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# Travels with Terry

BY TERRY RICHARD  
The Oregonian

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## Mush them huskies at Mt. Bachelor

Posted by [Terry Richard, The Oregonian](#) December 21, 2008 04:49AM

Categories: [Central Oregon](#), [Living Top Stories](#), [Outdoors News](#), [Travel News](#)



Torsten Kjellstrand/The Oregonian  
[Rachael Sodoris](#)' sled dogs are eager to run in central Oregon.

The howling begins the moment the Alaskan huskies are lifted from the truck. The dogs know they are going for a run and tend to get a little excited. Each pooch reacts differently to the humans they will be carrying -- the outgoing ones are liable to slather you with kisses, while the self-conscious ones cover in the shadows.

Once the huskies are hitched to the sled, they tug at their harnesses until the musher lifts the brake and Oregon's only commercial sled dog operation

begins another run. It may not be the start of the Iditarod, but it's nearly as exciting for first-time riders tucked safely inside the sled.



Terry Richard/The Oregonian  
Guests can get their Iditarod fix on Mt. Bachelor's sled dog tour.

**Main attraction:** Jerry Sodoris' Oregon Trail of Dreams Sled Dog Rides operate from the lower parking lot of the Sunrise Lodge at [Mt. Bachelor Ski and Summer Resort](#). The dogs, usually eight or 10 on a sled, positively bolt from the starting blocks. Since the first part of the trail heads down hill, the sled picks up speed with no problem. A professional musher is in control, so danger of an upset sled is minimal.

Most first-time riders opt for the comfort of a seat inside the sled, but physically fit patrons may elect to stand on the sled's runners behind the musher. The dogs can carry 450 pounds, plus musher, so two adults with small children can often go for the same ride.

**Reservations:** The surest way to book a spot is to do it in advance by calling Mt. Bachelor's reservation staff at 800-829-2442. For day-of-ride reservations, check with the information center inside the Sunrise Lodge.

**More fun:** Mt. Bachelor is Oregon's most diverse winter sports resort. It has the state's largest lift system for downhill skiers, as well as the longest groomed trail system for cross-country skiers. Snowshoes can be rented at the cross-country center. The resort also has a tubing center.

**Lodging:** The closest lodging to Mt. Bachelor is at the Seventh Mountain Resort, 15 miles east toward Bend. For complete information on Deschutes County's 5,000-plus motel/condominium beds, contact the Central Oregon Visitors Association at 800-800-8334, [www.visitcentraloregon.com](#).

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**Season:** Sled dog rides are offered throughout the winter. Musher and dogs will take an occasional midweek day off when there are no advance reservations. The 15th season begins today, Sunday, Dec. 21, with the 25,000th guests expected sometime this winter. Dave Sims manages the operation when Jerry and Rachael head to Alaska to race in the Iditarod. She has entered her fourth Iditarod this coming March.

**Getting there:** Drive west of Bend on the Cascade Lakes Highway for 21 miles to the first of Mt. Bachelor's two base areas, Sunrise Lodge. The ski area operates shuttle buses, both from Bend and between the lodges.

**Cost:** A one-hour ride costs \$75, plus a child for \$30; an all-day, 26-mile marathon costs \$450 per couple.

**Information:** Mt. Bachelor Ski and Summer Resort, 541-382-2442 and [www.mtbachelor.com](http://www.mtbachelor.com). For sled dog events, look at [www.cascadesleddogclub.com](http://www.cascadesleddogclub.com).

-- Terry Richard; [terryrichard@news.oregonian.com](mailto:terryrichard@news.oregonian.com)

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