

No Longer a Secret

No Longer a Secret - Fish Lake Fun

by Jeff & Sue Bates For Utah fishing at its very best, hiking, mountain biking, camping or just plain summertime relaxing, Fish Lake, in the heart of Central Utah is the spot. Sitting high in the pines and aspens, Fish Lake is formed the old fashioned way – no dams, dikes or any man-made device to hold it back. The way Mother Nature intended. And she left behind other remnants of her creativity, as well. A water level that stays at pretty much the same level year-round. The four seasons; cool days to cold nights in Spring, warm days in early summer, still even warmer later on, but always comfortably cool sleeping weather at night. In August, autumn begins its return to the high country. But September is the best-kept secret. Glorious Fall colors of reds, bright yellows and brilliant oranges contrast against the clear crystal blue of the placid water below. Best of all, you’ll love the fall. A primo time to visit Fish Lake! Recreation in and around Fish Lake is as varied as it is plentiful. A rolling mountain bike/hiking singletrack trail traces the entire shore of one side of the lake, with several pull-offs for a picnic. For more advanced riders, the Mytoge Mountain Loop, a 25-mile singletrack and dirt road route, culminates with an 800 foot climb to the top, well worth the effort once one stops, catches one’s breath and gasps at the spectacular view of the shimmering lake far below. Not far away is the intermediate UM Pass Loop trail. The fat-tire ride starts on the north side of Johnson Valley Reservoir and circumnavigates Mount Marvine. The highlight of the ride is the whoop-de-doo descent down from the pass on the jeep road turning to singletrack over a series of berms. Grins at the bottom! Several spurs nearby lead to the Great Western Trail, a multi-purpose route that, when completed, will stretch border to border. That’s not just Utah’s northern to southern borders, but US-Canada to US-Mexico, as well! For those who prefer motorized recreation, the 230-mile loop known as the Paiute ATV Trail is nearby, as is the Parker Mountain Trail. The Paiute climbs over three mountain ranges, through alpine forests with more than 700 miles of offshoots and side roads. Climbs go from 5100 feet, up to 12,000 feet with the majestic peaks of the Tushar and Pahvant Mountains as backdrops. But, as its name implies, angling is king at Fish Lake and the surrounding area. The lake itself is prime habitat for perch and rainbow trout, but most serious fishermen (and women) are here trying their luck to land the big one, a lake trout or Makinaw. Boat rentals and gear shops are available on the west shore of the lake. The east side is accessible only by boat or a long day hike, but if its solitude you’re looking for, you may well find it here. If you’re into ice fishing, Fish Lake has, arguably, the finest in the state and, most likely, the longest season. Nearby streams, UM Creek and the Fremont River, are not-well-known spots, but some of the best in Utah, for Tiger and Brown Trout. Another short distance away is imposing Thousand Lake Mountain. We haven’t counted, but there are numerous small lakes up there that have quality fishing coupled with quiet and peaceful settings not found in more popular spots. For the remoteness and ruggedness of the area, accommodations are surprisingly good. That said, you won’t find any fancy spas, waiters wearing tuxes, jetted tubs or disco bars here. Fish Lake has three resorts with motel rooms or cabins, a couple of good restaurants featuring basic, filling meals, convenience stores for gear and supplies, RV sites with full hookups for rent, and several Fishlake National Forest campgrounds. This is where you go to get away from the din and clamor that is civilization to many. Fish Lake is a different kind of civilized life. The outdoor life combined with peace, quiet and serenity in a lovely, remote setting. Where: An easy three-hour drive from Salt Lake City: South on I-15 to I-70, east to mile marker 48, Sigurd and Utah Hwy. 24. South to Utah Hwy. 25, east five miles to Fish Lake. From Las Vegas, north on I-15 to I-70, then the same as above. When: All year-round. Some lodges and facilities are seasonal, May 1 to November 1. The Fish Lake basin is in Utah’s Fishlake National Forest at elevations at and exceeding 8200 feet. Ice remains on the lake most years until April or early May. Lodges, Facilities, Services:

Bowery Haven Resort

435/638-1040 or 435/638-7525 Fish Lake Lodge Lakeside Resort

435/638-1000 Jeff & Sue Bates own and operate Bowery Haven Resort at Fish Lake, High in the Fishlake National Forest in Central Utah.