

Telus World Ski & Snowboard Festival: Hit the hills for music, fashion and parties

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By Graeme McRanor, Special to The Sun April 14, 2010

For many city dwellers, the snowy slopes and apres ski action at Whistler provide enough of an excuse to point the car north for a weekend getaway at the renowned resort.

But things will be amped up a notch starting Friday with the launch of the 2010 Telus World Ski & Snowboard Festival, featuring 10 days of music, slopeside competition, art and fashion shows and endless parties.

Now in its 15th year, the festival touts itself as the longest-running free outdoor concert series in North America. This year, there will be more than 40 bands playing in excess of 60 gigs during the Outdoor Concert Series and the Kokanee Freeride Series.

Headliners include Los Angeles-based funk orchestra Breakestra, Vancouver-based 12-piece rhythm machine Five Alarm Funk and Juno-nominated hip-hop artists Classified and Chad.

Also on the bill: Big Sugar, **Mutaytor**, Arrested Development, Wasabi Collective and We Are the City.

While music's the mainstay of the festival, it isn't the only game in town. The World Skiing Invitational features the Blackcomb Superpipe, an Olympic-sized pipe that will send male and female skiers soaring in an effort to take home a slice of its \$70,000 prize purse.

The Orage Masters might be slightly less competitive, but it's a ton of fun. Team-represented athletes — some wearing costumes — get creative on a custom-built course at the base of Whistler Mountain. State of the Art, which plays host to a slew of urban art and artists, runs through the festival in the foyer at the Whistler Conference Centre.

What's a festival without a fashion show? Schick Fashion Exposed features, in the festival's words, "shred-wear to bed-wear: the runway tells the story of what would happen if the world's fashion houses were bumped out of their limos, on to a mountain highway, and had to face real weather, the outdoors, and Ma Nature in all her glory."

That makes sense. It's a mountain festival and the surrounding slopes can be pretty fun too.

At a glance

TELUS WORLD SKI & SNOWBOARD FESTIVAL

Where: Whistler When: Friday-Sunday, April 25 Information: www.wssf.com

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