



**nileGUIDE**

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



# Best Beginner Hikes in Salt Lake City

## **Salt Lake City, 1 Day**

### Table of contents:

Guide Description 2

My List 3

Salt Lake City Snapshot 6

# Guide Description



**AUTHOR NOTE:** Few places offer the amount and variety of hiking trails than that of Salt Lake City's Wasatch Mountains. Hundreds of miles of trail are found throughout the mountains that surround Salt Lake City and all are just a short drive from downtown.

Many of these trails are ideal for beginners and take visitors to gorgeous alpine lakes and incredible vistas without an entire day's worth of travel.

All the trails in this guide are less than 5.5 miles round-trip, well-maintained, and relatively smooth traveling (no scrambling or balancing on precarious ledges necessary). That being said many of the trails will involve a great deal of elevation gain so keep in mind how much ascending you can handle when choosing a trail.

**contact:**

<http://www.utahtravelcenter.com/activities/hiking/hiking-trail/snorth/redpinelake.htm>

**location:**

State Road 210  
Salt Lake City Utah 84092

## 1 Red Pine Lake

**OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:**

Upper parts of the trail are often snow covered or wet until mid to late-June. The best time to hike the trail is during summer months and early fall.

**DESCRIPTION:** One of the most popular hikes in the Wasatch, the trail to Red Pine Lake follows a well-maintained trail through a narrow canyon to a beautiful alpine lake set just below tree line. The lake with its backdrop of craggy peaks makes for a great picnic spot or an excellent place to pitch a tent for an overnight backpack trip. Begin your hike at the well-marked White Pine trailhead located 5.5 miles up Salt Lake City's Little Cottonwood Canyon. The trail climbs nearly 2000 feet over 3 miles so plan on about 2-3 hours to reach the lake. Once at Red Pine Lake, explore the trail that circles the lake or scramble up the rock above Red Pine Lake to an upper pool. © NileGuide



Photo courtesy of Amiee Maxwell

**location:**

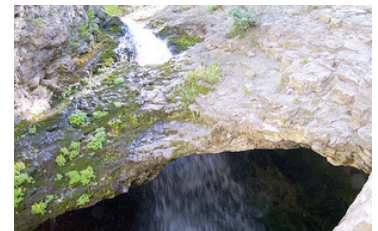
Big Cottonwood Canyon  
Road  
Salt Lake City UT 84138

## 2 Donut Falls

**OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:**

Dogs are not allowed in either Little or Big Cottonwood Canyons since the canyons are protected watersheds.

**DESCRIPTION:** Donut Falls is a unique waterfall in the Wasatch Mountains that gushes through a hole in the rock that literally looks like a donut hole. The Donut Falls hike is one of the most popular hikes close to Salt Lake City and is perfect for families and hikers of all experience levels. The trail follows a well marked trail 3/4 miles to the falls. The trail is relatively easy except for a short rocky section just before reaching the falls. The hike is best done from late spring into late fall with the waterfall being most impressive during the spring runoff. The rocks below the waterfall can be very wet and slippery so climbing up to the waterfall is not recommended. If you wish to do so do at your own risk. To get to the trailhead, travel 9.3 miles up Big Cottonwood Canyon Road and turn right onto the road to Jordan Pines Picnic Area. Continue on the road for 3/4 miles from the Big Cottonwood Canyon Road to the Donut Falls/Cardiff Fork Trailhead. © NileGuide



lemonjenny

**location:**  
Millcreek Canyon Road  
Salt Lake City UT

### 3 Dog Lake

#### OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Mountain bikes are only allowed on upper Mill Creek trails on EVEN numbered days and dogs are allowed off-leash on ODD numbered days.

**DESCRIPTION:** Dog Lake is a fun and popular hike just outside of Salt Lake City in beautiful Millcreek Canyon. The trail is very well maintained and winds itself through gorgeous high alpine forest 2.5 miles to Dog Lake. The hike is immensely popular with dog owners (hence the name Dog Lake) because the trail is one of the only trails in the Wasatch that lead to a lake where dogs are allowed.

The trail is moderately strenuous with 1440 feet of elevation gain from the trailhead to the lake. The climb is rather gradual so anyone in average physical condition should not have any real difficulty completing the hike.

The trail can be accessed from Upper Millcreek Canyon from July 1 until the snow falls. Spring hits these high elevation trails mid-summer so mid to late summer is an excellent time for wildflower viewing and the leaves are spectacular in the fall.

To get to the trailhead, travel all the way up Millcreek Canyon to the top and park in the Big Water Trail Parking Area. There are several trails leaving the parking area so make sure to the Big Water Trail to Dog Lake.

© NileGuide

**location:**  
Brighton Utah 84121

### 4 Lake Blanche Trail

**DESCRIPTION:** The hike to Lake Blanche is one of the easier hikes close to Salt Lake City. The well-maintained 2.75-mile trail leads through Aspen groves and up switchbacks past smooth rock slabs to a gorgeous basin containing Lake Blanche. The view at Lake Blanche is incredible with the towering Sundial Peak above the lake and surrounding peaks. Views of the Salt Lake Valley can also be seen from parts of the trail.

The hike ascends 2720 feet from the trailhead so the hike is considered strenuous for novice hikers, but should be no problem for individuals in good physical condition. Pack plenty of water, sunscreen, and snacks and plan on approximately 2.5 hours to reach the lake - the views and photo opportunities will make the hike certainly worth it. To get to the trailhead, drive up Big Cottonwood Canyon Road 4.4 miles to the Mill B South parking area. There are two parking lots and the Lake Blanche Trail begins at the east side of the lower parking lot.

© NileGuide



eyesofsalt

**contact:**

[http://www.summitpost.org/view\\_object.php](http://www.summitpost.org/view_object.php)

**location:**

E Mill Creek Canyon Road  
Salt Lake City UT 84109

**5 Grandeur Peak**

**OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:**

Grandeur Peak is considered a relatively easy hike in the Wasatch, but keep in mind it does climb over 2000 feet to the summit. Seasoned hikers should have no problem with the hike but less conditioned hikers may need more breaks. The views attained are certainly worth the effort.

**DESCRIPTION:** Grandeur Peak is the easiest and most accessible of the prominent peaks that make up Salt Lake City's eastern skyline.&nbsp; The most popular route to the summit of Grandeur Peak is from the Church Fork trailhead, which begins at the Church Fork picnic area 3.2 miles up Mill Creek Canyon (from Wasatch Blvd). &nbsp; The trail is well marked and easy to follow.&nbsp; The total length of the trail is 5.2 miles (out and back) with 2340 feet of elevation gain.&nbsp; The trail follows a stream for the first ½ mile and then cuts sharply west leading to a series of switchbacks that lead up to Mill Creek ridge.&nbsp; The trail follows the saddle to the summit and provides exceptional views of the entire Salt Lake Valley. Don't forget to pack your camera, sunscreen, and plenty of water for your hike to the Summit.&nbsp; Average hikers can reach the summit of Grandeur Peak in 2-3 hours. &nbsp; © NileGuide

# Salt Lake City Snapshot

## Local Info

Salt Lake City, Utah's capital, sits snugly against the base of the soaring Wasatch Mountains. These dramatic Rocky Mountain peaks today define Salt Lake City equally as much as its founding by the Mormons in 1848. And though a lot of strange urban legends circulate, the Mormon church (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) certainly exerts a much more subdued and positive influence on the city than the fearful would believe.

By any standards, Salt Lake City is a fairly young city—at just more than 160 years old. But it is one of the nation's most historically unique modern cities, having grown up in a territory peppered with sometimes bloody battles between Mormons and "gentiles". Of course this history and cultural background still effect Utah, but so too do many other factors like its magnificent outdoor opportunities and remarkably stable economy. Salt Lake's modern visitors and residents come for all sorts of reasons and enjoy an equally diverse set of opportunities. Located right at the crossroads of I-80 and I-15, and within

five minutes of a major international airport, it could hardly be more accessible.

Salt Lake's downtown sits at the northern end of Salt Lake Valley. With Utah's largest conference centers and guest capacities, the downtown area also has a host of restaurants, bars, and clubs. The majority of music venues can also be found here, as well as art galleries, cafes, and shops. Some of the highlights here include Market Street and its excellent restaurants like Takashi and Market Street Grill. Front and center are Abravanel Hall, home of the Utah Symphony, and the Energy Solutions Arena, where the Utah Jazz often play.

The University of Utah with its research facilities, galleries, and associated business occupies the city's eastern corner. The general public might head up to campus to hike the Bonneville Shoreline Trail or check out the Red Butte Gardens.

Heading southeast from downtown proper is the 9th and 9th region of town; a small collection of boutique shops, multiple restaurants, a cafe, bakery, and yoga studio. Move farther to the south and you'll run into Sugarhouse, the big brother of 9th and 9th. This dense center is home to a

book shop, a Patagonia Outlet, dollar-style Cinemax movie theater, Salt Lake's latest-open liquor store, restaurants and pubs, as well as several big, national retail stores.

As you head south still, the town becomes increasingly residential, though various malls, retail districts, restaurants, and bars pop up here and there. But even as you spread to the perimeters of town, you will continue to find culinary and commercial gems in each of its various neighborhoods. Toward the far southeastern corner of the valley (and the I-215 beltway) are the mouths to Big and Little Cottonwood canyons and their ski resorts, Brighton and Solitude (in Big), Alta and Snowbird (in Little). Look sharp for restaurants, apres ski spots, and hotels in this area.

Regardless of where you're staying and recreating in Salt Lake City, you'll have easy access to all parts of town via the I-80/I-215 beltway that encircles the majority of the urban compact, rendering almost every corner of town within 25 or 35 minutes of each other.

© NileGuide