

KING OF THE MOUNTAINS

MAMMOTH, CALIFORNIA IS OUR PICK WHEN IT COMES TO AMERICAN PEAKS. FIND OUT WHY

What you didn't know (but should) about Mammoth Lakes...

Just an hour's flight from LAX, Mammoth is one of the most convenient US ski towns to get to. And the sooner you get on the slopes, the closer you are to après, right? It has the longest season in North America, running from early November to June. Team that with 300 days of sunshine each year and around 15 square kilometres of rideable terrain and it's no surprise roughly one million skiers and boarders flock there annually (almost 60 per cent of those skiers are ladies, so the odds are in your favour). Here are some more tips for making the most of your Mammoth adventure.



LIVING LARGE

IF YOU'RE HEADING TO CALIFORNIA AND MONEY'S NO OBJECT, YOU SHOULD DEFINITELY THROW MONEY WITH RECKLESS ABANDON AT THE FOLLOWING.

STAY: **Sierra Nevada Resort & Spa** is conveniently located in the heart of Mammoth Lakes and is an affront to the thrifty. The Luxury Fireplace Suites feature an ornate brick fireplace, vintage leather furniture, a deep soaking tub and, most ballin' of all, heated toilet seats. thesierranavadaresort.com
EAT: You wouldn't expect authentic Greek food in

the middle of California but somehow **Jimmy's Taverna** delivers, with lamb chops that'll knock your socks off and a wine list that'll soon make you forget how cold you are without your blown-off socks. jimmystaverna.com
TIP: Forget lines, noise, and being prodded in the balls by four year olds with skis – some ski outfitters will come to you. **Black Tie Mammoth Ski Rental Delivery** will get you fitted with all your hardware at your hotel, which is ideal if you've had a late arrival and feel the extra 45 minutes at the crack of dawn is better spent in a warm bed (or on a heated toilet seat) than battling it out in a long line. mammoth.blacktieskis.com



GETTING THERE

Fiji Airways' stopover in Nadi will let you get your tan on before heading home – baffling everyone who thought you only went to the snow. Plus, it's just a brisk three-hour transit time (fijiairways.com). If you're pressed for time, just hop on one of the many direct carriers, including Qantas, Delta, and United Airlines. From LA, it's a simple domestic flight to Mammoth Lakes.



BUDGET

SO YOU BLEW YOUR MODEST BUDGET THE WEEKEND BEFORE IN VEGAS AND ARE HOPING TO DIAL IT BACK A BIT. DON'T WORRY, YOU CAN STILL HAVE A SWEET SKI BREAK WITHOUT AN ORNATE BRICK FIREPLACE.

STAY: Hang out slope-side at the **Mammoth Mountain Inn**, with deals for lodging and lift passes starting at \$ US129. The closest hotel to Main Lodge, not only can you be first up the lift, but you'll have more change in the pocket for party time. themammothmountaininn.com

EAT: Carb-load with fresh, handmade pasta at **Campo Mammoth** in the Village. Simple and authentic, the menu changes daily depending on what the chef can get his hands on. campomammoth.com
TIP: Each Saturday during peak season, the **Bavarian**

Yodler restaurant at the base of the Main Lodge transforms into a Euro-style après party called UNTZ. With \$2 beers, cocktail specials, and a new DJ each week, this is right up your alley, cheapskate!



WITH THE BOYS

SO YOUR BROS AGREED TO THE EPIC SNOW TRIP (EVEN THE LAME FRIEND WHO NEVER COMES OUT) AND NOW YOU NEED THE BEST PLACES TO GET UP TO MISCHIEF. TOO EASY.

DOGSLEDDING: Feel the dog-power, as a dozen huskies take you through Mammoth's snowcapped peaks. If you're feeling the need for a real *Man vs. Wild* (potentially uncomfortable bonding alert!) experience, you can even take overnight camping gear and spend the night around the

campfire. mammothdogteams.com/dog-sledding-tours.html
LAKANUKI: Ever wondered what the world's highest tiki bar looks like? Neither did we until we heard about **Lakanuki**. Started by Kiwi Stuart Need and his buddies, Lakanuki puts an exotic spin to post-hill beers. It's weird, but in the best way.



WITH YOUR LADY

YOU'VE SCORED SOME NEXT-LEVEL BROWNIE POINTS BY WHISKING YOUR LADY OFF TO MAMMOTH LAKES... BUT YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH HER. LUCKY WE'RE HERE. INVITE US TO THE WEDDING AND WE'LL CALL IT EVEN.

Snowcat dining: Sip on bubbly during an après tour or splash out on a three-course chef-prepared meal (with matching wines) in a heated snowcat, as the sun sets over the Sierra Peaks. If you're looking for a place to pop the question,

you could do a lot worse. mammothmountain.com/ResortActivities/DiningandNightlife/SnowcatTours
Mammoth Rock 'n' Bowl: The newest kid to the Mammoth Lakes entertainment scene, this is one of those cool après venues that combines healthy competition with cool live music. mammothrocknbowl.com



WORDS: CATHERINE SLOGROVE

RIGHT SAID SHRED

Former pro snowboarder **Gabe Taylor's** top tricks you need to know. Because Torah ain't gonna shimmy for you if you can't land your tricks

1. BACKFLIP

If you're only going to learn one trick on a snowboard, make it a backie. Park jumps, powder pillows, moguls, and pole jams are great places to show off this classic acrobatic manoeuvre, but make sure you have some soft snow and a poppy jump to learn on! Which brings up a good point: this trick



takes commitment. A half-arsed backflip attempt will potentially break your neck!

2. METHOD

Timeless, stylish, and a crowd-pleaser. This trick is completed by launching up in the air and grabbing your board with your front hand in between your bindings. When done correctly, it looks as good as it feels. It's kind of tricky to do well, and requires a fair bit of flexibility, so maybe stretch it out beforehand, to prevent hernias.

3. SPINS AND FLIPS

The more, the better, so wind up and give it the old heave-ho! Yeah, 900s are great, but you won't get noticed until you spin at least 1080 degrees, buddy.

"Dashing through the snow..."

