

SKI heaven

Skiing at Lake Tahoe is nothing short of heavenly, discovers Shonagh Walker



HEAVENLY PURSUITS

The first thing you notice on arrival at Reno Airport are the pokie machines throughout the terminal. Welcome to Nevada and Heavenly Mountain Resort, where flashing lights and the sound of coins dropping provide a backdrop to some of the best skiing on Earth.

Located in South Lake Tahoe, Heavenly Mountain Resort is under an hour's drive from Reno Airport, and two from Sacramento Airport.

The mountain is spectacular. The snow is fluffy and powdery, with incredible tree skiing. Even novice skiers and boarders can navigate Heavenly's trees. The varied terrain spanning the California-Nevada border offers adventure for everyone, including rolling glades, terrain parks, challenging steep, groomers and powder aplenty. Be sure you head to Heavenly Ridge for unrivalled views of the lake.

Stay

Seconds from the gondola, **THE EMBASSY SUITES** have oversized rooms, soft-as-cloud beds, complimentary breakfast and no-charge Happy Hour. Priced from about US\$129 per night.

Shop

Take advantage of the relatively strong Australian dollar and low US prices and pick up the latest gear from Patagonia, The North Face, Burton and more. Expect to uncover designs that you may not find in Australia, at least not at such low prices.

Eat

Tamarack Lodge offers on-mountain cafeteria lunches with a smokehouse grill, gourmet pizzas, salads, chilli station and bar.

Also on-mountain, **GUNBARREL GRILL** boasts sweeping views of the lake and a delicious menu with fabulous 'sliders' or mini burgers. **CIERA STEAK & CHOPHOUSE** at Mont Bleu Casino is an AAA Four Diamond



Restaurant. Lovers of Chinese food will delight at the offerings at **GIFU LOH** (Gather of Luck), with Cantonese food and a high-quality noodle bar.

No trip to South Lake Tahoe is complete without sunset dining at **RIVA GRILL**. Situated on the Lake's edge, it provides stunning photo opportunities, delectably grilled seafood and steaks, hearty salads and potent cocktails.

Nightlife

If you're game, you can casino-hop until 2am and then hit an all-night dance club.