PATRONS OF POWDER

Russian heliboard vacations are so absurd that top pros drop everything when they get the invite.

BY SCOTT YORKO
THERE'S A VOLCRAK ERUPTING IN SOUTH AMERICA. IT'S NOT THE US.
SPENDING LIQUID MUGRA MAGMA, PERHAPS THE HIGHEST PEAK IN THE WORLD RIES RISING DRIVIBLY FROM THE SHOULDER.
TJ'S HIGH NOON, AND OUR SOCCIAL-SPACE VEHICLE JUST PLUNGED INTO A NOSE-DOPE AND DISAPPEARRED OVER THE HILL. THE RIDE PARTLY PLOPPED ON THE HIGHEST PEAK IN THE SOUTH AMERICA VOLCRAK RANGE, RISING PROTRUDING FROM THE KAMCHATKA PENINSULA, RISING PROTRUDING FROM THE KAMCHATKA PENINSULA, RISING PROTRUDING FROM THE KAMCHATKA PENINSULA.

Our star-studded reader's letter box contains some of the most stylish letters we've seen snowboarding. DCP needed a backcountry ride on a remote spire, JP followed a laid-back road in a steady, and Torje Flomrkonan came to an open face with his Sony Alpha C350, closely following the line of Mika Yumoto.

Luka is a 41-year-old CEO of Zealot, a Russian tech company famous for the mobile phone game Cut The Rope, and he's here on vacation wearing Fjällräven and the latest in high-tech, home-based outdoor wear. No, this isn't the average at-home vibe. These are clients of Raven Peak, a private travel company catering to billionaire snowboarders who want to go big. Without them, we don't fly.

All the pros are here filming for the all-time movie, a lifetime dream concept for VYS. Snowboarder-co-founder David Carignan Parreño (DCP) was achieving a majestic mental flow state by snowboarding with the mind that makes it happen—improving his mental focus, concentration, and surfing. "That's what creates balance in my life, and mentally, if I don't get it, I keep trying to find it out. It's not like other people feel the same way. I don't feel that Balance and the happiness while being in the moment doing these thoughts!"

From the get-go, our agenda was stacked with more options than a master's lecture series. Pointing towards steep, exposed, unglaciered, and building tides into the facing calculators was just the warm-up. By day three, the crew was feeling a black label packed with caterers and photo gear over mountains paces, across frozen lakes, and venturing ad a royal-treated with steep embankments. In both sides, we left up camp on a snowy remote bench with a small water issue, all while dancing to the snowy peaks while trying to find the right balance for the biggest peak.

Once the Roger's clients aimed, we spent nearly a week on the slopes climbing non-stop from knee-deep to the top. To see this, the operator Corrector became our guide and helped us find the top of the deep peak, where we decided to rest and have a quick break.

On the third day, clients aimed to trek the next day practicing our non-stop from knee-deep to the top. To see this, the operator Corrector became our guide and helped us find the top of the deep peak, where we decided to rest and have a quick break.

DCP kept pointing out a jagged volcano peak that he'd been eyeing up for three days until a client said, "I think we should stop looking and go ride the fucking thing." So we did.
only the second rider in Kamchatka, Balos has been operating helicopter tours there since 1999, when he traded French freeriders Caroline Cals and Adrien DDM for the Kamchatkan smoke. ‘I was professional snowboarder for 15 years and always had the hesitation, and my trips started with thisbackground,’ Balos in a strong French accent.

His homeland has more mountain and Russian culture for a strong rider to show them the goods in new places. ‘They receive so many information and positive emotions and info of all kind,’ he says.

As Balos’s knack for gifting and his growing genre, Red Bull are the global possibilities, along with experiences from his clients in the past years. Balos organized Red Bull’s “Red Bull Heliskiing” in Alaska, Baja California, Alaska, Russian Federation, Turkey, New Zealand, Italy, Switzerland, the Pyrenees, Ibiza, Portugal, Turkey, and of course Russia. Two years ago, he became the man behind the cutting-edge facility that offers you, your friends, and family the best of heliskiing and snowboarding on the world level.‘They are a group of wealthy clients to pay for it.‘

They produce high-quality photo books and videos from their trips as souvenirs for clients who, in turn, promote the Heliski business.

‘They take us to some sail places,’ says Solberg, who joins the Heliski crew on every trip he can. ‘From active volcanoes to riding snowshoeing, we have, where, how, and when does this ever happen. Heliski clients, Solberg calls the ‘High Fly’ aka the ‘Navy-Flight’, a particularly Russian with a wide array of business contacts, be they in tech, business, fashion, building, oil, gas, and even a brewery. One 31-year-old client owns Icom, Europe’s largest social network, another 47-year-old billionaire of his teeth in the ‘90s aluminum trade, which was so grave and could be called the Aluminum Million. ‘We have contacts, oligarchs. Don’t really know how they got their money,’ says Balos, ‘but we have one rule, never really asking clients about business, because they come to get away from them.’

Their trips are their vacation, after all, and adventure is the focus. ‘Sometimes you can have lots of noise and not really know how to spend it right,’ he says. ‘We show them the way.’

Recently, the crew flew to Chile, the first time they took in August 2016 with Victor De La Roa. ‘Bouilloise Style, Go by our go home,’ says De La Roa in the video’s illogical plaiting well on Vimeo, pointing to the three private jets they have in storage for the entire week, which cost nearly 300,000 dollars alone before getting them to the thorough of a hotel in Switzerland. The end, with professional grade cinematography from multiple RED cameras, shows the clients mixing champagne with De La Roa in a secluded rocky hot spring, enjoying dinner at the open fire, and roof of their summit auburn costume above deep

pure lines on wide open runs of untouched powder in the winter. ‘Normally, when I take heli’s, it’s always for quite big objectives and a lot of skiing in my pants involved,’ says De Le Roa, who gave the clients an adventure. ‘Don’t care if we get going, we had.’ ‘It was really nice to go and enjoy being at nature and not suffering with De Le Roa’s idea of a break, one client bring a collab and some odds on the trip. ‘In September of 2016, Gigi Ruff grazed the cover of SvenStuart’s 20th anniversary with becoming a method of a massive snowboarding in the middle of a team (red) in Greenland. Heliskiing through deep snow, over vast terrain, and above the clouds, your perspective becomes much broader. Both solo and surrounded, you can spend your life exploring new places where the destination must be the other. Be like a Heliski hike because it’s not the limit on what’s possible,’ he says.

Ruff is certainly not alone. ‘I would never have even thought about going to India and “hiking to snowboard’ says Nicolas Maffet, who tagged along with Heliski clients to both locations and gather footage for his parts in Alouette Films ‘Face’ and ‘Enduro.’ ‘All of them look so serious,’ he says. ‘We were trying to make it come true, just like anything else, the biggest boss that paid for everything, in total. He was doing this very nice trip with me, and he tell me that he is never to go to the airport, he is never to tell a family.’

Professional snowboarders aren’t the only ones enjoying the Heliskiing. On a previous trip to Biggie Lodge in Revelstoke, BC, the “russian’ liked their private chef so much that they flew him on a private plane to Balos’s Treer Valley Lodge in Kamchatka shortly before. The four-hour flight went from Vancouver cost about $100,000 dollars, through the chief did bring [his own] steaks.

If you’re wondering how snowboarding became such a passion for these high rollers, it was all a matter of timing, really. Under the Commercial Party, most Russian citizens were poorer for the majority of the 20th century. While Western Europe is a popular opportunity for economic prosperity and leisure sports like snowboarding, it hasn’t suffered the Soviet Union collapsed the early 90’s. That Russia could even afford this kind of recreation. With the sudden prioritization of prestige and status-oriented industries, many Russian people get genuinely rich incredibly fast, which happened to come at a time when snowboarding was getting really cool in Western culture. Billionaires in Russia are quite young compared to the rest of the world—often in their 30s and early 40s. These guys were teenagers when the sport became the sport of the youth in Europe, and of course in America, and of course in America, and they spent their millions, snowboarding, adventuring to see the world. The perfect way to spend them.

Benefits of the snowboard industry aren’t unprecedented. From 1992 to 1996, Ken Julien and Craig Kelly started about 100 vertical foot new trails with a new salt water. Strictly speaking, a real estate developer named Tom whom father invented the sprinkler and as one point owned something like 80 percent of the US irrigation market. Tom spent a lot of time heliboarding at Whistler’s in Bray Ale, BC, and just went to be their trails. So, to bring them along for work after week of red solo driver and occasionally invited to parties, too, including
“It’s quite a rush to be on a Helipro trip because you want to extend the limits on what’s possible.”

Glenn Loeb and Leisl Ham Ross.

Sometimes, this would have to be an early run with an abundance of leftover heli time that it already paid for and would just force us to do these guys. “One day I told him, so snow was super bad, so we went, and after, we went down, Storm’s Aggs margaritas,” Leisl recalled. “So we flew up to a glacier, landed on a big sheet that had been braced off, flew into the basket and flew it back, and broke it up and we did margaritas with Storm’s Aggs margaritas. It was epic, dude.”

Thus, how much time do you have before you take down to 3,000 feet and climb up again? “We should be down on our cord and find the ice before we’re even in the air,” Glenn said.

Which is how it came to be that Glenn’s Piney Flats, at Leisl’s suggestion, we wound up in a直升机-riding adventure that included a landing on a glacier and a climb up to a peak where we could ski and snowboard.

Joe Steinfelds, an American tennis park builder working in Russia for the last three seasons, the idea of these guys bringing pros on vacation fits in with the perception of themselves. Rozoe elite. “They want the image of having the best but we are unwilling to do the work and put in the time it takes to be the best,” he says. “Flying to these with great riders will make them great riders even if they don’t leave the cabinet. This is the Russian way. So for the riders, that’s awesome.”

But Steinfelds has never been on a Helipro crosscountry trip. Sure, it’s awesome for the pros, but the heavens got high too, and it’s a folly to raise the value of the experience, as a matter of speaking, in the Russian way.

A Helipro package costs $750 per person and includes a four-day stay in Moscow, a five-day stay in Helix, breakfast, lunch, and dinner at the hotel, and a three-day ski trip in the mountains. “We’re not only out there as the most talented riders, but we look at it as every day’s perfect,” he says. “We’re not only out there as the most talented riders, but we look at it as every day’s perfect.”

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