



# Winter in Lake Tahoe

## **Lake Tahoe, 1 Day**

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# Guide Description



**AUTHOR NOTE:** The Lake Tahoe winter season is heating up with back to back snowstorms. What can you do up at "the Lake" if you only have one day? My choice? Rent a sled at Galena Sports on the Mt. Rose Highway and go sledding at the Mt. Rose summit followed by pizza and beer at Mofo's Pizza in Incline Village.

**contact:**

tel: +1 775 782 3047

<http://www.dogsledrides.com>

**location:**

P. O. Box 176

Gardnerville NV 89410

## 1 Dog Sled Rides

**DESCRIPTION:** Available only in winter depending on snow, dog sled rides recreate one of the most crucial methods of transportation in snowy countries. Situated in Hope Valley just south of Lake Tahoe, the terrain resembles the Alaskan wilderness. The vigorous huskies are a delight to see. Each sled can carry up to 375 pounds, generally sufficient for a couple of adults and a child or two. It is an unforgettable experience that will make your winter vacation the one everyone talks about. Adult prices: USD85; children USD45. Minimum total for the sled is USD130. Advance reservations and deposit are necessary © wcities.com



christine zenino/Flickr

# 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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