



PHOTO BY MICHAEL EDMINSTER / PROVIDED BY THE TRAILING OF THE SHEEP FESTIVAL

AUTUMN BEAUTY

in the Wood River Valley

Aspens, empty trails, reduced rates, new restaurants and fun festivals make fall an ideal time to visit the Sun Valley/Ketchum area

BY LISA CARTON
SPECIAL TO TREASURE MAGAZINE

Days are warm, nights are cool. Locals call it “fall slack” — the moment after summer crowds have gone and before ski-happy visitors swarm the slopes.

Before those pristine Sun Valley snowflakes fly and after the wildflowers have painted their last canvas on the hillsides, the fall foliage casts a spectacular array of color over the Wood River Valley. The aspen trees are shimmering gold with just the smallest amount of green, and the hills are alive with red oak and orange maple.

These incredible fall colors provide an awesome backdrop for loads of activity and fun in Sun Valley and Ketchum, including some great fall deals. Pamper your palate at several new restaurants, or experience the spectacularly remodeled Sun Valley Lodge. The seasons may change, but one thing never varies — a fall “to-do” list as tall as the surrounding mountains.

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PHOTO BY LISA CARTON / SPECIAL TO TREASURE MAGAZINE

Scott Mason's newest restaurant is the Town Square Tavern.

LODGING 4-star experience: Sun Valley Lodge

The Sun Valley Lodge was originally constructed in 1936 as America's first destination ski resort. It was closed for nine and a half months for a complete remodel, reopening June 15. The reimagined lodge has refurbished guest rooms — 94, down from 148. Most of the new rooms are now larger, modern suites. One of the grand additions is a 20,000-square-foot spa and fitness center.

"It's more than a renovation, it's a rebirth of the lodge," said Director of Marketing and Public Relations Jack Sibbach. "Last September we closed and took it down to its 13-inch concrete walls and pillars. We're now up and running with a spectacular reception, and the fall is an absolutely wonderful time to experience Sun Valley, where you also can take advantage of our great lodging deals."

The Aspen Glow package includes one night's lodging and 18 holes of golf anytime from Sept. 8 through Sept. 27. Stay in the new Sun Valley Lodge for \$229 per person, double occupancy (or at the Sun Valley Inn for only \$184 per person, double occupancy). Package includes golf cart.



PHOTO BY KEVIN SYMS / PROVIDED BY THE SUN VALLEY CO.

There's still time to bask in the sun at the remodeled Sun Valley Lodge.

The Golden Eagle package runs from Sept. 28 to the end of the season. Enjoy 18 holes of golf and one night's lodging at the Sun Valley Lodge for \$166.50 (or the Sun Valley Inn for \$124), per person, double occupancy.

Sun Valley Lodge: 1 Sun Valley Road, Sun Valley, ID 83353

Reservations: (800) 786-8259.

Boutique charm: Knob Hill Inn

Experience personalized service and a warm and inviting European charm at the Knob Hill Inn, Sun Valley's premier boutique hotel. Generously sized, newly remodeled guestrooms offer spectacular views of the surrounding Sawtooth mountain ranges.

"We offer customized and tailored service to our guests," said General Manager Andrew Wall. "With only 29 rooms, this allows us to focus more on the guests, providing them with suggestions on activities, dining and ways to enhance and shape their time in the valley."

Indulge in distinctively Northwest cuisine at the hotel's restaurant, The Grill at Knob Hill, Sun Valley's popular hot spot for dining and socializing. The Inn is also walking distance to downtown Ketchum and close to all the amenities Sun Valley Resort has to offer.

"We enjoy sharing our valley with our guests. During fall we are offering 25 percent off the best available rate when you book by Aug. 15 for the entire month of September," said Wall. "It's a beautiful time of year here."

Dogs are also welcome as part of the Inn's Wagging Tail escape program.

Knob Hill Inn: 960 N. Main St., Ketchum, ID 83340

Reservations: (208)726-8010, (800)

526-8010

GOOD EATS

World cuisine in the heart of Ketchum: Town Square Tavern

Scott Mason is a successful restaurateur and veteran of The Wood River Valley culinary scene. He oversees his three very popular establishments: The Ketchum Grill, now in its 23rd year; Enoteca, with its delicious Italian fare; and his latest creation, Town Square Tavern, which opened July 4.

"It's a gathering place in the center of Ketchum serving fresh and inspired world cuisine," said owner and chef Mason. "With flavors inspired by the Mediterranean regions stretching from the Middle East, to North Africa, to Spain, Italy and France, we think there's something to please everyone's palate."

Sample the "triad" of dips with warm pita. The dips include carrot and ginger, beet yogurt zatar and roasted eggplant. Also indulge in the roasted corn cakes — simply yummy.

Town Square Tavern: 360 East Avenue N., Ketchum, ID 83340

Reservations: (208) 726-6969, Open 7 nights a week at 5 p.m., Lunch beginning in the fall

Pub fare redefined: Warfield Distillery and Brewery

You can't miss this high-profile location at the corner of Sun Valley Road and Main Street in Ketchum — it's the new home of the Warfield Distillery and Alehouse, which opened its doors in July. Owners Alex Buck and Ben Bradley did a complete overhaul and remodel of the building.

With a focus on traditional recipes, Warfield is currently releasing two tasty

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The Sun Valley area is about 2 and a half hours from Boise by car. Learn more about visiting the area at visitsunvalley.com. The website has information about lodging, restaurants, shopping, dining, events and more.

If you are on a budget, try camping at one of the Sawtooth National Recreation Area sites. For reservation information, visit ReserveAmerica.com. Other lodging options besides the ones mentioned in this story include the Lift Tower Lodge, the Clarion Inn and many more.

Other restaurant favorites include The Kneadery, Christina's Restaurant and Bakery, Irving's Red-Hots (a hot-dog shack in the middle of town), Globus and more.

A fun day outing includes a visit to Galena Lodge (galenalodge.com), 24 miles from Ketchum. The day lodge is close to many recreation trails and its restaurant is a great place to grab a bite. (See related trails story on page 64.)

beers per season right from its brew and spirit facility on the premises. Spirits will happen later this year. Their philosophy: Put good in, get good out. That's why they only use organic malts and spicy, earthy whole-leaf hops. Try their Toothy Grin British Bitter, a full malt flavor beer which is actually not bitter at all, and their Hefe-weizen Short Pants, with a beautiful copper color.

The Warfield has a great bar scene and a beautiful outdoor rooftop deck with fire pit complete with gorgeous views of Bald Mountain.

"In the back room we have nine tanks; that's our brewery," said General Manager Robert Jensen. "We also have our copper still, which we haven't implemented yet, but soon we'll start making some gin, some apple brandy and whiskey."

Chef Ryan Stadelman brings his Midwestern roots and passion for flavors. "We emphasize innovative pub cuisine, seasonality and sourcing fresh local ingredients." Sample fare such as pickled popcorn or Alaskan halibut tacos, or dive into lamb Reuben sliders.

Warfield Distillery and Brewery: 280 N. Main St., Ketchum, ID 83340, (208) 726-BREW (2739)

FALL INTO EVENTS

Welcome to yesteryear: Wagon Days, Sept. 4-7

Main Street in Ketchum plays host Labor Day weekend to the largest parade in the country without motorized vehicles. Celebrate Idaho history before railroads or automobiles reached the town.

The Big Hitch Parade is the event centerpiece and features museum-quality wagons, buggies and stagecoaches.

The grand finale to the parade is Ketchum's own Big Hitch, the Lewis Ore Wagons. These large freight wagons are the best preserved, most original functioning wagons of their kind in existence. Watch them roar down the road pulled by an authentic 20-mule jerk line.

Also experience Basque dancers, marching bands and cowboys traveling by horse or mule or on foot — anything goes, as long as there is no motor. Also enjoy a pancake breakfast in Town Square, a bareback riding demonstration, an arts and crafts festival and an antique fair.

A wild, woolly weekend: Trailing of the Sheep Festival, Oct. 7-11

One would be hard pressed to find a more authentic or unique cultural heritage event than the 19th annual Trailing of the Sheep Festival. Each fall, the popular festival celebrates the 150-plus-year tradition of moving sheep from mountain summer pastures south through the valley to traditional winter grazing and lambing areas. This annual migration is a weekend-long

family-friendly festival that highlights the people, arts, cultures and traditions of sheep ranching in Idaho and the West.

"This is not a re-enactment; it is Idaho living history at its best," said Mary Austin Crofts, executive director of the festival.

"Sunday, Oct. 11, our parade plays host to about 1,500 sheep that will be coming out of the mountains as they have for 150 years right through Main Street. It's quite a sight to see with about 12,000 folks lining the streets. People love this event, and there's something for everybody."

The Trailing of the Sheep Festival has garnered its share of top accolades, including recognition as one of the Top Ten Fall Festivals in the World by msn.com Travel, and is a recipient of the Idaho Governor's Award for Cultural Heritage.

On a warm autumn day in 1939, the prolific American writer Ernest Hemingway, who made his home in Ketchum, read aloud a eulogy for his friend Gene Van Guilder, a publicist at that time for the Sun Valley Resort. The author of "The Sun Also Rises," "For Whom The Bell Tolls," and "The Old Man and the Sea," seemed to have said it best on behalf of his dear friend: "Best of all he loved the fall."



Lisa Carton is an award-winning broadcast and print journalist who has previously worked in San Francisco and New York. She is an avid skier, cyclist and runner, and an all-around outdoor lover, who now makes her home base in the Wood River Valley, where she spent her childhood.



PROVIDED BY KNOB HILL INN

The Knob Hill Inn offers beautiful views and a relaxing atmosphere.