News

ALTA'S TRADITIONAL MOUNTAIN LODGE

Alta Lodge

2026 - 2027

That's a Wrap (Almost)!

Alta Lodge Documentary in the Works

Some of you may have noticed a cameraman shooting around the building last winter. That was Filmmaker, David Layton, who has been working on his documentary film about Alta Lodge, where he aims to share the unique history and culture of this special place.

David, a transplant from Austin, Texas, recently moved to Utah to live and work in the Mountain West. After being a freelance documentary cinematographer for most of his career, he has recently pivoted to directing films about things he cares deeply about. Two of those things are skiing and human-oriented Places (check out the short clip).

David approached us about the possibility of making a film featuring the Lodge last December. The very next day, he arrived before dawn to document the legendary Stabutic tradition. From that moment on, he has been in the thick of his project.

David has shot over 50 interviews with employees, managers, guests and other Alta figures, along with some behind-the-scenes footage, and of course, some skiing. This summer he has been collecting and organizing archival material, much of it from boxes of records, letters, photos, and mementos saved over decades. He'll continue his work this coming winter with the hopes of finishing a rough cut of the film shortly after the end of the 2026-27 season.

David came to this project as an avid skier, but didn't start skiing until he was in his 30s, much later in life than most. "Being a Texan who then grew up in Philadelphia, I just never got the chance to ski as a young person. I started skiing as an adult with friends in Vermont, and then out West, and at some point I became thrilled with it. Just being in the mountains and breathing that air felt liberating to me. And then the actual activity of skiing was more exhilarating than anything else I've found to do. I can say that it has improved my mental health in the ways that people speak about cold plunges or something. After skiing there is less stress, less fear, less depression and more optimism about everything. I have found more joy and peace through skiing than maybe any other thing."

"I've been interested in talking to people who come here to prioritize what is becoming a forgotten commodity — happiness...The Lodge has always gone out of its way to attract passionate skiers as employees. It has obviously become a fundamental part of the identity of the business and, I think, part of what makes it a great place."
David Layton

The film will explore that feeling partly by talking with the seasonal employees who live and work together with the common pursuit of skiing all winter.



David says he was interested in telling the Lodge's story for a few reasons. "Every film needs an idea that you can hang the whole thing on. And for this, for me, it's the notion that the world grinds down most good things until they are unrecognizable. A special place can be loved to death or exploited for profit until its exceptional qualities have been wrung out. I've read interviews with Bill Levitt from 20, 30 years ago where it's obvious he was aware of that dynamic even then, and he was fighting with a clear and focused mind to protect Alta and the Lodge from that bad outcome. I want to show how the people who live and work here continue to nurture the unique character of this place."

(continued on page 2)

That's a Wrap (Almost)!

Cover Story - Continued

Working alone, David has been operating the cameras, lighting, recording sound, and conducting the interviews, which is not common. "I've never made a film as a true one-man-band before, but it's working out well." He decided that instead of shooting all day, every day for, say, two weeks, he would instead just shoot one or two small things a day over the course of a season. "By taking it slowly, I've gotten to know the place and the people better."



Photo: David Layton Cinematography

David finished a short teaser for the film in June, which he'll use as a proof of concept for a fundraising push this fall. The teaser has been well received so far and confirmed that he was on the right track. Ultimately, the film will be shown at mountain film festivals, ski events, special screenings, and eventually streamed online. David has talked to Utah PBS about a broadcast and to Ski Utah about spreading the word when the film is complete, saying "Everyone so far has been enthusiastic and helpful." David will raise funds this fall and has set up a fiscal sponsorship with the Utah Film Center so foundations and individual donors can contribute to the project.

If you'll be around this winter and have a story to share for the film, please feel free to connect with David at david@davidlaytoncine. He's excited to share the teaser with our guests, and you can learn more about his fundraising efforts here.

"This has felt almost like making a film about a great place from the past, like a legendary Catskills hotel from the '60s or one of the beloved Butlin's seaside resorts in England. But the Lodge is not a relic or a memory; it is still alive and in its prime. There is an elusive special quality about it that I know every longtime guest understands, and that's what I will explore and try to pin down." David Layton

WINDOWS TO THE WASATCH
PHASE 3



This fall we will begin construction on Phase 3, the final phase of replacing our legacy single pane gasket windows. This phase involves updating the "Coyote Suite" stairwell, which connects the original lodge building with the newer lodging wings and the hot tub hall. Phases 1 (Middle Wing) and 2 (East Wing) have been well received by our guests and have positively impacted maintenance, climate control, and sustainability. Phase 3 has required some re-envisioning of the stairwell because of the construction and technical limitations of replacing the full glass walls. But we are preserving the coveted view of High Rustler and are excited to see the finished project.

Where did the name "Coyote Suite" Come From?

As a side note, you may be wondering where "Coyote Suite" got its name. As the story goes, sometime shortly after the connecting stairwell and the subsequent Middle Wing addition were completed (mid-1960s), a local coyote got caught in a trap. Rather than destroying the coyote (coyotes had and still do have a bounty on them), someone decided to save the animal. The exterior space was easy to close off, so that's just what they did, creating a "suite" to contain the coyote outside while nursing it back to health. The coyote soon became known as "Tripod," most likely from a leg injury sustained from the trap, and remained a thriving, well-loved part of the community for many years.

powder house

boot SOLUTIONS

INTRODUCING BOOT SOLUTIONS

Our neighbors at the Powder House are excited to announce a new boot-fitting experience with Boot Solutions for the upcoming 26/27 winter!

The Powder House has been fitting customers with ski boots for more than 70 years. Their commitment to custom-fitting skiers with the best boot hasn't changed, but the process has. While Powder House will remain a full-service ski shop and will continue to provide expert boot work on existing boots, all new boot purchases will now be made through Boot Solutions.

Boot Solutions offers a far greater selection of boots from top ski boot brands than a wall of boots in a retail setting. Using a new iPhone Boot Solutions app, customers' feet will be scanned with medical-grade 3D scanning technology, then matched and fitted to the boot best suited to their unique foot anatomy.

Learn more and get expertly fitted for your new boots at bootsolutions.com.

Dear Friends,

The 2025-26 winter was one for the record books, but not in the way we typically expect in Alta. While we celebrated 85 years at Alta Lodge and Alta Ski Area rang in its 88th season, Mother Nature underdelivered on seasonal snowfall with a meager 321 inches (Alta's winter snowfall averages just shy of 550 inches), making last year the lowest snowfall in recorded history.

Although last season was an anomaly in regard to snowfall, it delivered in all the ways that truly matter: the joy of being in the mountains, the freedom of sliding on snow, and the undeniable magic of Alta. For lovers of the sport, it reminded us that great skiing and a great ski vacation are about far more than snow. Our fantastic staff was "just happy to be here, " and guests gathered with family and friends, enjoying time together both on and off the mountain. Day after day, we were greeted with smiles, stories from the slopes, and the happiness that exudes from being on the hill. We enjoyed welcoming guests back to the warmth and traditions that define a stay here at the Lodge. As always, it was a pleasure reconnecting with so many returning guests while also introducing new skiers to the Lodge experience.

We want to thank our guests for all the great Tripadvisor reviews this past winter. The quality of reviews earned us the Traveler's Choice Award again this year, with thirteen consecutive years in the top 10% of all the Tripadvisor listings. We truly appreciate the award along with your wonderful reviews and support.

We plan to open for the winter season on Friday, November 27, during Thanksgiving weekend, and our winter lodging season will run through Sunday, April 18, 2027. Chef Sam will be retiring at the end of the season, so we hope you'll join us in celebrating him this winter. As part of our annual newsletter tradition, we caught up with him to inquire about a favorite recipe. Don't miss Sam's ode to his favorite dish in "Milestone" on page 4, which, in our taste, is bittersweet perfection. We are going to miss you, Sam. But you always have a place (and a locker) in the Lodge.

The anticipation of the "Super El Niño" weather pattern definitely has employees and guests excited about the upcoming 2026-27 season. A high percentage of our staff plan to return for a "redemption" year, hoping for more bountiful winter snow. From the reservations side, it seems our guests are excited for the same. No matter what Mother Nature delivers, we'll be here as your "home base" for happiness and skiing, and we're excited to welcome everyone back.

Peace and Powder Snow
Marcus, Cassie, Toby, Bino,
Rosie, Maren and
Alta Lodge Staff

Alta Ski Area
What's New



Farewell to GM Mike Maughan
Mike Maughan, General Manager since 2017 (and the fourth GM in Alta Ski Area history), is stepping down after a 36-year career with Alta, where he focused on operations, sustainability and preserving the unique culture and experience of a skiers only mountain. Alta Ski Area has named David Hirasawa, from Boyne Resorts as their new General Manager.



Welcome Updated Albion Day Lodge
In other news, the ski area has been busy with projects this summer. The most notable is the renovated and expanded Albion Day Lodge. The building includes giant windows to showcase the mountain views and has been designed to accommodate increased dining and patio seating, a cozy skiers lounge along with a host of other skier services, and an updated space and location for Alta Java. The project is slated for completion by opening day and we can't wait to see the space. It looks beautiful!

Alta has also continued hand cutting work to optimize the Baldy and High Traverses with the goal to hold more snow earlier in the season, help with wind erosion, and also the flow of skier traffic. It's been an ongoing project the past few years with favorable results.



MILESTONE: SAM WOLFE

After 40 years in the Kitchen, Chef Sam is hanging up his white hat.



I'm often asked if I have a favorite dish. Over the years, the answer has changed, and many of those recipes have been featured in this space. As I begin my fortieth and final season in the Alta Lodge Kitchen, the question has come up again. The answer is an entrée I've been working on since Cheffie Paul Raddon welcomed me into his kitchen in the summer of 1987.

This dish has been developed with and inspired by a rotating buffet of co-workers and guests from around the globe. They are two of the recipe's three primary ingredients. The third, of course, is the snow. The proportions are constantly variable, yet they always produce something memorable and frequently amazing.



There are many other components, all lending their distinct flavors: maximum security interlodges, red snakes, straight lines, High Boys, and stabutics. These are strong; use them sparingly. The cooking directions are simple. Combine ingredients and mix well, with the understanding that a few lumps are inevitable. Simmer on gentle heat for forty years. And finally, nothing showcases a great entrée like an unforgettable setting. We are fortuitously situated directly in winter's crosshairs.



There you have my favorite recipe. I'm still figuring out what to call it. Alta Lodge will forever nourish my memories and season my dreams.

Ski Ya Later! Chef Sam Wolfe









Alta Lodge Emps 87-88



Back: Jenifer, Dan, Massimo, and Luca
Front: Amelia and Madeleine

Meet our Guests
Dan Sullivan & Family

Where are you from/where do you live? We live in Indialantic, Florida, a small beachside town on Florida's East Coast. We have no mountains and no snow, and that's why we need to come to Alta!

When did you start skiing? I started skiing in Eastern Canada when I was 17, but everyone else learned on the hill right next to the Alta Lodge. Amelia would not wait for me to come back up and decided to launch herself down without any lessons. She has not looked back.

When did you first stay at Alta Lodge? Our first stay was over Thanksgiving in November of 2022. We stayed for a full week and had such a great time we booked a second week-long stay for March. That ended up being the 903-inch winter, and we've been coming multiple times a year ever since!

What keeps you coming back? Alta Lodge is our home away from home. We love the Alta bubble - Eat, Ski, Eat, Ski, Eat, Sleep, Repeat. It is a great way to have fun outdoors as a whole family. The girls enjoy time in Kids Club for après-ski. But we love to have dinner together. The girls like to dress up, and it's a great way to finish the day, followed by our tradition of playing a very competitive family card game. It is surprisingly difficult to beat the girls at it.

I've been trying to get all three of my brothers out to join us at the Lodge. It is hard to coordinate schedules since we live all over the country. But I managed to get one of my brothers out to Alta a couple of years ago. He came out with his family and stayed at the Lodge. His boys learned to ski at Alta and they have been coming back since.

Favorite Alta runs? The girls love Bear "Crawl" Trail and Devil's Playground.

Favorite Lodge meal? Every morning, the girls read the menu to plan for dinner. Amelia enjoys the soups and vegetarian options. She also loves the steak. Madeleine is all about the pastas and dessert, especially the crème brûlée and ube sorbet. The house-smoked salmon is one of my favorites.

Favorite Alta Lodge vacation memory to date? We were all making a snowman together when Madeleine, who was seven at the time, disappeared. We had been to the Lodge many times, so we weren't too alarmed. But we looked everywhere and couldn't find her. Madeleine finally reappeared down by the snowman with a large carrot. Apparently, she went into the kitchen and asked the chef for a carrot for her snowman. I have never seen a happier kid than at that moment.



Kids CLUB

Kids Stay FREE

For those of us who love to ski, there's no better time or place to connect and create family memories than on the slopes and with a stay at Alta Lodge.

Avoid peak-season crowds and save on a family ski vacation by joining us during our Early (Nov. 27 - Dec. 16, 2026) and Spring (April 4 - 18, 2027) seasons, when children 12 and under stay free! Paired with our complimentary, supervised Kids Club, it makes a ski vacation easy and fun for the whole family. Learn more.

Baker's Corner: Erin Badough



Erin is entering her third year as Head Baker at the Lodge. From morning pastries to lunchtime and dinner breads, beloved teatime treats, and decadent desserts, Erin and co-baker Jim Hilding create fresh goodness for our guests in-house throughout both our winter and summer seasons.



Originally from Texas, Erin spent the majority of her working life as an environmental engineer. Needing a break from her career, she took a two-year volunteer assignment with the US Peace Corps in the Philippines, then returned to the States to work with adults with disabilities in Virginia. While living in Virginia, Erin fell in love with baking bread. She continued that passion and expanded it to baking pastries in Rhode Island, which eventually led her to Alta and the Lodge.

Erin says her favorite recipe is one she hasn't tried before. However, she has a nostalgic fondness for the traditional buttermilk biscuits she enjoyed regularly as a kid in Texas with her grandmother. Since exploring her passion for sourdough, she now recreates those biscuits for Lodge guests using a recipe from Little Spoon Farm.



Weddings & Events

We've always loved sharing the magic of Alta with guests in the summer. With Alta's new extended closing dates, we now also have the opportunity to offer the Lodge for private events on closing weekend, during the ski season.

No matter what the season, Alta Lodge is an equally magnificent destination and the perfect place to create memories that last a lifetime, whether by saying "I do," or gathering with friends, family, or co-workers for a completely private event.

We currently have closing weekend of April 24, 2027, open to book. Learn more and inquire about hosting your special event here.

SKI ADVENTURES

Looking to advance your skills on snow? Join us for an immersive multi-day/night Ski Adventure program.

WOMEN'S SKILLS CAMP

December 1-5, 2026

Our early-season Intermediate to Advanced Women's Skills Ski Camp returns again, with the entire Lodge reserved exclusively for the program. Participants will be surrounded by fellow women skiers, building camaraderie and connection both on and off the snow.

With Alta's legendary snow and terrain right outside the door, it is the perfect way to kick off the ski season, elevate your skills, and enjoy a one-of-a-kind, women-only mountain getaway. Learn more.

PERFORMANCE SKI CAMP

December 8-12, 2026
April 4-8, 2027

Deepen your understanding and love of skiing through our Early and Spring season Performance Ski Camps. These immersive co-ed programs for advanced to expert skiers, coached by top instructors from Alta's Alf Engen Ski School, offer precise practice and strategies to improve on-snow technique and performance in varying terrain and conditions. Learn more.