

# YOUR WINTER ESCAPE AWAITS at WHISTLER BLACKCOMB

WHISTLER-BLACKCOMB, BC, CANADA – Whistler Blackcomb offers 8,171 acres, 5,280 vertical feet, and over 200 trails of powder-filled bowls, ancient glades and mile-long cruisers, all covered in an average snowfall of nearly 40 feet each season. In the valley, you will find a lively pedestrian friendly village with more than 200 retail shops, award-winning restaurants for every appetite, legendary nightlife and an endless collection of activities. With this perfect mix of on and off hill action, it is not hard to understand why Whistler Blackcomb consistently sits atop the list of world-renowned resorts to visit.

## SKI Magazine's No. 1 Resort

It is a three-peat. Whistler Blackcomb has once again been named the No. 1 overall best ski resort in North America by the 29th annual SKI Magazine Reader's Poll. This is the fourth time in five years and the third year in a row Whistler Blackcomb has topped the survey results. The SKI Magazine Reader's Poll is the longest running and most comprehensive survey of its kind, proving Whistler Blackcomb consistently offers today's skiers and riders one of the finest resort experiences around.

## Strong US Dollar

Make your dollar go further. The strong US exchange rate makes now one of the best times to travel north for the picturesque winter vacation you have been dreaming of. You will enjoy exchange rate savings on everything at the resort from your après drink toasting a great day on the hill, to your Whistler souvenir swag.

## The Village Experience

Nestled at the base of Whistler and Blackcomb mountains, Whistler Village offers a lively mix of off-hill action and amenities, folded into a cozy pedestrian-only community hub. Teeming with shops, restaurants, accommodations and day-to-day essentials, the Village anchors a year-round mountain culture to meet the demand of all who gather there, without the need for a car. It is a one-of-a-kind confluence of two massive mountains, unique to North America, where plazas meet powder, where quaint mountain town meets cultural melting pot. Experience all that Whistler has to offer, and immerse yourself in the unique mountain vibe that constantly encourages you to go above and beyond.

## Dining in Whistler

Foodies unite. Whistler's culinary scene rivals cities ten times its size. With more than 200 establishments dishing up

delight, Whistler's range is as big as your appetite after a day on the slopes. Quick, tasty and Canadian options abound for great local and fresh versions of fast food. Try a hearty burger from Garbo's Grill, or poutine (a Canadian classic made from fries, gravy and cheese curds) from Zog's Dogs. To truly indulge, take advantage of Whistler's proximity to the coast and discover why the fresh fare from Sushi Village has a devout cult following. Araxi has been named the village's best restaurant for over a decade, while the Bearfoot Bistro boasts an internationally acclaimed wine cellar. Locals love the Rimrock Café for its seafood and game menu that ensures a true mountain dweller experience.

## Après and Nightlife

There is a Neverland vibe about Whistler. No one who goes there ever wants to grow up, and that is best experienced after dark. The nightlife has righteously earned honors and the Whistler Blackcomb's slopeside bars have turned après into an art form. Virtually every ski and snowboard publication on the planet agrees, with magazines like FREESKIER and Transworld giving top marks to the after hours scene. The famous Garibaldi Lift Co (GLC to the locals) is après magic at the base of the Whistler Village Gondola, while Merlin's rocks the Blackcomb base, and Dusty's Bar & BBQ offers a local chilled-out crowd in the Creekside.

## Whistler and Blackcomb Mountains

With the most skiable terrain in North America, spanning 8,171 acres, the vast and varied terrain will entice first-time skiers and seasoned shredders alike. It offers incredible variety, from big mountain terrain to family zones, gladed trees to wide open high alpine bowls, and powder to groomers. The side-by-side mountains are connected by the Guinness World Record-holding Peak 2 Peak Gondola, and supported by one of the largest networks of high-speed chairlifts in the world.

## Activities in Whistler

Whistler is frequently named No. 1 for off-hill activities. Whether you want luxury, culture, family time or exhilarating adventure, all areas are covered. Indulge with unique relaxing treatments at the Scandinave Spa, take in a world of culture at the new Audain Art Museum or try the free skating rink in Whistler Village Plaza. The Whistler Sliding Centre allows you to give bobsleigh or skeleton a go. Snowmobiling to a mountaintop hut on Blackcomb Mountain provides uninhabited thrill, and you cannot forget a true bucket-list experience, Whistler Heli Skiing.

## Whistler Heli-Skiing

Experience the pinnacle of Whistler skiing on big mountain terrain that includes 173 glaciers and 475 runs. With packages for strong intermediates, to seasoned experts, this is the year to take on the mountain adventure of your dreams. With Whistler Heli-Skiing, you will tour with your expert guide all day long on the legendary terrain not otherwise accessible. Enjoy a delicious lunch in the backcountry with your group, and save the unforgettable experience of a lifetime with video and still images captured by a professional photographer (with the Classic or Elite packages).

## Packages to Whistler

Stay longer, and save more at Whistler Blackcomb. Book your winter package by Jan. 19, 2017, and receive up to 35 percent off stays of over six nights, and up to 30 percent off four-night stays.

As an added bonus, guests who book a four-night stay or longer before the deadline will receive a complimentary \$50 restaurant voucher.

Get more details at [www.whistlerblackcomb.com/savemore](http://www.whistlerblackcomb.com/savemore)

## Lift Ticket Deals

Avoid waiting in line to pay full price at the window. Save up to 31 percent by purchasing your lift tickets at least three days in advance and spend more of your valuable time on the slopes. More details at [www.whistlerblackcomb.com/lifttickets](http://www.whistlerblackcomb.com/lifttickets)

## One Stop Shop

Whistlerblackcomb.com is your one stop shop for lodging, lift tickets, flights, transportation, lessons, and so much more. Local experts have stayed in the hotels, ridden the transportation, participated in activities and dined in the restaurants to provide you with firsthand knowledge.

Simply put, there is no one better to assist in making this your best trip yet. Whistlerblackcomb.com also guarantees the lowest prices available, and if you find a better deal, it will be beat by 10 percent of the difference.

Visit [www.whistlerblackcomb.com/whybook](http://www.whistlerblackcomb.com/whybook) or please call 1-866-787-1935 for more details on experiencing your own dream Whistler vacation this season.

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To contact Whistler Blackcomb directly, please, visit [www.whistlerblackcomb.com/whybook](http://www.whistlerblackcomb.com/whybook) or you may call them at 1-866-787-1935 for more details.

# FREE and GREATLY DISCOUNTED LIFT TICKETS, LESSONS and EQUIPMENT for STUDENTS MAKE FAMILY SKIING AFFORDABLE

- Prizes and perks are awarded to skiers/snowboarders in the "Bring a Friend Challenge."
- On Jan. 6, an attempt will be made to set the Guinness World Records for largest lessons.
- Winter 2016-17 savings are huge with "Learn to Ski and Snowboard Month," "Passport Programs" and Other Offers.

McLEAN, VA – Once again the ski industry has joined forces to offer ski-free Passport Programs and other statewide snow sports discounts. They have been updated and enhanced for winter 2016-17 by ski associations from New England to the Rockies to the Northwest. Complementing these savings will be the ninth annual Learn to Ski and Snowboard Month (LSMM) in January 2017 and the annual Bring a Friend Challenge (BAF), which runs nationally from early December through Feb. 28, 2017. In addition, on Friday, Jan. 6, there will be an attempt to set the first Guinness World Records for largest multi-venue ski and the largest multi-venue snowboard lessons ever taught at ski areas across North America.

"The snow sports industry has developed so many creative, economical ways for children and adults to get outside in the winter to ski or snowboard. These sports are a terrific way to stay active all year long," said the LSSM/BAF Director, Mary Jo Tarallo. "People often hear about the high priced, single-day, walk up to the ticket counter cost of buying a lift ticket, but the reality is that there are many ways to save if you know where to look."

## Passport Programs and Student Discounts

Ski-free Passport Programs generally put 4th, 5th and 6th graders on the slopes free. The registration is completed online at the various ski association websites. Some include a small processing fee. For winter 2016-17, participating states include Idaho, Maine, Michigan, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, Utah, Vermont, and Colorado. In addition, there are these programs, Ski the Northwest Rockies, and Vail Resorts' Epic SchoolKids Colorado Pack and Epic SchoolKids Utah Pack.

## State Residency Not Required

Most of the programs have little or no residency requirements and are very popular. For example, over 12,000 4th and 5th graders skied and snowboarded free last season with a paying adult on the Pennsylvania Ski Areas Association (PSAA) 4th and 5th Grade Snowpass, which also offers a free beginner lift ticket, lesson and rental equipment. About 50 percent were from outside Pennsylvania.

"The Snowpass Program is designed to foster a child's love of skiing or riding, as well as the great outdoors. The goal is to give kids the skills, confidence and passion for skiing or snowboarding that will last a lifetime," said Linda Irvin, PSAA Executive Director.

Parents seeking savings on healthy, winter-time activities embrace these programs. About Vermont's program, Mary Margaret Connors of New York said, "My daughter was in 5th grade last year and simply loved using the passport, as did our pocketbook."

"It is important for kids to get outside and exercise during the winter, and there really isn't a better way of doing this than skiing. Michigan's Cold is Cool Passport makes it affordable for families to spend time together on the ski slopes and trails of Pure Michigan," said Michele (Mickey) MacWilliams.

These discount or free programs are offered in ski states across the U.S. at your favorite resort. Details on the "Passport" programs and other discounts can be found by logging on to [www.learnstoskiandsnowboard.org](http://www.learnstoskiandsnowboard.org)

## January 2017 is

### "Learn to Ski and Snowboard Month"

January is Learn to Ski & Snowboard Month, when hundreds of ski areas large and small offer children and adults discount packages that typically include a beginner lesson, equipment rental and a lift ticket. Lessons usually are by instructors certified by the Professional Ski Instructors Association or American Association of Snowboard Instructors (PSIA-AASI). While lessons are available all season at ski areas across North America, January is a time for taking advantage of the best beginner deals.

Since its advent in 2009, nearly 750,000 people have taken their first ski or snowboard lesson with the LSSM initiative. Most participants learn Alpine skiing and snowboarding during their lessons, which typically last 1.5 hours.

Get together with your non-skiing or snowboarding friends and prime them for a discounted or free lesson in January. Perhaps they can be participants in the Guinness Book of World Records event on Friday, Jan. 6.

You can also find out more by logging on to [www.learnstoskiandsnowboard.org](http://www.learnstoskiandsnowboard.org)

## Program Examples Abound

As an example, during January 2017, Pennsylvania's Blue Mountain Resort in the far-reaching Appalachian Mountains will offer a \$49 Learn To Ski And Snowboard Beginner Package (8 years and over), including lift tickets, a lesson, and rental gear on five Sundays, Jan. 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29. This special offer will be limited to the first 200 guests.

Also in Pennsylvania, Liberty Mountain Resort, an hour from Baltimore and Washington beltways, on Thursdays in January 2017 will offer a \$49 Learn To Ski or Snowboard Package to everyone ages 8 and up. It includes an all day beginner lift ticket, rental equipment and a First Time lesson. Those that complete the First Time lesson are eligible to purchase the \$49 Mountain Passport: the next visit is free, as well as 40 percent discounts on lift tickets and rental equipment and FREE lessons for the remain-

der of the season. For children under age 8, Liberty offers 50 percent off its PlayCare, which is open until 5pm and requires reservations. For information call (717) 642-8282 or visit [www.libertymountainresort.com](http://www.libertymountainresort.com).

Across the U.S. in Southern California's San Bernardino Mountains, 90 minutes from Los Angeles, Snow Valley Mountain Resort will offer Monday through Friday, non-holidays, in January 2017 a \$69 Buy One Get One Free Beginner Lesson for skiers and snowboarders ages 13 and up. It includes beginner area lift ticket, 1.5-hour group lesson, and a complete ski or snowboard rental package. Also in Southern California, Mountain High Resort in the San Gabriel mountains will offer a midweek, non-holiday \$75 Midweek Half Day Beginner Package complete with lesson, rentals, and a lower-mountain - and a second lesson FREE that day.

"As the chair of the Learn to Ski and Snowboard/Bring a Friend initiative, I have seen, first hand, the success of our industry programs to engage newcomers and especially on how to enable children to experience and enjoy being active in the winter outside," said Raclene Davis, Ski Utah's Director of Marketing.

Dozens of other LSSM offers are now listed in the "Special Programs" section at [www.learnstoskiandsnowboard.org](http://www.learnstoskiandsnowboard.org).

## Guinness World Records for Largest Lessons

On January 6, 2017, ski areas across U.S. and Canada will attempt to set the first Guinness World Records Ski areas across U.S. and Canada will attempt to set the first Guinness World Records for largest multi-venue Ski and the largest multi-venue Snowboard Lessons ever taught. From this group, the single venue ski lesson and the single venue snowboard lesson record will be determined, too. Ski and snowboard lessons are not taught together. The single venue records for both disciplines are approximately 500 people. The national record-setting effort is being organized by the LSSM initiative and SNOW Operating, the exclusive provider of the Terrain Based Learning Program.

## Bring A Friend Challenge (BAF)

In the BAF, everyone that brings a "first timer" to sign up for a lesson can become a BAF "Ambassador" by competing in the Challenge. Ambassadors can win prizes including gear from the biggest brands in snow sports. The 2016 Ambassador of the Year, high school teacher Cindy Rust of Idaho, won a Burton apparel ensemble.

Development of the BAF program reflects data from a new National Ski Areas Association study: 55 percent of new skiers and 45 percent of snowboarders first tried the sport because they "Wanted to be able to join

family and friends who ski/snowboard."

Over 40 percent also noted they "Wanted to try an activity that would get me outdoors in the winter time." This reflects the fact that skiing and snowboarding are healthy activities. A 155-pound adult can burn 422 calories an hour skiing at a moderate speed, and a 70-pound youth can burn 181 calories (see <http://skiing.about.com/od/skifitness/qt/calories-burned-skiing.htm>).

Beyond these financial- and health-focused motivating factors, it is now commonly accepted that today it is easier to learn to ski and snowboard because of improved equipment. It is also more affordable due to the discount programs noted above and new websites offering discounted equipment and lift tickets.

New BAF prizes and a list of resorts participating in the January 6, 2017 Guinness World Records attempts were listed in December at [www.learnstoskiandsnowboard.org](http://www.learnstoskiandsnowboard.org)

## DETAILS on "PASSPORT PROGRAMS" and OTHER STATE SNOW SPORTS DISCOUNTS

Many of the programs offer discounts but require proof of enrollment, grade status and may have additional restrictions and holiday blackout dates.

There also may be some slight costs involved. For a complete listing, not available here due to space limitations, please log on to [www.skiernews.com](http://www.skiernews.com)

For info on Idaho resorts please visit, [www.skiidaho.us/programs/passport](http://www.skiidaho.us/programs/passport)

For Maine, visit [www.WinterKids.org](http://www.WinterKids.org)

For Michigan, please log on to [www.goskimichigan.com/michigan-ski-programs/michigan-ski-cold-is-cool](http://www.goskimichigan.com/michigan-ski-programs/michigan-ski-cold-is-cool)

For New Hampshire information see [www.skinh.com/deals/snowsports-passport](http://www.skinh.com/deals/snowsports-passport)

In New York, students can apply at [www.iskiny.com/ski-deals/free-kids-program](http://www.iskiny.com/ski-deals/free-kids-program)

In the Northwest, please log on to [www.skinwrockies.com/5th-grade-ski-ride-passport](http://www.skinwrockies.com/5th-grade-ski-ride-passport)

For Pennsylvania please log on to [www.skipa.com/4th-5th-grade-snowpass](http://www.skipa.com/4th-5th-grade-snowpass)

In Utah, please visit their website, [www.skiutah.com/passes/passports](http://www.skiutah.com/passes/passports)

For Vermont, to learn more visit [www.skivermont.com/FGP](http://www.skivermont.com/FGP)

In Colorado for registration and other details, see [www.coloradoski.com/passport](http://www.coloradoski.com/passport)

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Details on the Passport programs and other discounts can be found by logging on to [www.learnstoskiandsnowboard.org](http://www.learnstoskiandsnowboard.org)

For this article with more detail on pricing and discounts, visit [www.skiernews.com](http://www.skiernews.com)