

ASPENPEAK™



He's **HOT! HOT! HOT!**

OLIVER HUDSON

GETS UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL ABOUT LIFE IN ASPEN

MAGIC ON THE MOUNTAIN

KNOCK 'EM DEAD IN THE SEASON'S **SEXIEST** LOOKS

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LAND HO!

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Living la Vida Local

One Aspen denizen's advice on how to do as the locals do.

BY ANITA ROSENBERG

OVER THE THREE DECADES MY FAMILY HAS BEEN VACATIONING IN ASPEN, WE'VE RENTED EVERY CONDO AND HOUSE IN TOWN. But now that we are residents, our Aspen lives have changed. No longer mere tourists, we find ourselves connected to the town like true Aspenites. We fill our jeep with gas bought at the year-round residents' discount price. During hikes up Smuggler Mountain we run into folks we know. And best of all, we fit in with the local scene, which makes our Aspen experience very special. Fitting in isn't hard if you keep these tips in mind.

FAVORITE SPOTS

- Amen Wardy** (210 South Galena Street, 970-544-3426) for party supplies, bath products, and gifts.
- Boogie's** (534 East Cooper Avenue, 970-925-6111) for a large selection of jeans.
- Cache Cache** (205 South Mill Street, 970-925-3835) for the scene and a delicious dinner.
- Explore Booksellers** (221 East Main Street, 970-925-5336) to stimulate your brain.
- Hotel Jerome** (330 East Main Street, 970-920-1000) for a posh breakfast.
- Ink! Coffee** (520 East Durant Avenue, 970-544-0588) for black & white coffee (with cocoa and white chocolate).
- Performance Ski** (408 South Hunter Street, 970-925-8657) for chic, sporty designer gear.
- Popcorn Wagon** (305 South Mill Street, 970-925-2718) for chocolate crêpes.
- Poppycock's** (665 East Cooper Avenue, 970-925-1245) for oatmeal pancakes.
- Red Spa** (205 South Mill Street, 970-925-4648) for a manicure and facial.
- The Wild Fig** (315 East Hyman Avenue, 970-925-5160) for a cozy atmosphere and an intriguing menu.
- Woody Creek Tavern** (7760 Upper River Road, Woody Creek, 970-923-4585) for lunch after a bike ride.

WHAT TO DO

People here live for the outdoors. Before noon, they have either hiked, biked, golfed, mountain climbed, caught a dozen trout, or paraglided off Ajax Mountain. After adjusting to the altitude, get out there and get your body in shape. (Walking the two blocks from **Mezzaluna** to **Amen Wardy** does not count.) "Hike up Smuggler every day until people start waving hi and think you're a local," advises full-time resident Karen Lord.

WHAT TO WEAR

In any given season, you will find locals wearing fewer layers than would seem necessary. They sport down vests when it's snowing, shorts when it's raining, sneakers or hiking boots anytime, and always sunglasses thanks to those killer rays. Although your visitor instincts will have you packing chic city clothes, like stiletto heels and cashmere turtlenecks, trust me—don't be afraid to run around town in your biker shorts and helmet. "You don't have to be fancy to fit in," says Christina Nicoletti, owner of **Henry Beguelin**. "Don't wear your Jimmy Choo shoes, because you're going to go out and break your neck. Aspen is known for outdoor life. Meet the people. Ski. Hike. Have a good time."

ATTITUDE

Aspenites are friendly folks who have moved to this mountain paradise as a lifestyle choice. Everyone is here to play and have fun just like you—even celebrities. Celebrity sightings are a way of life and if you are new to town, it can be exciting. But locals know that the true Aspen celebrities are the money moguls, hotshot sport buffs, and community movers and shakers. "If you want to look like a local, pretend you could care less about a celebrity sighting," explains Jerry Bovino, host of *Eye on Aspen* on GrassRoots Community TV. "As the tourists rush in the direction of the star, secretly catch a peek of Catherine Zeta-Jones from the corner of your eye while you walk the other way and nonchalantly order a coffee at **Ink! Coffee** or **ZeZe Café**. Wait to call everyone you know back home when no one is looking." Fitting in—or at least giving the appearance of fitting in—is easy to do. It's all about having that Aspen attitude. **149**

Monumental

The shrines scattered throughout Aspen Mountain give a nod to icons of today and yesterday. BY ANITA ROSENBERG

ASPEN MOUNTAIN HAS A SECRET. Shrines—collections of trinkets, totems, and mementos of legends lost—that are mystical and difficult to find, are tucked away in various locations along the slopes. Shrouded in mystery, these memorials require expert guidance to locate. There is no official map. No one volunteers information. Cozy up to a ski patrol officer, gain the confidence of a ski instructor, or appeal to a seasoned local for the lowdown—it's the only way to find them. You can follow the vague directions (“on the east side of the mountain” or “on the back of Maroon Bell”), but don't be discouraged. With enough prodding and enthusiasm, the right folks might just take you.

Every culture has its own version, from informal to elaborate, and they are always unique and personal, with photographs and keepsakes of loved ones who have passed away. Aspen is no different: The Valentine's Day shrine off Walsh's run with its swing and love sonnets; the now defunct Marilyn Monroe shrine, which featured photographs of the silver-screen goddess, and the

Chick shrine with its lipstick and hair curlers.

Upon arrival, absorb the shrine's energy, say a prayer, and ski away, leaving everything as you found it. Respect the wilderness that houses these free spirits, and consider it your duty to help guard and perpetuate this mountain secret. Every shrine has a story—here are a few.

Just off the Bellissimo ski run in the woods is the John Denver shrine, which appeared in 1997 when the singer-songwriter died in a small-plane crash. “A friend and I started the John Denver shrine,” says Aspen local Maddy Lieb. “We decided he needed a shrine because he is such an Aspen guy. There was already an area in the woods with a bench, so we started bringing John Denver things. [His wife] Annie Denver brought the wind chime from his house. Someone brought a frame with a gold record in it. Once you get a shrine started, it snowballs.”

Other Aspenites agree: “John Denver is one of Aspen's original shrines,” says Tim Cooney of the Aspen Ski Patrol. “John came here in the early 1970s before he was famous, playing in a



ABOVE: An ode to John Denver on Aspen Mountain.
BELOW: Elvis gets his due.

restaurant out in Snowmass. ‘Rocky Mountain High’ was his first big hit. He walked the walk.”

Down Silver Bell Trail is the new Ski Museum, where locals dump the old skis they can't bear to completely part with. The old Ski Museum was taken down last summer, and the old skis eventually morphed into a fence at Silver Bell's Blondie's Cabin.

In the trees off the Back of Bell II run stands the Cowboy (Buckeroo) shrine. The Buckeroos—a group of intrepid skiers in the 1970s—would gather at the ridge of Bell run on the last day of ski season for the big Buck Off, a now defunct unofficial ski race.

The Elvis Presley shrine was the first memorial on the mountain. Take a left at the ski patrol phone on Copper and traverse to a clearing dedicated to the king of rock 'n' roll.

The Jimi Hendrix shrine is located down Zaugg Dump—a heart-pounding, double-black-diamond run at the bottom of a steep ravine. The nod to Hendrix is clustered between stone relics of the original 1880s Aspen Mountain miner's tram.

Off Ruthie's run is the popular Jerry Garcia shrine. “The Jerry Garcia dashboard kit from Ruby's in Moab started it all,” explains Heidi Hat Wade. “There already was a spot with a bench—my husband Paul went over there one day and left some roses.” [AP]

