

VIEW
FROM
THE TOP

MOUNTAIN *Life*

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Ice Cream
Parlour

HOW SWEET IT IS

Beaver Creek's charming on-mountain options for sweet treats include the Ice Cream Parlour and Candy Cabin

WHILE MOST PEOPLE recall scenes from the movie renditions of "Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory," Nina Hinnendael actually lived it; her grandfather, Harold Seigle, became the president of Sunmark Candy Company (later named the Willy Wonka Candy Company), in St. Louis, Missouri, from the early 1970s to 1988. Hinnendael remembers her first tour of the candy factory vividly:

“We had to wear the white Oompa Loompa suits, just like they wear in ‘Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory,’” she says, as she tells the story of parading through the factory with her sister and two cousins.

“I specifically remember the room where they made Laffy Taffy, because this room is depicted perfectly in the movie, and I remember thinking how magical it was to see it in action, in real life,” she says.

REIMAGING WONKA IN BEAVER CREEK

It’s as if Hinnendael was born to merge sweets with mountain memories: Before her grandfather worked for the candy company, he became president of Head Ski Company in Timonium, Maryland, so both skiing and confections surrounded Hinnendael at an early age.

Hinnendael grew up in New Hampshire buying candy for 10 cents at a local country store as often as she could. So, when it came time to open Candy Cabin in Beaver Creek, she designed the custom-built log cabin — made from the region’s blue-hued pine beetle kill wood and huge logs — around the look and feel of the New England country store she loved visiting.

Her initial inspiration for creating Beaver Creek’s Candy Cabin came in a flash when she saw an ad for a ski resort showing a kid in a candy store.

“The ad had nothing to do with candy. It actually was all about skiing and grooming,” she says. “But the boy in the photo reminded me of my son, Finn, and the emotions and excitement I



At Candy Cabin, kids can dish up treats with a little bit of nostalgia.

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felt from that photo made me instantly want to bring this to life here at Beaver Creek.”

The Candy Cabin debuted in December 2014, with a cozy cabin and outdoor deck. Situated at 9,840 feet in elevation at the top of two chairlifts, picnic tables overlook sweeping views of the Rocky Mountains.

The Candy Cabin echoes old candy stores with nostalgic sweets like Bit-O-Honeys, Necco Wafers, Root Beer Barrels and candy necklaces. Wooden barrels and baskets hold candies sold by weight, so kids (and

adults) can fill bags with an assortment of treats.

“Kids and adults alike are excited the moment they walk through the doors of the Candy Cabin,” she says. “For adults, they are so excited to show their kids the candies that they remember from their childhood. Kids just think it’s the best thing ever — (they’re) literally ‘like a kid in a candy store.’”

In addition to barreled-candy, the store sells striped gum, cow tails, chocolate in the form of snowflakes, snowmen and snow boots from a local chocolatier,

truffles, fudge, sour worms, Jelly Bellies, M&Ms, old-fashioned lollipops, homemade turtles and sea salt caramels, frozen bananas, cheesecake, chocolate-covered Twinkies and even sugar-free options, like almond bark, butter crunch, peanut clusters and pecan caramel patties. The cabin also sells classic Pepsi products, made with real cane sugar and presented in a cold cooler.

Hinnendael’s sons, Jake and Finn, play an important role in the types of candies she selects: They’ve spent hours

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paging through catalogues searching for candy.

“We brought in Fun Dip to pay tribute to their last name, Dippy,” she says. “Other favorites include Pop Rocks, Nerds and any Willy Wonka-brand candies because of their great-grandfather.”

And, of course, Hinnendael stocks the shop with her personal favorites: Bull’s Eyes, chocolate-covered Swedish Fish and banana Laffy Taffy.

SWEET EXTENSIONS

After Beaver Creek’s success with the Candy Cabin Beth Howard, former Beaver Creek VP & COO, envisioned the Cookie Cabin. By transforming a vacant, on-mountain space during the 2017-18 season, the resort extended its daily afternoon Cookie Time. The

Cookie Cabin only serves Beaver Creek’s signature chocolate chip cookie — fresh from the oven — along with hot cocoa, for ski school guests.

“The Cookie Cabin is a total sensory experience and evokes a sense of emotion,” Hinnendael says. “It’s basically like walking straight into a ‘warm hug,’ as Beth would say. From the smell of chocolate chip cookies to the overall aesthetic — and the many smiling faces of our guests enjoying warm cookies — everyone feels so warm and welcome at the Cookie Cabin ... it’s a unique experience, and one that’s not often forgotten by all Cookie Cabin goers.”

The Cookie Cabin’s design elements reflect the Candy Cabin.

“Both remind me of my childhood,” Hinnendael says.

One unique element, behind the Cookie Cabin’s counter, includes a collection of cookie jars found at a local rummage sale.

Howard also created the mountain’s Ice Cream Parlour, and Hinnendael influenced the design, which sprang from her experiences in Nichols Hardware in Lyme, New Hampshire, because the store served fountain drinks from an authentic soda fountain.

“My town only had a hardware store and a country store, and the post office was actually located in the hardware store, so I made many memories growing up there,” she says. “Each and every one of the sweet shops at Beaver Creek is reminiscent of

my childhood. They all bring back great memories, and I’m so happy to share these experiences with our guests.”

Both the Cookie Cabin and the Ice Cream Parlour inspire the same feelings guests experience when they walk into the Candy Cabin: nostalgia and a sense of warmth.

“From the house-made cocoa to our specialty small-batch Cookie Time ice cream, lots of thought went into each item on the menu,” she says. “I want all of our guests who walk into the (sweet shops) to feel like they’ve gone back in time, or for those experiencing a candy shop for the first time, I don’t ever want them to forget their experience at the Candy Cabin.” — **KIMBERLY NICOLETTI**



CANDY CABIN

WHERE:

Top of Strawberry Park Express Lift and Upper Beaver Creek Mountain Express Lift

HOURS:

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily during ski season

