



Trail 48--Lost Prospector

Duration: 3 hours

Distance: 6.5 mile loop

Difficulty: Easy

Trailhead: Rail Trail or Aerie Drive

Elevation: Aerie Drive trailhead: 7045'; Rail Trail: 6800'

Avalanche: Low

Map: Park City East 7.5' quadrangle

GPS Coordinates: none

Dogs: Allowed on leash

Introduction: The Lost Prospector trail sits on the east side of Park City. A wonderful trail that runs literally a stones throw from the city itself, this partial loop has two possible starting points. Each end of the partial loop offers different trail definitions, for example, there is minimal elevation gain if you start at Aerie Drive, and then a fun downhill run as you descend to the Rail Trail on the other end. On the other hand, if you begin at the Rail Trail you'll have some climbing, and then the trail becomes an even route that crosses along the mountain and dumps you right onto the road at the other end.

The route gives continual views of Park City along almost the entire stretch. The trail boasts great accessibility for those who want a jaunt in the mountains but have limited time. The pluses of this trail include great city views, simple accessibility, and the option for minimal to no climbing.

How to get there:

Aerie Drive: Take I-80 East from Salt Lake City. Exit at Kimball Mill Junction taking a right off the exit. Proceed 5.8 miles into Park City. Stay straight for Park Avenue. Old Town Park City has a shortage of parking. Luckily, there is a free parking area on the east side of Park Avenue near where the Lost Prospector trail begins. The parking area sits across from the Park City Library on Park Avenue. Once parked, carry your snowshoes as you exit out the back of the parking area where you'll find a sidewalk. Follow the Trail-to-Main-Street signs down the sidewalk. Shortly, you will see a short wooden bridge that crosses above the sidewalk. Go up and across that bridge. Cross the main road, S.R. 224, and turn up/left at the next corner--Aerie Drive. The Lost Prospector trail begins several hundred feet up this road.

Rail Trail trailhead: Take I-80 East from Salt Lake City. Exit at Kimball Mill Junction taking a right off the exit onto UT-224 toward Park City. At 5.5 miles turn left onto Kearns Boulevard and then right onto Bonanza. The Rail Trail begins a few blocks down Bonanza. Parking is found behind White Pine Touring. Start down the Rail Trail.

The Park City public transportation busing system can also help shuttle you from one trailhead to the other.

Trail Description: Aerie Drive: A small sign on the left side of the road marks the Lost Prospector Loop. The trail then heads back, parallel with the road, for a short way before curving around the front of the hill. The trail cuts through scrub oak with a clear view of Old Towne Park City. The view of Park City changes to newer sections of town as you continue to round the side of the hill to the north. The Lost Prospector trail maintains a level experience at just under 7100' of elevation until you descend to the Rail Trail at the end. If you're breaking your own trail just remain at the same elevation level and follow the ins and outs of the mountain as it curves north east. There are several possible exit points that will dump you into city subdivisions, if you're short on time. One sits at .84 miles from the Aerie Drive trailhead where a wash comes up from Iron Horse subdivision.

Small trail-junction markers mark Lost Prospector at any fork in the trail. Unless snow conditions rise to bury these, they will solve any directional questions along the route. The trail maintains elevation as it traverses the mountainside, until just before it drops a few hundred feet to the Rail Trail. As you travel the mountain side you can look down and see the Rail Trail below to keep yourself oriented. The Rail Trail then covers 1.65 miles back to Bonanza Drive, a flat stroll. From here you can head back up Bonanza, up HWY 224, and back to the parking area across from Aerie Drive for your loop.

Trail Description Rail Trail: The Rail Trail sits just south of White Pine Touring on Bonanza Drive. The trail is well signed. A little over a mile and a half down the Rail Trail, right before a bridge, the trail exits the Rail Trail and climbs up the mountain. Once you reach 7100', the trail levels out and cuts horizontally across the mountain. The trail may have been broken before and you can simply follow the route in the snow, but if you're the first, head up the north face of the mountain, switchbacking when needed, to 7100' and then follow the curve of the mountain as you head east and south to curve around into the city. The trail winds evenly along the mountain where it empties out on Aerie Drive. To get back to the Rail Trail, head down Hwy 224 to where it connects with Bonanza and drops you back where you started.