

# Diamond Peak – a gem of a ski resort



A snowboarder seems to ride right into Lake Tahoe from the slopes of Diamond Peak. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

**By Kathryn Reed**

INCLINE VILLAGE – Gorgeous. It was the word I kept saying. It was almost as though I had never seen Lake Tahoe.

The views from Diamond Peak are that good; they rival any view from any Tahoe resort. The superlatives are almost endless. Every 10 feet seemed like a Kodak moment.



A conveyor belt on Lakeview chairlift is a unique experience.  
Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

And the resort – wow. This was my first time at this Incline Village ski area, same for Carolyn. We were both incredibly pleasantly surprised, impressed and eager to return when the entire mountain is open.

On the day after Christmas there was no waiting in line. Only once did we have to share a chairlift with others, and that was as the afternoon skiers started arriving.

Crystal Express chairlift delivers skiers to the top of the mountain at 8,540 feet. On the east side Washoe Lake dots the valley in what otherwise looks like the barren landscape of the Carson area. Doing a 180, Lake Tahoe's deep blue waters stretch out, as though skiers could plunge into its icy embrace.





With views this good, it's hard to want to eat inside at the Snowflake Lodge. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

A multitude of runs descend from the intermediate Crystal Ridge run. The only problem is they are roped off. The incredibly dry December means no Tahoe area resort is completely open. And so it is at Diamond Peak.

But once Mother Nature cooperates (which forecasts show could start later this week), these slopes should be covered in white stuff. Because they face north, it means they'll be in better shape than others as the season goes on.

The tree skiing, according to resort officials, is pretty phenomenal – when there is the snow.



Lake Tahoe from Crystal Ridge looking toward the runs off Lakeview lift. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

The runs that were open were in great condition. No complaints.

The busiest area was the beginner terrain. The bulk of the mountain, though, is blue and black runs.

A welcome feature was the free open air tram that shuttles people between the parking area and the base. It could have been a bit of a walk, especially in ski boots, without this assistance.

Diamond Peak's mantra is to be customer service driven. It certainly doesn't have a corporate feel to it. Residents in the Incline Village General Improvement District actually own the resort. They also get deals on passes and daily tickets.





Diamond Peak is owned by the homeowners in Incline Village.  
Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

The Pike family from Granite Bay takes advantage of parents/in-laws owning a condo in the area.

“We love the views, it’s family friendly and everyone who works here is really nice,” Nell Pike tells *Lake Tahoe News*. She and her husband, Richard, are taking a break at the Snowflake Lodge with their four kids – ages 12, 10, 8 and 5.

For 8-year-old Robert, going fast is what he likes. He started skiing at 4 and last year transitioned to snowboarding. He boasted about how Diamond Peak was an easy place to switch sports.



Diamond Peak has all of its beginner terrain open. Photo Copyright 2017 Carolyn E. Wright

Most of the seating at this upper mountain lodge that is accessed from the Lakeview chairlift is outside. And with good reason. The views are stunning. On this Tuesday, with not a cloud in the sky and the sun beating down, it was definitely warm enough to sit there without a jacket.

Food is basic ski resort fare, with a couple vegetarian options.

It's easy to linger.

Laid back is a good way to describe Diamond Peak. It's unpretentious. It's welcoming.