Vail Resorts Newsroom

Heavenly and Northstar Set to Open for the 2026-27 Ski and Ride Season Friday, Nov. 20, as Feet of Snow Stack up Across the Resorts



- Up to two feet of new snow with more in the forecast. Teams at Heavenly and Northstar anticipate expanding terrain quickly.
- Kirkwood will open earlier than planned - stay tuned for updates!
- The best way to ski and ride at Heavenly, Northstar, and Kirkwood in Tahoe, and at resorts around the world, is with an Epic Pass. Last chance to purchase is Dec. 6.

IMAGES are available for media use here.

LAKE TAHOE, Calif. - Nov. 17, 2026 – Winter is making its return to Lake Tahoe, as Heavenly, Northstar, and Kirkwood measure snow in feet, with up to two feet of new snow so far this week and more in the forecast leading into planned opening days. Heavenly Mountain Resort and Northstar California Resort are ready to kick off the 2026-27 ski and ride season this Friday, Nov. 20. While Kirkwood Mountain Resort traditionally plans to open in early December, with current snow conditions, the resort looks forward to opening early and as soon as possible once terrain management and safety work is complete. Stay tuned for more updates soon on Kirkwood's opening day.

Guests are invited back for another season on snow and can look forward to views and vibes at Heavenly, elevated mountain traditions at Northstar, and no-frills, steep and deep skiing and riding at Kirkwood. Whether its Heavenly's premier lake views, two-state skiing and riding, and high-energy après, Northstar's pristine groomers, glade skiing, and timeless mountain charm, or Kirkwood's legendary big mountain terrain, each resort offers a distinct personality and its own unique take on the Lake Tahoe winter experience.

"We are hyped to see the snow stack up here at Heavenly, and across the Tahoe region, as we get ready to kick off the season and bring the winter energy back to the mountain and South Lake Tahoe," said Trent Poole, general manager at Heavenly Mountain Resort. "Thanks to the help of Mother Nature with new snow and cold temperatures for snowmaking, we are primed to kick off the season with a solid foundation and look forward to expanding terrain offerings across the mountain quickly as conditions allow. If the forecast ahead holds, we could be looking at adding mountain access via Stagecoach in Nevada quickly, which is rare this early."

So far Heavenly has reported a foot of snow in the last week, Northstar has reported 18 inches, and Kirkwood has reported 24 inches. The 10-day forecast also predicts more than 50 inches of snow expected at Heavenly and Northstar, and more than 75 inches at Kirkwood. In addition to snow on the horizon, prime winter weather and conditions means snowmaking is in full force to supplement natural snowfall.

"At Northstar, on-snow traditions start with first chair on Opening Day and carry throughout the season as we reconnect with winter and each other on the mountain and in the village," said Tara Schoedinger, general manager at Northstar California Resort. "There is so much hard work that goes into getting ready for the season, and we couldn't be more excited to welcome everyone back to the mountain and to kick off the season with friends, family, and our Northstar community. It's truly starting to look and feel like a winter wonderland up here!"

Terrain at Heavenly will feature skiing and riding on the California side off of Powderbowl Express and Patsy's, with mountain access from the Tram and Gunbarrel. The Gondola will also remain open for sightseeing and activities like the Mountain Coaster and Tubing, with no ski and ride access at this time. With an exciting forecast ahead, Heavenly will aim to expand terrain offerings to the top of the mountain in California, and into Nevada as quickly as possible.

Opening Day at Northstar kicks off with access via the Big Springs Gondola, and skiing and riding available off of Arrow, Vista, Big Easy, and Comstock Chairs. The Village at Northstar will also be buzzing with Opening Day energy, offering shopping, dining, live music, and ice skating throughout the day.

Whether you're planning to ski and ride just one day or the entire season, the Epic Pass is the best value and best way to access Heavenly, Northstar, and Kirkwood in Lake Tahoe, as well as resorts like Whistler Blackcomb, Vail, Breckenridge and more. Epic Passes are on sale now, and the last chance to purchase this winter is Dec. 6.

Stay tuned to resort social media channels, websites, and the My Epic App for more information on snow, conditions, terrain, and resort updates as the 2026-27 gets underway.

https://news.vailresorts.com/Tahoe-Opening-Days-2026