7,920 ft. (1½ miles)  
20 TRAILS (4 easiest, 8 more difficult, 8 most difficult)  
LIFTS: 1 triple, 4 doubles, 2 surface  
Equipment rentals available

Sugar Mountain Resort opened in 1969 with four lifts and 11 slopes for skiing; and now has seven lifts, 20 slopes for skiers and snowboarders and a terrain park, available day and night. It boasts the longest trail run in the state, at 1½ miles. Sugar also offers guided snowshoeing tours, tubing and a refrigerated outdoor ice skating rink. The resort's certified ski and snowboard schools accommodate all ages and abilities.

## Wolf Ridge Ski Resort

Mars Hill  
www.skiwolfridgenc.com  
(800) 817-4111

### STATS

PEAK ELEVATION: 4,700 ft.  
VERTICAL DROP: 700 ft.  
BASE ELEVATION: 4,000 ft.  
LONGEST RUN: about 5,280 ft. (1 mile)  
23 TRAILS (13 easiest, 8 more difficult, 3 most difficult)  
8 LIFTS: 2 quads, 2 doubles, 4 surface  
Equipment rentals available

Formerly Wolf Laurel Slopes, the resort offers something for everyone, from beginner to expert. Snow Sports School offers lessons in skiing, telemark skiing and snowboarding, while the Wolf Cub program helps kids learn and enjoy the snow. Night skiing and snowboarding are available on all trails. Skiers and snowboarders also have a tunnel run and a terrain park. The resort offers tubing at Wolf Ridge Tubing. 📍

**Opposite page:** Sugar Mountain Resort is just one of seven N.C. destinations for families looking for winter activities.

**Right:** Appalachian Ski Mountain provides one of the best snowboarding venues in the South.



For more information:  
[www.goskinc.com](http://www.goskinc.com)  
[www.skinorthcarolina.com](http://www.skinorthcarolina.com)  
[www.visitnc.com](http://www.visitnc.com)



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Find out the N.C. mountain weather before heading to the slopes at [www.raysweather.com](http://www.raysweather.com)  
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**Above right:** Sugar Mountain Resort's black diamond trails offer spice for any advanced skier.

**Above left:** Hawksnest Resort offers a 20-lane tubing park and a year-round zip line course.

**Above left:** Beech Mountain Resort boasts the highest ski elevation on the East coast.

**Left:** Cataloochee Ski offers skiing and snowboarding in the Great Smoky Mountains.