



OPERATIONS

When in December will it open?

The PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola is scheduled to open December 12, 2008.

What are there plans for summer use of gondola? Will Blackcomb stay open all summer for sightseeing?

Yes! One of the main benefits of the PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola is that it further enhances Whistler's appeal as a four-season destination resort.

The summer experience at Whistler Blackcomb will be revolutionized by the PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola. Sightseers and hikers riding the gondola will be treated to stunning vistas of the valley and Fitzsimmons Creek and will experience the beautiful alpine landscape of Garibaldi Provincial Park from a new perspective. Wheelchair access in the gondola sky cabins ensures that this adventure is inclusive. Meanwhile, the PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola will open up a whole new alpine hiking experience on Blackcomb, increasing the current network of trails to over 60 kilometers.

Summer operating dates will be extended with the addition of the PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola. The gondola will run from mid May through to mid October, and guests can access the gondola from either the Blackcomb base or the Whistler Village base throughout the summer until Labour Day. As the world's longest continuous lift system – up Whistler, across PEAK 2 PEAK, and down Blackcomb – summer guests will be treated to a whole new experience at Whistler Blackcomb.

How will the daily energy usage of the PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola compare to other lifts on the mountain?

The PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola is a record-breaking gondola that spans a great distance but because it does not gain elevation the energy consumption is much less than a traditional lift. If the load is balanced, just the friction of the track and haul ropes need to be overcome.

To put things into perspective the PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola will use less energy than the Whistler Village Gondola and will be similar in daily energy consumption to smaller high speed quads such as the Emerald Express and Jersey Cream Express.

Finally, because Whistler Blackcomb operates in British Columbia there is the added benefit of utilizing hydro power, which is considered a renewable resource, to power its operations. More than 90 per cent of B.C's energy comes from hydro projects located throughout the province rather than electricity derived from the burning of fossil fuels.

How fast is it? Is it the same gondola as the other ones?

The PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola will be our fastest moving lift, able to accommodate 4,100 people each way, per hour. The ride time is 11 minutes and it is moving at 7.5metres/25feet per second. To put that into perspective the Village Gondola runs from 4.5m/15 feet per second to 5.5m/18 feet per second and the Peak Chair runs at 2m/7 feet per second. Each PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola Sky Cabin can carry 28 people.

CONSTRUCTION

About when will the Peak 2 Peak gondola cabins be placed on the line for testing?

The cabins will have arrived in Whistler by the beginning of September. Crews will begin placing each of the 28 cabins on the line in mid to late September, however we could have a cabin on line in early September for station set-up and preliminary testing.

How do you get the cables across the valley?

Doppelmayr/Garaventa is responsible for the stringing of the track rope cables. The cables are too heavy to string initially so progressively larger and larger cables are pulled down from Blackcomb's terminal station, to Fitzsimmon's Creek in the middle, and then up Whistler Mountain's flank to the terminal station there.

A small, temporary cable lift has been built in the valley near the middle of the span which pulls each cable down the valley from Blackcomb's terminal. When the 56mm track rope is finally pulled down it is attached to a 40mm cable which has been pulled down from Whistler using the same towing system.

This 40mm cable gets threaded with the 56mm track rope and is slowly hauled up Whistler's flank with a 50 ton winch and a linear pulling machine that works the final cable through two jaws working "hand over hand," one metre at a time, 240 metres per hour until it arrives at the Whistler terminal station.

Once the final 56mm track rope is strung from Blackcomb to Whistler it is attached to an anchor bollard in each terminal station and threaded onto the saddles of each of the four lift towers.

There are four track ropes to be installed across the valley, creating two stationary "train tracks" going each way across the valley. Doppelmayr's unique 3S gondola technology has each cabin traveling along these track rope cables with the 46mm haul rope cable looped across the valley and pulling in the middle of each set track. The haul rope isn't stationary and will need to be spliced to create a continuous loop from Blackcomb to Whistler.

I've heard that some of the cars are to have see-thru bottoms. Is that true?

Yes. Two of the PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola sky cabins will have glass bottoms.

Will we be able to walk on the glass of the gondolas with the glass bottom or would the glass be sectioned off?

Skiers, riders and sightseers will not actually stand on the glass bottom in the middle of the sky cabin; it will be enclosed by a fence-type barrier. This will allow for a birds eye view of the Fitzsimmons Valley below.

How will you keep the inside windows scratch free?

All sky cabins will feature real glass in the windows for less scratching than traditional Plexiglas windows and amazing views up and down the valley all year long.

SAFETY

How does the aircraft warning system work?

When construction began on the PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola, the track and haul rope line across Fitzsimmons Valley was identified on all aviation maps for the Whistler area and communicated through the Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) service.

Brand-new technology developed in Norway called OCAS (Obstacle Collision Avoidance System) has been installed on the PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola. This state-of-the-art system constantly scans the area surrounding the P2P line with radar. If aircraft is detected, the radar alerts the system and immediately tracks the aircraft, calculates its speed, heading and altitude. If a collision hazard exists, the pilot is warned by flashing high intensity strobe lights and an audible warning transmitted over all aircraft radio frequencies.

OCAS's Norwegian team was in Whistler the first week of July to install and test the P2P system. The system is now operational with track ropes strung across the valley.

The OCAS system is much safer than traditional marking systems and is less obtrusive because it only activates if an aircraft is in the area. In the event of failure, OCAS will automatically produce messages to NOTAM.

Will the PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola be able to run in high winds?

The PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola will be the most wind tolerant lift at Whistler Blackcomb, able to run in winds up to 80km/hr. The 3S Gondola ensures stability since it travels along two track ropes while being pulled by a third haul rope.

Last January, in Whistler Blackcomb's stormiest month, the Peak elevation at 2,182m/7,160ft only saw two days where winds exceeded 80kms/hour. Comparatively, at the mid-mountain elevation of 1,660m/5,450ft, wind surpassed 50km/hour only six times during the month. The PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola is located at 1,850m/6,069ft, an elevation that is less affected by the heavy winds that can occur in the high alpine.

The PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola will play a key role in transporting guests to open terrain on both mountains when alpine lifts are closed due to stormy weather.

Will there be a sound system in the Peak to Peak? Specifically, will people in the gondola be able to communicate with the operators and vice-versa. There will be one-way intercom systems in each Sky Cabin for the terminal operators can communicate as needed to the passengers.

PRICE

Will season passes include the PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola and how much is it going to cost? How about Spirit Passes?

Whistler Blackcomb's Unlimited Adult Seasons Pass is available for the Early Bird price of \$1,529 which includes unlimited access to the PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola. The Unlimited Seasons Pass can be purchased without access to the PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola for \$1,460. In season, PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola access can be added to those passes for \$89 (unlimited use) or \$7 a day. After the Early Bird offer ends on October 13th, the PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola will be included in all Unlimited Adult Seasons Pass for a price of \$1879.

The Adult Spirit Pass, only available to people working in Whistler who participate in the Whistler Chamber of Commerce Spirit Program, is available for \$1,149. It includes unlimited access to the PEAK 2 PEAK Gondola all season.

All season passes offer unlimited skiing and riding over 200+ days in the winter and free sightseeing for 119 days in the summer. Information on additional pass options and passholder perks are available online. Daily ticket rates as well as information on the EDGE card will become available closer to the winter season.

FACTS AND STATS

You say that this is a record breaking gondola. Which records does it break?

The new Peak 2 Peak has the longest continuous lift system on the globe: Whistler Village Gondola - Peak 2 Peak - Solar Coaster - Wizard Express.

The Peak 2 Peak also has the longest unsupported span for a lift of this kind in the world at 3.024 km / 1.88 miles.

The Peak 2 Peak is the highest lift of its kind above the valley floor at 436 metre / 1,427 feet (above Fitzsimmons Creek).