

SNOWKITING SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

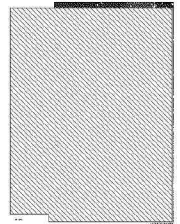
Winter is the best time of year to visit Salt Lake City. The Wasatch Mountains shoot up like snowcapped pyramids over the city's skyline, and the peaks get doused in some of the country's deepest, lightest powder. Olympic heritage and a growing foodie and music scene mean there's plenty to do in the city, too. And with 11 ski resorts within an hour's drive of the airport, you can fly in and score fresh tracks the same day.

Want to escape the crowds and lift lines? You can now experience Utah's ski-movie-worthy backcountry terrain in a completely novel way: via kite. Utah Snowkite Center offers newbies group or private snowkite lessons on flat and rolling terrain in the mountains surrounding Salt Lake City, as well as the charming resort outpost of Park City, where Sundance-bound celebs mix with fleece-clad, powder-obsessed locals. Stay in downtown Salt Lake City for a more urban vibe or post up in Park City for powder stashes outside your door.

To learn to snowkite, you'll step into skis or a snowboard—you don't even need to be an expert skier—and be harnessed into a high-flying kite that'll send you soaring across snow-covered tundra. The more advanced you get, the steeper the terrain you'll be able to access. "We know where the wind is and where the good snow is," says Jacob Buzianis, a pro kiter and owner of Utah Snowkite Center. "That means we get powder days every day."



**YOU NEED LITTLE
PRIOR SKI EXPERIENCE
TO TAKE FLIGHT ON
POWDER DAYS.**



© MURIC WEISSBERG PETERS, SHANNON HUBER



GO FOR GOLD

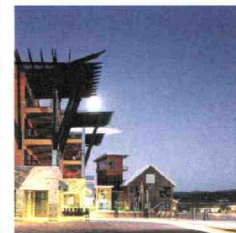
Feel the gravity of an Olympic bobsledder at Park City's Utah Olympic Park, site of the 2002 Games and a training center for current athletes. With an experienced driver at the helm, you'll bomb down an icy luge at 60 miles per hour.

Snowbird's aerial tram for a hold-your-breath ride to the top of 11,000-foot Hidden Peak. A new mountaintop restaurant called The Summit (pictured below) opened last year, serving up lunch with views of the Wasatch.



STAY OUT LATE

High West is Utah's first legal distillery since prohibition and now, in addition to its downtown Park City saloon, you can visit the new tasting room and distillery on a cattle ranch outside of town. In Salt Lake City, catch a concert at the Depot, a four-story music venue with everything from stand-up comedy to major national music acts.



CHOW DOWN

Grab a quick breakfast burrito, stop in for a bahn mi lunch or take home a rotisserie chicken dinner at Vessel Kitchen, a brand-new Park City hot spot that's as affordable as it is delicious. In Salt Lake City, it's worth the wait at Red Iguana for platters of house-made mole enchiladas.



LIFT TO THE TOP

Even if you don't plan on skiing or riding down, you can still hop aboard

SLEEP TIGHT

Book a room or a two-room townhome at Newpark Resort (from \$220), a Park City hotel equipped with an outdoor hot tub, ample ski storage and gas fireplaces. It's located just outside of the historic downtown, but a free shuttle offers rides to town and up the mountain. Or stay at the Monaco (from \$110), a swanky and modern hotel in downtown Salt Lake City that boasts dog-friendly service, a free happy hour and courtesy in-room yoga mats to stretch your quads after kite skiing.

