

Salt Lake City: A Scootering City

By Jaimi Haig and Kelley Pelzel

Salt Lake City has the cosmopolitan flair of larger western cities as well as breathtaking scenery only minutes from town and hospitable friendliness. Two mountain ranges surround the city-- the 11,000 ft. Wasatch to the east and the Oquirrh to the west. This makes for some fantastic scootering, whether hobnobbing around the city itself, or up one of several canyons, each unique in landscape.

The City

While outdoorsy activities come to mind when thinking about Salt Lake, there are many inexpensive things to do in the city. The new Clark Planetarium has star shows several times daily and its sound system and theatre are state of the art. There are yacht tours on the Great Salt Lake that boast incredible sunsets and lunch/dinner cruises. The Utah Museum of Fine Arts (located on the University of Utah campus) showcases over 5,000 years of art from all over the world. The University is also home to Red Butte Gardens, a large arboretum featuring many native Utah species and a large number of other types of horticulture. Red Butte also has a children's garden and many educational activities throughout the year. This is a relaxing place to explore and have a picnic. The 2002 Winter Olympics memorial, featuring the Olympic Torch, is another must-see on the University campus. Downtown you'll find Classic Cars International, a museum showcasing over 100 classic automobiles.

Where Can a Guy Get a Drink Around Here?

There's a vicious rumor that it is hard to find nightlife or liquor in Salt Lake. This is definitely not the case. Whether you are interested in hearing live bands, playing pool, drinking microbrew or having a swanky night out at a chic club, Salt Lake has a nightspot for you. Locally owned, moderately priced restaurants are abundant, with a range of ethnic food to satisfy anyone's palette. Take the Bohemian Brewery for example: a microbrewery specializing in central European lagers with terrific food and vintage scooter décor to boot! Or, if you are eating on the cheap, buy an authentic NY hotdog served off the back of a Bajaj Three-Wheeler at Alacart2Go. You won't find hard liquor or wine in SLC grocery stores, but state-run liquor and wine stores carry the same variety of spirits you'd find in other cities. Many Utah restaurants stock full bars for those who want a drink with dinner.

One thing you'll need to remember about nightlife around Salt Lake is that there is a private club law. Private clubs serve all kinds of liquor, beer and wine and you do not have to purchase anything to eat. The catch is that you must buy a temporary membership to enter any of these clubs. Most temporary memberships are \$5 and allow for up to five in your party. Temporary memberships are unique to each club, but are good for two weeks. Think of it as a 14-day cover charge for you and your four friends.

The Great Outdoors

Salt Lake Valley was once entirely covered by a prehistoric lake. The city itself would have been at the bottom of that lake. (Yet, keep in mind that we have a higher elevation than most cities-- 4330 feet above sea level-- and jetting adjustments are oftentimes necessary on scooters coming in from other places.) The Great Salt Lake is what is left of this giant sea, it still covers 2,500 square miles but is only 13 feet deep on average. Towering above this vast lake is Antelope Island. This 44 square mile island, visible from miles around, is home to a surprising variety of flora and fauna. Venturing out to Antelope Island via the 7-mile causeway makes for a great group ride, providing the scoots do not cross paths with the herd of 600 buffalo that roam freely on the island!

Camping is also a great way to enjoy a scooting weekend with your friends. Around the area are many spots to car camp while bringing your scooter. Group sites are available in nearly every camping area. This has proven to be wonderful way to have a memorable weekend while enjoying the beautiful summer weather Utah has to offer. Visit www.stateparks.utah.gov or www.fs.fed.us for more information on camping around Salt Lake.

Perhaps Salt Lake's greatest natural assets are the numerous canyons, many of which are accessible within minutes of downtown Salt Lake. Riding up the highest canyons will take you to approximately 8,000 feet, through oak, pine and aspen forests and stunning meadows. You can spend a lazy afternoon next to a rushing mountain stream after hitting the twisties and switchbacks of the canyon roads. In fact, the roads are almost as good as the scenery!

Come Visit Us!

Whether visiting Salt Lake on business or vacationing, Utah scooterists make a point of welcoming you. The scooter clubs here are pretty informal; however, there are a quite a number of seasoned riders in the scene. Salt Lake is also the home of scoot.net, one of the most visited vintage scooting sites on the web. Logging on to scoot.net/chat is a great way to connect with local scooterists. You can also check out our Utah Scooter Scene Yahoo Group. Salt Lake is the host city for AmeriVespa 2004 (www.amerivespa.org) and we hope to see all of you there!

Since Salt Lake City was host to the 2002 Winter Olympics, there are many lodging choices here in town. Here are a few we recommend:

The Grand America (big money for big playas)
555 South Main Street
801-258-6000
www.grandamerica.com

Hotel Monaco (ask for the complimentary goldfish)
15 West 200 South
800-805-1801

www.monaco-saltlakecity.com

The Carlton Hotel (independently-owned in the heart of downtown)
140 East South Temple
801-355-3418
www.carltonhotel-slc.com

Salt Lake City Center Travelodge (good rooms on a budget)
524 South West Temple
801-531-7100
www.travelodge.com

Econolodge (official hotel for AmeriVespa 2004--ask for the special rate)
715 West North Temple
801-363-0062
www.econolodge.com

Eating inexpensively in Salt Lake is not hard to do. The diverse selection of cuisine is affordable and delicious. Here is a short list of suggested dining choices:

Café Trang (Vietnamese)
818 South Main Street
802-539-1638
www.splor.com/cafetrang

The Red Iguana (specializing in pre-Columbian Aztec fare)
736 West North Temple
801-322-1489
rediguana.citysearch.com

Thai Siam (Thai)
1435 South State Street
801-474-3322
www.thaisiam.us

Red Rock Brewing Company (Microbrew and pub food)
254 South 200 West
801-521-7446
www.redrockbrewing.com

Stoneground (Italian)
249 East 400 South
801-364-1368

Brewvies (pub food & movie theatre all in one)
677 South 200 West

801-355-5500
www.brewvies.com

The Bohemian Brewery (Microbrew and vintage scooter décor)
94 E 7200 S (Fort Union Blvd)
801-566-5474
www.bohemianbrewery.com

A few private club recommendations (by genre):

Burt's Tiki Lounge -- Hawaiian tiki theme, live alternative/punk bands
726 South State Street
801-521-0572

Kristauf's Social Club -- Martinis
16 West Market Street
801-366-9490

Brick's Club -- Live music/Diverse dance club with patio
579 West 200 South
801-328-0255

Shaggy's -- Think of your parent's '70's basement with lots of booze and karaoke
200 South 150 West
801-359-2215

Club Naked -- Cool post-modern interior, DJs
326 South West Temple
801-521-9292

W (The Dub Club) -- Intimate club with International DJs and Ready Steady Go-British Invasion night
358 South West Temple
801-359-0637

Getting to SLC:

By road: SLC is conveniently located at the crossroads of Interstate 80 and Interstate 15.

By air: SLC International Airport is about ten minutes from downtown SLC. It is a hub for Delta Airlines.

By rail: Amtrak's California Zephyr stops in SLC on its eastward trek to Chicago and westward trek to Emeryville, CA.