

60 HIKES WITHIN 60 MILES

2ND EDITION



American
Hiking
Society

GREG WITT

SALT LAKE CITY

INCLUDING
Ogden, Provo,
and the Uintas



MENASHA RIDGE PRESS
Your Guide to the Outdoors Since 1982

OVERVIEW MAP

60 Hikes within 60 Miles: Salt Lake City



MAP LEGEND



Directional arrows



Off-map pointer



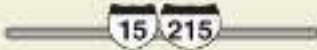
Featured trail



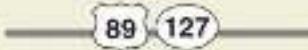
Alternate trail



Park/forest



Interstate



Major road



Minor road



Boardwalk



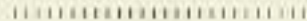
Dirt road



Railroad



Borderline



Ridgeline



Water body



River/creek





Intermittent stream


 Bridge

 Camping


 Garden


 Gate


 General point of interest


 Overlook


 Parking

 Peak


 Picnic area


 Restroom

 Shelter

 Ski area

 Spring

 Trailhead

 Waterfall

HIKES LIST

NORTH (Weber County)

- 1 Ben Lomond
- 2 Ogden River Parkway
- 3 Mount Ogden (via Snowbasin Gondola)
- 4 Malans Peak (via Taylor Canyon)
- 5 Waterfall Canyon

NORTH (Davis County)

- 6 Adams Canyon
- 7 Thurston Peak
- 8 Farmington Creek Trail
- 9 Frary Peak
- 10 Kenny Creek Trail

CENTRAL (Salt Lake County)

- 11 Mormon Pioneer Trail
- 12 Emigration Canyon Miners Trail
- 13 City Creek Canyon
- 14 Red Butte Garden
- 15 The Living Room (with Red Butte Extension)
- 16 Summit Park Peak
- 17 Lambs Canyon
- 18 Mount Aire
- 19 Grandeur Peak
- 20 Desolation Trail to Salt Lake Overlook
- 21 Gobblers Knob (via Alexander Basin)
- 22 Mill Creek to Park City Overlook (including Murdock Peak)
- 23 Neffs Canyon
- 24 Mount Olympus
- 25 Dog Lake
- 26 Desolation Lake
- 27 Mount Raymond (via Butler Fork)
- 28 Doughnut Falls
- 29 Lake Blanche
- 30 Willow Heights
- 31 Jordan River Parkway
- 32 Great Western Trail (Guardman Pass to Clayton Peak)
- 33 Lake Solitude (via the Silver Lake Interpretive Trail)
- 34 Brighton Lakes
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[60 Bald Mountain](#)

60 HIKES
WITHIN 60 MILES



**SALT LAKE
CITY**

INCLUDING
Ogden, Provo,
and the Uintas

SECOND EDITION

GREG WITT

60 HIKES WITHIN 60 MILES: SALT LAKE CITY

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DISCLAIMER

This book is meant only as a guide to select trails in the Salt Lake City area and does not guarantee hiker safety—you hike at your own risk. Neither Menasha Ridge Press nor Greg Witt is liable in any way for property loss or damage, personal injury, or death that result from accessing or hiking the trails described in the following pages. Be especially cautious when walking on or near boulders, steep inclines, and drop-offs, and do not explore terrain that may be beyond your abilities. To help ensure an uneventful hike, carefully read the introduction to this book and get further safety information and guidance from other sources. Familiarize yourself with current weather reports, maps of the area you intend to visit (in addition to the maps in this guidebook), and any relevant park regulations. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this guidebook, land and road conditions, phone numbers and websites, and other information can change from year to year.

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A PROJECT OF THIS MAGNITUDE goes from concept to print with the contributions of many. I'm thankful for the energetic and talented team at Menasha Ridge Press, who approached me about writing a Salt Lake City hiking guide. I was somewhat reluctant at first, but through their encouragement, vision, and support, *60 Hikes* became a reality.

Thanks to Sheryl McGlochlin, whose energy and enthusiasm are infectious. She's introduced many of these hikes to hundreds of locals and is always anxious to share a favorite hike with friends like me.

I'm appreciative of the staff at Weber Pathways, who have created a hiking legacy for the Ogden area through their efforts to promote, plan, and preserve trails.

I'm grateful to Alan and Kristine Colledge, with whom I've shared gallons of Gatorade and miles of terrain across the Wasatch, the Colorado Plateau, and the Grand Canyon.

Thanks to my parents, Bud and Claire Witt, who took me on hikes in Mill Creek Canyon and Brighton as a toddler. Later, they led me to discover the Sierra Nevada and many national parks on fabulous cross-country road trips.

I've met hundreds of hikers along the trail. Sometimes our exchange was nothing more than "g'morning" or "hello." But often these newfound friends would share their experiences with me—identifying a wildflower, reporting on a moose sighting, or telling me about a favorite waterfall just up the canyon. Their insights and love of the outdoors have enriched my life and are woven into every hike in this book.

Many of those trail acquaintances were members of the Wasatch Mountain Club, an organization of dedicated volunteers who love to explore the scenic wonders of the area mountains. They also deserve much of the credit for improving the quality of the outdoor experience through preservation of wild lands and providing access to these pristine reaches.

Special thanks to many hiking friends who have provided ideas, encouragement, and support along the way, including Phil Schow, Mark McGuire, Bart Hamatake, Bruce Bown, Ben Adcock, Peter Tennis, David Crowther, Jim Rasband, Vaughn Armstrong, Jim McDonald, Mary Baxter, Jack Welch, Al Christy, Jim Driggs, Harlan Hatfield, and Dennis Hoagland.

I always cherish the time I've spent on these and other Utah trails with my children, Heather, Blair, Lindsey, Dallin, and Tessa. I look forward to sharing many more trail miles with my grandchildren, Hannah, Isaac, Alden, and Grant.

My deepest gratitude goes to my wife, Elaine, my best friend and eternal trail companion. Her sustaining belief, encouragement, and love have guided me through this project and every other aspect of my life. She joined me on many of these hikes, but I wish she could have joined me on every one. If she had, this would have been a far more elaborate book.

—Greg Witt

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Photo: Celeste Elaine Witt



GREG WITT has lived the adventures he writes about and shares with audiences around the world. His journeys have taken him to every corner of the globe. He has guided mountaineering expeditions in the Alps and Andes and paddled wild rivers in the Americas. He has dropped teams of adventurers into golden slot canyons; trudged through deep jungles in Africa, Central America, and Asia; and guided archaeological expeditions across the parched Arabian Peninsula.

After earning degrees from the University of California and Brigham Young University, Greg had an early career in human-resources management. But because he prefers high adventure to the high-rise, he traded his wingtips for hiking boots decades ago and has never looked back.

Some weeks, Greg hikes more miles than he drives, which means he wears out his boots faster than he wears out his tires. He has crossed the Grand Canyon on foot more than a dozen times and climbed Colorado's three highest peaks in three days. Each summer in the Swiss Alps, he hikes more than 700 miles and gains nearly 100,000 vertical feet of elevation as he

guides guests of Alpenwild, a company he owns and operates.

~~Greg loves leading readers on the most breathtaking hikes and exciting outdoor adventures on the globe. He comes ready to discuss the geology, history, archaeology, weather patterns, culture, flora, and fauna of the exciting locales he loves. His other books include *Exploring Havasupai* (Menasha Ridge Press), *Ultimate Adventures: A Rough Guide to Adventure Travel* (Rough Guides), and the forthcoming *50 Best Short Hikes: Salt Lake City* (Wilderness Press).~~

Greg's research and exploration continue to uncover surprising adventures just waiting to be experienced. If you join him, you'll be guaranteed a phenomenal journey.

FOREWORD

WELCOME TO MENASHA RIDGE PRESS'S *60 Hikes within 60 Miles*, a series designed to provide hikers with the information they need to find and hike the very best trails surrounding metropolitan areas.

Our strategy is simple: First, find a hiker who knows the area and loves to hike. Second, ask that person to spend a year researching the most popular and very best trails around. And third, have that person describe each trail in terms of difficulty, scenery, condition, elevation change, and other categories of information that are important to hikers. “Pretend you’ve just completed a hike and met up with other hikers at the trailhead,” we told each author. “Imagine their questions, and be clear in your answers.”

An experienced hiker and writer, Greg Witt has selected 60 of the best hikes in and around the Salt Lake City metropolitan area. From the wilderness lakes and rocky peaks of the Wasatch Range and the Uinta Mountains to a suburban stroll along the Jordan River Parkway, Witt provides hikers (and walkers) with a great variety of outings—and all within roughly 60 miles of Salt Lake City.

You’ll get more out of this book if you take a moment to read the Introduction, which explains how to read the trail listings. The “Topographic Maps” section will help you understand how useful topos are on a hike, and will also tell you where to get them. And though this is a where-to rather than a how-to guide, readers who haven’t hiked extensively will find the Introduction of particular value.

As much for the opportunity to free the spirit as well as to free the body, let these hikes elevate you above the urban hurry.

**All the best,
The Editors at Menasha Ridge Press**

PREFACE

Alaska is our biggest, buggiest, boggiest state. Texas remains our largest unfrozen state. But mountainous Utah, if ironed out flat, would take up more space on a map than either.

—Edward Abbey

WITH MOUNTAINS ON EVERY SIDE, the Salt Lake Valley offers a greater variety of dramatic and awe-inspiring day hikes than any major metropolitan area in the United States. Nestled below the western flank of the Rockies, Salt Lake City provides ready access to a stunning array of alpine lakes, snow-draped mountain peaks, fragrant evergreen forests, deep canyon waterfalls, granite towers, and flowered cirques.

Within 60 miles of Salt Lake City there are thousands of square miles of national forest, national wilderness areas, state parks, and designated recreation areas to explore. But it takes accurate and dependable information to select the best hiking adventure for you. Within minutes of a bustling urban center, you can immerse yourself in the history of early miners, the Pony Express, the Donner Party, or Mormon pioneers. With a little planning you can summit one of a dozen 11,000-foot peaks sprinkled throughout the region. You can find solitude in flickering aspen groves, shaded canyons, and pristine wilderness. Whether you're lacing up boots, stepping into running shoes, or strapping on snowshoes, Salt Lake City is a premier destination for hikers.

ABOUT THE HIKES

It would have been easy to catalog 60 hikes near Salt Lake City from the hundreds of hiking trails in the area. But the ultimate challenge in writing *60 Hikes* was to pinpoint the *absolute best* of those hikes—the most enjoyable, inspiring, intriguing, and accessible hikes. You'll quickly discover that every hike has a “wow factor”: a memorable destination, a glistening lake, a mesmerizing stream, a breathtaking view, or a soothing canyon.



Photo: David Crowther/Stockphoto.com

The Wasatch Mountains loom over the Salt Lake City skyline.

The 60 hikes that made the list had to captivate the attention of young hikers and challenge the endurance of seasoned ones. The hikes needed to reflect the diversity of the mountain, valley, and canyon terrain in the area. With rising fuel costs, I wanted to reveal hikes that were nearby and easily accessible to the 1.7 million people who live within 60 miles of Salt Lake City.

Faced with the challenge of selecting the best 60 hikes in the Salt Lake area, I assembled a powerful and compelling list in less than an hour. But the book really demanded a more rigorous process. So I distributed my best-hikes list to dozens of area hikers, rangers, scoutmasters, youth leaders, mountain bikers, rock climbers, dog walkers, trails advocates, and city recreation officials. I sought their suggestions on which hikes to include, asking them to advise which route offered the best trailhead access and best overall experience. Their input was exciting to receive and proved invaluable. Surprisingly, there was a high level of consensus on which hikes to include; in fact, the 60 hikes included here are about 90% consistent with my original list.

In order to present the most accurate information possible, I rehiked each trail to take distance measurements, determine GPS coordinates, measure elevations, and clarify trail markings. The goal was simple: create a trustworthy, authoritative trail guide that would provide years of valuable hiking pleasure.

When *60 Hikes* was first published in 2008, it instantly became the best-selling hiking guide in Utah and the essential trail guide for thousands of hikers in the Wasatch. For that I am grateful, and it's been especially enjoyable to be on the trail and run into hikers who have a well-used, dog-eared copy of *60 Hikes* in their pack.

The big challenge came with the opportunity to publish this second edition. Sure, there

were some updates to include—new trailhead amenities, increased entrance fees, new access roads. ~~But dare I take out one of my favorite hikes? And if so, which new hikes are worthy of inclusion in this second edition?~~

For those of you who are familiar with *60 Hikes*, as you put this second edition to the test, I think you'll be pleased with the new additions. If you're picking this book up for the first time, rest assured that you're heading to some of the most beautiful and magical places in the West. Most of all, I have loved the challenge of selecting these hikes and providing every detail to make your adventure memorable.

Just 60 hikes? Hardly. At last count it was closer to 120 hikes organized into 60 profiles. Most of the 60 hikes—indeed, most Wasatch trails—are interconnected. Each hike profile describes a particular route but also allows for options, extensions, and spur trails. In addition, the Nearby Activities mentioned at the end of most trail descriptions often reveal short hikes leading to hidden waterfalls, short interpretive trails, or points of historic or geologic interest. Most of these activities consist of walks that are less than 1 mile round-trip, while the 60 hikes are 1 mile or more in length. If you're a novice hiker and want to build your speed and stamina, you may want to start with some of the Nearby Activities.

These 60 hikes appeal to a wide variety of skill levels and interests. Of the featured hikes, about 31% are considered easy, 47% are moderate, and 22% are hard. They range in distance from 1 mile on Buffalo Peak to 16 miles on Ben Lomond. Elevation gain ranges from –58 feet on the Jordan River Parkway to 5,460 feet on Lone Peak. All the hikes are normally done as day hikes, although many can also be enjoyed as an overnight backpacking trip. You'll find that *60 Hikes* has something for everybody.

REGIONS

Hikes are organized by area in relation to Salt Lake City—north, central, south, east, and west. Conveniently, those areas also match county lines, since most of the county boundaries are defined by mountain ridges. Most of the 60 hikes are in the Wasatch Mountains, which run north and south, with the vast majority of the area's population living on the slopes and valleys to the west of the range. Within each county, hikes are organized from north to south. Here's a quick overview of each region:

NORTH (Weber County) The hikes in Weber County are easily accessed from Ogden, about 35 miles north of Salt Lake City. Ogden's historical roots as a junction on the transcontinental railroad have been overshadowed in recent years by its emergence as a center of outdoor recreation. The alpine peaks that hosted downhill and super-G events in the 2002 Winter Olympic Games are also great hiking destinations in the summer. Favorite Weber County hikes include Ben Lomond to the north and beautiful Waterfall Canyon, which can be accessed just minutes from the city center.



White Pine Lake (see Hike 37, page 165)

NORTH (Davis County) Immediately north of Salt Lake City, Davis County is traditionally known for farming communities such as Bountiful, Farmington, and Fruit Heights, which rest on the alluvial plain at the base of smaller Wasatch peaks. But it also offers some great canyon hikes, such as Farmington Canyon and Adams Canyon. Davis County has more square miles of Great Salt Lake than it has land area, and Antelope Island is the ideal place to explore the wonders of the lake on dry ground.

CENTRAL (Salt Lake County) It's fitting that more than half of the 60 hikes are right in Salt Lake County. These hikes offer easy access to glacial canyons, alpine lakes, and snow-capped peaks. You'll be amazed how close wilderness areas are to the heart of the city. Salt Lake's pioneer history unfolds along celebrated trails and the Pony Express route. In *60 Hikes*, you'll find adventure waiting in each of the seven canyons that have shaped, nourished, powered, and built Salt Lake City since 1847. Most hikers can find enough opportunities in Big Cottonwood Canyon alone to feed their passion for a year or more. Some of the more popular hikes in the central Wasatch include Grandeur Peak, Brighton Lakes, and Doughnut Falls.

SOUTH (Utah County) To the south of Salt Lake City, the Mount Timpanogos massif watches over Utah County. Dozens of canyons flank "Timp," and waterfalls cascade down all sides. Provo Canyon and American Fork Canyon offer exceptional year-round outdoor recreation opportunities. While Timp is arguably the best hike in northern Utah, don't

overlook other Utah County jewels, such as Silver Lake and Stewart Falls.

WEST (Tooele County) With so much to enjoy in the Wasatch, you can see why most locals overlook the desert to the west. But the Stansbury Mountains and the Deseret Peak Wilderness Area, with its rugged terrain and 11,031-foot centerpiece, simply can't be ignored. Views stretch across the Bonneville Salt Flats and into Nevada. It's a straight shot out Interstate 80, just 35 miles to the west.

EAST (Uintas/Summit County) The Uinta Mountains, home to Utah's highest peaks, lie directly east of Salt Lake City, beyond the Wasatch Mountains. The Mirror Lake Scenic Byway provides easy access to picturesque basins and forests of spruce and fir. You can climb 11,943-foot Bald Mountain in less than an hour or spend days on end in the alpine heaven known as Naturalist Basin.

Let *60 Hikes* be a starting point. Let it inspire your own adventure on a road less traveled. Maybe you'll discover a hidden waterfall or encounter a mysterious field of white columbine. Wasatch trails are notoriously unmarked, and maybe with enough experience you'll discover you don't need trail signs to have a great hike. If a family of moose is blocking the trail, you may find a parallel trail over the ridge. If the trailhead parking lot is full, you can often take a shorter, steeper trail to the summit from another trailhead. The possibilities are endless, and you'll have the time of your life exploring them.

See you on the trail!

RECOMMENDED HIKES

AUTHOR'S PICKS

[Best Summit Hike: Mount Timpanogos](#)

[Best Lake Hike: Brighton Lakes](#)

[Best Waterfall: Stewart Falls](#)

[Best Mountain Scenery: Lofty Lake Loop](#)

[Best Paved Trail: Timpanogos Cave National Monument](#)

[Best Wildflowers: Cecret Lake \(Albion Basin\)](#)

[Best Wildlife: Frary Peak](#)

[Toughest Climb: Lone Peak](#)

HIKES OF 1–3 MILES

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[49 Battle Creek Falls](#)

[52 Buffalo Peak](#)

[36 Cecret Lake](#)

[28 Doughnut Falls](#)

[32 Great Western Trail \(Guardman Pass to Clayton Peak\)](#)

[14 Red Butte Garden](#)

[15 The Living Room \(with Red Butte Extension\)](#)

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HIKES OF 3–6 MILES

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[60 Bald Mountain](#)

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[43 Silver Lake](#)

[48 Stewart Falls](#)

[16 Summit Park Peak](#)

[35 Sunset Peak](#)

[45 Timpanogos Cave National Monument](#)

[30 Willow Heights](#)

[42 Yellow Fork](#)

HIKES OF 6–9 MILES

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[51 Big Springs Hollow](#)

[56 Deseret Peak](#)

[26 Desolation Lake](#)

[9 Frary Peak](#)

[24 Mount Olympus](#)

[27 Mount Raymond \(via Butler Fork\)](#)

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[7 Thurston Peak](#)

HIKES OF MORE THAN 9 Miles

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[47 Emerald Lake and Mount Timpanogos \(via Aspen Grove Trail\)](#)

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[27 Mount Raymond \(via Butler Fork\)](#)
[46 Mount Timpanogos \(via the Timpooneke Trail\)](#)
[57 Naturalist Basin](#)
[38 Pfeifferhorn \(via Red Pine Lake\)](#)
[35 Sunset Peak](#)
[37 White Pine Lake](#)

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[44 Box Elder Peak](#)

[28 Doughnut Falls](#)
[41 Lone Peak \(via Jacobs Ladder\)](#)

[24 Mount Olympus](#)
[27 Mount Raymond \(via Butler Fork\)](#)
[38 Pfeifferhorn \(via Red Pine Lake\)](#)

BEST TRAILS FOR MOUNTAIN BIKING

[1 Ben Lomond](#)
[26 Desolation Lake](#)
[25 Dog Lake](#)
[19 Grandeur Peak](#)
[33 Lake Solitude \(via the Silver Lake Interpretive Trail\)](#)
[22 Mill Creek to Park City Overlook \(including Murdock Peak\)](#)
[11 Mormon Pioneer Trail](#)
[3 Mount Ogden \(via Snowbasin Gondola\)](#)
[55 Stansbury Island Trail](#)
[16 Summit Park Peak](#)
[37 White Pine Lake](#)

BEST TRAILS FOR ROAD BIKING

[13 City Creek Canyon](#)
[31 Jordan River Parkway](#)
[2 Ogden River Parkway](#)
[50 Provo River Parkway](#)

HIKES WITH WATERFALLS

[6 Adams Canyon](#)
[49 Battle Creek Falls](#)
[40 Bells Canyon](#)
[28 Doughnut Falls](#)
[47 Emerald Lake and Mount Timpanogos \(via Aspen Grove Trail\)](#)
[8 Farmington Creek Trail](#)
[46 Mount Timpanogos \(via the Timpooneke Trail\)](#)
[50 Provo River Parkway](#)
[14 Red Butte Garden](#)
[43 Silver Lake](#)
[48 Stewart Falls](#)
[5 Waterfall Canyon](#)

BEST WINTER HIKES

[51 Big Springs Hollow](#)
[13 City Creek Canyon](#)
[25 Dog Lake](#)
[28 Doughnut Falls](#)
[9 Frary Peak](#)
[19 Grandeur Peak](#)
[31 Jordan River Parkway](#)
[2 Ogden River Parkway](#)
[50 Provo River Parkway](#)
[14 Red Butte Garden](#)
[55 Stansbury Island Trail](#)
[5 Waterfall Canyon](#)
[30 Willow Heights](#)

HIKES WITH HISTORY

[13 City Creek Canyon](#)
[12 Emigration Canyon Miners Trail](#)

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