

# Ski & Snowboard *with kids*

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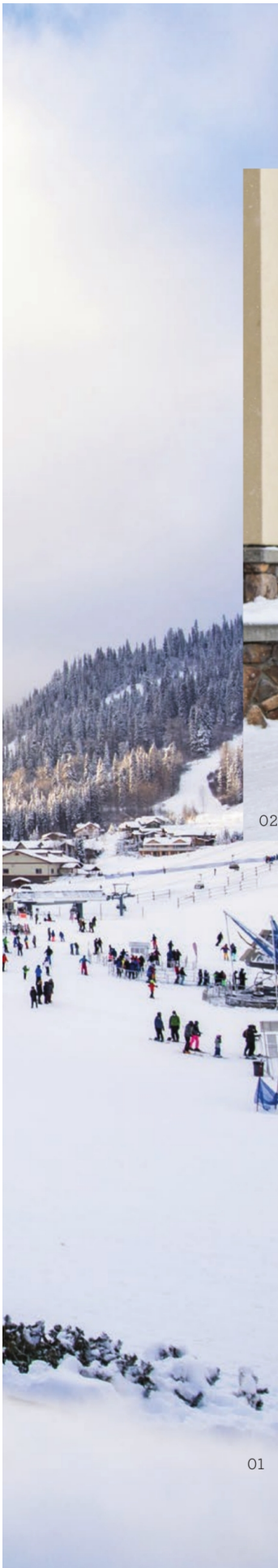


# Under the sun

Sun Peaks is just about the perfect place for a family snow holiday, but be warned; once you visit, it will steal your heart, writes [HELEN HAYES.](#)







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It was quite remarkable. We heard the same story over and over. From different people. From different countries. They came here for a visit two, three, seven, 10 years ago, fell in love with the place and returned over and over. Some people had even purchased property there, and one Australian family even moved there, their kids now going to school on a chairlift. How cool is that!

So what is about **Sun Peaks** that wins hearts? Is it its size? Sun Peaks has an intimate, ski-through village that is big enough to have a range of shops and eateries, but not so big that the older kids can't wander down to get a hot chocolate or an ice-cream by themselves. As for the skiing, the three mountains that rise around the village give 1,728 hectares of skiable terrain, making it the second biggest resort in Canada. The 13 lifts give access to 137 trails and 17 gladed areas, more than enough to satisfy skiers and snowboarders of all skill levels. There's even more than 37 kilometres of groomed Nordic trails.

For my family, it is all that and more. We first visited when my boys were 12 and 15, and absolutely loved exploring the mountains. We loved the perfect groomers on Sundance Mountain, skipping through the trees on Morrisey – where we could all go down the same run but take a different track round this tree or that – and marvelled at the snow ghosts on top of Mt Tod. And the boys spent a lot of time in the Rockstar Energy Terrain Park.

I loved doing the longest run, Five Mile, zooming down the Crystal Bowl, and skimming over the powder runs up in West Bowl. A highlight of our first trip was doing a tour around the mountain with Canadian ski legend Nancy Greene Raine. Nancy and her husband Al played a massive role in developing Sun Peaks into the destination it is today. Nancy takes visitors on free guided tours around the resort, and she still skis with the same effortless elegance and skill that won her gold and silver medals in the 1968 Winter Olympics in Grenoble.

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**"It was a surreal feeling to be skiing down the slope under the stars."**



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There is a great range of places to stay for families with many of them ski-in, ski-out. The **Cahilly Hotel & Suites** is part of Sun Peaks' DNA, and we love the restaurant there, the easy slopeside access and the friendly staff. **Fireside Lodge**, **Hearthstone Lodge**, **Kookaburra Lodge** and **Sun Peaks Grand Hotel & Conference Centre** with its fabulous hot pools, are also great options.

### Skiing under the stars

Apart from the skiing, Sun Peaks has so many wonderful activities to add to your family memories. One of our favourites is the dog sledding with **Mountain Man Dog Sled Adventures**. There is such a magical quality to being pulled through beautiful forests and over meringue-like fields of snow by nothing but puppy power. You can even have a go at driving the sled, learning how to mush the dogs. I quite enjoyed sitting in the sled while my eldest son did the mushing.

We also had a blast going tubing, racing each other down the slope. The kids loved ice skating on the full-size rink, and there were so many other things we could have done. We could have gone ice fishing, fat-tyre biking, snow biking, or had a horse-drawn sleigh ride through the village. We could have even jumped on a PistenBully cat to see just how the mighty groomers work.

Two things we did do, and highly recommend, were going to watch the local Kamloops Blazers ice hockey team do battle on the ice, and doing the Alpine Fondue & Starlight Descent. Seeing a Blazers game is a rite of passage for visitors to Sun Peaks, with the speed and action on



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the ice something to behold. As for the Fondue Descent, this was such a special treat. We rode the chairlift up to Sunburst Bar + Eatery where we indulged in a delicious fondue feast with live music. Afterwards, we were split into small groups, given headlamps and skied down the mountain on the freshly groomed Five Mile run. It was a surreal feeling to be skiing down the slope under the stars; it felt more like floating. And then we mounted a crest, overlooking the village, lit up like something out of a fairytale. Magical.

We will definitely do that again next time. And there will be a next time. We are well and truly under the spell of Sun Peaks. ▲



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01 The Clock Tower at the base of Sunburst © Local Lens 02 The ski-through village 03 Have a white Christmas and you might see Santa! © Kelly Funk 04 Looking back to Sundance and Mt Tod from Mt Morrissey 05 Skiing among the snow ghosts © Suz Kieran 06 Fat-tyre biking

## Sun Peaks Resort Report

Info [sunpeaksresort.com](http://sunpeaksresort.com)

**Getting there** Sun Peaks is a 45-minute drive from Kamloops, which is less than an hour by air from Vancouver. Shuttles can be arranged from the airport to the resort. **Blue Powder** has been providing some of the best ski deals and specialist advice for families for over 20 years. Blue Powder can customise a Sun Peaks package, providing you with the best advice and deals on flights, lift tickets and accommodation. [bluepowder.com.au](http://bluepowder.com.au)