



## Chapter 12: Little Cottonwood Canyon

**Introduction:** A seven-mile scenic byway, Little Cottonwood Canyon is home to rugged, granite cliffs far steeper than other surrounding canyons. Because of the steep canyon walls, this canyon claims many an avalanche and hosts fewer snowshoe trails because the cliff walls simply limit where you can go. This glacially carved corridor holds two world-class ski resorts: Alta and Snowbird. The massive granite blocks that were used to build the Latter Day Saint Salt Lake Temple were quarried from this canyon. Every size of granite boulder can be found along the canyon, but of particular interest are the car-size rocks that were dropped one after another in random locations as the glacier carved the canyon. Rugged and steep, Little Cottonwood hosts ice climbers, resort skiers, backcountry skiers, and snowshoers throughout winter months. Just call the avalanche report before you go, and don't forget it's a watershed canyon.

**Driving Directions:** To get to Little Cottonwood Canyon take I-15 South and then take I-80 East. Merge onto I-215 South and follow signs to the ski resorts, take exit 6 toward Alta and Snowbird. Follow Wasatch Boulevard south. There is a large intersection at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon. Rather than turning east toward Brighton and Solitude, continue south for Little Cottonwood Canyon. From this intersection travel 2.3 miles up Wasatch Boulevard/UT 210 to a stop light. Here the Boulevard turns off to the right. Don't turn with the Boulevard, instead go straight through the light and follow the road/ UT 210. This takes you directly into Little Cottonwood Canyon UTA, (Utah Transit Authority) 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: Alta Ski Resort, Snowbird, and Cliff Lodge – between Snowbird and Alta. Call RIDE-UTA from the Salt Lake Area, or 801 RIDE-UTA for more information. [www.rideuta.com](http://www.rideuta.com) has route planning on-line as well.