The Greatest Snow on Earth

In 1985, an image of a snowboarder and the slogan “The Greatest Snow on Earth” first appeared on Utah's license plates. Today, many snowboarders attest it is true!

Here are 10 reasons why many snowboarders believe Utah’s snow is better than anywhere else in the world:

* The Cottonwood Canyons in Utah are one of the snowiest places in the world, with Alta averaging 551 inches of snow annually.
* More than a foot of snow falls every five days between December and March.
* Snow density is 8.5 percent. This creates the perfect "body" to float your skis through powder.
* When it snows, it dumps! Deep fresh snow falls happen frequently. In fact, Utah receives on average 18 dump of 12 inches of snow or more within a 24-hour period throughout the winter.
* Only eight driving miles separate 40 feet of snow per year in the Cottonwood Canyons from 5 feet per year in Salt Lake City. You can enjoy deep powder skiing during the day and city entertainment, dining, and hotels by night.
* According to historical data, January 13th has the highest likelihood of receiving snowfall over any other winter day.
* Spring skiing is fabulous! On average, 6.7 feet of snow falls each April. Yet on some days, you can ski without a jacket.
* The Great Salt Lake does not freeze. This “lake effect” enhances snowfall all winter long, which produces about five percent more precipitation from September to May.
* Crystal blue skies. Utah has about 300 days of sunshine per year. Combine that with a foot of snow dropping every five days during the winter and you’ll see why snowboarders love it here!
* Dry, fluffy, powder. At 8,750 feet in Utah, 99 percent of the precipitation during the ski season falls in the form of snow - not rain. This results in “The Greatest Snow on Earth”!

# Flotation

Excellent flotation is defined by a formula that examines snow water content and conditions that cause lighter snow to fall on heavier snow.

When choosing the right gear for Utah's snow, Ski 'n' See's Ryan Larsen mentions that magical quality of flotation. It's happening in all the pictures and video you see of skiers and riders kicking up knee-deep Utah snow. Best of all, days of prime flotation are not an exception, but a rule.

Jim Steenburgh explains that flotation exists when light snow has enough body, or is "bottomless," to keep skis and snowboards on the upper layer of snow without scraping the base. To get this effect, snowstorms must be frequent and ample, yet not too profuse. He observes that it is possible to have too much of a good thing. Steenburgh calls the ideal frequency and strength of storms that produce quality deep-powder "Goldilocks storms," which is exactly what it sounds like: "just right" conditions. Steenburgh advises that occasionally Utah does experience different snow conditions, but things very often go right in Utah. In other words, the Wasatch Mountain Range is world-renowned for its skiing and riding due to the simple fact that we in Utah enjoy frequent and predictable Goldilocks storms. Just check out the five resorts in the top seven of SKI Magazine's reader survey for best snow in America to get an idea of Utah's good fortune.

# Learn more

If you want to educate yourself on what is and where to find the perfect powder, the full story on Utah snow can be found in Steenburgh's Secrets of the Greatest Snow on Earth: Weather, Climate Change, and Finding Deep Powder in Utah's Wasatch Mountains and around the World available here and here. It's essential reading for deep-powder enthusiasts. In addition, see Ski Utah's "Powder People" interview with Jim Steenburgh here or, for more details, follow Steenburgh's latest observations at Wasatch Weather Weenies.

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Today, many snowboarders attest it is true!

Our storm system brought beneficial rain and snow to Utah over the past weekend along with MUCH colder temperatures. While not unprecedented, it

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