

# Cheap Skiing Guide™

Special Adventure Edition

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Given that the experience every ski area offers is directly related to the conditions, it's hard to review a resort objectively. A puny little Midwestern mountain with a laughable amount of vertical could possibly be a whole lot more fun than a world-class area if the snow is fresh and deep at the former... and not at the latter. So it's difficult to hide my bias when I visit a place like Jackson Hole... especially when the conditions are awesome. Given its reputation for steep terrain, it wouldn't be difficult to imagine this area a lot less enjoyable without the deep fresh snow that usually covers it (annual average: 459 inches). I don't know the average pitch but it's seemed to me an adrenalin junkie's paradise and it's one of the few areas in the country that is steep enough to see the top (10,450 ft) from the base (6311 ft.). Fifty percent of the mountain is touted as expert terrain, forty percent intermediate. Only ten percent remains for beginners. I'm not certain where the beginner area is but I did not find anything that could even remotely be considered novice off any of the lifts I rode. (I admit I did not ride the Teewinot quad.)

I might have had a better experience had management supplied me with a guide who could show me some secret stashes... but I doubt it. With 2500 ski-able acres, it's hard to imagine finding terrain more exciting than what I'd found. The Ski Tracks app on my Iphone recorded more than 70,000 vertical feet and 60 miles of downhill distance during my four-day visit. (If you have an Iphone (or compatible), the app is really cool and only costs \$0.99.)

The light was flat my first two days there... but it was snowing so I couldn't complain. I stayed in the trees and out of the bowls as much as possible. It was a lot easier to see in the glades. The next two days were sunny with that deep, navy blue sky, for which the west is well known. The bowls were



*View from the top, 10,450 ft. elevation*

awesome in the sun... navigable, steep, and the dry light snow made maneuvering with confidence a cinch, regardless of the pitch. Not a patch of ice to be found. The base ranged from 91 to 127 inches... that's packed snow over ten feet deep!

There are actually two mountains at Jackson Hole, *Après Vous* and *Rendezvous*. *Après Vous* (which, in French means "after you") is the gentler of the two and where you find more intermediate skiing and riding. The more aggressive skiers are over on *Rendezvous*. The mountain(s) are spread out so if you



*Soft, inviting bumps.*

are staying at the southern end of Teton Village, it's quite a traverse from *Après Vous*. The French influence likely came from Canadian fur trappers who entered the region circa 1820. They affectionately referred to the Grand, Middle, and South Teton peaks as *Les Trois Teton* (the three breasts).

One of my favorite sections was the *Hobacks*. It's divided into three trails but in name only. The terrain is broad, steep, and



*Nothing beats fresh snow.*



*Corbet's Couloir; Jackson Hole's adrenalin rush.*



*The Grand Tetons*

it's about 2500 vertical feet from top to bottom. If it's your last run of the day (it was mine everyday), it's a workout. Hot tub, tequila, and ibuprofen were usually my first thoughts by the time I reached the bottom.

The town of Jackson, just 12 miles south, and east over the Snake River, is a nice après ski attraction with the Million Dollar Cowboy Bar where bar stools are topped with western saddles and the Silver Dollar Grill (in the famous Wort Hotel), that boasts over 2000 silver dollars embedded into their bar and tables. And don't miss The Bunnery for hearty but unique breakfast. Cuisine in Jackson is eclectic, from the common beef burger or steak to the same cut from bison or elk. Fresh seafood is also on many a menu but you won't hear surf from Jackson.

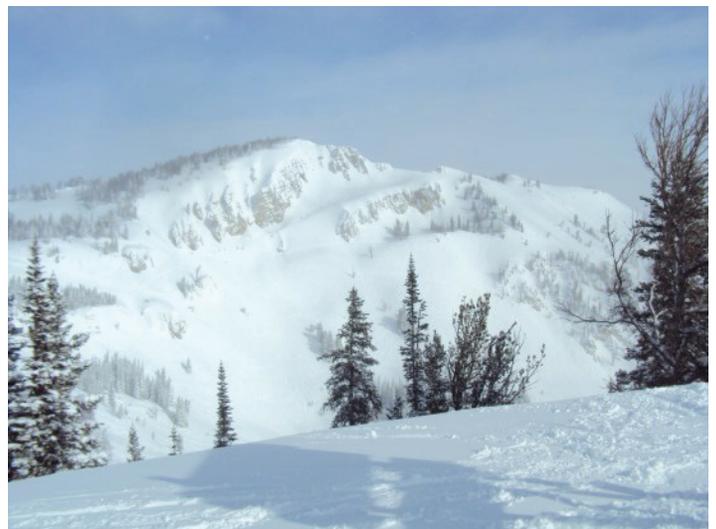
The town of Jackson is quaint and historic. It's chock full of shopping opportunities for anyone who likes to spend money. They cater to the tourist without making you feel like one. The town square entrances are arched with hundreds of elk horns assembled together. But wait...elk, like many other antlered mammals, shed their crowns annually so there's much more gathering involved in their acquisition than hunting. But if you'd like to see elk...hundreds of them, the National Elk Refuge is right along the road to (or from) the airport. Even if you don't ski (perish the thought), there's plenty to do in this

region. In fact, the summer population is more than double what it is during the winter months. Yellowstone is less than an hour from Jackson and, according to the locals, there's no better place to fly fish.

If you're interested in visiting Jackson Hole, it's relatively easy to get to. Your first stop should be to check out [www.jacksonhole.com](http://www.jacksonhole.com).



*The view on the way to the Hobacks.*



*Headwall climbers.*



*Steep like this.*