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PARTIES | SUNDANCE

Everything Is Free in Park City

by Jessica Flint January 23, 2010, 10:50 am



On the first day of Sundance, the film festival's founder, **Robert Redford**, said that the Park City event has become overrun by "ambush marketers" and that he wants Sundance to return to its indie film roots. The man has a point. After all, nothing says "welcome to a film festival" like arriving to your hotel room only to find a crate of Muscle Milk and a huge basket of PopChips (complete with a gray PopChips snow hat) waiting for you. That's what happened to me at least.

All the events at Sundance this year are branded—the "the Supper Club presented by Bing," the "Skintimate Screening Series," or the "T-Mobile Diner"—and everywhere you look there's something free to throw in your bag, whether it's a pair of Skullcandy headphones, an Eos lip balm, or just a bottle of Arizona Vapor water. You need a handbag for your swag? Just head upstairs to the penthouse of the Sky Lodge and swing by the Conair suite at the Art & Soul lounge: Conair customized Y.S.L. look-alike bags so guests could easily take home their free Infiniti Cord-Keeping hairdryers and Rusk hairstyling products after getting their hair cut or styled by Rusk creative design team member Naz Kupelian. (How could I say no to a hair cut after Naz told me I didn't have enough layers in my hair?)

Some swag does serve a Sundance-ish purpose. Over at the Talent Resources Sky Suite, on the fourth floor of the Sky Lodge hotel, A.M.C. is giving celebs free one-year memberships to the movies (and three-month memberships to those of the lesser boldface variety). And, considering that it's snowing buckets in Utah, Australia Luxe Collective is handing out sheepskin boots—handy for those who aren't afraid to sport the big-tufts-of-real-fur-and-lots-of-hardware-on-my-knee-high-footwear look.

But Rebecca necklaces? Axe men's anti-itching shampoo? Yoga classes at Los Angeles and New York's Exhale Spa via the online-gifting Web site Giiv.com? Or a three-day Blueprint juice cleanse? What's Sundance-y about throwing that kind of free stuff at people? O.K., actually the cleanse might be useful considering that I'll be snacking on PopChips for four days straight, if for no reason other than convenience. Hmmm. Maybe ambush marketing is useful after all.

More: Parties, Sundance

Tags: A.M.C., Arizona Vapor Water, Australia Luxe Collective, Bing, Con Air, Eos, Muscle Milk, Park City, PopChips, Robert Redford, Skintimate, Skullcandy, Sundance, T-Mobile Diner

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