

How to get cozy and coddled in Whistler

Finding tranquil sanctuaries amid high-octane fun

There's lingo in this mountain town that feels like a secret language of its very own. In fact, it goes without saying that, on perfect bluebird mornings, understanding bosses allow employees to sneak in ski sessions before arriving at work a wee bit tardy.

Residents hail from all over the globe, and statements like, "I came for two months and stayed for six years," prove a common refrain. One longtime transplant observes, "Everyone is happy ... they're either on vacation or have intentionally chosen to live here."



Nita Lake Lodge offers specials and packages that celebrate the best of each season — Photo courtesy of Nita Lake Lodge

After dropping into the rhythm of the days — dictated by the whims of Mother Nature and the moods of the mountain — you'll understand the allure. Spring boasts great benefits like added value (at hotels, especially), and sun-stroked, tri-sport days mean that guests can golf, bike *and* ski before bedtime, should they choose to go all in.

The highlight of this powder paradise, however, is that even non-skiers find enough pull to want to stay forever. If you're seeking high-octane adventure or rejuvenating zen (or are simply here for the thriving après scene), this is *the* place to dip your toe into luxury living during any month of the year.

Home away from home



The lodge's suites feature king-size beds, a double soaker tub, glass-enclosed rain shower and comfortable seating area with a basalt gas fireplace — Photo courtesy of Nita Lake Lodge

Whether you drive to Whistler or arrive by bus (one great option: Pacific Coach Lines, which picks up from YVR airport and downtown [Vancouver](#)), [Nita Lake Lodge](#) proves the perfect home base. Tucked away on the shores of a glacier-fed lake, the lodge offers a coveted balance of "upscale mountain comfort."

The welcoming venue lands guests a five-minute shuttle ride from the heart of Whistler and only 500 meters from the base of Whistler Mountain and the Creekside gondola. In addition to its spacious suites and soothing nature views, the hotel provides complimentary gear ranging from snowshoes and fat tire bikes to canoes and SUPs, once the snow melts and the sparkling lake reappears.

Spa sanctuaries + culture breaks



Savor every second at the 20,000-square-foot oasis that is Scandinave Spa Whistler — Photo courtesy of Chad Chomlack/Scandinave Spa

Hot. Cold. Relax. Repeat. This is the cycle at [Scandinave Spa](#), a 20,000-square-foot outdoor day spa located just a few minutes north of Whistler Village.

Set among a peaceful spruce and cedar forest, this magic-tinged, Scandinavian-inspired bath experience, also known as hydrotherapy, cleanses the body and skin, improves blood circulation and stimulates the immune system. The end result: increased wellness, intense relaxation and complete and utter bliss.

Try to set aside two to three hours to fully savor this oasis of calm that features a wood-burning Finnish sauna, eucalyptus steam room, refreshing Nordic waterfalls, cold plunge pools, a solarium, hammocks and outdoor fire pits. A no-talking rule gives guests the rare chance to unplug, disconnect and simply *be*.

Back at Nita Lake Lodge, relish treatments at the hotel's on-site spa like body scrubs and the indulgent 75-minute Kundalini massage. Guests also enjoy complimentary use of the rooftop hot tubs, steam room and relaxation lounge.



The 75-minute Kundalini massage at The Spa at Nita Lake Lodge is worth adding to your to-do list immediately —
Photo courtesy of Nita Lake Lodge

Absorb local culture at twice-weekly farmers markets (in warmer months), or walk the Cultural Connector to find the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre, the Whistler Museum and the [Audain Art Museum](#), an architectural wonder in its own right. There are also plenty of [festivals](#) on the calendar at any given time, so keep that in mind when planning your trip.

Nourishing pauses



Pioneering Whistler's urban-rustic food scene, CURE Lounge and Patio transports the authenticity and soul of local, farm-fresh producers to Creekside — Photo courtesy of Nita Lake Lodge

Breakfast at Nita Lake's [Aura restaurant](#) brings serene views to an artful setting where funky deer sculptures appear to prance through the wall. Delicious creations arrive atop dreamy dishware; try the spa breakfast, consisting of two poached eggs, multigrain toast with crushed avocado, cured tomatoes and frisée pear salad.

For casual eats with a view, ride the Whistler gondola up to Roundhouse Lodge; here global food stations range from pho and dumplings to salads and burgers. In warmer months, mountaintop barbecues welcome performing artists to this elevated space.

For fine dining at altitude, ride the world record-breaking Peak 2 Peak gondola across to the other side, where Christine's On Blackcomb awaits.



Enjoy Aura's fresh dining space, as well as lake views — Photo courtesy of Nita Lake Lodge

Back at the base, enjoy a delightfully healthful pit stop at The Green Moustache, a quaint eatery that's attached to 3 Singing Birds boutique. You can enjoy juices, smoothies, Buddha bowls and raw dessert bars that prove to be the perfect fuel for any afternoon activity. At quaint [Fifi's Bistro](#), try the cauliflower sandwich, butternut squash gnocchi or bison short ribs.

Once you've returned to the hotel, Cure Lounge & Patio is a warm, bustling spot at which to savor hearty charcuterie boards, flavorful salads, buzzed-about burgers and lobster rolls showing off the fresh bounty of Prince Edward Island. Be sure to order a craft cocktail, too, which may just arrive in a teapot or "light bulb."

Adrenaline rush



The Adventure Group team loves sharing the natural playground they get to experience every day — Photo courtesy of The Adventure Group

Of course if you *have* come for the adventurous angle of this uber-active destination, you could easily fill every hour of the day. Sail high above the treetops with [Ziptrek](#), or join friendly guides from [The Adventure Group \(TAG\)](#) on outdoors excursions in stunning settings.

TAG offerings range from snowmobiling tours and snowshoe descents to an aerial tree course that helps you feel like a "Ninja Warrior" in training.



The Whistler Sliding Centre is home to the fastest ice track in the world — Photo courtesy of Marisa Cuglietta/Hawksworth Communications

Looking for the ultimate rush? Swoosh down the fastest ice track in the world at the [Whistler Sliding Centre](#), host of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games. Hop into a four-person bobsled and marvel as your pilot helps you reach speeds of 75 mph. You'll feel the pull of up to 4 G-forces while rounding the track's final corner.

While you may feel slightly jostled afterward (pack your Advil, just in case), we promise it's a once-in-a-lifetime thrill you'll be glad you braved. And the best news of all: We reckon this ice victory justifies at least one final spa treatment before heading home.

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NITA LAKE LODGE
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