

# THE SUN RISES (AGAIN) ON SUN VALLEY LODGE

**THERE WAS A TIME** in Sun Valley Resort's not too distant past that guests returning to the Sun Valley Lodge would wax poetic, recalling how "in the day" it was a playground for Hollywood celebs, the country's skier elite and, of course, Papa Hemingway. How "in the day" its grand façade and interiors that mixed sophisticated styling with just the right amount of local wood and stone were the height of mountain elegance.

Well, a new day dawned last June when the historic Lodge reopened after one of the most comprehensive and high-profile makeovers in ski town history — and just in time for its 80th anniversary.

The effect is both aesthetically pleasing and purposeful. "The design of the reimagined Lodge respects its history, but brings it to a point where it fills all the needs of today's travelers," summed up Jack Sibbach, who as marketing and public relations director at Sun Valley Resort for the last 37 years

has an encyclopedic knowledge of its history. "It's modern and relaxed, but still retains the iconic Sun Valley feel."

Notably, the no holds barred renovation involved gutting the building down to its 13-inch-thick concrete walls (stained to resemble wood; a treatment first applied by its original architect, Gilbert Stanley Underwood) and supporting pillars. That it now so effortlessly imparts the essence of contemporary style and sensibilities while maintaining a true connection with its environment is a testament to the creativity and skill of Ketchum architects Ruscitto, Latham, Blanton and Boston design firm Frank Nicholson Inc. That the entire project, from start to finish, took only nine months is astonishing.

Big picture, the new Lodge is simply lovely, with no details overlooked. Less rustic and more refined, the signature lobby, expanded living room and adjoining Duchin Lounge feature custom

finishes and furnishings, from hand-woven rugs to bronze bird's nest coffee tables to specially commissioned 3-D artwork. Gold limestone flooring from Portugal and a new state-of-the-art kitchen were added to Gretchen's Restaurant. Guest rooms, the number paired down to 94 from 148, are spacious and comfortable, with spa-like bathrooms and dressing areas; 65 suites have fireplaces as well.

A significant new addition is the 20,000-square-foot spa, the likes of which Idaho has likely never experienced. Grand in scale, it dazzles with custom-designed granite fireplaces, anigre hardwood detailing and 15 treatment rooms with all the latest accouterments.

Now, lest anyone get all up in arms, as ski town dwellers are wont to do over change of any kind, the legacy of the Sun Valley Lodge continues to live on in many ways.

Resident swans, some of which have a legacy of their own, still swim in the (now-deepened) pond at the

entrance. More than 250 black-and-white photos illustrating Sun Valley's history are still showcased throughout the Lodge. In-room flat screens are tuned to Glenn Miller's classic "Sun Valley Serenade" at turndown. Four new suites are named after famous guests, Marilyn Monroe, Sonia Henie, Gary Cooper and Ernest Hemingway, respectively, and one in honor of Sun Valley's founding father, Averell Harriman.

Perhaps most importantly, it lives on just outside the Lodge at the famed ice rink, where, in the summertime, the Sun Valley Ice Show has been showcasing skating Olympians and superstars since 1937. (Full disclosure: the original rink was just a frozen puddle compared to that which exists today, but still ...) The skating rink is also open to the public several times a day. It draws everyone from local hockey kids practicing their moves to ice show pros perfecting their routines to couples ice dancing to "Walkin' On Sunshine" piped in over loudspeakers.

All portends good things for the next 80 years.



## CATCHING UP WITH KETCHUM

A quick half-hour walk, or even quicker shuttle ride, from Sun Valley Resort, Ketchum has lots of interesting spots to explore.

- **Valocio** – A popular hangout for the sporting crowd (and their dogs), with a community high-top and “commandments for the wise cyclist” imprinted on ceiling beams. Stop in for pour-over coffee, espresso drinks, botanical teas, wine by the glass, or gelato, depending. [velocio.myshopify.com](http://velocio.myshopify.com)

- **The Picket Fence** – A global collection of fine linens, jewelry, home accessories and more, all within a historic, barn-red cottage/interior design studio surrounded by a white picket fence. [thepicketfence.com](http://thepicketfence.com)

- **Iconoclast Books** – The window displays alone will pull you in to this family-owned bookstore, which offers everything from bestsellers to rare and secondhand books, plus magazines, stationary and novelty gifts. Café, poetry slams and open mic nights, too. [iconoclastbooks.com](http://iconoclastbooks.com)

- **The Pioneer Saloon** – The Pio, if you’re local, with Sawtooth brews, mighty margaritas, plenty of hard stuff and the Jim Spud, a baked potato piled with prime rib, grilled onions and cheese, amid a must-see setting — market guns, buffalo mounts and Wild West posters on the walls, canoes in the rafters. [pioneersaloon.com](http://pioneersaloon.com)

- **Sun Valley Center for the Arts** – Founded in 1971, the Center offers educational programs in performing arts, visual arts and the humanities. Exhibits by local and international artists, musicians and others explore culturally relevant themes. [sunvalleycenter.org](http://sunvalleycenter.org)



## ASPEN CONNECTIONS

**The Mountain Collective** – Like Aspen/Snowmass, Sun Valley is part of the Mountain Collective, a special winter program offering pass-holders two days of skiing at each of 11 top national and international resorts. It’s an easy get-to from Aspen. And Sun Valley Resort was named No. 2 Overall Resort in North America by the 2016 SKI Magazine Readers’ Poll. Just sayin’.

**Limelight Ketchum** – Look familiar? Aspen Skiing Company has recently begun construction on the new Limelight Hotel Ketchum. Set at the edge of town, it’s modeled after the popular Limelight Hotel here in Aspen, with interiors customized once again by Rowland+Broughton (note the lobby rendering, left). Consider it a bit of Aspen vibe in Sun Valley’s own backyard.

