

Mancuso, Bahrke star in California tourism ad

By Lori Weisberg, Sign On San Diego

Olympic skier Julia Mancuso is among winter athletes featured in a new California tourism ad campaign airing on cable TV.

California tourism officials have turned to celebrity athletes and chefs to promote the state as an ideal destination for skiing and snowboard enthusiasts, as well as vacationers with a hankering for fine food and wine.

Its new "Friends in High Places" television advertising campaign employs such notables as Olympic ski champions Julie Mancuso and Shannon Bahrke, both of whom grew up on the slopes of Lake Tahoe, to showcase California's top skiing and snowboarding locales. The ad is not devoted just to skiing but also highlights such activities as dog sledding, tubing and ice skating.

California ski resorts last year attracted 8.1 million snow enthusiasts and typically generate \$700 million in direct visitor spending annually, according to the California Ski Industry Association.

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