



Chapter 1 1: Big Cottonwood Canyon

Big Cottonwood Canyon was formed by glaciers. According to the Cottonwoods Canyon Foundation, two large glaciers broke loose from the top of the canyon. Both carved large swaths creating the canyon, until they ran into one another. From this point, the rest of the canyon was carved from the stream created by the melting of these two glaciers. You can see where the two glaciers collided-- the canyon becomes more narrow and winding from that point down.

Big Cottonwood Canyon is 15 miles long, holds two ski resorts: Brighton and Solitude. Primarily publicly owned, the canyon is managed by the Forest Service. Big Cottonwood Creek runs down canyon, and during winter, partially freezes and takes on the gorgeous cloak of snow pillows, hoar frost, ice crystals, and sheets of ice.

HOW TO GET THERE: From Salt Lake City take I-15 South to I-80 East to Belt Loop-215 South and then follow the signs to the Brighton and Solitude Ski Resorts, Exit 6. Drive east on 6200 south and the road will become Wasatch Boulevard. Follow Wasatch Boulevard south to an intersection with Fort Union Boulevard (7200 South). The intersection is located 1.7 miles after exiting I-215. There is a park-and-ride lot at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon for carpooling or catching the bus if you don't wish to hassle with driving and parking. All mileage is taken from the intersection of Wasatch Boulevard and Fort Union Boulevard—locally known as the “Mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon”.

UTA, (Utah Transit Authority) or the local bus, runs from 6:00 A.M. until midnight on weekdays. Saturday service runs from 7:00 A.M. until Midnight. Sunday service has limited regular routes, and ski service will run during ski season. Multiple stops exist within the canyon: Solitude Ski Resort- across from the lower parking lot; Solitude Nordic Center; Moonbeam – between Solitude and Brighton;

and Brighton Ski Resort. Call RIDE-UTA from the Salt Lake Area, or 801 RIDE-UTA for more information. www.rideuta.com has route planning on-line as well.

Warm Ups: The Lift House, a ski shop complete with clothes and gear, rents snowshoes for \$10 a day-located just west of the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon. 3698 E. 7000 S. Salt Lake City; 800.330.4SKI

For breakfast, lunch, or dinner the Porcupine Pub & Grille, right next to The Lift House, offers a complete menu for all three meals. "A" for ambiance. Hours: M-F 11 am – 11 pm, Saturday 9:30 am – 11 pm, Sunday 9:30 am – 10 pm.

For breakfast, lunch, dinner, or just a cup of hot cocoa, Silver Fork Lodge and Restaurant sits 11.8 miles up Big Cottonwood Canyon. Complete with a mountain view and a deck for use during sunnier months, Silver Fork Lodge has a log-lodge atmosphere. Prices in the \$7-\$12 range. Rooms are available but book early as they fill up 6 months in advance. 801.533.9977