

Clubs Mitigate the High Cost of Ski Trips

By Dave Bagwell, Assistant Editor of The Thunderbird Ski Club's (MI) *Towline*

I recently read an article which talked about the high cost of skiing at some of the top ski resorts. The writer talked about things that are so expensive, such as hotels, dining out, lift tickets, and discussed things that people can do to help reduce some of these high costs.

The writer talked about \$600 a night at a high-end hotel. He talked about the cost of a hot dog at the base of the mountain is around \$12. He talked about possibly spending \$1,000 for a four-day trip -- not including airfare.

We know that skiing isn't one of the least expensive sports, but many of us also play golf in the summer -- and that certainly isn't cheap.

The writers suggested where to rent a car, go out of town, or down the road. Then, when you eat out, you could frequent those little mom-and-pop restaurants that we love so much. He talked about the ambiance of staying in a little town just down the road from the resort.

All this can be true in many cases, but it immediately brought to mind the advantages of belonging to a ski club. Clubs can lease two- and three-bedroom condos at the mountain, many ski-in and ski-out. We can stay close to all the après-ski establishments and have a

drink with a bunch of friends and hundreds of other skiers who share the same interests that we have. But then we can head back to the condo to freshen up and relax. And, because club members have a kitchen, we can have breakfast before we head to the slopes. We can have dinner in the condo -- do a steak on the grill -- all while gazing up at the mountain as the groomers get the slopes ready for morning runs.

We can have friends over for cocktails in the evenings, BYOB, build a fire in the fireplace, socialize on comfortable sofas and chairs. It's just perfect! The ski club can offer all this to skiers, to our members, and the club can do it much cheaper (and with more of your friends around) than most others can.

We know that many skiers like to plan their own trips. They can stay at hotels or motels or B&B's. They use their miles and points and they can eat all their meals in restaurants. Although they probably can't get discounted lift tickets, in the end, for a couple or maybe four skiers, they can plan a nice trip. However, I'm a believer that going on ski trips with your ski club is the way to go.

Mad River Glen's Club Lodges

From their website: www.madriverglen.com

Vermont's Mad River Glen's Website lists seven ski clubs that have their own lodges near the resort.

The Amateur Ski Club of New York was founded in April of 1931. They then bought General Stark Mountain and created Mad River Glen as their new principle ski area.

The Hartford Ski Club was founded in 1936 on two basic principles: A low cost approach to skiing and member involvement.

The Montclair Ski Club is a restricted membership club founded in 1947. In 1959, they built a lodge at the base of Mad River Glen.

Miramar Ski Club, founded in 1949. Two years later the Miramar Ski Club opened its doors in Waitsfield where you can find an original Mad River Glen single chair on display.

In 1959, the **The New Jersey Whiz Skiers** built a lodge at the base of Mad River Glen in northern Vermont.

Ramapo Mountain Ski Club, founded in 1947. Most members live in Bergen County, NJ, and Rockland, and Orange Counties, NYE.

The **White Plains Ski Club** has had a lodge for almost 50 years within walking distance of the Mad River Glen.

8:30 AM: Hot espresso downtown
9:00 AM: Cold smoke at Bridger



Bozeman, Montana, has been called North America's number one place to live and work if you're a skier. And with good reason: Bridger Bowl is only 16 miles away and just installed two new chairlifts, providing access to more than 500 acres of intermediate terrain and that legendary cold smoke powder. It's part of Bridger's new "Alpine Experience," which focuses on Montana values and family fun. And it's Only in Bozeman.

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