

The ABA Beacon®

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Boating Lake Tahoe

by *W. Lynn Seldon, Jr. - Boating Writer*

It's hard to beat Lake Tahoe for inland boating. Situated at 6,228 feet and spreading 22 miles long and 12 miles wide, Lake Tahoe is North America's largest alpine lake. There's more than 70 miles of shoreline. That's a lot of boating!

Two-thirds of Lake Tahoe lies in the state of California, while one-third is in Nevada. With incredible mountain vistas, lots of marinas, and much more, both the California and Nevada sides make for ideal boating destinations.

Though driving, biking, and hiking are great, Lake Tahoe is best seen by boat. In fact, it's the best way to explore the area. Many sights are best from the water and some, like Fleur du Lac (the stone mansion featured in Francis Ford Coppola's, *The Godfather, Part II*), are only approachable from the lake. Other fascinating places approachable by boat

include: the Vikingsholm (a spectacular home that's now part of Emerald Bay State Park); Fannette Island and its teahouse (built by the owner of Vikingsholm); the Hellman-Ehrman Mansion (a huge summer house built in 1903); Tallac Historic Site (four historic summer estates near Camp Richardson Resort); and Cave Rock (a rock formation seen from practically anywhere on the lake).

Most of the lake's four million annual visitors get on the water at some point, so summer can be pretty busy. However, the lake is large enough to make boating from spring to fall quite enjoyable (and, thanks to temperate weather, quite comfortable air temperatures—though wetsuits are the norm for the cold alpine water!).

The lake's conditions can vary quickly, so it's best to be prepared. The mornings can be quite calm, while afternoons can bring wind and whitecaps.

New regulations have restricted engine types, wake zones, excessive noise, and more, but all for the sake of preserving what many consider some of North America's finest boating. With quiet rocky coves, white sand beaches, world-class marinas, and much to see and do, Lake Tahoe can and will remain a great place to boat.

A tour of Lake Tahoe boating opportunities can start just about anywhere, but the aptly

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Photo by Blaine Harrington III, courtesy of Nevada Tourism

Boats in Emerald Bay on Lake Tahoe

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Hotel discounts are as much as 65% off at properties like Hampton Inns, Holiday Inns, Best Westerns, Courtyards by Marriott, and many others. You can even save on your vacation rentals. Avis, Alamo, Budget, Hertz, Enterprise, National, Thrifty, and other rental car companies are available to book your discount rentals. And booking airfare is just as easy with choice itineraries available from many of the major airlines.

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Save yourself time and money - book your travel today at www.americanboating.org! ■

WINTER MAINTENANCE

by *Tim Harrington, Madison Marine and ABA Member*

When you finally pull your boat from the water this fall, give it a good looking over. If you notice maintenance that needs to be done, the temptation will be to put it off until next spring. However, many of these projects are perfect winter projects. By taking care of maintenance issues this winter, you will avoid the inevitable rush that occurs at marinas every spring as owners scramble to get their boat ready for launching. More than one boat owner has missed a targeted spring launching date because of waiting for maintenance to be done. So make a list of things that need to be taken care of and enjoy the leisurely pace of getting them done during the off-season.

A good item to check is your prop. Does it need rehab? This is a perfect off-season job. Make arrangements to have your props delivered back to you in early or mid-spring. This will save you time, plus you will be able to avoid last minute problems, such as finding out that the prop is beyond rehab and needs to be replaced. Most marinas provide this service through other shops that service props full time. When you get them back they are usually painted and ready to go. Brass props are shiny and ready for installation.

If your prop just needs basic maintenance, why not try the work yourself? The first thing to do is to apply several clear coats of antifouling. This will help reduce the growth of barnacles, both for fresh water boating as well as salt water boating. Keeping your props free of foreign growth will keep your props operating at maximum performance.

Greasing is also a good off-season job that you can do yourself. One brand that I like is OMC Triple Guard. It seems to stand up well to the rigors of the marine environment. For trailer owners, use marine grease in the bearing buddies. For trailers with tilt tubes, do yourself and your technicians a favor - grease your tubes periodically with MARINE grease. There is nothing worse than getting a boat ready to launch and having to spend time freeing up frozen tubes, either because of lack of marine grease, or because the regular grease hardened from non-use.

Another good project is to bottom paint. There are numerous bottom paints on the market, each with their own advantages. Use the time that you have to do some research. Check out the manufacturers' websites and take advantage of the "contact us" or "technical support" feature to ask specific questions about their product. Only you know the conditions that your boat will likely encounter and what kind of results you are looking for. A major decision that you need to make is if you are going to do the work yourself or if you are going to have someone else do the job.

Perhaps you are wondering what kind of return you will see in tackling such a large job as bottom painting. If you put a lot of hours on your vessel, you will undoubtedly notice that your fuel expenses are less. The more parasites and bacterial growth that you have on the bottom of your boat, the greater the drag; thereby decreasing your fuel efficiency. Extra power and rpm are needed to push the same amount of displacement through the water and increased stress is placed on the shaft and outdrive. Excessive stress means more maintenance bills and wear and tear on your equipment.

This is also an excellent time to deal with the hull and topsides of your vessel. To help save and maintain the longevity of your color, whether gelcoat or paint, wax and compounding will do wonders to stave off the effects of oxidation, UV damage, and the harsh marine environment. If the color has started to fade, compound it back. If doing yourself, ask questions and take the time the off season provides to do your research. What compound is best for Awlgrip? Can I use this compound on gelcoat? What is the best rpm for buffing? Compounding can get some into trouble as too high an rpm while buffing can burn or even remove the product you are trying to shine. Go to credible sources and ask; information is free. This is a prime time, while the boat is out of the water, to do any gelcoat repairs that may be needed. There are several sources for step by step instructions that will walk you through the repair of minor (and not so minor) scratches and digs in the hull. Doing it during the off season gives you the time to do the job right and not be rushed.

Another benefit of the off season is that everyone has more spare time

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“Ask Tim” Your Boat Maintenance Questions

ABA introduced Tim Harrington and the new “Ask Tim” section of *ABA Online*[®],

www.americanboating.org this spring. Many of you have taken advantage of Tim's knowledge and have submitted good questions to Tim. Read some of the questions and Tim's responses in the “Ask Tim” section of the website. You may just find the answer that you have been looking for to solve a problem.

As you are ending another boating season, don't forget to “Ask Tim” any questions that may arise as you decommission for the winter. When submitting questions to Tim, give as many details as possible about your boat (year, manufacturer, model, engine) and the problem. Tim will let you know his assessment of your situation and a recommended course of action. ■

Save Money With the New ABA Boat Insurance Program

You can now receive a free, instant online quote for your boat insurance through the ABA Boat Insurance Program at www.americanboating.org, or you can call toll free 877-229-7775. The ABA Boat Insurance Program offers very competitive rates and coverage for many types of boats on a nationwide basis.

ABA's Boat Insurance Program is provided through a partnership with National Marine Underwriters, Inc. who has been providing marine insurance for almost 20 years. They are a leading underwriter of recreational boats, yachts, personal watercraft, and six-passenger charter boats. Marine insurance is all they offer. Focusing on one class of insurance allows them to concentrate their efforts and provide a comprehensive all risk policy with competitive terms. Policies are issued by Hanover Insurance Company who is rated “A” by A.M. Best Company, which is based upon Hanover's financial stability and its ability to pay its claims.

Get your quote today at www.americanboating.org, or call toll free 877-229-7775. Be sure to identify yourself as an ABA member! ■

ON THE HORIZON

Boat Shows

Representative boat shows are listed below. For a full boat show listing and to link to boat show websites, please visit www.americanboating.org.

September 11 - 15

North American Sail & Power Boat Show, OH

(440) 899-5009

Lake Union Boats

Afloat Show, WA

(206) 545-8804

September 12 - 15

Indianapolis Fall Boat & RV Show, IN

(800) 892-1723

Tampa International Boat Show, FL

(305) 531-8410

Lido Yacht Expo, CA

(949) 757-5959

Newport International Boat Show, RI

(401) 846-1115

September 14 - 15

Fall Power & Sail Boat Show, CA

(800) 834-1004

September 14 - 22

Boat Show USA - Fall, MI

(800) 529-0494

September 19 - 22

Norwalk International In-Water Boat Show, CT

(212) 922-1212

September 20 - 22

Sunfest Boat Show, MD

(410) 213-1121

September 22 - 23

Antique & Classic Boat Show, VA

(757) 727-1276

September 26 - 29

Mid-Atlantic Boat Show, MD

(800) 378-4315

International Sail & Power Boat Show, CA

(714) 633-7581

Houston International In-Water Boat Show, TX

(713) 526-6361

September 27 - 29 & October 5 - 6

Long Island In-Water Fall Boat Show, NY

(631) 691-7050

October 2 - 5

International Boston In-Water Boat Show, MA

(978) 777-4439

October 10 - 17

United States Sailboat Show, MD

(410) 268-8828

Boating Lake Tahoe - continued from page 1

named town of Stateline on the south shore is a great reference point. From here, proceeding clockwise, boating on Lake Tahoe is easy to review.

The south shore is a great place from which to start a Lake Tahoe trip, with many public launch ramps and private marinas. From here, the granite peaks of Emerald Bay and California's Emerald Bay State Park are easy to reach. El Dorado Beach (530-542-6056) is a popular launching point, with full boating facilities, while private marina options along the south shore include Camp Richardson Marina (530-542-6570), Ski Run Marina Village (530-541-2155), Tahoe Keys Marina (530-541-2155), Timaber Cove Marina (530-544-2942), and Lakeside Marina (530-541-6626). The last four marinas are in the south Lake Tahoe area, while Camp Richardson is to the west.

The west shore includes the towns of Meeks Bay, Tahoma, and Homewood with Obexer's (530-525-7962) and Homewood High and Dry Marina (530-525-5966) providing full marina services in Homewood, and Meeks Bay Marina (530-525-6946) doing the same for its namesake area. Highlights in this vicinity include convenient access to Tahoe City and points north, as well as the opportunity to take a cruise with Steve Hanst, owner of Classic Cruises (530-525-4055) and his 1936 Stephens Sedan Cruiser.

To the north, bustling Tahoe City and the rest of California's west shore and north shore await. There's public launching at Lake Forest (530-583-5544) in Tahoe City, with plentiful private marina options including Tahoe City Marina (530-583-1039) and Sunnyside Marina (530-583-7201). To the north, heading towards popular Kings Beach, Tahoe City Marina in Carnelian Bay and North Tahoe Marina (530-546-8248) in Tahoe Vista await. Kings Beach also offers small boat launching and the popular Kings Beach State Recreation Area (530-546-7248).

Back in Nevada, boating along Crystal Bay is some of

the best on Lake Tahoe. Lake Tahoe-Nevada State Park (775-831-0494) is a perfect destination (or launching point), with a public launching ramp and nearby Incline Village among the draws. To the south, Glenbrook Bay features some huge homes and great cruising.

Just north of Stateline, the Zephyr Cove area features a public boat ramp operated by Nevada State Parks as well as the popular Zephyr Cove Marina (775-588-3833), with full facilities. From here, popular areas like California's Emerald Bay (covered above) are easily reached.

Thus from Stateline all the way around the lake to Zephyr Cove, Lake Tahoe offers great boating.

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ABA Boat Insurance Program

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(if you call, be sure to identify yourself as an ABA member!)

Boating Lake Tahoe - continued from page 3

Just choose your ramp or marina and hit the lake!

For further boating information, call the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) at 775-558-4547 or visit their website at www.trpa.org. Another website, www.boattahoe.com, is also an excellent resource. ■

Winter Maintenance continued from page 2

and other boaters and yard staff will likely have the time and inclination to discuss all of the various intricacies of any job you feel like tackling. The problem may be more one of getting too much advice!

Make a list as you find things so you remember to complete them before spring is upon you. Instead of the off season being a time of lamenting your lost time with your boat, make it a time of intimate contact with her preparing for many memorable days on the water. ■

Boat Evaluations Available

ABA, in conjunction with Boattest.com, has made it easier to research boats through the "Boat Test" section of www.americanboating.org. Boats are listed by type (bass, cruiser, deckboat, fishing, high performance, etc.), then by manufacturer. Click on the boat that you are interested in to see general information, specifications, test results and photos. Contact information of the manufacturer is also listed.

Save time by using this very handy and informative section of the ABA website. ■

BOATER'S QUIZ

When You Winterize . . .

Nobody likes to think about the boating season coming to an end, but for most of the country, that's what's happening. On the other hand, nothing better insures our winter dreams for the year ahead than the care we take in putting our boats properly to bed. For more details on the smart moves suggested by these questions, check the step-by-step guide to winterizing at www.americanboating.org, under Boating Tips.

1. What number should you enter on your storage card?
 - a. Motor ID
 - b. Compression test results
 - c. LOA
2. What do you do with your boat's battery?
 - a. Ground it
 - b. Empty it
 - c. Disconnect it
3. The propeller shaft should be:
 - a. Greased
 - b. Wiped dry
 - c. Sanded smooth
4. How do you winterize your boat's salt water systems?
 - a. Fill to capacity and seal
 - b. Add antifreeze
 - c. Drain them
5. And the fresh water systems?
 - a. Add salt
 - b. Insulate
 - c. Add antifreeze or drain
6. Where's the best place to store drain plugs in a pulled boat?
 - a. In the bait well
 - b. Replace in drain
 - c. Tied to helm in plastic bag
7. What about modular instruments, stereo, speakers, power supplies?
 - a. Plastic wrap and seal
 - b. Remove and tag
 - c. Pack with desiccant in place
8. How do you deal with the fuel system?
 - a. Top off, but don't overfill
 - b. Drain and store
 - c. Run it dry
9. With what do you treat the cabin?
 - a. Pine scent air freshener
 - b. Mothballs
 - c. Mildew proofing
10. What should you look for in your drive pulleys?
 - a. Burnt or cracked rubber
 - b. Oil/grease
 - c. Rust

Key to Answers:
1b; 2c; 3a; 4c; 5c; 6c; 7b; 8a; 9c; 10c

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- **Enterprise Rent-A-Car Discounts:**
800-593-0505, ID#KC4551
- **Hertz Auto Rental Discounts:**
800-654-2200, ID#1290122
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