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Enjoy Fall Foliage at New Hampshire's Ski Resorts

From sweeping vistas and lifts to great views, ski mountains offer new look at fall colors

Lincoln, NH --The snow hasn't started falling yet, but there are still plenty of ways to enjoy the fall season and breathtaking foliage at ski resorts around New Hampshire. Yes, ski resorts – as they offer options for guests of all ages, from getting an aerial view on a gondola ride to carving a pumpkin during a festival or getting spooked in a Halloween haunted house. Reports indicate foliage will be brilliant but late this season, just in time for October events.

FOOD, FOLIAGE & FAMILY

There are several events happening at ski resorts over the Columbus Day Weekend, October 10-12. Enjoy the Fall Foliage Festival at Mount Sunapee on Saturday and Sunday, which includes a pig roast, barbeque, aerial sky rides and pumpkin carving. Waterville Valley Resort is also holding their own Foliage Fest with events planned through Monday, including bike and boat rentals, kids' games and live music.

Also happening on Columbus Day Weekend is a two-day celebration of German food, drink and culture during Loon Mountain's Oktoberfest. There are activities for everyone, from family relay sack races and a stein hoisting competition to pumpkin painting and a children's root beer keg toss.

Those with a sweet tooth will want to head to Mount Sunapee on October 18 for their 20th annual Chocolatefest Challenge from 12-3 p.m. in the Sunapee Lodge. Guests will taste selections from some of the area's most celebrated chocolatiers and pastry chefs, then vote on their favorites.

Families with children ages four to 14 will want to save the date of October 24 for Gunstock Mountain Resort's Extreme Field Day for Kids. This is a new, family-focused event that promotes friendly competition and sportsmanship with a variety of activities planned throughout the day.

Pats Peak is hosting their own Oktoberfest on November 1, with German food, a Harpoon Brewery Beer Garden, chair lift rides, a NESJA Ski Joring and Mounted Shooting Demo, and more.

Cannon Mountain hosts their 4th annual Simmer 'n Brewfest on November 7 beginning at 3 p.m. Sample beers from more than 15 New England breweries and gourmet soups from local chefs and eateries while enjoying live music. Please note that this event is for guests 21 and older.

HALLOWEEN-THEMED

Ghostly Gorge opened at Granite Gorge Ski Area on October 2 and runs Friday and Saturday nights through October 24. Take a spooky nighttime hayride at either 7 p.m. or 10 p.m. and see what ghouls await in the woods.

The Ghoullog at Cranmore opens for its 9th season Columbus Day Weekend and runs on weekends through October. This famously scary event takes guests through four individual haunts and outside into the dark forest. There is also a haunted playground with rides. On the 31st, the Ghoullog transforms into a special 'lights out' night for anyone wanting some extra excitement.

On October 24 at 3 p.m., the area near King Pine Ski Area transforms into the 7th Annual Halloween Town, with neighborhood style trick or treating and other activities, including hot air balloon rides, a kid's carnival and petting farm.

Bretton Woods is holding their Wicked Woods event October 30-31. Costumes are encouraged during this weekend of spooky celebrations with a Trunk-or-Treat Festival among many other kids' activities, and a spiked cider tasting and murder mystery dinner for adults. This event is a fundraiser for the Laura Foundation for Autism & Epilepsy.

AERIAL VIEWS & MOUNTAIN VISTAS

When they aren't whisking skiers to the tops of snow-capped mountains, chair lifts and trams serve as the perfect way to view fall foliage from another perspective.

Gunstock Mountain Resort's Panorama Chairlift takes guests on a relaxing 15-minute ride to the summit where they can see Lake Winnepesaukee. Hikers sometimes opt to take the chairlift down after hiking to summit. It is open on weekends through October 12.

Loon Mountain has New Hampshire's longest scenic gondola skyride to the summit of Loon Peak, which provides views of the White Mountains. Skyrides are available daily through October 12.

As New Hampshire's highest lift-accessed point, Cannon Mountain's Aerial Tramway provides stunning views of four states and Canada. It is open through October 18.

For more information and a full listing of events, visit www.skinh.com/resort-activities/events.aspx.

Ski NH is the statewide association representing 33 alpine and cross country resorts in New Hampshire. For more information on ski areas, vacation planning, and updated winter events at Ski NH resorts, call Ski NH at 603.745.9396 or visit the Ski NH website at www.SkiNH.com. For statewide travel info, visit www.visitNH.gov.