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ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



Top 10 Hidden Gems

Reno, Lake Tahoe, 7 Days

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: These places may not be on the main section of any guide book, but they are tried and true local favorites that many tourists avoid.

contact:

tel: +1 775 333 9300
fax: +1 775 333 9309
<http://www.automuseum.org>

location:

10 South Lake Street
Reno NV 89501-1558

1 National Automobile Museum

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Special exhibits come every couple of months.

DESCRIPTION: If classic cars are your passion, then this museum is an absolute must-see. The 100,000-square-foot building houses one of the largest collections of antique automobiles to be found anywhere. It has been voted one of the top ten automobile museums in the country and one of the best 16 museums in the world. The cars are grouped by age in street settings appropriate to their time. These real-life backdrops include everything from Burma Shave signs to old gas pumps. See the cars that were originally a part of the Harrah collection including a Cadillac that belonged to Elvis Presley. © wcities.com



Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

contact:

tel: 530-525-7232
fax: 530-525-6730
cal-parks.ca.gov

location:

P.O. Box 266
Tahoma CA 96142-0266

2 D.L. Bliss State Park

DESCRIPTION: Covering 1,830 acres in California's Sierra Nevada, D.L. Bliss and Emerald Bay State Parks include some six miles of magnificent Lake Tahoe shoreline. The grandeur of the parks and their setting is a product of successive upheavals of the mountain-building processes that raised the Sierra Nevada. From promontories such as Rubicon Point in D.L. Bliss State Park you can see over one hundred feet into the depths of Lake Tahoe. From the crest of Eagle Falls in Emerald Bay State Park, you can see a brilliant panorama of Emerald Bay, Fannette Island, Lake Tahoe, and the distant Nevada shore. D.L. Bliss State Park is named for a pioneering lumber man, railroad owner, and banker of the region. His family donated 744 acres to the State Park system in 1929. The nucleus of Emerald Bay State Park, including Vikingsholm, was given to the State by Placerville lumber man Harvey West in 1953. Balancing Rock Nature Trail The Balancing Rock, "tons of granite resting precariously on a slender stone base", has long been a natural attraction on Lake Tahoe's western shore. Visitors to the Lake Tahoe area in the late 1800's and early 1900's enjoyed being photographed next to this geological marvel. Today, the Balancing Rock is the feature attraction of a short, half mile self-guided nature trail in the northwest section of D.L. Bliss State Park. The granite of this large rock began weathering more rapidly at the joint plane, an extensive horizontal crack that is easily seen at its "waist". The overlying rock weighs around 130 tons and is now balanced on the rock below. This precarious remnant of granitic rock will eventually fall when enough material has eroded away to break the equilibrium between the two pedestals. Visitors can pick up a brochure at the start of the trail. Along the path, there are 19 numbered markers where you can stop and learn more about the interrelationships between the soils, plants, and animals found in the park. Camping is also available, contact the parks



department for reservations. Campgrounds are closed during the winter and, depending on the weather, are open from late May until the middle of September. The park is located 17 miles south of Tahoe City on Highway 89, a couple of miles north of Emerald Bay.

contact:

tel: 530-587-3558

<http://www.campingguidenevada.com/cgnes/standardlisting.asp>

location:

Old Hwy 395

Washoe Valley NV 89704

3 Davis Creek Campground

DESCRIPTION: Davies Creek Campground is located on a dirt road on the west side of Washoe Lake. This campground has a dozen or so sites and toilets on site. There is a pond a 1/4 mile away in Davis Creek Park. You can fish there in summer, or ice-skate when the pond freezes over in winter. Additionally in the park is a trailhead for the Ophir Creek Trail. This long and pretty strenuous hike gains approx. 4,000 feet to Mt. Rose Campground in the Tahoe Meadows area. From here you can connect to the Tahoe Rim Trail. Washoe Lake State Park is only 10 minutes away on the other side of Washoe Valley.



frompkin/Flickr

Reno Snapshot

Local Info

Reno has always been a bit of a black sheep. It is not as hip as Portland and Seattle and not as chic as Los Angeles or Las Vegas, but in its own way it's dynamic and funky in a small package. The one thing to understand about Reno is that it's NOT Las Vegas. Reno is more popular for its outdoor sports than its gambling, but it also has a thriving art, music and theater scene sprinkled with great restaurants and bars. The downtown area, famous for the Reno Arch and several casinos has hit on hard times with the bad economy, but look a block or two south around the Truckee River corridor for cafés, farmer's markets, bike trails, street performers, ice rinks and roller derbies. This is the Reno Arts District and this is the real Reno. Locals are friendly and open, and will be happy to let you in on their town's many secrets.

One of Reno's best assets is being central to the Western U.S. San Francisco is a three or four hour drive to the west, Yosemite is a four to five hour drive to the south, Portland, Seattle, Los Angeles and Las Vegas are about an hour or two plane ride away. Reno and the surrounding areas also straddle several different types of terrain. When you visit Reno, you have access to the mountains with its rivers and alpine lakes, ski resorts and hiking trails, you can visit the wide open desert of central and southern Nevada, and the Pacific Coast is only a few hours away.

Downtown Reno

The Virginia Street corridor is the center of activity for not only gambling, but special events as well. The bright lights of the casinos and the famous Reno Arch declaring "The Biggest Little City In The World," greet visitors as they enter downtown.

The boisterous casinos have been the main attraction along the Truckee River for decades. The Club Cal-Neva Hotel Casino has been around since 1948, and is still going strong as one of the most popular gaming establishments in town. Harrah's Reno opened as a full casino the same year and the action has never ceased. The National Automobile Museum, located two blocks east on Mill and Lake Streets, houses some fascinating antique

cars collected by William Harrah on his ride to fame and fortune. Harrah's Events Plaza is a center for downtown events and entertainment. The Circus Circus Hotel Casino is a favorite for family fun with high-flying acts and a great arcade for the youngsters. The Silver Legacy Resort Casino is known for sponsoring major events and adding to the revitalization of downtown. The Automated Mining Machine towering 120-feet over the casino floor is a wonderful attraction for visitors. The Eldorado Hotel Casino is a major host for special events, as well as popular gaming venues. A couple very popular nightspots downtown include Roxy's at the Eldorado and Limerick's Pub and Grille.

"Reno-vation" is taking place in the downtown area to make more open and attractive spaces for visitors and Renoites to enjoy. The Truckee River Walk is one of the first efforts. The whole city gets into the act to host one of the major cultural events in the nation, the Reno Summer Arts Festival featuring Artown. The Pioneer Centre for Performing Arts presents the Reno Philharmonic, the Nevada Opera and Nevada Festival Ballet. Marvelous museums are lavishly dispersed throughout the area including the Wilbur D. May Museum and Aboretum at Rancho San Rafael Park and the Nevada Museum of Art on Liberty Street downtown.

Some major hotel/casinos outside of the Virginia Street hub include the Peppermill Hotel Casino and Atlantis Casino Resort & Spa on South Virginia Street. East of downtown resides the Grand Sierra Resort & Casino, a high-rise city in itself.

Sparks

Although it looks like it's part of Reno, this is a separate, thriving city. Founded in 1904, it served as maintenance facilities for the Central Pacific Railroad. Named for then-governor John Sparks, the city has come a long way in establishing itself as not only a great place to visit but to live. The Sparks Heritage Museum displays artifacts relating to the beginnings of the town that is sometimes known as the "Rail City."

The hub of activity is centered in Victorian Square at Interstate 80 and Victorian Avenue. John Ascuaga's Nugget towers over the Square and the hotel sponsors many major events taking place there. Fine

dining facilities in this establishment include Trader Dick's Restaurant and Aquarium Bar and Restaurante Orozko. Across the Square, you will find a great mid-sized hotel/casino, the Silver Club Hotel Casino. Smaller casinos are to be found as one strolls along the Square, one of the most popular being Rail City Casino. The casinos along Victorian Square host major events almost every month of the year. Sparks Hometowne Christmas is a favorite and the very popular Best in the West Nugget Rib Cook-Off.

Carson City

The capital of Nevada is about 45 minutes south of Reno. The historical main street and homes give this small town its charm. Several great restaurants and the great Nevada State Museum are the main attractions. Carson City is also the start/end of the infamous Hwy. 50, or the "Loneliest Road in America" across Nevada. Just east of Carson City is the historic mining town of Virginia City where you can step back in time and mosey down on wooden sidewalks, dress up in Western wear and have your photo taken or jump on an authentic steam train for a ride down the mountain.

Lake Tahoe

One look and you'll know why it is called the Jewel of the Sierras. The areas surrounding the largest alpine lake in the country offer year-round recreation and beauty. The Cal-Neva Resort Hotel Casino, the favorite haunt of the "rat pack," is always popular for entertainment. The Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe Resort, Spa & Casino is perhaps one of the most elegant places to lodge and have fun. MontBleu Casino Resort & Spa and Harrah's Lake Tahoe are also well known for fine dining and top entertainers.

During the summer months, the Zephyr Cove Resort & Marina beckons visitors to cruise on the M.S. Dixie II. On the south shore of the lake, Lake Tahoe Cruises offer sailing on the Tahoe Queen. The beaches and parks are popular for sunbathing and hiking. Sand Harbor presents the Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival and Kings Beach hosts the Lake Tahoe Music Festival.

The ski resorts in the Sierra Nevada mountains are unmatched anywhere. Boreal Mountain Resort is usually the first of the season to open because of snow-

Reno Snapshot continued

making equipment. Granlibakken Resort & Conference Center offers fabulous lodging and conference facilities, as well as fine slopes. Heavenly Ski Resort and Northstar-at-Tahoe are first-rate for challenging ski

areas. Cross-country ski enthusiasts will find the best trails in North America at Royal Gorge Cross Country Ski Resort in Soda Springs. And, of course, there is Squaw Valley USA, famous for hosting

the 1960 Winter Olympics and still a world-class venue for winter sports of all genres.

© NileGuide

Lake Tahoe Snapshot

Local Info

Lake Tahoe is an original. The "Jewel of the Sierras" is the third deepest lake in the world at 1,645 feet, and its crystal blue water shines brightly in both winter and summer inviting visitors to relax and enjoy the beauty. The Lake Tahoe area was recently voted the best ski area in the United States by Orbitz. And the locals couldn't agree more.

Lake Tahoe straddles two states, Nevada and California. And each portion of the lake has a different vibe. Like the Native Americans who summered in the region and called it "big sky lake", we will come up from the Nevada side, drop into California and then back into Nevada.

Nevada and Highway 50

For your first view of "The Lake", nothing is better than taking Highway 50 up from Carson City, the capital of Nevada. Even people who have lived here for years, still catch their breath when witnessing this blue beauty hovering among mountains and pine forests. The trip continues with a tour around the 72 miles of shoreline. Each place you go, you will not lose sight of the lake that Mark Twain called the "fairest picture the whole earth affords".

Traveling toward Stateline, and home to the gaming center of Tahoe you will drive passed the Logan Shoals Vista Point and through the tunnel at Cave Rock, which is sacred to the native tribes in the area. You will then pass by Zephyr Cove where you can camp, rent water and snow toys, eat at numerous restaurants or just enjoy one of the nicest beaches in the area. Zephyr Cove is also where you can catch a ride on the MS Dixie II, a full-size paddlewheeler (that Mark Twain would be proud of) or the Woodwind II, a catamaran that sails during the summer months. Stateline is home to Harrah's, Harvey's, Montbleau and the Horizon casino resorts. Here you can eat, game, relax in a spa, golf at

the Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course or enjoy the lake without having to leave the area.

California and Highway 89 North

As you leave Stateline and head into California and South Lake Tahoe you will pass by Heavenly Village and Heavenly Ski Resort which has a gondola with some of the best views of the lake. Coming into South Lake Tahoe you will find numerous hotels, resorts, restaurants and other ways to enjoy Tahoe and the views.

South Lake Tahoe is known for the South Lake Tahoe Recreation Area and has several bike and pedestrian trails that run alongside the road. As you head out of SLT, onto Highway 89 North and into the Tahoe National Forest and Tahoe Basin, you drive through some of the more rugged and beautiful areas of the lake. Here you will find less restaurants, but beaches like Pope Beach and Baldwin Beach, camping or dining at Camp Richardson, the Mt. Tallac Trailhead and the Spring Creek Recreation Area. All this beauty leads up to Emerald Bay, at the southern tip of Tahoe. This deep green bay embraces the only island on the lake, Fannette Island. From here you can hike down to Vikingsholm Castle as well as get great views of both Emerald Bay and the nearby Cascade Lake. The Eagle Falls trailhead and access to the Desolation Wilderness is here as well. This area can be precarious during snowstorms and sometimes the road will be closed due to avalanches.

California and Highway 28

As you continue up Highway 89 to the West Shore, you will come across D.L. Bliss State Park, Meek's Bay and campground, Sugar Pine Point State Park, Tahoma, Homewood Mountain Ski Resort and the tiny but local favorite, Granlibakken ski resort. Most of the West Shore is privately owned and the piers inviting you to take a stroll over the water are gated. However, this area also has several bike-friendly trails that run from here to Tahoe City and up to Alpine Meadows Ski Resort. Tahoe

City is "at the Y" of Highway 89 and 28. Highway 89 heads north towards Truckee on Interstate 80 and passes by Alpine Meadows and Squaw Valley USA, home of the 1960 Winter Olympic Games, and Highway 28 heads back toward Nevada. Tahoe City is a laid back town near the outlet of the Truckee River and offers dining and bars, rafting, golfing and shopping.

Back to Nevada

Beyond Tahoe City, Tahoe Vista and Carnelian Bay, the turnoff for Highway 267 also goes to Truckee over the Brockway Summit and passes by Northstar-at-Tahoe ski resort. If you stay on 28 you will head back into Nevada through Kings Beach which offers hotels, restaurants and a public beach. Highway 431, or the Mount Rose Highway, passes by the local favorites of Tahoe Meadows, the Mount Rose Summit trail, Mount Rose Ski Tahoe resort and into the Galena area of South Reno, home to Jack Nicklaus's Montreaux Golf and Country Club.

The quiet, laid back town of Incline Village has some of the local favorites in food and drink. Ski Diamond Peak, play a round of golf at the Incline Village Golf Course or access the lake at the Lake Tahoe State Park from Hidden Beach or Sand Harbor. Sand Harbor is the prettiest beach on the lake and home to the annual Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival. Farther along the road you will see a parking area for Secret Harbor, a clothing-optional beach about a mile hike from the road.

This is near the end of your circle of Tahoe. You can drive back down Highway 50 to Carson City which connects along Highway 395 to Reno and Sparks, or you can take the loop again! Lake Tahoe is big and full of out-of-the-way treats. It might be best to take the lake in sections. But after your first visit, you are bound to come back and join the locals in helping to "Keep Tahoe Blue."

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