

FAMILY TRAVELLER

Ski the wild west

Ingrid Osborne finds that powder, wildlife and waffles – plus a taste of the original settlers' life – make Jackson Hole, Wyoming, the perfect family skiing destination

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'Coming home to a place we'd never been before' could have easily been penned about Jackson Hole, Wyoming. As the youngest of the Rockies, the Teton Range has that 'just woken up' look, with sprawling prairies below wearing little other than willow bushes and sagebrush strewn across the plains like morning bed hair.

I enjoy gauging a place by its airport signage; Jackson Hole Airport had one that read, 'Bear-repellent spray prohibited'. It stops you to think, 'Should we have packed it to begin with?'

As the southern gateway to Yellowstone National Park, Jackson Hole naturally has wildlife overshooters alongside its own: a coyote slinks across the prairie; a bald eagle circles over sloppy remains of an elk carcass, the handiwork of a mountain lion.

And the family bit? That's nine miles shy of the airport, away from wildlife's roulette, in the cowboy town of Jackson, where saloons and ageing log homesteads mark Wyoming's great days of old... Well, youngish, given permanent settlers only arrived in 1884.

While Jackson is more bang for your buck as a base, it also rivals Teton Village (20 minutes' drive away) in terms of culture and cuisine, where Jackson Hole Mountain Resort lays down a frozen gauntlet across mountain giants Apres Vous and Rendezvous, the latter with a 3,185m summit.



And where it ended for us was in Bar Enoteca, a Spanish/Italian mountain-side bar that's a tad too easy to settle into with a bottle Piedmont red expertly paired with wild-game sausage. Thankfully, Kids Ranch happened to offer 'kids night out' between 6-9pm – that sorted date night.

The Kitchen in Jackson was the recipient of our 'last supper' blues. Its upbeat dorm style captured jovial chatter while staff served Asian-fusion creations, including delicate beef tartare and pan-seared tuna. The chef was also happy to oblige requests for child-friendly chicken.