From 1950-2000, these were some of Utah's most popular and beloved attractions

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In the latter half of the 20th century, Utah's man-made attractions also made waves. From thrilling amusement parks to captivating cultural centers, here's a look at some of the most exciting places that have drawn large crowds over several decades.

Lagoon

Although Lagoon Amusement Park has been delighting visitors since the late 1800s, it truly came into its own during the 1950s and 1960s. According to lagoonpark.com, "During the 1950s and 60s, the park became a hot concert spot, drawing many famous entertainers. In 1960 alone, Louis Armstrong, Johnny Cash, Ella Fitzgerald, and Duke Ellington played for the crowds."

Over the years, Lagoon's stage hosted an impressive lineup of legends, including the Beach Boys, the Rolling Stones, the Doors, and Janis Joplin. While major concerts are no longer part of the park's offerings, its thrilling rides and timeless charm continue to attract over a million visitors each year, keeping the spirit of Lagoon's golden era alive.

Temple Square

As the headquarters of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Temple Square has always been a focal point for Church gatherings and events. According to a December 1990 Church News report, visits surged from 2 million to 4.8 million between 1980 and 1990. By 1988, Temple Square even outpaced iconic landmarks like the Washington Monument and the Statue of Liberty in annual visitor numbers.

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Photo: Sean Pavone/Shutterstock.com

Lake Powell

A beloved getaway destination for anyone who enjoys houseboating, skiing or basking in breathtaking views of blue water against red rock canyons, Lake Powell is a beautiful man-made treasure. After reaching capacity in 1980, the outdoor playground has since welcomed scores of visitors. The National Park Service estimates that 3.5 million people visit each year.

Hill Aerospace Museum

Since opening in 1986, Hill Aerospace Museum on the corner of Hill Air Force Base has been a popular and family-friendly attraction. It delights both history buffs and aviation fans alike with its collection of over 70 different aircraft that spans from the early days of the Wright brothers up through every major war and modern aircraft. And here's another reason to visit with the whole family: admission is free.

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in 1978 when the Utah Film Commission launched the Utah/United States Film Festival to spotlight independent cinema and connect filmmakers with the Beehive State. Enter Robert Redford, a Utah resident and film icon, who saw the festival's potential and transformed it into the Sundance Film Festival in 1991.

According to Britannica, by the early 1990s, Sundance had cemented its status as a launching pad for American independent filmmakers, propelling the careers of legends like the Coen brothers, Steven Soderbergh and Quentin Tarantino.



Photo: Heidi Besen/Shutterstock.com

The Spiral Jetty

The Spiral Jetty, a monumental earthwork on the shores of the Great Salt Lake, has attracted art and nature lovers far and wide since artist Robert Smithson created it in 1970. If you're

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As landscape photographer Victoria Sambunaris tells Architectural Digest, "Any day you go you will experience it differently … You might see the lake is a different color. Sometimes you see this magenta color or sometimes it's a vivid blue … everything changes with the light."

Hole N" The Rock

Beginning in the 1940s, Albert Christensen decided to build — or rather dig — his family's dream home right into the side of a cliff just south of Moab. It took 12 years for Christensen to carve out 5,000 square feet into the rock, which included 14 rooms, a fireplace, a chimney and a bathtub. Christensen died shortly after finishing the home, but his wife lived there until she passed away in the 1970s. Known as Hole N" The Rock, this is a truly unique roadside tourist attraction these days, complete with a petting zoo, a collection of metal sculptures, a trading post and a souvenir shop.

And there's plenty more to see

Perhaps you're already familiar with these attractions and you're looking for something new and exciting to explore in the Beehive State. If so, you're in luck. This list from Utah.com is a pretty good place to start!



Celebrities you didn't know had Utah roots

Even if you're familiar with some or many of these names, there's a good chance that at least one of them will come as a total surprise. Here are eight celebrities you might not know had Utah roots.

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