

For Lake's Sake: Summer in Lake Powell

Written by Melissa Larsen

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As summertime in Arizona is all about local love with serious staycation time, one of the state's most beautiful sites offers on-the-water adventuring (and utter peace and quiet if you seek it) just a few hours away. Lake Powell, which straddles the Arizona-Utah border and is found within the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area in Page, offers nearly 2,000 miles of shoreline. You've seen the iconic images: the glistening sapphire water, the red sandstone cliffs and the amenity-packed luxury houseboats. But even though the reservoir is worth the five-hour drive from Phoenix just to snap a few photos, adventure (or lack thereof) is around every canyon-filled corner.

Home Base

Whether you're looking to rough it a bit or prefer your accommodations to have a comfy king-size bed and flat-screen TV's, Lake Powell offers a wide variety of ways to stay while you play. Lake Powell Resort is home to 348 waterfront rooms and deluxe suites, many with beautiful marina and lake views and all the desired amenities. In addition to pools and a fitness center, the resort is where you'll find the recently renovated Rainbow Room. Diners dig into the likes of blue corn-crusted salmon and green chile pork tacos while enjoying panoramas of the lake, Wahweap Bay and Castle Rock. You might even find that the prickly pear negroni matches the hot pick sunset in the distance.

For a bigger dose of the great outdoors, the Wahweap RV and Campground, only a short walk from the lake, offers all the wants and needs for those camping (like shower facilities and hookup sites). There are even three new trendy Airstream campers available for rent for a glamping getaway.

As one of the country's top houseboating destinations, making your home away from home directly on the lake is a popular option. A large range of houseboats, from economy to luxury, are available for rent in four- to seven-day increments. This option is ideal for larger groups; the newest fleet, the Wanderers, have enough space for up to 12 guests. The custom-designed houseboats offer four queen-size staterooms, a screened upper-deck driving helm, a wet bar, a barbecue and an enclosed spiral tube slide for some major warm-weather amusement.

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Fun in the Sun

Lake Powell offers endless alfresco activities—kayaking, fishing, waterskiing, hiking and more—for seasoned outdoorsmen or newbies who may prefer a more relaxing respite. To soak in the sights without doing any work, a scenic boat tour is a great option, all departing from Wahweap Marina and ranging about one and a half to three hours. Guests simply sit back and enjoy (individual audio sets are included with every tour, if you want a play-by-play of the scenery) while getting up close to Antelope Canyon, Glen Canyon Dam, Navajo Canyon and more, depending on the tour. There are plenty of pretty photo opps along the way, of course.

Want to get in the driver's seat? Wahweap Marina features oodles of options for renters, including powerboats (there are 15 new 200 HP-outboard engine powerboats added to the fleet), pontoons and water toys, like wakeboards, paddleboards and kayaks. The family-friendly 19-ft. powerboat is a popular choice, even for beginning boaters, and is a smooth option for exploring the canyons, beaches or simply hanging out while enjoying a picnic lunch on board.

Just a quick drive away, Horseshoe Bend is one of the most adored natural attractions in the nation, drawing attention from travelers worldwide. Though the viewing points can get a little cluttered and a short hike is needed to reach it, Horseshoe Bend is truly a bucket-lister. A guardrail was recently added as a safety feature, and the area is currently in the process of adding a visitor's center and other amenities.

If hiking to one of the world's greatest natural wonders or cutting through the azure waters at 40 miles per hour doesn't float your boat, at Lake Powell there is an art to doing absolutely nothing at all.

To Learn More

Lake Powell lakepowell.com.

Lake Powell peak season is June to September.