

# Mountain Sports

## Mt. Waddington

The Coast Mountain Range stretches nearly a 1000 miles from the American border in the south to the Yukon border in the north. The peaks in this rugged new range are generally consistent in height at 6500 to 10500 feet or 2000 to 3200m but the spine of this range bulges from 11500 to over 13000 feet or 3500 to 3800m to become the Waddington Range. The similarity to the Himalayas is the reason why the Waddington Range was chosen as the shooting location for Hollywood films such as "K2", "Kundun" and "Seven Years in Tibet".



Photo courtesy Damian Cromwell

## Mountaineering

Mount Waddington itself, once known as Mystery Mountain, is the highest peak in British Columbia that lies entirely inside the borders of the province 13185 feet or 4019m above sea level. It is a mountain of many facets, from a glacier draped base supporting rock fangs to casual flanks and expansive icefalls, low

angled shoulders and dangerously steep ridges. It's a mountain climber's dream and draws mountaineers from all over the world to try her many different faces. There are many other interesting peak ascents/descents including Mount Munday, Jester, Cavalier and Finality Mountains surrounding the spiritual soul of this range, as well as a number of both small and huge glaciers within the Waddington Range.

## Backcountry Skiing

While the main summit of Mount Waddington can only be accessed in summer by advanced mountaineers, the northwest side provides one of the most engaging and aesthetically pleasing ski mountaineering challenges in the Coast Mountain Range. In spring, April and May, alpine temperatures are warmer and the snowpack more stable, making this the favorite time for ski mountaineering.



Photo courtesy Rich Prohaska

## Heli-skiing & Heli-boarding

Ideal conditions for terrific heli-skiing and heli-boarding in the Pantheon Range surrounding Waddington occur from March until June. Dry air in the rain shadow of the Coast Mountain Range allows for good powder, an inordinate number of blue sky days and some of the most beautiful scenery in the world.

These rugged ranges lend themselves to alpine hiking, fishing, and wilderness photography and are best accessed by air or horseback. There are fixed wing and helicopter charter services located in both Bella Coola and West Branch Valley near Tatla Lake that can provide service into these remote mountains. They are also a critical source of information about guides, weather, and safety.

Mountain Sports in the West Chilcotin is sponsored by:



Eric Berger photos

## White Saddle Ranch Country Inn

*Located close to Bluff Lake in the West Branch Valley*

*Cook for yourselves in your fully furnished self-contained cabin or eat with us at the lodge.*

*Activities include hiking (including back-country), fishing, heli-skiing, and climbing.*

*Fixed-wing and helicopter flights available on site.*

*Book ahead with your hosts Dave and Lori King.*

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