



## Salt Lake City Travel Guide

### Best Place to Stay in Salt Lake City

I've had my eye on the [Asher Adams Hotel](#), a Marriott Autograph Collection property that opened in November 2024. I was excited when we finally had a chance to stay there, and it lived up to my expectations!

What makes the Asher Adams so special is that it's housed inside the historic Union Pacific Depot, which first opened in 1909 and served as a bustling train station until 1987. Today, it has been meticulously restored into a luxury hotel while still showcasing original features like the stained-glass windows, mosaic tile floors, and stunning architectural details.

We loved the little touches, like the gallery wall near the elevators with photos of the original building, and even a photo booth in the lobby for a fun keepsake.

Thirteen suites are located in the restored train station. The second-floor suites feature exposed brick, soaring ceilings, and massive windows. We stayed in a junior dormer room suite on the third floor. It was cozy and beautifully designed, though next time I'd book earlier to snag one of those second-floor rooms!

In addition to the historic suites, the hotel also has a new 8-story tower with over 200 rooms. The rooms and suites are modern and tastefully decorated with vintage-inspired touches. We've stayed in both types of rooms, and I preferred the historic while my husband preferred the modern!

The hotel is centrally located next to the Delta Center and The Gateway and is within walking distance to shops, restaurants, and the free TRAX train line downtown.

### Best Places to Eat in Salt Lake City

Rouser

Asher Adams' on-site restaurant, Rouser, quickly became one of our favorite breakfast spots. We loved both the ambiance and the food.

My favorite was the Blueberry Lemon Curd French Toast, and my husband loved the Hot Shot Benny.

Don't skip the Dutch Apple Skillet Pancake, and the omelet was delicious too! We only tried breakfast, but the lunch and dinner menus also looked fantastic.

## Hall Pass

Hall Pass is a modern food hall located at The Gateway. It's not your typical mall food court with greasy fast food joints.

Instead, you'll find a fun and vibrant ambiance with a curated collection of artisanal restaurants, a bakery, and a bar.

We ordered food from Skinny Fats and Lamb & Feta and really liked them both.

The gyro wrap from Lamb & Feta was unbelievable, and the arancini balls from Skinny Fats were a hit too.

## Sweet Lake Biscuits & Limeade

Sweet Lake Biscuits & Limeade is one of our favorite places to go for brunch in Salt Lake City.

Each dish is made fresh from scratch, and you can literally taste the quality in every bite.

Our favorite go-to dishes are the Hoss Biscuit Sandwich and the Blueberry Biscuit Bake. Be sure to order a side of hashbrowns with quinoa too!

## A Few More of the Best Places to Eat in Salt Lake City:

- **Adelaide Urban Brasserie:** A cute brunch spot that doubles as a cocktail bar at night. Order the Praline Bar, Lemon Ricotta Pancakes, or Jalapeno Cheddar Cornbread,
- **Carson Kitchen:** Offers an innovative tapas menu and a chic ambiance.
- **Slackwater:** A solid choice for pizza, sandwiches, and wings.
- **Copper Onion:** Great pasta, sandwiches, and seafood in the heart of downtown.
- **Mrs. Backer's Pastry Shop:** This cute bakery opened in 1941 and serves the most decadent mini-cakes and pastries!

## Best Things to Do in Salt Lake City

### Tour The Utah State Capitol

The Utah State Capitol is one of the most beautiful capitol buildings in the U.S. It was built in 1916 with granite from Little Cottonwood Canyon and is perched on top of the old Arsenal

Hill.

The building underwent a major restoration project between 2004-2008 and still stands as one of the most impressive structures in the state.

Visitors are welcome to take a self-guided tour of the Capitol building, or free guided tours are offered Monday thru Friday from 10 AM to 3 PM on the hour (except certain holidays). Tours last 40–45 minutes. Pre-registration is required for groups. Click the link for [tour information](#).

Some of the main highlights include the soaring rotunda and 250-foot dome. The rotunda is painted with 13 murals depicting Utah's rich pioneer history.

I also liked taking a peek inside the Supreme Court room and the room where the House of Representatives meets.

There is also an ornate reception room off the rotunda, which I assume is for hosting dignitaries. Outside the room is the original state flag, hand-embroidered in 1931 by the Daughters of Utah Pioneers.

The Capitol complex includes Council Hall, the Pioneer Museum, and the White Memorial Chapel. The grounds also serve as an outdoor museum. Stop by the Vietnam Memorial and the Mormon Battalion memorial. If you're visiting in the springtime, you'll notice the blossoming cherry trees that date back to 1931.

### Visit Temple Square

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is headquartered in Salt Lake City. Temple Square is where you'll find the administration buildings, as well as religious and historic buildings.

Temple Square is currently undergoing a major restoration project that is due to be completed in 2026, with an open house scheduled from April to October 2027. Just keep in mind that many of the buildings and tours are currently closed during the restoration project.

Temple Square is open for visitors to take a self-guided tour. [Guided tours](#) are also available at Temple Square, the Conference Center, Welfare Square, and the Humanitarian Center.

The [Church History Museum](#) is a great place to start your visit, where you can learn about the history of the church and early pioneers in Utah. You'll find interactive exhibits and hands-on activities for kids.

The crowning jewel of the complex is the Salt Lake Temple, originally built by pioneers from 1853-1893. The interior of the temple is closed to the public, but be sure to stop by the

reflecting pool for the best photos of the exterior.

We also love stepping into the historic tabernacle with its organ pipe and wooden benches. One of our favorite things to do is attend a live performance of [Music & the Spoken Word](#) by the Tabernacle Choir. This is free to attend and is held every Sunday at 9:30 am in the Tabernacle. The performance will be held in the Conference Center during the summer from June to August and in December.

The Conference Center replaced the tabernacle in 2000 as the General Conference venue. Twice a year, on the first weekend of April and October, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints holds a conference. Click the link for information about getting [conference tickets](#). You can also take a self-guided or guided tour of the center. The 21,000-seat auditorium and rooftop garden are my favorite features.

The Beehive House has always been one of my favorite buildings on Temple Square. This was once Brigham Young's home, and it is still decorated with furnishings to look as it did in the 1800s. Missionaries are on hand to take you on a guided tour of the home.

The Lion House is next door and is also where Brigham Young once lived. Today, it has been turned into the Lion House Pantry, a cozy little restaurant known for its home-cooked dishes.

The Joseph Smith Memorial Building is also worth visiting. The interior is stunning, and there is a free observation deck on the 10th floor. We also love eating at the Garden Restaurant, and The Roof Restaurant offers amazing views for a special occasion dinner. We celebrated our 2nd anniversary there and loved it!

The Legacy Theater is also located in the Joseph Smith Memorial Building, where you can get free tickets to watch church related films.

Assembly Hall is also a beautiful historic building that was once used for worship. Visitors can step inside to admire the beautiful interior. Devotionals and performances are also held on a regular basis.

The Church Office Building is the tallest building on Temple Square. This is where the church administration offices are held, but visitors can take an elevator to the 28th-floor observation deck for great views of the city.

### Shopping at City Creek Center or The Gateway

Salt Lake City has two fantastic shopping options, City Creek Center and Gateway Mall.

City Creek Center is such a beautiful mall with a retractable glass roof and a babbling creek running through the center. It's like an indoor park with over 100 shops and restaurants. You'll find everything from large department stores to smaller boutiques.

The Gateway is an outdoor mall with popular stores, restaurants, museums, and even small playgrounds and a splashpad. It is also a public event space with activities and events scheduled throughout the year.

### Spend the Afternoon at a Museum

My favorite museum in Salt Lake City is the [Clark Planetarium](#). I remember going on school field trips here back when it was Hansen Planetarium and being completely mesmerized by the laser star show. It is still one of my favorite places to take my kids, where they can learn about outer space through interactive exhibits and shows.

The [Discovery Gateway Children's Museum](#) was also a favorite spot to take my kids when they were younger. It's the perfect place to let them get lost in their imagination with a multi-level museum filled with hands-on educational activities and imaginative play.

A few more museums located in downtown Salt Lake City include the Utah Sports Hall of Fame, Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Museum of Illusions. You might want to consider getting the [Salt Lake Explorer Pass](#) for admission to multiple museums and attractions for one price.

### Discover a Hidden Speakeasy

At first glance, the Bodega seems like any other unassuming corner convenience store. But if you head to the basement, you'll find The Rest, one of Salt Lake City's best-kept secrets!

The Rest is a dimly lit hidden speakeasy and subterranean restaurant. It has a moody vibe with brick walls, vintage lightbulbs, exposed ductwork, and shelves of old books.

In addition to drinks, The Rest also offers a surprisingly delicious food menu! We ordered a few appetizers on the tapas menu and enjoyed everything we ordered.

### Rent a Scooter to Explore Downtown

The TRAX train offers free rides around the downtown area and is such a hassle-free way to get around. But if you're looking for a fun way to explore, then pick up an electric scooter or bike.

You can easily find them all over downtown, and you can activate them through the Lyft or Uber app. They are a little pricey at .47 cents per minute at the time of our visit, but it's fun to ride them around for a little bit.

If you're planning to visit the State Capitol Building, I recommend at least riding them to the top of the steep hill and admiring the beautiful homes along the way.

### Tour the Salt Lake City & County Building

While you're exploring downtown, be sure to stop by the historic Salt Lake City & County Building located at Washington Square Park.

Built in 1894, this Gothic Revival landmark was once the old courthouse and now serves as the city and county administration building.

It is open to the public for self-guided tours, or you can reserve a guided tour to see the chambers and clock tower.

Stop by the Salt Lake City Public Library

I love the architecture of the Salt Lake City Public Library! When you walk in, you're greeted with a grand 3-story atrium with sunlight streaming through the glass ceiling, and a spiral staircase leading to each of the open levels.

It's worth stopping by just to grab a photo of the interior. You can also check out the rooftop garden and beehive. Check the calendar for events such as rooftop yoga and outdoor movie nights.

Tour the School from *High School Musical*

Did you know that you can tour the actual high school where scenes from High School Musical were filmed? I recently found that out, and I have been so excited to walk the same halls as Troy and Gabriella!

East High is located on the east side of Salt Lake City near the University of Utah. Self-guided tours are available Monday through Friday from 3:30-6 pm when school is in session.

You can pick up a map from the office that shows the different filming locations on campus, like Sharpay's locker (that is still painted pink) and the cafeteria.

Take a Day Trip to Antelope Island

I can't believe I lived in Utah for 17 years and never visited Antelope Island! We recently took a drive out there, and it was the perfect day trip from Salt Lake City.

It was about a 45-minute drive from downtown and felt like it was a world away.

This is the biggest island on the Great Salt Lake and covers approximately 42 square miles. It is also home to one of the largest free-roaming bison herds in the US. There are literally hundreds of bison just wandering around, along with antelope, coyotes, mule deer, bighorn sheep, and over 250 bird species!

A herd of 12 bison was first introduced to the island in 1893. Today, the herd is around 500, and there is an annual roundup and auction to keep the numbers under control. The bison

roundup is held every October and is open to the public. It looks like a fun and unique event to attend!

When we visited, we drove along the scenic shore road for about 20 minutes until we reached the historic Fielding Garr Ranch. The ranch was established in 1848, and you can tour the original farmhouse, barn, and outbuildings.

The drive itself had a unique beauty with expansive views over the lake and surrounding mountain peaks. There are also several hiking trails on the island. The most popular include Buffalo Point or Frary Peak for panoramic views.

Bridger Bay Beach is also a popular spot to relax. The Great Salt Lake is known for its high salinity level, and you can actually float in the salty waters! Just avoid getting the salt water in your eyes, and it will also burn if you have any cuts or scrapes. Also, be aware that the gnats are horrible from April-June.

#### Swim in a Pink Lake at Stansbury Island

Stansbury Island is also a fun day trip from Salt Lake City. It is located on the southwest shore of the Great Salt Lake, about 40 miles west of the city.

This is where you'll find one of the two pink lakes that can be found within the Great Salt Lake (the second is by the Spiral Jetty).

The pink water is caused by microorganisms that thrive in water with high salt levels. It is so cool to see it in person!

The water definitely looks more pink from above with a drone shot. Drone permits can be picked up at the Great Salt Lake State Park visitor center.

For more information and details, see our guide, [Utah's Best Kept Secret: The Pink Lake at Stansbury Island](#).

#### Visit Wheeler Historic Farm

We stumbled across [Wheeler Historic Farm](#), and it was a fun little hidden gem! It's one of the few 19th-century farmsteads that remain in Salt Lake Valley.

Today, it is a 75-acre working farm that is free to visit. You can stop by and see the farm animals and vintage farming equipment.

For a small fee, you can also attend a milking demonstration, go on a wagon ride, and take a tour of the original farmhouse.

They also offer seasonal events, farmers' markets, walking trails, and the Rosebud Country Store.

We only had time to walk around the farm, but I would love to go back and tour the farmhouse and visit during their Pumpkin Days festival.

### Final Thoughts

Whether you are looking to fill one day or an entire week, there is so much to do in the city. I hope this guide will help you experience the history, culture, beauty, and tastes of Salt Lake City!