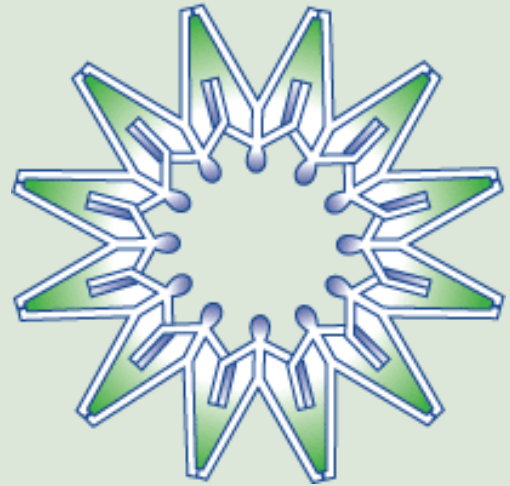


WINDSOR  **MOUNTAIN**
SUMMER CAMP



FIRST-TIME
CAMPER HANDBOOK

WELCOME
TO WINDSOR



MOUNTAIN INTERNATIONAL
SUMMER CAMP!

Hello, friend. You are a first-time camper at Windsor Mountain, and we are excited to welcome you to what we hope will be the best summer of your life (until next summer, of course). We have been busy planning your arrival.

As a first-time camper with us, you may have lots of questions, and you might be a little nervous too. No problem! This is a new experience for you, and new experiences are exciting and sometimes a little scary. We hope we can help to put you at ease with a little bit of good ol' fashioned information on how we do things and what to expect.

Yes! Let's get into it.

MEET THE TEAM



Jake and Kerry Labovitz are the owners/directors of WMI. (Pictured with their children, Ellie and Tyler).

Gabby Jack is the Assistant Director.



We have a seasonal Family Liaison who offers support to the Windsor Mountain families pre and during the summer.

There are also 4 Living Unit Coordinators- you can think of them as head counselors of each living unit on camp.

[Check out our website to meet some more of our summer leaders!](#)

When I was a camper, I was so excited for camp every summer that I would start to pack in April. It made me feel like camp was right around the corner. So, what should you bring? Here is a list to consider.

PACKING LIST

Clothing:

- Socks (10 pair/include some warm ones)
- Underwear (10 pair)
- Pajamas (3)
- Lightweight shirts/T-shirts (10)
- Sweatshirts or sweaters (3)
- Shorts (7 pair)
- Long pants (3 pair)
- Fleece jacket (for cool evenings)
- Raincoat or poncho
- Bathing suits (2)
- One dressy outfit

Shoes:

- Shower slippers (flip-flops are fine)
- Shoes (2 pair; one pair should be sneakers)
- Hiking boots if you are interested in hikes or Wilderness Trips

Other Essentials:

- Large Duffel Bag that slides under the bed (many trunks are too large to fit under the bed so we recommend a soft-side duffel)
- Fitted sheets (2)
- Pillow
- Pillowcases (2)
- Sleeping bag (removable, washable liner optional)
- Toiletry kit (soap, hair care, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, hairbrush) along with a shower caddy
- Backpack
- Headlamp or flashlight
- Towels: bath (2), beach (1)
- Clip fan
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent

Optional Items (starred items are available at camp):

- Tennis racquet*
- Baseball glove*
- Binoculars for birding
- Musical instrument*
- Favorite stuffed animal
- Fishing rod & tackle*
- A board game to share*
- Books*
- Mountain bike & helmet*
- Stationary, stamps, postcards, pens
- Camera (memory & batteries)
- Lightweight hiking boots
- Texas or water shoes
- Pack of white t-shirts (for tie dye, etc.)
- Swimming goggles*



ARRIVAL DAY



What happens when the big day arrives? Great question. Here is what happens on arrival day.

There are three ways that campers arrive to camp:

- Car;
- Camp bus from New York City and Westchester; and camp van from Boston area (Newton); and
- Airport pick-up from Boston Logan Airport (mainly international campers), or Manchester, NH (domestic flights).

For campers arriving by car, here is how things work:

- Arrive at camp and be met by staff to unload luggage and be directed to park your car.
- Once parked, head to the check-in table and get a name tag.
- Continue onto the nurses table to meet the nurses and discuss any medical needs.
- Go onto the lice check where professionals will check for head lice.

Once you have met with the nurse and had a lice check, it is time to meet your bunk counselors, who will escort you to your bunk where your luggage will be waiting. From here, you can set-up your area, make your bed and unpack your things, either with the help of your family or your counselor or both (or neither, I suppose!). This also is a time to meet some of your bunkmates. Make yourself a comfortable space and some new friends while you're at it.

Once you are unpacked, you'll head over to the main deck with your counselor to play some games and meet some more campers.

For Session 1 and 2, you will gather with your bunkmates around 4:00pm to get to know each other, and then we all will meet together for the first time at 5:00pm to talk about the start of camp. Then, you will eat dinner with your bunk, experience your first campfire (sing camp songs, listen, watch, chill), and then have a nice relaxing time in the bunk before bedtime.

For campers arriving by the New York City bus, Boston van, or Boston Logan Airport pick-up, the process from the time you arrive to camp essentially is the same, except that your counselors will help you set-up your things.

Mini-Session 1B and 2B, campers arrive on a Sunday. Our friendly staff will be waiting to greet you and take you through the check-in process (see above). Once you have checked-in, and your parents have departed you will meet your counselors and have brunch together. After brunch, new campers will meet with camper directors to hear more about upcoming events and activities. You'll have plenty of time to look around, get to know your bunkmates and enjoy some camp games.

FIRST FULL DAY OF CAMP!!!



Okay, so you slept and have one night of camp under your belt. Nice work. What now?

We call the first full day of camp "Rotation Day."

During rotation day, you will get to know camp! Rotating through camp with your bunk and counselors, you will get to try some of activities, get-to-know your bunkmates, take a swim in the lake (safety first, we need to make sure you can swim and place you in the correct swim group!), play group games and then choose your activities for the next three days of camp.

For campers joining us for Mini-Sessions 1B and 2B, you will explore camp, obtain your swim level and select your activities following your arrival; and you will begin your new activities the following day.

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:45 – First Bell- Wake-Up

Rise and Shine! You will hear a bell which means it's time to get out of bed and get ready for the day. In fact, you'll hear the bell each time you transition to a new activity.

8:00– Breakfast

Head to the dining hall with your bunk to line up and eat breakfast with other campers and counselors.

See 'Meal time' for more information.

8:45 – Clean-Up

This is the time when your bunk works together to tidy up your living space and each day you will have a different small job (this could be sweeping or taking out the trash etc...). There are rewards for the cleanest bunk each day, so it's always worth working together as a bunk to make it look amazing.

9:15 – Morning Meeting

Every morning the camp gathers for Morning Meeting, so head to the Pine Grove with your bunk. This is our time to gather as a community– there are skits, songs etc. We have announcements, shooting stars, green moments, camper of the day (see camp lingo) and finally a moment of silence to start the day.

10:00– First Activity

After morning meeting the first activity period begins. You will check your posted schedule and head to your activity. The counselor will take roll call, and the fun begins.

11:00 – Snack on the deck

This is the short time between activities to take a break, have a snack and check-in with counselors and friends before your next activity.

11:15 – Second Activity

Your second scheduled activity of the day. If you ever forget your activity, it is posted by the office.

12:30 – Lunch

Lunch time! Head straight from your activity to the Dining Hall to eat with your friends. We usually eat outside if the weather is nice.

1:30 – Rest Hour

At this time you head back to your bunk where you can rest and relax. Crawl into bed and you can read, write and take a nap if you need.

2:30 – Third Activity

Go from your bunk to your third activity period of the day.

3:45 – Snack on the deck

4:00 – Fourth Activity

5:00 – Fun Hour

This is an unscheduled hour everyday where campers have the freedom to choose how they spend their time. During this time, all activity areas are open. Campers have the opportunity to complete that project they didn't finish, try something new or even sit out on the grass and read.

6:15 – Dinner

Dinner is ready! Head from fun hour to the Dining Hall!

7:15 – Evening Activity

Every night we have an evening activity. Sometimes we play big camp games like capture the flag, sometimes we have campfires with music and sometimes we have SLUN or BLUN (see camp lingo).

8:45 – Back to Bunks

After evening activity, head back to your bunks and it's time to wind down. This is the time to get ready for bed and reflect on your day during night time ritual with your bunkmates and counselors.

9:15 – Lights Out – Younger campers (Dorm and Cabin Campers).

10:15 – Lights Out – Older campers (Tent Unit Campers).

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

On Sundays, we like to take a break from the daily routine and take things at a different pace. We get up a little later, have a very special Sunday Morning Meeting where we reflect on our week and important camp values. We enjoy a long brunch, then an afternoon all-camp activity, and that evening will be an activity with your bunk ("SLUN" - see camp lingo).

FREE-CHOICE PROGRAM

Activity Periods

- Each camper has 4 activity periods every day.
- Each activity lasts 3 days and this is called a "rotation."

How does this work?

- Every 3 days we have Program Planning, where counselors present the classes they are going to teach.
- Afterwards campers sit with their counselors and select their choices for each period (for each period, you pick 3 you like best).
- The day before the next rotation, your schedule is posted by the office.



What activities are offered?

We have 11 activity departments at WMI, each of them offering a large variety of activities each rotation!

These departments are:

- Waterfront
- Sports
- Music
- Ropes Course
- Performing Arts
- Wilderness Adventure
- Visual Arts
- Environment, Farm and Garden
- Video and Photography
- Culinary Arts
-

LIVING UNITS

There are 3 living units where campers live each summer:

- **The Cabins:** Boys 7-12 years-old.
- **The Dorms:** Girls 7-12 years-old.
- **The Tent Unit:** Boys and Girls 13-16 years old.



CABINS



DORMS



TENT UNIT



Each bunk will have two counselors and anywhere from 6-12 campers (depending on your living unit) of your age. In every living unit, there is a living unit coordinator (an "LUC"). You can think of them as a head counselor who is there to be helpful to campers and counselors alike.

MEAL TIMES

We have 3 meals during the day and our kitchen makes amazing food for all of us. We serve meals cafeteria style and here is how it works at WMI:

- When the meal bell rings, we line up on the ramp on the side of the dining hall.
- Once you are in the dining hall you will grab a food tray. Counselors and older campers will be there to ask what you want from the buffet and they will serve it on your tray.
- Once you have your food, grab some silverware and also grab milk, juice or water.
- You're ready to eat! Join your bunkmates and either pull up a stool in the dining hall or go outside and eat at a picnic table on the deck.
- Once you are done eating, head out to the back of the dining hall and give your dishes to KP.

*Every meal the kitchen makes something delicious for campers. However, we understand that some campers are picky so we always have sun butter and jelly available along with a salad bar.

*We are a nut-free camp- we do not cook with or serve nut products

*Do you have a food allergy? Don't worry! Our kitchen staff are happy to help. Your counselor will introduce you to the kitchen staff so they know who you are and how to help.



Kitchen Party (KP)

KP is just outside of the Dining Hall and it's where campers and counselors bring their dishes to be washed after every meal. Every day two different bunks are on KP for the day. The bunks on KP head to the Dining Hall 15 minutes before the meal bell. They eat before everyone then head outside for Kitchen Party. It's called a party for a reason—we make washing dishes fun with music and costumes while we pitch in.





HMO (Health Medical Office or Health Center)

This is where you find the friendly nurses, who are available to help with camper needs.

Medication Needs

If you need to take medication, you will head to the HMO before the meal when you take the medication. For meds taken at bedtime, you will head to the ("HMO") after evening activity to see the nurse.

Homesickness

Homesickness is a common and totally normal feeling. We are here for any homesick feelings and we will help ensure that you have a great experience.

Packages and Mail

Every camper has a mailbox in which they receive letters and postcards. If campers receive a package, they can collect it in the office during fun hour. If a camper is sending a letter, all they have to do is write the correct address on it, put it in the mailbox and we do the rest! We also send international mail via email.

Technology

Windsor Mountain is a technology-free camp. We love shutting off and enjoying the nature around us. Campers may bring mp3 players (or other music players that do not connect to the internet and do not have games) with headphones to use in their bunk during rest hour or bedtime. iPods, iPads, iPhones, tablets and kindles are not allowed at camp.



CAMP LINGO

These are some terms you will see a lot through this handbook and also hear during camp.

Bunk:

When we refer to your bunk, we are referring to where you sleep and your bunkmates.

Shooting Stars:

During morning meeting we send people shooting stars. A shooting star is an acknowledgement that someone or a group of people in our community has done something kind, helpful, thoughtful or just plain great. Maybe someone helped you out with a project or they took a big risk for themselves. We love to share the love and appreciation!

Green Moments:

Similar to a shooting star, a Green Moment is an appreciation of something great in nature. Maybe you saw a beautiful butterfly or the stars were shining bright the night before! Share the Green Moment with the community!

Morning Meeting Announcements:

During morning meeting directors and counselors will share information for the day. Maybe you will hear a reminder to drink a lot of water because it's going to be very hot or that someone is setting up a board game during fun hour that they would love people to come to play.

Camper of the Day:

We have a shell necklace that gets passed from camper to camper every day. The camper who has it gets to choose the next recipient. Like a shooting star, they acknowledge a camper who they feel has been a great member of the community or personally kind to them.

Bell:

The Bell will ring several times a day and that's when you'll know it's time to move to the deck for meals/snacks or your next activity.

BLUN:

There are 3 big living units at camp – the Cabins, the Dorms and the Tent-Unit. Some nights the big living units will gather for their own evening activity; we call these BLUNs (Big Living Unit Nights).

SLUN:

Another way we refer to your bunk is your small living unit. Once a week your counselors will plan a unique evening activity just for your bunk - Small Living Unit Night!

Night time ritual:

After evening activity has finished, you will return to your bunk and get ready for bed and your night-time-ritual. This special time is different for every bunk, and it can involve highs and lows for the day, calm games and/or group reading.

CAMP FIRE SONGS



One of the best things about Windsor Mountain is how present music is around camp. To get you ready for your first campfire, here are the lyrics to a few songs that you are sure to hear at camp this summer.



Wagon Wheel:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hvKyBcCDOB4>

(originally by Old Crow Medicine Show)

Heading down south to the land of the pines
I'm thumbing my way into North Carolina
Staring up the road and pray to God I see headlights
I made it down the coast in seventeen hours
Picking me a bouquet of dogwood flowers
And I'm a-hopin' for Raleigh, I can see my baby tonight

So rock me momma like a wagon wheel
Rock me momma any way you feel
Hey momma rock me
Rock me momma like the wind and the rain
Rock me momma like a south bound train
Hey momma rock me

Running from the cold up in New England
I was born to be a fiddler in an old time string band
My baby plays a guitar, I pick a banjo now
Oh, north country winters keep a-getting me down
Lost my money playing poker so I had to leave town
But I ain't turning back to living that old life no more

So rock me momma like a wagon wheel
Rock me momma any way you feel
Hey momma rock me
Rock me momma like the wind and the rain
Rock me momma like a south bound train
Hey momma rock me

Walkin' to the south out of Roanoke
I caught a trucker out of Philly and he told me a joke
But he's a-heading west from the Cumberland gap
To Johnson City, Tennessee
I gotta get a move on before the sun
I hear my baby calling my name and I know that she's the only one
And if I die in Raleigh at least I will die free

So rock me momma like a wagon wheel
Rock me momma any way you feel
Hey momma rock me
Oh, rock me momma like the wind and the rain
Rock me momma like a south bound train
Hey, hey momma rock me

Oh, so rock me momma like a wagon wheel
Rock me momma any way you feel (I wanna feel)
Hey, hey momma rock me (momma rock me, momma rock me)
Rock me momma like the wind and the rain
Rock me momma like a south bound train
(I wanna rock like a south bound train)
Hey momma rock me
Rock me

Circle Game:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VgVoLCO-d6U>

Joni Mitchell

Yesterday a child came out to wonder
Caught a dragonfly inside a jar
Fearful when the sky was full of thunder
And tearful at the falling of a star
And the seasons they go round and round
And the painted ponies go up and down
We're captive on the carousel of time
We can't return we can only look behind
From where we came
And go round and round and round
In the circle game

Then the child moved ten times round the seasons
Skated over ten clear frozen streams
Words like, when you're older, must appease him
And promises of someday make his dreams
And the seasons they go round and round
And the painted ponies go up and down
We're captive on the carousel of time
We can't return we can only look behind
From where we came
And go round and round and round
In the circle game

Sixteen springs and sixteen summers gone now
Cartwheels turn to car wheels through the town
And they tell him,
Take your time, it won't be long now
Till you drag your feet to slow the circles down
And the seasons they go round and round
And the painted ponies go up and down
We're captive on the carousel of time
We can't return we can only look behind
From where we came
And go round and round and round
In the circle game

So the years spin by and now the boy is twenty
Though his dreams have lost some grandeur
coming true
There'll be new dreams, maybe better dreams and
plenty
Before the last revolving year is through
And the seasons they go round and round
And the painted ponies go up and down
We're captive on the carousel of time
We can't return, we can only look behind
From where we came
And go round and round and round
In the circle game
And go round and round and round
In the circle game

The state flower of NH is the Purple Lilac and the Purple Lilac song has been a WMI song since the beginning. Every arrival day, departure day and plenty of days in between, we sing 'Purple Lilacs'. It's a little symbolic as I see it as the beginning of summer and it's an easy song to learn and remember. Here are the lyrics:

"I want to wake up in the morning
Where the purple lilacs grow
Where the sun comes a-peepin' into
where I'm a sleepin'
And the song birds sing,
"Hello" (Hello)
I want to wander through the wild
wood. Where the fragrant breezes
blow. And drift back to
New Hampshire
Where the purple lilacs grow"



A Parents Guide to a First-Time Camp Experience

Okay, so you have made the excellent decision to give your child the gift of an overnight summer camp experience, and he/she has never been to sleepaway camp. Yikes, what now? No need to panic, everything is going to be fine. In fact, everything is going to be great. Throughout this process, always keep in mind that sending your child to summer camp is one of the best things that you can do as a parent to help you raise an emotional healthy, well-adjusted, and self-sufficient



human being. Just take a deep breath, grab a cup of coffee and read these tips for first-time camp families.

1. Try a Sleepover

Some first-timers have never slept away from the safety and security of the home quarters (at least not without mom and/or dad in tow). Send junior to stay with aunt Ginnie for a night – not at Grandma's where he makes weekly visits. It might be a little uncomfortable, but it is good practice for getting used to the feeling of the un- (or at least less) familiar and for gaining confidence in sleeping away from Mom and Dad. And don't pick them up if they call you in the middle of the night!

2. Go Shopping!

Yes, kids love spending your money, so go ahead and take them to the store to pick out a new tube of toothpaste for camp or a sweet new hand-held water misting fan (which will help them make lots of friends on hot days). You don't need to spend a lot to enjoy the benefit of the shopping trip. Having tangible symbols of their adventures to come will allow them to better visualize little snippets of their daily existence at camp. Also, have them pick out a few items for a care package that you can send before camp so that it is there upon your arrival. (Make sure you know your camp's package policy – e.g., don't send food!)

3. Make a Checklist

Focus on the positive by brainstorming with your camper a list of four or five specific goals for the summer (for example, chip away at fear of heights by going down the zip line, learn to sail or make at least one friend from another country). Have your camper take this list to camp and send to you a letter during the summer updating you on any progress. When you write to your camper, ask about these specific goals.

4. Care for the Hair

Have your child get a haircut during the week before camp and get them checked for lice. Your child will have lice check on opening day, and nothing says massive bummer like spending a first day of camp in the health centre getting "treated" while everyone else is playing four-square. Also, we will resolve the issue right then and there (as opposed to sending your child home), the cost typically will be greater to you than if you have it resolved at home before camp.

5. Manage Expectations

Many parents respond to their children's fear of camp by telling them that they are going to love it and that there is nothing to worry about. This likely is true, and it is great to remain positive. AND you also need to let them know that the first few days might be a little tough until they get used to the rhythms of camp. They need to know from you that this is perfectly normal and okay to feel this way. Have a conversation about their fears and concerns and brainstorm strategies to deal with them. Otherwise, if they expect nothing but calm seas, the first ripple will have them looking for the lifeboat.

6. Go to Tahiti

Okay, maybe a trip to the South Pacific won't work, but use the time that your kids are at camp for some good self-care. You have spent years changing diapers, making grilled cheese sandwiches and helping with math homework. You deserve some "me" time. I'm going to say that again – You Deserve Some Me Time. This doesn't

make you a bad parent – it makes you human, and camp allows the perfect opportunity for some good parent recharge time. Have fun when your kids are at camp, and embrace the quiet. Enjoy a dinner out without having to worry about getting a babysitter. Reconnect with your college buddies or girlfriends. Play a round of golf (remember when you used to play golf?). Don't worry, it will be over before you know it, so take some time for yourself before the routine of school and kid's activities set in again.



7. "All Quiet on the Homefront"

Campers LOVE to receive mail from home, so send some. However, make sure to avoid the following: 1. bad news ("so about your pet goldfish..."), 2. Amazing news that makes home seem more awesome than camp ("We got a new puppy. Oh, and a pool. Oh, and Dad and I are at Disneyland eating candy"), and 3. sentiments that make your child feel guilty for having fun at camp ("The house is so lonely and quiet without you ... I am so sad you are not here with me. I cannot wait for you to come home"). Instead, when writing letters ask lots of specific questions, make home seem neither terrible nor particularly interesting, and tell them how excited you are that they are having this experience. Remember, camp is about your child. It may be an adjustment for you to be away from your child. That is normal. But consider whether sharing these feelings with them is for your benefit or theirs.

8. Come Clean

No, I'm not talking about laundry here. Parents and Camp Directors are partners in the success of your child's summer, so there needs to be an open and honest line of communication. If your child has a particular challenge that might impact his/her experience at camp, it is best addressed before camp starts. We eventually will learn that your child [occasionally wets the bed] [is struggling with a recent divorce] [takes medication for ADHD during the school year], and if we know this information in advance, we can strategize together and plan for it (for example, placing a bell on the door of a cabin for a camper who sleepwalks). No need to worry that this information will stigmatize your child. You should be able to trust that we will know how to keep sensitive information either entirely or selectively confidential. If that level of trust is not there, perhaps you should rethink your choice of camp.

9....And I'll Tell You No Lies

This is a big one. Under absolutely no circumstances should you promise to pick up your child from camp early if they are having a "bad" time. Making this promise almost will ensure that a struggling camper will make no effort to turn things around. Your child is human, and the path of least resistance (leaving) is oh-so-much more tempting than putting in the mental energy it takes to stick it out and try to have fun. If you feel that you have to make some sort of promise, make it a reward related to finishing camp ("We're going to the beach for the weekend when you return home from camp – but not a moment before"). Another good one is to promise that in the unlikely event that they have a miserable experience, they will never have to go back again. (Every parent to whom I provide this piece of advice always responds with, "of course, I would never do such a thing." However, they aren't thinking about the night before camp starts and junior is crying on his bed and the only thing that will soothe his nerves is to make unhealthy, but seemingly reasonable, promises. Watch out for making deals under duress! Even if a camper struggles to overcome homesickness, they gain resiliency, confidence and a sense of accomplishment ("hey, that was tough but I did it!" when they return home successfully finishing the session.)

10. Avoid the Long, Tearful Goodbye

Often times, children leaving home and going to camp can be more difficult for parents than children. Drop-off day is an exciting, emotional and seemingly hectic experience that might leave you feeling anxious and sad. These feelings are completely normal, and you should allow yourself to feel however you feel – ONCE YOU GET IN THE CAR. The tearful goodbye might feel like love to you but to your child, it might create feelings of sadness and guilt that they are leaving you "alone." Camp, like many other things that we do for our kids, is not always easy on us parents. But pull yourself together, keep a stiff upper lip, and then feel free to blubber on once you get back in the auto. Perhaps the most important thing for you to remember as the parent of camper is that the summer camp experience is a tremendous growth opportunity for your child. This does not mean that there won't be occasional struggles and difficulties along the way. It is like other experiences in life - we often learn more about ourselves from difficult times than blissful moments. Your children are stronger than they know, and with your support, guidance and partnership with us, your child has the chance to grow in ways you haven't even imagined. Happy camping!

We hope this gives you a sense of what to expect at camp for your first time. We know that this is a lot of information, but don't worry, there isn't a test! If you don't understand something or need help, ask any counselor, any time. We are all here to make your experience an excellent one, and we are so excited to meet you soon.



Please reach out with any questions for us.

Jake– jake@windsormountain.org

Kerry– kerry@windsormountain.org

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SEE YOU AT WINDSOR MOUNTAIN!

