

# Vail, Colorado

by Jana Voelke Studelska

regional  
spotlight

**Where:** Deep in the Rocky Mountains, about 100 miles west of Denver on Interstate 70.

**Focus:** Say "Vail" and everyone knows you're talking about skiing. The reputation is well-deserved. Vail Resort is the biggest ski resort in the United States, with 5,289 acres, 193 ski trails, and 34 chairlifts, including a year-round gondola. Vail also has world-class dining, boutique shopping and top-notch cultural events, making this small town (population 4,500) the object of many dream vacations. Summer is equally as inviting with music, dance and film festivals and outdoor sports of almost every kind imaginable.

**Atmosphere:** Many Western ski communities began as former mining towns. But Vail, resembling a European alpine village, was built in the early 1960s to serve the burgeoning ski resort. Vail doesn't have Aspen's nightlife, but there's no shortage of cosmopolitan partying. This

year, Vail is in the middle of a billion dollar renewal project in the pedestrian mall areas known as Vail Village and Lionshead.

**How to get there:** By car, two hours west by interstate from Denver. Most out-of-staters, however, fly directly into Eagle County Airport. During ski season, non-stop service from 17 U.S. cities is available. Private jet owners fly into Vail Valley Jet Center, where they're greeted by a concierge and white glove treatment.

**Famous residents:** President Gerald Ford, an avid skier, still owns a home here. Several Hollywood celebrities have homes here, but locals keep lips tight.

**For more information:** Check out [www.visitvailvalley.com](http://www.visitvailvalley.com), the Vail Valley Chamber and Tourism Bureau's Web site, where you can explore Vail through an interactive map, and even make vacation reservations. Last-minute vacationers can often find good deals on the site. 🐾



## Vacation Hotspot

Summer in Vail offers the usual activities such as hiking and horseback riding. There's also whitewater rafting, summer music with the visiting New York Symphony Orchestra at the Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater, guided ATV adventures or a day at a mountain bike class.

In winter, hit the slopes and enjoy some of Vail's world-famous "champagne" powder. Not a skier? Ride the gondola to Adventure Ridge on top of Vail Mountain to snow tube, ice skate, bike ski or snowshoe.

**Above:** Vail's town center. Photo by Jack Affleck.

## Local Real Estate

**Property values:** Prices have doubled in the last 24 months. Properties in Vail Village and Lionshead, where skiers can step out their doors and onto the lift, move quickly. Last summer, several hundred new condo units ranging from \$1.2 to \$9 million sold out in two hours.

**Taxes:** Property is taxed at assessed value, whether a primary residence or vacation home.

### Vail Village Penthouse

Sold for: \$2,000,000  
Square footage: 1,914  
Bedrooms: 3  
Baths: 2

**Highlights:** A spacious penthouse in a three-unit with vaulted ceilings and views to Gore Range and Gold Peak.



### Vail Single Family Home

Sold for: \$950,000  
Square footage: 2,302  
Bedrooms: 3  
Baths: 3 1/2

**Highlights:** A comfortable family home with a backyard creek. Much of the house was recently remodeled.



All listings sold within the past 12 months. Listing information provided by Diana Mathias of Slifer, Smith and Frampton, (970) 479-2009, [www.myvailmountainhome.com](http://www.myvailmountainhome.com).



# PREMIERE PROPERTIES

## LAKE GEORGE, NEW YORK



**3300 sq. ft. 3BR, 3BA log ranch.** 1.08 acres, 121' lakeshore, dock. Cathedral ceiling living room. Full finished basement. Hot tub. 2-car garage. Town sewer and water. \$750,000. Alison V. Craig Realty, LLC, 518-543-6221, [www.alisonvcraigrealty.com](http://www.alisonvcraigrealty.com).

## FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS



**3BR, 3BA log home on 30 wooded acres.** Native stone FP, large decks and walkout basement. Seasonal waterfall, walking trails. Second 1BR log cabin. \$475,846. Call Millie. United Country Team Runkle Realty, 479-442-7615, [www.teamrunkle.com](http://www.teamrunkle.com).

## HARBOR SPRINGS, MICHIGAN



**Lake Michigan waterfront just N of Harbor Springs.** Magnificent views of Beaver Island and 186' of sandy beach. Over 6000 sq. ft. of living space including 5BR, 6BA, large MBR. Rec room/bar. Decks on all 3 floors & much more! \$1,995,000. Gary McIntosh, 231-526-3190.

## LAKE OF THE OZARKS, MISSOURI



**Priced below appraisal!** 4093 sq. ft. lakefront home on 1.7 acres w/210' prime lakefront. Maintenance-free exterior. 5BR, 3BA w/many upgrades. Enjoy an inground pool, garage w/workshop and large covered parking area. \$359,900. Call Pam today, 800-598-1354.

## SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN



**Handcrafted log cabin on 29 secluded acres.** Nestled in wooded valley in hill country near Mississippi River in Vernon County. Lodgepole pine logs, massive stone FP, furnishings & appliances included. Excellent condition. \$245,000. 888-942-6644. [www.rushcreekrealty.com](http://www.rushcreekrealty.com).

## CRANE LAKE, MINNESOTA



**Scotts on Crane Lake** is at the Southern entry of Voyageurs National Park between Ely and Intl. Falls. Level building sites offer great lake views. Sand beach, road access and marina. Deena Congdon, Grand Rapids Realty, 866-352-2006, [www.landandlakesrealty.com](http://www.landandlakesrealty.com).

## EAGLE RIVER, WISCONSIN



**Columbus Lake** – Level hard bottom sand frontage & 18 acres of private hardwoods await you w/these 1-4BR cabin condos. Local rental agency can handle post-sale weekly rentals of units. Prices start at \$109,900. Call for free color guide. Wilderness Realty Inc., 800-881-7966.

## BITTERROOT VALLEY, MONTANA



**Live in this 4BR, 3BA Rocky Mountain log home w/creek running around property.** Mountain views. Easy access. Centrally located in Bitterroot Valley of SW Montana. \$452,250. MLS #36583. [www.curtrayrealty.com](http://www.curtrayrealty.com) or 877-289-5263. Ask for Don.

## EAU CLAIRE, WISCONSIN



**Create your own lifetime memories.** Enjoy 350' of spectacular peninsula frontage on Lake Altoona. Great fishing! 3BR, 3BA, 2-car garage. Walkout basement. \$450,000. Rick Roesch, Century 21 Metro, 715-829-1480.

## BRIDGTON, MAINE



**New offering on the West Shore of Long Lake.** Lindal Post & Beam construction w/prow-front, full deck. 200' deep water frontage w/expansive docking system. 3+BR, 3 1/2 BA, 1.8-acre lot. \$1,300,000. Nancy Hanson, 207-693-7270 or [njhanson@lakesproperties.com](mailto:njhanson@lakesproperties.com).

## HAYWARD, WISCONSIN



**Two-story log-sided executive home on Round Lake.** 5BR, 3BA, open floor plan w/many recent upgrades. 135' level sandy beach frontage. Spacious decks, 2-car detached garage, blacktop drive. \$982,000. Risberg Recreational Real Estate, 715-634-2656.

## MANITOULIN ISLAND, CANADA



**Mindemoya Lake – fine sand beach.** Waterfront 3BR bungalow w/2BA. Self-contained guesthouse w/3 pc. BA. Detached garage. Recreation building. Huge sun decks. \$269,000 Canadian. J. James Bousquet Realty, Inc., 705-368-2271, [www.manitoulinproperty.com](http://www.manitoulinproperty.com).



# Lake Gaston, North Carolina

by Jana Voelke Studelska



**Where:** Lake Gaston straddles the North Carolina-Virginia border, about 70 miles north of the Raleigh/Durham area and 80 miles inland from the Atlantic coast.

**How to get there:** Two interstates, I-95 and I-85, bracket the lake, providing easy access to either end. By car, it's an easy trip from Washington, D.C. (170 miles) or the Raleigh-Durham area (90 miles). The Halifax County Airport has a 4,000-foot landing strip, accommodating small private planes.

**How big:** Lake Gaston was created in 1963, with the completion of the Gaston Dam. Today the lake is 34 miles long, with 350 miles of shoreline and 20,000 acres of water. A number of "creeks" lead into the lake, creating large coves and bays. At its widest, it's more than a mile from shore to shore.

**Atmosphere:** Cabin owners are very proud of the lake quality, which has been rated as some of the cleanest water in the eastern United States. An active property owners' association and cooperative task forces are busy making sure it stays that way. The lake's dam (used for electrical generation) and shoreline (up to the high water mark) are controlled by Dominion Power, and the lake level is very stable. Set-back restrictions and lakeshore regulations have ensured a forested shoreline. Lands surrounding the lake are entirely privately owned, so commercialization on the lake is minimal. There are no state parks or public areas, no industry, no big resort complexes. A few marinas keep

boats gassed up and offer a place to catch up on the latest lake news. Mom-and-pop markets still dot the area, and surrounding towns offer shopping and medical facilities. There are public accesses, but very few day-trippers.

**Focus:** Life on Lake Gaston is all about the water. The stability and beauty of the lake make water sports the focus of all activity. So much so that a volunteer Coast Guard Auxiliary patrols the lake! One lake resident, a former world champion wake boarder, offers lessons on his slalom course, also used by the lake's water-skiers. Look for sailboats, personal watercraft and a few houseboats, as well. Fishing is big on Gaston. There are tournaments all year-round as anglers look for bass and crappie.

**Who comes here:** Lake Gaston's residents are an interesting mix of tech and medical workers with young families from Raleigh-Durham, former government employees and retired military from Washington, D.C., and weekenders from the Virginia Beach area. Increasingly, lake property owners are becoming permanent residents – perhaps as many as 60 percent stay year-round now. Many properties are rented out by the week to vacationers, who make reservations a year or two ahead.

**Property values:** Vacant lots are becoming scarce, driving the prices up dramatically. Today, lots on the main body of the lake start at \$400,000, and lots on navigable creeks start at \$150,000. Existing properties have doubled in value over the last decade. Prices on the main lake are higher – buyers love the view. A second ring of "offshore" properties are being bought up, starting at \$150,000.

**Taxes:** Because Lake Gaston's shoreline falls in two states and five counties, property taxes depend on where you are. Generally, property owners find the taxes and insurance to be significantly lower than that found in the northeastern seaboard states.

## "SOLD" Local Real Estate



### Log House

Sold for: \$390,000  
Square footage: 2,496  
Bedrooms: 3  
Baths: 2

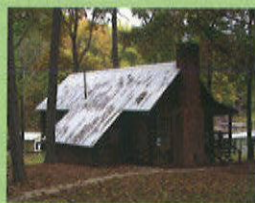
**Highlights:** A rustic log house with vaulted ceilings, a sleeping loft, a hot tub in the sunroom and a covered deck facing the water. The boathouse has a fantastic sundeck and view down the lake.



### Ranch House

Sold for: \$389,900  
Square footage: 1,800  
Bedrooms: 3  
Baths: 2

**Highlights:** Ranch house with redwood siding and an antique brick foundation. Living room has a fireplace while outside boasts lovely gardens and landscaping. There are 115 feet of lake frontage and a boathouse with lift.



### Cottage

Sold for: \$390,000  
Square footage: 2,496  
Bedrooms: 3  
Baths: 2

**Highlights:** A renovated, two-story log cottage with a tin roof and covered porch. The three-bay boathouse also has a sundeck with great lake views. The main living area has a fireplace and eat-in kitchen.

All listings sold within past 12 months.  
Listing information provided by Pam Hargrave, Wilkie Real Estate, Henrico, N.C., (800) 729-4125, [www.lakegastonhomes.com](http://www.lakegastonhomes.com).



# PREMIERE PROPERTIES

## MAYFIELD LAKE, NEW YORK



**Lakefront tri-level chalet.** 5BR, 2 1/2 BA on private dead end road overlooking lake and mountains. Hot tub room w/FP and indoor waterfall. LR w/FP, MBR balcony suite, 2-car garage. \$599,900. Coldwell Banker Arlene M. Sitterly, Inc., 518-762-9885, [sitterly98@frontiernet.net](mailto:sitterly98@frontiernet.net)

## MERCER, WISCONSIN



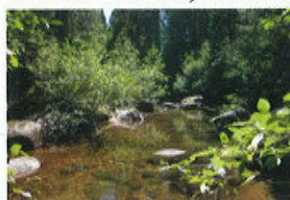
**Elegant 3BR, 2 1/2 BA home.** 250' sand frontage on Pike Lake. Formal dining, master suite, boathouse, private boat launch, recent updates. CENTURY 21 Pierce Realty. 800-253-5169. See virtual tour (Listing 414) at [www.c21piercerealty.com](http://www.c21piercerealty.com).

## LAKE VERMILION, MINNESOTA



**Price reduced!** Roomy home w/south exposure. 200' lakeshore. Stone FP, enclosed porch, walk-out basement, separate guest, spa & sauna building. Garage w/workshop. \$849,900. #100973. Angelo Poletti, Coldwell Banker Properties North, 800-584-9426 (O), 218-753-2151 (H).

## SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, CALIFORNIA



**Rare riverfront in Christmas Valley.** 61 acre, 4 BR, 2 1/2 BA, garage, recreational vehicle parking. \$750,000. Call Davey Paiva at Davey Paiva Realty, toll-free 877-530-0660, [daveyp@sierra.net](mailto:daveyp@sierra.net), [www.laketahoe4sale.com](http://www.laketahoe4sale.com).

## PARADISE ISLAND, MINNESOTA



**Own your own island!** This 3.4 acre island is located in the Northwest Angle of the Lake of the Woods. \$448,888. Call Tom Turner today at 800-875-0722, RE/MAX A-1 Excellence.

## LAKE REDSTONE, WISCONSIN



**Lovely waterfront log home!** Kit/dining area opens to 2-story LR w/FP & open staircase to upper floor. 3BR, 2 1/2 BA. 2+ car gar. w/upper storage area, covered wraparound porch. 82' private shoreline. Julie or Ray at RE/MAX Preferred, 888-985-8484. Tour at [www.JulieSells.com](http://www.JulieSells.com).

## NORTHERN WISCONSIN



**Newly constructed 2+BR, 2BA log home** situated on peaceful, pine-studded lot overlooking Crescent Creek. Full basement, solid hickory floors, six panel doors and beautiful woodwork throughout. \$239,000. Wilderness Realty, Inc., 800-881-7966, [www.WRInc.com](http://www.WRInc.com).

## BITTERROOT VALLEY, MONTANA



**Beautiful mountain views from this 3BR, 2BA frame home on 6.5 acres.** Attached 2-car garage, separate shop, meadows, trees, gravity feed irrigation. Horses allowed. MLS#35483. \$467,000. Contact Broker Don Ray at Curt Ray Realty, Inc., 877-289-5263 or [Don@curttrayrealty.com](mailto:Don@curttrayrealty.com).

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# Millinocket, Maine

by Jana Voelke Studelska



**Where:** Smack-dab in the geographical center of Maine, with Canada about 100 miles to the north, east and west. Beyond Millinocket? Forest, lakes and mountains. And moose. Lots of moose.

**How to get there:** Before the mid-1960s, very few ventured to this remote mill town – even mill workers were hard to recruit. Today, Interstate 95 passes not far from Millinocket. The town's airport is almost ready to expand to accommodate private jets. But it's the seaplane base that hums with the most activity: floats in the summer, skis in the winter.

**Focus:** If you're looking for golf courses and fine dining, just turn around and head south right now. This is the real North Woods, where you don't see the smoke from your neighbor's camp (which is Maine-speak for rustic cabin), and your kitchen water comes from the pond (Maine-speak for lake). In town, things are changing a bit, as Millinocket transforms itself into a four-season destination. There are now 13 white water rafting companies available to take you down the west branch of the Penobscot River, guided wildlife tours, and some cell phone coverage.

**Private land:** The state of Maine is 89 percent forest, 90 percent of which is privately owned – mostly by large forest industry corporations. That adds up to 17 million acres of woods. There's a long and proud tradition of the privately owned timberlands being open to the public. In fact, an enor-

mous network of privately owned logging roads allows access to most of northern Maine.

**Public land:** Not far from Millinocket is Baxter State Park, the nation's largest state park at 202,064 acres. It's also the northern terminus for the 2,174-mile-long Appalachian Trail, and home to Mt. Katahdin, climbers' much-loved mile-high mountain. In fact, Mt. Katahdin is featured

on the logo of L.L. Bean, whose corporate home is in Maine.

**Fishing and hunting:** Hardly a month of the year doesn't go by that some sport fishing or hunting season begins or ends. Moose, bear, duck and goose; deer, salmon, trout, grouse – you name it. With so much forest and water, Maine is home to the largest remaining population of moose east of the Mississippi.

**Recreation:** Whitewater rafting, canoeing, kayaking, hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, guide services, scenic moose tours, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, mountain climbing. That ought to keep everyone busy for awhile!

**Real estate:** Almost all recreational properties in the area sit on lots that are leased from the large timber company. It's an arrangement that's mostly unfamiliar to Southerners (Maine-speak for anyone not from here), but quite common in Maine. The lease contracts are renewed every five years, rarely exceeding fees of \$1,500 a year, and can be transferred from generation to generation. If you sell your camp (meaning the buildings on the leased property), the timber company just writes a new contract with the new owner. Compared to real estate on the coastline, leased properties are a deal.

**Taxes:** You won't get a property tax bill; that goes to the timber company. But you will get a bill from the state assessor for your buildings, and it will be far below the national average for lakeshore property. ~

## "SOLD" Local Real Estate



### Near Baxter Park

Listed for: \$75,000 (on leased land)

Square footage: 1,000

Bedrooms: 2

Baths: 1

Acres: 1.15

Highlights: Winterized camp practically borders two large lakes and a major interstate snowmobile trail. Has laundry room, computer room, and living room with fireplace.



### Millinocket Lake

Listed for: \$80,000 (on leased land)

Square footage: 728

Bedrooms: 1

Acres: 1

Highlights: Remote, rustic cabin has field-stone fireplace in living room, wood stove in kitchen. Accessible by boat or 4WD, or by snowmobile in winter. Surrounding area is great for hunting and fishing.



### Big Smith Pond

Listed for: \$135,000 (on deeded lot)

Square footage: 2,000

Bedrooms: 3

Baths: 2

Acres: 1

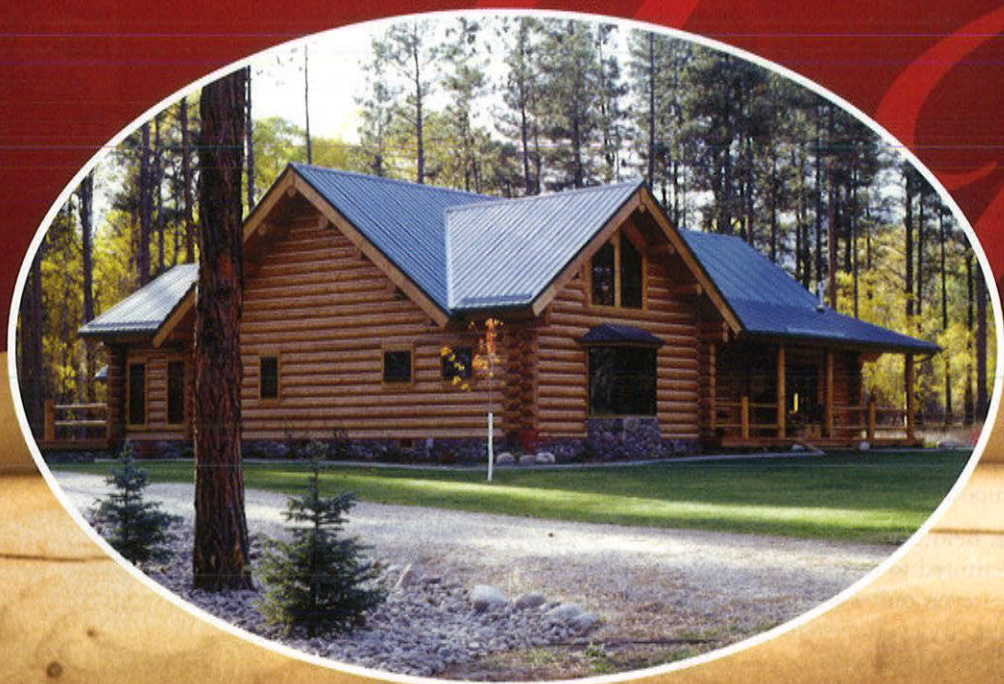
Highlights: 250 feet of water frontage on Big Smith Pond. Spiral staircase, large living room and enclosed porch. Garage has wood stove for heat. Also close to interstate snowmobile trail.

All properties sold within last 12 months. Listing information provided by Dan Corcoran, North Woods Real Estate, Millinocket, Maine, (207) 723-9086, [www.allmaine.com/northwoods](http://www.allmaine.com/northwoods)



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