

# UTAH'S Best for Less

Hit the Beehive State this autumn for great rates at top resorts—all under an hour from Salt Lake City.

Somewhere along the breathtaking 20-mile Alpine Loop between American Fork Canyon and Sundance Resort, it hits you: Utah is every bit as alluring washed in autumn light as it is blanketed by winter snow. Yet this may be one of the state's greatest secrets: fall is prime vacation time in Utah,

with ample opportunities to enjoy its most luxurious resorts at reasonable off-season rates. And with several alluring spots within an hour's drive of Salt Lake City, you can take your pick—or easily wander from one to another. Salt Lake City writer **Virginia Rainey** recently did both.

It's like something from a movie: the sandy-haired young stud sets off on a voyage of self-discovery, riding a motorcycle from his native California to the Colorado Rockies. Somewhere in the wilds of Utah, he falls deeply in love...with a mountain. It may sound like fiction, but that's how the Sundance story goes. When Robert Redford bought the Timphaven property in 1969—shortly after the release of *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*—it was little more than a rope-tow in the shadow of majestic Mt. Timpanogos. Today, Sundance Resort is the public anchor of a 5,000-acre sanctuary dedicated to supporting the arts, protecting the environment and serving an ever-expanding audience of grateful guests. Each of the resort's 95 quietly posh cottages is an invitation to let the world fall away...to let nature invigorate and inspire.

## SUNDANCE RESORT | Provo

**ROOMS + RATES** | It's not often that a resort becomes a *lifestyle*, with an aesthetic so clear—and so enviable—that it inspires a highly successful retail engine. Fans of the popular Sundance Catalog will find the Resort's inviting accommodations perfectly aligned: rough-hewn wood, elegantly earthy décor, through-the-ceiling thread-counts and eco-friendly in-room amenities from NATÛRA. Book well in advance, and ask for a Mountain Suite in the Pines. Fall rates start at \$149/night.



Artful solitude at Sundance Resort

**PALATE-PLEASERS** | Built around a now-expired tree and furnished with Redford's own collection of rugs and artifacts, the Tree Room is a magical experience, replete with candlelight, superb wines and seasonal "mountain cuisine" made with local ingredients. The more casual Foundry Grill is also a solid bet; honestly, you can't beat a perfectly medium-rare Angus burger there. But if I had to choose a favorite spot, it would be the Owl Bar, adjacent to the Grill. Belly up to the bar—a restored antique rumored to have been used by the *real* Butch Cassidy—and order the tortilla soup with a local brew.

**PAMPERING** | Based on the Native American concept of *hocoka*, or sacred center, the free-standing Spa at Sundance creates an inviting environment for restoration and

healing. It's intimate and no-frills (sans sauna or steam room), but the massages, body scrubs and facials are indeed restorative. And for once, it's refreshing to just walk outside after a treatment instead of getting into an elevator.

**PLAYTIME** | Redford has said, "Nature and creativity obey the same laws, to the same end: life." Indeed, Sundance invites guests to enjoy both in any number of ways: 25+ miles of challenging single track, 10 miles of alpine hiking trails, scenic ski lift rides, horseback riding, fly fishing, river rafting and nearby golf, to name just a few. Add to that the year-round environmental programs offered at the Sundance Nature Center, the creative classes at the Art Shack and the Resort's eclectic event calendar, and you get an experience that's greater than the sum of its parts.

*Sundance Resort is in Provo, about 50 minutes from Salt Lake International Airport. [www.sundanceresort.com](http://www.sundanceresort.com)*



### FALL COLORS ON CALL

Whether you check in at Sundance, The Sky Lodge or the Homestead Resort, you're within easy reach of two absolutely stunning fall color drives: the **Alpine Loop** ([www.utah.com/byways/alpine\\_loop.htm](http://www.utah.com/byways/alpine_loop.htm)) and **Guardman Pass** ([www.utah.com/parkcity/guardsman\\_pass.htm](http://www.utah.com/parkcity/guardsman_pass.htm)). If you take the partially unpaved Guardsman's Pass, plan on a great sourdough breakfast or hearty lunch on the deck at the **Silver Fork Lodge** ([www.silverforklodge.com](http://www.silverforklodge.com)) in Big Cottonwood Canyon.

**S**ure, Park City and environs are rich in rustic and Euro-style mountain lodging—from antler chandeliers to Teutonic frills. But let's face it, not everyone is into that. Enter The Sky Lodge: 33 über-cool residential-style urban lofts with a prime location overlooking Park City's bustling Main Street. No matter which way your stylish room faces, you'll drink in great views—from the town below to gentle hillsides covered in historic gingerbread houses. A private hot tub on each deck adds to the viewing pleasure...especially when the stars are out.



The Sky Lodge: urban chic, Park City-style

## THE SKY LODGE | Park City

**ROOMS + RATES** | A one-bedroom unit—light and airy, with a spa-like bathroom and full open kitchen—is perfect for two. Sharing with family or friends? Check out the split-level three-bedroom suite, but make sure you claim “dibs” on the wonderful tree house bedroom. Fall rates start at just \$199/night.

**PALATE-PLEASERS** | Kick off your stay with a cocktail on the deck of the private rooftop Sky Club—complete with its own elevated hot tub and endless views. Dining options abound in The Sky Lodge and around Main Street, so you won't have to wander far. Locals favor the French bistro vibe of the Jean-Louis Restaurant & Bar ([www.jeanlouisrestaurant.com](http://www.jeanlouisrestaurant.com)), just across the street. Don't let its humble mini-mall location deter you; once you step inside, you'll be rewarded with a heady mixture of slick onyx and sumptuous cuisine—including the not-to-be-missed lobster macaroni and cheese. Be sure to pick up the local paper, *The Park Record*, for off-season two-for-one dining coupons.

**PAMPERING** | Embrace your inner hedonist at Amatsu, the hotel's cocoon-like spa, complete with Japanese *ofuro* tubs and a transcendent bamboo and hot stone massage. As an extra indulgence (as if you needed one), you can order strawberry shortcake with Chantilly cream or a buttery house-made scone from the lodge's Easy Street Bakery—and enjoy it in the quiet calm of the spa's waiting area.

**PLAYTIME** | Park City is one of the country's most versatile natural playgrounds, with more ways to enjoy the great outdoors than you can shake a walking stick at. The adrenaline-fueled attractions at Utah Olympic Park ([www.olymparks.com](http://www.olymparks.com)) are open through September 7, including the Xtreme Zip (a zipline with a heart-stopping 435-foot vertical drop), the Quicksilver (a stainless steel alpine slide) and the Park's own bobsled, “The Comet.” And of course, you're always steps away from world-class hiking, biking and shopping. [www.parkcityinfo.com](http://www.parkcityinfo.com).

*The Sky Lodge is located in Park City, approximately 45 minutes from Salt Lake International Airport. [www.theskylodge.com](http://www.theskylodge.com).*



### LOCAL FLAVOR: SALT LAKE CITY

Downtown Salt Lake City ([www.downtownslc.org](http://www.downtownslc.org)) is in the midst of a renaissance—but if you can avoid the construction under way in the city center, there's much worth exploring. Consider “bookending” your trip with a night or two at the historic Peery Hotel ([www.peeryhotel.com](http://www.peeryhotel.com)), an area staple since 1910. You can find terrific restaurants, an award-winning food emporium called Tony Caputo's Market & Deli ([www.caputosdeli.com](http://www.caputosdeli.com)) and a lively Saturday Farmers Market (through mid-October—and a perfect place for breakfast—all within easy walking distance.

The Homestead's history harkens back to the late 1800s, when Swiss farmer Simon Schneitter turned the natural "hot pots," or underground hot springs, on his land into soothing mineral pools that eventually drew hundreds of visitors to the bucolic Heber Valley. Today, the Homestead boasts one natural hot pot in addition to a 55-foot deep limestone crater where guests can soak, snorkel and scuba dive (!) in the 90-degree water. A self-contained resort, the Homestead is one of those destinations with something for everyone—including a championship 18-hole golf course, tennis courts, indoor and outdoor pools, horseback riding, a game house for the kids and a spa for mom and dad.



Virginia House, the Homestead Resort

## THE HOMESTEAD RESORT | Midway

**ROOMS + RATES** | Ask for a roomy executive cottage or choose among condos, town homes, private homes and even a bunkhouse. The dominant vibe is comfortably Victorian with smart modern touches; most accommodations offer private decks or patios. Fall rates start at just \$89/night.

**PALATE-PLEASERS** | Though the resort continues to offer satisfying dining at Fanny's Grill (named for its original proprietress) don't miss the chance to experience some of the best Mexican fare in Utah at Tarahumara, an easy five-minute drive or 20-minute walk into the town of Midway. Gloria and Greg Grass serve up their famous fare nightly, including lamb barbacoa, seared scallops in passion fruit tomatillo sauce, house-made *churros* and *tres leches* cake and other authentic Mexican offerings. [www.tarahumara.biz](http://www.tarahumara.biz)

**PAMPERING** | While you'll be hard-pressed to find something to stress about here, you should still schedule some downtime at the on-site Aveda

Concept Spa—this luxe modern addition is set in the inviting Virginia House, a two-story brick building that served as the resort's original hotel. After a busy day of golf or tennis, nothing restores mind and body like a soak in the spa's outdoor mineral hot tub, followed by a massage or facial.

**PLAYTIME** | In addition to the activities available at the resort, you're in the heart of Utah's best hiking and biking territory, and within a stone's throw of some stunning autumn drives—including the Alpine Loop and Guardsman Pass. See page 14 for details.

*The Homestead is located in Midway, approximately 20 minutes from Salt Lake International Airport. [www.homesteadresort.com](http://www.homesteadresort.com)*

*Virginia Rainey, a Utah native, loves to discover good food and travel finds and write about them for Sunset, Spa and Park City magazines. She is also the co-author of California: The Beautiful Cookbook.*



### YOU'RE SOAKING IN IT!

*Balneotherapy*—the practice of soaking the body in a natural mineral bath to treat illness—has been practiced for thousands of years. It has even been said that explorer Ponce de León began his search for the legendary "Fountain of Youth" after hearing exaggerated stories about its healing properties. Today, balneotherapy is part of routine medical practice throughout Europe and Japan, and is recommended for everything from eliminating toxins and promoting healthy skin to reducing high blood pressure and treating arthritis. In American culture, the practice seems to be more luxury than therapy—but its rejuvenating benefits are just as real.



## SEASONAL MUST-SEES

in Salt Lake City and Surrounding Areas



Whispering Winds is a unique property with a character and personality all its own. With breathtaking views and proximity to some of the best hunting and fishing southern Colorado has to offer, this pristine 2-acre lot is a one-of-a-kind property you are destined to call your own.



To find out more about this special opportunity, go to [henrygill.com/whispering](http://henrygill.com/whispering) or contact Ron Hayes at 303.867.8357