**Squaw Valley**

**Categories**

**Good For**

Beginners

Intermediates

Experts

Snowboarders

Families

Snow reliability

**Data**

**Beginner Runs**

43

**Intermediate Runs**

77

**Advanced Runs**

50

**Total Runs**

170

**Lifts**

29

**Chairs**

22

**Drags**

5

**Gondola Cable Cars**

2

**Parks**

5

**Pipes**

1

**Weather**

**Annual Snowfall**

11.5m (38 ft).

**Overview**

Squaw Valley is one of North America’s leading snow sports areas, thanks to its vast amounts of skiable terrain and a lift system capable of accommodating nearly 50,000 people per hour – not that it’s usually crowded enough to test this figure.

But there’s more to Squaw than its size. Established after WWII, its early rise in success was so meteoric that, by 1960, it was hosting the Winter Olympics. Latterly it has built a reputation as a leading extreme ski and board destination with five terrain parks.

But few seem to know that Squaw Valley has exceptional beginner terrain as well with a beginner area that offers spectacular views of Lake Tahoe. It’s also America’s spring skiing capital, staying open for 6–10 weeks after many big name areas have closed.

Squaw Valley was ‘just’ a famous ski area until the 1990s, when the first slopeside lodging was built. But, more recently, a modern base town has emerged. Known as The Village, it was originally designed by Intrawest (the company behind Whistler Blackcomb and several dozen other world-famous resort developments) and has provided a full accommodation, dining and retail experience without the need for a car.

**Location**

The USA resort of Squaw Valley is located above the northern end of Lake Tahoe, in California’s Sierra Nevada Mountains.

**Website**

www.squawalpine.com

**Piste Map**

www.squawalpine.com/skiing-riding/mountains/trail-maps

**Hit The Slopes**

Squaw Valley is one of the world’s most snowsure areas and is typically open from mid-November to at least late April, but often into May. This is the resort starts its ‘second season’, when a beach atmosphere prevails at the High Camp Hot Tub.

Until recently, the resort was famous for not numbering or locating its trails individually: instead there were large areas of open terrain descending from the top of each lift with descents of up to 5.1km (3.2 miles). The terrain hasn’t changed, but now 170 or so runs are marked and named, making the resort more family friendly.

There’s plenty of excellent skiing for all levels, from nursery slopes to wide, fast cruising pistes and winding technical tree-lined trails. The area is also crowned by no less than 16 powder bowls.

Extreme skiing has its spiritual home in Squaw Valley and free-riders have five terrain parks to enjoy, each requiring different levels of technical ability. The SnoVentures and Belmont Parks are for beginners, while the Gold Coast and Mainline Parks are suited to intermediate and advanced skiers and riders. There are more than 50 rails, table tops and boxes spread throughout the parks, as well as a family-sized cross course.

Squaw Valley has become increasingly integrated within the neighbouring ski area of Alpine Meadows. Lift passes from either ski area are valid here and there’s long-term potential for a ski lift connection. For now, visitors can use a free shuttle bus between resorts.

**Squaw Valley**

**Resort**

1890

**Base**

1890

**Top**

2743

**General**

**Beyond The Slopes**

There’s a good choice of things to do in Squaw Valley besides skiing and boarding. At the large High Camp area (accessed from the base by a cable car), there’s the Olympic Ice Pavilion (tel: +1 800 403 0206) for skating with spectacular views of Lake Tahoe and the surrounding Sierra Nevada. There's also an equally well-located giant swimming pool and spa complex, as well as a museum dedicated to the 1960 Olympics.

Back down on the snow, there’s the choice of dog sledding with Alaskan huskies, snow tubing at SnoVentures, or cross-country skiing and snowshoeing at the Resort at Squaw Creek.

Older, more adventurous visitors can tackle the mini snowmobile course, which loops around in an oval shape in the SnoVentures Activity Zone, while little ones can learn to flip on the harnessed Sky Jump trampoline.

**Family Fun**

With its relaxed atmosphere and family-oriented attitude, Squaw Valley caters excellently for clans, especially in the ski and snowboard school classes at the Squaw Kids Centre, which tailor classes for different age groups and abilities.

It’s here that you’ll find a special ski rental shop with equipment for children too. The slopes also have a separate ski hill complete with drag and magic carpet lifts.

Squaw’s SnoVenture Activity zone is located at the base of the mountain and offers family snow tubing and mini-snowmobiles for kids aged six to 10. Here, a lodge with snacks, bathrooms and games keeps the little ones happy all day long.

**Retail Therapy**

Squaw Valley’s shopping opportunities are expanding rapidly in the base village. The new pedestrianised area houses ski and outdoor wear at Parallel Mountain Sports (tel: +1 530 452 4478) and the Squaw One Logo Company (tel: +1 530 584 6250), which sells Squaw Valley branded clothing. A more unusual option is Squaw Dogs (tel: +1 530 584 6562), which features a wide range of canine treats and accessories. Squaw Valley also has a specialty wine shop, various clothing boutiques and a photographer’s gallery.

**Splashing Out**

Spend a day being pampered and spoiled at the wonderful Trilogy Spa (tel: +1 530 584 6125; www.[trilogyspa.com](http://trilogyspa.com/)), which offers a rich menu of signature beauty and sports treatments. Options include the traditional Lomi Pohaku hot stone massage and its Hawaiian equivalent.

**Apres Ski**

Squaw Valley has a lively après-ski vibe, particularly straight after the lifts close. Popular venues include the recently-renovated Plaza Bar in the Olympic House and local’s favourite, the Loft Bar in Le Chamois (tel: +1 530 583 4505; [www.squawchamois.com](http://www.squawchamois.com/)).

Inevitable Irish-themed pub, the Auld Dubliner (tel: +1 530 584 6041; [www.aulddubliner.com/SV](http://www.aulddubliner.com/SV), has live music and DJs, but is trumped by Rocker@Squaw (+1 530 584 6080) which has the widest selection of draught beers in the valley.

**Eating Out**

Squaw Valley has expanded its dining options to offer a global mix of flavours. Those with wheels can widen choice further by exploring the Lake Tahoe area.

In the resort, head to Cornice Cantina (tel: +1 530 452 4362) for Mexican food, Mamasake (tel: +1 530 584 0110; www.mamasake.com) for Californian-Asian fusion dishes, and the Fireside Pizza Company (tel: +1 530 584 6150; www.[firesidepizza.com](http://firesidepizza.com/)) for top-notch Italian grub.

For local cuisine, try PlumpJack Café (tel: +1 530 583 1578; [www.plumpjacksquawvalleyinn.com](http://www.plumpjacksquawvalleyinn.com)), which pairs farm-fresh meals with Californian wines, or the elk steak at Six Peaks Grill (tel: +1 530 581 6621).

**Transport**

**Getting There**

Nearest airport: Reno-Tahoe International Airport (RNO).

Distance to resort: 80km (50 miles).

Driving time: 60 minutes.

Nearest railway station: Truckee

Distance to resort: 11km (7 miles).

Driving time: 10 minutes.

**Getting Around**

Many of the facilities at the resort base are within a compact pedestrian area reached on foot or by snow on skis or board.

For those travelling from further out, most accommodation options run shuttle bus services, while free daily shuttles from North Lake Tahoe, South Lake Tahoe and Reno.

**Hotels**

There is a mix of accommodation in Squaw Valley ranging from chalets to hotels, plus a decent number of slopeside or base level options. The surrounding area has cheaper rates.

**Plumpjack Squaw Valley Inn**

Possibly the most tastefully decorated rooms in Squaw, the Plumpjack is comfortable, well-located and offers ski-in/ski-out access. It also has an onsite fitness centre and outdoor hot tubs.

**Category**

Cheap

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

XXX

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

XXX

**Telephone**

+1 530 583 1576.

**Website**

www.plumpjacksquawvalleyinn.com

**The Resort at Squaw Creek**

Ranked as one of the best ski hotels in North America, The Resort at Squaw Creek is a luxury 405-room full-service hotel and spa that recently underwent a US$50 million renovation.

**Category**

Luxury

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

XXX

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

XXX

**Telephone**

+1 530 583 6300.

**Website**

www.squawcreek.com

**Squaw Valley Lodge**

This well-positioned, modern property offers ski-in/ski-out suites of various sizes and a popular health club with hot tub, swimming pool, sauna and steam room.

**Category**

Moderate

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

XXX

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

XXX

**Telephone**

+1 855 549 6742.

**Website**

www.squawvalleylodge.com

**The Village at Squaw Valley**

Bang slap in the centre of the resort, The Village offers tastefully-styled rooms and generously-size condominiums, each with up to three bedrooms. It also has a fitness centre, superb spa and a games room for children.

**Category**

Moderate

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

XXX

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

XXX

**Telephone**

+1 888 259 1428.

**Website**

www.squaw.com/the-village/lodging

**Olympic Village Inn**

Originally athlete accommodation at the 1960 Olympics, the Village Inn has been fully modernised and is now a wonderful, European-looking hotel with a homely vibe and free shuttle to the lifts.

**Category**

Luxury

**Thoroughfare**

1909 Chamonix Place

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Olympic Valley, CA

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

96146

**Country**

XXX

**Telephone**

+1 530 581 6000.

**Website**

www.olympicvillageinn.com

**Red Wolf Lodge at Squaw Valley**

This popular and affordable family-friendly accommodation is mainly timeshare lodgings, but has studios and condos available as holiday rentals too. It is located close to the lifts, next to the Squaw Kids Centre.

**Category**

Cheap

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

XXX

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

XXX

**Telephone**

+1 877 344 0686.

**Website**

www.redwolfsquaw.com