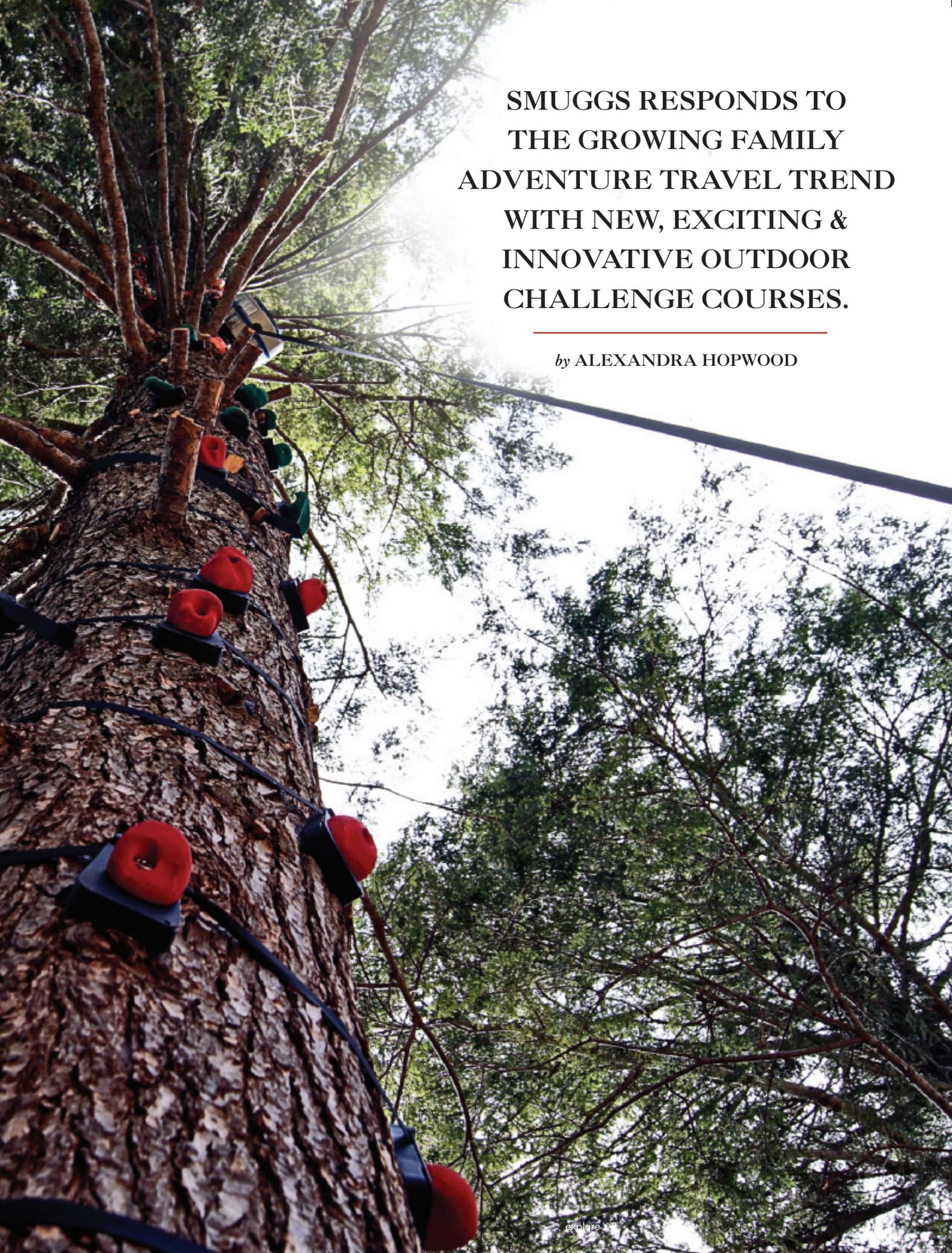


HELLO
HEMLOCK!

Tree climbing at
Smugglers'.

Outdoor Adventures

A FAMILY AFFAIR



**SMUGGS RESPONDS TO
THE GROWING FAMILY
ADVENTURE TRAVEL TREND
WITH NEW, EXCITING &
INNOVATIVE OUTDOOR
CHALLENGE COURSES.**

by ALEXANDRA HOPWOOD

“Today’s traveling parents are away from the screen and out into nature.”

In this age of ubiquitous Internet, smart phones, and video games, it’s so easy for kids (and adults) to view the world from the tiny rectangle of their computer screen and spend endless “recreation” hours without moving a muscle beyond those that control their texting thumbs. But despite, or perhaps in response to, the increase in technology and virtual worlds, the active family adventure vacation is on the rise.

Smugglers’ Notch Resort has responded to this increased demand by implementing new and exciting, fun-for-the-whole-family outdoor challenges to help guests connect with the stunning Green Mountain scenery around them while getting their adrenaline pumping with high-energy, thrilling eco-adventures. In addition to Smugglers’ tried and true favorites, including zip lining, rock climbing, and the multi-sport Via Ferrata adventure, the 2013 summer season will introduce the newest set of exciting challenges – an invigorating Treetop Obstacle Course and an array of innovative Climbing Adventures.

In the 2013 summer season, ArborTrek Canopy Adventures at Smugglers’ Notch, which brought Vermont’s award-

winning Zip Line Canopy Tour to life in 2010, is unveiling several new course options designed to complement the resort’s existing outdoor adventure programs and provide guests with a greater variety of options.

Headlining the new opportunities is the exhilarating 50+ element Treetop Obstacle Course. Participants can test their strength, stamina, and daring by dashing across wobbly bridges, sailing through space on rope and log swings, scaling cargo nets, teetering along balance beams, and much more. Those who are up to the challenge may just surprise themselves, and their family and friends, with the feats they can achieve and the fun they will have along the way. Designed for participants with good health and mobility who are looking for a physical challenge, the Treetop Obstacle Course boasts multiple options of varying difficulty to accommodate a range of ability and desired level of challenge for intrepid adventure-seekers ages 4 through 84.

ArborTrek is putting technology to work in nature by employing the self-operated SmartBelay lifeline system, which ensures participants on the Treetop Obstacle Course are

continuously connected to the overhead cables as they move from element to element. This allows guests to progress at their own pace, independently or as a group working together, and to control their own level of adventure, all while easily maintaining a seamless safety connection. Friendly, knowledgeable guides are on hand below to monitor activity and give helpful tips and encouragement along the way.

Today’s traveling parents are emphasizing active family vacations that get their children away from the screen and out into nature. “Paired with their concern about obesity, parents will no doubt welcome the many opportunities to get kids onto hiking and biking trails, into National Park programs and family camps where the emphasis is on healthy, unplugged outdoor endeavors,” Lynn O’Rourke Hayes, owner of FamilyTravel.com, explained on AdventureTravelNews.com in a recent article. Smugglers’ Notch Resort has always been a beacon of outdoor recreation in all seasons and is staying fresh by expanding its repertoire of incredible outdoor adventures. The new challenge courses are available as stand-alone events, and are also incorporated into the Resort’s award-winning children’s



emphasizing active family vacations that get their children

camp. Kids can experience practically every thrilling feat available throughout the course of five days in the High Adventure Experience Camp.

Accompanying the Treetop Obstacle Course this year are a variety of Climbing Adventure activities. A unique new addition in 2013 is the innovative Tree Climb. A twist on rock climbing and artificial climbing walls (both of which Smuggs also offers, see side bar), the Tree Climb allows participants to utilize rock climbing technology to summit one of Vermont's eastern hemlocks. Routes of varying difficulty are available for participants to navigate their way up to the canopy where they can take in the scenic vistas of the woodlands and mountains from an atypical vantage point. Guests can climb more than trees at ArborTrek; other Climbing Adventures include scaling an artificial rock wall and clambering over a progression of vertical obstacles. The Climbing Adventures are equipped with auto-belay systems that automatically kick in should a participant lose their grip, or when they are ready to descend, to lower them to the ground at a controlled rate.

"The new courses are designed to fill out our product offerings," says

ArborTrek Canopy Adventures president, Michael Smith. "With the addition of the Treetop Obstacle Course and Climbing Adventures we can offer a full family of adventures ranging from serene to extreme. The new elements offer great value at a great price, they provide a different set of thrills from our zip line tour and properly round out our range of eco-adventures."

Many Smuggs families have already dared to soar through the forest canopy on ArborTrek Smugglers' Notch's established Zip Line Tour. Multi-generational groups all experience the thrill of zipping through hemlocks, maples, and birches, peering down at the rushing mountain stream as they ford the wobbly sky bridges, and rappel like pros from 40 feet up. Children often tackle the challenge with the most enthusiasm and enliven the group with their infectious spirit of adventure and fun. That galvanizing energy is present across the span of the age spectrum, all the way up to the plucky nonagenarian zipper who readily tackled the course and proved you really can participate at any age.

The goal of all of the ArborTrek challenge courses is to educate, entertain and inspire. "We're thrilled

to receive such acclaim for our canopy tour and are excited to continue to offer new outdoor adventures that promote physical fitness, adventure, exploration, and an appreciation for wild places," says Smith.

Active adventure sport outings are the perfect platform for families to connect by creating shared excitement for children, parents, and grandparents alike, providing lasting memories, and invigorating the family vacation. "Taking the family on an adventure travel vacation is a great way to strengthen family bonds, and a guarantee that your kids will remember the trips in years to come," observes Adventure Travel Guide Lois Friedland, in an article for AdventureTravel.About.com.

One of the best parts of guiding outdoor adventure tours is seeing the amazement and elation on people's faces as they step outside their comfort zone, off that platform into the fresh air and treetops, with nature flashing past at warp speed. Even the most timid of thrill-seekers become empowered with confidence in their own abilities and stimulated with the rush of the extraordinary as they become more comfortable with the course and with themselves. The new adventure



options at Smuggs capitalize on the physical activity and challenge to engage participants' minds and bodies and enrich their confidence and collective bonding experience, all while getting up close and personal with the local ecology.

So grab your family, take a break from TVs and tablets, get out in that sunshine, and check out the incredible outdoor adventure options available at Smugglers' Notch Resort. Spend the day surrounded by the beauty of nature in the shadow of Vermont's highest peak, challenging yourself and your loved ones to try something new, active, exciting, empowering, and memory-making. It will make for an incredible, unforgettable vacation for your entire family.

Alexandra Hopwood is a freelance writer, tour director, and zip line tour guide at ArborTrek. An avid traveler and adventure sport enthusiast, she has been skydiving, bungee jumping, Zorbing, jet boating, ostrich riding, and, of course, zip lining. Guiding zip groups through her home mountains in Vermont has been her most rewarding adventure to date.



Outdoor Adventures at Smugglers' Notch

TREETOP OBSTACLE COURSE

Navigate your way over wobbly bridges, rope swings, cargo nets, and more on the new 50+ element aerial trekking course. Multiple routes available based on age, height, and desired level of challenge. \$55/person, \$24.95/under 8 yrs. old (limited course) Full course - ages 8 & older, minimum reach: 66 inches, weight: 40-250 lbs., open daily.

CLIMBING ADVENTURES

Clamber up an artificial rock wall, a series of vertical obstacles, or try the innovative new Tree Climb and get a bird's eye view of the woodlands by summiting one of its eastern hemlocks. \$20/person/hour, \$10/3 climbs, \$6/climb, ages 4 and up, weight: 40-250 lbs., open daily.

ZIP LINE CANOPY TOUR

Soar through the trees with experienced guides who will share with you stories about the ecology and lore of the Notch while you test your courage on zip lines up to 1000 ft. long! Tours daily every hour 9 am -4:30 pm, \$99.95/person, ages 8 & older, 70-250 lbs.

ADVENTURE DAYS - HIGH ROPES CHALLENGE

Guides will help you challenge your balance, stamina and courage while you tackle elements like the Burma Bridge, multi-vine traverse, catwalk, space loops, trapeze dive, and vertical playpen. Thursdays 10 am - 3:30 pm, ages 13 & older, \$75/person.

VIA FERRATA

Looking to experience rock climbing, hiking in the Green Mountains, and the challenges of a high ropes course? The Via Ferrata is a unique adventure activity that combines all three in this one-of-a-kind exploration. Adults only program Tuesday, Thursday & Friday; family program Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday, \$49/person.

Extended Via Ferrata - the next level of challenge - Adults only program Thursday & Friday, family program Thursday, Friday, & Saturday, \$64/person.

RAVEN'S ROOST OPEN CLIMB

Looking for an established difficulty level, a place to practice your technique, or a chance to try out climbing for the first time? Then the Raven's Roost 30 ft. outdoor climbing wall may be just what you're after. Mondays & Thursdays 1 pm - 3 pm, Saturdays 12 noon - 3 pm, ages 8 & older, \$8/2 climbs.

ROCK CLIMBING & BOULDERING

Scale the most breathtaking boulders around with a guided tour of the craggy beauty of the Notch. Saturdays 10 am - 4 pm (additional times by appointment), ages 8 & older, \$155/person, groups of 3 or more \$110/person.

HIGH ADVENTURE CAMP

Each day of the week brings a new adventure, from the new Treetop Obstacle Course and Climbing Adventures, to favorites like the Via Ferrata, Eurobungee, Raven's Roost Climb, swimming, kayaking, and the High Ropes Course. Monday - Friday, 9 am-4 pm, \$99/person, \$459/person for 5-day package.

SEGWAY TOUR

Just hold on and lean forward and your Segway will take you wherever you want to go, whether it's exploring Smugglers' Village or wheeling along mountain hiking trails on the rugged XT off-road model. SegRide Tours daily at 9:30 am, 11:30 am, 2 pm, 4:30 pm, \$45/person; Off Road SegRide Adventures Monday - Saturday 10 am & 3 pm, \$65/person; all tours 1 hour long, ages 12 & older.

GEOCACHING

Hunt through the wilderness using an old-school map and compass or a high-tech GPS system to find hidden items left by fellow adventurers. Take a treasure that interests you, and leave something of yours for someone else to discover. Tuesdays & Fridays 10:30 am - 12:30 pm, \$20 per person.

Check your Resort Information Guide for more information on any of these programs.