Vail Resorts Newsroom

Heavenly Mountain Resort Announces Leadership Changes

After 45 years in the ski industry, Heavenly & Tahoe Region COO, Tom Fortune, set to retire; successor Shaydar Edelmann returns to Tahoe with 25 years of ski industry experience.



LAKE TAHOE, Calif. – April 15, 2024 –Heavenly Mountain Resort has announced the retirement of its current Chief Operating Officer & Vice President, Tom Fortune, effective June 23. After 45 years in the industry, Fortune will pass the baton to his successor, Shaydar Edelmann, who returns to Tahoe with 25 years of industry experience, most recently serving as the Vice President of Mountain Operations at Park City Mountain.

Fortune joined Vail Resorts in 2010 as Director of Base Area Operation at Heavenly – a role he held for six years. In 2016, he became Director of Mountain Operations at Kirkwood Mountain Resort, and two years later, he took on the role of General Manager and Vice President there. In 2019, Fortune was appointed GM & VP at Heavenly, later becoming COO of the resort and the Tahoe Region – with oversight of Northstar California and Kirkwood – in 2022.

Fortune also led through the Caldor Fire in 2021 at Heavenly and Kirkwood during mandatory evacuations and supported firefighting efforts by galvanizing his team to set up a base camp for First Responders, leveraging Heavenly's California Base Area and snowmaking equipment. He was also a critical leader and guide through the 2022/23 winter season's record-breaking snowfall, which triggered a state of emergency across the region. He has been a proactive member of a range of tourism and government advisory boards throughout his career, currently serving as Chair of the Board of Ski California.

"Tom has been an incredible force over the last four decades and his leadership has left an indelible mark on the ski industry and all of us," said Jody Churich, SVP & COO of Vail Resorts' West Region. "From starting his career at Stevens Pass in 1978, to today as COO at Heavenly & Tahoe, Tom is the definition of how passion can transform into impact. We are so proud to have been part of his journey, and his legacy of transparency, honesty, and kindness will continue to be an inspiration."

"I am forever grateful to the amazing people I have had the honor of working with over the last 45 years – I have learned and grown, and my success is not mine alone, but shared with everyone I've ever crossed paths with. Thank you to the teams at Heavenly, Kirkwood, Northstar, and Stevens Pass for 14 amazing years, and I want to further share my gratitude to the Vail Resorts team for their endless support along my journey and in making this decision," Fortune said. "This decision was not one made lightly, but I am ready to start a new adventure."

With Fortune's departure, Edelmann will begin as the new GM & VP of Heavenly, effective June 24.

Edelmann brings more than two decades of experience to the role, having served the last four years as VP of Mountain Operations at Park City. As the Mountain Operations leader at the U.S.'s largest and most complex ski resort, he managed a team of more than 700 through the challenges of COVID and unprecedented snowfall. He also played a key role in reimagining chairlift optimization across Vail Resorts and helped plan and permit upcoming transformational lift and snowmaking upgrades at the resort.

Prior to joining the Park City team, Edelmann spent 17 years in North Lake Tahoe, starting his career in Competitions & Events at Alpine Meadows and working through Ski & Ride School and Skier Services leadership roles. He later became VP of Operations at Boreal Mountain Resort, Soda Springs and Woodward Tahoe, where he was part of establishing California's first recycled water snowmaking system and managed the construction and opening of Woodward Tahoe. He was general manager of Woodward Park City during its construction and grand opening before joining Vail Resorts in 2020.

"I am so honored and excited to be stepping into the role of GM & VP at Heavenly," Edelmann said. "Tahoe has so much passion and energy around the outdoors and snowsports, and Heavenly is truly iconic. The chance to lead this special mountain resort is something that only comes once in a lifetime. I look forward to getting to know the Heavenly team and South Lake Tahoe community as I begin this new chapter."

Heavenly sits in two states, providing a one-of-a-kind skiing experience with its iconic, breathtaking views nestled within the Sierra Nevada Mountain range. With nearly 5,000 acres of skiable terrain and 97 trails ranging from groomers to chutes, the mountain's wide breadth of terrain is ideal for all skiers and riders.

Edelmann will lead the resort, which includes Mountain and Base Area Operations, Food & Beverage, Ski & Ride School, and other important areas of the business.

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About Vail Resorts, Inc. (NYSE: MTN)
Vail Resorts is a network of the best destination and close-to-home ski resorts in the world including Vail Mountain, Breckenridge, Park City Mountain, Whistler Blackcomb, Stowe, and 32 additional resorts across North America; Andermatt-Sedrun in Switzerland; and Perisher, Hotham, and Falls Creek in Australia. We are passionate about providing an Experience of a Lifetime to our team members and guests, and our EpicPromise is to reach a zero net operating footprint by 2030, support our employees and communities, and broaden engagement in our sport. Our company owns and/or manages a collection of elegant hotels under the RockResorts brand, a portfolio of vacation rentals, condominiums and branded hotels located in close proximity to our mountain destinations, as well as the Grand Teton Lodge Company in Jackson Hole, Wyo. Vail Resorts Retail operates more than 250 retail and rental locations across North America. Learn more about our company at www.VailResorts.com, or discover our resorts and pass options at www.EpicPass.com.

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