



NORTH CASCADE HELI 2027 HELI-SKIING TRIPS

The following information will answer most of your questions regarding your heli-skiing trip with North Cascade Heli. If you have further questions or need more info please contact us at 509-996-3272 or info@heli-ski.com.

Please review and be familiar with our policies below which are absolute and final. North Cascade Heli expects that all guests have read and understand our policies before reserving a heli-skiing program with us.

CANCELLATIONS

- If you cancel for any reason, at any time, we require notice in writing via email
- 50% of the deposit is refundable up to 60 days before the first scheduled date of the trip
- Trip dates may be changed (based on availability) up to 60 days before the trip
- Trips are transferable

RAINCHECK CREDIT

- Full credit will be issued only when North Cascade Heli is not able to provide any portion of the guaranteed heli-skiing (no runs skied)
- Full credit may be used the same season or the next season, based on availability
- Full credit is transferable to another guest for use during the same season or by the end of the next season, based on availability
- Full credit expires at the end of the next season (no exceptions)
- If a cash refund is preferred when North Cascade Heli is not able to provide any portion of the guaranteed heli-skiing, the cash refund will be 50% of the credit amount
- When only a portion of the guaranteed heli-skiing was received (partial credit), then credit will be issued at the rate of \$120 per run not skied

- All partial credit is issued towards the purchase of a full North Cascade Heli program
- If North Cascade Heli is only able to provide 3 runs or less on a given day, guests have the option to pay \$150 per skied run and retain a full day credit.
- Partial credit may be used in the same season or the next season, based on availability
- Partial credit is transferable to another guest for use during the same season or by the end of the next season, based on availability
- Partial credit expires at the end of the next season (no exceptions)
- If a third-party travel insurance claim is filed for reimbursement of payment for a canceled trip, all raincheck credits from that trip will be forfeited
- No full or partial credit or refund whatsoever will be issued for missed skiing (before or during your trip) due to ability, fitness, equipment failure, injury, or personal choice to abstain from heli-skiing

North Cascade Heli reserves the right to cancel operations at any time or refuse service to anyone for any reason. North Cascade Heli may cancel, alter, or reschedule a trip for any reason, at any time (guests will receive credit as described above). North Cascade Heli reserves the right to add a fuel surcharge to any trip at any time.

Please review all of our policies at <https://heli-ski.com/about/policies>.

TRAVEL TO THE METHOW VALLEY

We're based in the Heli Barn at 31 Early Winters Dr, Mazama, Wash., on the Wilson Ranch adjacent to the Freestone Inn & Cabins, 1.5 miles west of the Mazama Junction off Highway 20.

Highway 20/Washington Pass is closed from the west during our season, so the *only winter access* to Mazama is via Winthrop. From Winthrop, drive 15 miles west on Highway 20, turn left at the Freestone Inn & Cabins sign, then follow the signs to the Heli Barn. Approximate driving times to Mazama are five hours from Seattle, four hours from Spokane, three hours from Wenatchee and seven hours from Portland, depending on weather and road conditions. If flying to Washington State, consider flying to either Spokane or Wenatchee and renting a vehicle (4x4 recommended). For current pass and road conditions, call 1-800-695-7623 or check www.wsdot.wa.gov.

LODGING

The Methow Valley has numerous lodging options across all of its communities. We recommend staying in Mazama or Winthrop, if possible.

The Inn at Mazama & Cabins of the Methow and the Freestone Inn & Cabins are the closest lodging options to our base. Our website has a full list of our recommended lodging options here: heli-ski.com/plan-trip/accommodations

ARRIVAL DAY

All guests will be contacted within 24 hours of their first scheduled heli skiing day to be notified of their arrival time. Guests must arrive at the Heli Barn promptly at their scheduled arrival time on the first day of heli-skiing. Please be on time to avoid delays in heli-skiing operations and for the consideration of our other heli-skiing guests. We recommend that you arrive in the Methow Valley the evening before to avoid delays in the morning. Daytime parking is available at the Heli Barn. Overnight parking is not allowed in the Heli Barn parking lot.

The arrival day procedure includes:

- Check-in with the office
- Sign the Release of Liability & Assumption of Risk (mandatory before flying)
- If using our complimentary K2 powder skis or K2 and Ride Snowboards, choose your preferred skis or board, then complete and sign our Marker binding form and provide a boot to one of our ski technicians for binding adjustment
- Indoor briefing
- Weigh-in (stand on the scale wearing ski attire, boots and backpack)
- Complimentary Backcountry Access avalanche transceiver check out
- Outside avalanche transceiver orientation and practice
- Helicopter procedures briefing
- Get your Mazama Store lunch (provided with your package)
- Go heli-skiing

DAILY ROUTINE

- Arrive at the Heli Barn at your scheduled time
- Guests are flown in groups of four, each with a guide, for the duration of the day
- Guests will stay in the same group throughout the day. Guests may elect to change groups on successive days of multi-day trips if the schedule allows
- Fly to Landing Zone, follow guide instructions to unload helicopter
- Ski!

- Arrive at Pickup Zone, follow guide instructions to load into helicopter
- Fly to next Landing Zone, repeat
- Return to the Heli Barn at the end of the day
- For guests on multi-day trips, skis, poles, snowboards, boots and packs may be stored at the Heli Barn overnight

DEPARTURE DAY

On your final day of skiing you must check out before skiing to avoid a late checkout fee, or arrange a late checkout with the lodging property you are staying at. Please plan accordingly. Following your last day of skiing, please return all of our gear before leaving the Heli Barn and ensure that you haven't left any gear (you'll incur shipping charges for any gear left). We're not responsible for any personal items left at the Heli Barn.

EQUIPMENT

Heli-skiing programs include the use of our complimentary K2 powder skis or K2/Ride Snowboards. Our skis are mounted with Marker downhill bindings (we do not have skis mounted with touring bindings). Our line of K2 demo skis includes Mindbenders, Powabungas, Darksides, Reckoners and Pon2oons with various widths and lengths that are great for our terrain. If you plan to use our skis, please ensure that your ski boots are compatible with alpine bindings (ISO 5355, ISO 9523, or Gripwalk). We do not have ski boots or snowboard boots available.

Please feel free to bring your own skis or board if you prefer. Generally, shorter and wider powder skis and wider boards with rocker are better suited for our terrain and snow.

We provide ski poles if needed. If using your own poles, we recommend poles with larger baskets for deep snow.

Please note that your heli-skiing package includes the mandatory use of our avalanche safety gear including BCA transceivers, shovels, probes and airbag backpacks.

We provide BCA Tracker S transceivers, shovels, probes and Float 22 airbag backpacks, as well as training on how to safely and effectively use all equipment. You may choose to use your own airbag backpack instead. If you bring your own pack please keep it at 25 liters or less to facilitate loading gear in the heli basket and to reduce weight. If your airbag is battery powered, please make sure the battery is fully charged before you arrive.

ATTIRE

The goal is to stay warm and dry and prevent excessive sweating and overheating. Layering is key so that you may add/remove layers since conditions can change rapidly in the backcountry.

Essential heli-skiing attire:

- Waterproof/windproof hard-shell jacket and pants
- Mid-layer
- Thermal base layers (avoid cotton)
- Ski socks (avoid cotton)
- Warm ski hat/beanie
- Waterproof gloves
- Goggles

Additional mandatory items to include in your pack include:

- Reusable leak-proof water bottle (1 Liter)
- Compressible puffy jacket/vest or extra warm layer
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Lip balm
- Balaclava/neck gaiter
- Nutrition/snacks (each guest will also receive a Mazama store lunch)

Helmets are optional.

TERRAIN

We access five distinct zones in the North Cascades including Silver Star, Kangaroo, Cutthroat, Liberty Bowl and Way Out West. We choose our daily region of operations based on weather and snow conditions. Some of our best terrain is only several minutes of flight time away from base. Each zone has numerous terrain options amongst towering granite spires and walls and glacier-carved valleys. Terrain includes wide open bowls and cirques, couloirs, ramps, aprons, and glades.

- Landing Zones range from 7,000' to 8,600'
- Pickup Zones range from 4,000' to 6,000'
- Runs range from 1,500 to 3,500 vertical feet

PREPARATION & FITNESS

Heli-skiing is a thrilling but often strenuous activity. Be prepared for quad-burning deep powder runs, massive vertical descents, and variable backcountry snow and weather conditions. Obviously, skiing or snowboarding as much as possible before your arrival is the best and most enjoyable training.

We also recommend a pre-heli training program that includes cardio, strength training, stretching and good nutrition. Being prepared physically will help maximize your heli-skiing experience. Check out the following sites for training programs that can help whip you into shape:

Mountain Tactical Institute -

<http://mntactical.com/shop/dryland-ski-training-program/>

Uphill Athlete -

<https://www.uphillathlete.com/training-plans/#ski-mountaineering-training>

ABILITY

Skiers and riders should be at a strong intermediate ability level at minimum and able to handle diverse snow and weather conditions

Strong Intermediate - You confidently ski or ride all snow conditions including deep powder, hard pack, wind buff, heavy snow, etc. on moderately steep slopes

Advanced - You ski or ride steeper, more challenging slopes in all snow conditions but avoid no-fall zones and technical terrain

Expert - You competently ski or ride all snow conditions and can handle all but the gnarliest, most technical terrain

Pro - If you're a pro, we don't have to explain this to you

TRIP INSURANCE

We strongly recommend that our guests buy trip insurance to protect their heli-skiing investments. For a fraction of the total trip cost, trip insurance may cover many unforeseen expenses including trip cancellations/delays, flight cancellations/delays, missed flight connections, lodging, guiding fees, emergency medical expenses, lost baggage and more. We recommend that you purchase a policy with a "cancel for any reason" clause. Depending on the carrier and the policy you may be reimbursed for the entire cost of your trip in some cases. Also, check to see if your homeowners insurance policy includes trip or travel insurance.

Some of the companies offering heli-skiing trip insurance include:

- [Ripcord](#)
- [World Nomads](#)
- [Dogtag](#)
- [Travel Guard](#)

As always, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. See you in snowy Mazama!

****FOR REVIEW ONLY, DO NOT SIGN AND RETURN - YOU WILL SIGN A WAIVER IN MAZAMA FOLLOWING YOUR ORIENTATION AND SAFETY BRIEFING****

PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT, RELEASE, AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK

In consideration of the services of North Cascade Heli-Skiing, Inc., their agents, owners, officers, volunteers, participants, employees, and all other persons or entities acting in any capacity on their behalf (hereinafter collectively referred to as "NCHS"), I hereby agree to release, indemnify, and discharge NCHS, on behalf of myself, my children, my parents, my heirs, assigns, personal representative and estate as follows:

1. I acknowledge that my participation in helicopter & snow cat skiing and/or boarding, and avalanche control activities entails known and unanticipated risks that could result in physical or emotional injury, paralysis, death, or damage to myself, to property, or to third parties. I understand that such risks simply cannot be eliminated without jeopardizing the essential qualities of the activity.

The risks include, among other things: traveling in forested areas, rugged terrain, or inclement weather; falling objects; slips and falls; rope burns; pinches, scrapes, twists and jolts that could result in scratches, bruises, sprains, lacerations, fractures, concussions, or even more severe life threatening hazards; hidden obstacles by snow including crevasses, ice and snow cornices, tree wells, tree stumps, creeks rocks and boulders, below the snow surface; loss or damage to equipment being used; being lost or separated from their guides or companions by traveling in forested areas, rugged terrain, or bad weather; exposure to altitude and cold including hypothermia, frostbite, acute mountain sickness, exhaustion, cerebral and pulmonary edema; natural forces including steepness of slopes, snow depth, instability of snow pack or varying and difficult weather; snow conditions may cause avalanches; exposure to altitude and cold including hypothermia, frostnip, frostbite, acute mountain sickness, and exhaustion; exposure to potentially dangerous wild animals, insect bites, and hazardous plant life; water hazards; equipment failure; improper lifting or carrying; my own physical condition, and the physical exertion associated with this activity. Weather and altitude can be extreme and can change rapidly without warning. The areas may not have been traveled previously and are not regularly patrolled. Communication in this mountain terrain is always difficult and in the event of an accident, rescue and medical treatment may not be immediately available. Helicopter and other transportation travel, including mechanical failure and operational error have increased risks in mountainous areas, especially in winter weather conditions. Furthermore, NCHS instructors have difficult jobs to perform. They seek safety, but they are not infallible. They might be unaware of a participant's fitness or abilities. They might misjudge the weather, the elements, or the terrain. They may give inadequate warnings or instructions, and the equipment being used might malfunction.

2. I expressly agree and promise to accept and assume all of the risks existing in this activity. My participation in this activity is purely voluntary, and I elect to participate in spite of the risks.

3. I hereby voluntarily release, forever discharge, and agree to indemnify and hold harmless NCHS from any and all claims, demands, or causes of action, which are in any way connected with my participation in this activity or my use of NCHS's equipment or facilities, including any such Claims which allege negligent acts or omissions of NCHS.

4. Should NCHS or anyone acting on their behalf, be required to incur attorney's fees and costs to enforce this agreement, I agree to indemnify and hold them harmless for all such fees and costs.

5. I certify that I have adequate insurance to cover any injury or damage I may cause or suffer while participating, or else I agree to bear the costs of such injury or damage myself. I further certify that I am willing to assume the risk of any medical or physical condition I may have.

6. In the event that I file a lawsuit against NCHS, I agree to do so solely in the state of Washington, and I further agree that the substantive law of that state shall apply in that action without regard to the conflict of law rules of that state. I agree that if any portion of this agreement is found to be void or unenforceable, the remaining portions shall remain in full force and effect.

By signing this document, I acknowledge that if anyone is hurt or property is damaged during my participation in this activity, I may be found by a court of law to have waived my right to maintain a lawsuit against NCHS on the basis of any claim from which I have released them herein. I have had sufficient opportunity to read this entire document. I have read and understood it, and I agree to be bound by its terms.

Print Name _____ Phone Number _____
Address _____ City _____
State _____ Zip _____ Email _____

Signature of Participant _____ Date _____

**PARENT'S OR GUARDIAN'S ADDITIONAL INDEMNIFICATION
(Must be completed for participants under the age of 18)**

In consideration of (print minor's name) ("Minor") _____ being permitted by NCHS to participate in its activities and to use its equipment and facilities, I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless NCHS from any and all Claims which are brought by, or on behalf of Minor, and which are in any way connected with such use or participation by Minor.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____