



The Whistler Rx: A sunny alpine antidote for San Francisco's gloomy summer

Twenty years ago, at the height of my ski-bunny days, I could not ignore the fact that I enjoyed snow more watching it fall from inside a cozy cabin. Over the years, this truth has taken over that part of my adventurous spirit that governs icy recreation. With visions of the Winter Olympics (Vancouver 2010, Calgary 1988) dancing in my head, I had ruled out much of Canada as a destination for future vacations.

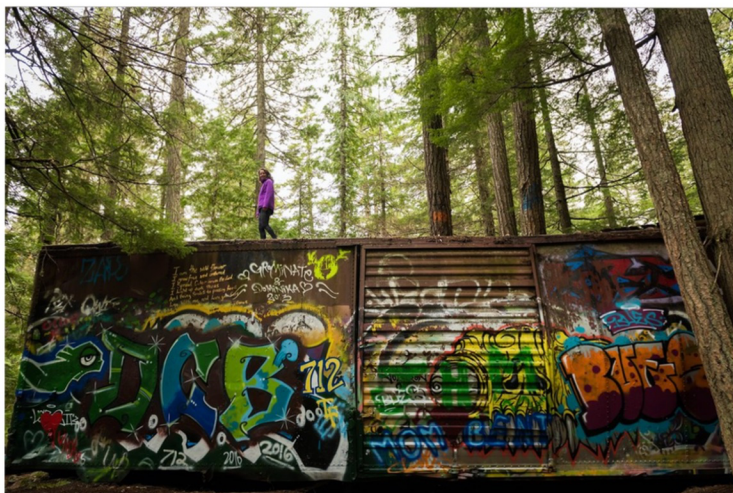
Until I was assured by some trustworthy Canucks that four seasons happen across the Great White North, and right now, the days there are much warmer and longer than what San Francisco can muster during any given summer. I recently journeyed to Whistler to stockpile Vitamin D (at an elevation of 2,200 feet, pure, unadulterated, no-smog sunshine is inescapable), a preventative measure against the cold, gray skies of home.



The private dock at Nita Lake Lodge offers kayaks, canoes, and standup paddle boards for guests.

STAY

Since ski-in/ski-out privileges were not required, I opted for the only hotel in Whistler where the peaks meet the shore for maximum outdoor enjoyment. Located at the base of Whistler Mountain, [Nita Lake Lodge](#) (a 2016 *Travel + Leisure* World's Best award winner) is a modern chalet with oversized studios and suites overlooking a glacier-fed lake. The sun rises around 4:30am this time of year, so be sure to close the black-out curtains fully if you want to sleep past dawn—the big, downy beds are worth the extra shut-eye. For better or worse, I awoke with the sun, marveling at how many other people are up and at 'em at this time of day. Insomniacs? Sunshine hoarders? Vacation overachievers? Whatever their reasons, they picked a good spot to reach the fullest expression of their personality profile (I happen to identify with all three).



One of seven derailed boxcars on the Train Wreck hike.