



## **The Tree: Another Perk**

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Snow Timer**

I often speak of the reasons that we live in the White Mountains. Things like the changing seasons, fresh air, relaxed life style and simply the great out-doors. One of the reasons that I truly love to live here only comes around once a year. That is the search for the perfect Christmas tree. Now, do you have to live here to come cut you own tree? No, but it sure is nice to have that opportunity right here in our own back yard.

So, why a tree? The evergreen tree has been used to help celebrate Winter Festivals for thousands of years. Germany is credited with starting the Christmas tree tradition as we know it somewhere during the 16<sup>th</sup> century when devout Christians brought decorated trees in to their homes. Today, we carry on that tradition as we strive to find the best symbol to represent our households during the holiday season.

I grew up in an area very similar to this one and, around the first of December every year, we went out and cut our Christmas tree. I wasn't just driving out to the forest and whacking down a defenseless tree; it was a quest. A quest to find the fullest tree with the best shape at just the right height for that perfect spot in the living room. The ideal tree must have branches that can support the garland, ornaments and the lights. What are we going to top it with this year? The angel, the star or the Santa Claus? A warm fire crackling in the background; some Christmas music; maybe your favorite holiday movie.

The tradition carries on today. What a great opportunity to hang out with family and friends. Take cookies and hot cocoa. Bring the dogs and the kids' sleds. Spend plenty of time maybe starting a camp fire; roasting marshmallows; playing games and singing songs. Everyone has their own traditions, their own rituals. The only problem with the quest up here is that sometimes you find the perfect tree too fast. A couple of years ago, my son and I ventured out to find the tree and, from the moment we left the house to the minute we got back was under an hour. No joke. A bit anti-climactic but hey, we found the perfect tree for the perfect spot at just the right height and it brought joy to our season. It was kinda like when a man

goes shopping. Laser focus, no distractions, the mission is clear; no need to dilly dally around. Get your stuff and get out.

Make the quest. Enjoy what is magical about the season. Take the time with family and friends, make the most of the day and the season. Embrace all that is right with the world... Just don't forget to bring a saw.....