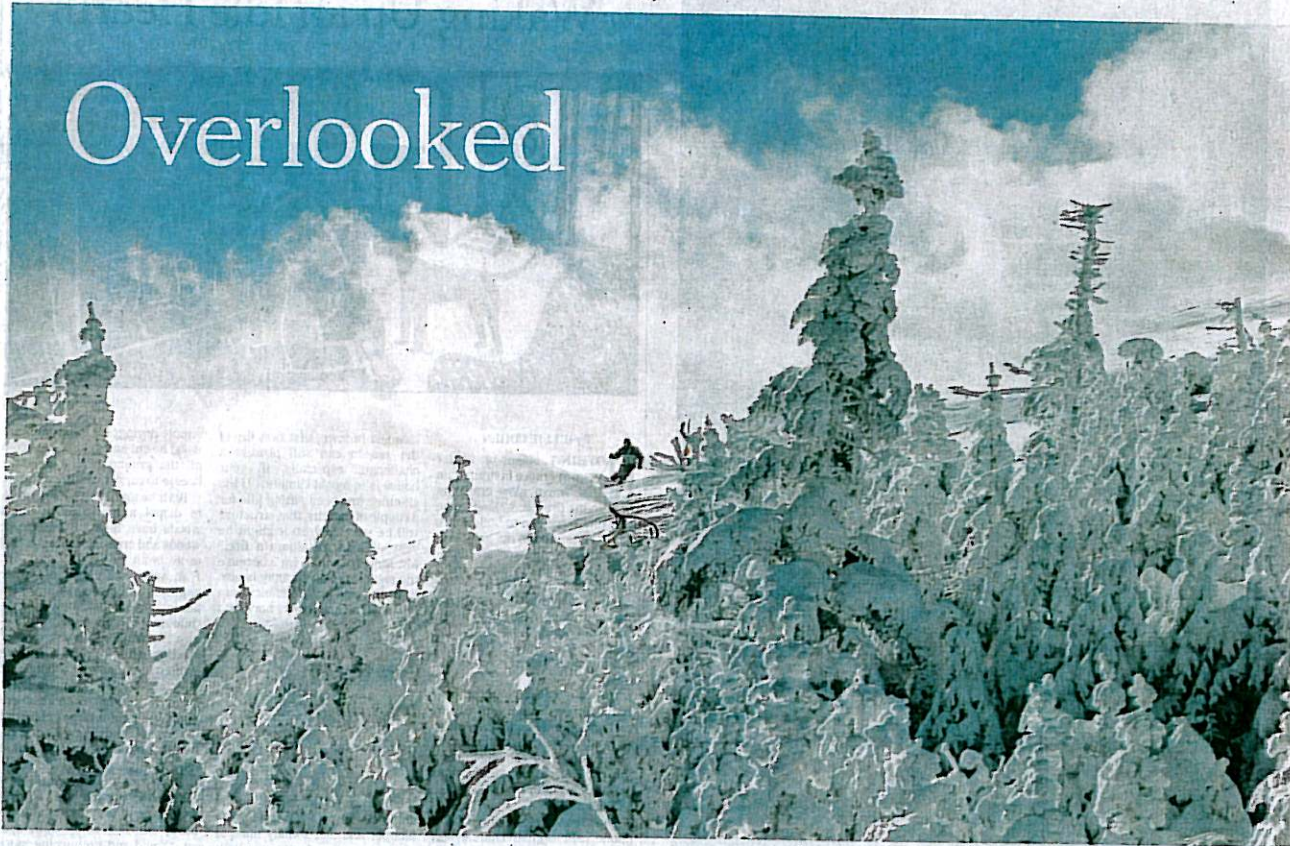


## Overlooked



PHOTOGRAPHS BY RANCE BATTACIA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A NEAR MOUNTAIN Skiing in deep powder amid a shower from the snow guns on the Skyward trail at Whiteface near Lake Placid, N.Y., a village where you can even try dog-sledding.

### Skiers bypass New York's 44 resorts at their own risk.

By BILL PENNINGTON

DO you know which state has the most ski areas? It's not Colorado, Vermont, Utah, California or New Hampshire, though those are the usual suspects. The answer is New York. But somehow New York's 44 ski areas attract a sliver of the attention given mountains elsewhere. And on any given winter weekend, the surge of skiers and snowboarders on the Eastern Seaboard will point their cars north toward New England and speed past New York's ski areas is staggering.

There's nothing wrong with those New England resorts. Many are icons, and deserve to be. But if you live in the East, especially in and around New York City, that's no reason to overlook slopes that are as close, if not closer. If the average ski family makes three trips a season, why make all three to New England? And if you're traveling East, New York's areas will reward a close look. It's not as if New York's resorts are considered inferior. Among the most devoted skiers and snowboarders, New York's winter resorts are far from a secret. In Ski magazine's most recent annual ranking of Eastern ski resorts, Whiteface Mountain outside Lake Placid came in No. 3 and Holiday

Valley in Ellicottville was No. 5. Only two New England resorts, Smuggler's Notch at No. 2 and Stowe at No. 4 (both in Vermont), were ranked higher. And it's not as if New York's ski areas lacked cachet or credentials. Whiteface was host to the 1980 Winter Olympics races and Lake Placid was home to both the 1980 and 1932 Winter Olympics. Whiteface has the largest vertical drop (3,450 feet) of any resort east of the Rockies, yet it attracts about 200,000 skier visits annually, or roughly a fourth the number who visit the largest New England resorts. How is that possible?

"People mention skiing in Vermont and everyone thinks of white church steeples, village greens and a romantic country atmosphere," said Sandy Calligore, communications director for the state-run Olympic Regional Development Authority, which manages Whiteface ([www.whiteface.com](http://www.whiteface.com)) and Gore Mountain ([www.goremountain.com](http://www.goremountain.com)), another large ski area outside Lake George. "When someone says New York, they think of Manhattan and skyscrapers. Someone says New York skiing and somebody else thinks: How good can that be? But it's a big state. It's mostly country villages and big mountains."

Having grown up in New England, and having  
Continued on Page 4



## For Many a Follower, Sacred Ground

By FINN-OLAF JONES

TRUST an unknown future with a known God," urges the sign in front of the Sangre de Cristo Christian Church on the outskirts of Crestone, Colo., which is close to a four-hour drive south of Denver off Highway 17. The town might seem to be in the middle of nowhere, but if you're seeking a taste of the divine, you've probably come to the right place.

At 8,000 feet on the edge of the desert plains of the San Luis Valley beneath the Sangre de Cristo Range, this town and its environs have about 500 residents and two dozen different religious centers, including a cluster of Buddhist monasteries, a Catholic monastery, a Taoist retreat, a Hindu ashram, a Shumet center and several American Indian sanctuaries. This forested hillside haven, nestled on an enormous aquifer below the 4,000-foot Crestone Peaks, has long been considered sacred.

"The Navajo and Hopi think of this as holy ground," said John Milton, a naturalist who runs shamanic Indian workshops on the serene 210-acre Sa-



MICHAEL BRANDEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

GOD'S COUNTRY Connie Bielecki, left, the Rev. Eric Hayer and Suzie Ryan at the Catholic Napa Hermitage, one of two dozen spiritual centers in Crestone, Colo.

cred Land Trust along North Crestone Creek. "Elders from the community still come here to worship."

An abundance of arrowheads and spears found in the area indicate that Crestone has long been a gathering

spot for Indians. "This area was probably considered holy thousands of years before Europeans ever set foot here," Mr. Milton said.

It's easy to see why. There's an  
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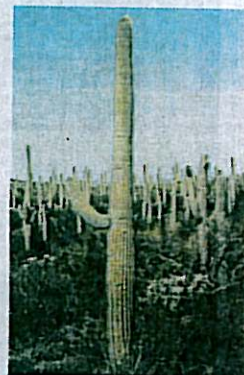
### AMERICAN JOURNEYS | Arizona Borderlands

## A Road Trip On the Edge Of America

By KEITH MULVIHILL

AS you enter the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument in southern Arizona, it's not the park's namesake plant, thick with a cluster of many branches, that inspires gasps of awe, but thousands of saguaro, the iconic tall cactus of countless Western films. Upright and lanky, with whimsically outstretched arms, one after another the saguaros wave you in.

In the 1930s, when the National Park Service went searching for the best examples of each ecosystem in the country, it chose this tract of 330,000 acres, abutting the Mexican border, to represent the Sonoran Desert. Organ Pipe is part of Arizona's larger borderland, the grand expanse of desert, grasslands and staggering peaks that make up the southern third of the state. Acquired in the Gadsden Purchase of 1854, which also included part of what is now New



JEFF TOPPING FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

ICON Saguaro also thrive in Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument.

Mexico, it was an area where people of many kinds and cultures had long mingled: Native Americans and Spanish missionaries, miners and ranchers, cowboys and vaqueros.

In a road trip in this part of Arizona  
Continued on Page 6

## BREAKING GROUND

### Viceroy Anguilla

**WHAT** Oceanfront residential resort.

**WHERE** Anguilla, in the British West Indies.

**AMENITIES** A beach club and restaurants, among others.

**PRICES** Available residences range from \$935,000 to \$9.9 million.

**STATUS** The first phase is expected to open in the spring. About two-thirds of the residences have been sold so far.

**DEVELOPER** The Kor Group.

**CONTACT** (800) 357-1930 or [www.viceroyanguilla.com](http://www.viceroyanguilla.com).

**DETAILS** Along two bays and 3,200 feet of beach near the western end of Anguilla, this 35-acre project is part of the Viceroy brand, which now includes two



♦ hotels in Southern California and is expanding to planned developments in Mexico, Florida and Colorado. It will consist of 140 villa, town house and condominium residences, which owners may choose to be rented and serve as hotel rooms when they are away. Either on bluffs or fronting the beach, the residences are all sold furnished, with their interiors designed by Kelly Wearstler. ♦ ♦ ♦ The free-standing villas, from 4,335 to 6,100 square feet, and the 3,300- to 4,300-square-foot, two-level town houses will have private infinity pools; the studio to three-bedroom condos will be in 10 7- to 16-unit buildings with shared infinity pools. Amenities other than the beach club will include five restaurants offering casual and fine dining, access to a 78-foot yacht, a club with activities for children and three tennis courts. There will also be a 20,000-square-foot Asian-inspired spa with a fitness center. The island's airport is nearby; flights from the United States connect to it through St. Maarten, Puerto Rico and elsewhere.