



*Erik Nelson enjoying some well-earned turns on Gunsight Gully in Oakes Gully. Photos by Joe Klementovich*

## NORTH CONWAY, NH

Moat Mountain Smokehouse & Brewing Co.



Clogged with tourist-friendly restaurants and motels, North Conway, NH has no shortage of places to eat or drink after a long day of skiing in the Mount Washington Valley. In the quaint-but-somewhat-busy-village, figuring out where to throw down can be harder than the skin up, but the savvier backcountry skiers always wind up at the Moat Mountain Smokehouse and Brewery.

"The Moat" is what every backcountry après bar should be. No junkhouse of mismatched ice skates hung next to an old banjo, three license plates and a Jackalope head; no skis or climbing gear nailed to the walls—although most of their patrons have just returned from doing one of these two things. Just a renovated 1840s farmhouse whose bright but not obnoxious atmosphere includes a basement brewroom and old porches that enclose a dining room filled by a great cadre of stinky climbers and skiers talking about falling and fall-lines.

With seven of their own microbrews on tap and eight to 10 seasonal beers rotated through by The Moat's brewmaster, Will Gilson (who honed his art at Salt Lake City's Squatter's Pub and Jackson's Snake River Brewing Company), the beer is always good. But the eats don't slack off, either. There are the big sandwiches, burgers and wood-fired pizzas, but the menu's Tex-Mex flavor is perfectly married to smokehouse origins to create unique combos in quesadillas and nachos, as well as straight-up barbeque right from the smoker with pulled pork and brisket sidelining mashed potatoes and yam fries under their two authentic barbeque sauces.

Beer or no beer, the food's great, the ambiance is better, and the location is best. Sit on the porch, eat and drink while taking in views of the Presidential Range, and you'll start to think about making this place home.

—Brian Irwin

**Specialty:** Aside from the beer, the Moat Nachos, customized with beef brisket chili, pineapple/mango salsa or a blackbean spread.

**Location:** On Route 16 in North Conway, ½-mile north of Memorial Hospital.

*Will Gilson brewing up a batch of Oktoberfest, one of the 7 to 11 beers on tap at the Moat Mt. Brewery & Smokehouse.*

