

Kirkwood Mountain Resort: Traversing Lake Tahoe's Slopes

Situated on the south side of Lake Tahoe in the Eldorado National Forest, Kirkwood Mountain Resort is one of the larger resorts in the Lake Tahoe region, and is renowned for having one of the highest average snowfalls (Kirkwood received an impressive 804 inches of snow during the last ski season) and an extensive selection of advanced terrain.

Long a secret haven for locals, you won't find packs of tourists here. What you will find are wide-open trails, deep snow pack and short lift lines, so there's plenty of opportunity for skiers and boarders to find fresh tracks all day.

With its stunning views of the snow-capped Sierras, Kirkwood's 2,300 acres comprise a series of five bowls created by horseshoe-shape ridges, with a vertical rise of 2,000 feet (top elevation 9,800). Each bowl boasts some narrow runs, steep chutes and sharp cornices at the top and wide intermediate runs at the bottom. There are 65 trails and no catwalks. About half the mountain is accessible by lifts, with more than 1,000 acres reachable by climbing or hiking. With the plethora of snow, bowls and access to the backcountry, Kirkwood is a ski destination aptly suited for intermediate to advanced skiers with the top half comprised of expert terrain funneling into intermediate trails.

Tucked away from the heavy traffic of Route 50, Kirkwood is a good option for skiers who want great snow and a challenging mountain, yet don't require a lot of apres-ski action. While there are a few bars and restaurants in the village, the clubs and casinos remain at South Shore. **HB**

Fast Mountain Facts

Average snowfall: **500 inches**

Base elevation: **7,800 feet**

Top elevation: **9,800 feet**

Vertical rise: **2,000 feet**

Average % sunny days: **70%**

Average length of season: **Mid-November to late April**

Skiable acres: **2,300**

Trails: **65+**

Lifts: **2 high-speed quads, 1 fixed quad, 6 triple chairs, 1 double chair and 2 surface lifts**

Longest run: **2.5 miles**

Terrain: **15% beginner; 50% intermediate; 20% advanced; and 15% expert**



Where to Stay

Instead of booking a traditional hotel or motel room, a more comfortable and affordable option (particularly if you're traveling with a family or a group of friends) is to rent a private home.



The Tahoe Keys Resort and the Lake Tahoe Reservation Bureau offer over 240 properties ranging from simple studio condominiums to luxury free-standing homes.

The latter includes this brand new three-bedroom and three-bathroom home (located at 1144 Golden Bear in Lake Tahoe's South Shore) is ideally situated just minutes from Heavenly Ski Resort in the beautiful wooded residential area of Montgomery Estates.

For more information or to review available rental properties, visit www.tahoevacationguide.com or call (800) MY-TAHOE.