

POWDER

UNLEASH THE HOUNDS



Will Burks stays some of the dry and light at Snowbird, Utah.

SECRET STASHES

Every first-track snake knows the obvious powder destinations. So hit the famous resorts, and then ditch the crowds.

1. UTAH

OBVIOUS CHOICE: ALTA/SNOWBIRD

Average Snowfall: 527 inches/466 inches **Water Content*:** 8.5 percent at both resorts **Local's Stash:** the 'Bird's Mach Schnell. "It's 1,200 vertical [feet] of untouched pow in an open field with trees on both sides—the most virgin snow at Snowbird." —Nick Greener

NEXT UP: POWDER MOUNTAIN

Average Snowfall: 400 inches **Water Content:** 9 percent **Local's Stash:** Powder Country (via Hidden Lake lift). "When you get to the bottom, there's a four-by-four school bus and a driver named Woody to take you back." —Amy Wicks
Go the Distance: 80 miles from Snowbird



2. WYOMING

OBVIOUS CHOICE: JACKSON HOLE

Average Snowfall: 369 inches **Water Content:** 9.3 percent **Local's Stash:** Headwall. "The hike cuts down on the crowds, so the powder stays longer." —Jimmy Hartman

NEXT UP: GRAND TARGHEE

Average Snowfall: 465 inches **Water Content:** 9 percent **Local's Stash:** Peaked Ridge. "Southwest winds deposit big dumps here. Enter through a 10-foot-wide chute; stomp the six-footer into a 35-degree field." —Zahan Billimoria
Go the Distance: 40 miles from Jackson



3. COLORADO

OBVIOUS CHOICE: ASPEN/ASPEN HIGHLANDS

Average Snowfall: 250 inches/238 inches **Water Content:** 7 percent at both resorts **Local's Stash:** Aspen's Bell Mountain. "You can be alone on the busiest powder day in Aspen. That's how big it is." —Ali Wade

NEXT UP: SNOWMASS

Average Snowfall: 266 inches **Water Content:** 7 percent **Local's Stash:** The North Woods. "Dead-north-facing with fairly open glades, yet thick enough for most people to stay away." —Chris Davenport
Go the Distance: 9 miles from Aspen



4. CALIFORNIA

OBVIOUS CHOICE: KIRKWOOD

Average Snowfall: 478 inches **Water Content:** 11 percent **Local's Stash:** Big Jim's. "Trust your skis as you roll over the entrance of this corniced chute, and you'll be fine." —Cameron Thomson

NEXT UP: MOUNT ROSE

Average Snowfall: 350 inches **Water Content:** 11 percent **Local's Stash:** The Chutes. "It's worth waiting a couple of hours for the patrollers to open the gate to these chutes. But if you screw up here, you're gonna eat shit." —Charlie Curl
Go the Distance: 72 miles from Kirkwood



5. BRITISH COLUMBIA

OBVIOUS CHOICE: FERNIE

Average Snowfall: 369 inches **Water Content:** 10 percent **Local's Stash:** Surprise Trees. "The snow stacks up, and it's a wind-protected stash in the trees. Sometimes it skis even better with a few tracks in it." —Kirk Gutzman

NEXT UP: CASTLE MOUNTAIN

Average Snowfall: 250 inches **Water Content:** 9 percent **Local's Stash:** Minus One. "There are 20- to 60-foot cliffs, a few 1,300- to 1,600-foot skinny chutes, and a field for wide-open, steep turns." —Peter Hodgson
Go the Distance: 75 miles from Fernie



* All water content estimates and snowfall totals courtesy of Tony Crocker, bestsnow.net.

TOP SNOWBASIN

utah



ACCORDING TO . . . jordan judd

YEARS AS A LOCAL: 26

SKI DAYS PER YEAR: 75

AGE: 27

OCCUPATION: Co-owner of
Decade Snow and Skate

BIG PICTURE: Snowbasin is never as crowded as the Cottonwood Canyon resorts. Even though more and more Salt Lake City locals will drive 45 minutes north to ski here, finding fresh tracks a week after a storm still isn't hard. We also have the nicest bathrooms anywhere. Seriously. They have marble floors and stalls with solid oak doors. The 2002 Olympics really spruced this place up.

ON MOUNTAIN: The resort has so many steep, rocky, exposed lines that the pros and photographers say it's a mini-Alaska. One of the best spots for quick powder shots is the old Middle Bowl triple, and 119 is a great stash of north-facing trees and little cliffs.

OFF MOUNTAIN: Ogden is an original railroad town with working-class roots. The early-century neighborhoods have large, old trees and houses with a lot of character. Get fresh salmon at Bistro 258, a two-story renovated brick eatery, or catch local bands at Teazers Sports Bar and Grill.

WILD CARD: The most exposed big-mountain terrain is the unpatrolled backcountry off of the Mount Allen tram. It's serious avalanche terrain, though. Do your homework before heading out there.

Steep and cheap
above Ogden, Utah.
Skier: Rob Holmes.

NO.

MUST HAVE:

LIFE LINK CARBON PRO: Powder lasts longer at Snowbasin, and you'll appreciate the Carbon Pro's 3.5-inch powder baskets and—if you tour beyond the resort gates—their 10-inch adjustability. \$110; life-link.com

TOP ELEVATION: 9,350 feet VERTICAL DROP: 2,950 feet
SNOWFALL: 326 inches ACRES: 2,660 BARS/EATERIES: 4

MUST KNOW:

"OGDEN IS ONE OF THE LAST AFFORDABLE ski towns. The median housing price is \$160,000, and the outdoor recreation is world-class."