



CAT SKIING/BOARDING HELI SKIING/BOARDING TRIP INFORMATION 2008/2009

Chatter Creek Mountain Lodges Ltd.

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ABOUT CHATTER CREEK

Welcome to Chatter Creek! Some of you reading this will be coming to Chatter Creek for the first time. We hope that you can relax, leave your work behind and enjoy the fun ahead of you! The guides will take you where you will enjoy yourself best, based on weather, snow conditions and guest skiing and boarding capabilities. For those returning guests welcome back we are looking forward to meeting you again.

Of course where we talk about skiing here we mean boarding as well!

Skiing / Boarding

We have the best glacier access for cat skiing in North America. Skiing the glaciers at Chatter Creek brings you close to 10,000 ft in elevation and gives you incredible views. The tree-line at Chatter Creek is at 7,000 ft so there is almost 3,000 vertical feet of alpine skiing. The base area is at 5,250 ft. How much vertical do we ski in a day? We guarantee exhaustion! Typically, guests ski 12,000 to 20,000 ft a day depending on the guests' abilities. Each group skis to it's own enjoyment within guide parameters. We recommend some regular exercise before coming to Chatter Creek to help avoid sore muscles or joint injuries and to increase the enjoyment of your tour.

Lodges & Buildings

Vertebrae Lodge has 12 sleeping rooms with ensuite baths for absolute comfort. Each room has 2 comfortable double beds with duvets. Solitude Lodge has 6 double rooms similar to Vertebrae Lodge. The 18,200 sq ft of overall space gives us a large bar and games room, spacious dining and living areas, a well-equipped commercial kitchen and quiet areas for reading and relaxation. Solitude Lodge main floor contains the boot & dry room for all 36 skiers.

All our buildings are built from very large spruce logs, harvested and constructed by the owners on site. Spruce Lodge, the Bath House and the Log Shop, house our staff. We log, skid, mill and construct all our own buildings.

Snowcats & Other Transportation

We have 3 snowcats to transport 3 skiing groups. The passenger cabs are the best in the business with high quality forward facing seats and defrost units on the windows.

We have 2 snowcats for road building, one of which is used as a spare in the event of mechanical troubles with any of the group snowcats.

Transportation from Golden to the Lodge, every Tuesday and Friday is in either a Bell 407 or Bell 212 helicopter through a contract with Alpine Helicopters.

Chatter Creek is plowing the forestry road to make it easier to access the lodge by ground. Our staff & supplies now go in by road & then by snowcat to the lodge. We have said goodbye to the Mattracks.

Massage Bookings

If a massage is important to you, please make prior bookings on your Massage Booking Form available on our web site under reservations>guest forms and send the sheets to us promptly. We have three massage therapists at the lodges, with a fourth available if needed, so we need prior appointments to serve you best.

Safety

Chatter Creek Mountain Lodges (CCML) takes your safety very seriously. We employ 2 professional guides per 12 person group. The Lead Guide is ACMG, UIAGM or CSGA qualified, followed by a qualified Second Guide. Each new group has an educational session with the guide about safety procedures and the use of avalanche transceivers before the first run of the tour. Transceivers are provided. Shovels and probes are not carried by guests unless individuals decide to carry their own gear. Rescue equipment is carried by the guides and is also carried close by on the snowcats.

CCML is a member of HeliCat Canada, an organisation of cat skiing and helicopter skiing companies operating in the region (over 30 including CMH). This group conducts regular internal safety audits and has stringent operating bylaws for the safety and reputation of the industry. HeliCat Canada also invests \$70,000 - \$100,000 yearly in the ongoing University of Calgary Avalanche Research Project under Bruce Jamieson. The group has initiated a Best Practices Code which is under review and is being implemented by members.

Since 2001, CCML has taken part in the Canadian Avalanche Association Infoex program. Over 80 operators send in daily snow and weather reports and receive back broad daily weather and avalanche information.

Risk

There is risk involved in cat skiing and cat snowboarding and we require you to read and sign a Waiver of Liability form **before you leave Golden** for the Lodge.

Please read the section regarding Waivers thoroughly.

Communications, please remember!

We are a remote lodge with a satellite phone, limited internet access, radio contact, helicopter access in the daylight hours, & snowcat or snowmobile, & 4 wheel drive vehicle at night. We need our guests to come prepared for our environment. Leave all cell phones in your car [no coverage at Chatter]. Try to leave computers behind; this is a holiday. Personal satellite phones are becoming a more common sight with returning guests. Guest use of our satellite phone is available for a charge. Internet use is also available.

You can prearrange your own satellite phone. Rentals are available through High Country Communications-Golden 250-344-2504.

An emergency in the daytime can, weather permitting, utilise helicopter evacuation to the Golden Hospital. Night transport is via ground transport-approx 2.5 hours. We have well trained personnel with oxygen & first aid equipment, but there is no doctor, unless one happens to be staying as a guest. Bring enough of any required medication. Excitement, high altitude, exertion, etc. can bring on conditions you don't expect, probably in the middle of the night. It is in your own best interests to be prepared.

Tipping

Guests who appreciate the staff's work during their stay may consider a voluntary gratuity when paying their final lodge bills. Usual amounts vary between \$50 and \$200 per skier per trip. These are shared equally between lodge staff (excluding owners).

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

What to Bring

- 1 pair of powder skis, poles, boots, (no ski bag)
- *rental fat skis/poles available at lodge*
- OR 1 snowboard and boots (no board bag) –

- Quality goggles and gloves or mitts
- *(2 pair gloves/mitts suitable for powder skiing)*
- 1 or 2 piece ski suit with powder cuffs
- *suitable for all conditions and temperatures*
- Sun glasses and sun screen
- Layers to put under or over ski suit
- *to peel off if you get too warm or add if you are cold*
- Bathing suit for hot tub - *towels provided*
- Small flashlight with new batteries
- *in case of power failure or for late night walks*
- Light slippers or shoes to wear in the lodge and between lodges
- Comfortable lodge wear - Jogging pants, sweat or T shirts are great
- *we're informal*
- PRESCRIPTION MEDICINES - carry in 2 places if your life depends on it!
- Money for lodge purchases. We take Visa, MasterCard, cheques, traveller's cheques & cash
- Video or still camera with lots of film
- Your favourite CD to share

We recommend you wear bulky winter clothing on the helicopter

RENTAL SKIS: "Fat" skis are available to rent at \$25.00 per day plus taxes. No reservations are required unless you have unusual requirements [such as very short skis]. The guides will assist you at the lodge. Most of our rentals are Volkl Explosives with an assortment of other powder skis. We have a couple of pairs of 150cm skis which should be reserved. **Ski poles are always supplied with rental skis**

Sorry, we do not have rental snowboards.

What NOT to Bring

- Don't bring beer, wine, alcohol or fancy clothes
- Don't bring electrical appliances, we supply hair dryers - *ask the bartender*
- Don't bring too much stuff! Less is more at Chatter Creek.

Lost & Found

Gloves, goggles, ski poles, toques etc cannot be returned unless they are marked for identification. The dry room has too much identical gear to make unidentified small items returnable. Please remember to check dresser drawers and under the beds, and collect and check all your gear before you fly back to Golden, especially **Passports** if you have a border to cross.

Have a check list if you need it! Just like the summer camp we all loved as kids.

HELICOPTER TRANSFER

FLIGHT TIMES

Departure times are important and rigid. Flights leave in the afternoon and must leave on schedule to be completed 30 minutes before dark due to daylight flying regulations.

Airport arrival times are Mountain Standard Time (Calgary time). **These times are noted on our web site under logistics>what time to arrive.** Flight duration is between 22 & 27 minutes. **The first guests to sign in are the first to fly in.** The same order is retained for return flights.

All guests must attend a helicopter safety briefing before the flight into Chatter Creek.

If you are late, the flight will have departed. Call us at 1 877 311 7199 or local 344 7199 if you are delayed for any reason. Do not wait for lost baggage in Calgary if you will miss your helicopter flight. When found, your baggage will be sent on to Golden. **Take your ski boots on airlines as carry on baggage!**

We expect most flights to go on schedule. With 8 successful seasons using the helicopter and only about 20 missed flights out of hundreds, we are confident that flights should be able to reach the lodge as planned.

Ground transport is in place in case of no fly transfer days.

NOTE: Intoxicated guests may not be allowed on the helicopter !!

Chatter Creek Heliport, Donald

Flights depart from Donald which is 30Km west of Golden. There is ample parking but no food or gas facilities. You should make any purchases in Golden or Revelstoke before driving to Donald. See directions [logistics>how to get here] and maps [reservations>guest forms].

Luggage

Please bring a **small soft-sided sports bag** with NO WHEELS or hard bottoms. As we are flying by helicopter to and from the lodge, the bag has to be stuffable into odd shaped baggage areas. (**Wheeled bags don't stuff.**) Consider packing the allowed sports bag in a wheeled bag for ease at commercial airports and leaving the outer wheeled bag in your car at Alpine Helicopters.

Your small sports bag should be about:

~ **12 inches by 12 inches by 26 inches** and should not weigh more than **25 pounds**. This figure has been decided after discussion with many guests. If you are over this weight check the "What to Bring" section again.

~ Boots are **not** included in this weight and will be packed separately in CCML boot bags.

~ Helmets can be worn or packed in boot bags

~ 1 set of skis, 1 set of poles or 1 snowboard are also **not** included in the 25 pounds weight limit.

We will weigh all bags, equipment & guests.

Alcohol will not be transported by helicopter. We have a fully equipped bar at Chatter Creek.

No carry on luggage is allowed unless you wear a very small fanny pack.

Wheeled, Hard-Sided, Snowboard & Hockey Bags

We will ask owners of ALL wheeled bags to repack them into our soft sided bags. Please remove skis and boards from their bags and leave the bags in your vehicle. Snowboard bindings higher than 2 inches must be removed for the flights and packed in your luggage.

What to Wear & Carry on the Helicopter

The helicopter pilot will conduct a safety briefing. If an emergency were to occur while under the care of Alpine Helicopters, remember that Golden will be in the middle of winter. *Be prepared for the unusual! Please wear the following on the helicopter (it will also make your luggage lighter).*

- WINTER BOOTS (no sandals or running shoes)
- Winter clothing including a warm hat and gloves
- PRESCRIPTION MEDICINES - Carry in your pocket if needed regularly!
- Medication for air sickness / vertigo and a bag if needed for the flight
- Camera for fabulous scenery
- Energy bar, candy bar - **no alcohol in the helicopter**

Please refrain from smoking within 10 minutes of departing in the helicopter

SMOKING IS NOT ALLOWED ON THE AIRCRAFT EVER!

GOLDEN, BC (See map in Guest Printable Forms)

Where is Golden, BC, Canada?

Driving times are approximate and assume ideal driving conditions.

Add an hour for baggage, customs, car rentals, city driving

Nearest international airport - Calgary Alberta Canada (3 hours by car)

Nearest American city of size - Spokane WA (7 hours by car)

Nearest west coast Canadian city - Vancouver BC (8 hours by car)

Rental cars are the best option for convenience in a small town like Golden

Time Zone

Important: Chatter Creek and Golden are in BC but are in the Mountain Time Zone (MST). This is the same time as Calgary, which is 1 hr later than Vancouver and 2 hours earlier than Toronto. The time change to Pacific Standard Time is just west of Golden.

Guests from the west coast often run into problems with time changes. If you arrive in Golden at 3pm your time (PST) it is 4pm Golden time (MST) and your flight has departed!

About Golden

Golden is a nice little town of 4500 people with another 4500 people living in the outlying areas. It's on the Trans Canada Highway near the BC, Alberta boundary and just 1 hour west of Lake Louise Alberta. Our community-run Whitetooth Ski Area changed hands and has grown to become the well known Kicking Horse Mountain Resort. Your flight day is a good opportunity to warm up at KHMR for Chatter Creek and gets you to Golden the day before, a recommended idea. Lunch at the Eagle's Eye at KHMR is a delight and 11:30 am beats the lunch rush. KHMR 1-888-706-1117, www.kickinghorseresort.com

There are many delightful accommodations in the area from the more usual motels and hotels to B&B's and European style front-country lodges. For details contact The Chamber of Commerce at 250-344-7125 or Golden Tourism at www.tourismgolden.com. The map on our website (reservations>guest forms) gives a few suggestions for accommodation & meals.

Golden is surrounded by 6 Mountain National Parks and numerous Provincial Parks. The Rockies, Purcell's and Selkirk's border the town and make it a scenic adventure stop on any trip, any season of the year. Chatter Creek is northwest of Golden and is surrounded by the Columbia/Clemenceau Icefields 30km to the north, the Great Divide to the east, the Selkirks and Rogers Pass to the west, and the Bugaboos south of Golden. *Great, cool, snowy country!*

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

***** WAIVER *****

The Release of Liability, Waiver of Claims, Assumption of Risks and Indemnity Agreement form is included on our web site under reservations >guest forms, for you to read. Please take the time to read this Waiver it is important that you understand it **You will be required to fill in & sign a Waiver at the Alpine Helicopters heliport before leaving Golden.** Be sure you fully understand this waiver. Our tours have a "Risk" involved that you need to understand and accept before coming. Anyone not wishing to sign the Waivers will not be able to go cat skiing or cat snowboarding at Chatter Creek.

No changes can be made to the Waiver wording. It must be signed as it is presented. Group Organizers, the necessary forms are available now on our web site, www.chattercreek.ca under guest forms. **A child waiver/parental consent form** must be completed at the airport for each child under the age of 19, to be attached to the regular waiver which the under 19 & a parent must both sign This Waiver is a comprehensive document that is very important to the Heli and Cat skiing sector and to Chatter Creek Mountain Lodges Ltd.

Cancellation

Chatter Creek Mountain Lodges Ltd. (CCML) reserves the right to cancel any ski package/tour at any time. Although cancellations are highly unlikely, there would be a full package refund, but CCML cannot be responsible for any guest travel costs or associated costs to the tour.

Weather Delay

In the event that the helicopter cannot fly to the Lodge due to poor weather CCML has ground transport in place to take you to the lodge by bus & snowcat. It is a much longer trip than the helicopter flight, up to 4 hours, but it does allow guests to arrive and depart from the lodge on the planned days. Ground transportation is not guaranteed and in extreme weather it is still possible to be delayed in Golden or at the lodge. When booking your flights home, we suggest that you allow sufficient time in case there is a delay returning from the lodge or possible highway closures. Flights home are best booked for the following day. Winter travel can be uncooperative and the storm cycles that make travel difficult usually produce the best powder skiing.

Down Days

CCML has 4 passenger snow cats for 3 ski groups. It is not anticipated that down days due to CCML machinery will occur. If a passenger cat breaks down, the 4th cat with passenger cab will substitute until repairs are complete.

Unusual weather related problems beyond the control of CCML can cause down days, and although very rare in the cat skiing sector, it is possible and has happened. Chatter Creek does not provide replacement ski days for down days lost to weather related problems (e.g. snow slope instability, unusual torrential rain etc.)

Reservations

Tour Deposit is 25% of full package price, and is non-refundable in the event of a cancellation, unless the seat can be rebooked. If successful in rebooking the seat, CCML will retain \$100 per person administration fee and refund the remainder within one month of receiving alternate payment. The remaining 75% of the full package price must be paid by the date on your Confirmation/Payment Form, either, September 30, October 31 or November 30. Please send a post-dated cheque early to avoid late charges or sign the Credit Card Authorization page showing permission for final payment to be taken on the due date. We email reminders to those who have authorized both payments by credit card before the 2nd payment is taken. We reserve the right to charge interest on overdue accounts.

Payments

Payment may be made by Visa, or MasterCard, cheque, or wire transfer. **We are no longer able to accept payments by American Express.** Late payments will be subject to late charges of 2% per month or if unusually late, and we are unable to contact you in a reasonable time frame, we reserve the right to rebook your seats with the same refund policy shown above. All rates are in Canadian funds and are subject to change without notice. US payments - no cheques please, credit cards or wire transfers.

Cancellations

Cancellations must be received in writing 3 months prior to your trip start date or there will be no refund (unless, of course your trip can be rebooked). You may also sell your tour to another skier 19 years or older with proper notification.

CHANGE IN RESERVATION DATES

We will attempt to change your ski tour dates, if possible, but we reserve the right to charge \$100 per person for the additional work involved.

RECOMMENDED INSURANCE

Cancellation Insurance

We recommend that you purchase travel insurance for your tour from your travel or insurance agent, or it can be obtained from Uniglobe Specialty Travel, 866 667 0811 or 250 837 2544. It is also available through some credit cards.

An alternative to trip insurance is for you to have a prearranged replacement to travel in your place in the event of an emergency. CCML is not responsible for providing replacement skiers and at best may be able to supply a replacement from our standby list at a reduced price, for last minute cancellations.

Our experience is that about 10% of guests booked are unable to make their vacation when their tour dates arrive. Most have recent injuries, some have family medical problems and others business commitments.

Medical Insurance

Check with your insurance provider to make sure you are fully covered in British Columbia and Alberta, Canada. Calgary is our nearest major medical facility.

Personal Property Insurance

If you are concerned about the safety of your equipment and personal belongings, please ensure that they are covered by your household insurance policy before you leave home. Equipment lost in a fall or in an avalanche is the responsibility of the guest. Attempts will be made to recover the lost articles at the time or in the summer, but the terrain is very large, inaccessible and rough in the summer and this makes recovery very difficult. CCML reserves the right to charge the skier for lost rental skis, depending on the circumstances.

Emergency Evacuation Insurance

Although this is hardly ever required, Air Ambulance is not always covered by your medical insurance. It is NOT covered by Canadian Medical Insurance Plans. Air Ambulance evacuation for non-BC residents is at least \$2,800 Canadian. For BC residents the charge is capped at \$274. Please ensure you have insurance for this cost before your tour or be prepared to pay the cost if needed.



Background and History

WINTER 2001, OUR FIRST SEASON

Guest comments from the first season; “Wonderful lodge staff. Hard-working young people with energy, vitality, wonderful skills and filled with fun and laughter. Best cat in the business. Best snow this winter. Beautiful scenery. The spectacular fifteen minute helicopter flight makes the whole tour even better. Glacier skiing makes the skiing as good as heli skiing. Great vertical *Fun lodge, I’m coming back!*”

WINTER 2002, OUR SECOND SEASON

The many returning guests loved the new bath house with the flush toilets and showers. They also enjoyed seeing the staff in their new staff building rather than the previous winter tents. Many more access roads to the alpine were constructed during the winter. The guests loved the new terrain opened up. The skiing conditions were excellent, and more like normal, with twice the snow of the previous winter. The guests continued to be impressed with our excellent staff and care of guests.

WINTER 2003, OUR THIRD SEASON

Vertebrae Lodge named after the Ridge, royally welcomed our guests in 2003. The 12 guest rooms with 2 double beds and ensuite baths were completed and appreciated. The common areas were much larger than Spruce Lodge and included a living, dining & games room, massage and dry rooms, ski shop and retail area, kitchen and bar, plus an outdoor hot tub. Our new “Investors and Friends” who helped fund the Lodge kept the second snow-cat busy throughout the ski season.

WINTER 2004, OUR FOURTH SEASON

Vertebrae Lodge had the roof overhangs completed as well as many inside finishes. A large woodshed was built and filled with firewood, a generator building had 2 generators installed in it and new bridge construction plus alpine road work completed this less frantic construction season.

WINTER 2005, OUR FIFTH SEASON

Solitude Lodge was constructed for 2005, housing another 12 guests, with staff on the 3rd floor and 4th floor. The Solitude’s main floor became the dry room for 36 guests. Considerable new terrain was developed with our larger excavator. Our cat skiing tenure was enlarged from 129 to 238 square kilometres. Our new heli skiing tenure of 485 square kilometres, surrounding the present cat skiing tenure, was approved.

WINTER 2006, OUR SIXTH SEASON

Our first year of heli skiing was an unparalleled success! Our skiers enjoyed outstanding conditions and were very excited to be the first guests to ski these amazing slopes. Solitude and Vertebrae Lodges got some finishing touches including a new entrance area. Cat access roads were improved to make it easier to reach the new terrain.

WINTER 2007, OUR SEVENTH SEASON

Chatter Creek’s biggest project this summer was one that guests don’t directly notice. Dan & Dale spent a large portion of the summer rebuilding the access road to the lodge from the B road. The last 17 km of road was used for winter logging 30 years ago & needed major upgrades in order to facilitate access to bigger trucks such as fuel & cement trucks. The fuel for the cats & generator is now located at the lodge which means no more midnight runs to the fuel garden! The wine list was also substantially upgraded and many fine BC wines were added under the direction of our new bar manager and sommelier.

WINTER 2008, OUR EIGHTH SEASON

Before, & during our 8th season, many finishing details were completed. Dry wall was finished and painted & trim installed in the Solitude guest rooms and the dry room. The dining room & bar had both slate flooring and carpets installed and new tables & chairs were purchased. The kitchen was also extended to facilitate delivery of the improved menu.

WINTER 2009, OUR NINTH SEASON

The construction of a heliport in Donald has been the major work this summer although further improvements to the lodge have been completed including a new hot tub.