

## Snowboarders Battle US Ski Resorts

Ever increasing numbers of snowboarders are emerging as a large percentage of the snow tourism industry, but are they a welcome addition? Some U.S. resorts still ban snowboarding, while others are opening the door.

While some resorts do not ban snowboarding, either allowing snowboarding on all property or allotting certain areas for the activity, there are three resorts in the United States that still have complete bans on snowboarding. The issues at the heart of the conflict stem from several reasons, one of them a longstanding rivalry between skiers and snowboarders, a rivalry that can sometimes get a tad nasty.

The big news for snowboarders is that Taos Ski Valley in New Mexico has recently announced that they are lifting their ban on snowboarding. This comes as a result of increased pressure by the public, including a campaign by Burton Snowboards.

The company offered a prize of \$5,000 to individuals or groups who film their illegal snowboarding, or poaching, at locations where it is not allowed. A representative of the company cautions against the manifesto of this publicity stunt being taken to the level of a civil rights matter, but there is a serious side to the issue. Snowboarders feel that they are discriminated against by the ban.

Taos defends their decision on their Facts and Answers page of their website. Complaints by individuals about the change centered around the impact on the snow levels, protesting that the snowboarders scrape snow off the trails, misbehave on lifts, and are an unwelcome presence in the community. Many others still welcome the change, saying it's about time. Taos asserts that "Opening to snowboarding allows us to refocus on being a family oriented mountain."

While Taos has changed their tune, three other resorts still ban the practice of snowboarding. Mad River Glen, Deer Valley in Utah, and Alta Ski Area stay focused on skiers. The central complaint revealed by these resorts is the conflict of interest among their clientele. Skiers claim the snowboarders ruin the mountain, and the experience of skiing.

Mad River Glen, located in Fayston, Vermont, still vehemently upholds their ban on snowboarding, posting a press release that declares, "Despite the fact that snowboarders account for 25% to 30% of all lift tickets sold in the United States, don't expect Mad River Glen to lift its ban on snowboards any time soon." Mad River Glen is privately owned by shareholders and operates as a not-for-profit entity. More than 75% of their shareholders voted to eliminate snowboarding after "legendary" events occurred at Mad River when the activity was allowed. For those who hope that Mad River Glen will eventually buckle to economic pressures, "Don't hold your breath!" It looks like a [ski holiday](#) there won't involve snowboarders for a while yet at least.

Deer Valley's Website, when searched using the site's own engine, brings up links to a press release, and at the bottom of the page simply states, "No snowboards, please." The press release reveals, however, that Deer Valley will be one of the sites to host events of the 2011 World Freestyle Ski Championships. These include a variety of alpine, freestyle and snowboarding events. It is unclear whether any of the snowboarding events will be hosted at the Deer Valley site.

Alta Ski Area, also in Utah, does not allow snowboarding. Some speculate that since the resort introduce a combined pass with Snowbird, a neighboring resort that is open to snowboarders, in 2001, Alta may eventually change their policy. At present the resort is standing firm, however, "preserving and protecting the skiing experience."

Another reason to drop the ban is the number of younger individuals who prefer snowboarding. Younger families and older snow bunnies with snowboarding family members want to share the slopes, and this has a heavy economic impact on ski resorts. Those that turn away snowboarders also turn away entire families or groups. Time will tell what the result will be for these three remaining resorts.

## About the Author

Andorra has many top European ski resorts, and YourAndorra.com includes both resort hotels and other [ski holiday in Andorra](#) details.

The guide also has hotel reviews for Andorra plus [hotels in Barcelona](#)

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