



Trail 42--Albion Basin/Cecret Lake

Duration: 3 hours

Distance: 3.8 miles out-and-back

Difficulty: Moderate

Trailhead: Alta Ski Resort, Albion Basin upper parking lot

Elevation: Trailhead 8800'; Albion Basin Ridge 9449'; Cecret Lake 9905'

Avalanche: Low: Maintained by Alta Ski Resort

Map: Brighton 7.5' quadrangle

GPS Coordinates: Albion Basin ridge--12 T 0447981/4492313

Dogs: Not allowed in Little Cottonwood Canyon

Introduction: If you're looking for solitude, this is not the trail for you, but if avalanche conditions are iffy, or you are unsure about heading into the woods alone on your first snowshoe, you'll find plenty of social opportunity on this trail. The Albion Basin sits in the vertical middle of Alta Ski resort. This Albion Basin route has an elevation gain of 1100 feet if you go to Cecret Lake. There is no route, or suggested trail through the basin. The Summer Road (which is covered in snow during the winter) takes you to the rim of Albion Basin where you can then pick your way down through the basin as your heart desires. Mount Superior stands regally to the northwest, and Catherine's Pass sits just to the east of Albion Basin.

How to Get There: The Albion Basin is part of Alta Ski Resort. The resort resides at the top of Little Cottonwood Canyon. Drive up Little Cottonwood Canyon as far as you can go and park in the Upper Albion Basin parking lot. The trail starts on the east side of the lot at the Summer Road.

Trail Description: On the east side of the lot a snow-cat groomed road heads east. This "summer road" takes you up to the ridge where you will drop into Albion Basin. A quarter mile up the groomed "summer road" the cat track forks north straight up the mountain. Head up this track for a more direct route to the Basin. Mileage for this trip is figured going straight up this face, but you will get to the same place by continuing to follow the track straight – it will just take longer. The resort asks that snowshoers stay on the "summer road" to access the basin, and once in the basin, that you stay off main ski runs. Near the top of the mountain, after about .9 of a mile, the summer road crosses under a ski lift and the road breaks for the ski run. The upper road says, "Uphill Traffic Only". This is the appropriate trail for snowshoers to follow. This short route takes you to the top of the ridge and the top of the Sunny Side lift. Cross the ski run and Albion Basin sits just over the south ridge behind the lift. From here you can trek into Albion Basin in the direction that best suits you. Enjoy the powdery down hills, stay out of skiers' way, and head back out the way you came when you've had enough. Depending upon your route, it is about .75 mile from the ridge above Albion Basin to Secret Lake. Secret Lake sits below a band of blonde cliffs. Use these as a marker to help you locate the indentation where the lake sits in the summer. There is no route or path to follow and you will snowshoe amid cabins, Alta ski runs, and untouched powder. You must climb a steep ski run that sits below these blonde cliffs to get to the lake. Depending upon the year, the lake may have been drained to make snow or it will be completely covered in snow. Look for the No-Swimming sign below the steep but popular ski bowl where skiers line up like a picket fence for their turn to ski. This may be the only way you'll know where Secret Lake sits.