



PHOTO: Courtesy of Lee Canyon

How To Ski and Snowboard Without Breaking the Bank

Five Hacks to Keep Your Wallet Intact This Winter

By Stephanie Forté

Gone are the days of rolling up to a ski resort's ticket window and snagging an affordable day pass. Last winter, *Outside Magazine* reported that a last-minute day of ski or snowboarding for a family of four could cost anywhere from \$828 to a staggering \$1,400. Some ski resorts charged over \$200 for a daily pass, while an Arizona resort charged over \$300 following record snowfall. Consider these five hacks to help make skiing and snowboarding near Las Vegas more affordable.

1. SKIP THE HOLIDAYS

The highest prices for daily lift passes are during holidays like Christmas, Martin Luther King Jr. Day and President's Day weekends. The price surge is due to dynamic pricing, a strategy widely adopted by U.S. ski resorts in recent years. Prices are adjusted based on supply and demand, like airline tickets becoming pricier before the holidays or Las Vegas hotel rooms spiking during major events like the Super Bowl.

To secure the best deals on daily lift tickets, plan to ski/ride mid-week or non-holiday weekends. When writing this article, a day pass for Las Vegas' Lee Canyon during Christmas week was more than triple the price of a day pass on a regular Tuesday in January. At Eagle Point, situated in the Tushar Mountains of southern Utah, a daily lift ticket on Christmas day (a Monday) was 82% more expensive than a typical Monday in late January.



PHOTO: ©Jesse Lynch • Courtesy of Brian Head Resort

2. COMMIT EARLY

Failing to plan and pay in advance in the skiing world often leads to spending more. Purchasing day passes weeks or months ahead of a trip means saving. While the sweetest deals are usually before the season starts or early season, even in midseason, booking a few weeks in advance can yield significant savings.

Pre-season in November, Lee Canyon offered mid-week prices as low as \$19, with the added bonus of a \$10 resort credit for food, beverages, rentals, or retail. During the holidays, a daily pass was priced as low as \$69. So, if you must ski during the holidays, buy early to lock in lower rates.

Similarly, Brian Head in southern Utah posted midweek prices as low as \$30, and some of their daily lift tickets also included a \$10 resort credit. Eagle Point, open Friday through Monday, offered adult tickets for as low as \$42 to \$61 on non-holiday weekends, compared to \$60 to \$75 if purchased at the resort and \$90 on holidays. Mammoth Mountain in California, farther from Las Vegas but a local's favorite, reported midweek daily tickets for November as low as \$119 and \$159 to ski in January and February. Prices during the holidays were higher at \$219. Though those prices are dynamic and will increase as more tickets sell and due to factors that influence price like snow storms.

3. GET A PASS

If you plan to hit the slopes a few times this winter, investing in a season pass is a smart financial move. Most offer access to various resorts and discounts. Here's how things shake out locally: (Quoted prices as of November 2023)

Lee Canyon & Brian Head:

For those who have long debated *Lee Canyon* or *Brian Head*, the decision has been made easier. Lee Canyon was acquired by Brian Head owner Mountain Capital Partners (MCP) last season, which means passholders enjoy both resorts. The Power Pass offers unlimited access to Lee Canyon, Brian Head, Arizona Snowbowl in Flagstaff, Purgatory in Durango, Colorado, and other MCP resorts. The 12-Day Power Pass offers 12 restricted days at Lee Canyon, Arizona Snowbowl, and Purgatory, with unlimited access to Brian Head and other MCP resorts. The 4-Day Power Pass comes with four total restricted days at Lee Canyon, Brian Head, Arizona Snowbowl, and Purgatory, with unlimited access at other MCP resorts. Prices vary by age; visit www.leecanyonlv.com for more information.

Eagle Point:

As part of the Freedom Pass Resorts (FPR) network, Eagle Point's season pass options range from \$299 for kids to \$599 for adults and include resort discounts and three free days at 15 FPR resorts, like Mt. Baldy Resort in California. For more details, visit www.eaglepointresort.com.

Mammoth Mountain:

For the traveler, the Ikon Pass means skiing 58 resorts worldwide, including Mammoth, for \$1,309. Other options are the Ikon Base pass for \$979 that includes 51 resorts worldwide. The Ikon Pass 2, 3, or 4-day options can be used at 42 destinations. For additional information, visit www.ikonpass.com.



PHOTO: ©Mike Saemisch • Courtesy of Brian Head Resort



PHOTO: ©Mike Saemisch - Courtesy of Brian Head

4. KIDS SKI FREE

Parents can save by finding resorts that offer free skiing and snowboarding for kids. Nearby, both Lee Canyon and Brian Head offer Power Kids passes that grant children aged 12 and under unlimited free access to both resorts and other properties. Parents must register kids online before their visit. Visit www.leecanyonlv.com/power-kids.

5. STAY INFORMED

Subscribe to your favorite resort's newsletter and follow their social media channels to stay updated on pre- and early-season pricing news. Often, resorts release special deals to their subscribers first, so hitting that sign-up button or following them can help you save.



Stephanie Forté is a Las Vegas-based writer who covers outdoor recreation and women's health. She moved to Las Vegas from Aspen, Colorado where she taught snowboarding.



PHOTO: Courtesy of Lee Canyon



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