



getaways

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MOGUL MASTERY If you can comfortably ski a groomed blue trail, Bumps for Boomers can get you to runs like this.

PEAK PERFORMANCE

Bumps for Boomers' technique, now easier to learn than ever, is like Viagra for the knees.

By Kelly J. Hayes

“Short leg tall!” Those three little words have become my ski mantra. For the first time in decades, when I explore the bumps on Aspen Mountain in the Mine Dumps, or peer down Walsh’s, I think “piece of cake.” It’s all thanks to the skills I acquired during Bumps for Boomers, a four-day ski

clinic offered eight times a season on Aspen Mountain.

According to Joe Nevin, the program’s founder and lead instructor, “80 percent of the skiers on the mountain ski on just 20 percent of the available terrain.” Nevin left a career in Silicon Valley as Apple’s CIO to pursue his passion for teaching skiers of a certain age to “think different,” and Bumps for Boomers was the result. After 14 years of running the program, Nevin

has refined it for this winter with even easier-to-grasp language and a simplified approach. “If we can just give skiers, especially Boomers, the tools to ski the rest of the mountain, we can change their lives,” he says.

Targeted toward older but still-active skiers, the techniques Nevin teaches reduce fatigue and wear and tear by requiring considerably less physical effort. The net result? Skiers can stay on the slopes longer each day, ski more days in a season and, ultimately, ski more years—all without taking a pill.

The program also takes the fear out of skiing by incorporating a series of simple but oh-so-effective methods that allow you to conquer the biggest bumps and delight in the deepest powder. Nevin and his team of PSIA-certified instructors break down skiing into individual components, like softening the edge angles of your skis or using each bump as a mini-mountain to facilitate turns. That lets you replace the “oomph” of skiing bumps with “aah.”

Each session begins with basic exercises on groomed terrain, teaching you how to let your skis drift over the snow. On Days One and Two, the comfort level is pushed as everyone learns to maneuver on short ski boards that demand precision and focus. Once mastered, these shorties become akin to training wheels in the bumps.

It was here, on a steeply pitched black-diamond bump run, that I realized my mantra. Standing on the crown of a mogul, I allowed my skis to simply drift. Then, as I extended my uphill leg—or made the “short” leg tall—my skis arced, seemingly by themselves, around the face of the mogul, putting me in perfect position for the next turn. It was a revelation in how stress-free the sport can be.

By Day Three, fellow skiers who had previously shied away from Aspen Mountain’s most challenging runs were skiing them—back on traditional-length skis—with confidence and unbridled enthusiasm.

Says Pat Eggers, a boomer from Boston who has participated in the clinic multiple times, “The No. 1 benefit is that you *can* teach old dogs new tricks. Learning skills so you can ski more efficiently and on more challenging terrain is a blast.”

Ski longer today, tomorrow and for life. It’s another great mantra I’m putting into practice. *\$1,528 per person (not including lifts), 970.989.2529, bumpsforboomers.com*