

Adventure in the Snow

UNEXPECTED

Utah



by arnesa a. howell

For my ladies looking to switch it up from the routine tropical girl-friend's getaway, there are the powdered peaks of Snowbird, Utah. Already a fave of die-hard skiers craving exhilarating trails, the upscale Snowbird Ski and Summer Resort offers more than the expected ski runs. Despite the nip in the air, Snowbird serves up warm hospitality with luxurious spa treatments and a pinch of adventure for those who'd prefer to relax and gaze at a snow-covered mountainside rather than ski down one.

PHOTO: Images courtesy of Snowbird Resort



Opposite page: Snowbird Lodge, nestled on 2,500 acres in the Wasatch-Cache National Forest in Little Cottonwood Canyon

Below left: Cliff Spa pool

This page: Brave the cold (and heights) as you ride the tram, or stay warm inside—while you limber up—in a yoga class.

● GO

Planes, shuttles and automobiles. Fly into Salt Lake City International Airport and hop on a shuttle for hassle-free travel to the resort, less than an hour outside Salt Lake City. If you fancy getting behind the wheel, make sure to spring for a four-wheel drive, otherwise, you could get stuck at the bottom of the mountain in a snowstorm. Keep the hotel's number handy, in case it needs to send someone to rescue you. Hey, it happens.

TIP: Take away the stress, call the resort in advance with your flight information and it can book the shuttle for you.

● STAY

Tucked away in Little Cottonwood Canyon, the Cliff Lodge is a stoic structure of concrete and glass that blends seamlessly into its surroundings. Whether you favor a room overlooking the canyon or the mountains, it's impossible not to enjoy the scenery at this resort. Why? A head-to-toe wall of glass in the shower offers striking views of both. So on the first day, take it easy, unwind and drink lots of water. You're at an elevation of 8,000 feet and your body may need to adjust. Rooms from \$139; (800) 232-9542; snowbird.com.

TIP: Book a ninth-floor room for same-level access to the Cliff Spa, just down the hall, and complimentary use of the rooftop heated pool, fitness center and other amenities.

● PLAY

Morning. Start slow with some pampering at the **Cliff Spa**. This top-tier retreat offers a yummy list of treatments like the Body Glow, full body exfoliation and a heated gel wrap accented with a relaxing eucalyptus steam. Splurge for the 80-minute session (\$220) and get an added perk: a therapeutic massage. The relaxation journey continues with you and your girls cocooned in fluffy white robes and lounging in the solarium with mountain views and chatting over hot cups of herbal tea. Or settle in for a nap. You deserve it!

TIP: Let the shy be warned: It's a unisex steam room.

Afternoon. Bundle up and bond during an **Aerial Tram** ride to Hidden Peak. Expect to feel every bump and sway as the tram climbs to an exhilarating 11,000 feet. After reaching the top, gaze at the shimmering slopes and snap some photos to remember this mini-adventure. Linger as long as you like before taking the 10-minute trip back down to the resort.

TIP: If heights make you nervous, it's true what they say—don't look down!

Evening. Remember, this is Mormon Country, so expect a tight rein on the spirits. But no worries, there are plenty of lounges here for sipping and socializing. Hang out at the 10th floor's popular **Aerie Lounge** and enjoy hot chocolate with a kick, nosh on small bites and share some laughs.

TIP: Have a girlfriend stake out a good spot in advance; this popular spot really draws a crowd.

Night. Be daring and pin up that 'do! Venture to the lodge's rooftop and slip into the hot tub, even more of a luxury amidst snow flurries. Inhale the crisp air and take in the beauty of the nighttime sky, and then plan the next day's outings!

TIP: Sign out an extra robe and slippers in advance from the spa to ensure a warm and cozy retreat to your room. ♥

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