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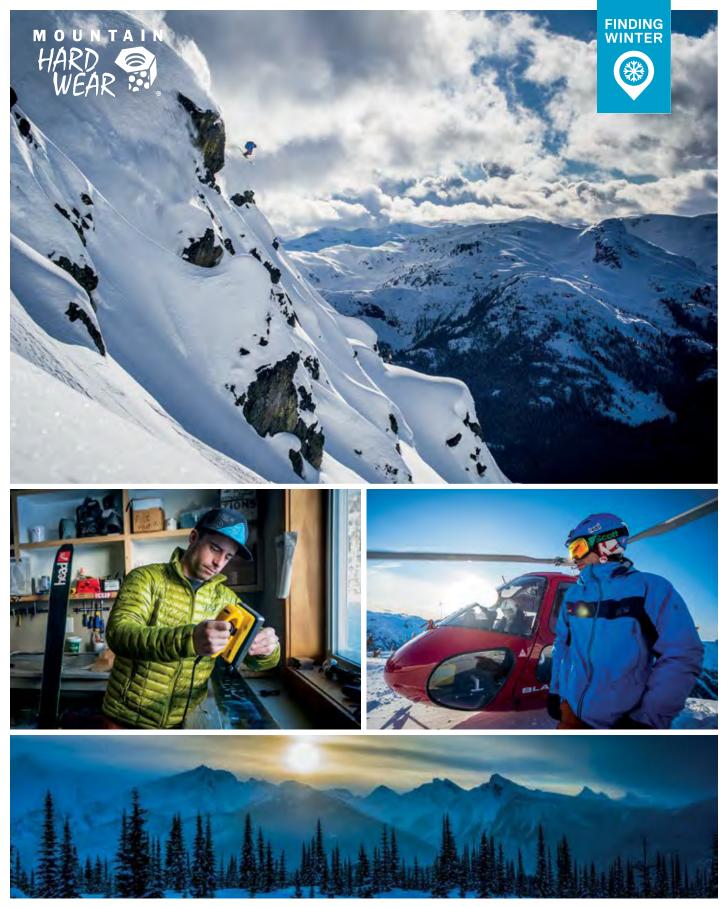


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DEPARTMENTS

- **36** Biophiliac: The Big Chill
- 41 Backyard: Winter Camping Done Right
- 44 Heliskiing: The Great Escape
- 50 Mtn Home: Mulmur Modern
- 59 Travel: The Ultimate Mountain Town
- 72 Stay & Play: Sony SnowCrown
- 88 Powder Perfect: Guide to BC Resorts
- 102 Nordic Ski: Vermont Harmony
- **107** Wellness: Turmeric Takedown
- **112** Athlete Profile: The Konings Brothers
- 117 Restaurants
- 122 Gear Guide
- 130 Gallery
- 138 Local Picks
- 144 Backpage: Frigid Mishap on the Beaver River

FEATURES

- 64 The Faux Route: Niagara Escarpment backcountry ski touring is all about carving your own adventure
- 80 Frozen Fathoms: A hazardous journey across Great Lakes ice to bring back photojournalistic gold

UPFRONT

- 23 The Bruce Trail, Version 1.2.2
- 24 Polar Rush Invades Horseshoe Resort
- 26 Talisman Resort Redevelopment
- 28 Women's Park Day at Blue
- **30** Collingwood's Be The Change Film Series
- **33** Mount St. Louis Moonstone at 50

Cory Davies in the glades at Blue Mountain. MARC LANDRY PHOTO.

On this page, clockwise from left: TRENT BONA PHOTO; ANDREJ KOPAC PHOTO; CORYNN FOWLER PHOTO; RICHARD ROTH PHOTO.





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NOTHING LIKE HOME

"This place felt nothing like home, but stood only a stone's throw from shore and a ten-minute drive from my birthplace."

of our paddle, most of the ice had drifted or melted away. All that remained were glacierlike deposits of compacted snow atop a series of half-submerged rocks. We explored this ice-bound archipelago for several hours. This place felt nothing like home, but stood only a stone's throw from shore and a ten-minute drive from my birthplace.

The formations rose into irregular cones. Faintly geometric chunks of ice littered the surface and glinted blue in the afternoon sunlight. The island, which was no island at all, felt nonetheless permanent - like a house-sized modern sculpture.

A week later, everything melted. When I looked at my photos and then showed them to friends, our reactions jibed: the scene didn't look like it was just off Thornbury harbour. It looked more like the Antarctic, Greenland, or the Beaufort Sea. It didn't look like Ontario.

Running a magazine with a sister publication in British Columbia, we're often confronted with images that Ontario can't hope to compete with - for vertical drop, surfable waves, big trees, snowpack. In a certain sense we always "lose" to BC. But ski-mountaineering the Skeenas or ice-climbing the Frazer Canyon and returning with photos or video is for a small handful of pros who risk everything. We're all impressed by their missions; not so many of us want to follow them.

I've heard more than one of our Ontario photographers say "You can't even tell this is Ontario!" when sharing a backcountry ski photo from Batchawana Mountain or Killarney's Silver Peak. The underlying suggestion? Ontario topography isn't colossal enough for outdoor action photos competitive with those taken in BC.

When I looked over the photos of David paddling off Thornbury harbor and thought, "That doesn't look like Ontario!", I too was suggesting that our home is generally too quaint to elicit the extreme outdoor images we have come to expect in print and online.

This leads me to a realization: every day, without a lot of effort, I discover an aspect of my home that was previously unknown to me; all it takes is a short walk or paddle into the pockets of wildness remaining in southern Ontario. It could be an ice formation that disappears come March, a wizened cedar tree that geminated before Champlain's first voyage, or a strangely shaped Escarpment rock that weathers at a rate slow beyond human scope; nature continuously reinvents itself and offers up new perspectives. They're available to anyone, even if they may seem small and not very "extreme." Perhaps by communicating their beauty we can inspire others to look again at the irreplaceable bounty in our backyard.

David Loopstra in his home waters, just off Thornbury Harbour, NED MORGAN PHOTO.

- Ned Morgan, Editor



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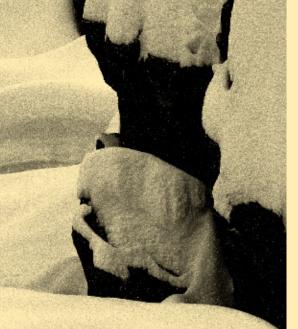
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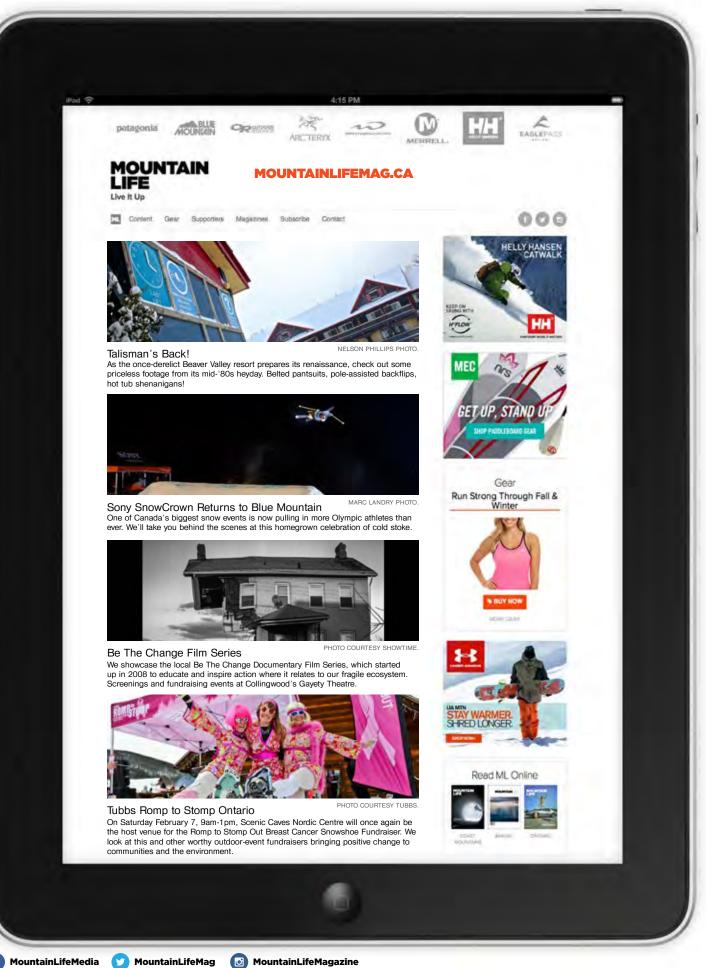


WHISTLER, BC

Our days have gone grayscale: ascents start in pre-dawn blackness, silver fog hints at sunrise. Sometimes Kye is an opaque phantom, just 10 feet from my ski tips. Waiting for sunny mornings in this wilderness will earn you nothing but the roof overhead, so we wander into our monotone world where descent is a game of chance and feel; where we trace imaginary lines from one contour to the next, where slightly darker shades of snow signal a 20-foot drop without so much as a memo.

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20 MOUNTAIN LIFE ONTARIO WINTER 2015

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NED MORGAN PHOTOS.

Canada's oldest and longest marked footpath winds through the vestigial wilds of southern Ontario, often within cell tower range. And if you needed another reason to bring your iPhone (or iPad) while hiking or snowshoeing, here's one: the Bruce Trail Conservancy has released an app on iTunes.

Now you can plan, track, and log your hikes in an app that features the most up-to-date Bruce Trail data – you can view either the BTC's own topo maps (including all trail changes) or Apple's satellite maps. If you want it to (and have the battery power to spare) the app will create saved tracks of your favourite hikes, and mark your progress in real time. You can search for locations or services along the route as well.

A collaboration between the BTC and Fugawi Software, the app (dubbed The Bruce Trail version 1.2.2) costs \$10 in the iTunes Store, with proceeds going toward trail development and conservation work.

The BTC and Fugawi are working on a version for Android for release in late 2015 or early 2016.

THE BRUCE TRAIL VERSION 1.2.2

And though you'll often see one or two bars of cell service on much of the Trail, you won't need to burn your data plan when hiking: download the most recent maps at home and the app caches everything on your device. (The location and tracking functions will also work without cell service.) We found the fingertip access and zoomability of the maps to be silky and intuitive, and an encouragement to further trail exploration. We figure the only advantage the paper map has over the app is the former doesn't require battery power. One more reason to invest in a pocket solar charger for those multi-day hikes...

brucetrail.org

-Ned Morgan



POLAR RUSH INVADES HORSESHOE RESORT

With the explosion of events like the Tough Mudder, MetCon Blue, the Warrior Dash and many other 'mud run' events, you have to ask yourself the question: Why aren't there any winter events? Well, that's the same question Sean Ruppel asked himself.

Ruppel, one of the two brothers who created Albion Hills' ubersuccessful 24 Hours of Summer Solstice mountain bike race, is preparing a winter obstacle course race. Ruppel and brother Adam have run mountain bike races since 1994, and the latter is currently running the thriving Mud Hero events.

Polar Rush will be a five-kilometre run through twelve-plus obstacles – including wall climbs, crazy carpets, tube runs, snow crawls and snowball tosses. Taking place at Horseshoe Resort near Barrie on March 21, the event also includes an after party with DJs, a beer garden, and bonfires.

But why would anyone want to do this?

"Because most people sit around all winter waiting for spring," says Sean Ruppel. "Why spend half your life waiting? Everyone remembers the fun of playing in the snow. If you're planning on doing some mud events, Polar Rush is a great way to get a leg up on the season."



PHOTO COURTESY HORSESHOE RESORT.

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TALISMAN RESORT REDEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCED



The ghost resort. NELSON PHILLIPS PHOTOS

Southern Ontario's Beaver Valley houses a pristine stretch of protected marshland, a bustling whitetail deer population, the meandering Beaver River, and an old relic: a derelict mountain resort formerly known as Talisman.

From the 1960s into the 2000s, the resort was a classic example of small-time Ontario ski royalty, and its bankruptcy in 2010 was both sad and unnerving for the ski community. But there's hope: a financial defibrillator has recently zapped some life into the 200-acre property. Once owing the municipality over \$2 million in back-taxes and additional millions to creditors, a Toronto development group has purchased Talisman with plans to revamp the aging facility into a conference centre and spa. The resort once boasted 100 hotel rooms, a jumpin' après watering-hole, and a tubing park – as well as one of the best jib parks in Ontario.

Developer Brian Ellis says it's unlikely the ski lifts will ever run again, and calls them "financially unviable. But we will be using the hills for nature walks, trails and other activities that are enhanced by the natural beauty of the Valley. The hotel will see restaurant renovation, the pool area will be completely redone, and a new outside dining area added for the warmer months of the year."

Ellis plans extensive renovations to all exterior and interior spaces though he adds that the overall look and feel of the original Talisman Resort will remain similar. The spa, which will inhabit the old day lodge, will compete with nearby Blue Mountain facilities, and there are reported talks of a potential agreement with neighbouring Beaver Valley Resort to shuttle visitors over for a spot of skiing/boarding.

"We have had some initial meetings with the Beaver Valley Club," says Ellis. "We are working on a program that benefits both sides and will allow our clients to ski next door at the Club."

Talisman will also get a new name, which hasn't been announced yet.

Back in the mid-90s, Talisman introduced me to snowboarding, and it was one of the first resorts in Ontario to allow shredders on its slopes. (They let me in with a plastic Canadian Tire board and Sorels.) When you're driving by, be sure to give it the proverbial downward nod of respect. There's snowboard history on those hills.

The developers are aiming to re-launch the resort on Canada Day 2015.

- Nelson Phillips

DIY Check mountainlifemag.ca for some priceless vintage footage of Talisman in its '80s heyday.



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PARK DAYS ALL-WOMEN SNOWBOARD CAMP HITS BLUE MOUNTAIN

On Saturday, January 24 the Women's Snowboard Federation kicks off the Ontario leg of their Park Days tour. This year the tour will be hitting Blue Mountain for its Ontario stop – this is a great opportunity to get out and ride with a group of welcoming and fun girls.

Whether you're a total park newbie or an experienced competitor, something pretty magical happens when you throw up to 50 girls on snowboards into the park together. It's all about building a strong community for Ontario's female riders.

"The biggest thing is building that community," explains Ontario organizer Jessica Woolsey. "It's not just about riding with the guys, it's about your personal progression and growth and really being comfortable. I grew up riding with the boys and, yes, you progressed but you always compared yourself to the boys. That's good because you want to get better than them – but I found that I was uncomfortable sometimes. These Park Days are about getting the girls together just to have a good time and showing them that the park isn't scary."

Woolsey will be among a host of talented coaches at the Blue Mountain stop. After registration, riders are split into groups by ability with a max of five to six riders per coach. The camp is suited to all ability levels, with more advanced riders encouraging those new to the park. "It's open to everybody that can get themselves down the hill confidently," explains Woolsey. "Everyone from a girl who has never been in the park before but can confidently link turns, to the girls who are now competing."

Registration runs from 8:30 to 9:30 on January 24th or you can preregister online. Groups will be formed after registration and will hit the hill til noon. Riders will work with their coaches until lunch, which is provided, and an additional hour and a half of coaching happens after lunch. The last part of the day is spent in a mini competition format, among the groups, with the girls urged to push themselves. With an impressive list of sponsors, there's tons of prizing and a vendor's village for participants to check out. It's \$100 to participate for the day plus a discounted \$35 lift ticket that includes a one-day park pass.

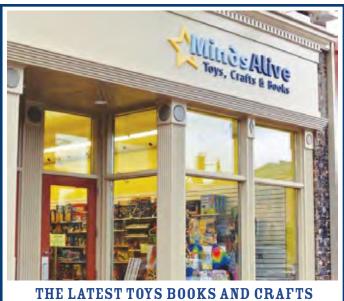
Woolsey says the vibe is unbeatable. "You get a bunch of women together in the park and everyone is pushing each other. It's just super friendly and the vibe is so good that you can't help but have a good time."

For all tour dates and registration details, check: ridedays.ca

- Allison Kennedy Davies



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UPFRONT



Hurricane Sandy damage. COURTESY SHOWTIME NETWORKS, INC.

BE THE CHANGE FILM SERIES LIVES DANGEROUSLY

The new docu-series *Years of Living Dangerously* examines the effects of climate change on a global scale with a particular focus on the human impact. With executive producers James Cameron and Jerry Weintraub – and celeb-octane injections from the likes of Matt Damon, Arnold Schwarzenegger, and Harrison Ford – this Emmy-winning series brings the climate crisis the exposure it needs.

On Wednesday March 25 the Be The Change Film Series continues at Collingwood's Gayety Theatre with a screening of the "Winds of Change" episode from Years of Living Dangerously, which tackles the future of renewable energy. The night is also a fundraising event for Elephant Thoughts Educational Outreach and the Blue Mountain Watershed Trust Foundation, with a silent and live auction, dinner prepared by Bruce Wine Bar, and a surprise musical guest. The event begins at 6 pm and tickets are \$50.

bethechangefilmseries.com





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LIGHT 'EM UP: MSLM'S TURNING



One of the few family-owned resorts in the country, Mount St. Louis Moonstone is celebrating a big event this season: they're turning 50.

On December 16, 1964 the resort – located about 25km north of the city of Barrie – opened for business with two T-bars. In a weather pattern we're all too familiar with, the snow completely melted four days later. But Austrianborn owner Josl Huter wasn't deterred; he convinced local high-school students to cart snow in apple baskets to cover the trail.

And today, the Huters are still running the resort. Over the years they've added and moved nearly four million cubic metres of dirt to crank up the vertical and create a drop of 550 feet.

They embraced snowboarding early on and started building terrain parks long before other resorts in the region. And that early-adoption has paid off. MSLM is known for its terrain parks.

The Skool Yard Grom Park features low-to-

the-ground rails, jumps and rollers, where the resort teaches kids and adults how to hit the features. And their Junkyard Park helps those beginners progress onto bigger features.

Of course The Outback is the true measure of local talent. A superpipe, urban staircases, and some of the biggest jumps in the province offer some great opportunities for pro-level riders to flaunt their stuff.

To celebrate their 50th year in operation, MSLM is lighting up the slopes. With over \$2 million invested in lighting, the Skool Yard and the Junkyard will be lit up for night skiing this winter, as will a number of slopes. And with a further \$500,000 invested in snowmaking, you can bet MSLM is the little family resort that will.

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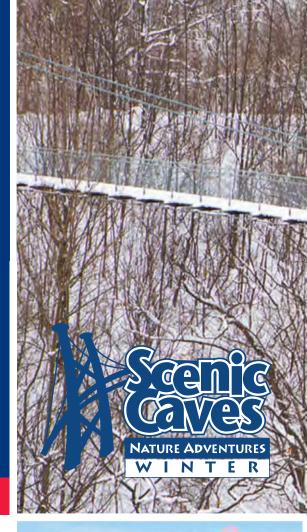
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ABOVE: A Blanding's turtle found near Toronto. ONTLEY MCNAUTH PHOTO, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS. BELOW: Bill Greaves, former MSc student in Jacqueline Litzgus' lab, radio tracking wood turtles in winter. The red 'x' indicates a hibernating turtle under the ice. Greaves is now a biologist with MNRF in Thunder Bay. JESS BEATON PHOTO.

THE BIG CHILL

How studying hibernation might help save some of Ontario's endangered species

By Leslie Anthony

One cold Boxing Day, James Baxter-Gilbert and Julia Riley hopped in their car and drove to the remote east side of Algonquin Park. Baxter-Gilbert donned an orange emergency flotation suit – the kind carried on fishing boats – attached a rope to himself, tied it off on a tree, and walked out on a frozen bay. Playing the rope, Riley watched calmly as he promptly fell through up to his waist. "You OK?" she called. "Yeah," he replied, clawing his way back onto solid ice only to walk ten steps and fall through again. The comic leitmotif repeated as Baxter-Gilbert alternately cut holes in the ice with an auger and his own weight.

Were they scouting ice-fishing hotspots? Training for winter searchand-rescue? Not quite. This unlikely vignette is the face of turtle conservation in the Great White North, and the pair likely weren't the only herpetologists (those who study reptiles and amphibians) so engaged that day: most who conduct field research on these familiar log-lounging icons of summertime eventually find themselves scouting their subjects through a blanket of snow and ice.

"You can't say you're a Canadian herpetologist until you've done winter work," laughs Riley, who relishes the paradox of searching out coldblooded animals in a frozen landscape.

Indeed the outing—where they'd measured dissolved oxygen (DO) at hibernation sites—was no anomaly. Between them, the two species-



at-risk researchers have worked on seven of Canada's eight native freshwater turtles: Blanding's, map, musk, painted, snapping, spotted and wood. Each were conservation efforts that involved tracking turtles via radio telemetry, and most included winter work. Why the brumal preoccupation?



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"We're at the northern limits in Ontario for most of these species, so time spent overwintering represents at least half their lives," says Canada's top turtle researcher, Dr. Jacqueline Litzgus of Laurentian University. "What happens in summer with food and growth is important to fitness and breeding, but if you can't survive winter your fitness is zero."

As such, turtles' long annual nap at the bottom of ponds, lakes and rivers has become a focus of conservation efforts in eastern Canada. Because site choice is very particular and vulnerability high during this time, the loss of – or impact to – overwintering habitat can quickly override other considerations in the demise of a population. But this knowledge is cold comfort if it can't be quickly applied to conservation. And, unfortunately for a group that first appears in the fossil record some 220 million years ago and has changed little since, it's a race against time.

Turtles are in troubled waters worldwide, but very much so in Canada, where most species already eke out a marginal existence. Habitat fragmentation, degradation and loss from road, agriculture and urban development have further isolated many in small-population pockets; they're not going anywhere fast, and they're not doing well.

There are more formal turtle-recovery teams in Ontario than there are species, but while declines continue in hare-like leaps and bounds, protection moves at the speed of, well... a tortoise.

Nearly all our turtle species show significant declines in absolute numbers and viable populations, a problem exacerbated by government foot-dragging. (There are more formal turtle-recovery teams in Ontario than there are species, but while declines continue in hare-like leaps and bounds, protection moves at the speed of, well... a tortoise.) The problems start with basic biology: all turtles are long-lived and slow growing, with late sexual maturity (at 10-30 years) and a long reproductive life (up to 50 years). Ecologically, these traits balance the high number of eggs and hatchings lost to predation, evolving in concert with low adult mortality. While this has allowed turtles to survive cataclysmic events in Earth's history, populations of animals with such characteristics cannot quickly replace losses after sudden episodes of high adult mortality. Despite their geological resilience, turtles aren't equipped to deal with the myriad anthropogenic threats of their active season-high road mortality (while moving to and from nesting or overwintering sites) and overharvesting for the food or pet trades. Far from a respite, the inactive winter season also presents a range of threats.

Turtles face three major challenges to overwintering survival: freezing, predation, and acidosis (the toxic accumulation of metabolic lactic acid in tissues). Study after study has demonstrated how turtles select hibernation sites which minimize these threats. Thermal stability is key. "A certain depth of water and a certain configuration that maintains temperatures in that layer is required—maybe a hole or a spring," says Litzgus. "It's very specific."

Not knowing the preferred sites for populations at risk presents a significant conservation problem. Construction companies, for example, often use winter for particular types of work because it's easier to drive heavy equipment across frozen soil and wetlands. This presents more of a hazard than just accidentally crushing snoozing turtles. "ISome species] choose the coldest areas of stratified water, so the biggest threat during hibernation becomes changes in hydrology," notes Litzgus with concern. "Any alterations to water flow will change the thermal profile available to turtles—which in turn can increase risk of acidosis or predation."



Dr. Jacqueline Litzgus with a Blanding's turtle. THOMAS MERRITT PHOTO.

With good sites at a premium, many turtles often end up hibernating together in the same place. The importance of such communal hibernacula to springtime mating—well understood in wide-ranging animals like snakes—is now also apparent for turtles. Because a large percentage of the breeding population is potentially present in one small area, the population effects from destroying the site or its occupants can be disastrous.

With it so easy to perturb the critical overwintering habitat of turtles, the only thing between extirpation and conservation may be those willing to brave the cold on their behalf. But it doesn't always mean tying yourself to a tree.

"Wood turtles need wiggly, fast-flowing rivers with cobble or sand bottoms and sandbanks at the bends," says Litzgus. "These rivers are easy to identify on a map, but since logging changes hydrology and siltation in some stretches, overwintering sites are often in remote areas that are dangerous and physically challenging to get to."

Wood turtles' preferred place to hibernate is a metre deep and a metre from the bank. If there's a thaw where ice pulls off the shore then refreezes, turtles respond with small upstream and downstream movements that keep them in a "box"—on the edge of the main flow where it's always 0°C with high DO, but no danger of being tumbled downriver. This can be fortuitous for the curious researchers following them.

"Tracking wood turtles in winter is extra neat because you go out on fast-moving but ice-covered rivers," enthuses Julia Riley. "Sometimes you can even see them through the ice." \blacksquare



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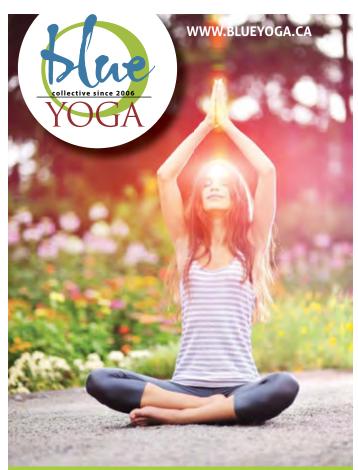
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10:30 - 11:45 am Gentle Stretch with Leah Hagreen Buddha Rider, Collingwood

6:30 - 7:45 pm Intermediate Hatha Yoga with Lise Garrette Ravenna Hall, Ravenna (no classes the week of Oct. 27 and Nov. 3)

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WINTER CAMPING DONE RIGHT

Killarney Self-Haulage Pros. L to R: Dave Marrone, Mike Valin, Ann Valin. CONOR MIHELL PHOTO.

Traversing Killarney Provincial Park by snowshoe and toboggan

By Conor Mihell

To the people who glide by on cross-country skis, glowing in Gore-Tex with their backpacks overloaded and dangling with survival gear, we must appear mad: Ten people on snowshoes, stomping out a snowy platform the size of a suburban building lot alongside Kakakise Creek in Killarney Provincial Park, Ontario. We walk back and forth, hammering

our wooden snowshoes into the powder with satisfying thuds. After a half-hour of pacing, Dave Marrone, our guide and co-owner of Sudburybased outfitter Lure of the North, pulls on his stained, fur-trimmed anorak and announces that the first step of establishing a winter campsite is complete.



Clockwise from left: Dave Marrone, lighting up; Dave and Kielyn Marrone on Freeland Lake; group tent-setup on frozen swamp. CONOR MIHELL PHOTOS.

Whereas alpine-style "cold" winter camping is classic man-versus-nature – shouldering backpacks overstuffed with copious layers, sleeping bags and tents, then devouring high-calorie foods and sleeping away long nights – traditional "hot" camping is more elaborate, comfortable and refined. As university students, Dave and his wife, Kielyn, experienced the hardships of the former on a trip to New York's Adirondack Mountains. "My feet were so cold," recalls Kielyn. "I had to put them on Dave's belly to warm up."

Then they heard about a different approach to winter travel that harkens back to Cree and Ojibwa trappers and early *coureurs de bois*. The Marrones discovered canvas tents, portable woodstoves, leather moccasins, wooden snowshoes, and slender, flexible toboggans. They found them to be the perfect accourtements for travelling the frozen lakes and portages of summertime canoe country.

We're here in Killarney to learn Dave and Kielyn's methods on a threeday introductory trip along the park's east side. We packed our coffinshaped plastic sleds at the park's main campground and skidded them by tumpline across George Lake—stunning in any season for its quartzite bluffs and wispy pine. As Dave promised, the glazed surface made hauling effortless. A minor challenge came on the short, twisty portage to Kakakise; then it was more smooth sailing to camp.

Now, six of us join Kielyn in pitching two mushroom-shaped canvas tents while Dave leads a group of axmen in gathering, cutting and splitting wood. Finally, two hours after arriving in camp, we lounge by candlelight in the larger tent, which is warmed to t-shirt temperatures by a glowing woodstove.

Winter travel has a way of bringing people together in work and in play. Setting up camp is a joint effort, just as we dine together and sleep

side by side like cordwood in the tents. This sense of community is challenged by a kilometre-long portage to Terry Lake on Day Two. The trail ascends 30 metres then twists through tortuous, knee-deep snow. Such a route would be impassable without teamwork. Pushing and pulling in threes and fours, we wrangle the toboggans up the rise and take turns breaking trail in the powder.

To the people who glide by on cross-country skis, glowing in Gore-Tex with their backpacks overloaded and dangling with survival gear, we must appear mad.

Mutiny nearly occurs when Dave disappears ahead to scout. But we soon realize he's packed a trail to our second campsite – a rock-rimmed, frozen swamp with dead-standing firewood scarcely arm's length from the tent sites. Dave informs us that this type of place – completely bypassed in the summer – is perfect for winter camping. Sure enough, we pitch camp in half the time.

The next morning, we face the predictable languor that comes at the end of a rewarding trip. We pack up slowly; in a few weeks, all signs of our passage will melt away. As we approach the access point at Carlyle Lake, our trip's end, we encounter another pair of backpack-wearing skiers. Today, our group no longer feels strange for our old-school toboggans and snowshoes. We look knowingly at one another in silent agreement that this is winter camping done right.



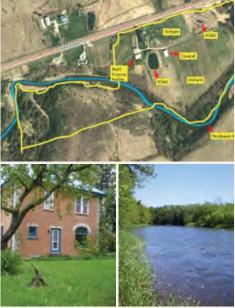


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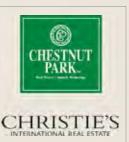


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THE GREAT ESCAPE





Northern Escape Heli-Skiing showcases the massive and pristine Skeena Mountains of BC's remote Northwest ^{By William Shelley}

Continued on page 46





Northern Escape Heli-Skiing's huge tenure feels like a continent unto itself. The 7,000-square-km (1.7-million-acre) mix of glaciers, alpine and steep tree skiing in the mighty Skeena Mountains of BC lies just south of the Alaska panhandle. The Skeenas are routinely pummelled by big snowstorms from the Gulf of Alaska low-pressure systems that form each winter, pumping down mega-metres of fluffy fun from heaven. The ski elevation temperatures average around -10C during winter – warm enough to keep the snowpack stable, cold enough to keep the powder dry.

The Skeenas are routinely pummelled by big snowstorms from the Gulf of Alaska low-pressure systems that form each winter, pumping down mega-metres of fluffy fun from heaven.

NEH President and General Manager John Forrest spent his late teens and early twenties working for several different mountain schools and

Continued on page 48 ►



Clockwise from top: NEH guides pick their lines. CHAD HAMILTON PHOTO. Another group ready for the deep. AARON WHITFIELD PHOTO. Chad Hamilton blisses out. AARON WHITFIELD PHOTO. The Ice Bar, fired up and ready for the wind-down. AARON WHITFIELD PHOTO.



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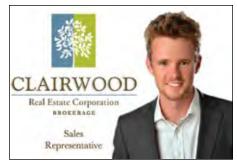
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guiding organizations, gaining the experience he needed to become a certified ACMG guide. He spent his holidays skiing and climbing in North and South America or Europe.

At 22 he and a friend started a snowcat skiing company in southern BC. Next winter, a pioneering heli-ski guide company in the southwest of the province hired John as an assistant guide. When legendary guide Herb Bluer quit over a controversy with management, they promoted Forrest to Operations Manager over many older and more experienced guides. About a decade later – after scouring BC for the best possible location – he discovered Terrace and the Skeenas. Forrest soon partnered with long-time ski buddies Teddy Allsopp and Benny Abruzzo and launched Northern Escape Heli-Skiing in 2004. Such a big and varied tenure is difficult to sum up in words. Runs often begin high in the alpine, featuring huge open glaciers, and end with really long descents through old growth forests to the valley floor. Snowfall averages between 30 and 40 metres annually.

One of NEH's go-to spots for experts has to be the First Nations Zone. This is a place for advanced skiers/boarders who have shown they are willing to ski respectfully – tuned into their surroundings, mountainaware, and loving the huge tumbling glaciers with their seemingly infinite variety. Being part of a good group on a bluebird day in a wild place like the First Nations zone is as good as it gets. Intermediate groups don't belong there – NEH has lots of other terrain that will challenge them to the limits of their abilities.



Clockwise from top left: Aaron Whitfield busts a cornice. CHAD HAMILTON PHOTO. Ted Allsopp eats white gold. NEH PHOTO. Hugh Jones takes in the view. CHAD HAMILTON PHOTO. Open bowl carving. NEH PHOTO.

DIY

Details about the NEH snowcat backup program and everything else: neheliski.com

Terrace is a two-hour flight from Vancouver International Airport. The lodges are located just a few minutes outside Terrace along the banks of the Skeena River.

Check **mountainlifemag.ca** in February when we will be covering Arc'Teryx extreme skier Chad Sayers' visit to Northern Escape Heli-Skiing.

Thanks to Hugh Jones and Clair Israelson for their assistance with this article.

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Out of the Ashes

After a house fire, this sleek contemporary design rose from the ruins

By Tamara Dawkins. Photos by Andrej Kopac.

On a dead-end road in Mulmur Township, there once stood a pleasant but unremarkable house – the sort you see in subdivisions all over North America, though this one stood on its own in a large lot. When it burned down due to a freak electrical accident when the owners were absent, all that remained was the concrete foundation.

Committed to the region and wanting to stay and rebuild, the owners decided to break completely from the standard design of the old house. They brought in young architect Steve Sopinka, Principal of Fieldesign, a Creemore design studio specializing in smaller-footprint modern homes and additions. Sopinka recognized a major asset in the thickly wooded 12-acre property set well back from the road. The mix of hardwoods and evergreens meant privacy in all seasons. He knew the owners wanted a low-profile house and he made sure his design would not overpower the natural elements inherent in the landscape.

Continued on page 52



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The one-storey home (with walk-out basement) is open to its surroundings, with big helpings of carefully oriented windows and glass doors, a large bi-level deck with generous overhangs for shade, and exposed structural steel beams. Drystacked guarried stone walls and patios provide conduits from the built space of the home into the natural space outside. The sleek contemporary style is apparent in the single-slope (shed-style) roof, made from Galvalume standing-seam metal. To break the monotony of one style of siding, Sopinka chose a hybrid of prefinished wood sections followed by corrugated metal cladding. Inside and out, the home maintains a palette of three main complementary elements: wood, stone, and metal.

The interior features European white oak engineered flooring, an Ontario reclaimed barnboard accent wall that hides a walk-in pantry, an unfinished cedar ceiling, and an oversized wood-burning fireplace with a chase cladded in cold-rolled steel.

Continued on page 54 ►









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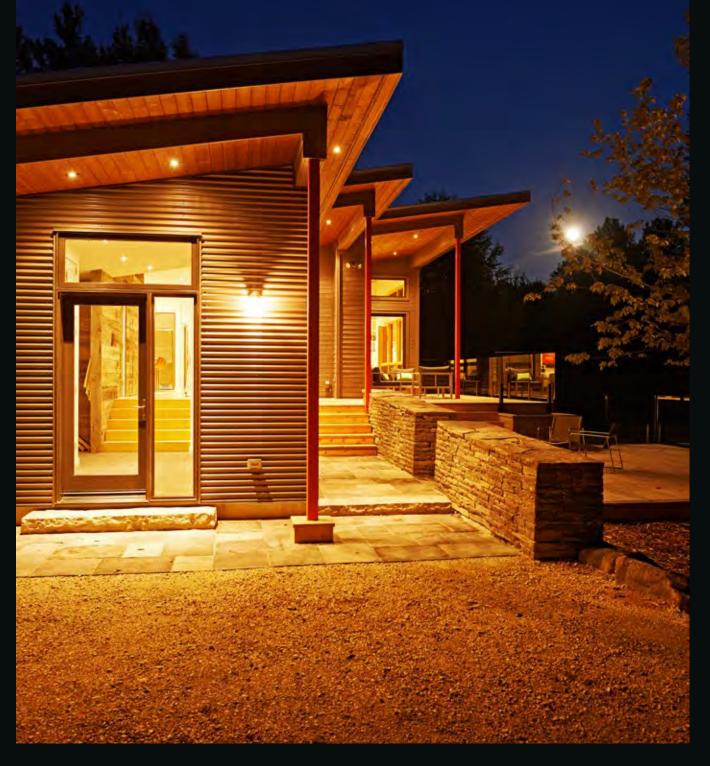


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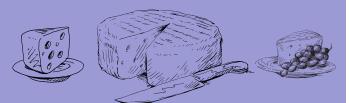
"Organic buildings are ... qualified by light, bred by native character to environment, married to the ground. " *Frank Lloyd Wright*



This is a remarkable home that exists harmoniously in its lot. In line with Sopinka's architectural vision of connecting people with environments, the design draws you into the surrounding landscape. It put us in mind of something American architect Frank Lloyd Wright wrote in *Two Lectures in Architecture* (1931): "Organic buildings are... qualified by light, bred by native character to environment, married to the ground."



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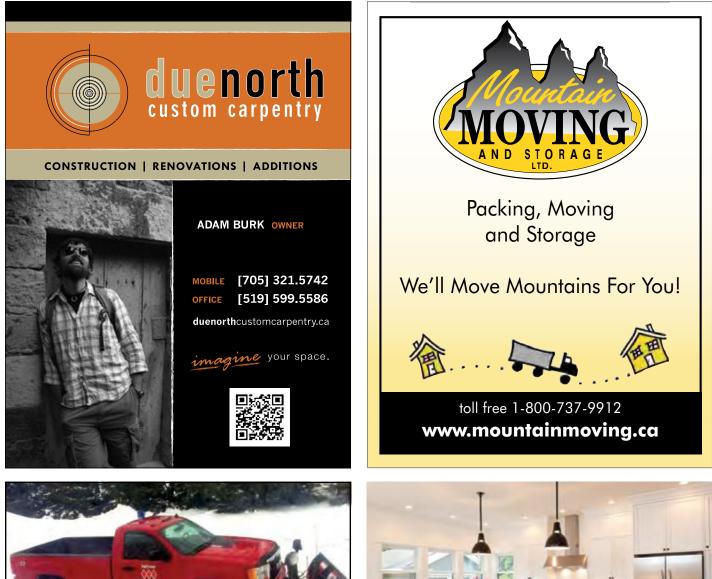
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RIVERS DEEP MOUNTAINS HIGH

At the confluence of the mighty Kicking Horse & Columbia Rivers – surrounded by three major mountain ranges – Golden, BC is the ultimate alpine town _{By Andrew Findlay}



I'm peering over the lip of yet another Kicking Horse Mountain Resort couloir, this one plunging into Feuz Bowl, along with Jean-Francois (JF) Plouffe, mountain guide, fitness trainer and perpetually optimistic Helly Hansen ambassador. It's frigid. The air is thankfully windless but the Rocky Mountains are entrenched in a high-pressure deep freeze with ambient daytime temperatures hovering at a less than balmy -30°C. I have migrated to Golden, BC with a half dozen other media types for a Helly Hansen-sponsored immersion in the ski culture of this mountain town. Kicking Horse needs no introduction as a skier's mountain, a resort with such an abundance of double-black terrain, with four alpine bowls ringed with countless chutes, that getting it open after heavy snowfalls is like a military operation.

The chopper soon alights on a windswept Purcell ridge, and with a nod from the pilot we tumble out into the bracing diamond-clear air.

Golden comes by its mountain cred honestly. In the late 1800s into the early 20th century, Swiss alpine guides settled here to ride the boom in mountain tourism that followed the completion of the transcontinental Canadian Pacific Railway. Rudi Gertsch came in a later wave of European

Grabbing the goods at Kicking Horse. TRENT BONA PHOTO.

guides. As a young Swiss immigrant, he guided for the late Hans Gmoser's pioneering Canadian Mountain Holidays, before opening his own outfit, Purcell Mountain Heliskiing out of Golden, one of the longest running heliskiing operations in BC. However, heliskiing is for another day.

Plouffe drops in, and I soon follow, setting an edge on firm but grippy snow, then jumping into the next turn, summoning some inner moxy for terrain that feels like 50 degrees but is likely no more than 40. Far below, I spot the half frozen braided channels of the Columbia River snaking northward. The angle eases into the bowl, now shaded to nose-freezing temps, and I open up into GS turns. Next ride up we regroup for elk burgers and a much needed reheat inside the summit Eagle's Eye Restaurant, before heading off to explore more of KHR's far-flung terrain, following a well packed snowy staircase to the top of T1. That night back at our palatial six-bedroom condo, Valhalla, Plouffe leads an après ski session of stretching and yoga.

"You should stretch more," Plouffe says, stating the obvious, as I struggle awkwardly with hip flexors as tightly wound as piano wire.

The session ends with beers in the hot tub. The next morning we pack the van excitedly for the across-valley trip to Gertsch's Purcell Heliskiing base on the eastern outskirts of Golden. Purcell is a family operation with the founding father and his son, 34-year-old Jeff, often guiding side by side.



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Clockwise from top left: Panorama with Eagle's Eye Restaurant at centre left. DAVE BEST PHOTO. Feuz Bowl. TRENT BONA PHOTO. Under the gondola, overlooking the Columbia River basin. ANDREW MIRABITO PHOTO.

"I still guide about 100 days a year," says the fit 69-year-old year old senior Gertsch while Jeff walks us through an avalanche beacon practice and safety briefing.

Soon we slide into the 212, and the whir of the helicopter's turbines fills our ears. I look at Plouffe – ear-to-ear grin. In minutes we're soaring across the Columbia Valley, and above KHR. Skiers on the runs far below look like black ants on a white hill. The chopper soon alights on a windswept Purcell ridge, and with a nod from the pilot we tumble out into the bracing diamond-clear air.

"Stay right of my tracks," Jeff says and is off, carving lazy tracks down a run called Beverly Hills.

One by one we follow our guide down the lee of this sparsely treed ridge. At first the snow is stiff and punchy from the wind, but gets lighter and more forgiving with every turn.

We gather at the landing spot and five minutes later the chopper arrives. So it goes. A half dozen, thousand-vertical-metre runs later and it's over far too soon as we soar back above the Columbia Valley to home base.

That evening, satiated from a day of Purcell powder, we commiserate over drinks and steaks at Whitetooth Mountain Bistro on Golden's quaint little main drag, which has changed a little since the time I spent time here years ago with a tree planting crew and got into a hippie-versus-local redneck brouhaha at a nearby hotel, called back then The Big Bend.

Back at the condo at KHR, a hot tub soak is in order before hitting the mattress. Tomorrow we'll have stretching and warm-up with Plouffe, then we'll get into exploring more of KHR's on-hill riches. This town was born because of the mountains and it truly is a skier's paradise.

DIY Flights from Toronto to Calgary depart daily: aircanada.com Kicking Horse Mountain Resort has a new Calgary Airport Connector – a shuttle service to and from Calgary International Airport (YYC): kickinghorseresort.com purcellheliskiing.com tourismgolden.com hellyhansen.com

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This Niagara Escarpment ski-touring route is all about carving your own way to the hard-earned riches of the Ontario backcounty By C.G. Fuego The Alps have the Haute Route^{*}, an intimidating pass through France and Switzerland. It's a 180-kilometre ski tour that takes seven days, from Chamonix to Zermatt. It was first done in 1911 by an English alpine club and has become the route to which every other route compares itself. It's one of the most famous ski tours in the world.

And for good reason. Overnighting in the mountains, in cabins, huts, and tiny villages, all the while enjoying kill-for cheeses, incredible wines, and the occasional blast of Euro-pop. Of course it all happens in French and Swiss-German which adds another certain *je ne sais quoi*.

How do I know all this? I don't. I didn't do a single shred of research to write this, nor have I done The Haute Route. I saw it once from a chairlift in Switzerland, but that's it. These are all the things I imagine it to be. By reputation. A wonderful stroll through the Alps, some skiing, some drinking, some relishing of the European way of life.

But I'm sure you have to work for it too. I'm sure there is some serious mountain terrain up there. You may need crampons and ropes to cross glaciers, you may need a guide and avy gear, I don't know. I know Chamonix has the reputation as a do-or-die kind of ski zone.

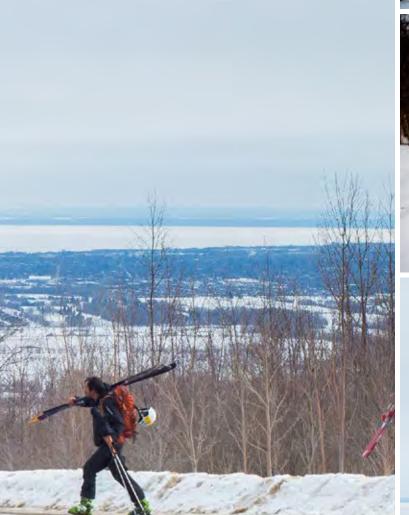
It's always true that when you work hard for something the rewards are magnified. So I would guess it's a potentially life-changing journey. Maybe not the latest and greatest, most fashionable place to go skiing (getting tired of Iceland and Greenland stories yet?), but a classic for sure. It's something I aspire to do in my lifetime. The Haute Route.

It's about the spirit of Ontario backcountry skiers; we're a silly, desperate bunch, but if there's a skiff of snow on that hill, we're skinning to the top to ski it.

But until that day, I'll settle for what some locals call The Faux Route. A budget trip in comparison, but gruelling just the same. There's no fine French wine, no need for crampons, and no stanky cheeses. There are no overnight huts, no need for avy gear, and no sanctioned route. But there are a few cans of Pilsner available. And 12-15 flasks. You'll get



Previous spread: A break at the top. KEN GARF PHOTO. This page: Crossing Scenic Caves Road is just one of many dangers on The Faux Route. C.G. FUEGO PHOTO.

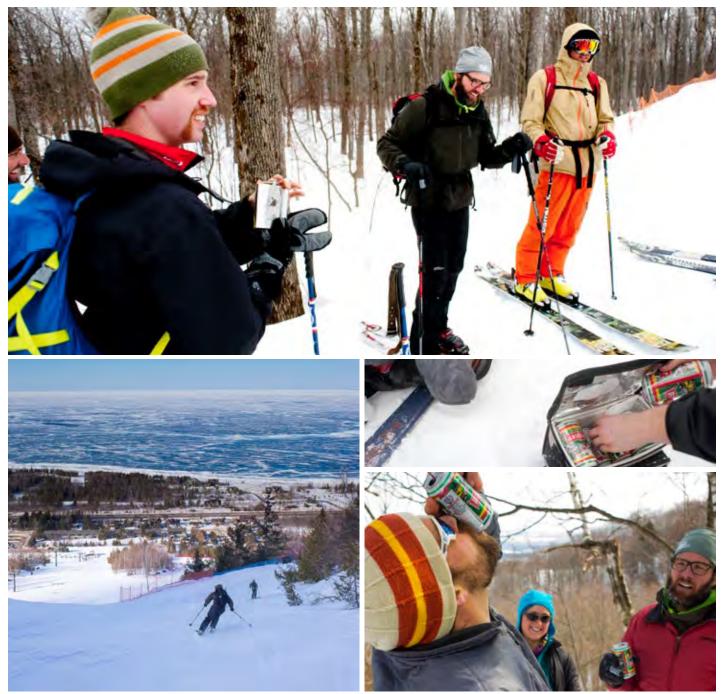








C.G. FUEGO PHOTO.



Clockwise from top: One of the 12-15 flasks; the pause that refreshes; Cannonball!; The final descent. C.G. FUEGO PHOTOS.

some blisters, risk being busted for trespassing, and probably get some core shots to your skis.

There are one or two restaurants and a few questionably decent turns on the way but there is also lots of up, and even more traversing. Which is why some other locals refer to it as The Traverse. Thirty-five kilometres from point to point.

Most of all, The Faux Route is about the camaraderie. It's about being open to a seriously physical ass-whupping. It's about setting out on an expedition in a place where we rarely expedition. It's about the spirit of Ontario backcountry skiers: we're a silly, desperate bunch, but if there's a skiff of snow on that hill, we're skinning to the top to ski it. And The Faux Route is the coming together of those willing to earn their turns. We all suffer, laugh, and trek together from sunup to sundown. And then, we celebrate.

I won't be doing The Haute Route in 2015. Money, time, and family commitments are my excuse this year. But you can bet I'll be skinning up the Escarpment one early morning with a bunch of like-minded individuals and a six-pack in my backpack.

* We covered The Haute Route in our Winter 2007 issue in a feature written and photographed by Don Bauer.

.....

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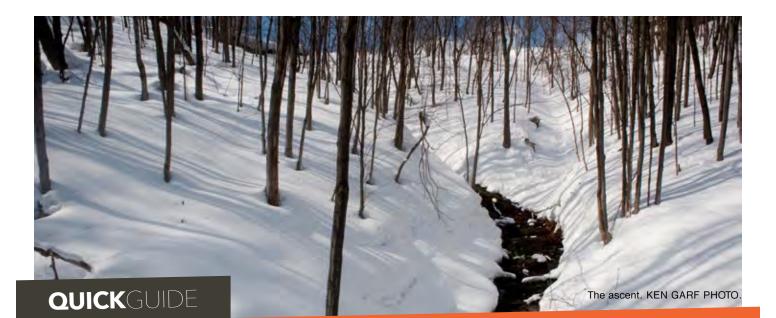


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BACKCOUNTRY SKIING

Nearly every ski brand is making touring gear these days and some of Ontario's retailers are actually stocking it. Which means people in Ontario are starting to embrace backcountry skiing. Or as someone recently coined it: backyard-skiing. What do you need to get into Ontario touring? Well, as long as you've got a cheery disposition, a willingness to work hard, a bit of stupidity, and the gear listed below you can get out there and start searching for bottomless turns.



(1,000 feet) near Sault Ste. Marie. Some have also skied Killarney's Silver Peak. There are a lot of options closer to home on the Escarpment, but you'll need permission to ski it if the land is privately owned.

Of course, looking for places to ski is half the adventure. Happy hunting. And when you find a place worth skiing, send me a private message. – C.G. Fuego

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them in your backpack and

drop in. Get to the bottom and

repeat.



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ONTARIO'S MASSIVE SNOWCROWN SKI & SNOWBOARD FESTIVAL THROUGH THE LENSES OF TWO ACE SHOOTERS

The Sony SnowCrown Ski & Snowboard Festival, now in its fourth year, brings big name athletes from all over the world to Blue Mountain's slopes. From March 13-22, Olympic-calibre winter action sports – including Slopestyle, Halfpipe, and Big Air in Freeski and Snowboard Disciplines – rule Ontario's biggest resort. Last year's event was televised in 90 countries on networks such as BBC and TSN and played host to 80,000 spectators and over 300 athletes.

Shooters Marc Landry and Richard Roth were there. Here's a selection of their finest.

snowcrown.ca

Women's Halfpipe finals at Blue Mountain. RICHARD ROTH PHOTO.

SOW

Grey County Winter Bucket List

Go Winter Caving at Metcalfe Rock Cross Country Ski and Apres Ski at Coffin Ridge View 7 Frozen Cascades by Snowshoe Enjoy Night Skiing at Blue Try Your Hand at Mushing a Team of Dogs Snowmobile the Fresh Powder in Grey Photograph the Radiant Festival of Northern Lights Drink Hot Cocoa and Sleigh Ride through the Snow Glide Across the Outdoor Rink at Cobble Beach Warm Up and Unwind at Scandinave Spa



www.visitgrey.ca

Two-time Dutch Olympian Dolf van der Wal soars to a third-place finish in Men's Halfpipe. RICHARD ROTH PHOTO.

"Perfect shooting conditions allowed for this signature Blue Mountain shot with bluebird sky over Georgian Bay. I shot much of the day at 400mm but got in tight at 70mm for max DoF on this one." MARC LANDRY PHOTO.

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Head Judge Marcello Centurione deliberating with the other judges at the snowboard slopestyle, SnowCrown '14. RICHARD ROTH PHOTO.



"I shot most of the night alongside the jump with a wide lens to showcase the takeoff and landing but eventually made my way behind the lip for a tighter composition, which worked out great for this shot." MARC LANDRY PHOTO.



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A hazardous journey across the ice in the open-water channel between Lake Huron and Georgian Bay nets photojournalistic gold

Words and photos by Scott Parent

Last winter Graham Thomas and I set out from Tobermory on foot, towing a sled loaded with safety gear, across the frozen waters of Fathom Five National Marine Park, to explore Flowerpot and Echo islands. We found the usual wild nature of the channel forebodingly still. We were bewildered to observe the tracks of animals having toured the remote islands, across waters that remain open most years.

I shot with a Konica Minolta Dynax 7D, mostly using a 17-35mm range lens. All shots were taken photojournalistic style aiming to hook images from a historic year that could not be reproduced.





Graham Thomas crossing a pressure ridge near Flowerpot Island. We sent the heavy guy first, only to find out a skidoo had bravely journeyed out before us.

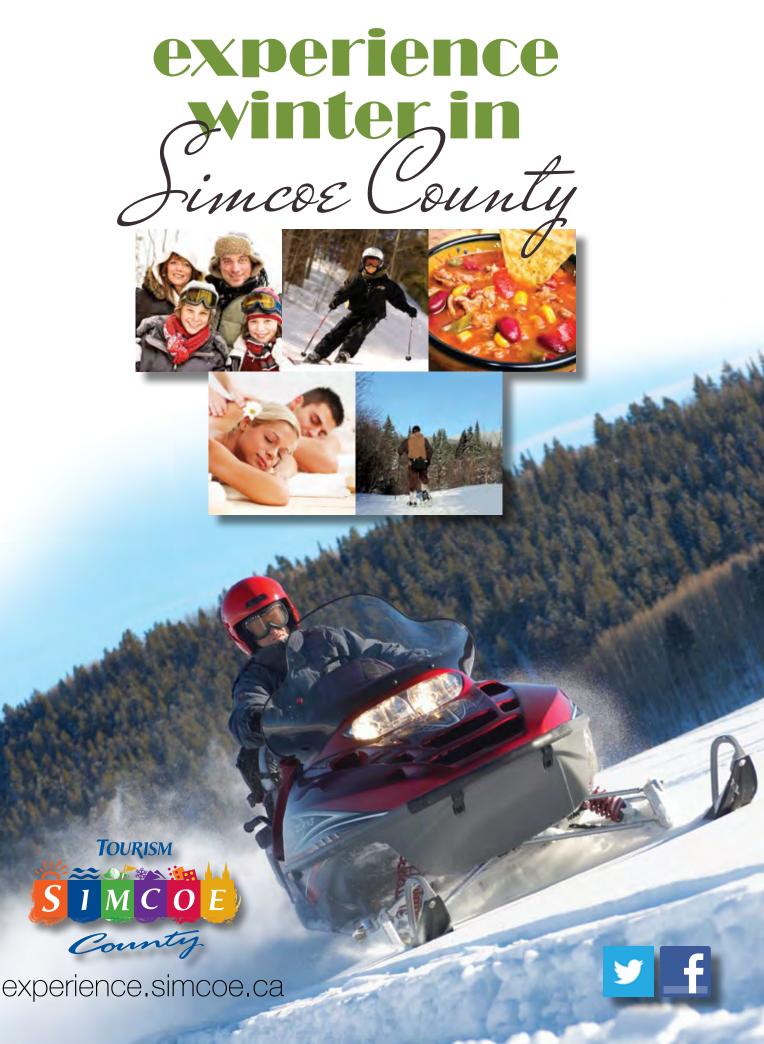
A surreal moment, standing on top of Fathom Five National Marine Park. We staged our lunch offshore, because we could! Graham Thomas takes it all in, at the heels of Flowerpot Island.







Approaching Flowerpot Island one cautious step at a time.



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PONDER PERFECT

We asked participating British Columbia resorts to pick one iconic photo to sum up the best of their terrain or guest experience. And then we asked each shooter to tell us about the inspiration behind the photo. Here's what they delivered.

Whitewater Ski Resort

Pushed up against the Rocky Mountains in the Southeastern corner of BC, the Kootenays are about the size of a small European country and the whole place is riddled with incredible mountains and pow out the wazoo. Whitewater gets enough snow to bury a four-storey house each and every winter. Whitewater is prominently featured in last year's hit ski film *Valhalla*.

PHOTOGRAPHER STEVE OGLE:

"This is patroller Orry Grant on a home-run at the end of one of his few days off, above the hill on a slope called Scob's Knob. I think it shows Whitewater at its strongest: a powdery paradise where touring and in-bounds skiing sort of blend together. Below the clouds, so-called real life awaits. Previously unpublished shot."





LEFT PAGE:

"My background is in newspapers, so most of my favourite shots happen naturally, when I see something out of the corner of my eye. Coming up the Comet Express lift I noticed the sundog hitting the Milky Way. When I reached the top I raced down half way looking for an angle. Lo and behold a ski instructor and two friends were taking a break 'at the right place at the right time." Tim Fitzgerald, photographer, Silver Star Resort.

A sundog. Fireworks. The Northern Lights. Not the sort of phenomena you see often in ski/snowboard photos. But along with the classic shots of powder carving supremacy that we never tire of, we wanted this photo-focused BC Resort Guide to reflect the unique and questing vision of each photographer. We hope you admire the views as much as we do.

This report was produced for Canada West Ski Areas Association (*www.cwsaa.org*) and Explore BC (*www.helloBC.com*) by Mountain Life Media. Bryan Grundmann, National Account Manager (*bryan@mountainlifemedia.ca*)





Apex Mountain Resort

Apex is one of the hidden gems among BC resorts. Located a 30-minute drive from Penticton, Apex is a chock-a-block with quality snow, great weather, incredible terrain, and friendly people. The heart of the Okanagan Valley gives Apex the perfect mix between large amounts of precipitation and low humidity that makes for the lightest champagne powder snow imaginable. Smiles stretch from ear to ear, as locals and visitors alike hoot and holler amongst the glades and open terrain, leaving clouds of pow in their wake.

PHOTOGRAPHER SHANDIA CORDINGLEY:

"I had just finished skiing down the Sun-bowl and James Shalman was coming down charging the fresh Okanagan powder with face shots on almost every turn. Picture a mid-week, bluebird day, not a person in sight – an untracked mountain playground. It's easy to lose yourself in the perfection of a waist-deep blower pow day."

> www.apexresort.com

Big White Ski Resort

Big White has huge elevation, impressive vertical, and specializes in dry champagne powder. This is the best family resort going: icetower climbing, mini-skidoos, a huge ice skating rink, tubing, Nordic skiing, horse-drawn sleighs, spas, dining and more. The nightskiing is excellent, too. The go-to zone on big snow days is the headwall above the Cliff Chair. Parachute bowl features a steep drop into big, beautiful, open terrain. The Gem Lake Express offers nice long cruising runs on a steeper fall-line and there are amazing glades out in the Sun Rype Bowl area. Best of all, Big White is easy to get to (direct flights to Kelowna from Toronto) but still 50-odd km away from the city so you get that sense of adventure and wilderness.

PHOTOGRAPHER ANDREW JAY:

"After three days of scouting the back side of Gem Lake, we found this tree loaded with snow on the top. There were a few issues -it was 20 feet high, and the run in that we had planned had a few trees in the way. In true Canadian style, we got out our axes and saws and proceeded to clear the run, which took two hours. The next issue was the height - we would have to build a jump big enough to launch Matt Galina over the tree. We spent a few more hours building the jump. Matt did a few test runs just to smooth the run in and get an idea for speed. We figured we would only get one shot at this, as the snow was very soft and would likely not hold out. This was the result."



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Fernie Alpine Resort

To skiers and boarders, the word Fernie conjures a single image: powder. Lots of it. Fortuitously situated at the juncture of two perpendicular valley systems (one running east/west, the other north/south) most passing storms are funneled directly into a collision course with the resort. When it pukes at Fernie – which it does a lot – it really pukes. Fernie has navigated a unique path, slowly and steadily expanding its terrain and infrastructure and today its 10 lifts service 1013 hectares of terrain. And the in-bounds skiing is just as spectacular as any hidden backcountry stash.

PHOTOGRAPHER ABBY DELL:

"Pow was piling up by the second, you could have gotten face shots on groomers this particular day, although that's not a rare concept for Fernie. Caleb Brown – a born-and-raised Fernie local and a freeski athlete for The North Face – and myself headed straight up to the Ski Patrol Hut to get info on the storm and to find out when a few desirable shooting areas were going to safely open up. While chatting, we overheard on the radio that Knott's Chutes – a freeride zone with wide spine features, small chutes and cliffs – had just opened up. Every time I shoot at Fernie I am blown away by the in-bounds terrain, and this was no exception. Getting this shot was a bit tricky with flat lighting and snow pouring in, but I do love the hint of a dark stormy sky lingering and of course Caleb's killer style as he slashes the spine."

> www.skifernie.com

Kicking Horse Nountain Resort

Offering the fourth-highest vertical in North America (only two metres less than Jackson Hole), Kicking Horse boasts some seriously challenging terrain and some very long runs (one ski-out is over 10km in length). On a clear day, the view from the Gondola Summit is worth the price of admission alone, with an unbroken vista stretching over five National Parks, the granite peaks of the Purcells, and the immense Rocky Mountain Trench. And when you finally pull your goggles on and point your tips downhill, remember: pace yourself. This resort is huge.

PHOTOGRAPHER TRENT BONA:

"The great thing about shooting at KHMR is that even in the middle of a high-pressure system you can still find really cool features still holding good snow. On this morning we were doing just that, hunting down the last stashes of the resort's inbound ridges. When I came across this powder-filled rock fin with the Eagle's Eye restaurant and the Dogtooth Range to the north of the resort boundary, I knew I wanted to capture it. Luckily Rob Dickinson was there to drop in and make a hard right turn for the camera before we got to ski a thousand feet of powder down to the groomer below."

> www.kickinghorseresort.com







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photo by: Steve Cuff





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Kimberley Alpine Resort

While kids will love the big, open runs of the front side, 80 percent of the terrain at Kimberley is intermediate or advanced, with plenty of sustained fall-line glory. Located close to the city centre, Kimberley Alpine Resort sits upon a former mine site at North Star Mountain. While just a four-hour drive from Calgary, KAR lies just beyond "casy getaway reach" and the slopes are generally deserted midweek, while weekend line-ups are never bad. If you are lucky enough to be in town when a storm hits, jump on the first chair and head straight to the backside.

PHOTOGRAPHER PAT BATES:

"This particular shot is of my buddy Dave Shipley skiing in one of our frequented spots in Kimberley. On this day we were up early and up high, well before sunrise. I passed on the skiing in order to photograph Dave coming down through what I knew would be cool shadows cast in the rising sun by the small alpine larch trees. Dave is unquestionably the most enthusiastic skier that I know. He is also a class-four cancer survivor. Dave's passion for skiing lies strongly in the backcountry but his skiing background also includes the uncommon combination of both racing and freestyle. Few people I've seen make it look as easy as Dave does, and nobody makes it look more fun."

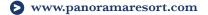
> www.skikimberley.com

Panorama Mountain Village

Pano boasts over 4,000 feet of vertical and a large percentage of terrain ranked beginner or intermediate. The new family-friendly Discovery Zone is focused on progression and is furnished with a new quad chairlift and carpet lift. The terrain has also been re-sculpted and equipped with state-of-the-art snowmaking. Which is not to say that expert carvers will be disappointed. The resort has hosted World Cup events, and the ambitious blackdiamond runs of Taynton Bowl (once part of a heli-ski tenure) are inbounds and avy-controlled – making Pano a resort for families of every ability.

PHOTOGRAPHER KARI MEDIG:

"One of the coolest things about shooting in Panorama is the epic view of the Purcell Mountains. To be honest, as a photographer, it's almost a case of sensory overload. One of the highest peaks in the Purcells is called Mount Nelson and looms right across the valley from the resort. I was actually trying to get an image that incorporated its aesthetic peak when I had the models ski down the run. When we came across this view that looks a little bit further northeast, I was struck by just how vast of an area of the range that can be seen from the resort. I had the models stop here, and made some images, knowing they'd be keepers."





Continued on page 99 ▶





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Revelstoke Mountain Resort

Long known for its epic heli and cat skiing, Revy upped the ante in 2007 when Revelstoke Mountain Resort expanded the existing ski hill way up into the alpine on the south side of Mount Mackenzie. All of a sudden a little railway town off the Trans Canada Highway suddenly boasted the highest in-bounds vertical in North America (1,713m/5,620 ft). When those inevitable big snow dumps arrive, Revy has plenty of gladed runs and the now-legendary North Bowl, an alpine to satisfy even the burliest pow rippers.

PHOTOGRAPHER BRUNO LONG:

"Sean and I had concocted this idea the day before to see if we could do some promotional shooting at the resort before it opened. This would allow us to get some unique images on ski runs that are very rarely, if ever, blanketed with deep untouched powder. As a former groomer at the resort, I used to groom this run almost every night and it is one of the mainstays on the grooming list. Having a chance to ski and shoot it without any tracks was a dream come true and as you can see, Sean nailed this turn in the perfect spot, getting trenched in the deepest snow. An unforgettable day."

> www.revelstokemountainresort.com

Silver Star Mountain Resort

Just under an hour's drive from Kelowna International Airport, Silver Star is another incredible family spot. They have the fastest/ steepest Tube Park in BC and the on-hill terrain is varied to suit everyone's needs. The front side offers four chairlifts worth of nice cruising, sweet tree lines between the runs and great beginner's terrain. The real action is out back where the Powder Gulch Express services steeper terrain with over 50 black and double-black diamond runs mixed in with blues and choose-your-ownadventure glades.

PHOTOGRAPHER TIM FITZGERALD:

"I had shot the fireworks from every angle in the village and was looking for a different perspective. I had patrol take me to the top of Attridge where I could capture the shot with a more unique angle highlighting our village and the homes that surround it. My favourite part was then sliding down the mountain to get back to the village."

> www.skisilverstar.com



Continued on page 100 ▶



Sun Peaks Resort

Sun Peaks is what you see from the magnificent vantage point of the hot tubs, condos, cafes and boutiques of the Ecosign-designed ski-in, ski-out village – plush, wide open blue-square groomers for the whole family. But Sun Peaks is also the vast and newly expanded terrain at Gil's and West Morrissey and tons of diversity across three mountains – gladed areas, moguls, steeps, alpine bowls, progressive park. The resort now boasts 4,270 acres of terrain, making it the second largest in Canada.

PHOTOGRAPHER ADAM STEIN:

"Sun Peaks was my home for over a decade and I have many signature spots that I return to shoot every winter. This shot came together on a perfect February afternoon while hiking for turns on Gil's, which is now within the ski area boundary. I was out with a few folks including an old friend of mine, Vincent. It was a pretty comical day dragging him through the deep snow for these shots – he wined and moaned the way only a well-seasoned Quebecois can while ascending... beaming with excitement at the bottom, in utter disbelief that he doesn't do it more often! The 'snow ghost' trees are iconic of the area and the snow in Gil's is some of the deepest around, so this shot really captures skiing at Sun Peaks."

> www.sunpeaksresort.com

Whistler Blackcomb

Beyond the unrivalled après and live music and party scenes, beyond the almost 100 top-drawer restaurants and bars, beyond the international vibe, beyond all the events and other outdoor activities, and beyond the guaranteed snowfall, the titanic complex of glaciers, alpine bowls, chutes, glades, leg-thrashing pistes and abundance of easily accessed out-of-bounds descents means you can always have a do-it-yourself adventure.

PHOTOGRAPHER DAVID MCCOLM:

"While in the Whistler alpine late one evening scoping out locations for the Whistler Blackcomb Alpine Photography Tours, I noted the aurora forecast looked quite promising As a result, I stayed in the alpine until nightfall and waited for a potential (and generally quite elusive) deep-sky light show. Fortunately I didn't have to wait long as shortly after sunset, this amazing light show began and lasted throughout the night! This photo of the aurora borealis dancing above Whistler & the Emerald Express chair on Whistler Mountain is a frame from one of a number of time lapses I shot that night – definitely a night to remember."

> www.whistlerblackcomb.com





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Nordic Nirvana, with your choice of groomer. PHOTO COURTESY TRAPP FAMILY LODGE.

A transcendent Vermont XC ski experience, von Trapp family style

By Dan Rubinstein

Ski in, ski out. Four magical words, usually reserved for the downhill set, conjuring images of slope-side hotels, al fresco hot tubs, and a sea of peaks, powder and pubs stretching to the horizon — everything you need for a storybook ski holiday. Even in eastern North America, alpine skiers could go dizzy from choice. But when you're crazy for cross-country and also crave après pleasure, options are limited. Which makes the Trapp Family Lodge that much more transcendent.

Perched on the side of a hill in Vermont's Green Mountains, overlooking the resort village of Stowe, the lodge is an XC skier's Shangri-La. On my first visit, a solo trip two years ago, I gleefully kicked and glided along the 2,500-acre property's 65 kilometres of groomed trails, which snake through the evergreen and hardwood forest that surround the hotel. Back for another stay with my wife and twin daughters, I was hoping to spark a similar state of bliss. That's not always easy with four people — especially when one of your kids is keen to cross-country, but the other has been bitten by the downhill bug.

Fortunately, the Trapp Family Lodge has a free shuttle to the Stowe Mountain Resort, 15 minutes up the road at the base of 1,340-metre Mount Mansfield, the highest summit in Vermont. With Daisy and her mom on their way to a hill with more than 100 runs, Maggie and I could begin burning off the pancakes, bacon, eggs and pastries we had gobbled up at the breakfast buffet. (OK, I was the one on a high-calorie diet; she went for yogurt and fruit.)

We set off from the lodge's outdoor centre, a few steps away from the hotel. Maggie, whose stamina has impressed me on the trails of Gatineau Park, across the river from our home in Ottawa, was game to get to the

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Trapp's Slayton Pasture Cabin for lunch. The off-the-grid log cabin, five kilometres from the trailhead, sells soups, sandwiches and hot drinks, or you can bring your own food and sit by the fire. I had our hiking specialty in my backpack – pita smeared with Nutella – to coax Maggie up the steep Parizo trail, a two-kilometre herringbone on the most direct route to the top. Stopping every few minutes to look at the snowmelt dripping off pine branches on a mild February morning, she didn't complain (much). When we reached the cabin, she settled into an easy chair while I fetched her a hot chocolate to wash down the chocolaty sandwich.

"How old is your daughter?" an older man at the next table asked.

"Nine."

"Impressive climb. I started bringing my daughter here when she was that age, and she ended up on the ski team in college."

"Hey, you never know."

"You try to introduce your children to a few different things," he said, "and maybe something sticks."

On our descent back to the lodge, Maggie managed the slopes and sharp turns with grace, swooshing down a pair of blue trails until we reached the rolling terrain below. Back in our room, we changed quickly and dashed across the parking lot to the fitness centre for a swim in the massive indoor pool and a soak in the 20-person outdoor hot tub. A misty rain started to fall, and fog tumbled down the ridges on the other side of the valley. Ahead of the downhill crowd, we had the place to ourselves.

In 1968, Johannes von Trapp, Maria's only son (yes, *that* Maria), opened the first commercial cross-country ski centre in North America.

This type of joy is what the von Trapp family had in mind when they opened the lodge in 1950. Yes, those von Trapps: the family that inspired *The Sound of Music*. They put down roots in Vermont after singing across America and wanted to create an Austrian-style alpine experience on this side of the Atlantic.

In 1968, Johannes von Trapp, Maria's only son (yes, *that* Maria), opened the first commercial cross-country ski centre in North America. Their original hotel burned down in 1980, but three years later the replacement lodge opened its doors.

The trail network has been expanded and improved over the decades. It links with 100 kilometres of backcountry routes, and with the Stowe Mountain Resort's own Nordic system. There is a brewery on the Trapp property now too, melding traditional Austrian lager with Vermont's thriving microbrewery scene. And in the candlelit dining room, schnitzel and spätzle are on the menu alongside contemporary fare.

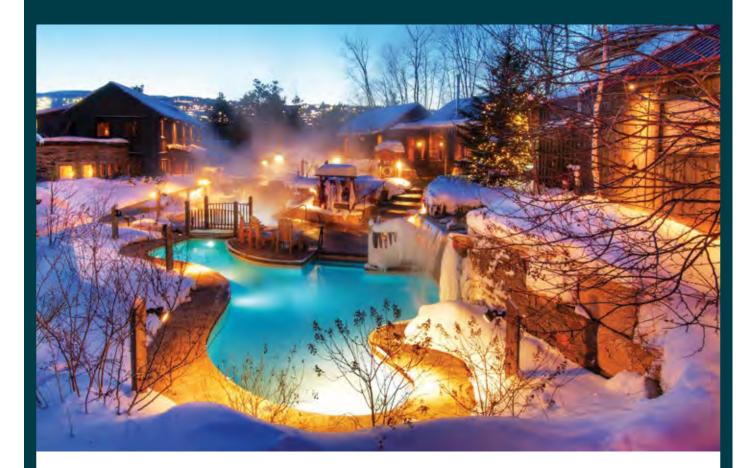
For me, though, it's about the skiing. After our day apart, Lisa and Daisy join Maggie and I on the XC trails the next morning. The girls race ahead in the crisp tracks as we finish waxing. Maybe some of this will stick.

DIY The Trapp Family Lodge (trappfamily.com) is a four-hour drive southeast of Ottawa. During the ski season, Porter Airlines (flyporter.com) flies direct from Toronto to Burlington, Vermont, a 45-minute drive from Stowe. The Stowe Mountain Resort (stowe.com) is one of the East's top alpine destinations.

TOP PHOTO: Horse power in the Green Mountains. BOTTOM: En route to the Slayton Pasture Cabin for pita and Nutella. PHOTOS COURTESY TRAPP FAMILY LODGE.



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Immune-Boosting Foods to Combat Cold and Flu

By Corynn Fowler

For many, dropping temperatures and falling snow herald the arrival of cold and flu season. Want to spend less time sitting around with the sniffles this winter and more time playing in the snow? Try incorporating these five immune-boosting foods into your diet.

Turmeric

Turmeric is a warm, bright yellow, earthy-tasting spice often used in curry. In addition to adding awesome flavour and colour to a meal, turmeric contains powerful anti-inflammatory compounds, as well as antioxidants and antiviral agents. This makes it a very effective immune booster and combatant of infections.

Add the dried powder to curry, soups, stews, and salad dressings for a deeper flavour. Start the day with a glass of hot lemonade spiced with

turmeric and ginger, or go to bed with a warming mug of sweetened turmeric milk for an extra dose of this fantastic herb.

Green and Herbal Teas

Green teas and herbal teas are the most beneficial drinks to sip throughout the flu season. Keeping your body's nervous system balanced is an important factor in strengthening your immune system. Green tea contains the compound L- Theanine which has been shown to relax the nervous system, while non-caffeinated herbal teas such as lemon verbena, tulsi, and chamomile benefit your immunity by calming your body and lowering your stress levels.

Try swapping your afternoon coffee for a cup of green tea instead. Finish the day with a mug of calming herbal tea like chamomile or lemon verbena to relax and get a better sleep.



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Garlic

This powerhouse of immune-boosting agents is an easy food to include in your everyday diet. It is full of detoxifying agent and also contains allicin, a compound known to be antibacterial, antiviral, and antifungal.

Chop it raw into a salad dressing, bruschetta mix, or puree it into homemade hummus and bean spreads. Sautéed garlic makes a great base for winter soup and stew recipes, while roasting whole heads of garlic makes for a delicious appetizer.

Mushrooms

Unlike regular white and button mushroom varieties, shitake and reishi mushrooms are considered medicinal as well as culinary ingredients due to their anti-inflammatory, anti-viral, and even anti-fungal properties. Reishi mushrooms contain polysaccharides believed to enhance the function of your immune cells, and can be used against both common colds and chronic diseases.

Incorporate mushrooms into your diet by sautéing them with carrots and celery as a soup base, boiling them in broth, or topping salad, pasta, or meat with a sautéed mushroom mix.

WARMING TURMERIC MILK

INGREDIENTS

- + 1 1/2 cups coconut milk, almond milk, or another dairy-free alternative
- + 2 1/2 3 tsp honey
- + 2 tbsp powdered turmeric (or 1 fresh turmeric root grated)
- + 4 cardamom pods
- + 4-5 black peppercorns (optional)

PREPARATION

Measure your milk into a small saucepan and heat on the stove over low heat. Add the turmeric, cardamom pods, and optional black peppercorns. Allow to heat over a low flame, stirring occasionally. When the milk is warm stir in the honey and allow it to heat for another few minutes until it is steaming hot. Strain the turmeric milk into a mug and enjoy it hot after dinner or before bed.

Fermented Foods

Kimchi, sauerkraut, and kombucha are all examples of fermented foods that have gone through the process of preservation in a solution that brings out beneficial enzymes, nutrients, and probiotics. Healthy gut flora is the basis of your immune system, and eating probiotic-rich, fermented food helps to replenish your gut's good bacteria while keeping harmful bacteria levels down.

Kombucha makes a refreshing treat to sip with your lunch at work, while kimchi and sauerkraut make ideal appetizers, side dishes, or toppings for a hearty winter meal.



CORYNN FOWLER PHOTOS



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WHO SAYS DADS CAN'T RIP?

Kevin Konings blasting at the DownLow, Mount St. Louis Moonstone. RICHARD ROTH PHOTO.

The snowboarding Konings brothers talk beginnings, accidents, fatherhood, and their best-ever day of riding

By Colin Field

If you've had anything to do with action sports in the Collingwood area, then you know at least one of the Konings brothers. They're like an institution up here. You've probably seen Kevin Konings on the podium at a snowboard competition. Or throwing his motocross sideways 25 feet in the air. And as the park groomer and build supervisor at Blue Mountain, you've seen Matt Konings while riding up the Century Express Chair. He's also no slouch on the snowboard. Nor on the BMX. And he regularly competes in both disciplines. Plus he builds the downhill mountain bike trails at Blue Mountain in the summer months.

Surprisingly, their passion for snowboarding developed in the most unlikely of places: Brampton. At the generously named Mount Chinguacousy. But regardless of the lone T-bar, or the vertical drop of (wait for it) 68 feet, it was that little lump of dirt that launched the Konings to where they are today.

Mountain Life: So you guys grew up in Brampton? Where did you ride?

Matt Konings: Chinguacousy. The cool thing about Chinguacousy was, it was our local little hill. Especially with Kevin being the older one, they let us design features for them. We rode there all the time. Then when Kevin was 18 and I was 16 we moved up here.

ML: You guys were riding BMX as well. Any other sports?

Kevin Konings: That was about it. We did a little bit of skateboarding and some in-line skating. Yeah, there were a few years of fruit-booting. I played soccer too. Goaltender.

ML: And you race motocross now, Kevin?

Kevin: I race MX occasionally. I ride at Cassidy's place mostly. I've been doing that for about eight years now. I rode DH (mountain bike) before that, then sold my DH, my XC mountain bike, and bought an MX. I've

never looked back. I haven't touched my BMX this year. Being a dad now, I need to limit my activities, so, it's not like I can come home, load up the bike and go ride like I used to.

ML: Why did you guys move up here?

Kevin: Our parents wanted to get out of the city and help the two of us pursue snowboarding. They felt there was something there, so that was a way to help us out. Not having to drive 1.5 hours to ride every day meant instead of going riding once a week, we were out four or five times a week.

Matt: It was kind of my choice to finish high school up here. Going to Jean Vanier [Catholic High School] and seeing everyone in snowboard gear was completely different from seeing everyone in Puma, Adidas, Kappa. I was like the outcast at my Brampton high school. Here, I fit in.

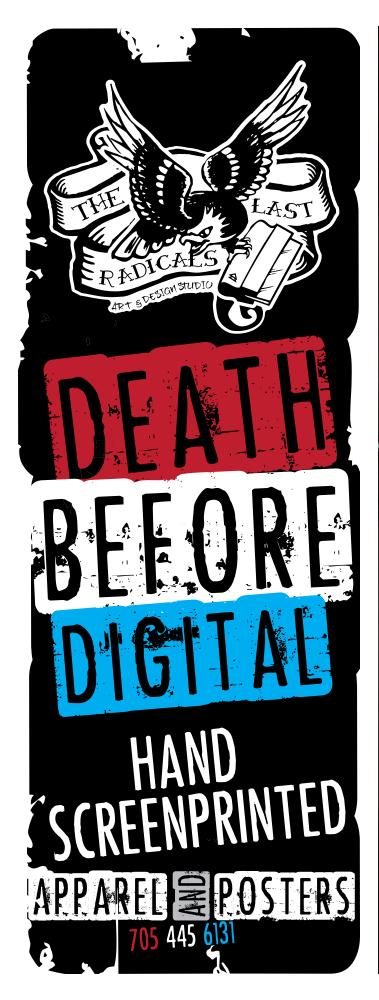
ML: And were you competing a lot?

Matt: I raced BMX till I was 15. That was the last year after I got number 1 in my category. Then dirt jumping and park riding came up. I was the youngest in the group of riders, but that always built my confidence. I was fine with getting last place as long as I didn't sandbag.

Kevin: I competed a lot. I still compete but not as much anymore. I'll be 34 this winter, so I still do big air events and still give the 18-year-olds a run for their money.

ML: You can still do that?

Kevin: I can, yeah. I'm lucky enough that when I ride, I feel like I'm 18. My age has nothing to do with it. The more your body is used to abuse and impact, the more your body can take it. Lucky for me, in the summer, the motocross bike is very physically demanding, then I jump straight to snowboarding.







ABOVE: Matt Konings toe-picking the Moto Park Ramp Barn. MAX WHARIN PHOTO. RIGHT: Matt Konings grabs the nose at Blue Mountain. COLIN FIELD PHOTO.

ML: How has growing up as brothers helped you?

Kevin: Matt was my guinea pig sometimes, you know? Why risk myself getting hurt, when he can go and get hurt first.

Matt: I think with us being so close in age, it's just like we feed off each other. At the end of the day, we're brothers, we're best friends, we can rely on each other when it comes down to it. Any sport we've done, we do together. There are days when Kevin's going dirt biking and he'll get a bike for me and he'll teach me through the track. He'll be like, "just stay in second gear all day, you'll have fun, don't worry about doing anything."

ML: Matt you're the number one guy at Blue these days?

Matt: Yeah, I'm the terrain park builder. The groomer. I'll be building all the features this winter. Which is super rad. Blue is finally seeing a lot of potential for what I can be doing and they're taking a chance on me to be able to do that. I build all the DH trails too. They can take my BMX logic and bring it to the DH trails. It was my first year riding a mountain bike and it was super fun. It's something different.

"They were like, 'Code red!' They called for a helicopter to land at Matt's house. The doctors told our parents he had a 50/50 chance of living."

ML: Are slams getting harder?

Kevin: No. Honestly, no.

Matt: No. Except for the one where I was knocked out for five days. I think that one was super bad for everybody. Nobody knew what the outcome would be.

Kevin: The next day, I was like, "Matt you're not well, I have to call 911." He resisted it, but the ambulance came and they were like, "how long has he been like this?" I said, "a day," and they were like, "Code red!" They basically called for a helicopter to land at his house.

He got to Toronto and the doctors told our parents he had a 50/50 chance of living.

Matt: I constantly wear my helmet now. If I had had a helmet at the time it still would've happened, but not nearly as severe. That happened on my BMX. We've all had our fair share of falls.

Kevin: Everyone keeps telling me the older I get the more pain I'm gonna feel, but I don't know when that's gonna come. I still feel great.

I feel lucky though. I've had so many dislocations on my shoulders, I've broken my wrists, torn ligaments, and then I see my doctor and he's like, "You're fit, your muscle mass is great you're staying active. Keep doing what you're doing."

Breaking my back was by far the most painful. I was going to the [World] Ski & Snowboard festival in Whistler and practicing for big air at Blue when I went for a cab 9, but corked in a way I wasn't expecting and compressed four of my vertebrae together. Man that was painful. But it healed up really well. It was basically a month of lying in bed.

ML: What was your best day of riding?

Matt: I would honestly say the best day of snowboarding was the day Kevin asked me to be his best man at his wedding. We had such a rad day. Kevin was helping me on a new spin, and he just rolled up on the deck and said, "July 4th. You're the best man." It took me a second. Then I was like, "Yeah, I'm your best man." It was my most epic day.

Kevin: We were younger doing a boardercross at Talisman [Resort]. Matt crashed and broke his collarbone and got taken away in an ambulance. I said, "don't worry, I got this," and I won the event. I got a stack full of prizes and gave them all to Matt at the end of the day.

Matt: Last year's Quiksilver DownLow [Super Slopestyle] was just a super key moment, Kevin having a newborn, a couple of days old. That day was just awesome because everyone knew Kevin just had a little baby boy, but he was out there still destroying it.

Kevin: It was my first contest as a dad, but I still won. At 33 years old. That was a pretty cool moment. There were photos after with the hashtag #whosaysdadscantrip. That was really cool.

ML: How is the DownLow?

Kevin: Best event in Ontario, by far. The owner lets Craig [Burley] do whatever he wants and he builds a big-ass superpark for the day for us and just lets us ride. It's always the best day of the year; sunny, five degrees, perfect big-air jumps. They shut the Outback [at Mount St. Louis Moonstone] down for a week and just plow the place. They plow the features, and it's like, "Here we go." It's a good time. Love it.

ML: Who are your sponsors?

Kevin: I ride for Oakley, Lib Technologies, Quiksilver, Blue Mountain, Fathom Boardshop, Celtek and Skullcandy.

Matt: I'm sponsored by Salomon Snowboards, Bonfire, Spy, Celtek, Skullcandy and Fathom Boardshop.

DIY ONLINE: For the full interview, check out the Konings Brothers on mountainlifemag.ca



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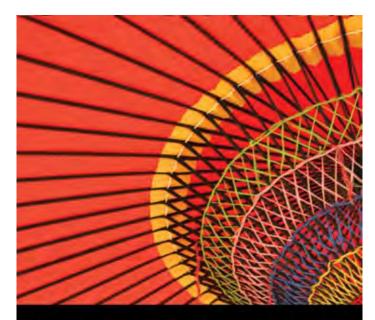
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Royal Majesty Espresso Bar Bakery in Blue Mountain Village serves up the finest espressos, lattes, loose-leaf organic teas and Belgian hot chocolate as well as fresh made soups, salads & sandwiches. Try their famous OOEY GOOEY cinnamon rolls or the perfect croissant, all baked fresh three times daily. **190 Jozo Weider Blvd, Blue Mountain Village** royalmajesty.ca 705.812.3476



THE MILL

Enjoy the quaint pub atmosphere as you overlook the Beaver River and the Thornbury Dam with its landmark fish ladder. Under new management of award-winning Chef Andrew Barber and his wife Sylvia (both formerly of Simplicity Bistro), The Mill features fresh local fare influenced by the seasons. Open six days a week at 11:30 am. Closed Tuesdays. \$1 corkage Wednesdays. Take-out and catering available. 12 Bridge St., Thornbury themillcafe.com

519.599.7866



THORNBURY BAKERY CAFÉ

Finally a fresh, moist bread that is not only gluten-, dairy- and egg-free, but delicious! Made fresh, from scratch with quinoa flour, chia seeds and coconut oil (among other things), it truly is a breakthrough in gluten-free bread. Order it on your favourite sandwich and then pick-up some loaves and buns to take home.

12 Bruce St. S, Thornbury thornburybakerycafe.com 519.599.3311



GEARGUIDE



WINTER GEAR GUIDE

CLIF BAR

It's the first bar they made, and it's still everything CLIF Bar is about: wholesome ingredients, sports nutrition, and great taste. Whether you're on a 150-km bike ride or exploring a new trail, this energy bar is built to sustain your adventure. Each bar is Nutrition Crafted to Perform. *clifbar.ca*





SWIX T77 ECONOMY WAXING IRON

The newly redesigned Swix T77 Economy iron is an essential in every ski or snowboard bag. The ergonomic body with a wider metal plate is perfect for waxing alpine and XC skis, and snowboards. The plate is angled on one side to allow for a smoother and faster glide across the base of the skis or snowboard. *swixsport.ca*

ROCKY MOUNTAIN BLIZZARD FAT BIKE

Rocky Mountain has created a true "mountain-bike-feeling" fat bike. With suspension-optimized design, agile trail bike geometry, and a truly capable parts spec, the Blizzard delivers RM ride quality on snow, sand, and anything else. RM added a shorter-than-average top tube to keep it nimble, and wide 4.7" tire clearance allows maximum float on soft terrain. *bikes.com*

The warmest piece in the Cerium hoody collection functions as a mid layer or

ARC'TERYX CERIUM SV WOMEN'S

DOWN HOODY

standalone piece in frigid conditions. Down Composite Mapping strategically places coreloft synthetic insulation in areas where moisture may build up. This is a streamlined, pro-level piece with extremely high warmth-to-weight ratio. Highly compressible. *arcteryx.com*



G3 EMPIRE 115 CARBON SKIS (\$949.95)

A ski fat enough for pow drift and versatile enough to rail on edge, the Empire 115 is a big mountain ripper's dream come true. Now 20% lighter, this might just be the lightest 115 on the planet, ready to climb as deep or far as you can take it. Pair them with G3's new ION alpine touring bindings and VIA Carbon lightweight adjustable poles. *genuineguidegear.com*

SUPER.NATURAL WOMEN'S COMBUSTION CLOUD JACKET

New to North America, super.natural's unique combos of engineered wicking fibers and Merino wool mean less moisture and sweat on the skin's surface, keeping you fresh and dry. Their poly-blended Merino wool dries 5x faster than 100% Merino. The mid-weight Women's Combustion Cloud Jacket offers high warmth-to-weight ratio and country-to-city versatility in cool weather. *sn-supernatural.com*



FJALLRAVEN KEB LOFT JACKET

The outer fabric is pliant polyester with G-1000 reinforcements at the hem, on the pocket openings and inside the front opening for extra durability where needed. The new synthetic G-Loft Supreme feels like down and has an exceptionally high insulating ability, even when damp. For touring in changeable weather, this jacket fits well under a shell and takes minimal space in a backpack. Fluorocarbon-free fabric impregnation. Women's and men's styles available. Regular fit. *fjallravencanada.com*







GUITAR LESSONS

Edmund Baxter Classical Guitarist • Pedagogue 519 538 3808 • fretpro@sympatico.ca



DESIGNED BY A CANADIAN GAL WHO LOVES THE CANADIAN OUTDOORS!

The Sooski Skirt and Tunic idea was born while snowshoeing up Georgian Peaks. It was a cold day and I started thinking about a piece of clothing that would keep us warm while being functional and fashionable. The result comes from my love of the outdoors, design and Canadian pride.

– Suzy Kirby-Mealey

MADE IN CANADA

416 569 6344 www.sooski.ca



ROSSIGNOL EXPERIENCE 88

With the heart of a high-performance carving machine and effortless freeride feel, the new Experience 88 features a rounder tip profile with Rossi's award-winning Air Tip technology, and longer, more progressive rocker for enhanced float and control, delivering elevated all-mountain performance across all terrain and conditions. Precision and power meets effortless float. The ultimate one-ski quiver. *rossignol.com/cg/ca*

CANADA GOOSE HYBRIDGE LITE HOODY

Weighing less than half a pound, this hoody is perfect as active wear, for layering, and for fast packing. The feather-light 10D outer fabric is fully abrasion resistant, while the quilt-through design to reduces pack size. Tensile-tech breathable inserts located at the sides and underarms for extended comfort and maximized fit. *canadagoose.com*





FISCHER RANGER PRO 13 VACUUM SKI BOOT

Fischer's Vacuum Fit molding technology has proven itself one of the most innovative boot-fitting technologies to ever hit the market. Now 18 models can be customized to any skier's lower leg and foot. The Ranger Pro 13 Vacuum is a 130 flex freeride boot with oversized velcro power straps for easy adjustments. The boot of choice for 2014 Olympic medalists Joss Christensen and David Wise. **fischersports.com**

BOGS TACOMA

INSULATED RAIN BOOT

both-worlds boot, offering equestrian flare and pull-on

practicality for the wettest

of weather. Insulated and

catching colours, it blends

fashion and function into a reliable classic you'll reach

for all season long. 100% Waterproof. Comfort rated to

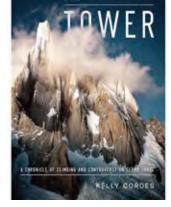
-15°C. bogsfootwear.ca

offered in a host of eye-

The Tacoma is a best-of-

KEEN REVEL II WINTER HIKING BOOT

Boasting true underfoot insulation, the Revel II features patent-pending Heat Trapolater insulation system – three (count 'em) innovative heat-trapping layers. It features 200g Keen. Warm insulation and a 4mm multi-directional lug outsole for unmatched performance. Other messy-winter-weather and snowshoefriendly features include: Keen.Dry waterproof breathable membrane, Shellback heel support, and stability shank for impact protection. Women's and men's styles. *keenfootwear.com*



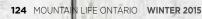


FUGOO TOUGH BLUETOOTH SPEAKER

The Fugoo is shockproof, snowproof, sandproof, and waterproof to three feet. Six drivers are positioned on all sides for 360-degree sound, and there is an integrated mic for speakerphone, Siri, Windows Phone, or Google Now. Crafted from fiber-reinforced resin and solid aluminum, this speaker is super-light, super-tough, and super-sounding. 40-hour battery life. Various mounting options. *fugoo.com, CDN orders: store.apple.com/ca*

THE TOWER: A CHRONICLE OF CLIMBING AND CONTROVERSY ON CERRO TORRE BY KELLY CORDES, PUBLISHED BY PATAGONIA BOOKS.

Considered by many the most beautiful and dramatic mountain in the world, Patagonia's Cerro Torre draws the finest alpinists from around the globe. Reinhold Messner called it "a shriek turned to stone." But controversy has swirled around Cerro Torre for decades. This chronicle of hubris, heroism, controversies and epic journeys offers a glimpse into the human condition. **patagonia.com/ca**





Rossignol available at Slalom Gate: Hwy 26 West of Collingwood at Peaks Road | +1 (519) 599 3244 | slalomgate.ca





MSR FLIGHT 3 ADJUSTABLE WINTER POLES

Engineered for ski mountaineering, splitboarding and snowshoeing, the Flight 3 poles feature ultralight, aircraft-grade aluminum construction, a pack-friendly three-section shaft and ergonomic grips for reliable performance and confidence on challenging terrain. Come spring, swap in MSR Tip Protectors for trekking. *Available at altitude-sports.com*



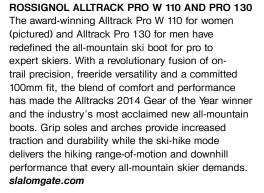
ARC'TERYX BETA AR GLOVES

An all-around insulated waterproof alpine glove with Gore-Tex Pro outer fabric to shed precip and an inner fleece liner. Ready for wind, snow or rock, the three-lobe pattern and micro-seam technology maps a three-dimensional shape for each digit and minimizes seams to deliver unparalleled dexterity. The minimized leather overlay protects palms and fingertips, reducing dry time without compromising on durability or warmth. *arcteryx.com*



MOUNTAIN HARDWEAR SUPER POWER JACKET

The ultimate in cold-weather running and crosstraining, the Super Power is a lightweight do-it-all jacket for those who don't stop when temps plunge. It boasts thermal-weight stretch fabric with a smooth face for durability and microfleece backing for warmth. Excellent moisture management, two zippered pockets, front and back reflectivity, and handy thumbloops. *mountainhardwear.com*





SMITH I/07 GOGGLES

Switching lenses on the new I/07s is easier than ever; with a single-pivot quick release, the lenses pop right out, ready for your yellow lenses on that flat-light day. And for those who don't switch lenses at all, these rimless goggles are helmet compatible and come with performance lenses and moisturereleasing technology. *smithoptics.com*

HEAD ABSOLUT JOY WOMEN'S SKI W/JOY 9 SLR BINDINGS

Constructed with ultra-strong and lightweight Graphene, the Absolut Joy is a super flexible and reactive frontside ski for Eastern slopes. Its lightness means you can ski long days on hard-packed terrain without tiring. It boasts Head's Women's Specific Rocker – the lower camber makes the ski easy to handle and control in just about any piste condition. *head.com*

HELLY HANSEN JR POWDER PARKA

Youngsters will handle chilly days in style in this PrimaLoft-insulated and windproof parka. Boss features include Durable Water Repellency treatment, breathability, SprayTech protection, detachable faux fur hood, and reflective details for safety. *hellyhansen.com*



lifted

Located mountainside at Blue Mountain Resort Eira - Burton - Spy - Rome - Electric - Salomon - Liberty 705.443.5801 | bluemountain.ca



ELAN AMPHIBIO 82 XTI The Amphibio 82 XTI is the right ski...and the left one too, with right and left ski design technology. Thanks to the revolutionary Amphibio Profile, these skis give you an unprecedented advantage of rocker and camber profiles on the same ski, making turns easier, while improving edge hold. Elan's renowned WaveFlex technology, RST sidewall, Force woodcore and extra layer

titanium reinforcement complete the package for versatility on all

terrain. elanskis.com



STORMTECH AFP-1 GRAVITY THERMAL JACKET

Stormtech Performance Apparel has been conquering extreme climates since 1977 with performance fabrics and features combined with excellent workmanship. This newly released 40g polyfill insulated hoody boasts a Durable Water-Resistant outer shell, quilted body with ultra-soft liner, adjustable hem, hand-warmer pockets, internal full-length storm flap, internal media port. Waterproof rating: 600mm. Breathability rating: 1000g/m2. *stormtech.ca*

BLIZZARD BRAHMA

This ski is a narrower (88mm waisted) version of the awardwinning Bonafide. The Brahma is an unbeatable choice for someone looking for a ski with a hard snow bias while maintaining great performance off-trail. Early rise tip, camber underfoot and an early rise tail combine with Flipcore construction and titinal to make this ski quick and responsive on groomers yet silky smooth through soft snow and variable conditions. *blizzardsports.com*

KOMBI PATROLLER GLOVE

When it comes to gloves you get what you pay for. And one -30C day with these gloves and you'll be thankful you spent a little more; filled with goose down, the Gore-Tex waterproof, breathable membrane has a Dura-nylon shell, with leather trim and palm. The Spandura thumb inset (for wiping a runny nose) and bell cuff with drawstring keep you warm and dry. The liner is made with wicking micro-polyester to fight stink. *kombicanada.com*

OUTDOOR RESEARCH PHOSPHOR MITTS

When space in your pack is at a premium, the lightweight, compressible Phosphor Mitts are your goto insulation for frigid environments and rapidly shifting weather. Made with a water-resistant and breathable two-layer Gore Windstopper fabric, these mitts are filled with blissfully warm 600-fill down. Water-resistant synthetic suede palms with a fleece backer add extra durability and protection to these weather-fighters. *Outdoorresearch.com*

PATAGONIA WOMEN'S RE-TOOL SNAP-T FLEECE PULLOVER

This friendly fleece will be the first thing you reach for every morning and the last to come off at night. Made of lightweight, deep-pile Polartec Thermal Pro polyester fleece (51% recycled) with extra-long fibers for warmth retention, this hip-length pullover features the classic Snap-T chest pocket with a ny

GIRO VAULT KIDS' HELMET

Slim fit. patagonia.com/ca

Sleek and skate-inspired with a brim to cut the glare, the Vault delivers style, safety and unsurpassed fit for fickle youngsters. Ergofriendly dial at the base of the helmet provides up to 6cm of adjustment and enhanced stability while the vertical tuning feature accommodates different goggles and head shapes. With hardshell construction and EPS foam liner, the Vault will keep them comf and protected from first chair pow to the final park lap. *giro.com*

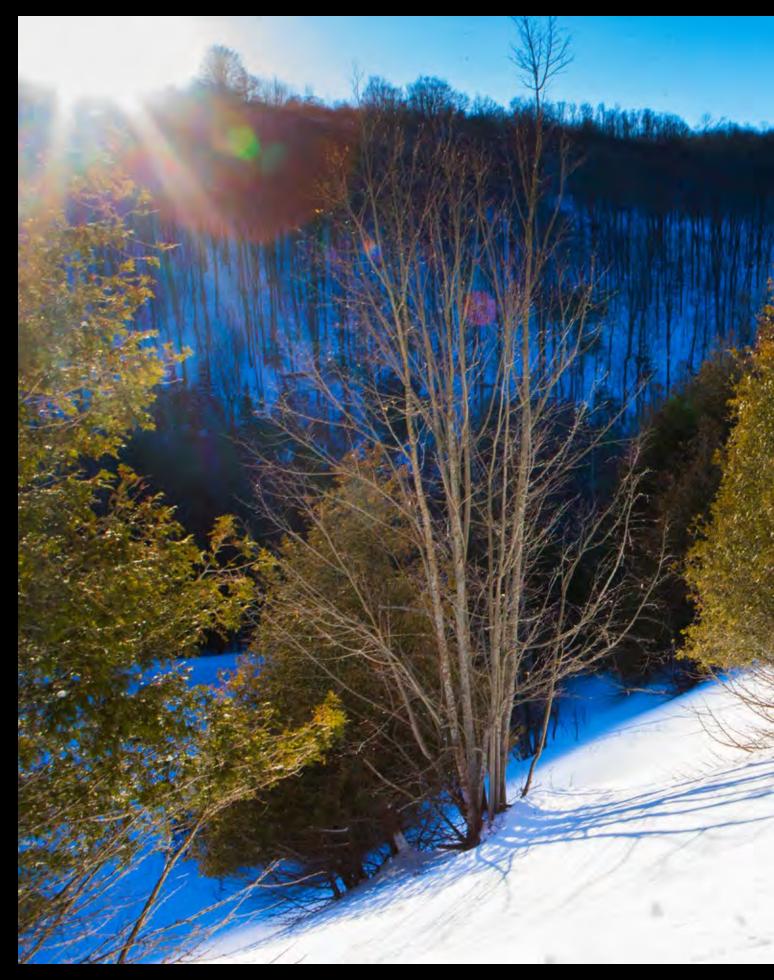






"Visitors to Indian Head Cove in Bruce Peninsula National Park last winter were rewarded with ice sculptures formed inside sea caves by the extreme cold weather that gripped Ontario. The caves are normally reached by water but with almost all of Georgian Bay frozen solid, hikers visited on foot. The last time the caves saw this much ice sculpturing was in 1993. I used a tripod and remote control for this self-portrait." WILLY WATERTON PHOTO.





Kyle Easby in the Beaver Valley. COLIN FIELD PHOTO.







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Had a few amazing days working with these gents from Level 1 this past winter. Super talented skiers. This spot is about 5 minutes from where I grew up and I've wanted to do something with this for the longest time. A few years ago there were no options but with the introduction of highspeed winches a lot has opened up. This is an image of Shay Lee 180 tail grabbing to flat from the second story. RICHARD ROTH PHOTO.

The only thing missing is you.

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LOCALPICKS



SPY Angler with Happy lens

The SPY Happy Lens is the first and only lens technology specifically designed to foster a positive uplift in mood and alertness by allowing mood-enhancing long-wave blue light rays into the eyes while offering 100% UV protection and Trident polarization. Frame made from virtually indestructible Grilamid.

Chelsea, spyoptic.com (available at mec.ca)





BC Link Communication System

The biggest variable in avalanche country is often within your own group: humans. The Backcountry Access (BCA) is a highperformance two-way VHF radio with remote Smart Mic designed for use in the high alpine – where group communication is absolutely crucial. (backcountryaccess.com)

Blundstone CSA Greenpatch

Blundstone worked with CSA authorities to craft a steel-toe boot that lives up to safety standards, as well as Blundstone standards for style, comfort, and durability. A lightweight, weatherproof work boot with Kevlar shank in the sole. Blundstone.ca

Brooks Range Ultimate Brisa

This jacket is all about protection and breathability. The body of the Ultimate Brisa is filled with Polartec Alpha, while Polartec Power Dry in the arms wicks moisture and is highly breathable. This jacket has the best of both worlds and can handle anything you throw at it.

Sarah, brooks-range.com (Available @ Valhalla Pure: vpo.ca)



OSBE Helmets

Made in Italy, OSBE Helmets are known for their technological superiority, innovative designs, top-rated safety features and overall quality, never mind their cool looks. Join the goggle-free revolution. Envy Eyewear is the exclusive Ontario retailer of OSBE helmets. Armand, Envy Eyewear, Blue Mountain Village (envyeyewear.com 705.445.3168, direct Toronto line 416.238.2743)



Early Rider Spherovelo

This unique toddler run bike is the perfect gift for the budding cyclist aged 10 months to 2 years. The giant spherical wheels with the stabilizers make for a super fun and safe ride. Kris, Kamikaze, Collingwood (kamikazebikes.com 705.446.1234)



Big Agnes McAlpin SL 5 Sleeping Bag

Even in the wettest of conditions, DownTek repels water while maintaining loft, insulation value, and breathability. Rated to -15C, the McAlpin lightweight mummy bag can serve all four seasons, especially if you have a winter-rated pad. Carl, Big Agnes (available at mec.ca)

Dubarry Longford Gore-Tex Lined Waterproof Leather Boot

Knee-high boot made from Dubarry of Ireland's DryFast-DrySoft leathers. Stylish double buckle detail combined with side panel beading add a sophisticated look to this functional boot. Waterproof and breathable Gore-Tex liner. Kelly and Kim, The Tack Shoppe, Collingwood (thetackshoppe.ca 705.445.4041)

Klippan Moose Blanket

This is a warm, dense and soft 100% wool blanket that will last for many years. A stunning design featuring Swedish master Bengt Lindberg's wonderful moose illustration. Kelly, Dags & Willow Fine Cheese, Collingwood (dagsandwillow.ca 705.444.9100)



Eddie Bauer Rainier Storm Shell Pants

Guide-built for superior performance in the worst weather, these lightweight alpine shell pants pack small for climbing, mountaineering, hiking, and backpacking. Three-layer Weatheredge Pro technology is seamsealed and waterproof/breathable. Katie, Eddie Bauer (eddiebauer.com 1.800.426.8020)

Olang Boots

This Italian winter boot with its famed pivoting grip is designed to increase traction on ice and snow. Olang has conquered the Canadian winter with its sole with swivelling/folding framework comprised of 20 studs with flow channel.

Pam and Karen, Stepping Out Shoes at Blue (bluemountain.ca/shopping 705.293.9300)



Mountain Hardwear Herralake Long-Sleeve Shirt

A lightweight wash-and-wear travel shirt that is as versatile as it is stylish. Cotton/poly/ lycra blend fabric makes it comfortable, and easy to care for. Wick.Q technology provides faster, drier moisture management.

Shannon, Mountain Hardwear (mountainhardwear.com 866.346.1588)

MEC Women's Waxwing Jacket

Fleece on the sides and arms of the new Waxwing allows for a great range of motion when you're skiing or running and disperses heat efficiently. Primaloft panels insulate your core and offer wind resistance. DWR finish gives you protection from light precip. Sarah, MEC (mec.ca 888.847.0770)

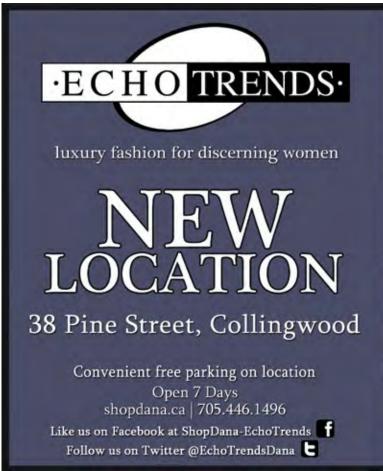
Cindy Goble Luxury Hand Knits

We love Cindy Goble's made-in-Canada specialty knit products that come in a huge array of colours. Exclusive to Echo Trends, the hats are new this winter season. Shawls also available. Echo Trends' new location is on Pine Street in downtown Collingwood. Dana, Echo Trends, 38 Pine Street, Collingwood (shopdana.ca 705.446.1496)



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WWW.BEAVERVALLEY.CA







Exped 9 DownMat

Nothing compresses better than down, and the DownMat 9 packs small and tight. The integrated pump makes inflation swift and simple. With toasty 700-fill-power goose down, this mat is designed to handle sub-zero temperatures but can be used all year long.

Benoît, Exped (exped.com 1.800.465.9637)

Lenz Heat Sock 1.0 + Lithium Pack

The Heat Sock boasts two tiny rechargeable battery packs (one for each foot) and temp settings you can control manually or via your Bluetooth-equipped smartphone. Made of thick nylon, poly, elastane, and merino blend. Charge will last 10-14 hrs at a toasty 42°C. Shane, Squire John's, Craigleith (squirejohns.com 1.800.303.1334)





Columbia Men's Karako Pass Gloves

Ultra-premium Pittards goatskin and sheepskin leathers on the palm and overlay make this a durable winter glove that keeps you dry, warm and protected. Inside, a one-two punch of Omni-Heat thermal reflective and cozy berber fleece ensures that hands and fingers stay warm throughout the day.

Shannon, Columbia (Columbia.com 800.622.6953)



Atomic Redster Double Deck 3.0 XT

An on-piste Escarpment charger with all the capabilities for a perfect Slalom turn on the steeps and the ultimate GS turn when you get your nerve and speed up halfway down. Features include a 15.5-metre radius, solid wood construction, enough metal to build a ship, and Atomic's Double Deck tech.

Jay, Atomic Canada (atomic.com)



Rossignol Megeve Boot

Rossignol celebrates nearly 100 years as a premium ski brand with its new 1907 Collection. With chic styling and high performance materials, the women's Megeve boot will keep you warm and dry while making a statement in the village. Fiberglass and rubber outsole with cleats for grip. Devin, Skiis & Biikes Collingwood (skiisandbiikes.com 705.445.9777)





Head Supershape Rally

Made with Head's World Cup Sandwich Construction, the Supershape Rally is very powerful and damp, especially at fast speeds. The camber underfoot provides you with rebound and edge-hold. If you want a slalom ski with the power for short turns, the Rally is the ski for you. Skip, Kenmark North, HWY 26, Craigleith (kenmarksnowsports.com 705.293.9322)



Oakley Airbrake Goggles (Team Canada Edition)

Not only does it have a wicked quick-change lens system, but you also get two of the best lenses you'll ever look through, guaranteed to have you covered on both the Greyest and Sunniest days you can imagine. Choose your favourite way to support our team with a variety of Olympic-themed Velcro patches. Kate, Lifted, Blue Mountain Village

(bluemountain.ca/shopping 705.443.5801)

My Pakage Weekday First Layer Men's Long Underwear

The Keyhole Comfort Pouch makes MyPakage the most comfortable men's underwear on earth. No need for your regular underwear underneath. Leslie and Scott, Evolution Him & Her, Thornbury (evolutionformen.ca 519.599.5013)



Got Your Snuffy?

Over the past 8 years these locally hand-knit toques have become a winter institution. Their nostalgic old-school vibe, vibrant colours and big 'ole pompoms make them sought after by young and old alike. For many of our customers, a new Snuffy hat tops their seasonal checklist. Exclusively in Ontario at Slalom Gate.

Tricia, Slalom Gate Ski Shop, Georgian Peaks Club (slalomgate.com 519.599.3244)



Hides in Hand Moose

This unique mitt features soft

moose suede leather, trimmed

with faux fur and native braid.

leather shell is hand-washable.

Liners are removable and

Handcrafted in Canada.

Thornbury (gaiaboutique.ca

Tarren, Gaia Boutique,

519.599.3040)

Suede Mitt

Merrell Polarand Boots

With a TPU-molded heel for snowshoe strap compatibility, the men's and women's Polarand are for hiking in cold conditions. This boot maps warmth and padding where you need it for comfort to push through icy and slushy trail conditions. Soft and hard lugs adapt to grip varied surfaces.

Joanne, Merrell Canada (merrell.com 888.463.7735)

Sooski Skirts and Tunics

I came up with my Sooski Skirt and Tunic designs a couple of years ago while I was snowshoeing. My butt was cold and I started thinking about a functional design that would look good. When I was growing up my Dad called me 'Soos'. I love to ski. My husband is from 'Soo' Ste. Marie: hence, SOOSKI came to fruition. Designed and made in Canada.

Suzy Kirby-Mealey (sooski.ca 416.569.6344)





Northwinds Pretty River Lagered Ale

This Kolsch style beer is strawcoloured with a noticeable hop presence. Fermented cool in comparison to most ales (then lagered at 0°C) this ale boasts a refined, delicate flavour. Collingwood's water profile is perfect for brewing this style. Geoff, Northwinds Brewhouse & Eatery, Collingwood (northwindsbrewhouse.com 705.888.3550)



Veba Ski & Snowboard Socks

Seamless toe, arch band, deep wide shaped heel, elasticised ankle and graduated compression on the calf. No migration on the plantar surface of the foot. The Olefin yarn wicks all the moisture from the foot. Veba socks provide perfect harmony with ski-boot liner and shell.

Available at Kenmark Snowsports, Kenmark North, Slalom Gate Ski SHop, Mount St. Louis Moonstone, Source for Sports London, Snow Valley, Horseshoe Valley, Hockley Valley, Little Ed's Collingwood & Midland, Hardwood Ski & Bike, Lifted at Blue Mountain, and Algonquin Outfitters.

Collingwood Brewery Vintage Ale

Brewed to celebrate the local hop harvest, this golden ale is brewed with Bighead organic hops from Meaford and wild honey from the Beaver Valley. Available exclusively at The Collingwood Brewery retail store. 750ml 6.9% ABV. Chris, The Collingwood Brewery (thecollingwoodbrewery.com 705.444.BEER)



MDXONE Kids' Training Backpack

Start them young and share your passion for snow! The MDXONE is a tether that combines a kids' backpack (MDX-Bpak) for your slope-student and a retractable leash (MDX-Leash) for the instructor. Sylvian, MDXONE (mdxone.com 844,319.3993)





Gaia

28 Bruce St S., Thornbury 519-599-3040



By Colin Field

The plan came together flawlessly. For some reason, photographer Richard Roth wanted to go canoeing in the Beaver River. In December. On a -18° C day. And somehow he managed to wrangle together a few other suckers to make it happen. Northwinds Skis athlete Greg Sturch and the adventurous Nads (I don't know her real name...) were down, plus myself. Although Nads did look a little sceptical at times. Which was totally justifiable. I was too.

We scoped the pull-out at Slabtown before going upstream and fully committing. And once we'd chipped away a bit of ice, we were confident we had a place to get out of the boats when we arrived. Yeah, it was a fairly steep riverbank, but if we took our time and were careful, we'd be fine. The other choice was going over the Slabtown Dam. Which wasn't much of an option. Nor was dumping the boat here. The temperatures, the current, the ice over the river downstream, were all not to be messed with. I wouldn't have walked on the ice downstream, but it didn't mean I was ready to swim under it.

We put in upstream at Heathcote. It's a classic Free Spirit Tours river trip; takes an hour, is great for kids and a total blast. But in this weather, it felt, not gonna lie, a bit dangerous. Stepping one foot into the stern of the canoe while the other pushed off the riverbank felt like a foolish commitment. After that, it just felt like canoeing. On a gently flowing river. Easy.

As we drifted downstream, we high-fived and celebrated our success. Richard and I were in the same boat shooting photos. Thousands of photos. Thousands of photos which are all pretty much exactly the same. We floated through sections of water with a top layer of slush. And we laughed at how awesome we were. Then we saw the river ice over ahead. I quietly panicked wondering what happens when the current pushes you onto ice. Do you tip? Do you get stuck on top? Does the ice break all around you until you're stuck? Does the current push you under? I realized I didn't care to know the answer when, at the last moment, a narrow, fast-flowing, parabolic channel revealed itself. So we shot it. It was pretty easy, but it was a moment where I questioned the whole misguided shenanigan.

After a few meandering kilometres and some uneventful but lovely 'winter canoeing,' we loaded our camera gear into the other boat, just in case disaster struck. Then we headed in to our final port of call.

I'm sure I remember saying, "Take your time man, take your time, we'll do this slowly, it'll be easy."

And I had a plan. My plan was to eddy into the break in the ice, nose up to the riverbank and hold us there while Richard carefully stood on the bank and got out of the boat. But before I had a chance to eddy into the riverbank, Richard had one foot out of the boat and was jumping for it. Instinctively I white-knuckled the gunnels and held on, prepared to go swimming. I swear on all that is holy, that boat came to within a millimetre of flooding on the upstream gunnel. It was terrifying.

Technically, Richard's head did submerge completely.

Now I have no idea how much canoeing experience Roth has. Maybe tons. I can say that his exit that day wasn't good. He'll claim he did everything in his power not to dump me as well, and for the most part, I think he did. And I really, really appreciate that.

Technically, Richard's head did submerge completely. But the amount of time it took for his head to be fully underwater until he was on the riverbank six feet from the river's edge was miniscule. A fraction of an instant. If you blinked slowly you would have missed it. It was incredible. And it was, without a doubt, hilarious. But watching the way Richard responded was awesome. He took it like a man. He laughed. He wringed out his toque put it back on and started getting us on shore. He pulled the boats out of the water hiked quickly to his car, got in, cranked the heat and demanded some hot tea from his thermos. We obliged happily.

He was probably at Rusty's later that night with one more hilarious story to share. For a guy with an encyclopedia of funny stories .

Of course now we're in competition trying to sell these photos (to all the same clients), and you know what? Turns out, no one really needs 'winter canoeing' photos. It just isn't a *thing*. No one has ever needed winter canoeing photos and no one ever will.

The trip wasn't a bust. It was a great day on the river that reminded me how much I love being out in zee wilderness.

Next time you have some shenanigans planned, Richard, give me shout. I'm in. I'll just be sure to get in the *other* boat next time.

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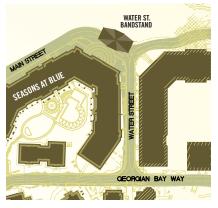
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