



By Mike McPhee

A HIKING DREAMLAND AT BUGABOO LODGE.

Le paradis de la randonnée au Lodge Bugaboo

DESTINATION

Bugaboo Lodge



A perfect blend of adventure and tranquility on this unforgettable hike.

The granite rock spires of eastern British Columbia's Bugaboo Range rise out of the glacier and stand above the valley like sentinels guarding a secret sanctuary. The morning sun bathes the peaks in a warm light that adds to the already dramatic spectacle. This breathtaking place has long been the domain of heli-skiers and alpine climbers but is also home to some of the best hiking to be found on the continent. I have come to the historic Canadian Mountain Holidays (CMH) Bugaboo Lodge to experience heli-hiking in the most awe-inspiring setting.

One can feel the history of the local mountains and the lodge. Heli-skiing was invented here by Hans Gmoser in 1964. That's right—60 years ago! Before that, the area was a well-known mountaineering destination and many of the pioneers of Canadian alpine climbing—such as Conrad Kain—made history on the granite walls of the dramatic spires. World famous rock climbing and heli-skiing are augmented by incredible summer heli-hiking for various ability levels.

At 1,490 metres (4,888 feet) above sea level, the lodge is an impressive monument to the mountains. Built to take advantage of the views, every room is positioned to perfectly frame the rock spires and glaciers. The staff are friendly, knowledgeable

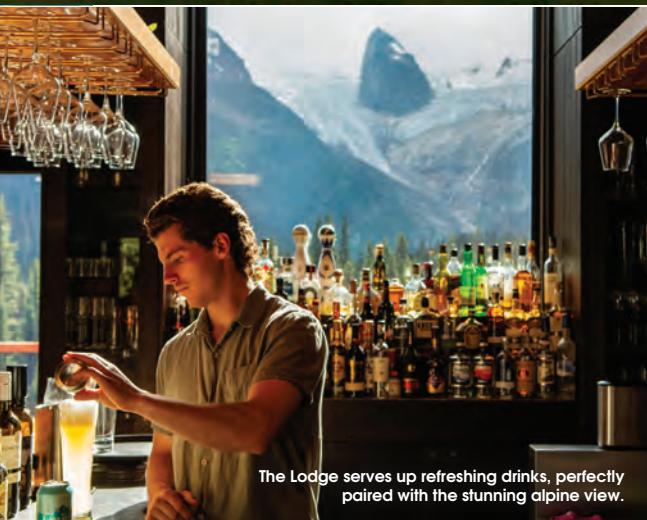
Les majestueuses aiguilles de granit de la chaîne des Bugaboo, dans l'est de la Colombie-Britannique, surgissent du glacier et surplombent la vallée, telles des sentinelles veillant sur un sanctuaire caché. Les premiers rayons du soleil baignent les sommets d'une lumière dorée, accentuant la beauté spectaculaire de ce paysage. Cet endroit à couper le souffle est depuis longtemps le domaine des amateurs d'hélico et des grimpeurs alpins, mais il offre également quelques-unes des plus belles randonnées du continent. C'est au légendaire Lodge Bugaboo, propriété de Canadian Mountain Holidays (CMH), que j'ai décidé de découvrir l'héli-randonnée dans un cadre époustouflant.

On ressent ici toute l'histoire des montagnes environnantes et du lodge lui-même. C'est en ce lieu qu'Hans Gmoser a inventé l'hélico en 1964 — il y a déjà soixante ans! Bien avant cela, la région attirait les passionnés d'alpinisme, et des pionniers de l'escalade au Canada, comme Conrad Kain, ont laissé leur empreinte sur les imposantes parois de ces aiguilles. Aujourd'hui, en plus de l'escalade de renommée mondiale et de l'hélico, l'héli-randonnée estivale, accessible à différents niveaux, est également proposée.

Perché à 1 490 mètres d'altitude (4 888 pieds), le lodge est un véritable hommage à la majesté des montagnes. Construit pour sublimer la vue, chaque chambre est orientée de manière à encadrer parfaitement les aiguilles de granit et les glaciers environnants. Le personnel, toujours accueillant, compétent et attentif, incarne parfaitement la philosophie de CMH, centrée sur le client. Les installations incluent une salle de sport avec espace d'étirements, un spa, un sauna, et un bain à remous sur le toit. La salle à manger et le bar, idéalement situés, permettent de profiter pleinement des jeux de lumière sur le paysage changeant.



The historic Bugaboo Lodge offers a luxurious retreat for outdoor enthusiasts and adventure seekers.



The Lodge serves up refreshing drinks, perfectly paired with the stunning alpine view.

and helpful at every opportunity—a testament to the customer-forward philosophy CMH is known for. Facilities include a gym and stretching room, spa, sauna and roof top hot tub. The dining room/bar is perfectly situated to enjoy the ever-changing light of the view. The culinary program matches the scenery outside. Skilled chefs prepare meals that are both unique and attractive, but also designed to sustain the active guests at the lodge as they burn calories in the alpine all day. Guides and lodge staff sit with guests at the table for family style dining that adds to the story telling and overall experience. A well-stocked wine cellar rounds out the offering. Unique art lies around every corner and a history museum adds details for those interested in mountain culture, alpine climbing, heli-skiing and natural history. The lodge is worth a visit on its own.

From the lodge, a helicopter whisks guests to various ridges and alpine bowls. This allows hikers to spend as much time in the high places as possible. CMH Bugaboos has access to over 1,035 square metres (400 square miles) of trails. Each trail or area has its own unique views and features, including many picturesque alpine lakes that dot the landscape. The glaciers and rock spires of the Bugaboo range loom dramatically from many vantage points. The mountain guides do an excellent job of putting groups of various abilities together, so all guests get the experience they desire. Daily hiking lengths vary from eight to 25 kilometres and it's not uncommon for non-hikers to come up for a casual stroll through the alpine wildflowers. Safety is of course the primary goal of the guides, and their depth of experience will have a reassuring effect on those feeling out of their element. There is also a via ferrata experience which is a hybrid between climbing and hiking. Italian for "iron path", via ferratas were first built in the Alps during WW1 as a way for soldiers to get around the high places. Modern versions include a steel safety cable that you can clip into and iron rings to assist through many of the pitches. The exhilarating experience is closely monitored by the guides and making the summit is a goal worthy of achieving.



Back at the lodge after a day's adventure in the high places, you will be greeted with: a light snack that changes every day and a cold beverage of your choice. Enjoy these on the deck while taking in more of the view. Massages are available in the spa or perhaps you need a soak in the rooftop hot tub to soothe the day's hiking legs. Trip lengths vary from three to seven days. There is also an option to hike between Bugaboo Lodge and another of CMH's mountain lodges—Bobby Burns. Cariboo Lodge—a third CMH property—is further north and also offers heli-hiking adventures.

Overall, the experience at CMH Bugaboo Lodge is on a level hard to find these days. The dramatic mountain views combined with an old-world style hospitality and top-level guiding is a combination that is sure to fulfill those seeking a unique and authentic mountain experience. ↗

de parcours a été conçu dans les Alpes durant la Première Guerre mondiale pour faciliter le déplacement des soldats. Les versions modernes incluent un câble de sécurité en acier et des échelons de fer pour progresser. Encadrée par les guides, cette activité exaltante procure un grand sentiment d'accomplissement.

De retour au lodge après une journée d'aventures, un « après-rando » vous attend : une collation variée et une boisson fraîche, à savourer sur la terrasse avec vue. Le spa propose des massages, ou bien vous pouvez profiter du bain à remous sur le toit pour reposer vos jambes. La durée des séjours varie entre trois et sept jours. Il est également possible de randonner entre le Lodge Bugaboo et un autre lodge de CMH, Bobby Burns. Le Cariboo Lodge, une troisième propriété CMH située plus au nord, propose également des parcours d'héli-randonnée.

Dans l'ensemble, il est difficile de rivaliser avec l'expérience offerte par le Lodge Bugaboo de CMH. Les vues spectaculaires, l'accueil chaleureux et les guides de premier ordre créent une combinaison idéale pour les passionnés de plein air en quête d'une aventure en montagne à la fois unique et authentique. ↗



Nothing beats savouring gourmet dishes at Bugaboo Lodge.



Every bite is as spectacular as the surroundings.

Photos courtesy of Mike McPhee. CREDIT | Mike McPhee (34-39).



Hikers return to the helicopter, completing a memorable mountain adventure.



The trail leading to Cobalt Lake.



Glaciers provide a breathtaking panoramic backdrop.