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P. 62

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SKIING, BRITISH COLUMBIA-STYLE

Dry, deep powder. Jaw-dropping scenery. Relatively mild temperatures. Affordable prices! This is the year to explore B.C.'s Canadian Rockies and Coast Mountains—on and off the slopes. Bonus: Getting there might actually be quicker (or, at the very least, less frustrating) than driving a traffic-choked highway to Tahoe or Vail. *By Christine Ciarmello and Dave Hanson*

MOUNTAIN RESORT	BEST FOR	TRAIL WONDERS	SANS SPOOLS	BASE CAMP
<p>Whistler-Blackcomb</p> <p><i>Two-day lift ticket from \$148 U.S.; whistlerblackcomb.com.</i></p> <p>Getting here A 90-minute shuttle from Vancouver International Airport.</p>	<p>With more terrain than Vail and Breckenridge combined, the two-mountain behemoth attracts athletes and après-ski fans in equal numbers.</p> 	<p>Ride the Peak 2 Peak Gondola, the world's longest (1.88 miles) and highest (1,430 feet) continuous lift, for world record-worthy views. <i>Included in two-day lift-ticket price; whistlerblackcomb.com/discover/360-experience.</i></p> 	<p>Mountain mushing with the majestic huskies of Blackcomb Dogsled brings you on a scenic trail through the Callaghan Valley overlooking the Whistler Olympic Park. <i>From \$150 U.S.; blackcombdogsled.com.</i></p> 	<p>About 2½ miles from Whistler Village (accessible via shuttle), Nita Lake Lodge has fireplaces, rooftop hot tubs, and a kundalini spa treatment guaranteed to restore mountain-weary muscles. <i>From \$121 U.S.; nitalakelodge.com.</i></p> 
<p>Sun Peaks</p> <p><i>Full-day lift ticket from \$70 U.S.; sunpeaksresort.com.</i></p> <p>Getting here A 45-minute shuttle from Kamloops Airport.</p>	<p>Thanks to two new alpine areas moved inbound, Sun Peaks' three mountains provide the second most expansive terrain in Canada, 90 percent of which is rated intermediate and expert.</p> 	<p>Ski under the stars after a fondue dinner mid-mountain, with lanterns lighting the slope and your own personal headlamp to guide the way. <i>\$57 U.S.; sunpeaksresort.com.</i></p> 	<p>Nonskiers can get in on the fun with a chauffeur-steered Snow Limo that lets you schuss down the slopes in comfort. <i>From \$90 U.S.; sunpeaksresort.com.</i></p> 	<p>In-room kitchens and pet-friendly accommodations make the all-suite Hearthstone Lodge a popular option. It's also one of the closest hotels to the chairlifts. <i>From \$116 U.S.; hearthstoneresort.com.</i></p> 
<p>Big White</p> <p><i>Full-day lift ticket from \$70 U.S.; bigwhite.com.</i></p> <p>Getting here A 45-minute shuttle from Kelowna Airport.</p>	<p>Young families and ski groups whoop it up at this Monashee Mountains resort that lacks the intimidation factor of Whistler—both in vertical drop and social scene.</p> 	<p>Ski amid the famed "snow ghosts"—sculptural, snow-clad trees located at higher elevations on the mountain.</p> 	<p>Ride a blanket-laden sleigh pulled by Clydesdales to a cabin in the woods for a hearty chicken-and-ribs dinner.</p> 	<p>Find affordable condo-style accommodations in the center of town at the ski-in/ski-out Whitefoot Lodge. <i>From \$58 U.S.; whitefootlodge.com.</i></p> 
<p>Whitewater</p> <p><i>Full-day lift ticket from \$58 U.S.; skit whitewater.com.</i></p> <p>Getting here A 3-hour drive from Spokane, WA, to Nelson, B.C.</p>	<p>Known for abundant, consistently dry snow, empty slopes, and lift-accessible backcountry terrain, the resort draws real-deal skiers more interested in thrills than frills.</p> 	<p>Sign up for a one-day backcountry skiing and avalanche awareness course to truly explore this off-piste heaven (and learn how to dig a snow pit).</p> 	<p>Ornate wood paneling and cucumber gin cocktails make the Library Lounge at the historic Hume Hotel a civilized spot to pass an evening. <i>Drinks for two \$12 U.S.; humehotel.com.</i></p> 	<p>The Adventure Hotel in downtown Nelson has a cool, Scandinavian-influenced vibe and rooms with views of Kootenay Lake. <i>From \$62 U.S.; adventurehotel.ca.</i></p> 