

5 Best Places to Snowboard in the West

Written by Lindsey Clinkingbeard

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Temperatures are finally starting to drop--even here in Arizona--so we've rounded up some of the best places to snowboard right outside of the desert. Break out your gear and get ready to glide down those snow-topped mountains.

5. Sierra-At-Tahoe Resort, California



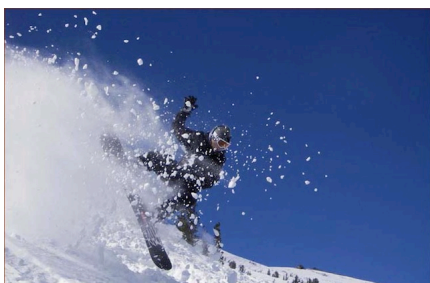
Sierra-At-Tahoe is filled with old forests surrounding the mountain, providing a beautiful backdrop for its epic parks. With more than 2,200 vertical feet and 480 inches of annual snowfall, the mountain at Sierra-At-Tahoe Resort is a steep ride. This resort has many options for all levels of snowboarders, from their Jack's Bowl and Huckleberry Canyon with pine-tree scenery to their intense superpipe, Sierra is keeping activities filled with snow-chill fun. This laidback resort also offers their Wild Mountain Children's Center for you to bring the whole family. For more information, visit sierraattahoe.com.

4. Bear Mountain Resort, California



Known as the "People's Park," Bear Mountain elevates as high as 8,800 feet and constantly is a home to local snowboarders. With helpful crew all around the park, Bear Mountain also offers top-to-bottom jib lines and kickers. This park means business with its 1,665 foot vertical drop. You can also explore natural banks and trannies by heading to Geronimo Gulch, where, post-shred, you can grab drinks and spicy Mexican food at the Sonora Cantina. To see more, go to bearmountain.com.

3. Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, California



This mountain, up 11,000 feet above sea level, has everything from park paths to steep drops and is known for having bright, sunny days most of the year. The Old New York Deli & Bakery Co. in the village offers warm breakfast foods that will warm your belly before you hit the slopes. For experienced riders, there are tons of backflips, bumps, and side hits on the run under Chair 12 or a path called the Dragon's Tail. Mammoth Mountain also has tons of options for post-snow-day, like the Mammoth Brewing Company or classic restaurant Roberto's. Learn more at mammothmountain.com.

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2. Park City, Utah



This park offers various slopes to ride on, from the Claim Jumper, a simple warm up, to the 3 Kings Park that offers upscale or beginner's rides. Experience vertical drops of up to 3,100 feet in Park City. Newer additions like the Neff Land or the King's Crown are fun options to challenge advanced riders. When you decide to defrost yourself at the end of the day, you can visit O'Shucks for warm, cheap beer or delicious pizza at Davanza's. If you're still wide-eyed, Park City offers night riding in select areas as well. Visit parkcitymountain.com.

1. Aspen, Colorado



Aspen/Snowmass offer four distinct mountains for your choosing, all with beautiful varied terrain. Buttermilk is the spot to go for full park features, superpipes, and fast laps. The snow on Burnt Mountain at Snowmass is pure white and deep. For post-shredding, there are lots of options for food, from Sneaky's Tavern in Snowmass to Eric's Bar in Aspen. For information on all the different mountains that Aspen has to offer, visit www.aspensnowmass.com.