

Harford Ski Club Red Mountain BC Trip Report

Feb. 23 – March 2, 2019

Trip Leader: Anne Webb



Here I am roughly a month after this trip and find myself still contemplating what was the best part! Was it skiing the last two days in about 10 inches of fresh powder, or was it the wide selection of probably the best tree skiing I've ever encountered, or the first three bluebird days soaking up the warm sunshine and taking in the breath taking views of the Kootenay's, or experiencing the 'small town Canada' atmosphere? I still can't make up my mind! I guess that means only one thing – I'll have to return someday to make my final decision.

We had an absolutely fantastic week at Red Mountain this year! We started out with some mega travel to get there on Saturday, with the highlight being a fly over of the Grand Canyon with a touch of snow. But by mid-day Sunday I believe everyone was convinced it was worth the trek to get there. After settling in late Saturday night for some much needed rest we started out Sunday morning with a mouthwatering Welcome Breakfast at the main lodge which was a short 5 minute walk from our condos. They rolled out the Red carpet for us!



The hot meats, potatoes, and creamy scrambled eggs really hit the spot to get us started on our first day. There were three groups of us that took the complementary mountain tour, which was unlike any mountain tour I have ever taken. The 'stick to the Blues and only groomed Diamond runs' philosophy was not in their tour guide books! I believe we all found some untracked powder from the dumping that arrived the previous Friday and conditions overall were superb! During our 4 hour tours we learned the basics of how to navigate the 360 degree skiing from the top of Granite Mountain and make our way to-and-from Grey and Red Mountains with plenty of bumps, trees and powder along the way. Most of us found our ski legs by the end of the tours and headed to food, drink and our hot tubs!



Our Mountain Tour with a cabin in background

We had two more days of gorgeous sunshine and temps in the 20's to go back and explore the areas we found on the tour like the Blue and Black tree skiing in Paradise, or the Black Groomers by the Motherlode chair and yet more tree skiing down Grey Mountain. While looking at the trail map now I'm not recalling many names of the trails, mainly because the signage was sparse at Red and often was summed up with this sign:



Only the 'roads' of Easy Street, Rino's Run, and Southside Road looked familiar and these trails were well marked. It was easier to navigate by which lift you were skiing. And speaking of the

lifts, Red prides themselves with not having modern high speed detachable lifts. Instead they have repurposed used lifts from Vail, Whistler and other major resorts. And with the lack of lift lines the slower lifts give you more time to rest your legs in-between runs as well as take in the gorgeous scenery.



9 Tickets in Paradise!

Another highlight of the trip was the Slalom Creek condos, which were truly ski-in walk-out condos, very clean and spacious with nicely equipped kitchens and private hot tubs on our decks. Probably one of the nicest condos our club has ever stayed in. Being on the first floor I literally skied home and popped off my skis and walked right past my hot tub to get into our building.



Hot tub, snow, skis, mountain...Check!



Pat's selfie with occupied hot tub...with the ski home path in the reflection in the window!

Red felt like big resort pampering in small town Canada. Much to my surprise I took the shuttle from our condos to Rossland on day 2 of our trip and the shuttle driver knew all about our club, that there were 32 of us, that we had come from East Coast USA – our little group was the talk of the town...and the mountain. We all felt very welcome wherever we ventured on the mountain or in town.

Our group dinner took place on Tuesday night in Rossland at Idgie's, one of the towns longest operating restaurants. Idgie's put together a special menu for our group and the meal did not disappoint. From the Prawns to fresh Salmon and Sole, to the Roasted Rack of Lamb, the vegetable medley that consisted of a sampling of about 7 different veggies, to the enormous desserts, I believe everyone's pallets were more than satisfied! Of course there was the unique Salmon skins prepared especially for Gary Dogget that really stood out – just ask Gary or anyone who sat at his table! We also found fantastic Rabbit Stew and Czech beer at the new Josie restaurant right next door and great nachos at Rafter's.



Our week was topped off with the last two days of luscious powder, totaling about ten inches. Thirteen of us ventured to Whitewater Mountain (don't let the name fool you) where they had about 5 inches of fresh powder when we arrived and about 12 inches by the end of the day. Unfortunately we didn't get to appreciate the pristine views as seen in their brochures but the ski conditions and the lunch made up for it. Whitewater prides itself with gourmet food in the lodges and even has published their own line of cookbooks. I took the advice of a local and had the 'Glory' bowl, which had about ten layers of everything from typical salad fixings, shredded beets, marinated grilled tofu and warm brown rice at the bottom, all with a homemade dressing. One of the best tasting salads I've ever had! The Paninis and burritos others had looked fantastic too. Looking strictly at the platters at our lunch table you would not have guessed you were in a ski lodge, but in fact we were in Glory Lodge!



Whitewater Day Trippers

And with any ski trip there are always the funny stories. One of the first was when we were in the grocery store (the only one we found open past 9 PM on Saturday night!) and I was thrilled to see a deli counter. So I proceeded to order a ½ pound of ham, only to see the deli worker look totally confused and asked how many grams I wanted. I'm sure I had a similar look on my face but we found common ground on how many slices I wanted. Then there was the little known fact that the free Master ski pass Bobby Jones had for the week came with a bunk bed in the condo. But luckily our condo manager came up with the perfect solution to open up the adjoining extra bedroom free of charge. There was also another tale of Pat Vandrey's jacket moving mysteriously around the ski lodge. Not sure if this was in Paradise Lodge or maybe it had something to do with the 'No Shower Happy Hour' at Rafter's. And finally in case nobody knew, there were Zombies at Red Mountain. If you took the Ski Cat ride up to Mount Kirkup, there were those that had no \$ for the \$10 CAD ride, so they walk rather shabbily up the cat trail and have to venture off the trail when the Cat comes by. The 'walkers' as they are called stagger along and look up at you with Zombie-like expressions as you glance down on them while you ride by. Guess there are Walking Dead fans in Canada too!

Overall it was a stupendous trip and I look forward to returning to Red in the future! I leave you with some more pictures highlighting the fun times at Red. Until next time.....

