



YES, IN MY BACKYARD: Grand Teton, from the Idaho side

# Driggs Stands Alone

Jackson's humbler twin is ideal for a long weekend, the holiday season, or even retirement BY DINA MISHEV

**I**t used to be that people came to Driggs, Idaho (pop. 1,100), for one of two reasons: Either they were aspiring potato farmers, or they'd been priced out of Jackson, Wyoming, 35 miles and an avalanche-prone mountain pass to the southeast. These days, it's because Driggs, a farming town first incorporated in 1909, has become enticing on its own merit—an eclectic community of artists, ski bums, and the occasional dot-com billionaire (not that you'd be able to peg one on Main Street) that shares a common passion for granite summits and wide, stream-filled valleys. Sounds like a lot of western mountain towns, sure. But, for now at least, Driggs retains the straight-talking, come-as-you-are attitude that places like Taos and Telluride have lost. There isn't a single T-shirt shop in town; Hollywood films show at a place called the Spud Drive-In; order an apple martini at the Royal Wolf, one of few bars, and people will look at you funny. In other words, the only hip that matters here is the one your Wranglers cling to.

## SCOUTING TRIP

### Your Weekend in Driggs



**WHERE TO PLAY:** Follow a Rendezvous Backcountry Tours guide five and a half miles and nearly 2,000 vertical feet up for an overnight at the Baldy Knoll Yurt (\$225; [www.skithetetons.com](http://www.skithetetons.com)), a mountainside command center with a wood-burning stove, a well-appointed kitchen, and 800-foot runs ten minutes from the front door. Not backcountry-ready? Grand Targhee Resort (\$574 for an annual lift ticket; [www.grandtarghee.com](http://www.grandtarghee.com)), 12 miles from downtown Driggs, has a reputation for powder-packed intermediate terrain.



**WHERE TO EAT:** Pendl's Bakery & Café (208-354-5623) serves the finest coffee in town—not that that's especially difficult in a place owner Martha

Pendl says, "is still learning what coffee culture is." The bakery also features the best (and only) hot-out-of-the-oven Austrian linzer torte and homemade bratwurst for miles around.



**WHERE TO STAY:** Grand Targhee's runs are just minutes from your log cabin at Intermountain Lodge (\$59; [www.intermountainlodge.com](http://www.intermountainlodge.com)). Or, for close-to-the-ground outdoor tips, bed down at comfy but bare-bones Movin' Sol Hostel (open January 1; \$22; [www.tetonhostel.com](http://www.tetonhostel.com)), owned by former National Outdoor Leadership School instructors Jonathan Spranza and Sarah Simmons.



## WANT TO LIVE HERE?



\* **Homes:** During the last six years, the median sale price has increased from \$150,000 to \$215,000—a lot by local standards, but about the same as a carport in Aspen and still \$315,000 less than Jackson.

\* **What \$300,000 buys you:** A five-bedroom, three-bath home on two and a half acres with Teton views ([www.siroffices.com/brokerages/jacksonhole](http://www.siroffices.com/brokerages/jacksonhole)).

\* **The local economy:** Scores of residents still make the 45-minute daily commute over Teton Pass to Jackson. Those with jobs closer to home work retail or construction, at Grand Targhee Resort or Teton Valley Hospital, or run small businesses (i.e., growing mushrooms, making skis by hand).

## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Tons of spuds grown annually in Teton County:

# 84,000

Number of places to buy toilet paper on Sunday

# 1

Average annual powder (in inches):  
Grand Targhee Resort: 500  
Jackson Hole: 459

**“I think that inmates have better chances of finding girlfriends than single men in Driggs do.”**

—Driggs male, 29, single, who asked not to be identified for fear of “seeming lame”