

[Nordik](#) is an incredible outdoor spa in Chelsea, Quebec, Canada and I visit almost every winter. In December 2022, my best friend's bachelorette party was at Nordik and as I took in the glow of the lights strung in the trees, steam coming off the hot baths and snow falling gently, I could not imagine more romantic surroundings. While approximately 9 out of 10 Americans report hating winter, a small group of winter lovers claim the frosty season is their favorite. Winter does have some obvious drawbacks - shoveling snow, slipping on icy surfaces, the winter blues - but I believe there are more aspects to love than hate - snowy evening walks, skating, the warm glow of the fireplace, a relaxing spa experience. If you dress properly, find a winter activity or two to enjoy, and bask in the romantic ambiance of winter, you will have more reasons to embrace the coldest season than to reject it.

One reason people say they hate winter is probably the most obvious: the cold. But when you observe a group of kids building a snow fort, they are usually bundled up with scarves, mitts, and snow pants, meaning it will take a long time for them to complain of the cold. Kids have the right idea. The first step to enjoying winter is to invest in good quality outdoor clothing to stay warm. As one article in [The Washington Post](#) observed: "We don't all have to dress like polar explorers, but many of us would do well to get smarter about what we wear when temperatures plunge." To counteract bulky downfilled coats and clunky snow boots, more and more companies are designing outdoor gear that is warm, functional, and attractive. Take the Canadian clothing brand, Arc'teryx for example. Not only are their designs sleek, but they innovate products with incredible features like their signature [WaterTight zippers](#) and [storm-resistant hoods](#) for peak functionality. In other words, if you dress appropriately during the coldest months, you'll find greater enjoyment in winter.

Now that you're dressed, a second way to start loving winter is to find an activity or activities that excites you, preferably one that gets you outside. If you are affected by seasonal affective disorder or feel a decline in mood, going outdoors can be a mood booster. With nearly a quarter of Americans reporting winter depression, the [American Psychiatric Association](#) noted that winter activities can bring us joy and lift our moods. There's a wide array of winter sports to adore and experience: skating, skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, sleigh rides... But if being indoors is more your thing, find winter activities and events to break up the monotony of the season. Playing cards with friends, reading, or doing a beloved hobby or craft are all low-key, winter-friendly pastimes. One of my favorite winter events is the [Banff Mountain Film Festival](#). Starting in December, the film fest sends a selection of films on a World Tour and features short and long film submissions inspired by the mountains. These epic films and the fun atmosphere make this festival a winter evening event not to miss.

Lastly, embrace the romance of winter. It is easy to focus on the frigid temperatures winter brings or the messy ugliness of salty, sand-laced snow. However, winter ushers in immense visual beauty - snow hanging gently on the tree branches, the Northern Lights, gathering around a bonfire or hearth. I grew up in a community with lots of people from Sweden and Finland. They showed me how to love winter rather than

simply endure it. Generally, Scandinavians cultivate a “[positive winter mindset](#)” which means thinking of winter as a season full of opportunities rather than limitations. In my hometown, “[ice candles](#)” glowed on the front steps on winter evenings. Locals with Scandinavian roots made these ice lanterns by freezing buckets of water overnight, allowing a natural well to form as the water froze. Then, they inserted a candle into that well, and soft candlelight shone through. These esthetic customs encourage a positive winter perspective and mindfulness. Crack open the bedroom window every morning for just a few minutes and let in some crisp, fresh air. Pull back the living room curtains and watch a nighttime snowfall under the glow of the streetlights. I am confident you will fall - even just a little - under winter’s enchanting spell.

I grew up in Canada and for the past 5 years, I have lived in Southern California. While California is renowned for its natural beauty - with snow of its own in mountainous places like Lake Tahoe - I miss my backyard full of snow when the wet SoCal “winter” arrives. I pine for the sunny, snowy days of my youth in Northern Ontario, seeing my breath hang in the air and feeling my thighs tingle as they thaw out after a long skate on the ice rink. I know winter can stretch endlessly for some and it is used as a literary device to convey despair, bleakness, or struggle. But for me, there is a much-overlooked joy to this season. Yes, it takes a little more effort to dress to stay warm, seek out and master an enjoyable winter activity or two, and develop a positive winter mindset. However, if you try, winter will without a doubt become one of your favorite seasons too.