

Utah

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Best Places to Stay

- » Sundance Resort (p499)
- » Torrey Schoolhouse B&B (p426)
- » Quail Park Lodge (p445)
- » Under the Eaves Inn (p454)
- » Sorrel River Ranch (p411)

Best Places to Eat

- » Café Diablo (p427)
- » Hell's Backbone Grill (p429)
- » Parallel 88 (p456)
- » Love Muffin (p412)
- » Talisker (p493)

Why Go?

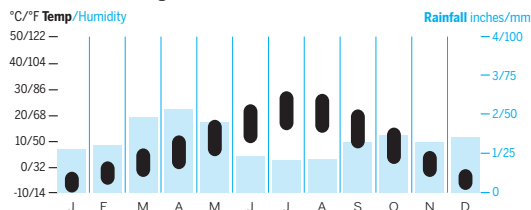
Though not everyone knows it, Utah is one of nature's most perfect playgrounds. The state's rocky terrain comes ready-made for hiking, biking, rafting, rappelling, rock climbing, skiing, snowmobile riding, horseback pack-tripping, four-wheel driving... Need we go on? More than 65% of the lands are public, including 12 national parks and monuments.

Southern Utah is defined by red-rock cliffs, sorbet-colored spindles and seemingly endless sandstone desert. The forest- and snow-covered peaks of the Wasatch Mountains dominate northern Utah. Interspersed you'll find old pioneer buildings, ancient rock art and ruins, and traces of dinosaurs.

Mormon-influenced rural towns can be quiet and conservative, but the rugged beauty has attracted outdoorsy progressives as well. Salt Lake City (SLC) and Park City especially, have vibrant nightlife and foodie scenes. So pull on your boots or rent a jeep: Utah's wild and scenic hinterlands await. We'll meet you later at the nearest boho coffeehouse.

When to Go

Salt Lake City



May

The mild weather makes this an excellent time to hike, especially in southern Utah.

Oct

Colorful autumn leaves come out, but a welcome touch of warmth lingers.

Jan-Mar

Powder hounds gear up for the skiing at SLC and Park City mountain resorts.

Utah Planning

Utah is not a large state, but it is largely rural. That means unless you are staying in Salt Lake City or Park City, you'll need a car. If you're headed to the parks in southern Utah, your cheapest bet may be to fly into Las Vegas and rent a ride there.

DON'T MISS

Sure, some of Utah's rugged beauty can be seen roadside. But one of the great things about the state is how much of it is set aside for public use. You'll gain a whole new perspective – and appreciation – of the terrain if you delve deeper. Not-to-be-missed outdoor adventures are available for all skill levels, and outfitters are there to help. Challenge yourself by rappelling into the narrow canyons around **Zion National Park** or mountain biking on the steep and sinister **Slick Rock Trail** in Moab. Or take it easy on your body (though not your vehicle) by going off-pavement along one of the state's many 4WD roads. Whether you're rafting on the **Colorado River** or skiing fresh powder in the **Wasatch Mountains**, you'll see the state in a whole new way.

Tips for Drivers

- » Driving between major cities can be quite a speedy affair. The three interstate freeways have a 75mph limit.
- » Cruising in from Denver on I-70? Make sure you get gas in Green River (345 miles, 5¼ hours). The 104 miles between there and Salina is the largest stretch of US interstate without services.
- » When traveling between Las Vegas and SLC, consider a scenic detour east on Hwy 9 at St George to Hwy 89 north. It's longer (365 miles, seven hours, St George to SLC; compared with 303 miles and 4¼ hours on the I-15), but you'll pass through some stunning red-rock country.
- » In general, plan to take your time on smaller roads and byways. The state has some daunting geographic features. Switchbacks, steep inclines, reduced speed limits – and stunning views – are all part of the experience.

TIME ZONE

Utah is on Mountain Standard Time (generally seven hours behind GMT), but does follow daylight saving time from mid-March to early November. Note that if you're traveling into Arizona, there's an hour's difference spring to fall.

Fast Facts

- » Population: 2.9 million
- » Area: 84,900 sq miles
- » Time Zone: Mountain Standard Time
- » Sales Tax: 4.7%
- » SLC to Moab: 235 miles, 4 hours
- » St George to SLC: 304 miles, 4¼ hours
- » Zion to Moab: 359 miles, 5½ hours

Liquor Laws

Although a few unusual liquor laws remain, regulations have relaxed recently. For more information, see p393.

Resources

- » Utah Office of Tourism (☎800-200-1160; www.utah.com) Free Utah Travel Guide; website in six languages.
- » Utah State Parks & Recreation Department (☎877-887-2757; www.stateparks.utah.gov) Info about the 40-plus state parks.