

Whitefish, Montana

March 10-17, 2015

Trip Leaders Sonia Cardoos and Barbara Greene

****We may have been short on snow but we made up for it with amazing camaraderie!****

25 skiers woke in the wee hours of Tuesday morning to arrive at JAX by 4:00am. Sleepy but excited we made our way from Jacksonville through Atlanta and Minneapolis arriving in Kalispell, Montana by 2:00pm. We were warmly greeted by several members of the wonderful staff from The Lodge at Whitefish Lake who loaded our luggage up for transport to have waiting in our condos while we boarded a separate shuttle for the local Safeway to stock up for the week.

After a quick and seamless check-in and a few moments in our spacious condos to breath in and admire the amazing view of the lake and Whitefish Ski Resort we regrouped for our Welcome Reception at 5pm hosted by The Lodge. The owner of The Lodge gave us his personal greeting along with other members of his helpful staff. On site were Ski School reps, Mountain Ambassadors, and a ski shop offering helmets and gloves and goggles for us to purchase on site. The Glacier Adventure Guides were also there to fill us in on the Snowshoe trip that was planned for Saturday for any who wanted to venture out into Glacier National Park for a day.

With a few of us outfitted with new gear for the next day and several signed up for ski lessons most of us called it an early night and readied ourselves for the ski week.

First up was a Mountain Tour at 10am, free to all who wished to get a lay of the land. Great tips on which areas of the mountain to ski were invaluable as spring skiing had come early to Whitefish this year.

Enthusiastic cries of "Yahoooo" and "Hootiehoo" were heard all over the mountain during the week as the red bandannas of the JSC dotted the 3000+ acres of wide open slopes! We met the first day for our group lunch at the at the Hell Roaring Saloon and for the rest of the week most of us would meet at the Summit House where there was never a problem finding a table big enough to gather and swap info on where the best snow was and most importantly to find a JSC member to ski it with! Yahooooo!

While we continued to hope the rumors of snow for Monday were true many enjoyed the Northside of the mountain in the where the best snow was highlighted on blue groomers. Several members enjoyed the Terrain Park Areas and even braved the crazy narrow gully called George's Gorge --with varying degrees of success. :)

Après Ski activities usually started with a gathering in the huge hot tub overlooking the lake! Sometimes with deer sightings, always with laughter.

We had an informal gathering for the All-You-Can-Eat seafood buffet on Weds night featuring crab legs and shrimp! This was followed by the Group Dinner Thursday at Ciao Mambo Italian. Can you say Italian Nachos with a prosciutto alfredo sauce? YES!!!! The service and food were fabulous and many of us had enough leftovers for a full meal the next night. Hootiehoooooo!!

On Saturday six JSC members went on a snowshoeing adventure in Glacier National Park. Led by a truly knowledgeable guide who educated us on everything from the geological history to the local flora and fauna. We saw evidence of the moose and bears who roamed the woods as we trekked but thankfully (??) did not encounter any in person. Grrrrrrr!!

Sunday was a day filled with rain, and most members of the group who braved the slopes gave it up after a so-called "one and done" experience. While Many others ventured into town for a bit of shopping in Downtown Whitefish. Coffee shops and restaurant and shopping--Oh MY!

Monday we all got what we had been waiting for--SNOW! Yahooooooo!!!! It was snowing as we arrived and continued throughout the day. Fresh was found all day on the slopes, the moguls and even in the trees! It was a fabulous ending to our ski week.

But we were not done yet--on the last night Sonia and Barbara hosted a Pot Luck Dinner in their condo. We were all invited bring the food and drinks we hadn't consumed during the week! WOW--we had a ton of food. Another night of smiles and laughter ensued punctuated by awards for everything from "Best Skier" to "Most Enthusiastic" to "Most Inquisitive".

Our trip back to JAX went just as smoothly as our trip to Montana. Very happy and tired travelers made their way from Kalispell to Salt Lake City to Atlanta to JAX successfully navigating the short layovers. At the baggage carousels there were many hugs as the Jacksonville Ski Club completed another Successful Ski Trip. HootieHooo!