

# SKI

## Market Report: One Steamboat Place

Steamboat is still the genuine Western town it's always been, but long-awaited base improvements and a flagship luxury residential property are softening its rough edges.

*By Deborah Williams*

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At first, it feels like a total betrayal. Like many Steamboat loyalists, I've embraced this resort for its rustic charm, its genuine mountain ranching community and its decidedly unpolished veneer. I've forgiven its rough edges and aging infrastructure, and I've celebrated the 'Boat's counterpoint to swankier ski resorts. So I actually feel a little disloyal as we pull into the hulking stone-and-timber rotunda at One Steamboat Place and allow the unabashed dotting to begin. But, make no mistake: I got over it.

Dotting is the cornerstone of the OSP experience, and it starts before you even arrive. A week before our visit, Resort Manager Ellie McAtee—more den mother than concierge—called to ask what pre-arrival logistics we'd like her to arrange. She offered to stock the refrigerator with groceries, make dinner reservations, book ski lessons or coordinate an airport transfer. She could even arrange for a private chef to prepare Christmas dinner in our condo. This, I would learn during our visit, wasn't special media treatment but rather the standard of service offered to all of OSP's owners, guests and club members.

When we arrive, Ellie is there to greet us. Attendants whisk our luggage to our 4,700-square-foot four-bedroom residence and take our equipment directly to the onsite ski valet. The next morning, our skis—freshly waxed and tuned—are waiting for us by the main entrance on Gondola Square Plaza, steps from the lifts. Had we asked the valet to buckle our boots and carry us across the plaza to the gondola, he probably would have obliged.

Developed by the Timbers Resorts, which owns similar residence clubs around the world, OSP comprises 80 three- and four-bedroom deeded fractional- and whole-ownership condominiums. Each is fully furnished and appointed with top-end finishes and fixtures, including Viking appliances, granite countertops, flat screen TVs, steam showers and heated floors. But those features are hardly unique to luxury vacation homes in the mountains. The five-star amenities—onsite spa, state-of-the-art workout facility, ski valet with locker room and boot warmers—and the Timbers' reciprocity program aren't groundbreaking either. Instead, OSP sets itself apart the same way Steamboat always has: with sincere hospitality and a commitment to community.

For starters, OSP offers non-residential social memberships to its Summit Club in an effort to draw locals into the fold. Like OSP homeowners, Summit Club members—many of whom own primary or vacation homes in the Yampa Valley—have year-round access to all of the property's slopeside services and amenities. Better still, OSP's presence benefits all Steamboat guests, not just the paying customers.

Skirting the south perimeter of the ski area's base, OSP—with its reclaimed timber and weathered steel arches—provides a gateway to the revitalized Gondola Square. In the morning and at ski day's end, skiers can congregate around the fire pit on the heated stone pedestrian plaza that extends from OSP's grand entrance to the square. On the plaza level, The Truffle Pig restaurant (set to open this summer), an organic market and Fleischer Sports, owned and operated by former U.S. Ski Teamer Chad Fleischer, bring the base area conveniences it was sorely missing.

Inside, OSP's gathering spaces and common areas encourage owners, club members and guests to congregate and linger around grand stone fireplaces. Plush couches and distressed leather chairs overflow with pillows; a mix of eclectic furniture, artwork and antiques imbue each room with ambience that is unmistakably Steamboat. When everyone's had their fill of quality family time, kids can hit the game rooms for a Wii tournament or a movie while the adults share a bottle of wine from the private cellar.

On Friday nights, General Manager Lance Thompson hosts wine tastings, featuring a different theme each week, in the owners' lounge. It's there, over a glass of organic California red and convivial conversation with Fleischer and several OSP owners, that my guilty conscience finally subsides. I no longer feel I'm betraying Steamboat's legacy. Rather I am embracing its evolution.



One Steamboat Place skirts the perimeter of the base village and is a gateway to the revitalized Gondola Square

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