

# Cost of skiing making it an exclusive sport

By Rob Lovitt, NBC News

Skiers and snowboarders searching for “the steep and deep” this winter may find that the concept has taken on a much less appealing connotation: The price of the sport is getting so steep that some believe it may be becoming the exclusive domain of those whose pockets are exceedingly deep.



Those with the means can ski in and out at the Ritz-Carlton Bachelor Gulch at Beaver Creek. Photo/LTN file

“You have the haves and the have mores,” said Douglas Quinby, principal analyst at PhoCusWright, which conducts market research on the travel industry. “When you factor in the airfare of the typical ski trip, the accommodations and the length of stay, you’re talking about a pretty significant penny.”

Coupled with lift tickets that can top \$100 per day and clothing and equipment that can cost thousands, it’s not surprising that both the industry and its fans are concerned about the sports’ long-term viability for those of more modest means.

Skiing, of course, has never been considered an inexpensive activity, but the sport has seen a significant upward shift in visitor demographics in recent years.

Last year, 54 percent of skier visits, defined as one skier or snowboarder riding for one day, came from households earning more than \$100,000, according to the National Ski Areas Association. That's up from 48 percent five years ago, a 12.5 percent increase.

In contrast, visits from households earning less than \$100,000 during the same period slipped from 52 percent to 46 percent – an 11.5 percent decrease.

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