

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS 2007

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With a pot of thick black “Kwik Trip” coffee, a pack of beef jerky, my freshly soaped 30-year old cowboy boots, and a resurrected Panama Jack cowboy hat, I was ready to board the motor coach for “Cow Town USA”. Apparently the “cowboy apparel memo” wasn't widely circulated though, as there were only two of us on the coach that were dressed appropriately...

Boarding the plane, it became apparent that we were surrounded by a renegade group of NASTAR ski racers that were ironically scheduled to compete in the NASTAR National Finals at Steamboat, during the same time period as our visit. When we got off the plane at Hayden International (it's not really an international airport, but it sounds kind of impressive...) we walked across the tarmac in a pouring rain. I had vivid flash backs of the ill fated 2006 Red Eye trip arrival to pouring rain in Salt Lake City. Thankfully my cowboy hat was semi waterproof, which helped keep that thin spot on the top of my head from getting soaked. With nary a flake of snow in sight we headed off on the 30-minute shuttle to the Lodge at Steamboat, praying in unison with the NASTAR racers that we would miraculously find snow on the mountain.

It turned out that there was in fact plenty of snow on all of the runs at Steamboat, but the weather remained unusually warm. What little precipitation fell during our stay was mostly in the form of very light rain. Much like our trip to Whistler/Blackcomb last year, the successful “lift” strategy was to ride the gondola to mid-mountain both going up in the morning AND coming back down at the end of the day. Skiing at the highest possible altitude always provided the better snow conditions.

The 3-bedroom condominium accommodations at “The Lodge at Steamboat” were just terrific, and the frequent shuttle buses made getting around Steamboat a breeze. We had easy access to the lifts, grocery stores, ski shops, restaurants, and nightlife entertainment.

The bullet point highlights from Steamboat (many of which are supported with photographic evidence) include:

- A fabulous Sunday evening Red Eye spaghetti dinner / Birthday party (for Fred Hooser who turned 39 one more time...) coordinated by our lovely condo hostess Mary Anne Kies. It was an awesome spread of great food including a huge birthday cake! I'm going to trade my Cinnamon Raison French

Toast recipe with Mary Anne for her original Italian Spaghetti Sauce.



- An unusual Red Eye ski trip coincidence occurred on this trip in that the average daytime temp at Steamboat, and the average Red Eye trip participants age were both the exact same number, 60!
- The unusually warm spring temps and bright sunlight turned what is universally known as “Ski Town USA”, into what we are now referring to as “Slush Mountain USA”. Water skis would have worked

well by mid-afternoon.



- After three days of skiing with neither coat nor gloves, even the SPF-50 couldn't prevent a distinct sun tan line from forming on both of my wrists. Fortunately I was wearing pants at all times...
- The soft snow conditions made some of the flat “green” runs very slow, which created a bit of crowding on the intermediate “blue” runs. BUT that same soft snow also made many of the more difficult “black diamond” runs ski-able for even some of us intermediate level Red Eyes! While “Fred & Fred” (and company) are rumored to have tamed the nastiest “black diamond trees and moguls” that Steamboat offered up, I'm very lucky to have survived “ROLEX”, a Steamboat signature 800 foot black diamond vertical mogul head wall...
- Without some of the regular hard partying Red Eyes on this trip, Jon “Party Boy” Seep and I had to coerce some of the casual beverage consumers to step it up a notch at Steamboat. While only a couple of us actually made it to the “Tug Boat” dance floor, we found several Après ski sun deck opportunities at the base of the main gondola. During one of the more entertaining sun deck outings I accidentally demonstrated the trick of pouring Steamboat Pale Ale (a fabulous local brew) into my new ski boot. Sometimes I'm such a “dork”...
- Speaking of “new equipment”. Carol “Bad Girl of the North” and formerly “Flying Figi” is all decked out in brand new Atomic skis and Dalbello ski boots courtesy of the fine retailers at the Steamboat Ski Shop. Unlike Linda Johnson and Maggie Smith who pulled a similar stunt last spring at Afton Alps, Carol was not inebriated at the point of purchase...
- It wouldn't be Steamboat Springs without horseback riding, so yes; two anonymous Red Eye cowboys (or cowgirls) went calf roping at “Del's Triangle 3 Ranch”. (No there wasn't really any calf roping, but I'm trying to make this stuff sound good...). After a couple glasses of liquid courage it was revealed

that one of them had never even been on a horse before... Oops!



The safe return of all 28 Red Eyes from Steamboat concludes a very successful 2007 ski club trip season. Thank you to trip leaders Fred Hoeser and Carol Figi for going the extra mile in putting together this great Steamboat trip!