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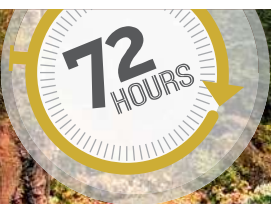
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Middle McCloud River Falls  
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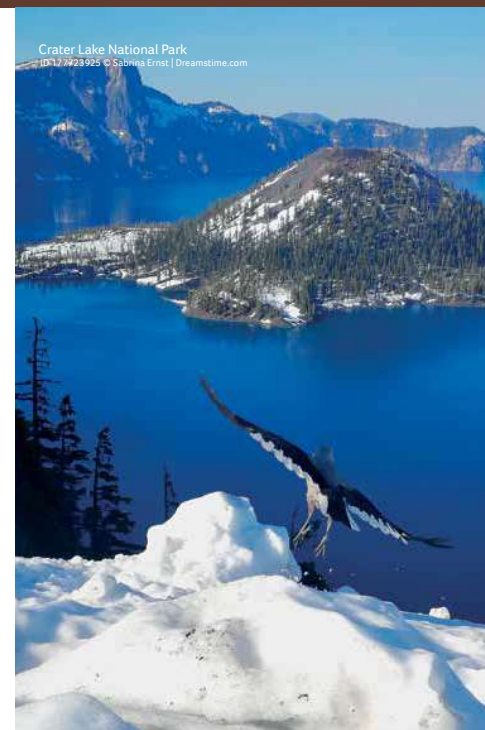
# A Long Winter Weekend in the **KLAMATH BASIN**

BY ADAM SAWYER



**PERHAPS DUE TO THE FACT** that Klamath Falls sees an average of 300 days of sunshine a year, potential visitors might see the town and the broader Klamath Basin it resides in as more of a warm-weather destination. And there's plenty to do in summer; however, the benefits of the region's geology help to make it a perfect winter playground.

The town of Klamath Falls sits in the belly of the basin and is surrounded by high deserts, marshes, lakes, rivers and wetlands. All of that is guarded by rising mountain peaks and forested ranges that see their fair share of winter snowfall. What might three days in the Klamath Basin in winter look like? Glad you asked.



Crater Lake National Park  
ID 117729925 © Sabina Ernst | Dreamstime.com



Basin Martini Bar, Klamath Falls  
© Discover Klamath

Let's say you happen to arrive in the early afternoon, in which case a nice leg stretch and some in-town time might be in order. Klamath Falls' Moore Park is home to an extensive trail system that explores habitats ranging from sage and juniper steppes to dense pine forest. If you happened to bring bikes along on the journey, the trails of Moore Park are also great for mountain biking.

The Fairfield Inn next to downtown and on the banks of Lake Ewauna makes a fine home base. Get checked in and head over to the cocktail bar of choice in downtown Klamath Falls, the Basin Martini Bar. In addition to craft cocktails and wine, the elevated dining options and ambiance help make the BMB the complete package.

The next morning, grab breakfast and perhaps some handhelds for later from the homey coffee shop and deli, A Leap of Taste, and head into the mountains for some snowmobiling. Taking advantage of a cadre of natural attributes, a large number of Sno-Parks encircle the basin, providing hundreds of miles of well-groomed and maintained trails that afford truly something for all skill levels and abilities from rank novice to expert. And places like the Lake of the Woods Resort offer snowmobile and snowshoe rentals onsite. From the resort, enjoy over 165 miles of trails that snake easily through forests of high-elevation firs and larches.

Finish the day off with dinner and drinks at the Falls Taphouse. Choose from over 30 craft beer, cider, and wine options on tap and an insanely good beer cooler. Then grab a bite from one of the onsite food trucks including the always wonderful Wubba's BBQ and enjoy view-laden rooftop tables and ample outdoor seating.

The next day, fuel up at the Daily Bagel and head out on a waterfall road trip along the Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway. Yes indeed, the waterfalls of the Klamath Basin are regularly accessible in winter. It's about an hour and 45-minute drive across the California border to the Lower Falls parking area in McCloud.



Although all three waterfalls of the McCloud River have their own parking area and viewpoints, starting from the Lower Falls and enjoying a 3.5-mile out and back hike is the recommended route. The trail through the McCloud River Canyon showcases the eruptive history of Mount Shasta, with the river etching through numerous layers of lava rock and pouring over a series of distinct waterfalls.

Depending on how early you left town and your hiking pace, you can continue down the road another 40 minutes to the 129-foot Burney Falls. As the creek drops over a basalt cliff, spring water joins in on the fun, seeping out from the rock wall on either side of the cascade, combining to produce a flow of over 100 million gallons a day, making it one of the most dramatically beautiful and unique cascades around. On a side note, if you're more into waterfowl than you are waterfalls, sub out this excursion with a trip just across the California state line to the Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuge to observe the massive population of the basin's overwintering birds, including bald eagle. Cap the day off at the Ruddy Duck Restaurant for

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hearty home cooking with a modern twist and call it a day.

On the final morning of your long weekend adventure, pack up and swing by the Grocery Pub for the day's provisions. The neighborhood eatery/grocery store offers a full, well-rounded deli-style menu with options for any and all dietary restrictions. Plenty of beer and wine options, and a grab-n-go cooler to boot. Then head north to Crater Lake for a snowshoe adventure. The majority of the park is closed during the winter, but Rangers lead guided snowshoe excursions through the forest and up to the rim of the crater, where the views of the lake's serene winter landscape will leave a lasting impression on even the most scenery-jaded outdoor enthusiast.

From there, it's back from whence you came. For the time being, anyway. As mentioned, there's a lot of summer activities that can fill a 72-hour itinerary and then some.

Plan your Klamath Basin adventure at [discoverklamath.com](http://discoverklamath.com). Learn more about travel in the broader Southern Oregon region at [southernoregon.org](http://southernoregon.org).



Lake of the Woods snowshoeing  
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Snowmobiling Pelican Butte  
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