

SUMMER FASHION  
TAKES A WALK

CELLAR DWELLERS: THE  
NELL'S WINE LEGACY

BIKE SHARING,  
ASPEN STYLE

# Aspen

## SOJOURNER

2005 ASPE



CULTURE TOWN

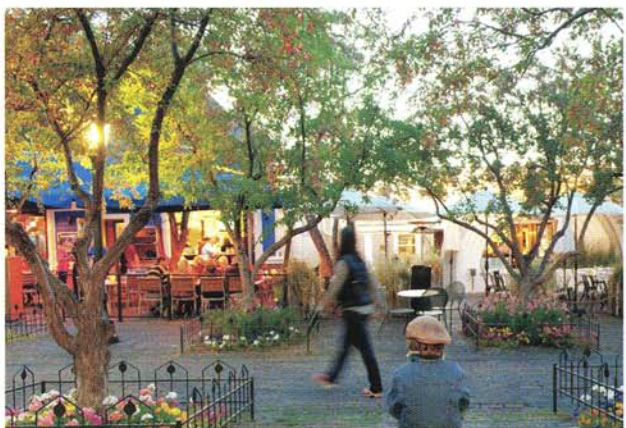
SUMMER'S BEST MUSIC, DANCE,  
MEALS, THEATER, AND MORE

NO  
VEH



# at altitude

HANDBAG VOYEURISM p.32 /// THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY HITS FIFTY p.34 /// A SHOE THAT FITS p.38



## Pedaling Progress

Aspen's latest eco-friendly effort wheels into town this summer.

Story by **MICHAEL MIRACLE**

Paris, Barcelona, Aspen. Any guess what connects them? No, Zara hasn't set up shop on the Hyman Mall (though we would take that chic and cheap fast-fashion chain in a heartbeat). Here's a hint: the answer goes by *bicing* in Barcelona and *vélib'* (a portmanteau of *vélo* and *liberté*) in Paris.

*Ding-ding!* If you hear the ringing of a bicycle bell, you've guessed correctly. In early June, Aspen debuts WE-cycle, the first bike-sharing program outside of a major metro area in the US. It'll be hard to miss: WE-cycle places 100 bicycles at twelve solar-powered docking stations around town. Swipe a credit card at one of them—say, the Aspen Institute's—and you're on the hook for \$7 for the day and entitled to as many thirty-minute,

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: TIM KURNOS; BRETT FRIEL; KIM KLEIGER; BEEDE PHOTOGRAPHY / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM; TIM KURNOS; ANNE REESER





station-to-station intervals as your legs can pedal. Other permanent station locations include the gondola plaza, Ruby Park, the Aspen Valley Hospital, and the Aspen Club & Spa. The docks can even be relocated for special events (Food & Wine Classic, Ideas Fest) that increase demand at certain spots in town.

Why does a town whose citizens are more likely to own a bike than a car need a bike-sharing program? “Because it’s not for Aspen’s 6,000 full-time residents,” says Mirte Mallory, WE-cycle’s cofounder. “It’s for visitors and commuters. The bikes are the perfect complement to RFTA [the valley’s bus system]—we say for that last mile after people get off the bus. They’re for short trips.”

WE-cycle is not short on technology. There’s an app (Cycle Finder, for both WE-cycle and other similar programs around the country) that tracks real-time bike availability, dock availability, and station locations, as well as how long you’ve been out. The bikes’ built-in GPS units allow a “bike balancer” to ensure that there are enough bikes at every station (or, if a station is full, to remove bikes and free up docking space). Broken bikes can be locked down.

Should we pity the poor bike shop, where rental business could suffer for all the tourists opting for \$7 rides? Not at all. In advance of its launch, WE-cycle connected with local bike shops. Their

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Mallory. “And it encourages street-side interaction among strangers. There’s a shared, collective feel. We can pedal ourselves to a happier, cleaner community.”

That’s a ride we’re willing to try. ●

names and locations appear on docking station maps, and, more critical for bike shops’ day-rental business, the network’s user fees become prohibitively expensive after two hours. WE-cyclers who haven’t redocked their bike after the free thirty minutes pay \$2 for the first fifteen minutes thereafter and \$5 for each fifteen after that. Assuming the \$7 day rate (there are also three-day, seven-day, and season passes), taking a WE-cycle bike on a three-hour cruise would cost \$54—more than renting something basic from a local shop.

Besides which, “bike-sharing increases bike usage, helmet sales, and gear sales,” says