



  
**CALLAGHAN  
 COUNTRY**  
*Routes of wilderness*

## *BACKCOUNTRY-SKIING*



Backcountry skiing, also known as alpine ski (or snowboard) touring, ski hiking, backcountry touring, or randonnée skiing, is the purest form of skiing. Unlike the mechanized approach, backcountry skiing is as much about “earning the turns” as it is about the turns themselves. The tranquility, great physical exercise and exhilaration of backcountry skiing connects you with the natural world in an incredibly profound way.

### **Backcountry Skiing & Boarding Equipment:**

Backcountry skiing and boarding equipment allows the skier/boarder to hike uphill. Skiers can choose between telemark skis (with a free heel binding) or alpine touring skis with specialized bindings (AT gear) that enable the ski boot to pivot at the toe when climbing but can be locked down for skiing. Either way, to go uphill, skiers attach climbing skins to the bottom of the skis. The climbing skins allow the skier to walk up the mountain without sliding backwards. At the top of the slope, the skier removes the skins, locks the bindings’ heel down (AT skiers) and then skis downhill just as they would had they stepped off a ski lift or out of a helicopter.



Snowboarders can either hike uphill using snowshoes or they can choose to use a "split board." A split board is a specialized snowboard that can split in two, forming two “skis.” It comes with bindings that can be remounted so the user can walk uphill once climbing skins are attached. At the top, the skins are removed, the two halves are re-attached, the bindings are reset, and the boarder is free to rip up the slope.

Skiers and boarders visiting Callaghan Country must supply their own ski / snowboard touring and safety equipment (avalanche transceiver, probe, shovel). We can recommend rental outfitters on request. Please make sure that your equipment fits, works and is in good condition before your arrival. Don't forget spare batteries for your avalanche transceiver.

### **Ability Requirements:**

To be enjoyed to the fullest, backcountry skiers must be of intermediate skiing ability or better, in good physical condition, and capable of handling the challenges of ascending and descending in a variety of snow conditions.

### **Personal Responsibility & Release of Liability:**

Backcountry skiing is not without risk; by its very definition, it takes place in uncontrolled environments. Reliable prediction of factors such as weather, snow and terrain conditions is impossible. For those guests who are strong skiers with previous backcountry skiing experience, self-guided ski touring is an option. We strongly recommend that self-guided parties have knowledge and experience in backcountry travel and avalanche safety. All ski touring parties will be responsible for self-rescue. All guests going ski touring will be required to read, understand and sign a Release of Liability or Waiver of Claims agreement.

*“This is what I call a ‘terrain park!’  
 The lodge should be renamed the  
 Callaghan shrine – the experience has  
 been religious.”*

*- Cam, Calgary, AB*

*“One of the continent’s premiere  
 backcountry lodges.”*

*- Mitchell Scott, Powder Magazine*



  
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## GUIDED BACKCOUNTRY SKIING



For those groups wanting to maximize their backcountry skiing experience, we work with the Whistler Alpine Guides Bureau to provide an A.C.M.G. (Association of Canadian Mountain Guides) guiding service.

In addition to being trained in customer service, all guides are fully certified in first aid, avalanche safety, snow stability evaluation and emergency response. Further, the guides have an intimate knowledge of both the terrain and the snowpack. They know the best travel routes and the best places to ski in all weather and snow conditions. These professional and friendly guides will help you to learn more about the area, the backcountry experience, and avalanche safety. They'll even give you a few pointers on ski technique if you so desire. Without a doubt, hiring a professional ski guide is the best way to make sure that your group will get the safest and most enjoyable ski experience possible.



### Rates:

Group Size	First Day	Additional Days
1 – 2 people	\$629.00	\$499.00
3 people	\$779.00	\$649.00
4 – 6 people	\$829.00	\$699.00

The maximum client to guide ratio is 6:1, however should you have a group larger than 6 people, we'd be happy to put together a customized quotation. Prices are quoted in Canadian funds and do not include the 5% GST or gratuities. The price includes the rental of backcountry safety equipment (avalanche transceiver, probe and shovel) for each member of the group. The price does not include touring gear, though Whistler Alpine Guides Bureau can coordinate equipment rentals on your behalf.

### What can you expect from a typical guided ski / board touring day?

Most days start at about 9am and finish at about 4:30pm. Your guide will start by giving you either a refresher session on avalanche safety (if your group has previous experience), or a full briefing on guided backcountry touring. The orientation begins with a discussion of the group's past skiing experience and continues with a brief avalanche safety session to familiarize everyone with their safety equipment.

The total elevation gained and skied ranges from 400 m to 1500 m per day depending on the fitness and ski ability of the group. On clear days the guide can choose to go 1000 m + up from the valley in one push to ski a high alpine peak. The guide sets an uphill pace that works for everyone in the group. During the ski down, the guide remains in the front and everyone skis down together at a speed comfortable with all members of the group.



Mountain Guides

Thanks to Chris Ankeny, John Baldwin, Rich Haywood, Al Safrata & Dave Sarkany for letting us use their great photography!

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*Whistler's Nordic Adventure Destination: Inspiring, Naturally!*