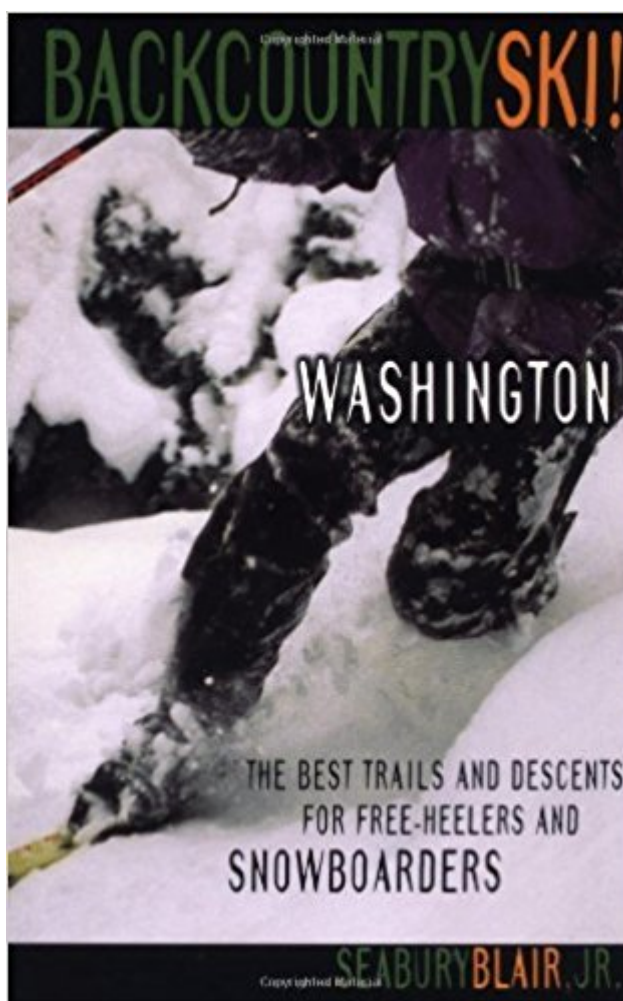


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# Backcountry Ski! Washington: The Best Trails And Descents For Free-Heelers And Snowboarders



## Synopsis

Discover the best places to go in the Cascades and Olympics for backcountry skiing -- telemarking, cross-country, and snowboarding. In his new guide, Seabury Blair explores ungroomed powdery slopes and pristine wilderness trails, with more than half the routes described for intermediate-level backcountry skiers. The 70 routes described here feature mileage and elevation gains, trail logs, estimated skiing times, topographical maps with GPS, photos, skill levels and traction required, map references, directions, and avalanche potentials. Blair also includes information on safety, gear, and resources as well as tips on backcountry areas in eastern Washington.

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## Customer Reviews

Discover the best places to go in the Cascades and Olympics for backcountry skiing -- telemarking, cross-country, and snowboarding. In his new guide, Seabury Blair explores ungroomed powdery slopes and pristine wilderness trails, with more than half the routes described for intermediate-level backcountry skiers. The 70 routes described here feature mileage and elevation gains, trail logs, estimated skiing times, topographical maps with GPS, photos, skill levels and traction required, map references, directions, and avalanche potentials. Blair also includes information on safety, gear, and resources as well as tips on backcountry areas in eastern Washington.

This book is nice for tamer adventures.

This has got to be one of the worst guidebooks I have ever read. I bought it only because it was, at the time of its release, the only backcountry skiing guidebook for Washington. Now that the 2nd ed. of Rainier Burgdorfer's book has come out, there is no reason to buy this one. There are several things wrong with this book:1) The tours are mainly beginner and intermediate tours. (It's true that these types of skiers will get some use from this book, but there are other problems). For example, the Muir snowfield tour is portrayed as the be-all-end-all tour, when really it is a mundane overcrowded route. Furthermore, he squeezes several tours out of one, especially in the Paradise and Hurricane Ridge sections... tour #20: go 1/2 a mile, and swoop down this bowl. Tour #21: go a mile further, swoop down this bowl. Tour #22: go 1/2 a mile further, there is a nice viewpoint.2) For each of these tours, driving and trailhead directions are repeated in full. For cases like Paradise and Hurricane ridge, which, as noted above, probably have 10 "tours" from the same spots, this is such a waste of space!3) He talks way too much about his dog "wunderhund", and silly anecdotes, instead of giving useful advice. He states the obvious a lot.4) Snowboarders? That word is in bold font on the cover, in an attempt to appeal to a new market. The reality is, not many of these routes are suitable for snowboarders. In conclusion, flipping through this book is depressing. You feel like there really isn't any good backcountry ski terrain in Washington. And the silly writing gets old really quickly.

Rainier Burgdorfer's *Backcountry Skiing in the Washington's Cascades* is MUCH MORE useful. I've got both this book and Burgdorfer's guide and this guidebook covers the same tours as Burgdorfer's book and doesn't provide enough new or different information about these backcountry ski tours to make it useful. As Mr. Blair mentions, Burgdorfer's book does cover some tours that are only accessible after roads have melted out or that require some mountaineering equipment, but that just makes it more interesting. The majority of Burgdorfer's tours are suitable for skiers of intermediate or better ability and do not require any non-skiing gear (i.e., mountaineering equipment). Martin Volken's guide to *Backcountry Skiing Snoqualmie Pass (Backcountry Skiing)* is also worth checking out as it does provide new and different options from Burgdorfer's guide in my opinion.

Does anyone besides Seabury Blair's friends like this book? Marlene Kocur liked it but she has also drew the maps for the book. Another reader gave it 5 stars but also happens to live on the Olympic Peninsula. Probably another of Mr. Blair's friends. If you give this horrendous book a positive review please be completely honest about whether or not the author happens to be a friend of yours. Blair

has written a pamphlet for beginning cross-country skiers and then stretched it into a book by printing the same route descriptions over and over again. Then he slapped a cover on it to try and sell it to backcountry skiers and snowboarders. A quick perusal at the bookstand would make this obvious but on the web we don't have that luxury.

Wow! I don't think my book is as bad as Mr. Fortier suggests. I'd ask backcountry skiers and riders to judge for themselves. My book lists 70 hills that are all accessible in the winter, slopes that you can reach in a single day. It is aimed at skiers and riders of intermediate ability or better and I attempted to give alternate routes where available for snowriders just getting acquainted with wild snow. Mr. Fortier is correct in saying my book serves an entirely different readership than Mr. Burgdorfer's book. Almost half of all the routes in his classic guide cannot be reached during the winter months without snow machines or long, tedious approaches on logging roads. The reader's choice here is simple: if you want to ski or ride the backcountry of Washington's Cascades and Olympics during the winter, buy the book I wrote. If you want to extend your snowriding to the spring and summer months - or if you are a mountaineer with plenty of time on your hands during the winter - by Burgdorfer's. It's okay to skip the parts about my dog if you don't want to read them.

Seabury Blair's guide book appeals to those of us who don't jump off of cliffs for entertainment. When first starting out as a novice skier I would have appreciated having a copy of this book. Now that I'm skiing at an intermediate level this guide book is invaluable. It's formatted for all levels of skiing abilities. Most guide books are written with just the facts...very dry. Blair's guide book is informative but written with a sense of humor. Whether you are experienced or just beginning to take to the snow this book is for you. Very well done.

The best thing about this guide is that you can use it all winter and put it away in the summer. I really like the relaxed style and the way the author makes me feel like I can do any one of these routes in a day. I own both backcountry skiing and snowboarding guides to Washington, and this one is by far the best. Most of the routes in the other book are only open in the summer and it would be impossible to get to them in a day.

The author has written a witty very informative book. I would very strongly recommend it to anyone who loves the outdoors, and is looking for a book that is not only accurate, factual, but also very entertaining. GREAT READING!

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