



Lake Tahoe is an unusual vacation destination with two distinct types of attractions. It's flanked on its western side by pristine Northern California's Sierra mountains, a world-class winter ski paradise.

On the eastern shore is Nevada, where the anything-goes casinos and posh hotels beckon less athletic travelers with bright lights, Las Vegas-style entertainment, upscale shopping and, of course, spinning casino gambling.

There are ten ski resorts on the upper reaches of California's Lake Tahoe. Perhaps the most well-known is Squaw Valley, host of the 1960 Winter Olympics, and a favorite destination for sports and entertainment stars ever since.

Squaw Valley has many hotels, inns and hostels at prices from outrageously high to economically modest, along with cozy restaurants and clubs. The surrounding slopes feature more than 100 various skill-level downhill runs, designed to suit everyone from the first-time senior to world-class ski champs. For those who want to get up to the top and schush downhill, there are more than 30 quick-moving ski lifts.

A more intimate destination is the Donner Ski Ranch. If you're familiar with the disaster of what happened to the Donner Party more than 100 years ago, don't let that stop you from trying the slopes there. The Donner Ranch is a favorite of skiers who prefer its quieter locale, and is more family-oriented than very hip Squaw Valley.

The highest ski destination of the Lake Tahoe area is aptly-named Heavenly Mountain Resort, an international favorite. It's two miles above sea level, and for dedicated skiers who require heavy white stuff, there is usually at least five feet of packed natural snow on the slopes from November through May.

There other ski areas in the mountains surrounding Lake Tahoe, all with the usual upscale attractions for winter vacationers. Each offers its own charm and unique facilities for skiers of all ages and skill levels.