

ADVENTURE

CMH Heli-Skiing's Bobbie Burns is the destination for racking up vertical on big mountain faces set against a stunning backdrop of glaciated terrain.



PHOTO BY THE PUBLIC WORKS/COURTESY OF CMH HELI-SKIING



# TAKING FLIGHT

AT CMH'S BOBBIE BURNS,  
A HELICOPTER DELIVERS YOU TO  
A REMOTE LODGE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA—AND  
TO MASSIVE VERTICAL AND MILES OF PRISTINE POWDER.  
BY RACHEL WALKER

“LOOK AT BABY CROW FLY!” From the bottom of a glorious, high alpine bowl on a glacier in Canada’s Selkirk and Purcell ranges, I crane my neck to watch a young man on the cusp of his 18th birthday arc graceful turns through boot-deep spring snow that’s as soft as cream cheese. The late March sky is a brilliant blue, and the sun has transformed the snow into a steep, sparkling carpet. The woman directing our group of seven to watch Baby Crow is Lindsay Andersen, one of the lead heli-skiing guides at CMH’s Bobbie Burns Lodge. Tall and lean, with the rugged, weathered look of someone who spends most of the year working and playing outside, she’s as adept at group dynamics as she is guiding us safely down glaciated, big mountain slopes. Heck, she’s convinced a burly, handsome high school senior to embrace the nickname “baby,” because coming from Andersen, it’s a term of endearment.

For seven days, we ski untracked, magnificent terrain whose scale seems impossible until the Bell 212 helicopter drops you on top of a run. It’s late spring, so we’re in the high alpine, where the avalanche danger has been reduced thanks to the snow’s freeze and thaw cycle. Early winter to mid-March, Bobbie Burns is famous for its lower-elevation tree skiing runs, which run several thousand feet through evergreen forests so deep with dry powder that they’re practically magical portals to another world.

In some ways, CMH is such a portal, thanks to the unique, storied experiences it delivers. The oldest heli-skiing operation in North America, CMH has 12 destinations in British Columbia with terrain that varies from friendly intermediate to raise-your-heartrate extreme slopes. Most of the destinations have their own lodge, and a stay at any one of them threatens to forever relegate resort skiing to the thing you do to bide the time until your next heli trip. »



Heli-skiing the high alpine with CMH

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# Powder Fix of a Lifetime

BOOK YOUR NEXT HELI-SKIING OR CAT-SKIING TRIP AT ONE OF THESE OPERATIONS, NEAR AND FAR.



Bobbie Burns Lodge



The lodge got a makeover in 2019.

The Bobbie Burns Lodge is a 32-bedroom, luxury base camp accessible by helicopter. Elegant and recently renovated, Bobbie Burns boasts an extensive wine cellar, outdoor hot tubs and a spotless workout room for morning stretch classes. A massive fireplace anchors the cozy common room. Chefs conjure gourmet meals and homemade pastries from the lodge's kitchen, while a friendly bartender keeps the drinks flowing and offers wine-pairing recommendations to go with the evening's dinner. Choosing a favorite meal is near impossible, but the red-wine-braised lamb shank served midway through our trip is fall-off-the-bone delectable. When my server—one of the heli-ski guides, because they all do double duty—brings dessert, he cheerfully fetches me an espresso, delivering it with a small chocolate on the side.

The combination of lodge life with the big mountain lines creates an insatiable urge to book next year's trip before this trip is even over. On one hand, the experience is exhilaratingly physical, and on the other, it's utter relaxation. Add in the low-key guides like Andersen, and it's supremely friendly to boot. Perhaps Andersen said it best, moments after Baby Crow skidded to a stop and gleefully sprayed his dad with snow: "Best spring turns of the year so far, eh? Why don't we go find some more?"

Why not, indeed? ♦

## CMH HELI-SKIING

CMH ([cmhheli.com](http://cmhheli.com)) has 12 lodges in British Columbia, where an average of 65 feet of fluffy light powder blanket the peaks annually. Trips to the Bobbie Burns Lodge can span four to seven days, and the season runs from Dec. 9 to April 21, 2023. CMH representatives meet guests at the Calgary airport and drive them west to a helipad just outside Parson, B.C.

From there, it's a dramatic 15-minute heli flight to the remote Bobbie Burns Lodge.

## TELLURIDE HELITRAX, TELLURIDE

With helicopter access to more than 200 square miles of U.S. Forest Service terrain surrounding Telluride in the San Juan Mountains, Telluride Helitrax ([helitrax.com](http://helitrax.com)) offers spectacular, above-treeline terrain for strong intermediate to expert skiers and snowboarders. Day trips include six runs, powder skis or snowboard, avalanche transceiver, airbag pack, and food and water.

## ELEVEN, SCARP RIDGE LODGE, CRESTED BUTTE

Each winter, storms sweep across the deserts of the western U.S. and unload 450 inches of light and dry snow in the West Elk Range, home to Eleven's ([elevenexperience.com](http://elevenexperience.com)) exclusive cat-skiing operation. Up to 10 guests stay in Crested Butte at the luxurious Scarp Ridge Lodge and then travel by snowcat 13 miles to Irwin for a day of guided exploration across more than 1,000 backcountry acres. With two beautiful chalets for meals, warm-ups and live music, Eleven seamlessly blends comfort and adventure.

## ASPEN HELI-SKIING, SILVERTON

It's hard to say what will be more spectacular: the private helicopter ride from Aspen to Silverton Mountain in southwestern Colorado's San Juan Mountains or the endless, untracked terrain available only to you, your guide and three of your luckiest friends ([heliskiaspen.com](http://heliskiaspen.com)).

FROM LEFT, PHOTOS BY BRAD WHITE; BY TAMMY HANRATTY; BY STEVE SEELEY/COURTESY OF CMH HELI-SKIING