

GO

ALTA • DEER VALLEY • MAD RIVER GLEN

BY KIM-MARIE EVANS



Skiers Only

Three resorts
that draw
a firm line in
the snow

Skiing has a long and storied past. There are primitive carvings of skiers from 5,000 BC. The Swedish army fought battles on skis. And it has been the sport of the elite for decades. In contrast, a dude who wanted to surf some snow invented a snowboard in 1964. Skiers and boarders have been battling for the powder ever since.

For the hard-core skier, only a mountain that eschews boarders will do. “Snowboarders just ruin the moguls, they carve the mountain differently, it’s not fun to ski with them, and the sound the boards make scraping off all the powder is just awful,” says Greenwich resident and avid Mad River Glen skier Tasha Nagler. Hers is a sentiment heard often around the fires at these three enclaves where snowboards and their riders just aren’t welcome.

1. ALTA ALTA, UTAH

For those who consider themselves “real skiers,” Alta is the only place to ski out West. This powdery heaven has a fiercely loyal clientele who are not there for the après ski scene, they are there for the legendary runs piled with deep, light powder and fall lines never marred by the wide swath cut by snowboarders.

Alta gets an average snowfall of 500 inches and often as much as 700 (that’s higher than a four-story building). And this is not just any snow, it has crossed the mountain range and Salt Lake, leaving it light

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as a puff of powdered sugar. From Alta's Point Supreme, with an elevation of 10,595 feet, skiers drop into the stuff of dreams. Unlike East Coast ski runs that are narrow and bordered by trees, skiing in Alta is a joyride through the vast and most breathtaking terrain Mother Nature has to offer.

The resort is in Little Cottonwood Canyon, not far from Salt Lake City but a world away from the glitz of Park City. Though the terrain is challenging enough for an Olympic level athlete, there are miles of beginner and intermediate runs. If you have a snowboarder in the family (it's okay, we understand), Snowbird is next door and will welcome them with open arms.

THE DETAILS

LIFT TICKET
\$96

BEST PLACE TO STAY
One of the five classic ski in/out lodges. Rooms with meal plans average \$400 per night.

TRAVEL TIME
45-minute drive from Salt Lake City

THE BACKSTORY

Two years ago snowboarders sued Alta, claiming that the resort banned them because of stereotypes that they are "undesirable people with obnoxious habits and characteristics." A federal judge rejected their claim and Alta remains a skiers' only sanctuary.



2. DEER VALLEY
PARK CITY, UTAH

For the skiing purist looking for a luxurious winter adventure, Deer Valley gets you. The slopes here are favored by celebrities and powder junkies alike. Where Mad River and Alta eschew swanky lodges and fur-trimmed skiwear, Deer Valley embraces it. A ski concierge will whisk your sticks from car to mountain without you lifting a finger, gourmet food is easier to find than chicken nuggets, and every lodge has a well-stoked fire to snuggle up to between runs.

The Montage hotel recently opened the mega

posh Veuve Clicquot yurt, set conveniently between the Ruby Express and Empire Express lifts. Skiers simply clip off their skis and step into this luxe hideaway decorated by the team at Gorsuch with fur throws, hide rugs and other fabulousness. A glass of bubbly will set you back \$32, \$39 if you're a rosé fan. If that bothers you, this mountain is not for you.

THE BACKSTORY

Deer Valley has never allowed boarding, and according to its representatives, their guests like it that way.

THE DETAILS

LIFT TICKET
\$132

BEST PLACE TO STAY
If you want someone to help you snap your boots in the morning, the Montage ski in/ski out starts at \$1,000 per night in season.

Or choose an on-mountain lodge like the Lodges at Deer Valley, starting at \$645 per night.

TRAVEL TIME
45-minute drive from Salt Lake City



3. MAD RIVER GLEN
FAYSTON, VERMONT

You likely know Mad River Glen for its iconic slogan: Ski It if You Can. Here you won't find fast chairlifts, ski butlers or a heavily logeod crowd. In fact, it's the only ski area in the country on the registry of historic places and has one of only two single chairlifts in the country. (The other is at a resort in Alaska, reachable only by plane or snowmobile.) The not-for-profit

mountain still adheres to the frugal aesthetic of its founder, Roland Palmedo, who believed "a ski area is not just a mountain amusement park. It is a winter community whose members, both skiers and area personnel, are dedicated to the enjoyment of the sport."

What Mad River Glen lacks in flash, it makes up for in substance. It boasts the best expert ski terrain in New England

with 2,000 vertical feet in just one lift. Ninety percent of the snow is nature made, and the black diamond runs are never groomed.

THE DETAILS

LIFT TICKET
\$79

BEST PLACE TO STAY
Mad River Barn; \$49-\$175 per night

TRAVEL TIME
Five-hour drive from Greenwich

THE BACKSTORY

Mad River Glen briefly allowed boarders in the early '90s, until a young snowboard advocate ambushed the resort owner on video about why the entire mountain wasn't available to them. In response, the owner banned all snowboarding and the mountain has never looked back.