

SKI & Ride BIG-BEAR



Southern California's Premier Mountain Resorts

SKI BIG BEAR MOUNTAIN RESORTS...

Snow Summit's Cruisers, Bowl Runs and Even Parks Tops

At one time Snow Summit was a dominant force in terrain park development, building the sickest features and hosting the raddest events, most notably the 1997 Winter X Games. Then it acquired neighboring resort Bear Mountain and converted it into the "All-Mountain Terrain Park," sending most of its jumps and jibs next door.

Now Snow Summit has come nearly full circle again, even as the resort celebrates 20 years of being a major park player. No, Southern California's most complete resort isn't back to building Super Parks again. But it is gradually reintroducing features to its slopes again, to the delight of skiers and snowboarders who prefer the region's nicest, most complete resort.

Westridge run, for instance, practically snowboarding hallowed ground with all the competitions that it's held, again has features up and down

its 1-1/3 mile length. Not the size of busses like back in the heyday, mind you, but enough for those who like to jib and jump.

"Last year we kind of reinvigorated our snow park offerings at Snow Summit, and it was well received from riders who prefer the resort," says Chris Riddle of Big Bear Mountain Resorts. "Also at night, there were more park opportunities than in previous years. Features will not dominate runs like they used to so you'll still be able to ski or board without making moves to avoid features if you want to."

Zzyzx and Ego Trip are other runs where features are located. Along with the famous Family Park on Chair 9 runs like Cruiser, Sundown, Skyline Creek and Mainstream, where tame terrain features and itty bitty hitties serve as perfect introductions for skiers and boarders just getting into freestyle fun.

Still, if it's freestyle you're after, head to Bear Mountain—there's a free shuttle running every half-hour between the areas—and experience complete nirvana with

over 200 jibs and jumps, three halfpipes, The Scene and so much more. Snow Summit, by contrast, serves up a complete resort experience that just happens to include freestyle too. But there's also endless acres of wide open and immaculately-groomed cruisers, challenging steeps and hidden tree stashes to explore.

At Snow Summit it's all about the snow and the resort often boasts better conditions than other local resorts because of its incredible snowmaking system. The resort has poured in \$12-\$15 million in recent years investing in fan guns and providing the power to fuel them. The biggest factor though by far is its unlimited water supply courtesy of Big Bear Lake, which allows the resort to make snow even in marginal conditions while other resorts, who rely on limited supplies of well water and reservoirs, are forced to stand down.

Accessing all the snow is the Southland's most complete and best-designed lift system, which starts with not one but two high-speed quads that get skiers and snowboarders out of the base area in a hurry. From there an entire network of interconnected runs and lifts takes over, so guests never have to return to the base area if they don't want to. If you're standing in lift lines on busy weekends or holidays instead of carving turns, it's because you went somewhere other than Snow Summit. And what good is a shorter drive if you spend the day standing in lines?

Each chair serves up its own distinct terrain with a heavy dose of intermediate blue square bliss. Chair 10 runs like

Perfect Pitches—aptly named to be sure with great lines that everyone from low intermediates to experts enjoys—Sugarpine and Sideshow are tremendous fun, often with some of the resort's best snow and always the shortest lift lines. Even on busy holidays and weekends there's never a crowd at Chair 10. Other highlights include runs named for resort founders Tommi Tyndall and Jo Alexander.

Adjacent Chair 7 offers more great cruising on blue square intermediates Seven Down and Timber Ridge, one of the resort's best runs. On the west side there's Chair 3's freestyle action plus cruising on East Why, along with Last Chance.

More people have learned the sport at Snow Summit than anywhere, with an expanded beginner area serviced by Magic Carpet uphill lifts and two chairlifts. The transition from the bunny hill to the rest of the mountain is another resort strong point. Summit Run is legendary as a gentle transition run with incredible views, slow skiing and lots of room to negotiate the snow.

Other top-to-bottoms include famous Miracle Mile with its Steilhang and Hogback variations. Then there's Log Chute, a great mix of cruising and steep terrain. With 14 lifts and 31 runs plus countless variations, Snow Summit offers simply the nicest and most complete resort experience this side of Mammoth or Salt Lake City.

Chair 6 services The Bowl runs including The Wall, Olympic, Off the Wall, Dicky's and several variations. Back in the day Chair 6 was one of the most crowded, but now it rarely has any wait at all. With music