

## Uncle Bud's Hut Guidebook Excerpts

Excerpt from Litz, B. (2000). Colorado Hut to Hut. New York, United States: Macmillan Publishers.

### Uncle Bud's Hut

<b>Hut Elevation</b>	11,380'
<b>Date Built</b>	1989
<b>Seasons</b>	Thanksgiving through April 30 (winter); July 1 through September 30 (summer)
<b>Capacity</b>	16
<b>Hut Layout</b>	1 room with 6 beds, 1 room with 4 beds, in addition to 1 double bed and 4 single beds in a communal sleeping area, all upstairs
<b>Hut Essentials</b>	Woodstove for heat, wood-burning cookstove with oven, propane cookstoves, all kitchenware, outhouse, photovoltaic electric lights

This hut is named for Burdell "Bud" Winter, a 10th Mountain Division soldier killed in action in the Italian Alps during World War II. A display tells the story of a man who died young, already a seasoned mountaineer.

Uncle Bud's Hut is unique in that the first level is constructed of stone, with a traditional wood-sided second story. Day skiing around the hut is extensive and varied, with a little bit of everything for everyone. Uncle Bud's Hut works well in conjunction with trips to the Skinner Hut to the southwest and the 10th Mountain Division Hut to the north, and as a destination in its own right. Make reservations through the 10th Mountain Division Hut Association (see Appendix A).

#### RECOMMENDED DAY TRIPS:

The area near Uncle Bud's Hut offers several options. To the west of the hut is a large basin between Saint Kevin, Galena, and Bear Lakes. It is easy to drop down from the hut and spend a full day touring up and down this gully. Behind the hut to the north, skiers can climb back to the east ridge of Galena Mountain and ascend west to Elevation Point 12,313' for a brief introduction to winter mountaineering. Around the northeast corner of the hut is Saint Kevin Gulch, which has many acres of treeless terrain offering nice and easy telemark skiing, especially after a storm.

Finally, Galena Mountain's south ridge makes for a very safe, classic winter climb. From the hut, the route drops down to the Colorado Trail/Skinner Hut Trail, then west to the foot of the south ridge of Galena Mountain and a safe route up and out of the forest. Once on the south ridge, the route is straightforward and ascends north up a broad ridge to the 12,893-foot summit. If you attempt this route, although it's easy for a climb to a 12,000-foot peak, it does require commitment.

## **Tour 24A: Turquoise Lake Trailhead to Uncle Bud's Hut**

<b>TIME</b>	4 to 7 hours
<b>DISTANCE</b>	5.8 miles
<b>TRAILHEAD</b>	9,760'
<b>HUT</b>	11,380'
<b>GAIN/LOSS</b>	+1,620'/-40'
<b>AVALANCHE</b>	Minimal danger
<b>MAPS</b>	10th Mountain Division: Continental Divide, Galena Mountain USGS 7.5': Homestake Reservoir, 1970; Leadville North, 1970 National Forest: San Isabel, White River; Trails Illustrated: Map #109 (Breckenridge/Tennessee Pass); Map #126 (Holy Cross/Ruedi Reservoir)

**Tour Overview:** Because of acts of vandalism at the traditional trailhead, the trailhead was moved down the road 2.1 miles into the main Tennessee Creek/Arkansas River Valley. Located on the eastern side of the river and the railroad tracks, this new parking lot is more open and lighted. Still, try not to leave valuables in your car or valuable cars-here.

The trail now gains an additional 270 feet of elevation and is 5.8 miles long. It is still an easy-to-follow road for the entire distance. Novice skiers will be challenged by the climb to the hut but will enjoy cranking turns (or snowplowing!) back down to the parking area. For skiers, bikers, and hikers, this steep route climbs continuously from the parking area to the hut and features nice views of the Mosquito Range to the east.

**Directions to Trailhead:** The Turquoise Lake Trailhead is a little difficult to locate, so follow the directions closely. The road to the trailhead begins on the north end of Leadville near Safeway. From the junction of US 24 and Mountain View Drive, turn west and drive 2.8 miles to a T junction. Turn north (right), cross a fork of the Arkansas River, and proceed to the parking lot, which is near the place where the road veers west to cross the main river and the railroad tracks.

**The Route:** Ski or walk west over the railroad tracks. Cross the main stem of the Arkansas River, then head west past the entrance to Turquoise Lake. When you reach another intersection, turn north again. Follow Forest Road 104, passing a picnic area, campgrounds, and boat ramps on the left between the road and the lake. Continue along the road, above the lake on the northeast, to a fork in the road.

Take the north fork onto Forest Road 107 and start climbing. Pass a right turn to Saint Kevin Gulch after 0.3 mile. Continue climbing north, ski under a power line, and then contour west up to a flat shoulder and small clearing with great views of the Arkansas Valley. Traverse west along the south aspect of the ridge for another 0.3 mile, then gain another flat shoulder.

Follow the trail north across gentle terrain, then begin the final 340-foot climb to the hut. Head northwest up a forested ridge and across a clearing, eventually leaving the road near Elevation Point 11,285'. Ski northwest through thinning trees to Uncle Bud's Hut.

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Excerpt from Dawson, L. (1998). Colorado Tenth Mountain Huts and Trails: The Official Guide to America's Largest Backcountry Ski Hut System (3rd ed.). Basalt, Colorado: Who Press.

## Chapter 13. Uncle Bud's Hut

Uncle Bud's Hut, owned by 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain, is similar in aspect and construction to the 10th Mountain Division Hut. Views from the south window-wall include a panorama of 14,421-foot Mount Massive and the logged pate of Bald Eagle Mountain. During the mining boom in the late 1800s, most of the land around Leadville was logged like that of Bald Eagle. That any forests still exist is a testament to the hearty species of conifer that grace the Rockies. The hut was built as a memorial to 10th Mountain Division veteran Bad Winter (1925-1945), who died in Italy during World War II. Bud was a "born skier and mountaineer" and dearly remembered. Funds for the hut were given by Bud's brother, Dr. Fred Winter. His sister Laura contributed the proceeds from her poetry book *Laura's Lines*.

ELEVATION:	11,380 feet
COORDINATES:	39°18.088'N, 106° 24.298W
UTM:	13 378 854E, 43 50 964N
COUNTY:	Lake
TEXT MAP:	pp. 162, 182
10TH MTN MAP:	Galena Mountain
USGS MAP:	Homestake Reservoir
TRAILHEADS:	Turquoise Lake

This hut, combined with the Skinner Hut and Betty Bear Hut, allows travel over Hagerman Pass to the Frying pan drainage, thus forming a huge loop that strong skiers can enjoy. Uncle Bud's Hut is very accessible from Leadville via an easy trailhead to hut route from Turquoise Lake.

Use this route to reach the hut quickly, then spend a few days base skiing. Or if you're learning backcountry skiing, use this mellow route as a step on your ladder of learning. For ski-throughs to the north and south from Uncle Bud's Hut, routes 13.2 and 13.3 use sections of the Main Range/Colorado Trail (marked on older USGS maps as the Main Range Trail). Branch routes from the hut range from mellow glade skiing to euro-style couloirs on Galena Mountain.

### **13.1 Turquoise lake Trailhead-Uncle Bud's Hut**

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate

TEXT MAP: pp. 162, 182

TIME: 5 hours up, 3½ hours down

10TH MTN MAP: Continental Divide

DISTANCE: 6 miles

USGS MAP: Homestake Reservoir, Leadville North

ELEVATION GAIN: 1,640 feet; loss: 20 feet

This 10th Mountain suggested route follows snow-covered roads through a beautiful lodgepole pine forest. It is a short route, with relatively easy navigation.

**ROUTE DESCRIPTION:** Begin with Nordic wax at the Turquoise Lake Trailhead. Ski west up a main snow-covered road three-quarters mile, 'Then swing N, continuing on the main road around the lake. This road gradually climbs while paralleling the north shore of the lake. It is very distinct and easy to follow, the only possible false turns being several

well-signed spurs to boat ramps and campgrounds. At 10,410 feet and 3½ miles from the trailhead leave the main road by turning right (N) onto a well-defined road-cut. There is a stake here with the road number 107, but this may be covered by snow. There are also the standard 10th Mountain trail markers. All the following mileages are measured from this turn.

Put your skins on and follow Road 107 as it climbs N through conifer. If you notice, just one-quarter mile after turning from the main road you'll pass an intersection at 10,570 feet. Be sure to stay north on 107 here. It can be all too easy, especially on an overcast day, to lose your bearings. Use your compass and altimeter.

At one-half mile from the main road you'll pass under a power line at 10,730 feet. This is a good landmark and altimeter calibration point. After the power line the road climbs N a short distance, swings W for about one-third mile, then makes a short steep climb N several hundred feet to a mining area in some flats (11,000 feet). Stay on the road in this area, as several dangerous open shafts can be hidden by snow. Though most mine evidence will be obscured by snow, you'll see of unnatural looking mounds and some wood ruins.

Ski W on Road 107 through the mining area, then begin a climb NW for one-half mile (still on the road) to a clearing at 11,280 feet. The road to this point follows the ridge between St. Kevin Creek and Turquoise Lake, so as long as you're climbing, you're on the route. At the 11,280-foot clearing the 10th Mountain suggested route leaves Road 107 and takes a climbing traverse another one-quarter mile NW to Uncle Bud's Hut (11,380 feet) at the top end of the clearing. The hut is visible from several hundred yards below. The possible mistake here would be to stay on Road 107 and traverse below the hut. You can see the hut from 107, so keep looking uphill for it. Also, use your altimeter as you get close.

REVERSE ROUTE DESCRIPTION: Descending Road 107 can be quite a thrill as a series of tree-lined "toboggan chutes" test your ski skills. From the front of Uncle Bud's Hut take a descending traverse SE through a clearing. Intersect Road 107 at 11,280 feet. Stay on the road as it takes you downhill along the crest of the ridge between St. Kevin Gulch and Turquoise Lake. Swing N then SE through a flat area at the 11,000-foot level, then climb a small hill to a mining area.

Take care to find the road-cut at the east end of the mining area, where it makes a right turn (S) down a steep hill. From here the road-cut is easy to follow down to the main Turquoise Lake Road. Turn left (E) on the Turquoise Lake Road and follow it to the Turquoise Lake Trailhead (or to the snow closure).

SAFETY NOTES: This short route could lull you into false security. The problem is that many snowmobiles and backcountry skiers use the area, so trails may lead everywhere-and nowhere.

SUMMER: Road 107 is a fine horse, hiking, or bike route.

### ***13.5 Galena Mountain from Uncle Bud's Hut***

DIFFICULTY: Advanced/Expert

TEXT MAP: pp. 162, 182

TIME: Half day

10TH MTN MAP: Galena Mt, Con. Div.

DISTANCE: 4½ miles round trip

USGS MAP: Homestake Reservoir

ELEVATION GAIN: 2,000 feet round trip

Rising to the west of Uncle Bud's Hut, Galena Mountain (12,893 feet) is sure to tempt mountaineers. While lower than the 13,000- and 14,000-foot peaks that stud the Continental Divide in the Leadville area, Galena offers good variety and is easy to reach from the hut.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION: There are two good routes for this climb. One option, rated expert, ascends the prominent east ridge from 11,680 feet on the Main Range/Colorado Trail. The first part of the east ridge is a simple ridge run. After a deep notch (12,600 feet), rope-work is necessary to climb a vertical step. In the winter you must ascend this step to avoid avalanche danger on the northeast face. But in the spring, provided the snow is frozen spring corn, you can avoid the technical climbing by traversing onto the northeast face. This option requires expert snow climbing skills.

The longer winter route is rated advanced. Follow route 13.2 to timberline on Galena Mountain's broad south ridge. Leave the trail here and follow this ridge to the summit, either sticking to the right-hand ridge crest or following the broad ridge. Your choice would be dictated by avalanche conditions. Whatever your ascent route, this ridge is a good way down.

Expert mountaineers enjoy the beautiful couloir that ascends to the summit of Galena Mountain from St. Kevin Lake. At 48 degrees maximum angle, this couloir makes both a good crampon climb or "extreme ski" during the spring season on compacted spring snow. The most straightforward route to St. Kevin Lake follows the Bear Lake drainage from the Main Range/Colorado Trail.

SAFETY NOTES: All these routes pass through avalanche terrain and thus are safer on a spring "melt-freeze" snowpack while the snow is frozen in the morning.

SUMMER: The east ridge of Galena Mountain is a fine summer climb and the south ridge makes a good alpine hike.

### **13.6 Galena Lake from Uncle Bud's Hut**

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate

TEXT MAP: pp. 162, 182

TIME: 3 hours round trip

10TH MTN MAP: Galena Mountain

DISTANCE: 2½ miles round trip

USGS MAP: Homestake Reservoir

ELEVATION GAIN: 310 feet round trip

This short branch route takes the Main Range/Colorado Trail to Galena Lake. Use it as a scenic tour or get some turns in glades west of the lake.

ROUTE DESCRIPTION: From Uncle Bud's Hut, ski W down into the clearing in the drainage west of the hut (Bud's Gulch). Do not ski up Bud's Gulch, simply cross to the west side of the clearing and locate the obvious Forest Service "double post" trailhead sign (11,240 feet); this marks the Main Range/Colorado Trail.

Ski W out of Bud's Gulch on the Main Range/Colorado Trail. It takes a short climb through timber, then traverses one-quarter mile to the top of a clearing at 11,240'. The Main Range/Colorado Trail takes a dropping traverse from here, then passes between the two Galena Lakes. For a better ski route, take the fall line down to the flat marshy area where the clearing widens, then ski fairly flat terrain SW a short distance to Galena Lake. Take time to explore the area; include Bear Lake in your quest. For the best downhill skiing, stay on the Main Range/Colorado Trail W, then SW past the south edge of a small lake, then climb to timberline via several switchbacks. Pick your glade. Return via the same route.

SAFETY NOTES: This is a mellow excursion with no unusual safety problems. Remember that the Main Range/Colorado Trail is marked with tree blazes because it's in wilderness. Pay attention to your map, since it's likely you will deviate from the summer trail. Ski in control.

SUMMER: Enjoy this route as a hike.

### **13.7 Ski Tours from Uncle Bud's Hut**

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate

TEXT MAP: pp. 162, 182

10TH MTN MAP: Galena Mountain, Continental Divide

USGS MAP: Homestake Reservoir

Several popular ski runs are accessible from Uncle Bud's Hut. Close by, the glades of St. Kevin Gulch can be reached by climbing N up the ridge behind the hut, then dropping E for the skiing. You can get back to the hut without skins by taking a short climbing traverse at the 11,300-foot level. For your first trip use your altimeter to find the traverse.

Another fun ski is point 12,313 on the east ridge of Galena Mountain. Access this via route 13.3. Enjoy the terrific view and the superb downhill skiing. Point 12,313 is worth several trips up and down. On the last trip try cutting over to St. Kevin Gulch for the final ski to the hut.

**SAFETY NOTES:** Ski downhill with care. Stay clear of the drop-off on the left (north) as you're descending from the top of point 12,313 and watch for rocks on the upper section.