



## **NORTH CASCADE HELI 2027 3 OR 4 NIGHT YURT TRIP GUEST INFORMATION**

The following information will answer most of your questions regarding your yurt 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](mailto: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 yurt trip with us. Please review all of our policies at <https://heli-ski.com/about/policies>.

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.

We provide all meals during your time at the yurt, so if you have dietary issues or allergies, please let the NCH office know ASAP. We can accommodate almost any diet other than vegan, kosher, or truly severe nut allergies.

### **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

- If we are unable to fly for the entire reserved period, a full credit will be issued that may be used the same season (based on availability) or the following season.
- If we fly in one day late, no refund will be issued for the first day missed. If we fly out late, there will not be additional charges.

## 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 and 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](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov).

## ARRIVAL DAY

Guests must arrive at the Heli Barn **by Noon** on the first scheduled day of the trip. Please be on time and give us a heads up if you expect to be late. We recommend that you arrive in the Methow Valley the evening before to avoid delays. Parking is available at the Heli Barn. If parking your vehicle at the Heli Barn, you must leave your keys with the office so that we can move your vehicle for snow plowing.

The arrival day procedure includes:

- Check-in at the Heli Barn
- Sign the Release of Liability & Assumption of Risk (mandatory before flying)
- Bring all of your gear and supplies into the Heli Barn
- Indoor safety briefing
- Weigh-in (stand on the scale wearing ski attire, boots and day touring pack)
- Outside avalanche transceiver orientation and practice
- Helicopter procedures briefing

- Groups and gear are flown to the yurt
- Overnight gear, food and supplies are unloaded at the yurt and then we may go touring, but the primary goal on the first day is to get to the yurt.

Space and weight limitations in the helicopter require that you pack efficiently and minimize the gear that you bring. Don't pack the kitchen sink. We recommend organizing your gear like this:

- Touring pack (max 30 liters): packed with all your touring gear (skins, goggles, extra layers, etc.). Fully loaded, this pack should weigh 20 lbs or less.
- Small and light duffel bag (max 40 liters) for overnight gear. This bag must not have wheels, a frame of any kind, or any rigid parts. **Please pack only the essentials** (See yurt trip gear list below). If your bag is too large or does not meet the above requirements, we may repack your gear into a provided duffel bag.
- Sleeping bag in a separate compression stuff sack.

## DAILY ROUTINE

- Enjoy breakfast, make a plan and get ready to tour
- Tour as much as weather, snow conditions and endurance allow - we will stop for lunch or eat on the go depending on the group
- Head back to the yurt for dinner and après

## DEPARTURE

We generally fly home from the yurt by 4:30 PM on the last scheduled day after touring. However, weather conditions may necessitate an earlier or later departure, so plan for an extra day just in case.

## LIBATIONS

Just like you, we like beer after skiing powder all day! Please note that all beer should be in **CANS**. Boxed wine is best, but glass bottles are allowed. Spirits may be in glass or plastic bottles. Leftover alcohol stays at the yurt.

## YURT TRIP GEAR LIST

All of our backcountry skiing and snowboarding programs are subject to rapid and severe changes in the weather. Select attire that is warm, waterproof, windproof, lightweight, breathable, comfortable, and durable.

### Clothing

- Socks: (2 pairs). Wool or synthetic. Ski-specific. If you're prone to blisters, bring 1-2 pairs of thin liner socks.

- Thermals: top and bottom (1-2 sets). Silkweight or Lightweight.
- Lightweight fleece: top (1). Patagonia's R1 is a good option.
- Softshell pants: (1 pair). Ski specific that fit over your boots.
- Softshell jacket: (1). Breathable with hood.
- Insulated jacket: (1). Synthetic insulation is recommended over down. A hood is recommended.
- Hardshell pants: (1). Waterproof and breathable. If your softshell pants shed snow well, these may be optional. Must fit over your ski boots.
- Hardshell jacket: (1). Waterproof and breathable.
- Gloves: (2 sets). 1 pair of lightweight windproof gloves for skinning, and 1 pair of warmer waterproof, breathable gloves for descending. If significant precipitation is expected, a third "backup" pair of gloves is recommended.
- Sun hat: (1). Lightweight billed hat.
- Warm ski hat (1-2). Synthetic.
- Balaclava/neck gaiter. Lightweight, thin.

### **Ski Gear**

- Boots: Modern. Alpine touring, plastic telemark or snowboard boots are required. AT/Tele boots must have a walk mode.
- Skis: Ideally a fat ski with rocker in the tip and tail that is still lightweight. Most of our guides ski on skis with a waist width in the 105-120mm range. We do not have alpine touring skis available.
- Snowboarders must have a splitboard (snowshoes are not practical in our snowpack). We do not have splitboards available.
- For Telemark skiers, it is critical that you have a free-touring binding (e.g. that disengages from the springs for ascending. No three pins - it's 2026.
- Poles: Adjustable poles recommended, and three-piece collapsible poles are strongly recommended for splitboarders.
- Ski Strap: Long enough to hold your skis and poles together.
- Skins: Cut to fit your skis or board with adhesive free of debris (dirt, pine needles, dog hair)
- Transceiver: You may borrow one of our BCA Tracker 2 beacons or bring your own. All transceivers should be modern three-antenna units less than 5 years old. Bring extra batteries.
- Shovel: Must be metal, collapsible and designed for avalanche rescue.
- Probe: Must be 280cm or longer.
- Ski Pack: Ideally, a ski-specific day touring pack around 30 liters with a separate compartment for your avalanche rescue tools as well as a ski attachment system. If you wear a helmet in the backcountry, we strongly recommend a pack with an outside helmet carry system.
- Reusable water bottle and/or thermos. Ability to hold ~2 liters of total fluid for the day. We like the combination of a 1 liter thermos of hot liquid and a 1 liter collapsible water bottle. We strongly recommend NOT bringing a water bladder unless you have a proven way to keep the hose from freezing.
- Sunscreen / Lip Balm.

- Sunglasses: 100% UVA/UVB protection.
- Goggles: Light colored lenses that work well in flat light conditions.
- Repair Kit: Guides carry larger repair kits, but please bring anything specific to your skis and/or bindings. For splitboarders, it is critical that you bring extra screws for your binding setup.

If your current gear is outdated, the Goat's Beard Mountain Supply in Mazama rents high quality touring gear, including splitboards. Reserve by calling 509-996-2515.

Avalanche airbag backpacks are optional. We have a limited quantity of BCA Float 22 packs available. The Goat's Beard also rents BCA Float packs.

### **Yurt Gear**

- Duffel bag: Small (max 40 liters). No wheels / frame.
- Sleeping bag: Down or synthetic. 20 degree rating. Compression stuff sack.
- Yurt clothes (1 set). Comfy, warm clothes for indoor use (pants / socks / T-shirt / sweatshirt)
- Slippers or comfortable shoes. For use inside the yurt.
- Headlamp. Lightweight LED with extra batteries.
- Food. We provide ALL food, including snacks. If there's anything that you really can't live without, such as energy gels, fancy chocolate, etc. then you're welcome to bring it along.
- Blister protection. A small supply of moleskin, molefoam, second skin, athletic tape, etc.
- Personal effects: Hygiene kit, etc.

Again, it is imperative that you stick to the gear list and do not exceed the size and weight limits. Please ask if you have any questions well in advance of your trip.

### **ABOUT THE BARRON YURT**

The yurt is about 30 feet in diameter and sleeps 10 (8 guests and 2 guides). It has a wood and propane stove, propane lights, well-equipped kitchen with propane cook stove plus indoor shower and bathroom. Single and queen size bunks are available with foam mattresses and linens.

### **TERRAIN**

The yurt is located just north of Hart's Pass in the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest in the heart of the North Cascades at 6,000'. We have excellent backcountry skiing terrain virtually right out the door. This includes Tamarack Peak, about a 20-minute skin with descents on all aspects, and Buffalo Ridge, about a 30-minute skin with plenty of delicious lines. Most of the terrain is moderate to advanced with some rowdier options available. Descents range from

800'-1,500' per line. Best of all, we have this terrain all to ourselves thanks to the remote location and difficulty accessing it unless one has a helicopter.

## **PREPARATION**

Backcountry touring in the North Cascades is an exhilarating but often strenuous activity. After the heli drops us off at the yurt, we're earning our turns. Plan for multiple ascents and descents with variable backcountry snow and weather conditions. Breaking trail and ascending challenging terrain during poor weather conditions may be required. Obviously, touring as much as possible before your trip is the best and most enjoyable way to prepare.

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

Mountain Tactical Institute -

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

Uphill Athlete -

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

## **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.

We advise our guests to research several companies to purchase the policy that works best for you. 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: \_\_\_\_\_