

## Lake Louise – Banff Castle to Castle Tour

March 10-17, 2018

Early Saturday morning, 43 SJSC skiers and boarders left Philadelphia for Calgary, Alberta for the last trip of the 2017-18 season. We changed planes in Minneapolis where we boarded a very tiny plane minus 19 pieces of our luggage. We landed in Calgary where we met up with Earl and Donna J. who flew in from Utah. We traveled by bus and soon checked into beautiful Chateau Lake Louise. At 7:00 we all gathered for a lovely welcome party and met some of the mountain staff, Brad and Holly, who gave us the lay of the land.



Sunday morning after “springing ahead” we awoke to a bluebird day. Most people took the bus and skied at Lake Louise. Some had to beg, borrow, and rent clothing and equipment as our luggage had not yet been delivered. A few of us including Georgean, Steve, Jim and Linda S. made lemonade out of lemons and opted to take the day off and explore the lake while we waited until mid-afternoon to receive our bags. We enjoyed the offerings of the Ice Bar and sunned ourselves in the Adirondack chairs. Many of those who skied took advantage of the free mountain tours offered by the “Ski Friends”. Some enjoyed their morning tours so much that they returned for a second tour in the afternoon. Tom was lucky enough to have a private tour of the mountain.

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On Monday, another bluebird day, a group of intrepid skiers, took off for a day of heli-skiing. Chip, Bobby, Rich, Jason, John T., Joe T., John M, George, Pam, Lauren and Lana had an adventure they’ll never forget. . We understand that Chip is credited for causing a bit of an Avalanche. He claims he outskied it.

The rest of us enjoyed skiing at Lake Louise and taking in the breathtaking views.



Tuesday proved to be yet another bluebird day. After packing our bags for the transfer to Banff, all but three people got ourselves over to Lake Louise for another spectacular day of skiing. Linda H., Ray, and Melanie helped our driver Yuki pack the bus and accompanied our luggage to Banff Springs Hotel and enjoyed the amenities at the hotel and in downtown Banff. Melanie had a spa appointment and loved



the six pools. She felt like a chicken nugget with six different dipping sauces. Later in the day, everyone else took shuttles from Lake Louise to the Banff Springs Hotel. People explored the many dining options at the hotel and in downtown Banff.



Wednesday was (wait for it) **another** bluebird day, and everyone took the bus to Sunshine Village for an awesome day on the expansive slopes, most of which are above tree line. Beth had a special day snow shoeing beyond the ski area boundaries. She said it was harder work than skiing. At



5:30 most of us made our way into town to enjoy a happy hour (and a half) at the Rose and Crown. Each of us had two drink coupons with a wide assortment of beverages and a buffet of hors d'oeuvres and desserts. It was a great chance to mingle with our fellow ski clubbers. Several people challenged each other to rollicking games of pool and foosball. Once our coupons ran out some folks continued the festivities with shots of various spirits.

Thursday we awoke to freshly falling snow. Those who chose to ski decided among Sunshine Village, Lake Louise and Norquay depending on their preferences. They found it was best to stay in treed areas to avoid flat light which is why some went to Lake Louise. Joe H., Gwen and Geri tore up the powder and have pictures to prove it. Others opted to stay in downtown Banff and check out the Whyte Museum and, of course, shop for souvenirs. Late afternoon found many of us bathing in the outdoor hot tub with snow still falling on our heads.

Friday morning the snow had stopped falling leaving the slopes covered with heavy fresh powder. It was hard work for most of us to ski through the ungroomed deep powder. Roy even saw an Avalanche sliding down the mountain while he was riding down in the gondola. Friday night found many of us celebrating an early St Patty's Day in downtown Banff. Earl, Donna, Chris, Dave, Linda H, Mindy, Karen and Bob B. found themselves at the St. James Gate Irish Pub. Linda S. and Jim opted for a romantic dinner at the Waldhaus. Lauren, Joe T., Rich, Jason, Bob A., Amanda, Frank and Chip ripped it up at the Dancing Sasquatch even though they were the oldest ones there, but that didn't stop them from doing shots. Rumor has it there were more than 70 shots done that night.



Saturday, St Patty's Day, we had our bags packed and picked up at 7:30 am. The group photo was held on the inside stairs of the hotel lobby. Congratulations to Amanda and Frank on their engagement. Frank proposed in the Mount Stephen Hall at the Banff Springs Hotel. We took a special group photo surrounding the happy couple.



Some special

memories that were passed on to us were: Kelly and Ray enjoyed skiing with Diane and Joanne as well as staying at the beautiful "unicorn" hotels. John S. and George also appreciated the two beautiful hotels. Jeff said that Eileen loved the skiing especially since the last time she was here she was wheel chair bound from a previous accident. Patty, who had only 20 days on skis, really enjoyed Fred being her "Mr. Miyagi" and teaching her so much about downhill skiing. She is now addicted. Bob B. and Karen enjoyed reuniting with old SJSC friends and making new ones. Sandy thought the outdoor hot tub was amazing. Joe D. enjoyed

the guides at Lake Louise. Eric and Brittany spent some time playing ice hockey on Lake Louise. It was Brittany's first time playing the sport.

Linda H., Linda S. and Jim enjoyed being the impromptu trip leaders, but we couldn't have done it without all the behind-the-scenes preparations which were done by Diane Kae. We wish Da Queen was with us at Da Castles and we all wish you a very speedy recovery!!

