

Tour Report – Lake Louise Tour 2016

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The Lake Louise Tour took place from February 7 to February 11, 2016. There were 42 club members on the bus and 11 self-drivers. The bus was loaded at 9:00 AM and we departed around 9:20 ahead of schedule. Andy, the bus driver, helped with the loading on the icy surface of the parking lot and his assistance was much appreciated. At 10:45 it was time to wake up and smell the coffee, which we did at the Donut Mill in Red Deer for a coffee and donut stop.

The lunch stop was in Calgary at Crowfoot Crossing shopping area where club members stocked up on groceries. Andy, the bus driver, demonstrated his problem solving skills when he borrowed a ladder from Safeway and climbed in the roof hatch to unlock the bus. His key had broken off when he was locking the luggage compartments before lunch. That was the only adventure, and it was smooth driving on dry roads to Lake Louise. It was great to see the mountain vistas as we drove through the park.

The Welcome Dinner on Sunday night featured pasta entrees, salad and dessert. The lift passes were distributed at dinner and everyone was ready to go to catch the shuttle to the hill starting at 8:30 on Monday. A number of the club members took advantage of the Ski Friends tours to gain an understanding of the layout of the mountain.

There were great views of the mountains (360 degrees of Wow) on Monday and Tuesday. You know it is a clear day at Lake Louise when you can see Mount Assiniboine in the distance from the top of the Top of the World Chair. The only disappointment was that the Larch Chair was being brought back slowly from being shut down on the previous weekend. It was loading every third chair on Monday and Tuesday. However, the conditions were great on the Larch runs with very few skiers and boarders. Favourite runs were in the Paradise Bowl, Meadowlark, Charlie's Choice, Sunset Terrace and WiWaxy. On Tuesday night, Bruce Walker once again led a rousing sing-song of folk tunes.

On Wednesday, it was mainly cloudy and the runs were slick and fast. Charlie's Choice was the wrong choice on Wednesday. But there were enough groomed runs and the Larch Chair was running at full speed to make it a good day. The club dinner was a jolly event with a prime rib buffet and great desserts.

There was around 5 centimetres of fresh snow on Wednesday night, so after loading luggage on the bus at 8:00, everyone headed to the hill. It was another adventure on the Larch Chair when it stopped for a time. Members who were on it were given a voucher by the hill for free stuff as compensation. The sun was shining and the snow softened up, giving spring like conditions.

The bus was loaded with skis and boots at the hill and we departed ahead of schedule at 3:20. Bus drivers were switched during the supper stop at Cross Iron Mills in Calgary. Thanks to bus drivers, Karmin and Michael, for getting us back to Edmonton just after 9:00 PM. Thanks to everyone for being prompt and pitching in to make the tour a success.