

Rubicon trail delivers exquisite views of Tahoe



Rubicon trail has stunning views in all directions.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

EMERALD BAY STATE PARK – Fifty shades of blue; that’s what you see along the Rubicon trail.

From Emerald Bay to D.L. Bliss State Park the spectrum of color is breathtaking. It seems to change every few feet; the hue altering with the sun and depth of water.

With so much terrain in the Lake Tahoe Basin off-limits because of lingering white stuff or impassable water, it’s necessary to find trails below the snow line. This is one of them.

What makes this trail so special is that either Emerald Bay or Lake Tahoe is constantly in view. As the elevation of the

trail changes, the perspective alters from it seeming to be within reach to being a scary dive.



Emerald Bay shimmers on a warm spring day. Photo/Kathryn Reed

The Rubicon Wall is where some of the deepest waters of Tahoe exist. In the summer, when the water is warmer, people are often jumping off rocks.

This trail was not immune to the ravages of winter. One section before reaching the tip of the bay is covered in water. It's passable to the right where hikers have put down limbs to walk across.

Trees cross the path at times, but all are easy to maneuver over or around.

The waterfall midway along the route is passable, but slow going as people watch their step on the rocky-watery crossing. (What was more amazing was all the water coming out of the hillside along the paved path from the parking lot to Vikingsholm.)

While there were several people on the trail last Sunday, it was by no means crowded. Besides the four us, only two people were at Calloway Cove at D.L. Bliss. It was truly blissful.



The colors of Lake Tahoe are dazzling.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

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Getting there:

From South Lake Tahoe, take Highway 89 north, through the hairpin turns, and around Emerald Bay. Park in the Vikingsholm lot on the right. Cost is \$10. Go down the paved trail toward the castle. Before reaching the castle, the Rubicon trail is to the left. Round trip it is 11 miles.