



SNOWCAT TOUR FAQs

The Homewood Snowcat Adventure is an all-day adventure taking Homewood's Snowcat to the top of Ellis Peak. The Snowcat will provide skiers and riders a chance to experience the Lake Tahoe backcountry in a whole new way with phenomenal views. There is over 750 acres of backcountry terrain, adding over 800 vertical feet to our resort. One run from the top of Ellis to peak to the bottom of Old Homewood Express is over 1,800 vertical feet.

- **How much does the Cat skiing cost?**

The program is \$499 and includes a lift ticket and all day tour in the Cat weather and conditions permitting. A lunch, snacks, beverages, backpack with a shovel, beacon and a probe will be included. Homewood season passholders and are eligible for a \$100 discount, making the price \$399 per person. Deposits in the full amount are due to hold reservations.

- **How many people do we need to have? Can we do a private tour and rent out the whole cat?**

There is a 3 person minimum to run the cat for the day. If you don't have 3 we can put you on standby for an open tour. You can also rent out the whole cat for \$3000 for up to 9 ppl.

- **Are there guides that ski with us?**

Yes, there are highly trained guides that lead the cat skiing experience.

- **What is a day on the cat like? Will we get to take breaks? What if I get tired and can't ski the whole day?**

We suggest you to arrive at the mountain for 8 AM, allowing time to boot up and get demos if needed. You will check-in with your guide at 8:30 AM at the West Shore Café who will go through safety procedures and introduce you to your backcountry equipment. As soon as the lifts open at 9 AM you will head up to do a brief riding assessment then meet the cat.

Typically groups will get in 4-6 runs depending on the length of run and pace of the group. Some groups will opt to eat their lunch on the cat ride, at the top of the mountain, or take a break to go down to Big Blue View Bar. The tour guides will go over the plan with your group. You may sit out a lap and meet back up with the group any time or if you get tired you are more than welcome to drop out early, however there are no refunds for doing so. The tour will wrap up around 4PM.

- **What level skier or rider do I have to be to go on a tour? Do I have to have backcountry experience?**

Generally we recommend this tour only to more advanced skier and riders. Private group tours for intermediate-level skiers/riders can be arranged with full buyout. No previous backcountry experience is required!

There is some challenging terrain and the guides want to ensure the safety and pacing of the group. A riding assessment will be done at the beginning of the day and the guide will ultimately make the decision if they feel you meet the required ability level for the safety of you and the group. If not, you can take a lesson to improve your skills, reschedule your tour, or get refunded.

- **Can skiers and boarders go together?**

While we like to share turns with skiers and snowboarders alike, we have found that skiing allows easier access to traverses and any flatter sections. For this reason, we prefer to run open tours with groups of either skiers OR snowboarders to ensure the best experience for everyone on the tour. Private buyouts may be mixed and exceptions are made on a case by case basis when booking open tours but will require a call to assess ability and experience.



- **What kind of terrain does the snowcat access?**

There is a variety of terrain: the majority of Ellis Peak area consists of intermediate gladed pitches mixed with some nice steeper areas, open faces and bowls. Optional short hikes and some traverses will allow for longer runs and make more terrain variety available, but if you prefer not to do this please inform your guide.

- **Is there a cancellation policy?**

Yes, there is \$100 per person cancellation policy and \$1000 for buyouts. All cancellations must be made 14 days in advance. Any cancellations made within 14 days of your reservation will be charged in full. There are no partial refunds for buyouts.

- **What if the snow or weather conditions are poor?**

Homewood Ski Patrol will assess the conditions and the weather forecasts daily. *Please keep in mind this call may not be made until the morning of the tour, we cannot guarantee advance notice.* Safety is our number one concern. If conditions are not safe or skiable we will make that call and make necessary adjustments to the schedule. We encourage you to book for a different date, but if this can't be facilitated we will issue a full refund.

- **What time do we have to be there in the morning? What if I'm late? Do I forfeit my spot?**

Please be at the West Shore Cafe for 8 AM. You will be given further instructions if you book a tour. You are required to complete the safety training and riding assessment with one of the guides or ski patrol prior to joining in. If you are late we will try to accommodate this if possible, otherwise we will reschedule you for another date. There will be no discount for the missed time.

- **What if I get hurt? Does ski patrol patrol Ellis Peak?**

Yes, ski patrol is on site at Homewood all day. We have snowmobiles and highly trained patrollers who are on call daily. Response time to anywhere on Ellis is very fast, guides are equipped with radios to contact patrol at all times.

- **Do I get to keep the backpack?**

No, use of the equipment is a part of the experience however you do not get to keep the equipment. The professional grade snow safety kit and other backcountry accessories are available at Homewood Mountain Sports.

- **Do you have demo skis or board and do we receive any discounts?**

Yes, we have a great selection of demos available at a discount to cat tours. More details available when booking.

- **Is a helmet required?**

A helmet is not required but it is highly encouraged.

- **Can I bring alcohol in the cat or on the tour?**

No, however beer and alcohol can be purchased at any of the Homewood bars or through buyout upgrade packages.

- **How do I go about booking my reservation?**

Please contact the Guest Services office by calling 530-584-6800 or preferably by email at guestservices@skihomewood.com

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