

DONNOR SUMMIT DAY HIKES



Location
DONNER SUMMIT
Best Time of Year
LATE SUMMER, FALL

#15

Fall has never been more beautiful than when you're exploring North Lake Tahoe's mountainside. Get the most out of fall foliage, Tahoe history, and scenic views with day hikes around Donner Summit!

What Is It?

- Take a step back in time and learn more about the tragic history of the Donner Party. [The Donner Party Hikes](#) are a two-day package experience, September 14-15.
 - The [Saturday Hikes](#) take guests to interpretive spots along seven different hiking trails, giving detailed historical information about the infamous Party, as well as emigrant and area history.
 - The [Sunday Historical Walking Tour](#) explores the fascinating history of the Donner Party. The tour begins at the Donner Camp Picnic Area, followed by an interpretive walk which includes tales of the grueling travels and mishaps of the Donner Party and highlights archeological finds along the way. Participants then drive to the Donner Memorial State Park to view the Murphy Cabin Site and Pioneer Monument.
- For more hikes around Donner Summit bursting with area history and scenic beauty:
 - Hike a portion of the iconic [Pacific Crest Trail from Donner Summit to Squaw Valley](#), allowing you to experience part of one of the most famous trails in North America, while seeing the splendor of the Sierra Nevada for yourself! Clocking in at around 15 miles, this stretch makes for the perfect fall day outing for the true outdoor explorer.
 - One of the most unique hikes in North Lake Tahoe, the [Donner Summit Tunnels Hike](#) takes you through an abandoned 19th Century railroad tunnel. Discover ancient petroglyphs, centuries-old structures including the aforementioned tunnels and the China Wall, and peer out over vistas with great views and vantage points over Donner Summit Bridge and Donner Lake!

Insider Tips

- Dogs are welcome on the Mount Judah Loop as well as the Pacific Crest Trail, as long as they are kept on a leash. Please be sure to check all signs and trails to make sure that your pup can tag along with you!
- To get the most out of your trek, make sure to bring plenty of water and snacks, and rest when necessary; not only to avoid ending up like the ill-fated party, but to properly enjoy your surroundings without tiring out too quickly.

Fun Facts

- The Sunday Walking Tour portion of the Donner Party Hikes begins at the Alder Creek site that is believed to be the site of the Donner family cabin.
- The 1,659-foot Donner Tunnel was the first railroad line to traverse the Sierra Nevada Range. The tunnel was completed in August 1867, and the first train passed through it on June 18th, 1868. The last train passed through in 1993 when the route was changed to a new location.

If You Like This, You'll Love:

- Castle Peak, 3.5 miles, +1,850 feet elevation gain
- Mount Lincoln, 3.5 miles, +1,200 feet elevation gain
- Donner Peak Trail, 3.8 miles, +882 feet elevation gain