



One of the guided tour groups after climbing to the top of The Cirque at Snowmass at 12,510

Aspen / Snowmass Trip - February & March 2011

The Aspen trip was just about perfect. There were no major travel issues for anyone either going to Snowmass or returning home. The weather provided us both with sunny days and powder, along with comfortable temperatures and low wind conditions. We also selected an off week which had very light traffic on the slopes and short to nonexistent lift lines

The Stonebridge Inn was a total hit with the 58 club members who attended: slope side location, a great breakfast buffet, comfortable beds, good long reasonable happy hour, convenient ground floor ski lockers, excellent restaurant, and a bus stop near the front door. The only complaint was that it was too warm, but then the Tampa Bay Club thought it was too cold. However, we could always open a window to drop the temp if we needed.

On **Sunday**, the group that came in a day early skied with about 4 inches of fresh snow and sun.

Monday was a bluebird day and we had 7 private guides provided by Aspen Skiing Company meet us on the slope at the Inn to give us guided tours of Snowmass based on the skiing ability of each of our 7 groups. On Monday evening we had a Meet & Greet / Beer, Wine & Cheese Party followed by a presentation by Aspen about the four mountains and the off mountain activities. Following that we had a bar food dinner.

Tuesday and **Wednesday** were bright sunny days with the group breaking up into smaller groups to mostly ski at Aspen and Aspen Highlands, some actually skied two mountains on the same day. Wednesday night we went into Aspen to have



Happy Hour at the Artisan Bar in The Stonebridge Inn

a family style BBQ dinner at The Hickory House which was wonderful. Kudos to the Aspen / Snowmass bus service for providing our group a free special bus to the Hickory House and when we were finishing dinner we were able to call for another special bus to pick us up at the restaurant and drop us off back at the Stonebridge Inn.

Thursday was a mixed weather day starting out mostly cloudy and changing to heavy snow by early afternoon and overnight. The group again was skiing different mountains in smaller groups.



At the top of Aspen Mountain 11,200 feet

Friday was a blue bird 6 to 10 inch powder day. About 15 of our group who signed up on Monday evening were able to participate in First Tracks. That group was able to get on the mountain an hour before the lifts opened at 9AM for about 50 minutes of

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Aspen at night

for another day or two, most of the club left to return home to Reno.

guided untracked powder on the slope and in the trees. However, Snowmass is so big and so vacant that there was plenty of powder for everyone for several hours after the lifts opened at 9 AM and powder stashes were found well into the afternoon.

Friday evening we had our final group cocktail and dinner event in a private room in the Stonebridge Inn with very high end appetizers and an outstanding dinner buffet provided by the Artisan Restaurant.

Saturday morning, while a few people had extended their stay



On the slope at Snowmass

In addition to the skiing and planned group events there were numerous trips to Aspen for shopping, dining and night life. On three days several people went to the large hot springs in Glenwood Springs, Colorado.

I want to thank my wife Claire, for all her help and patience. Also, I want to thank Todd Betterton, Suzie Jacox, and Ron Precivale for taking charge and coordinating the air, train and shuttle transportation groups. In addition, a double thanks to Kats Cannell for not only doing an outstanding job putting together the Aspen Trip web page but who also led a mini pre ski trip to Utah for those driving to Aspen Snowmass, who needed a powder fix on the way.

Vin Keenan

Hickory House BBQ



Friday Night's Buffet Dinner