18. Mount Sunapee

NEW HAMPSHIRE

A day-tripper’s dream, Mount Sunapee serves up a real mountain experience commuting distance from urban New England. This mountain “feels small and skis big,” thanks to its friendly attitude, legitimate frontside steeps (think Lynx and Goosebumps), and expansive backside cruising in Sun Bowl, where readers rave about the “incredible views” and the “sweet high-speed lift.” Legendary guest services, free gear storage, a dedicated learning area, and a top-shelf adaptive program complete the résumé. With the East’s No. 1-ranked grooming and No. 4-ranked snow, “Groomingdales” is the early-season go-to. It just gets better through spring when “The Beach” between base lodges becomes tailgating and picnicking central. Readers who begged for “more terrain!” get their wish soon with the recently approved West Bowl expansion, which will include a high-speed quad and four top-to-bottom trails. Easy day access comes with laments of big weekend crowds, limited après, and no slopeside lodging, but overall readers see Sunapee as “a great, manageable family resort.” —E.T.M.