

Whistler continues to thrive as year-round tourist destination

Travel Talk

MIKE COHEN

WHISTLER, BC – It was in 2010 that Whistler, B.C (www.tourismwhistler.com) gained world-wide recognition when it served as one of the host cities for the Winter Olympics. My family and I recently returned for our second visit. Given the fact we are not skiers, we like to spend time at this year-round tourist destination during the summer.

We were based in Vancouver for the first part of our trip. It is a two hour trip and as you climb the mountains absolutely gorgeous scenery jumps out on you.

There are many things to do in the Village, the heart of Whistler. You can stay in a centrally located hotel, walk the Village Stroll, indulge yourself at one of many places to eat and browse the unique shops. The Village is located at the base of the lifts, making access to Whistler and Blackcomb Mountains convenient for skiing, snowboarding and sightseeing. Whistler Village is big enough to have all the amenities expected of a world-class resort, yet small enough for you to feel its unique mountain culture and distinctive hospitality.

There is no better experience than the Peak 2 Peak Gondola. You first take the Whistler Express Gondola from the Village, which takes 25 minutes. You'll arrive at the Roundhouse, a lodge where you can have lunch or a snack, and take in the spectacular view of the mountains on the opposite side of the valley. We took advantage of that opportunity. The view as I enjoyed my Miso soup was absolutely spectacular. Our



next move would have been to hop on the Peak 2 Peak Gondola for a thrilling 11-minute ride over to Blackcomb Mountain.

Besides the Peak 2 Peak Gondola, which still holds the Guinness World Record for longest and highest lift, The Peak Cloudraker Suspension Skybridge is the latest attraction and it was part of our 360 package. It is 130 metres long and goes from Whistler Peak to the West Ridge, which crosses the Whistler Bowl. Upon completion it will have a viewing platform on the West Ridge side. I look forward to coming back when the lookout is completed. Yes the bridge does sway a bit, but we all felt very secure. We even saw someone navigating it in a wheelchair.

We were so pleased to spend some time at The Hilton Whistler (www.hiltonwhistler.com). Our family thoroughly enjoyed a day at the outdoor pool area, which has plenty of very comfortable lounge chairs and umbrella coverage. The water was the perfect temperature and the pool itself a nice size. There are two Jacuzzis, one outside the other in the fitness center. You can also soothe your sore muscles in the sauna. The pool area is completely handicapped accessible, with a level walkway from the elevators and lobby to the deck.

We were provided with a menu of items we could conveniently order right from our chairs. Three of us opted for the club house, featuring seven grain bread, perfectly grilled chicken, crispy bacon, lettuce, tomato, smoked cheddar, guacamole and mayonnaise with side salads and an order of crispy chicken tenders and yam fries. They also have a nice selection of drinks. We asked our server to recommend something sweet and she brought us some cool glasses of spiked strawberry lemonade. If you are at this Hilton on a Sunday, be sure to take advantage of the popular Bubbles, Beats and Brunch.

The hotel is ideally located in the heart of Whistler Village, host mountain resort of the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympics Games. There are 24-hour fitness and business centres here.



The beautiful pool at the Hilton Whistler.

Additional amenities for a comfortable Whistler getaway include lavish Peter Thomas Roth bath and body products, specialty Brew Selector by Cuisinart coffee maker, and 37" flat screen television. Wireless internet and local calls are included in each guestroom. Kitchens include a microwave, cooktop (no oven), refrigerator, dishwasher, and are fully equipped with cutlery, crockery, cookware, as well as a toaster and a kettle.

Sales and Marketing Director Allison Brown was kind enough to give me a tour of the property, noting that when it debuted in 1982 it was the first large hotel to open in Whistler. All the rooms and hallways have been recently renovated in this beautiful 287 room facility. Next on the agenda will be a revamp of the large reception area. The rooms I saw were lovely. The chalet style Premier Studio, for instance, boasts 600+ sq. ft. and is ideal for families or those desiring more room. This self-contained studio features a well equipped kitchen, breakfast bar, wood burning fireplace, sitting area and balcony. The oversized bathroom includes a deep soaker tub, some equipped with air jets. Many of these studios can be connected to a Hilton Room with two double beds for additional space and comfort.

The spacious and luxuriously appointed two bedroom Alpine Suite features a wood burning fireplace, well equipped kitchen, in-suite laundry, balcony, and even a steam room or sauna to relax those tired



Ski season is now at its "peak" in Whistler.



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WHISTLER – There are some fantastic dining choices in Whistler's village area



Steak and lobster at Hy's.

We were very excited to return to the Brewhouse Restaurant (www.markjamesgroup.com/brewhouse.html). This is one of the busiest spots in Whistler Village all year round. With a separate restaurant, bar and mezzanine, the Whistler Brewhouse is capable of accommodating groups large and small. The pub has a cozy two-sided fireplace and lots of TVs, making it the perfect place to watch the game when you're tired from playing all day. The restaurant is warm and family friendly with a great kids' menu and a huge patio for Whistler's long, hot summers. The cuisine is an inspired and appetizing mix of barbeque and rotisserie classics, with exceptional pizza and pasta options. These flavours are complemented by their range of handcrafted ales and lagers, brewed onsite. There are even four kinds of poutine. Our server, Juilie, is from Sherbrooke, Quebec and has been here for seven years. Try the huge bowl of Matzo Ball Soup, the Szechuan chicken lettuce wraps and the tempura tuna maki roll, a brick oven pizza or the beef sliders.

One of our favorite and more unique spots we recalled from our last visit to Whistler was the Mongolie Grill (www.mongoliegrill.com). This is the ultimate "fun" dining experience with fresh and tasty ingredients grilled to perfection in front of your eyes! I love the creative aspect to this place, where you go about choosing your own stir-fry combination! Select your favourite ingredients and flavour with your chosen sauce combinations. Your meal will be weighed by the chefs then the-



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atrically grilled to perfection.

Hy's Steakhouse & Cocktail Bar (www.hyssteakhouse.com) is always a special dining experience and their Whistler location is no exception. Every ingredient is chosen to highlight the top quality of perfectly grilled steaks and the freshest fish and seafood. A wide range of classic and modern appetizers and accompaniments make choosing difficult, but satisfaction guaranteed. With a hungry four year old in our party, we ordered some delicious bread cheese toast to fill his empty tummy. The adults liked it as well. For appetizers we shared the Ahi Tuna and a nice Caesar salad while our little man requested and received a bowl of kid's macaroni and cheese. For the main courses, two of us selected the eight ounce filet mignon, it was perfectly grilled and cut like butter. The 20 ounce bone in rib was more than enough for two others to share while the remaining order consisted of prawns and scallops. While we were all quite full, the six of us happily split a piece of chocolate bourbon cake.

If you are looking for the best sushi in Whistler, consider Harajuku Izakaya (<https://www.harajuku.ca>). We were delighted with the selection. Harajuku has a very original menu. For starters we recommend the tuna avocado yukke, the popcorn calamari, the brie cheese, the black cod. We opted for three kinds of assorted sashimi (Albacore tuna, Sockeye salmon and Yellowtail). Next came Avocado Oshi Sushi, Salmon Avocado Poke, crispy tuna roll and Rock n' roll. Reservations are recommended. Call 604- 962-7222.

muscles after a day of adventure. The stylish living room has a double sized sofa bed, and three 37 inch flat screen televisions, featuring HD programming. The master bedroom includes a king sized bed while the second bedroom contains a queen. Alpine Two Bedroom Suites can connect to a Signature Spa Room to create a three bedroom suite.

Escape Whistler (www.escapewhistler.com) was a lot of fun. There are four escape rooms to try: Pirate ship, Pinball Machine, Buried Cabin or Rabbit Hole. Each room is very different in terms of

game, difficulty and style. If you are an escape room veteran, you could be confident to try any of the rooms straight off the bat. The Pinball Machine was our choice. The games are suitable for all ages and this is fantastic team building or family outing activity for everyone to enjoy. They are open seven days a week. Info: 604-962-1117.

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sunyouth

WHISTLER – There are some fantastic dining choices in Whistler's village area



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Echoes of Sun Youth

by Nicolas Carpentier

Sun Youth Communications
Department



Montreal Canadiens Congratulate Hornets Midget Football team on their wins



Photos: Joseph Munro

A moment the Hornets will remember for a long time. **Shea Weber, Brendan Gallagher and Paul Byron (and Youppi!)** visited the team to congratulate them on their perfect season.

The Sun Youth Hornets Midget football team had a great season, an amazing season, winning the Quebec Midget Football League (QMFL) Provincial Championship and getting their hands on the Doug Britton Cup by shutting out the North Shore Mustangs 24 to 0. This victory led them to take part in the Interprovincial Bowl where they defeated the Ottawa Knights 37 to 1. While the last time that the Midgets were awarded the Doug Britton Cup was in 2014, the young athletes in this year's team were all part of the Bantam team that won both the provincial and interprovincial championships in 2017.



Assistant Captain **Brendan Gallagher** signing a Montreal Canadiens jersey for Hornets Midget player **Jeff Medeiros**.

Their awesome track record didn't go unnoticed, especially by the Montreal Canadiens. On December 3rd, the Midgets were gathered at Sun Youth's former headquarters (Baron Byng on St. Urbain) to celebrate their victories with coaches and parents but the *Habs* had a special surprise in store for them. In addition to the team's mascot Youppi! (who caused quite a stir when he first walked in the room where the event was held), the Canadiens had sent three of their best men to congratulate the Hornets: Captain Shea Weber and Assistant Captains Paul Byron and Brendan Gallagher. "We heard about your season and we wanted to come and congratulate you guys", said Montreal Canadiens Captain Shea Weber to the players in attendance.

This event was part of the Montreal Canadiens' "Random Acts of Kindness" initiative. Bearing more than words of encouragement, the trio gave each player and their family tickets to a January 2019 game against the Florida Panthers and Montreal Canadiens tuques. They also presented a \$4,000 cheque on behalf of Sports Experts to support Sun Youth's Sports & Recreation program. After supper (also offered by the Canadiens), the Habs players and the Hornets went into the gym to play a friendly game of touch football. Paul Byron scored a touchdown on an interception while all in attendance had a chance to see that Weber's throw of the ball is as powerful as his one-timers.

It was also a very emotional moment for Sun Youth's General Director Johanne Saltarelli, who wished the organization's late co-founder Earl De La Perralle had been there to see the smiles on the kids' faces. This visit was a unique opportunity for the Hornets to meet their favourite hockey players, get their autographs and have their picture taken with them. The event ended with Weber, Byron, Gallagher and Youppi! joining the Hornets in their team chant, a moment the young athletes will remember for a long time.

This space is offered by a donor of Sun Youth in collaboration with **The Montrealer**. For more information on our programs visit our website at www.sunyouthorg.com. For more news and information on Sun Youth and the community, like us on **Facebook**, follow us on **Twitter** and **Instagram** and connect with us on **LinkedIn**.