

CMH NEWS

January 2009 Issue 60



**CMH Heli-Skiing
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An Invitation to Play!

BY WALTER BRUNS

Headed into December and the holiday season, Old Man Winter descended from the pole with a vengeance. It has been many many years since it was forty below around here!

Call me weird, but splitting firewood at these temperatures is an absolute delight!! The rounds shatter into chunks that keep the stove cranked and the place warm.

This is as Canadian as it gets. Which begs the question: What makes us tick?! What drives us to make this outwardly wild business of a Canadian Mountain Holiday work?!!

For starters, there are almost 500 passionate people who genuinely care about you, our guests, and who love to just be in our mountains to work and play.

Everything we do is based on a few simple core values: safety, passion, excellence, accountability, and sustainability. We live by these values and we invite you to come and play with us.

We commit that we will do everything possible to earn and keep the trust that many of you have placed in us for 44 years. And we promise that we will have a lot of FUN! No matter what the weather is like, no matter if the snow is perfect or not, we will have a great time and you will get the best possible holiday experience for your money.

We do it because it is fun to make it work. It is fun to be with like-minded winter enthusiasts. And it is fun to see you go home happy. That is our goal for 2009... happy skiers going home to tell everyone about the terrific time they had at CMH!

I invite you to come and play with us in this magnificent, glorious white winter wonderland!

With best wishes for the New Year,



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ROKO'S SKI TIPS



BY ROKO KOELL

The Perfect Powder Exercise

In a day's worth of skiing, we make about 3,000 turns. We prefer a certain turning radius, certain speed and familiar skiing movements in the form of technique. This works great on hard pack, as there is little turning resistance for our skis when they're on a solid snowy platform.

Fresh snow has fallen. It's a powder day at your ski area and you're keen to experiment with the fluffy white stuff. But there's a problem... Your excitement doesn't quite transform into the harmonious powder turns that you'd hoped. What's the problem? It's not a problem, just a lack of practise. As well, fresh powder isn't so common at ski areas. Powder skiing requires a few subtle changes as compared to skiing on hardpack. The overall skiing technique is the same, but the difference is that in powder, you have to overcome the additional turning resistance of soft snow.

Strong and linked vertical movements will create and build your platform and weighting both skis more equally will drastically complement the challenge of balancing. Proper pole plants will also give you rhythm and help link your turns together. If you're a neophyte, it's your ticket to success and if you're an intermediate or expert powder skier, it's your ticket to better efficiency. This means you'll avoid rapid fatigue, save energy and will have a better overall experience.

You can practise this on hard pack with short turns. Skiing short turns with strong pole plants gets you out of your comfort zone. If you exercise the vertical movements (platform) and rhythm, it's an excellent way to establish more equal weighting (balancing). This way, when you venture into the deep, your muscle memory will remember these motion patterns. Then after a bit of practise, it will click and you will float down the mountain effortlessly and be consumed with orgasmic powder nirvana.

It Ain't Cheap But it is a Bargain

BY G.D. MAXWELL

"Hah!" you say, lips curled with cynicism. "Heli-Skiing a bargain!" Be mindful of Oscar Wilde's admonition about the cynic; a man who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing.

Heli-Skiing is a bargain, and I can prove it. Well, all right, I can argue forcefully in its favour.

But let's put our minds in the proper space before we begin. Close your eyes. Picture your perfect ski vacation. I'm willing to bet – and give you great odds – your picture doesn't include long lift lines, crowded runs, swarming restaurants and frenzied dinner reservations. Of course it doesn't. You're picturing postcard mountains, untracked runs, fabulous food and relaxation.

Wake up! You're dreaming about Heli-Skiing, you poor, misguided fool.

So let me put the economics of your folly to rest. Yes, it is going to be more expensive to spend a week Heli-Skiing than it is to spend a week skiing at any major, world-class resort in the U.S. or Canada. But not nearly as much as you might think. And bear in mind, we're talking value here, not price. Value, not price. Repeat the mantra.

The very accommodating folks at Canadian Mountain Holidays (CMH), who have run the biggest heli operation on the planet for over 40 years now, will show you the time of your life during, say, the week of January 17-24 for a

mere \$8,370 CAD, assuming you're going with a friend. That's \$6,600 USD, more or less.

For that price, they'll shuttle you from Calgary Alberta to their Cariboo Lodge, one of the dozen they operate in the mountains of British Columbia. Canada, eh? They'll put you up in a comfy room for seven nights, take you Heli-Skiing for six and a half days, throw in the use of powder skis, serve more delicious food that you can possibly eat and immerse you in the charming company of 43 other pilgrims whose jones for powder rivals your own.

If you'd like to spend the same week at a big-name ski resort, a nice middle-of-the-road kind of hotel, you will be set back around \$2,000-\$2,500 USD. You can spend more of course, way more, if you're so inclined. Lift tickets and good quality rental skis will set you back another \$650 to \$750 depending on where you decide to go. Don't forget to tack on transportation from where your plane lands to the mountain and back.

Hmmm... Heli-Skiing may not look cheap in comparison. But man – gender neutral – does not live on Frosted Flakes alone. Ya gotta eat if yer gonna ski and eating costs money.

Now no one goes on a CMH heli trip for the food, but everybody raves about it. That's just one of the ironies. The other is heli-belly. Heli-belly is what you go home with if you eat everything you're offered at the lodge. You'll be

sorely tempted to do just that because you'll be burning a bazillion calories every day. Give into temptation.

At Cariboo Lodge, friendly staff run down the halls ringing bells at 7:00 a.m. That's to get you up in time for stretch class... followed by breakfast; French toast with fresh berries and a side of roasted chicken sausage. That was the morning after the smoked salmon eggs benny.

No stretch class at the resort. Do you dress in ski clothes and wilt through breakfast or wear civvies, eat, come back and then get dressed for skiing? No helicopter at the resort either, just lift lines. Sometimes big ones, sometimes little.

When the chopper sets you down on an impossibly narrow mountain ridge, you have 952,960 acres of Cariboo Mountains to ski... endless, untracked powder in a landscape so powerful you can't imagine it until you've seen it. Just you and those 43 other pilgrims.

Don't get me wrong, I've skied plenty in big-name resorts and enjoyed myself doing so. But on major powder days, most mountains at most resorts are likely to be cut to ribbons by noon. Still good skiing, but not much untracked powder and no solitude.

When après rolls around, many of the top spots in the best resorts resemble mosh pits more than the kind of place you want to unwind with a refreshing beverage and snack. The Cariboo's lounge doesn't though; it's fluffed up, fireplaced and sparingly peopled with folks just like you

— high after the best day of skiing they've ever experienced and dying to talk about it.

And dinner. Let's see. In resorts you have to make a reservation if you can get one, get dressed, go for a walk or taxi ride and reverse the process to get back to your room. In the Cariboo's? You put on your slippers and pad down the hall to the dining room. The cuisine at dinner is like nothing else. One night, the appy was mache with seared scallops and pancetta vinaigrette. The main was marinated rack of venison with a tawny port reduction, smoked corn relish, parsnip potato cakes and something green and leafy. The white chocolate and strawberry mille feuille dessert nearly didn't matter as most of us had no room left, but we devoured every last morsel anyway. We ate like this every day.

The rooms are comfy but not luxurious. The lodge is luxurious. The hand-built stone sauna, outdoor hot tub and on-staff therapists are luxurious. There are no nightclubs in the heli-world, just good conversation or a friendly game of pool with the neurosurgeon you just met.

And then there's the soul-satisfying resurrection of the passion gene that got you hooked on skiing to begin with.

So there you go. Heli-Skiing is a bargain. You can afford it. Hell, you can't afford not to go, at least once. And yes, you are a good enough skier to go Heli-Skiing... and you'll enjoy it like you've never enjoyed anything before.

G.D. Maxwell is a writer living and working in Whistler, B.C.



INSIDE

▲ Roko's Ski Tips	2
▲ It Ain't Cheap But it is a Bargain	2
▲ Hawk Air Service Suspended	3
▲ Snow What?	4
▲ Eyes on BC	5
▲ A Double Award	5
▲ Socially Savvy	6
▲ Powder Alert	6
▲ <i>Bugaboo Dreams</i> No Longer Just a Dream	7
▲ Staff Profile: Russ Peardon	7

Enhancing the Bargain!

BY MARTY VON NEUDEGG

The Canadian dollar is at its lowest level in years against the US Dollar and the Euro!

As of December 12, a high season trip offered at \$9,790.00 CDN would be \$8,189.00 USD.

A 4-day Kootenay trip offered at \$3,900.00 CDN would be \$3,265.00 USD!

Hawk Air Service Between Revelstoke/Calgary Suspended

BY MICHELLE BOROWIECKI

Revelstoke Mountain Resort has decided not to pursue its partnership with Hawk Air for service from Calgary to Revelstoke. Powder Air will continue to run on Saturdays servicing all CMH Revelstoke area drive in Lodges. The airport remains open and there is still the option of private charters from areas such as Spokane, Vancouver, Calgary, and Valemount.

CMH Navigation navigation@cmhinc.com 403.762.7809



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Snow What?

“There are many ways to describe it, but at CMH there is only one white, cold, wondrous substance that fuels us – snow.”

BY KELSEY VERBOOM

Fluffy, heavy, slushy, powder, chowder, corduroy, crud, death cookies, freshies, granular, champagne pow, corn, white asphalt, kitty litter, windblown, pillows, mashed potatoes, dump, epic.

There are many ways to describe it, but at CMH there is only one white, cold, wondrous substance that fuels us – snow. Each season we wait for it, we fly in it, we play in it, we ride through it, we float over it and we live for it. It’s not often, however, that we stop long enough to really think about snow:

- Where does it come from?
- How has it influenced our history and culture?
- How can a snowflake be at once both chaotic and exquisitely ordered?

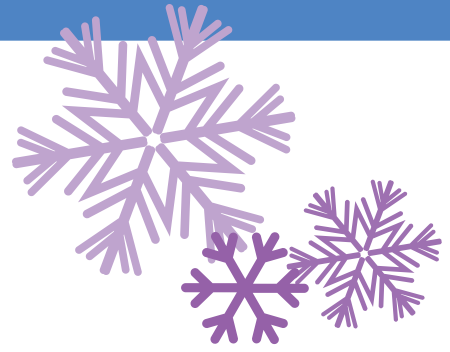
Snow means a great deal to us emotionally and ecologically. The interactions between snow and man are longstanding. For thousands of years, the presence of snow has helped shape the settlement patterns and cultural traditions of many societies. In areas where glaciers or deep snow stood, fewer societies settled. In places where long winters pushed settlers indoors for extended periods of time, activities such as weaving and carving developed.

Snow cover also influenced new modes of

travel, including skiing. Today we ski mainly for recreation, but that wasn’t always the case. A Norwegian pictograph from 2000 BC shows the first known representation of skiing. Travelling across the snow on skis instead of struggling on foot made it possible to transport food, people and trade items over otherwise impassable areas and distances.

Today, we’re surrounded by remarkable examples of how we’ve adapted to life with snow. We travel through mountains on roads cleared by snowplows and protected by snow sheds and do so in vehicles outfitted with snow tires, anti-freeze and window scrapers. We fly in a helicopter that swoops through the sky with the snow. We bundle ourselves in high-tech thermal clothing and goggles designed to insulate us from the snow. And in that single, ethereal moment when the helicopter disappears over the next peak, we click into our skis and boards and move through, in and around the snow.

However, it’s the quiet mystery of snow that captivates and inspires us, not the material technology we’ve developed. For centuries, the cryptic beauty of snow has inspired poets, artists and scientists. Physically, snow is one of the smallest and yet most complex substances we interact with in everyday life. Each individual snowflake is made up of a myriad of ice crystals, arranged in a unique



and beautifully delicate shape. Each flake is formed during different, ever-changing weather conditions and as it travels through the sky, it takes on individual characteristics.

The many forms snow can take reflect its intricate nature and susceptibility to rapid change. Skiers, snowboarders and mountain lovers are captivated with the complex and surprising unpredictability of snow. What draws us to the mountains and the snow blankets that cover them is the knowledge that by being in this terrain, we become part of something greater than ourselves. Snow is something intriguing, yet we cannot conquer it or know everything about it. Instead, we can enjoy it and experience the rush of adrenaline that accompanies a trip down the slopes, mindful that what is underfoot is an accumulation of ordered chaos.

All around us, snow transforms life. It replenishes water supplies, reflects sunlight to balance the earth’s energy absorption and signals animals to hibernate or change their colour. It also transforms the landscape around our lodges and changes our focus at CMH from summer to winter operations. So, this winter, when you’re snorkeling through the snow, think about the millions of tiny crystals all around you, and be excited about the opportunity to ski the best of it in the world. Happy trails!



2009 Great Spaces Still Available!

BY NICOLE KOESTER

As of December 12, 2008 there are still some prime powder spaces left for this winter. Here is a sample of some of these weeks:

Revelstoke	February 7 - 14	Gothics	February 7 – 12
Kootenay Powder Max	February 14 - 21	Monashees	March 14 - 21
Galena	March 21 - 26		

Call 1.800.661.0252 for the latest availability.

Eyes on B.C.



Front row: Craig Murray, Nimmo Bay; Nancy DaDalt, CMH; Deirdre Campbell, Tartan Group; Ron Gibson, Clayoquot Wilderness Resort. Back row: John Caton, Clayoquot Wilderness Resort; Dave Butler, CMH; Arthur De Jong, Whistler/Blackcomb. Missing: Sue Bosdet, Clayoquot Wilderness Resort, Ian Robertson, Rocky Mountaineer, Kate Rogers, Fairmont Hotels & Resorts (B.C. Region).

BY DAVE BUTLER

The 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games are fast approaching and the world's eyes are beginning to focus on Canada and British Columbia (B.C.). In anticipation of this, imagine six B.C. companies – each with a very public commitment to sustainability – working together to showcase the best that sustainable tourism has to offer.

We are proud that CMH is a member of this very group; the British Columbia Sustainable Tourism Collective (BCSTC). The collective is founded on the vision that travel within B.C. fosters appreciation and stewardship for the natural environment in addition to the regions and communities on which it depends. The collective has also defined sustainable tourism as travel that motivates destinations to remain unspoiled for future generations through commitment to environmental, social and economic responsibility. This pertains to how an organization relates to fellow companies, their staff and guests, communities and the environment.

As part of the BCSTC, we are pleased to work with Whistler Blackcomb, Fairmont Hotels and Resorts (British Columbia), the Armstrong Group (Rocky Mountaineer Vacations), Nimmo Bay Resort and Clayoquot Wilderness Resort. Important communications support comes from the Tartan Group.

This unique group is approaching its third anniversary. By being an active member of the BCSTC, we strive to support each other to become sustainable tourism leaders. In addition, we can build value for each other and can influence the tourism sector, governments and local communities to identify and implement sustainable best practices. The collective was formed to create benchmarks for success by combining and utilizing each other's expertise and best-management practices.

We're currently focused on three priorities:

1. Climate change
2. Human resources
3. Guest education.

We're pushing each other hard on our journeys toward sustainability and hope to continue serving as mentors through the sharing of best practices, while we encourage other B.C. tourism operators to follow our lead.

For more information about the BCSTC, please contact co-chairs Dave Butler (Director of Sustainability at CMH at 1.800.661.0252 or daveb@cmhinc.com) or Deirdre Campbell (Tartan Group at 1.250.592.3838 or Deirdre@tartangroup.ca). Alternatively, please visit the BCSTC website at www.sustainablebc.ca for more information.



1978 – Jan Armstrong skiing in the Bugaboos



2008 – Jan Armstrong skiing in the Bugaboos

A Double-Award

BY ANNIE FREW

Long time skier and CMH-enthusiast Jan Armstrong will join us again this season in the Cariboo. This year, however, will mark a special accomplishment as after 30 years of skiing with CMH, he will receive his first Million Foot Award!

Since 1978, Jan has enjoyed skiing deep untouched powder in CMH terrain and he recently joked that he should get a special award for being the guest who's taken the longest in CMH history to reach this milestone. Jan's skiing philosophy is about enjoying his surroundings and the sport itself, regardless of the footage he logs.

Thank you for your continued support over the many years Jan! We look forward to more ahead and are happy to announce that a new award has in fact been created – especially for you!



CMH Heli-Skiing Introduces *Powder Alert!*

BY PATTY ZINCK

Are you on the list? The CMH Powder Alert list?

What's this program all about? Take powder snow, add great weather conditions and you've got every skier's dream!

- Do you love to ski the best conditions?
- Is your schedule flexible?
- Can you drive to a CMH area?
- Do you like a great price?

If so, here's the deal:

- **Powder Alert** members will receive an email direct from one of three CMH lodges (Kootenay, Revelstoke and Gothics) advising of last-minute spaces and ideal ski conditions.
- Members then book their space with CMH and get themselves to the lodge for epic Heli-Skiing.
- **Last-minute spaces booked through this program will be sold at \$975 per day* on a "first-call, first-in" basis!** This price includes one day of guided Heli-Skiing, use of powder skis and avalanche transceivers, one night's accommodation and all meals and non-alcoholic beverages. Multiple days can be booked for the same rate subject to availability.

CMH *Powder Alerts* will have a one-day booking window. Alerts will be sent directly from CMH Kootenay, based in Nakusp; CMH Gothics, based just north of Revelstoke; and CMH Revelstoke, based in the town of Revelstoke. Please make all bookings direct with each lodge – contact details will be found in each alert.

You NEED to get on the list! To become a CMH Powder Alert member go to:
www.CMHski.com/powderalert

*Prices are in Canadian dollars, based on twin occupancy and do not include GST or applicable taxes

Socially Savvy

CMH + Social Media = Fun Times Online

BY JASON SEMENEK

If you use the Internet in today's "connected" society, you've probably heard the buzz about social media. Social media is a catch-all phrase for the suite of new Internet tools that allows anyone – including businesses, groups and individuals – to share and discuss information online. These include older technologies (such as online forums, podcasts or wikis) as well as an increasing number of newer technologies (such as Facebook, MySpace, YouTube and blogs). If you have a story, a picture, a video or an opinion, you can now easily share it online with others you're connected to via social media.

So, what's all the hype about? Well, marketers have made two main discoveries:

1. Companies can participate in these activities to promote their products.
2. Existing clients are their best advertising tools. Instead of paying lots of money to advertise a product, companies empower their clients to tell friends (and anyone else they're connected to via social media) about how great their product is. A personal endorsement from a real person (even better, a friend!) goes much further toward influencing a consumer, as compared to seeing a paid ad.

As a result, companies around the world are entering this new realm of marketing. They are

setting up "Facebook groups" to announce events, Flickr accounts to share photos or writing daily blogs about their products. This has resulted in a bit of kick-back from the public (they are more suspicious now and are on the lookout for marketers disguised as individuals promoting a product), but overall this has been seen as positive for both marketers and the public.

What is CMH doing about it? CMH has been actively involved in social media for some time now. In particular, we started using YouTube (a video sharing application) in October 2007 so people around the world could view our Heli-Skiing and Heli-Hiking videos. We've now added 13 videos (with more coming!), which have been viewed more than 83,000 times!

Curious? Visit the YouTube player on our website at: <http://www.canadianmountainholidays.com/multimedia/videos> or you can check us out on YouTube at: <http://www.youtube.com/cmhbannff01>. Take a moment to rate our videos, comment and even subscribe to receive an alert whenever we post a new video!

Watch future issues of this newsletter for details on how CMH is moving into social media or check out our website for updates. We look forward to "connecting" with you soon!

CMH Newsletter & Calendar

What are your preferences?

We have the ability to send our newsletter via the post or electronically. Tell us what you would like.

Are you currently receiving a CMH Calendar but would like to opt out?

Please go online to let us know what works best for you:
www.canadianmountainholidays.com/preferences

Bugaboo Dreams

No Longer Just a Dream

BY CONNIE MACDONALD

Almost three years ago we commissioned writer, photographer and climber Topher Donahue for a journalistic mission to write the story of Heli-Skiing. It was an ambitious project and the idea had been floating around for years. Hans, however, was not particularly interested and it seemed like the right person never came along who could change his mind. "Write a book after I die!" he told Marty von Neudegg.

When Topher came into the CMH family as a journalist, he had no intention of writing a book, but through a series of events he established a connection with the Gmoser family and one opportunity led to another. After spending time at Nostalgia Week, Topher was inspired to find a way to capture the stories of the people who helped build the industry. He also understood Hans' reluctance towards a book, so when he

ultimately pitched his idea, Hans gave his O.K. with the understanding that the focus would not be on him.

Bugaboo Dreams was published this fall (2008) by Rocky Mountain Books and Topher now has the equivalent of a PhD in CMH. Sadly Hans passed away before it was published, but our hope is that he would be happy with the end result. Part biography, part adventure story, business case, history and quasi-tell-all... *Bugaboo Dreams* provides many insights into the captivating world of CMH and the Heli-Ski industry.

Our skiers and hikers will all receive a copy of *Bugaboo Dreams* as their welcome gift this year, but if you can't wait or want extra copies, it is available at major book retailers and on-line book stores.

We hope you enjoy reading *Bugaboo Dreams* as much as we've enjoyed putting it together for you!



Staff Profile: Russ Peardon, Director of IS



Connie MacDonald, our Director of People, recently interviewed our new again Director of Information Systems, Russ Peardon. This is what we found out...

Connie: It's not often that someone works as a senior director for 10 years at a company, moves on to start their own successful business and then boomerangs back to the same role. Tell us your story...

Russ: I was infected with a nasty case of entrepreneurial zeal in 2002, became delirious and left CMH. It took building a software company with a client base of 500 physicians, selling it, building a cell phone tuner/metronome application for musicians and doing a lot of big corporate IS consulting... but I've come to my senses again. I've kept a photo of my last high-

tower office as a reminder, in case I start having any remotely similar thoughts!

Connie: What's surprised you the most about coming back?

Russ: Apart from my surprise at being allowed back? The biggest surprise was how much has changed: new products, approaches, organization and execution. At the same time, it's incredible how much of the "great stuff" about CMH has remained strong – the staff, the values and the places, of course.

Connie: What do you see as your biggest IS challenge?

Russ: Our department is really no different than any other at CMH – it's exceeding guest expectations with a small team and doing so

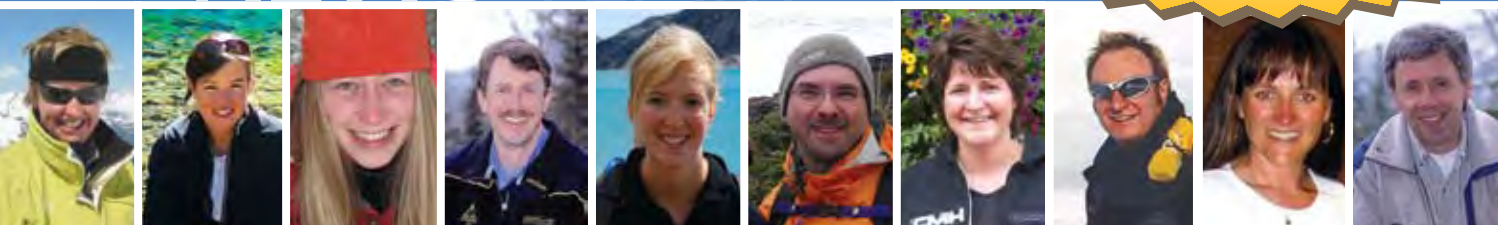
in remote locations. Take Internet service in our remote lodges for example; guests simply expect it. Meeting that expectation in a mountain lodge either means a slow satellite connection or bleeding-edge 50km long-range wireless facilities with really interesting installation challenges.

Connie: As the recruiting success story of the year, any words of wisdom you'd like to share?

Russ: CMH is a very special company – something you realize after only a bit of new perspective. My thanks to all for making it so. To my fellow "new" CMHers, a word of caution – it's a cult really – not a company. Good luck trying to leave!

CMH NEWS TEAM

Visit
www.CanadianMountainHolidays.com
to book your next CMH Adventure!



CMH News team, left to right: Connie MacDonald, Director of People; Annie Frew, Editor; Wanda Bogdane, Editor; Dave Butler, Director of Sustainability; Kelsey Verboom, Assistant Lodge Manager, Bugaboo Lodge; Jason Semenk, Website & E-marketing Coordinator; Patty Zinck, Marketing Coordinator; Marty Von Neudegg, Director of Corporate Services; Nicole Koester, Reservations Manager; Walter Bruns, President
Photos not available: Michelle Borowiecki, Transportation Coordinator; G.D. Maxwell, Freelance Writer

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