

# YOUR ULTIMATE GUIDE TO CANADIAN SKI RESORTS



## Whistler, BC

**Whistler Blackcomb** is impossible to describe without using superlatives. It's North America's biggest (3,307 skiable hectares), Canada's best-known (thanks in part to the 2010 Olympic Games), and one of the world's most visited (skier visits often surpass 2 million a year) mountain resorts. Even its gondola boasts the distinction of being the highest in the world (**the Peak 2 Peak** connects the two mountains, passing 435 metres above ground). It is, in short, one of the most incredible outdoor playgrounds in the multiverse.

But what makes **Whistler**, Whistler isn't necessarily the mountains themselves, but the diverse population of artists, innovators, filmmakers and writers that they draw. This ever-evolving community makes this place uniquely vibrant and contemporary—full of the lifeblood that makes **Whistler** arguably the beating heart of skidom.

In the **pedestrian-only village**, lit with thousands of twinkling lights, you can discover an **après scene** as rowdy as the lines off Spanky's Ladder, stroll into a five-star restaurant that boasts some of the world's finest cuisine or attend a contemporary art opening that would be at home in New York City's Lower East Side. So pack your kick turns, your refined palate and your good vibes—because **Whistler** is, well, superlative in every way.

### Stats

11.64 annual metres of snow

3,307 skiable hectares

**Epic Pass**

## SkiBig3, Alberta

SkiBig3's resorts—**Banff Sunshine**, **Lake Louise**, and **Mt. Norquay**—each has enough terrain and character to be a singular destination that stands on its own. But they happen to all share the magical town of **Banff**, cradled in Canada's oldest national park, making this ski destination an embarrassment of riches that can only be called Canada's crown jewel. (Oh, and did we mention fairytale castles? **Banff National Park** has two.)

**Banff Sunshine**, just a few minutes down the winding highway from town, is a sprawling 1,359-hectare smorgasbord of goods known for its mettle-testing steepes of Wild West and Delirium Dive. **Lake Louise** lies a little farther through the humbling peaks (keeping your eyes on the road is no small feat), boasting high-alpine lines and a staggering 1,700 hectares of skiable terrain, all of which overlook the lake itself (suffice it to say it's one of the most photographed places in Canada for a reason). And finally, **Mt. Norquay**, just on the edge of town, is the area's best-kept secret. Here you'll find a hometown vibe, zero lift lines, sneaky steepes and the best lodge food.

Each resort has a unique flavour (they're all independently owned), but they share one lift ticket and accept both the **Ikon Pass** and **Mountain Collective**, so you can affordably sample all three mountains. And, getting there is so easy—just an hour and a half west of **Calgary International Airport**—that you'll be scratching your head at why there are so few people in the lift lines. So book now, and your memories will be with you happily ever after.

### Stats

9 annual metres

3,136 total skiable hectares

**Ikon Pass**

**Mountain Collective**



## Kicking Horse Mountain Resort, BC

There are some resorts that boast having “something for everyone,” and then there is [Kicking Horse](#). Proudly etched in the pristine [Purcell Mountains](#) that loom above the unassuming railroad town of [Golden, BC](#), this is a place for grizzly bears and wolverines...and the handful of local skiers who are just as fierce.

Even getting there takes commitment: It's a three-hour drive from [Calgary](#), winding over harrowing mountain passes on the famed [Powder Highway](#). And once you arrive, the 1,315-vertical-meter resort—bristling with double-black diamonds—is so steep and so spiny, the only reason it's skiable at all is the copious 7.3 annual metres of legendary BC powder that fills in its crevasses. Much of its plunderous bounty requires bootpacking, too, and at an elevation of 2,505 meters, you'll be treated to an amazing ride down..

But all this, of course, makes [Kicking Horse](#) the ultimate grounds for big-mountain couloir hunting—and chances are the only tracks you cross will be your own. At [Kicking Horse](#), you will get the goods—unless, of course, the goods get you first.

### Stats

7.3 annual metres of snowfall  
1,376 skiable hectares

[Epic Pass](#)



## Fernie, BC

Folded into a pocket of the Lizard Range near the Montana border, [Fernie](#) might just be the world's greatest ski town. A historic mining community with all the requisite charm, it has just enough shine to satisfy the five-star set, too. It's friendly, quaint and home to [Fernie Alpine Resort](#), which of course is the best part.

The resort boasts six vast bowls, each with endless ridgeline tree shots and sneaky chutes, plus Polar Peak, a puckering double-diamond-studded formerly hike-to zone that now boasts a lift that spins whenever the weather permits. Experts won't want for anything here—save more time to purr through the blower Kootenay powder (Fernie gets 9.1 annual metres of the stuff). The aspiring set need not worry, however, as [Fernie](#) serves up plenty of gentler fare on the lower flanks and in Lizard Bowl, where skiers of all abilities can find what they're after and meet at the bottom.

As for après, this place is known for its casual pubs. [The Griz Bar](#) is one of the most authentic anywhere. You'll find some higher end spots, sushi and a welcoming crowd that's there for the same reason you are— an early night that makes way for some fresh tracks.

### Stats

9.1 annual metres of snowfall  
1,012 skiable hectares

[Epic Pass](#)



## SilverStar, BC

The ski-through village at [SilverStar Mountain Resort](#), located just 40 minutes from the [Kelowna airport](#) in BC, is the definition of quaint. And it's perfect for all levels of skier, which has given it the reputation of being a family hill. The Though the front side offers a kaleidoscope of blues and greens for the littles, but flip the map to the backside and you'll find terrain rugged enough to challenge the most seasoned expert in your group.

Riddled with steep chutes that fan out from three separate ridges, [SilverStar's](#) challenging backside will leave your legs burning. It's all served by a single quad chair—the aptly named Powder Gulch Express—meaning you'll have plenty of terrain to yourself. And the liftlines back there? Your legs will make you wish there were some.

What to do when you wake up thrashed from skiing so much powder? Explore [SilverStar's](#) 105 kilometres of cross-country trails, which curve quietly around the idyllic hills and warm up with a hot drink at [Paradise Camp](#) along the way.

[SilverStar](#) may not be on your radar yet, so hear us now and thank us later. (You're welcome.)

### Stats

7 annual metres of snowfall  
1,328 skiable hectares



## Sun Peaks, BC

**Sun Peaks**, in **British Columbia's** interior, is the biggest mountain you've never heard of—1,728 hectares of skiable terrain, the second largest in Canada. How they've managed to keep this quiet is beyond us, especially considering it's an easy 45-minute drive from **Kamloops**, which in turn is a quick flight from **Vancouver**, and **Calgary**.

The resort is shaped like a catcher's mitt—with five fingers of mostly friendly terrain with deep pockets of unrelenting steeps and powdery glades in between. Those who have heard of it think of it mostly as a family place, which is understandable when you pull into a village so quaint it resembles those ceramic ensembles under the Christmas tree. (Park your car and leave it: You can ski through the village.) That said, it's also true that the terrain offers plenty for the blue-square and green-circle set, but rippers will feel plenty of burn on the runs off Burfield, or by hiking into Gil's, a controlled zone with a backcountry vibe.

No matter where you go, though, the catcher's mitt will funnel you right down to the village, where you can join the locals for après beers at **Bottoms Bar & Grill** and spray about your day on social. With zero (and we mean zero) liftlines, **Sun Peaks** is a secret that can stand to be shared.

### Stats

6 annual metres of snowfall  
1,728 skiable hectares



## Big White Ski Resort, BC

**Big White Ski Resort**, located less than an hour's drive from **Kelowna International Airport** in the world-famous Monashee Mountains has a lack of crowds that will entice any skier. Aptly named, **Big White** spills down 777 vertical metres from two massive white peaks, with terrain that seems designed solely for the purpose of making you smile. Its 1,119 skiable hectares (accessible via the second-largest lift system in Canada) consist of mellow powdery bowls, perfectly spaced glades, steep shots through the woods, and impeccably groomed blues—all coated in nearly 7.5 metres of dry, fluffy Okanagan champagne powder each year.

But at **Big White**, skiing is just part of the fun. A **huge ice-skating rink** at the base encourages that favourite Canadian pastime, pond hockey; an **18-metre ice climbing tower** will get you solidly out of your comfort zone; 26 kilometres of **Nordic trails** beckon for a peaceful workout; and tubing gives the kids (and their parents) belly laughs they'll remember forever. Oh, and did we mention the wine and food in the quaint ski-through village? The Okanagan Valley is famous for both—and this place has been doing "farm to table" before that was a thing.

At **Big White**, you choose your own adventure. You can't go wrong.

### Stats

7.5 annual metres of snowfall  
1,119 skiable hectares





## Québec

With nearly 80 ski resorts spread across three regions—the [Laurentians](#), [Charlevoix](#), and the [Eastern Townships](#)—and quaint towns rich in history and each with a unique flavour, [Québec](#) is like a trip to Europe without the jet lag or the bank-draining expense.

The main thing about [Québec](#) is that it takes its culture (not to mention its cheese) seriously. Originally settled by the French in the 17th century, it's a proud province where cuisine du terroir is not just a trend, it's a way of life. Even the resort fare is high-brow, and every inn and restaurant, no matter how small, serves up local cuisine that will change the way you think of Canada.

The skiing will burn it off, too. In the [Charlevoix](#) region around [Québec City](#), an ancient walled city that's nothing less than enchanting, you can choose from [Stoneham](#), [Mont-Sainte-Anne](#), and [Massif de Charlevoix](#). In the [Laurentians](#), [Mont Tremblant](#) takes top billing, but [Sommet Saint-Sauveur](#) and [Mont-Blanc](#) are worthy destinations as well. In the [Eastern Townships](#), you can roadtrip around [Sutton](#), [Owl's Head](#), [Bromont](#), and [Orford](#), and perhaps tack on a day to explore cosmopolitan [Montréal](#).



## Revelstoke Mountain Resort, BC

[Revelstoke](#), or “Revy,” as it's affectionately called, is deep in the Monashee Mountains of [British Columbia](#). It's not easy to get to—the closest airport is [Kelowna](#), a two and half-hour drive away. It's not quite as easy to ski—the resort rates 45 percent of the terrain as “expert,” and trust us, they mean it. But [Revy](#) is proof that nothing worth doing ever comes easy.

With the longest vertical drop of any resort in North America—1,713 metres, a third more than Jackson Hole's—and 10.5 metres of average annual snowfall, this place is the real deal. The mountain is so big that to ski down the whole thing is an endeavor in and of itself, so big that you pass through several climates and ecosystems, each with its own snow conditions. There are cliffs to huck, couloirs to thread, powdery aprons to plunder, groomers to mach, and bumps to zipper. If you find yourself standing atop the North Bowl, as the wind whips up snow devils that whirl through the cliffs, you will know you are really, really alive. And maybe a little scared, too.

The town far, far below is exactly what you'd expect at the base of a mountain this big. Its cute and brightly colored Victorians are an historic slice of its hardscrabble mining origins, and its residents are, first and foremost, mountain people—also of a hardscrabble ilk. Pull up a chair made from old straight skis at the [Village Idiot](#), which might just be our favourite ski town bar on the planet. Biased? Perhaps. Because nothing makes beer taste better than purring through 1,713 vertical metres of pure [British Columbia](#) pow.

### Stats

10.5 metres of annual snowfall

1,263 skiable hectares

[Ikon Pass](#)