

# ROAD TRIPS

S P O T L I G H T

## White Mountain Retreat

**NORTH CONWAY, N.H.**—There's plenty for both outdoor enthusiasts and shoppers to do in this colonial New England village, which sits on the edge of the White Mountain National Forest. Much of

life in North Conway revolves around the mountains. Skiers flock to the slopes in the winter, and come spring, hikers set out on about 1,200 miles of area trails.

Bargain hunters have a lot of ground to cover, too, with outlet stores like Benetton and Reebok.

And since there's no sales tax in New Hampshire, your money will go further.

After dark, head to the rustic Red Parka Pub, a local hangout on Route 302, where bands from Boston and Portland, Maine, play on weekends (no cover). If comedy is more your bag, Jackson Square—inside the Eastern Slope Inn on Main Street—hosts comics from the Boston Comedy Connection on Thursdays (\$5 cover). Burger- and buffalo-wing-type meals are about \$6.

If you're a hiker, crash at one of eight huts in the mountains for \$42 (breakfast and dinner included). Reserve at least a month in advance (603-466-2727). The Maple Leaf Motel (603-356-5388) offers doubles for \$35 to \$68.

For more information, call the Mount Washington Valley Chamber of Commerce at 603-356-5701.

—Michael Langlois



Atlanta's original Punchline (above) has proved so successful that management opened a new club in Underground Atlanta.

A M E R I C A ' S P I C K S

## Comedy Clubs

*The trick to finding great comedy clubs is separating the standouts from the McStandups. Here are some worth their cover charges.*

### The Punchline

**Atlanta, Georgia**—Voted "Favorite Comedy Club to Play in America" in a *Comedy U.S.A.* magazine survey of comics, this place may also be the best club for *watching* comedy. It's noted for pushing progressive acts like Paula Poundstone and Emo Phillips. And since comedians like to work here, there are many big-name drop-ins—like Eddie Murphy and Richard Pryor. Cover: \$6 to \$10. Call 404-252-0394.

### Second City

**Chicago, Illinois**—This irreverent mother church of ensemble comedy launched the Belushi brothers, Dan Aykroyd, Catherine O'Hara, and almost everybody else. You can catch free improv sets after the late show every night but Friday. Cover: \$8.50 weeknights, \$9.50 weekends. Reservations are advised. Call 312-337-3992.

### Holy City Zoo

**San Francisco, California**—Owner Bob Fisher refers to his place as "a comedian's clubhouse" where comics like regulars Jim Samuels and Lizz Winstead not only perform but also hang out at the bar and mingle with patrons. The club hosts auditions for the annual San Francisco Standup

Comedy Competition, and past winners (like Dana Carvey and Marsha Warfield) occasionally drop by. So does Robin Williams, who started here and stops in to try out new material whenever he's in town. Cover: \$2 to \$3 weeknights, \$7 to \$8 weekends. Call 415-386-4242.

### Catch a Rising Star

**Las Vegas, Nevada**—This club in Bally's Casino Resort follows the variety-show format—three comics, a comedy magician or juggler, and occasionally a singer make up the cast. If you sit ringside, you may even become the butt of jokes by stars like Jerry Seinfeld, Elaine Bosler, and VH-1's Rosie O'Donnell. Cover: \$12.50. Call 702-739-4397.

### Bear's Place

**Bloomington, Indiana**—Although this south-wich joint across from the Indiana University campus is not strictly a comedy club, it may have the country's most successful Monday-night comedy shows. Tickets go on sale Thursday, and second-show tickets are often hard to come by. Why the fuss? It may be the only place where you can catch the likes of A. Whitney Brown, Simbad, or Roseanne Barr for just \$4. Call 812-339-3460.

—Mary Elizabeth Williams