

# The Guide to Planning the Perfect Winter Family Vacation

## *from America's Family Resort!*

Dear Friend,

It's always easier when you know the tricks. That's why we wrote The Guide to Planning the Perfect Winter Family Vacation. We want to let you in on all the secrets to help you get started on one of life's great adventures – Winter Vacations with children.

Smugglers' Notch Resort began packaging family vacations as early as 1976 and since then has become a leader in providing fun for families. We have received accolades from such national media as SKI Magazine, FamilyFun magazine, and the Family Travel Forum that have recognized our children's and teen programs, service, accommodations, entertainment and variety. Now Smugglers' would like to share its expertise with you.

To help you meet and even exceed your family's expectations, we've taken the hundreds of questions families ask us and arranged them into a planning guide full of cost saving ideas and practical hints. Planning a Winter vacation may be a new challenge for you, but you will find it easy to accomplish with this helpful guide.

We hope you'll find yourself dreaming about a Winter family vacation, and that you'll let this guide help make your dream come true.

*Happy trails!*



Barbara Thomke and Karen Boushie

## Table of Contents

<b>3</b>	Planning is Key	<b>10</b>	How Do We Get There... Car, Plane or Train?
<b>3</b>	Use the Internet and 800 Numbers to Your Advantage	<b>10</b>	Closing Up Your House
<b>4</b>	Choosing the Right Dates	<b>11</b>	The Travel Day & Planning Your Arrival
<b>4</b>	Keeping Winter Fresh!	<b>11</b>	Mountain Weather & Other Contingencies
<b>5</b>	Outdoor Activities for Every Age & Interest	<b>11</b>	Cash When You Need It
<b>6</b>	Alternatives to Skiing and Snowboarding on a Winter Vacation	<b>12</b>	Staying Connected
<b>7</b>	Choosing the Right Accommodations	<b>12</b>	To Rent or To Buy Equipment – <i>That is the Question</i>
<b>7</b>	Dining In or Dining Out?	<b>13</b>	Rekindling Family Ties & Family Reunions
<b>8</b>	Dressing for the Winter Outdoors	<b>13</b>	Appendix A: <i>Games to Play While Traveling</i>
<b>9</b>	What to Bring	<b>14</b>	Appendix B: <i>Projects for Your Child's Sabbatical</i>
		<b>14</b>	Appendix C: <i>What to Bring List</i>

# Planning is Key

There's no way around it! Planning will help you get the most out of your Winter family vacation, and it will lessen the hassles once that exciting week arrives.

Hold a family meeting well in advance of your trip and find out what the kids would like to do. Mix in your own ideas. Then sift out the priorities. This will define the kind of vacation that will meet everyone's expectations.

Winter destination resorts rank high with families because they can meet most needs in a centralized location and

because young children do better in a home base rather than always on the road. Kids like the company of other kids, and their presence at the destination resort promises success.

While you and your family are planning your holiday, also make arrangements for being away from work. Then adjust your mind set. This is recreational travel, not a business trip!

Also try to be realistic about your children's behavior both during travel and while away. There are bound to

be moments when they get fussy or lose patience. Planning a car break and stretching every two hours or so on travel day will help keep them happy. Staying flexible while away as they adjust to their new surroundings will too. *(See Appendix A, page 13 for a list of travel games.)*

Well, you see, you just can't get away from planning! ❖

## Use the Internet and 800 Number to Your Advantage

Researching resorts on the Internet and calling their 800 number are two great ways to gather information and first impressions without any cost to you. You can tell a lot about a resort from how easy it is to navigate their site and how the material is organized. Can you book your vacation online, or at least get a quote?

A phone call may be more revealing. Is your call professionally and courteously handled and are the reservationists knowledgeable and helpful? Are you able to also book child care and ski lessons or does that require a separate call? How forthcoming is the employee you're talking to with advice about accommodations that will suit your family, and dates that will perhaps save you money? If you can arrange many of the details of your stay in advance with one call, that is very possibly a sign of a resort with well-integrated programs and an organized schedule.

**At Smugglers' the Vacation Planning Professionals will gladly offer lodging and rate advice, and also assist you with reserving cribs, cots, bed rails, booster seats and highchairs. They will pre-register you and your youngsters for Snow Sport University programs such as adult lessons and kids' all-day ski and snow-board camps, plus child care, equipment rental, airport transfers and more. They will also gladly e-mail you if that is your preferred method of communicating.**

A responsible and responsive reservation staff helps you get your vacation off to a great start.

Is the resort's deposit and cancellation policy flexible should your plans change? **Smugglers' Notch Resort offers a full refund policy for reservations cancelled seven or more days prior to arrival. Within seven days, deposits are applied to future reservations within two years.** ❖



# Choosing the Right Dates

The school calendar often determines a family's vacation schedule.

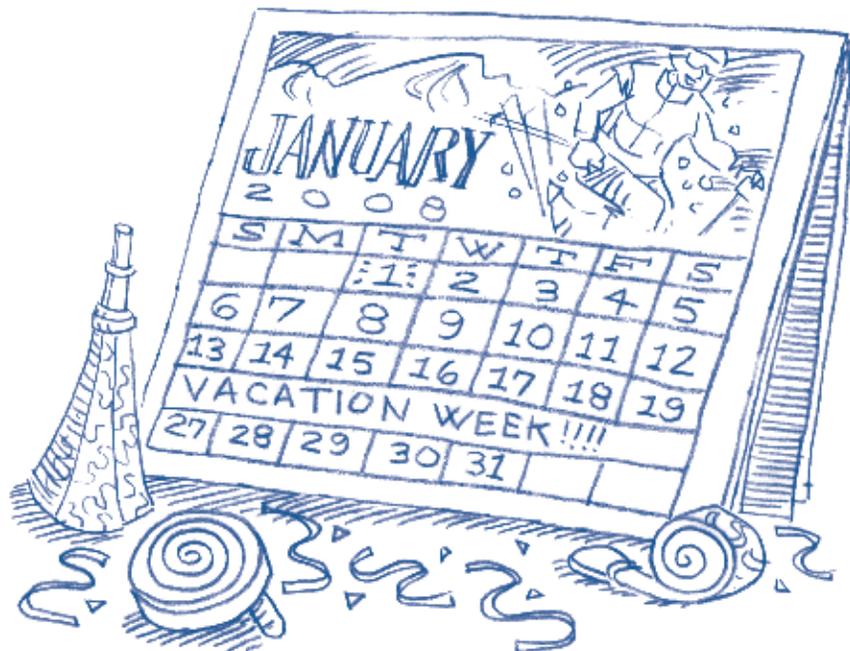
If your youngsters are infants, toddlers, or pre-schoolers, you have the advantage of taking trips any time. Kids this age usually enjoy travel and do well in condominium accommodations with a comfortable and home-like atmosphere where there is plenty of room to spread out familiar toys, run around, and there are kitchens for impromptu snacks.

If your children are school age, consider requesting a sabbatical. A Winter vacation involves the geography and history of travel, the acquisition of skills, and new outdoor experiences that are educational. Teachers will often agree to allow children to complete a special project related to the vacation in exchange for time missed in school.

Not convinced? Check out the suggestions for school projects listed in *Appendix B, page 14*. Many are very challenging and there are other benefits. The quiet time spent helping your youngster write a diary or paste up a scrapbook can be a pleasant way to relive each day's adventures. These experiences can be shared later in school, and will become treasured family memories for years to come.

The most economical times to book vacations are during non-holiday times. Generally speaking these periods fall from early December up to Christmas, from January 2<sup>nd</sup> throughout the month (except Martin Luther King weekend), and mid-March to the resort's closing date. During these weeks you can better experience the essence of the resort because programs are more flexible and personnel are not so busy. *The caveat:* Be sure the resort you choose is in full operation during the dates you select.

Go to [smuggs.com/winter](http://smuggs.com/winter) and click on special values and you can view the vacation specials on Smuggers' website and even book your vacation online. By dialing 1-800-451-8752 you can speak with a *Smuggers' Vacation Planning Professional* who will gladly advise you on dates and rates and answer all your questions. Either way, take advantage of your freedom to choose the right dates. ❖



# Keeping the Winter Fresh!

A Winter vacation should not require you to leave at home the good energy and resource conservation habits you've carefully developed with your family. You should find that the mountain resort communities you might like to visit will appreciate your willingness to partner with them in the steps they are taking to maintain and improve the air and water quality of the still wild places.

A check of the printed materials or website or a call to the reservation staff of your desired destination will clue you in to the value a resort places on its environmental initiatives. You will discover if recycling of

bottles, cans and food waste is encouraged in your hotel or condo and throughout the resort. You may discover how water conservation is practiced and if any initiatives protect wildlife. Perhaps resort machinery and vehicles use biodiesel fuel and drivers adhere to a no-idling policy. Is there a shuttle system for you to use around the resort to help reduce your carbon footprint? Does the resort do its part to help reduce and offset emissions and work towards becoming climate neutral?

**Smuggers' Notch Resort is proud to be Vermont's only resort and one of only two businesses designated a Vermont**

**Business Environmental Leader.** This award reflects a commitment to pollution prevention, regulatory compliance, and exemplary environmental management practices, including recycling from guests and employees. Smuggers' is also recognized as a leader in creating climate neutral skiing and riding and the Resort's dedication to a cleaner, greener environment is a hallmark of the focus on the ultimate family experience. Smuggers' was named one of the top ten eco ski resorts by Plenty Magazine. More details on Smuggers' environmental policies can be found at [www.smuggs.com/environment](http://www.smuggs.com/environment). ❖

# Outdoor Activities for Every Age & Interest

If your family represents a wide range of ages and interests, be sure the resort you choose has something for every family member to do. You don't want to discover that kids under two are not welcome at the nursery, squashing your skiing plans, or that children's ski and snowboard classes meet only in the afternoon leaving you in charge of the morning's entertainment.

Family-centric resorts will have activities and ski programs for even their youngest visitors. *Smugglers'* offers state licensed child care at *TREASURES* for little ones as young as 6 weeks. *The Little Rascals on Snow* program at *Smugglers' Notch* is designed for two and a half to three year old children still in diapers. *Little Rascals* is staged from *TREASURES* child care center, offering outdoor play and ski lessons (during the mornings), and indoor play, naps and snacks (in the afternoons).

Once youngsters are out of diapers *Smugglers'* invites them to join the all-day *Discovery Dynamos* Ski Camp for 3-5 year olds, or *Snowboard Camp* for 4 and 5 year olds. Discuss the programming available for your children with the reservationist or resort personnel, or check out the details

online. Then don't be afraid to register your children. *Resorts like Smugglers' Notch that guarantee kids' fun are experienced with little people. Even your youngest can be skiing confidently down the slope, turning with ease, and riding the chairlift in a very few days.*

Grouped by both age and ability, older children should have an appropriate level of teaching sophistication in their ski and snowboard camps. Find out the hours and whether lunch is included. Is their meet-up location convenient to where you will be staying? At *Smugglers'*, children ages 6-10 will enjoy *Adventure Rangers* ski or snowboard camp with on-slope instruction and nature and science discovery.

Yes, teenagers want activities too. They may have very definite ideas about this Winter vacation you are planning, and those ideas may not fit exactly with what you envision for them! Teenagers often prefer the company of their friends to their family. A program specifically designed for adolescents can help them have a great time as well. Inviting a friend along on the trip may make the vacation more fun for everyone.

Investigate *Notch Squad* Ski and Snowboard Camp for 11-15 year olds, and the *Explorer Program* for 16 and 17 year olds at *Smugglers' Notch*. The *Notch Squaders* explore the mountain terrain with their age mates and experienced Snow Sport University guides. The *Explorers* hang out together with their guide to ski and snowboard to the secret spots in the glades, bumps, jumps and Half-pipe.

With the children well tended,

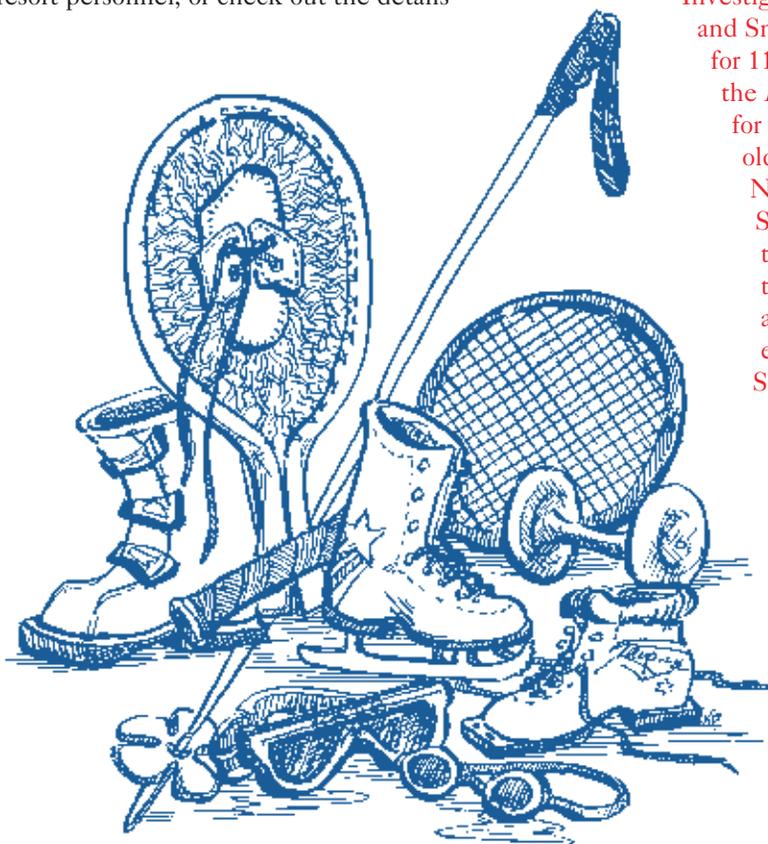
it's time to think about yourself. What activities are available for you? Part of the excitement of a Winter vacation is trying something different. How about snow-mobiling? Can you take a spin on an ice rink? What about cross-country skiing lessons or tours? If lessons are available, are they part of the package and if not what do they cost? Snowshoeing has become popular in recent years. As a sport it is very low-tech, easy to learn, and gives you access to the quiet snowy woods. A *Winter Walking* program at *Smugglers'* offers daily two hour walks. Guides lead guests on quiet country roads and packed trails for an invigorating stroll to glimpse and enjoy the "backside" of Vermont you might miss otherwise.

At *Smugglers' Notch* adults new to skiing are treated to lessons and may take as many as they require until they are comfortable riding the lift and skiing down the beginner slope on their own. All the *Snow Sport University* Guides are professionals whose goal is to help you learn or improve your skills while enjoying yourself, getting to know the mountains and meeting other vacationers.

**One more important factor to keep in mind:** find a Winter vacation spot where you won't be automobile dependent. If family members have a way to get around to various activities, either by walking or riding a shuttle, parents won't be stuck in the chauffeur's role.

*Smugglers' Notch* is a self-contained condominium resort with four neighborhoods. The community swimming centers in each are within walking distance, and all neighborhoods are interconnected with each other and the slopes by a convenient on-demand shuttle service. Say good-bye to hassling with your car, and hello to freedom. ❖

Suppose you don't envision an active vacation for yourself, or not everyone in your family is interested in skiing or snowboarding? Then be sure your destination resort has other options available. Log on to a resort's website to investigate, or call the resort for specific information.



# Alternatives to Skiing and Snowboarding on a Winter Vacation

Offerings at Smugglers' Notch will keep any solitude-seeker happy – pathways for nature walks alone or in the company of other strollers, fireplaces to curl up in front of, and on-site restaurants for quiet lunches. There are craft classes in stenciling, beading, watercolor and sculpting. At the Mountain Massage Center guests may indulge in a variety of massages or stretch gently in yoga class. If you don't feel like leaving your condo home come dinner time, you can call the Resort Village's Pizzeria restaurant for delivery.

If you want to have your own vacation where you can do as you wish at least part of the day, you must feel secure that the children's activities will both excite and occupy them. A true family resort will already have thought out the details of their programs for you.

If you'll be needing child care, you will want to check to see if the center where you are headed is fully licensed and what the staffing ratios are in your child's age group. Does the center have a check-in and check-out security system for dropping off and picking up the children? Do the care givers schedule outdoor play and supervised learning activities, or is this a movies and nap-time curriculum only? Are babysitters available for evenings out? What is their policy if your child is sick? Will your child eat what is served for lunch, and what will he need for outdoor play? How are allergies handled? If the reservationist cannot answer these questions, ask to speak with the child care center's staff. These are important things to know in advance.

**TREASURES** child care center at Smugglers' Notch welcomes youngsters six weeks old through age 3 and is licensed by the state of Vermont. There are three separate rooms for different age groups with appropriate toys and games.

What will be available to older children after the lifts close? Swimming is a popular activity, which most resorts provide. How about bonfires and hot chocolate warm-ups? A sledding hill or an indoor family play center? Smugglers' Notch offers families these and other activities at no

cost. Outdoor ice skating, a welcome party, I-Did-A-Sled contest, Showtime Theatre, tube sliding, and the *FunZone* Family Entertainment Center are some of the other offerings.

It's essential that teenagers have a place where they can meet other teens and hang out. Look for teen cafés, clubs or centers listed on the website. Are they supervised? The kids won't like the supervised part... but you will like knowing that a mature young adult is in charge. There should be interactive games to unite the kids in activities and organized ones where they can form teams and friendships.

For teenagers at Smugglers' Notch there are two teen centers: Teen Alley for ages 13-15, and The Outer Limits for those 16 & older. The centers are open daily from 5:00 pm to midnight, offering a place to socialize, access to the Internet, shoot pool, play video games and cards, and enjoy a juice bar with no-adults-allowed. The *FunMeister* supervisor sees to interaction. There's also evening ice skating, nordic tours, swimming, DJ dance parties, Karaoke® and a blockbuster dance party scheduled every week that are specifically for teens. The on-call shuttle service means they can enjoy independence in getting to and from the events.

In the evening, when your family is reunited and tales of daring have been told, it's time to think of how to spend the hours before sleep. The first night away from home everyone may be too exhausted from the excitement of new experiences for more than a board game or a relaxing movie. But by the second night you'll be ready for something a little more lively.

At Smugglers' Notch family entertainment begins evenings at 7:00 pm. *Goodtime Charlie*, Smuggs resident entertainer, or one of the *FunMeister* crew will lead you into hilarious adventures with Bingo Blast, Family Karaoke and *FunZone* parties. You'll only be a short walk or shuttle ride from your condominium, so if a sleepyhead needs to get to bed before an older sibling, he doesn't spoil the fun for everyone. Entertainment for adults begins nightly at

9:00 pm and ranges from comedy and hypnosis shows to a dance party and live band. When the resort offers a children's night out or a babysitting service, it makes it a lot easier for parents to enjoy some grown-up time alone during their vacation. At Smugglers' a *Kids' Night Out* program, for ages 4-11, is offered several times during the week. Or take advantage of our babysitting service in your condominium Vacation home. ❖

Here's a list of what's available at Smugglers' Notch. Use it as a guide:

## Daytime

- Ice skating (skate rentals)
- Skiing & snowboarding
- Cross-country skiing (rentals, lessons and tours)
- Snowshoeing (rentals, lessons and tours)
- Snowmobile tours
- Winter Walking program
- Indoor swimming pool & hot tubs
- Massage & Exercise rooms
- Aprés ski parties & bonfires
- Arts & crafts classes
- Shopping

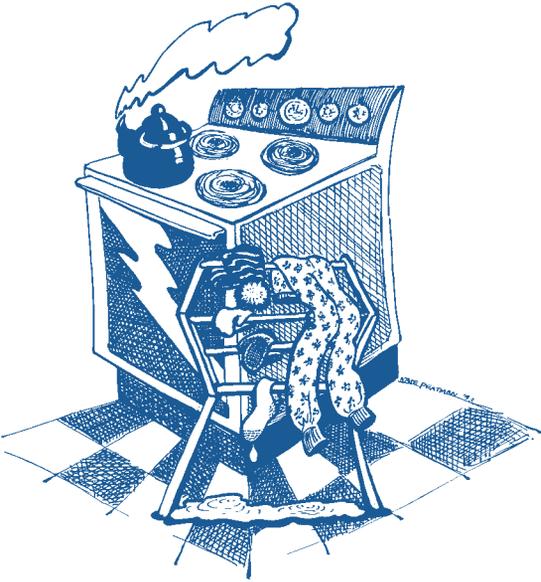
## Evening

- Karaoke® & DJ dances
- Tube sliding
- Family game nights
- Movie night
- Showtime Theatre
- Fireworks & Torchlight Parade
- Comedy, magic and hypnosis shows
- Family Sing-along
- Outdoor ice skating
- Nordic night tours
- Snowshoe Adventure Dinner
- Snowmobile tours
- Night School for Snowboarding

# Choosing the Right Accommodations

One rule of thumb when choosing accommodations – as the kids get older, you'll need more space.

For families with an infant or toddler, or for couples, a studio generally provides plenty of room. Parents will still be able to enjoy their privacy because little ones drift off to sleep early. The kitchenettes are handy for warming baby's food and big enough for keeping snacks and adult drinks cold or cooking a light meal.



Base your selection on your lifestyle. Do you enjoy cooking while on vacation, and preparing a couple of your family's favorite meals? Then a fully-equipped condo is what you are after. Do you tend to be active and seek entertainment and meals away from your lodgings? Then you will be happy with simpler accommodations.

Take time and care in selecting your home away from home. Request the suite with the fireplace, or the condominium with the view that you will enjoy during relaxing afternoons. Any light sleepers in your family, a mix of girls and boys, or teens who sleep late? Take all these factors into consideration when you choose the number of bedrooms and bed configurations. Quality, convenience and comfort in accommodations are key to enjoying your vacation experience.

Of course smaller accommodations are usually less expensive. Balance what you can afford with how happy your family will be in the space. Be realistic. Resorts may not always be able to move you to larger lodgings if you decide you need more bedrooms.

Smugglers' Notch is a self-contained Resort Village where all accommodations are condominium-style. They range from studios to five bedrooms. Most have balconies, fireplaces and full kitchens, TVs, VCR or DVD players, High-speed Internet access and telephones. The larger homes will accommodate extended families. Have you considered traveling with friends? If you have young children this is a great way to save and also share child care responsibilities and meal preparation. *Floor plans can be viewed at: [www.smuggs.com/winter/lodging](http://www.smuggs.com/winter/lodging)*

**Two final notes on accommodations:** Washer and dryer facilities are a must for a family, and condos deliver on this feature. And unlike hotels, daily maid service in condominium settings should not be taken for granted. **At Smugglers' however, fresh linens and supplies are available for pick up several times a week and for an additional fee housekeeping services can easily be arranged.** ❖

Most families choose to do a little of both. Many guests at Smugglers' Notch bring breakfast foods, spices, and staples along from home, and perhaps a casserole or tray of lasagna. This allows for meal flexibility and no one gets stuck in the kitchen too long.

When making vacation reservations, ask about local dining options. Where are cafés, cafeterias, delis, and restaurants located? Are they close enough to walk to and do they have children's menus? What are the price ranges? Do children receive a hot lunch as part of their all day ski and snowboard programs? Knowing these facts will help you in your planning.

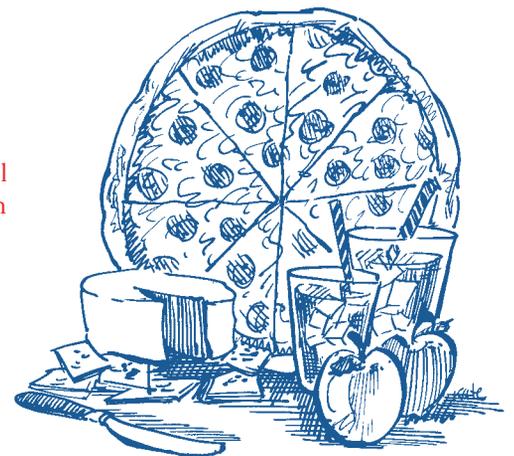
Within Smugglers' Resort Village there are plenty of options for meals. For starters, there's your own kitchen! Then,

within a short walk or shuttle ride, you may choose from Riga-Bello's Italian eatery, Morse Mountain Grille & Pub, the Green Mountain Deli, or the upscale Hearth & Candle. Among these restaurants all three meals are available and children are always welcome, even greeted with their own special menus and time diversions.

Outside Smugglers' Village, but within a five mile drive, you will find Italian fare, nouveau American cuisine, fabulous meals prepared by New England Culinary School graduates and continental cuisine served in a variety of settings that range from country inns and a log lodge to a renovated commercial bakery. The Explore Smuggs! magazine included in each guest's arrival packet displays sample menus, prices and descriptions of the dining possibilities.

## Dining In or Dining Out?

Winter resorts tend to be casual, so unless you're planning to celebrate a birthday or anniversary with a dress-up occasion, leave your ties, jackets and heels at home. ❖



# Dressing for the Winter Outdoors

Most people already own clothing to ski in, so new clothing should not be a huge investment prior to a ski trip. The trick to being warm and comfortable lies in layering. For children and adults, getting dressed for skiing and outdoor Winter fun is essentially the same. Let's start next to the skin and work out:

**Long underwear tops and bottoms, your "base layer," are essential.** You may want to consider purchasing ones made of synthetic fibers that wick away moisture and help keep you warm. They wash easily and are soft to the skin. (This layer is also useful for ice skating, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, hiking, canoeing, or sleeping.) Older versions of long johns in cotton or wool are bulkier and less effective if you perspire.

**Turtlenecks are essential to keep cold drafts off your neck.** Do you have ones that are cotton blends? These are warmer than the 100% cotton variety and dry more quickly. Cotton absorbs and holds moisture, contributing to conductive heat loss, which occurs much faster with wet garments. Make sure your turtles are loose fitting enough so you can bend over easily without exposing your waist.

**Wool, wool blend or fleece sweaters.** Here thicker is not always better, especially if you begin to feel as round as a dough boy. A medium weight is generally warm enough. Judge by your sensitivity to the cold and the warmth of your jacket.

**Ski jacket or parka.** Most of us have one, and they are warm, water repellent, light-weight and roomy. A hooded version is nice, but not essential. (If you don't have a parka, we suggest borrowing one for your trip.)

**Ski or snowboard pants.** Many youngsters own snow suits, which are also fine for skiing. Teens and parents will need some type of fiber-filled pants, or water repellent nylon pant shells if the weather is not too cold. Fiber-filled insulated pants fit comfortably over long underwear. Wear sweat pants or polyester fleece pants under the shell-type pants for warmth. (Jeans are not recommended; they are neither warm nor particularly flexible, and soggy if wet.)

**A thin sock of wool or wool blend** with wicking capabilities works well in combination with today's insulated ski or snowboard boots. Give up the notion that you need a thick sock to ski in. Bulky socks with deep ribs get bunched and lumpy in your ski boots. Cotton is not recommended because it stays cold if it gets wet from perspiration. Help little ones pull their socks up smoothly to avoid wrinkles and pressure spots inside ski boots. Always make sure your socks and boots are dry before putting them on to avoid cold feet and blisters.

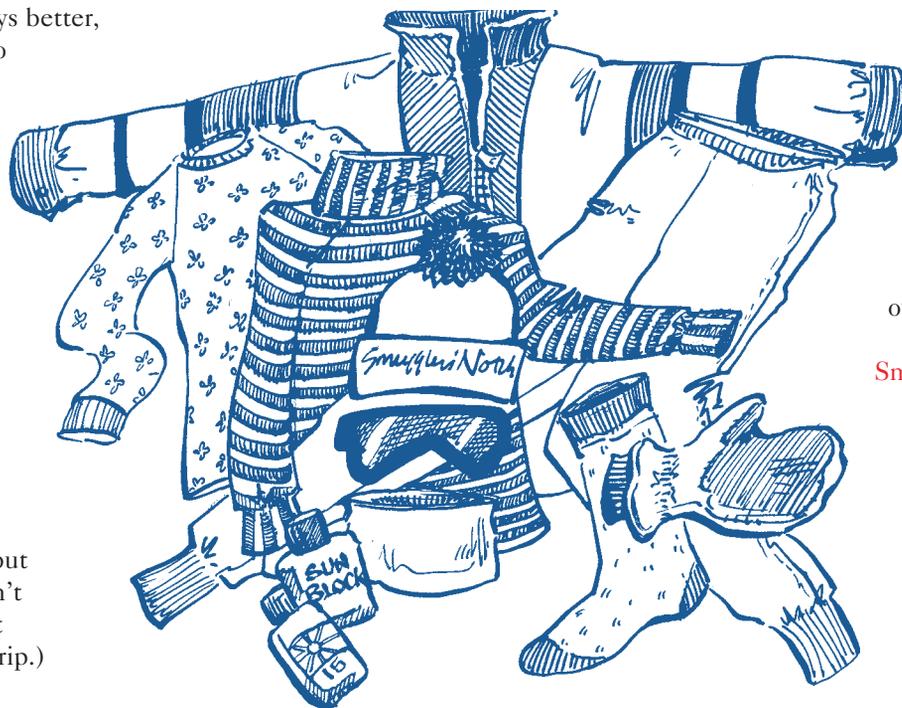
**Neck gaiters** out distance scarves in warmth, safety and practicality. They don't need tying, can't get caught in lift

equipment, and can be pulled up over ears, mouth and nose for extra warmth. They are especially practical for children, and are sold in youth sizes.

**More than 50% of body heat can be lost through the head, and therein lies the importance of wool or synthetic hats, or helmets.** Many wool hats are now made with a non-itch band adding extra comfort. Consider renting a helmet or even purchasing one. Helmets are extremely warm, keep you dry, and may prevent head injuries in case of a fall. At [www.lidsonkids.org](http://www.lidsonkids.org) parents may want to inform themselves on the relative safety helmets provide.

**Don't skimp on good warm ski mittens or gloves since the fingers may be the first to feel chilled.** Mittens are warmer than gloves. Stay away from knitted mittens, and purchase warm, synthetic fiber or insulated leather hand protection with water repellency. Ditto for the kids. The hand and foot warmer packets you can buy at sport shops are a good addition for those whose digits get cold easily.

**Goggles are essential.** When it's sunny they protect eyes from bright snow glare, and when it's windy or cold, goggles keep your eyes from tearing and your eyeglass lenses from glazing. They should fit securely over helmets with no gaps. Once again children need this eye protection as much as their folks do. (Special goggles are also made to fit over glasses.)



Smugglers' on-site 3 Mountain Outfitters & 3 Mountain Equipment has clothing and accessories to meet all of your Winter needs, including rental of adults and children's outerwear. [www.smuggs.com/pages/winter/skiride/3-mountain-equipment-rental.php](http://www.smuggs.com/pages/winter/skiride/3-mountain-equipment-rental.php) ❖

# What to Bring

Helping kids do their own packing is a bit more work for Mom and Dad, but goes a long way in getting the kids involved in their Winter vacation. Use the handy list (*Appendix C, page 14*) in this Guide and have them start to get clothes ready a few days in advance.

Here's a suggestion for winning their help. Gather several plastic milk crates or clean cardboard boxes and stack them in the child's room. Label or use pictures to identify one each for underwear, tops and sweaters, pants and shoes, outdoor clothes,

sleepy time, and toys. Then let them fill the boxes with what they think they will need, helping them to understand the length of the trip (*i.e., for a five day ski trip, five pairs of clean undies, etc.*), and what they will be doing while on vacation (boots and clothes for activities outdoors).

Then, leave the clothes for a day or two. Assess. Once you feel that everyone has what they need, pack the underwear, socks, belts and long johns in a plastic zippered sweater bag and the pajamas and toiletries in another one.

Finally, pack all the other clothes in a suitcase with the two separate bags on top.

This will help you or your child unpack and sort easily into drawers later and also keep the little items from getting lost. If you arrive at your destination late, the pj's are quickly found. If flying, you might want to have one change of clothes and toiletries for each family member in a carry-on bag in case your luggage gets lost en route.

Pack each child's toys separately into backpacks to take along in the car, plane or train. This will help them be realistic about what they can carry and becomes their own personal Fun Travel Bag. A new toy can be slipped into the pack to surprise your youngsters en route, and you can decide if you want to take along a separate box of playthings and books.

Adolescents will pack for every possible contingency. Unless your car will not hold the largest suitcase on earth, allow them this indulgence. They will appreciate the security of knowing they have the right outfit for any occasion, and it may make them more willing to be social with other teens they meet.

Ask ahead of time if your vacation lodging has items like cribs, play pens, or high chairs for babies. Not having to pack such bulky items means more room in the car and a more comfortable ride. Plastic sleds to pull small children in usually can be purchased cheaply nearby your destination and are a worthwhile short term investment for little ones who find it difficult to walk in the snow.

**Smugglers' Notch offers cribs, cots, high chairs and other items for rent to use in your Vacation condominium. Check online at [www.smuggs.com/pages/winter/read-before-you-pack.php](http://www.smuggs.com/pages/winter/read-before-you-pack.php) ❖**



# How Do We Get There... Car, Plane or Train?

## What About Transfers or Car Rentals?

Sometimes these choices are easy. Geography, available options, or the family budget determines the answer. But often it is just a matter of which is better for you.

The type of Winter vacation you've planned will determine whether the car is best. If family visits or activities along the route lure you, or you cherish being able to get up and go when you like, then you need the flexibility a car provides. There will be room for napping, for extra toys, and maybe even for an extra person. On the downside, travel time is generally longer – isn't there always a trade off?

If you're heading to Smugglers', interstates and major routes in Vermont are very well maintained, and snow is removed almost as fast as it falls. Don't think a 4-wheel drive vehicle is necessary; your winterized family car will do just fine.

If you are headed for a destination resort for your entire holiday and don't think you'll need a car, then flying may be best. The pivotal factors are where do you fly in to, and how far is that from your final destination?

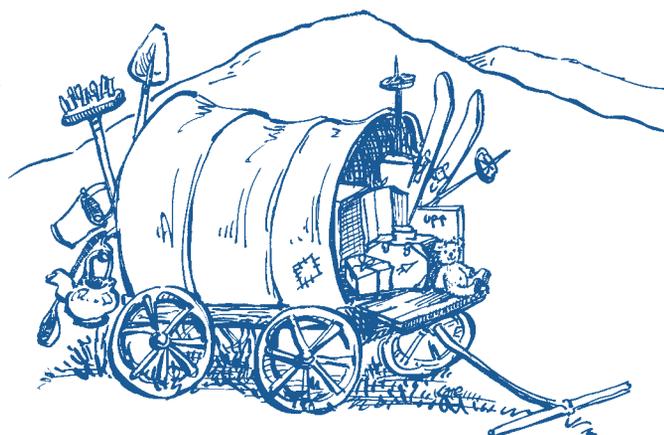
Flying is particularly convenient for guests coming to Smugglers' Notch since the Burlington International Airport is only

a 45 minute drive away and a shuttle service is available with 48 hours notice. The same is true for the Amtrak train that arrives in Essex Junction (near Burlington) and is on the shuttle's route. Transfers or car rentals may be arranged when booking your vacation reservation.

If you decide to fly, check with your airline about their luggage guidelines regarding Winter sports equipment. Passengers are usually allowed two checked pieces of luggage (with a weight limit), one carry-on and one personal item such as a purse or briefcase. Many airlines will include ski equipment (meaning skis, boots, and poles) as one piece of luggage in the count of checked bags. Play it safe and call ahead; it's better to know before your departure day if you're going to have to pay excess baggage fees.

Winter weather can be changeable, and if you are driving you may want to check your route prior to departure for any weather-related delays. Some destinations may have this information on their website, or you may contact a traveler's service such as the American Automobile Association. In Vermont, you may call 1-800-ICY-ROAD

or log on to [www.511vt.org](http://www.511vt.org) to check out what's happening on the state's roads and highways. If you are traveling to Smugglers' from the south and are utilizing an onboard GPS mapping service or have pre-printed directions from an online service such as MapQuest, please be advised that none of these services indicate that Route 108 through Smugglers' Notch Pass is closed to through traffic in the Winter between Stowe and Smugglers' Notch Resort. Smugglers' *Read Before You Pack Guide* identifies the most commonly traveled routes to the Resort and contains other information useful to travelers. You will receive this guide in the mail with your reservation confirmation. This guide and routing directions can be found online at [www.smuggs.com/pages/winter/read-before-you-pack.php](http://www.smuggs.com/pages/winter/read-before-you-pack.php) ❖



## Closing Up Your House

You think you'll remember everything about closing up the house for a week, but inevitably you'll forget something. Use this handy checklist to help you be organized up to the moment you're out the door.

### One week before departure:

- Notify post office to hold mail
- Contact an online service if you'll need to set up temporary Internet access during your vacation. At Smugglers' you can conveniently set up Hi-speed internet access in your condo. [www.smuggs.com/pages/winter/amenities/cableTV\\_internet.php](http://www.smuggs.com/pages/winter/amenities/cableTV_internet.php)
- Notify newspaper carrier

### The day before departure:

- Leave a house key and phone number with neighbors
- Give itinerary and phone numbers to parents, friends
- Slip address book into your bag
- Install light timers in various rooms with different settings
- Go through the refrigerator and sort items to take along, items to freeze, and items to discard
- Take pooch or kitty to pet-sitter or kennel
- Water plants
- Gather lodging confirmation, maps/directions, prescriptions, credit cards, traveler's checks

### Minutes before departure:

- Set thermostats
- Check windows, lock doors
- Turn off appliances, radios, TVs, computers
- Remember to lock all windows and doors, including the basement bulkhead and the garage door

# The Travel Day & Planning Your Arrival

While the ground may be bare in your backyard, it's very likely you'll find snow in the mountains when you arrive. Regardless of your mode of travel, pack so that boots and lined jackets are easy to get at. You'll be glad to have warmer clothes handy. *(Please refer to Games to Play while Traveling (Appendix A, page 13) to add some fun and laughter to your travel time.)*

Smugglers' Notch sends the *Read Before You Pack* brochure with routing directions, strategic stops, and other valuable travel information with each guest's confirmation letter. This information can also be found online at [www.smuggs.com/pages/winter/read-before-you-pack.php](http://www.smuggs.com/pages/winter/read-before-you-pack.php)

Check-in policies vary widely throughout the resort industry. Try to coordinate your arrival with the check-in time to

avoid having to wait for your rooms. If you arrive early to pursue some outdoor activities on your travel day, dress accordingly except for the final layer of jacket and pants, which should be on top in the trunk of your car. At Smugglers', courtesy changing areas and a short walk to the lifts help you take advantage of skiing your first day.

Keep in mind that the lighted Sir Henry's Hill at Smugglers' Notch is open from 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm. Why would you want to remember that? Because when you arrive and the kids have had enough of traveling you can send them over to this supervised area to let off steam and enjoy themselves tube sledding while you check in and have a quiet moment before unpacking. Not a bad way to begin your Winter vacation!

Check-in is a good opportunity to collect details about the programs, your accommodations, restaurants, and brochures for later study. The Smugglers' Notch arrival packet includes your lift tickets, a resort map, and a directory of Resort programs and area services. There's also a copy of Explore Smuggs, the Resort's complimentary magazine with interesting articles to read plus dining and area information. At the check-in desk guests will find a well-trained staff ready to assist with sign-ups and further information regarding the resort's special activities. Even the equipment rental shop stays open from 8:00 am until 8:00 pm daily as a convenience to Smugglers' guests. ❖

## Mountain Weather & Other Contingencies

Mountain weather is probably not what you are used to at home. For every 1,000 feet in altitude there may be three to four degrees difference in temperature. Just remember to layer, and on very cold or windy days be sure to keep exposed skin covered. Face masks, neck gaiters pulled up over nose and cheeks, woolly hats and helmets all do the protection trick. Remember to use sunscreen to protect your face from the Winter sun.

Do consider that the need for medical attention may arise during your Winter vacation. Bring along all prescription drugs, plus a few of the usual medicines you keep at home for colds, allergies, and minor ailments.

It's best to be prepared even though your trip may be pre-paid. Take along a credit card and ATM card as well as a couple of personal checks.

Inquire about local clinics and hospitals. How far away are they and is there an emergency ambulance service? Who do you call when you need help?

For medical care at Smugglers' Notch there are several options.

- During the day the Ski Patrol is on duty at all three ski mountains from 8:00 am - 4:00 pm to handle emergencies both on-mountain and in the Resort. Many patrollers are Emergency Medical Technicians. To call the Ski Patrol, guests either dial the Guest Service Desk, or notify a lift attendant.
- Guests at Smugglers' Notch may call 911 at any time for medical

emergencies. There are also EMTs on the staff of our Security department who will likely be the first responders. A well-trained volunteer rescue squad with ambulance will also respond from Jeffersonville, just five miles away.

- Just eight miles away, a local clinic serves the Resort's guests by appointment with three physicians and a dentist. There is also a pharmacy nearby.
- Copley Hospital is 35 minutes east of Smugglers' in Morrisville.
- Fletcher Allen Hospital of Vermont is located in Burlington, 50 minutes west of Smugglers'. It is the largest hospital in Vermont and is affiliated with the University of Vermont's College of Medicine. ❖

## Cash When You Need It!

Smugglers' will cash checks for you right at the Guest Service Desk, if you find yourself shy on funds, or your purchases may be charged to your room. There is an

ATM located in the Village Center Clock Tower and the Base Lodge, as well as a bank in nearby Jeffersonville. ❖

# Staying Connected *(Whether Playing OR Working!)*

Be sure to give your cell phone number to your family and friends. And just in case your service is interrupted by the mountain terrain, also pass along the resort's central phone number, as well as the name your reservation is registered under. Two families with different last names staying together may be listed under only one name in the resort's computer. Or you may be listed under the name of your tour, e.g. the Baltimore Ski Club. Providing this information to anyone who might wish to contact you will expedite your in-coming calls.

At Smugglers' Notch, you can dial all Resort extensions and the local calling area free from the condominium and house phones. A central switchboard will answer questions and direct your inquiries.

Long distance calls made from lodging telephones do require a calling card. This gives you access to direct dialing with

the phone company of your choice without burdensome in-house phone fees. Condominium phones have voice mail.

If you need to work while on your vacation, some of the things you might want to see at your destination could include a computer with convenient Internet access, a fax machine, and a quiet area to work, whether in your lodging or at a resort-based business center.

Smugglers' Notch offers a business center with a pay for use computer with Internet access for guests. There is a fax machine for guests' use at the Guest Service Desk. Condominiums are ideal for providing sufficient space for family members who need to work while on vacation. At Smugglers' Notch, all condominiums have in-room

Internet access either through wireless broadband, broadband via ethernet, or dial-up connection. [www.smuggs.com/pages/winter/amenities/cableTVinternet.php](http://www.smuggs.com/pages/winter/amenities/cableTVinternet.php) ❖



## To Rent or To Buy Equipment – *That is the Question*

The answer is... it all depends on how much you ski or participate in your chosen Winter sport, and how old you are! Renting on-site is the most sensible. Resorts are prepared to fit you properly with recent models. They know how to adjust the bindings to your height and weight, and show you how to step in and release them. It's your first lesson. And if you misjudge your boot size, you can easily change them for a different size and not be stuck with cramped toes for the whole stay.

The personnel in a rental shop are likely to ask if you'd like to rent a helmet. This decision is one of personal or parental choice. Today's helmets are comfortable and keep your head and ears warm. Talk to the rental shop employees or review the website [www.lidsonkids.org](http://www.lidsonkids.org) to help you fully understand a helmet's benefits and limitations, so that you can decide whether or not to add one to your on-the-slope accessories.

It's time to buy when the economics work for you. When you and your kids become enthusiastic skiers or riders and you plan to ski or ride ten or more days during the season, consider purchasing equipment.

Used equipment and hand-me-downs are fine as long as they fit properly and are not too dated. If boots are sloppy and skis too old they may be dangerous, and kids will have a difficult time with control. The shaped skis which emerged several years ago are ideal because they turn easily and are recommended in shorter lengths, which make for greater and easier control overall. Fall ski swaps are a good way to pick up such bargains, or look for end-of-season sales. Prior to using your new shaped skis, you should have the bindings checked and set to your skier type by a trained shop professional, then tuned to sharpen the edges and wax the bases.

At Smugglers' 3 Mountain Equipment offers great deals on rentals plus you can purchase new and used equipment. [www.smuggs.com/pages/winter/skiride/3-mountain-equipment-rental.php](http://www.smuggs.com/pages/winter/skiride/3-mountain-equipment-rental.php)

When renting equipment, especially for the first time, try to visit the rental shop when it is not crowded and you are not hurried. At Smugglers' the rental shop is open from 8:00 am - 8:00 pm daily. The best times to visit are between 10:00 am and 3:00 pm, and evenings 5:00 pm to closing. This will give you a chance to ask questions and become familiar with the first time strangeness of ski boots. An unhurried rental experience can lead to a more relaxed first day on the slopes. You'll also feel more organized about getting everyone off to their lessons in the morning. Kids enjoy clumping about in the boots inside and will amuse themselves for quite a while on the first pre-ski adventure evening. ❖

# Rekindling Family Ties & Family Reunions

Vacations strengthen family ties with their bond of common experiences and sharing. Relieved of daily routines and work stresses, children and parents rediscover how much fun they can have together. Many families also choose to include grandparents. Destination resorts are good choices for such holidays where there is plenty for all ages to do.

A few special considerations will help make the multi-generational experience succeed: reserve accommodations so that grandparents have their own room where they can rest and find privacy, plan meals around dietary restrictions, solicit their input for activities, and bring a sufficient supply of medications.

At Smugglers' a popular spot for grandparents is The Pub at the *Morse Mountain Grille* in The Village. It offers unobstructed views of the beginner slopes where they can watch the grandkids in their first ski lessons. The cameras click away!

Children in blended families often range from toddlers to teens. This makes vacation planning especially challenging since there are such a variety of interests and expectations. **Smugglers' had such families in mind when they developed programs for the youngest to the oldest – TREASURES child care center for babies as young as six weeks to the Explorer Program for teens up to age seventeen. It's a match that works.**

Vacations can become family reunions. If a resort's programs are designed for a wide variety of ages, such an occasion is easily planned. Cousin can pal up with cousin and brother and sister can once again, too. Savings on cost can be realized by sharing spacious multi-bedroom condominium accommodations.

Vacation Planning Professionals at Smugglers' Notch will even help you devise and execute some special reunion events such as a professional group photo, private theme meal, or sleigh ride through the forest.

Rounding up families for a group trip is made simple when you consider a packaged vacation. You'll know the cost up front and exactly what's included. Two or more families may like to share a four or five bedroom condominium, or be lodged next to each other.

Smugglers' Notch has been packaging vacations since 1976. With all facilities and programs managed by the same company, you can be assured you won't be dragging out your wallet at every turn. **The package inclusions have been well thought out to please and entertain family members of all ages from dawn to dusk.** ❖



## Appendix A: Games to Play While Traveling

**ALPHABET GAME** One person chooses a category like animals, cities, or famous people and starts with an example. The next player must find a word that begins with the last letter, and so on until someone is stumped and must drop out of play. The game continues until only one player, the winner, is left.

**GUESSING AND GIGGLES** This one is both fun and funny. Taking turns, the player reads a sign by dropping the first letter of each word as in "alling ocks head." After giggling at the funny message, the one who guesses correctly ("falling rocks ahead") wins.

**RHYMING SENTENCES** Work your way through the alphabet by creating sentences that rhyme such as "Alice sees a palace" or "Bill took a pill" and so on. With additional rounds add new dimensions by defining the number of words in the sentence or subjects.

**LAUGH ATTACK** This is a fun way to practice your acting abilities! The player who is "it" must answer questions only with the word "bananas," and may not laugh! The others ask questions that are ridiculous when answered this way such as "What do you use to brush your teeth?" or "What is your favorite subject in school?" The round is over when the rules are broken and the next player gets a chance to keep a straight face. Vary the game with different reply words.

**20 QUESTIONS** An old favorite. One family member thinks of a person, place or thing. Children and parents singly or in teams ask yes/no questions. Whoever guesses correctly wins, but if no one does in 20 questions, then the leader is declared winner.

**STORY TAPES AND CDs** You'll find many more activities and games in a book called *Carschooling: Over 250 Entertaining Games & Activities to Turn Travel Time into Learning Time – For Kids Ages 4 to 17*. Published by Random House and available at: [www.carschooling.com](http://www.carschooling.com)

When packing games to bring along think about bringing a variety for different situations: to play alone, to play with a parent or a sibling, activities such as books and music for quiet times, and some active ones, too. And don't forget the old standbys of paper and pencil or crayons (with a clip board), coloring books and craft paper, and that favorite bedtime storybook. It's practical to avoid toys with lots of small parts that can get lost, and to remember ones that may have multiple uses like playing cards and pipe cleaners. ❖

# Appendix B: *Projects for Your Child's Sabbatical*

Many schools allow children to take time off when school is in session as long as they talk to their teacher prior to the trip and receive assignments so that they do not fall behind. In addition to staying current on homework assignments, why not do one of the following projects that your child could share with classmates?

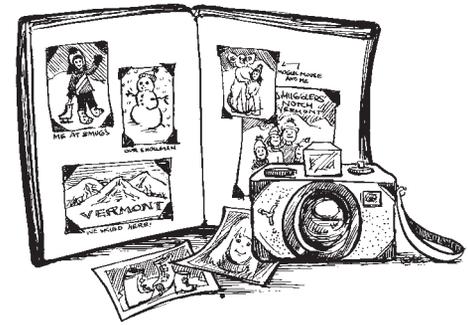
- Make a scrapbook of photographs, postcards, maps, drawings, brochures, journal activities, scenery, new experiences, impressions or new friends. Prepare a glossary of new Winter sport-related words such as bindings, chairlift, and frost.
- Prepare a photo essay using a disposable or point and shoot camera. Help your youngster learn how to frame a picture, identify a good subject, or tell a story.
- Record new sounds such as the whir of snow guns, hoot of owls, and crunch of skate blades.
- Write a story about adventures and use the soundtrack as background. Ask classmates to identify sounds.
- Write a manual on learning how to ski or snowboard. Keep a record of each day's instruction to create it. Illustrate.
- Write a brief history of the area. Collect brochures, local information, county history book. Find out about unusual names. *As you might guess, Smugglers'*

*Notch has an interesting history. Written information is available from the public relations office.*

- Sample area restaurants and collect menus. Write an article posing as a food critic.
- Identify regional food specialties and find out about ingredients and preparation. For example, maple syrup is a specialty of Vermont and is produced by boiling maple tree sap.
- Study a ski, cross-country, or snowmobile trail map. Jot down unusual names and look for a theme. Write a tale incorporating them. *For example, trail names at Smugglers' include Treasure, RumRunner, Smugglers' Alley, Drifter, and Black Bear. A story emerges about a drifter who tries to smuggle treasures but encounters a black bear.*
- *Smugglers' offers Study Hall Smuggs Style weekly for kids who need to work on their classwork while on vacation.*
- *Smugglers' Snow Sport University instructors are happy to work with Boy Scouts on merit badge requirements for skiing or snowboarding with advance registration.*

*Here are some interesting facts to stimulate other creative projects:*

- *Smugglers' Notch is located in Vermont's Green Mountains, a 157 mile chain. Morse 2250', Sterling 3010' and Madonna 3640' are Smugglers' three interconnected ski mountains.*
- *Sterling Pond, Vermont's highest natural trout pond, is atop Sterling Mountain.*
- *There are more than 100 covered bridges in Vermont.*
- *Smugglers' Notch and Genoa, Italy share the same latitude.*
- *Vermont leads the nation in maple syrup production. The sugar maple is the state tree.*
- *Vermont's Lake Champlain, the so-called sixth Great Lake, is 100 miles long and 12 miles wide.*
- *Montpelier, Vermont's capital, is the nation's smallest capital city. ❖*



# Appendix C: *What to Bring List*

Here is a convenient list to help you pack for the most enjoyable vacation ever! If you don't have some of the items, most are available for purchase or rental at your destination.

## CLOTHING

- Ski parka & pants
- Turtle necks
- Long underwear
- Casual après ski wear
- Sleepwear
- Personals
- Ski socks
- Warm sweater
- Warm hat
- Insulated mittens
- Neck gaiter

## SPECIAL NEEDS

- Personal hygiene products
- Sewing kit
- Lip balm
- Medications
- Thermometer
- Diapers
- Formula
- Baby's needs
- Extra eye glasses
- Contact lenses
- Sun screen

## ACTIVE WEAR

- Bathing suit
- Beach towel
- Sneakers

## ACCESSORIES

- Goggles
- Cosmetics
- Alarm clock
- Camera and/or Video recorder
- Ski lock
- Sunglasses

## ESSENTIALS

- Money/credit card/ATM card
- Traveler's checks
- Storybooks
- Games for the ride
- Snacks for the trip
- Address book
- Child's favorite blanket or stuffed animal

## IN THE CONDO

- Condiments/spices
- Coffee/tea
- Powdered laundry detergent
- Specialty items
- Night light

## EQUIPMENT

- Skis, boots, poles (alpine and cross country)
- Snowboard and boots
- Ice skates
- Sled
- Tennis racquet
- Helmet
- Snowshoes

For almost thirty years, Smugglers' has been perfecting the art of entertaining families. We have learned a great deal about families likes, dislikes, and expectations and desires for a Winter vacation. With this information we have continually enhanced programs to help families have fun together, develop leadership skills, become aware of nature and the environment, learn positive self awareness, and develop an open mind. We believe the ritual of vacations unites families, and that the psychological benefits are enormous. Just one reason to visit snow country!

Unlike racquet and some other sports where various abilities and ages in a family accentuate the differences, Winter sports equalize them. In skiing, for example, it takes only a few days to master the basics, and with those skills a family can be off on a joint mountain adventure. But beware... children will quickly surpass their parents because they take to skiing so naturally! One more reason to visit snow country.

Winter sports bring families in contact with panoramic, pristine mountain surroundings that inspire the spirit and refresh the soul. Ski resorts, the original environmentalists,

have a large stake in seeing to the land's health. They fastidiously maintain the freshness and beauty of the mountain playground for families to enjoy. It's reason enough for a trip to snow country.

A Winter family vacation is a path to a life sport you will cherish forever. We hope our Guide will get you started on the right foot. Please call us at Smugglers' if there's any way we can help.

## *Happy Trails!*



Concept: Nancy Illemann Rock  
Research by: Barbara Thomke  
Edited by: Barbara Thomke & Karen Boushie  
Proofreader: Stacy Maynard  
Design by: Priscilla Emerling  
Illustrations by: Kate Peatman & Jim Espey