

Whiteface Mountain Road

Overview

This trip goes up Whiteface Mountain Road, near Wilmington, located in the Adirondacks, NY, USA. In summer, this road is prohibited to hikers and cyclists, as it can be climbed by car against a fee.

In winter, it becomes a popular ski tour, which is very easy and accessible to most skiers, including beginners. Skis with edges are preferable but not required, especially when no snowfall has occurred for a while, leaving the wind the time to remove the snow from some exposed sections. As opposed to what you would expect from a road, this ski tour offers a good variety of panoramas.

How to get there

From the north: Highway 87, exit 34, left (west) on route 9N (towards Whiteface), up to the town of Jay. At Jay, turn right on route 86.

From the south: Highway 97, exit 30, route 73 up to Jay. At Jay, turn right on route 86.

From Jay:

Drive on route 86 towards Wilmington/Whiteface. At the 4-way intersection at Wilmington, continue straight ahead towards the Veterans Memorial Highway (a.k.a. Whiteface Road). Drive past the Atmospheric Research Center access road, then at an intersection, take the left and park about 200 meters ahead, in front of the gate and gatehouse.

On-line road map available at:

http://www.iloveny.com/info_center/road_maps.asp

http://www.iloveny.com/info_center/pdf/map_region_ad.pdf

USGS Topographic maps

1 : 25000 Wilmington

1 : 25000 Lake Placid

Description :

As you leave the gate, you ski up a gentle slope, which does not require that your skis leave the tracks (chance are that you will find tracks there). From time to time, you will see signs along the road, indicating your current elevation.

2351 ft: gatehouse

2638 ft: sign

2877 ft: before left curve with a wall and view

3307 ft: sign

4289 ft: between the 2 hairpin turns

4499 ft: after the second hairpin turn

4602 ft: the Whiteface castle

4867 ft: summit of Whiteface Mountain

The road alternates between sections lined with trees, and places where the steepness of the natural terrain has required building high walls. Those spots generally offer good views.

At some point, you get to the first hairpin turn, with a high cliff to your left. There can be a short section of ice or crust there. Then, the road is less steep for another 1.5km, where you will find a second hairpin turn, and another short icy or crusty section. The hiking trail climbing Whiteface, from either the Atmospheric Center or the Wilmington water reservoir, meets the road on the left, after the turn.

After going between cliffs, you will be able to see the "castle", if weather permits.

On your way to the castle, there is the closed entrance, which looks like the entrance of a cave like you see in some video games. In summer, people who do not wish to climb the stairs from the castle to the summit can enter a tunnel there, then take an elevator and be taken to the summit without much effort. In winter, the castle is sometimes covered with blown snow.

After passing through the castle, you can remove your skis, and climb the stairs up to the summit, where you will find a weather station.

Once back to the castle, put your skis on, and let the gravity take you down to the gatehouse. You could make it in about 15-20 minutes, but you also have the option of enjoying it by leaving off the tracks and risking yourself in deeper snow.

Alternative : Whiteface downhill ski trails

Note that this option is a suggestion, which has not been tried nor checked for legality. There are two options for reaching the downhill ski trails:

- ski down to the hairpin turn, take the hiking trail up to a very small shelter, bushwhack for about 200 meters south, take a slide or former ski trail (properly assess the avalanche risks first) down to the network of maintained ski trails of Whiteface Mountain.
- hike down the hiking trail on the southwest side of the mountain down to elevation 1300m, bushwhack east for about 200 meters west, where you reach the the network of maintained ski trails of Whiteface Mountain.

You can then ski down the mountain, up to the parking lots of Whiteface Mountain Ski Center, from where you can either hitch-up or have left a car previously.

Production – Distribution

Base Map

Topozone, <http://www.topozone.com>

Mapwork/Text

Charles Leduc

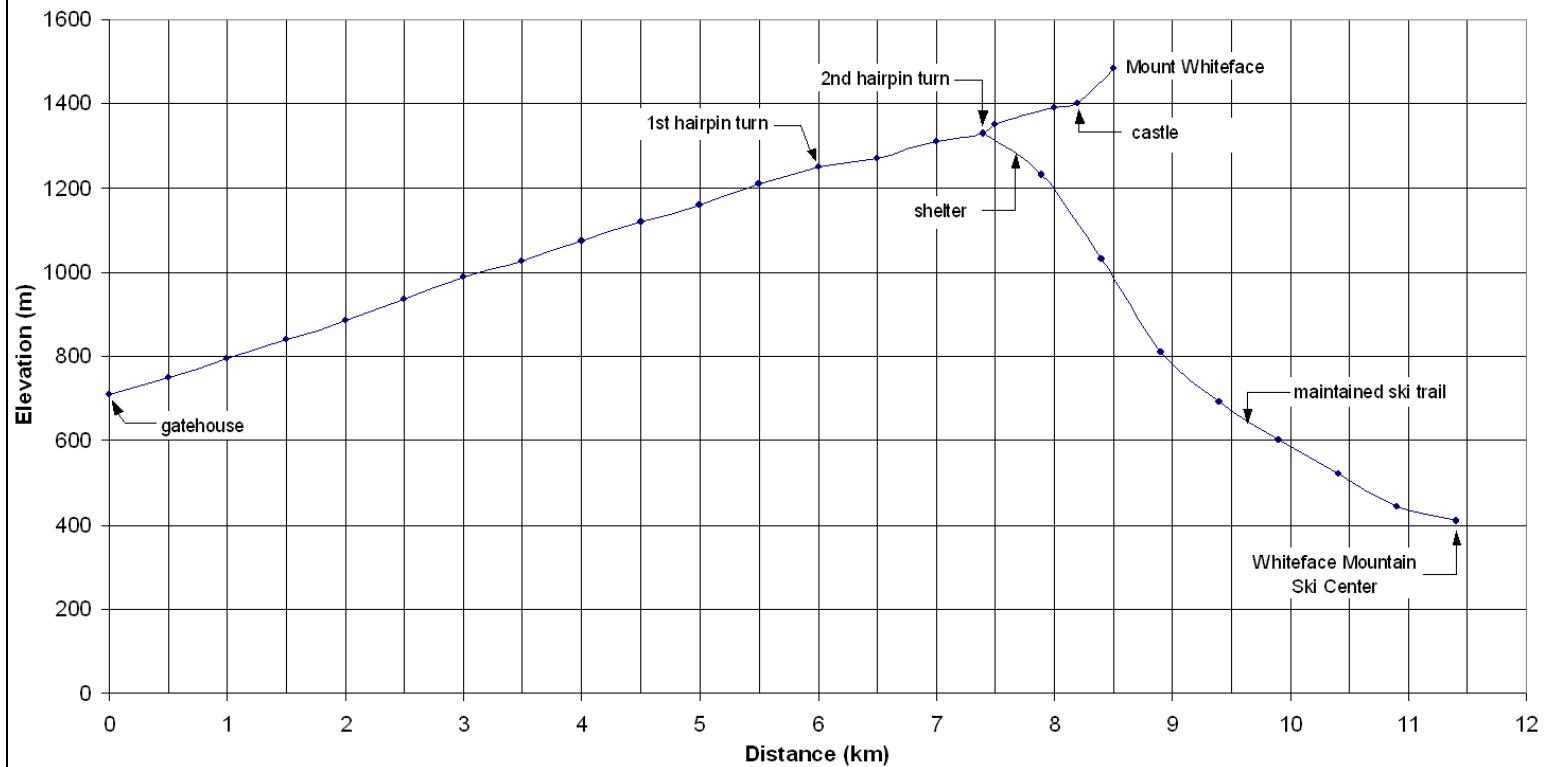
Distribution

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Disclaimer

This document has been produced on a volunteer basis by skiers who do not claim to have infallible judgment. The authors assume no responsibility for any accident, damage or other prejudice that may result from the use of this document. Omissions or errors are always possible, and we would be grateful should you bring them to our attention.

Whiteface Mountain





WHITEFACE

WHITEFACE SUMMIT
ELEV. + 4867'

LITTLE WHITEFACE
PEAK - ELEV. 3579'

Cloudlifted Gondola

Face Lift

NEW FOR '02 - '03

- Increase in snowmaking
- New high-speed quad
- New conveyor lift
- New trail improvements
- New Zaugg super pipe cutter

SYMBOL KEY

- GONDOLA
- CONVEYOR LIFT
- DOUBLE CHAIR
- TRIPLE CHAIR
- QUAD CHAIR
- ★ MID-STATION UNLOADING
- EASIER
- MORE DIFFICULT
- ◆ MOST DIFFICULT
- ◆ EXPERTS ONLY
- ◆ FAMILY SLOW SKIING ZONE
- Kodak PHOTO OPPORTUNITY
- FIRST AID
- PARKING
- SNOWSPORTS SCHOOL
- SKI SHOP
- CAFETERIA
- LOUNGE
- NURSERY
- KIDS SNOWSPORTS LEARNING CENTER
- REST ROOMS
- TERRAIN PARK
- HALF PIPE
- NASTAR

SLIDES and designated GLADE SKIING areas are ungroomed natural terrain and are open subject to natural snow and weather conditions.



BASE LODGE

ELEV. 1,220

EAST ACRES

FAMILY CENTER

LAKE PLACID WILMINGTON

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