**Whistler Blackcomb**

**Categories**

**Good For**

Beginners

Intermediates

Experts

Snowboarders

Families

Non-skiers

Après ski

Summer skiing

Snow reliability

Environmental awareness

**Data**

**Beginner Runs**

34

**Intermediate Runs**

110

**Advanced Runs**

56

**Total Runs**

200

**Lifts**

37

**Chairs**

18

**Drags**

15

**Gondola Cable Cars**

4

**Parks**

5

**Pipes**

1

**Weather**

**Annual Snowfall**

(11.74m 38.5 ft)

**Overview**

Whistler Blackcomb ski resort is consistently ranked the number one resort in North America, and it's easy to see why.

Whistler has the largest skiable area and the second-biggest lift-served vertical drop on the continent, topped-off with an enviable snow record. In addition, an eclectic mix of 5-star hotels and budget hostels grace the pedestrianised base at the foot of the slopes, attracting more than two million visitors each winter from all walks of life. The resort is also equally popular in the summer months, helping to build a year round community that distinguish it favourably from the purpose-built resorts dotted throughout Europe.

The skiing here is spread over two mountains: Whistler and Blackcomb, and there are three neatly arranged pedestrianised bases: the Upper Village (at Blackcomb), Whistler Village and Creekside.

Along with Vancouver, Whistler was host to the 2010 Winter Olympics and unveiled a new hydroelectric power plant in the same year. It now generates more than enough green electricity to meet the resort’s entire needs, with any surplus sold back to the grid.

**Location**

Whistler Blackcomb is situated in the Coast Mountains in Canada's westernmost province, British Columbia. The resort is 125km (78 miles) north of Vancouver, just outside Garibaldi Provincial Park.

**Website**

http://www.whistlerblackcomb.com

http://www.whistler.com

**Piste Map**

http://www.whistler.com/skiing/trail-maps/

**Hit The Slopes**

Whistler Mountain has the edge over Blackcomb when it comes to beginners' terrain. There's a good learners' area under the Olympic chairlift by the gondola mid-station, while higher up, the Emerald Express chairlift serves a nice range of wide, green runs.

Intermediates have an enormous choice of cruisy tree-lined runs and more challenging powder bowls (55% of the ski area falls into this middle classification). The tree skiing is out of this world too: there are a number of marked gladed trails and plenty of widely spaced trees between runs.

Meanwhile, more than a quarter of the terrain is graded advanced/expert. Several heart-stopping drop-ins lead to steep chutes, bowls and mogul fields. And don't miss Blackcomb's impressive Couloir Extreme.

Freestyle skiers and snowboarders will delight in the five terrain parks in the resort that are spread between the mountains. These cater for all levels, so everyone can have a go.

Whistler has an efficient, modern lift system; although queues at popular lifts tend to build up quickly over holiday periods.

The two mountains are connected at altitude by the remarkable Peak 2 Peak gondola, which travels 4.4km (2.7 miles) in 11 minutes, carrying passengers up to 436m (1,430ft) above the valley floor. This is a world record for the highest point above the ground that a passenger lift travels. For the full effect, some cabins have glass floors enabling passengers to look straight down.

The main ski season in Whistler Blackcomb runs from November to June (only one mountain usually remains open from the end of April), with summer glacier skiing on Blackcomb from late June until the end of July.

**Whistler Blackcomb**

**Resort**

675

**Base**

653

**Top**

2284

**General**

**Beyond The Slopes**

Whistler has a veritable A to Z of off-slope activities, from aerial sightseeing to zip lining. The latter, run by Ziptrek Ecotours (tel: +1 604 935 0001; [www.ziptrek.com/whistler-canada](http://www.ziptrek.com/whistler-canada)), involves criss-crossing Fitzsimmons Creek (which can be seen below from the glass-floored Peak 2 Peak gondola cabins) via a series of suspended cables. Other options in and around the village include bobsleigh, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing in Whistler Olympic Park, spa treatments and a cinema.

For some cultural immersion, head to the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre (tel: +1 866 441 7522), a museum that provides a fascinating insight into Canada's indigenous population.

**Family Fun**

The resort’s ski school puts on five-day adventure camps (or ‘ride tribe' camps for teenagers) where kids ski or ride with the same instructor and group each day. Lessons are also offered to children aged three to 18, with a maximum class size of four children on a four-day course.

Easy runs for little skiers include Pony Trail and Bear Cub on Whistler, which meet at the incredible Tree Fort adventure area. The Easy Out run on Blackcomb – which passes the Children's Adventure Park (complete with a castle to explore) – is also a popular route.

There's a fun tube park near Blackcomb's base, while other activities include sleigh rides, ice skating and swimming in the resort’s sports centre.

Childcare (tel: +1 800 766 0449) is available from the resort for children aged 18 months to four years. Other childcare providers include Babysitting Whistler (tel: +1 604 902 2229; [www.babysittingwhistler.com](http://www.babysittingwhistler.com/)) and Nannies on Call (tel: +1 403 351 0180; [www.nanniesoncall.com](http://www.nanniesoncall.com/)).

**Retail Therapy**

Shops selling everything from high-street fashion to stuffed moose line the pedestrianised streets of Whistler Village, with a handful of other retailers located in the redeveloped Creekside area.

Popular Canadian clothing shop Roots (4245 Village Stroll) is a great place to buy branded casual wear. In the Upper Village, the Fairmont Chateau Whistler Hotel (4599 Chateau Boulevard) has an arcade hosting upmarket boutiques.

Unsurprisingly, there's no shortage of ski shops in Whistler Blackcomb, which stock the latest ski gear. Showcase Snowboards (4340 Sundial Cresent) has all the top brands and houses the Burton Women's Store.

**Splashing Out**

Head to a remote backcountry log cabin for a fondue dinner with Blackcomb Snowmobile (tel: +1 604 932 8484; [www.blackcombsnowmobile.com](http://www.blackcombsnowmobile.com/)), which has offices in the Fairmont Chateau Whistler and Hilton Whistler Resort. To reach the cabin, drive a snowmobile or travel in the luxury snowcat, complete with a flat screen TV, DVD and games console.

**Apres Ski**

Whistler is definitely one of the livelier resorts in North America.

If you’re looking for a good atmosphere, Tapley’s Neighbourhood Pub (tel: +1 604 932 4011; [www.gibbonshospitality.com/tapleys](http://www.gibbonshospitality.com/tapleys)) is one of the most loved, thanks to its welcoming staff and good beer selection. While Merlin's at the Blackcomb Day Lodge (tel: +1 604 938 7707) and Dusty's (tel: +1 604 905 2171) at the foot of the Creekside gondola are other animated venues that host regular live music.

There are several clubs. The free *Pique News Magazine* and [the](http://the) resort’s website list all the best deals, latest news and upcoming gigs.

**Eating Out**

With a mammoth selection of nearly 200 restaurants to choose from, ranging from large canteen-style eateries to tiny huts specialising in soups, diners are spoilt for choice at Whistler Blackcomb resort.

Among the most highly recommended venues are the Cafe & Oyster Bar at the Rimrock Hotel (tel: +1 604 932 5565; [www.rimrockcafe.com](http://www.rimrockcafe.com)), which somewhat predictably specialises in shellfish, and Elements Urban Tapas in the Summit Lodge & Spa (tel: +1 604 932 5569), which has been trading for over a decade and remains a local favourite.

For a sweet treat, the Purebread Bakery (tel: +1 604 938 3013; [www.purebread.ca](http://www.purebread.ca)) sells creative baked goods including a brioche-donut hybrid that’s filled with lemon or strawberry cream.

**Transport**

**Getting There**

Nearest airport: Vancouver International Airport (YVR).

Distance to resort: 140km (87 miles).

Driving time: 2 hours 15 minutes.

**Getting Around**

Pedestrianised Whistler Village is easy to explore on foot. A scenic route is the Valley Trail, a 30km (19-mile) footpath/cycling track that connects the main village with several other neighbourhoods.

There is a shuttle providing a free bus service around the village centre. Some hotels also offer shuttle transport to the lift base. Public buses travel to Creekside (which has direct access to the slopes) and the outer areas.

**Hotels**

There is a wide range of hotels in Whistler, including top-end options, rental apartments (some with ski-in/ski-out facilities) and luxury lodges with private hot tubs and saunas.

**Nita Lake Lodge**

A boutique hotel widely regarded as one of the best in town, the Nita Lake Lodge is located in the quieter area of the original Whistler Village with a free shuttle service to resort centre. The hotel offers large and comfortable suites and houses a wonderful restaurant.

**Category**

Luxury

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

XXX

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

XXX

**Telephone**

http://www.nitalakelodge.com/

**Website**

With a range of rooms from basic twins to luxury suites, the Summit Lodge and Spa is a good choice at the southern end of the lower village. Facilities here include a pool, hot tub and sauna and reputable on-site restaurant that can provide vegan and gluten free options.