

CLOSE-UP ON LINCOLN, N.H. | BY MARTY BASCH | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

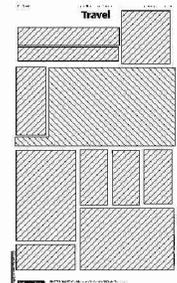
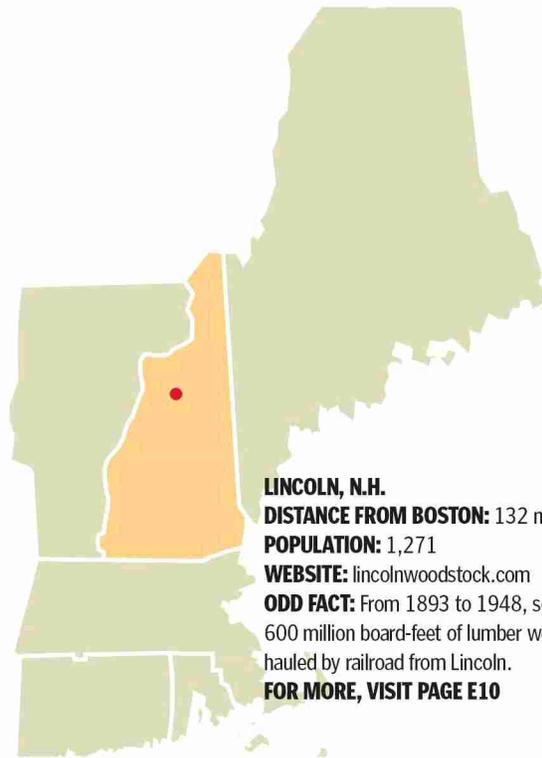
RAILS AND TRAILS

LOGGING PUT WHITE MOUNTAIN TOWN ON THE MAP. SKIING AND HIKING KEEP IT THERE.

Lincoln's gone from logging to lifts. Credit timber baron J.E. Henry and his railroad for keeping the mill town in the western White Mountains humming economically in the late 19th century and into the 20th. As the area's economy changed, it was another advance in transportation that paved the way: Interstate 93 reached Lincoln in 1973, helping to bring skiers and other visitors to Loon Mountain, which had been founded seven years earlier by Sherman Adams, the former governor (and, yes, President Eisenhower's famous chief of staff). Over the years, Loon has worked to turn itself into a year-round destination, but it's still busiest in winter. This season Loon plans to open long-awaited trails on South Peak.

DO

Loon Mountain (60 Loon Mountain Road, 1-800-229-5666, loonmtn.com.) expects to premiere three new ski trails — two groomed and one gladed — and two lifts this season. Plans for the expansion were started in 1983 so there will be some long-awaited celebrating this winter. Many people don't know there's a little hill in town with night skiing: the **Kancamagus Recreation Area** (Kanc Rec Road, 603-745-8673). **Alpine Adventures canopy tours** (41 Main St., Route 112, 1-888-745-1919, alpinezipline.com) allow visitors to zip down Barron Mountain from platform to platform along the treetops, outfitted with climbing harnesses and connected to heavy cables. Alpine offers snowmobiling tours, too. Stay on the ground after crossing a suspension bridge on the **Lincoln Woods Trail** (Lincoln Woods Visitors Center, Route 112, 603-630-5190, fs.fed.us/r9/forests/white_mountain/), for an all-season gentle hike, mountain bike, ski or snowshoe expedition. All that activity leave you aching? Sweet-smelling wraps and scrubs like the refreshing pear and green apple scrub plus a list of massages and facials are available at **The Viaggio Spa** in the Mountain Club on Loon (90 Loon Mountain Road, 1-800-229-7829, ext. 5287, mtclub.com).





You can hike, ski, or bike on the beautiful Lincoln Woods Trail.

PHOTOS BY MARK WILSON/GLOBE STAFF

SPEND

Shopping isn't as big a sport here as at the other end of the "Kanc" in North Conway, but Main Street has its finds. The first Lahout's opened in 1920 in Littleton as a dry goods and grocery store, now Lincoln has four of the ski, clothing, and gear stores with bargains at **Lahout's Discount Warehouse** (41 Main St., 603-745-3334, lahouts.com). **Rodgers Ski and Sport** (5 Main St., 603-745-8347, rodgersskiandsport.com) has three floors of skis, snowboards, a boot lab, and even a guy corner for watching a big screen. Upscale wines, cheeses, and treats are found at **Abbey Cellars** (78 Main St., 1-877-917-9463, abbeycellarsnh.com). An outdoor theme runs through **Mountain Wanderer Map and Books Store** (Main Street, 800-745-2707, mountainwanderer.com) and **Innisfree Books** (In the Mill, Main Street, 603-745-6107) has an assortment of page turners.

PARTY

Many restaurants turn into night haunts. Watch the game at **CJ's Penalty Box Sports Bar and Pub** (Downstairs at the Kancamagus Motor Lodge, Route 112, 603-745-4899, kancmotorlodge.com, \$5.99 to \$17.99) with its fan decor. Two former Olympians are part of the team at **Gordi's Fish and Steak House** (Depot Station, Main Street, 603-745-6635, gordisfishandsteak.com, \$5.99 to \$22.99, après-ski specials) where memorabilia fills the homey lounge. Seasonal brews like winter's Wassail ale, live entertainment, karaoke, and rustic comfort keep the party going at **Woodstock Inn Station and Brewery** (Main Street, North Woodstock, 603-745-3951, woodstockinnnh.com, \$6.99 to \$21.99, après-ski specials). The mix is local and from away over the pool tables at **Truant's Tavern** (Main Street, North Woodstock, 603-745-2239, \$6.99 to \$22.99).

REST

There is no shortage of hotels, motels, inns, and condos in the area. Accommodations from studio size to three-bedroom condos are available at **The Nordic Inn** (Route 112, 866-734-2164, nordic-inn.com, \$99-\$309 seasonal, two-night minimum). Many deals can be found a few miles away along Route 3 at places like **Parker's Motel** (750 US Route 3, 603-745-8341, parkersmotel.com, \$39-\$92 seasonal). **Indian Head Resort** — climb the tower for stellar views — is a complete family destination with plenty to do (664 US Route 3, 800-343-8000, indianheadresort.com, \$69-\$175 seasonal). The tastefully furnished **Woodstock Inn** with its behind-the-glass porch is a touch of comfort with varied lodging opportunities (Route 3, North Woodstock, 800-321-3985, woodstockinnnh.com, \$69 to \$199, seasonal).

PLAY



Engineer Mike Gooden climbs off his engine after a run on the Hobo Railroad, which takes Santa for rides during holiday season.

Loon's got snow tubing, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, outdoor ice skating, the Loon Mountain Adventure Center's indoor climbing wall, and more kid-friendly winter fun, but look for Santa nearby. He's riding the rails along the rocky Pemigewasset River on the **Hobo Railroad** (64 Railroad St., 603-745-2135, hoborr.com) on select November and December dates. The trained bears may be hibernating at **Clark's Trading Post** (Route 3, 603-745-8913, clarkstradingpost.com), but the fun performances and amusements run from Memorial Day through fall. Paint those mugs, plates, and bowls year-round at **Creation Station** (Depot Plaza Route 112, 603-745-8205, creationstationpottery.com) before they're fired in the pottery kiln.

FUEL

Just plain good cooking keeps **Peg's** (Main Street, North Woodstock, 603-745-2740, 99 cents to \$7.95, cash only) a local hot spot for breakfast and lunch. Worship the coffee bean and grab a sandwich at **Half Baked, Fully Brewed** (187 Main St., 603-745-8811, \$1.95 to \$6.50, cash only). International cuisine sparkles at **Gypsy Cafe** (117 Main St., 603-745-4395, \$6.95 to \$19.99) with Indian-influenced salmon and raspberry chipotle-accented Australian lamb. Probably New Hampshire's most famous homegrown chain, now a Granite State staple, **The Common Man** (10 Polard St., 603-745-3463, thecman.com, \$5.99 to \$21.99) serves "Great American Fare." In a lofty former mill, **Fratello's Ristorante Italiano** (Main Street, Route 112, in Village Shoppes Mall, 603-745-2022, fratellos.com, \$5.99 to \$21.99) serves up brick oven pizza and classic Italian from antipasto to dessert.



The Woodstock Inn brings a touch of comfort to the area.