

# WATERFALL HUNTING IN THE WASATCH

WHEN SPRING HAS SPRUNG, HIKE TO THE ROAR AND THE MIST.

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Falling water has captivated our collective imagination for ages. The cool, misty breeze, the humbling roar and the sight of nature's effortless power remind us of our place on this planet.

Every spring, the steep canyons of the Wasatch yield ideal conditions for waterfalls. Thanks to warmer, wetter weather, small creeks swell and plunge 4,000 feet down toward the valley floor. The perfect formula of elevation change, melting snowpack, spring moisture and rapid warming equates to a fantastic season for waterfall hunting. Keep an eye out for these:

## BRIDAL VEIL FALLS & STEWART CASCADES @ PROVO CANYON

A classic Wasatch waterfall day trip includes Bridal Veil Falls in Provo Canyon and Stewart Cascades near Sundance Resort. This excursion connects two of the most impressive and accessible waterfalls in the area, so they often get crowded on weekends. Bridal Veil Falls on Highway 189 has paved parking and a path to its misty base. Stewart Cascades is a family-friendly 1.7-mile hike from Aspen Grove Trailhead, and its 200-foot icy roar can be heard from a half-mile away.

## DONUT FALLS @ BIG COTTONWOOD CANYON

In Big Cottonwood Canyon, Donut Falls are small but truly unique. While less than 20 feet tall, the stream current has carved a hole in the bedrock (resembling a donut) and flows into a small, cool cave. Young waterfall hunters can easily hike the 0.6 miles from the Reynolds Flat trailhead to a viewing area below the falls. A slippery scramble is required for a close-up view of the falls from inside its shower-like cave.

## BELL CANYON FALLS @ LITTLE COTTONWOOD CANYON

For adventurous waterfall hunters, Bell Canyon provides two breathtaking waterfalls

along its strenuous hike. The Lower Falls sit less than two miles from the Little Cottonwood Road trailhead. A 50-foot drop showers a shady pine grove with cold bursts of mist. After another steep mile, the 75-foot cascading Upper Falls crashes carelessly into a couple of pine trees clutching the rock face. A few other small waterfalls dot the trail on the way up to Upper Bell Reservoir.

## TIPS FOR WATERFALL HUNTING

### 1. FOLLOW THE FORMULA

Water + significant elevation change = waterfalls. Buy a good topographic map and look for trails that ascend or descend next to creeks. Stay on the trails to preserve vegetation and to keep yourself from getting lost. Odds are if there's a waterfall around, there's already a trail to it.

### 2. START LOW

Since each spring season brings vastly different conditions, it's best to start at the lower elevations with easy, snow-free hikes. As the snow retreats and feeds the creeks, more trails dry out and the Wasatch waterfalls ramp up their flows.

### 3. BE SMART

Waterfalls claim lives every year, but you can avoid accidents with caution and common sense. Never climb the incredibly slick rock under, above or around waterfalls. Give these natural wonders the respect they deserve, and you'll have many years of waterfall hunting in your future. Also, never swim in watershed areas. ♦

