

To: Teton Back Country Guides
Fr: Timothy B. Price - Snowboarder - New York City, NY
Re: Thanks for saving my trip.

I visited Jackson Hole over the Christmas/New Years break. Jackson has been on my list for several years because of the quality of in-bound terrain it offers the advanced skier/snowboarder.

Unfortunately for me, I arrived about a week too late for fresh snow and had nine days ahead of me. I was certain that a snowstorm would make everything okay. Well it didn't. All of the inbound terrain I had heard so much about had been tracked out days before and while the view was amazing the riding was not. I rented a car and even took the pass over to Grand Targhee to see what I could find. While the snow was marginally better, I hadn't flown 2,100 some odd miles to ride some groomers.

The trip was looking bleak. No snow on the horizon, it looked as if it was going to be a complete wash out. On the way back to Jackson I picked up a hitchhiker who had just skied out of the woods, and gave her a courtesy lift back to her car at the top of the pass. I noticed that the visible trails looked pretty decent, and the snow quality looked mighty good compared to what I had been riding the last three days.

When I returned to my hotel I decided if the snow wasn't going to find me I was going to find the snow. I was not however willing to become a statistic, by getting myself lost in the woods or worse. So I called up a couple places later that day, one of the outfits being Teton Backcountry Guides.

There are a few things that immediately set me at ease when I called Teton Backcountry. First was the amount of time Jeff spent discussing the options available to me. We spoke several times over course of three days discussing the previous days conditions, best options and routes available, this is an outfit that will ensure you are going to have the best time possible. The second thing that I appreciated was the amount of amenities that were provided. Other groups had a surcharge for everything, which quickly added up and could have potentially been a make or break on my going out. TBG provided all the necessities, Pack, Beacon, Shovel, and I'll get to the lunch a little later, but suffice to say the gear provided was high quality and it made the decision even easier.

The final thing of most importance to me was safety, and Jeff did a pretty thorough Q&A with me in advance. But having skied with people in the past who can talk the talk only to find out their true ability when it is too late, I was sure I had made the right decision on the ride up to the park. Jeff and I spent the entire ride to the park, discussing my riding experience, my decision to use a "split-board" for the first time and my overall health and fitness.

Going down the mountain we agreed shouldn't present much a problem, but since I was using some new equipment we opted for an intermediate route up that allowed access, provided I demonstrated skill needed, to attack some more advanced terrain on the way down.

When we arrived at the park we suited up, and began the adventure that saved my trip to Jackson. Having not been on skis in over a decade, a split-board is a snowboard that breaks into skis for the uphill part of the trip and then turns back into a snowboard when you go down, I was how to put this gingerly, a little rusty with these two planks attached to my feet. A couple words of encouragement and some no-nonsense tips and tricks, Jeff had me ascending the trail in no time flat without exhausting myself in the process.

We stopped a few times along the way to peel some layers and about halfway up stopped for some lunch. I was expecting your typical soggy Sammy on Wonder Bread and a couple power bars in a non-descript paper bag. What I ended up getting was a solid Turkey Sandwich with all the fixins and a cookie roughly half the size of my head that made Mrs. Field's look like a hack, AND a couple granola bars to boot.

We continued our ascent all the while Jeff is pointing out little things about the various trees, wildlife, snowpack and composition, which added to the experience, and in no time we arrived at the summit.

The view was breathtaking, we snapped a few pictures, I put the split-board back together and it was time to go down. Jeff gave me the ground rules made sure I understood and away we went into an area that no ski resort can ever provide. Once Jeff ascertained my riding ability we gradually kicked it up and took a single run from summit to base that made the hike and the entire trip to Jackson worth it.

While it was not the most difficult terrain I had ridden it was the absolute perfect run for all of the other elements of the day. We had deep soft powder through some technical trees into some open faces. I could not be happier.

I broke the split-board back into touring mode and we took a leisurely pace, read I could use a little work on the skiing side of the business, back to the car.

All in all the best money I spent on my nine days in Jackson was the money I spent on Teton Backcountry Guides, and the first beer I had at the bar when I got back to Jackson later that day. I will be back, and I will be calling them again when I am. I find myself hard pressed to justify a ticket at the resort when I know an outfit like TBG exists. The cost of the day was comparable to two days at the resort with food and quite frankly one day out with TBG you'll want to take a day off to appreciate just how much fun you had.

A couple other notes worth mentioning and I think the folks at TBG could easily provide. The backcountry is not reserved for expert skiers. Even though I have ridden for well over twenty years and consider myself an expert level rider in all conditions, I was a novice when it came to the ascent, and Jeff was able to get my novice "on-ski" skills up to a place where I could access the terrain that my snowboarding skills were also satisfied. I'm actually in the process of improving my "touring" mode so that next time out we can take it a step further.

You cannot recreate the experience you find in the backcountry at the resort. It will be unlike anything you have ever done and is more rewarding than your best day at an inbound mountain. As long as you are moderately active, are able to ski on intermediate trails, and have the determination to succeed than I think TBG can provide you a day you will not soon forget. I wish I had done this years ago, so that I hadn't spent so many mediocre days on the lifts.

My sincerest thanks to Jeff and the TBG crew for saving my trip to Jackson, you can be sure I will be back soon, with some improved "touring mode" skills so that we can take it to the next level.

Sincerely,



Timothy B. Price
New York City, NY
2012-2013 Season