



**Because the magic happens outside the comfort zone...**

**Choice Splitboard Camp Kuehtai – 6th to 8th of March 2020 – Schaermeralm**

**As an approved ski touring and splitboarding paradise, the Kuehtai deserves a fixed date in every year's Choice Splitboard Camps schedule. This season it was in early March, when a group of highly motivated splitboarders and splitboarding newbies came together at the cosy Schaermeralm for a basic splitboarding beginner experience at Kuehtai. Since mountain guide „Snoppy“ aka Christian Eberherr does not care too much about camp levels, participants were looking forward to an adventurous touring experience of possibly higher levels. But as you all know, the magic happens outside the comfort zone and that's what the Choice Splitboard Camps are famous for.**

Only 35 kilometres from Innsbruck and located high on 2.000 metres above sea level, the resort of Kuehtai attracts backcountry fans with great touring and splitboarding opportunities. A dozen splitboard fans and newbies came together at Schaermeralm on Friday, 6th of March for the second Choice Splitboard Camp 2020. With the first welcome drink, the breathtaking Kuehtai mountain range shimmered through the clouds. While Karakoram and Spark R&D bindings were adjusted to matching Jones and Never Summer demo/test splitboards inside the warm and cosy mountain hut, it started snowing big flakes outside. After everyone was equipped with the brand-new Kohla skins, Jones touring poles and Ortovox safety gear and backpacks were packed up for the next day, mountain hut host Ingrid served an amazing, freshly made typical Austrian dinner.

Together with mountain guide Christian „Snoppy“ Eberherr, the group started into their first splitboarding adventure on Saturday morning. After switching to hiking mode and the first transceiver check, the group started splitboarding towards upper Issalm through the forest. From here, a nice little track lead through the breathtaking scenery of Woergetal and all the way up to „Wetterkreuz“ on 2.250 metres above sea. As the name „Wetterkreuz“ says, the weather changed from sunshine and bluebird to mysterious light and moody skies and finally whiteout and heavy snowfalls on the last kick-turns on the way to the top. Even the splitboarding newbies mastered a 860 height metres climb on their first day. Since it was quite uncomfortable at the summit, they quickly changed back to riding mode. A steep entry challenged the snowboarders in the whiteout, followed by a mellow cruise over fresh powder fields and back into the forest. Everyone was stoked about the long and amazing run with fresh turns in untouched powder. Back at the mountain cabin, mountain guide Christian „Snoppy“ Eberherr talked about the basics of avalanche safety and risk management, while everyone was having their well-deserved „after-work“ beer. All splitboarders finally got the opportunity to practise the worst case scenario outside the mountain hut. They learned the do's in case of emergency and how to handle and search with their safety devices beside probing, shoveling and rescuing a casualty.



On Sunday, Kuehtai showed off with bluebird, sunshine and wintery temperatures. Perfect conditions for a splitboarding tour to Gaiskogel. Said and done! Taking the first chair lift up with Dreiseenbahn, the group quickly changed to hiking mode and everybody was excited to start skinning towards Gaiskogel on 2.820 metres. After a rather moderate start in glittery winter wonderland, a steep, icy and challenging kick-turn track demanded full concentration. The last height metres had to be overcome boot packing over a steep ridge with the splitboards on the back. The exposed ridge challenged some of the newbies to step outside their comfort zone. Everyone finally made the 440 height metres to the summit cross. A breathtaking 360-degree mountain view was their reward. The splitboarders were excited and nervous about the steep access into the north chute down to Haggen. But when they saw two friendly local mountaineers came climbing up the chute with their dog, they smiled and were determined to drop in. The steep and icy access was rewarded with a 1.100 height metres and 5,3- kilometre- long powder run all the way back to the entrance door of the mountain hut Schaermeralm. What a day, what a weekend, what a group, what a mountain guide, what an amazing accomodation! We love Kuehtai and it seems to love us back! See you in 2021, Kuehtai!!!

A special thanks goes out to Kuehtai for the support and Christian Eberherr from Freeride Division for perfect tour planning and first-class guiding. Big shout out to the partners who made the Choice Choice Splitboard Camps possible in 2020: Jones Snowboards, Never Summer Snowboards, Karakoram, Spark R&D, Deeluxe Boots, Ortovox, Penguin Clothing, Smith Optics, SN Supernatural Merinowear, Protect our Winters Austria, Dana Beanies, Kohla Tirol

[www.kuehtai.info/winter/skigebiet.html](http://www.kuehtai.info/winter/skigebiet.html)

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