



Palm Springs & the Deserts

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Best Places to Eat

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- » Pastels Bistro (p694)

Best Places to Stay

- » Riviera Palm Springs (p659)
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- » Palms at Indian Head (p677)
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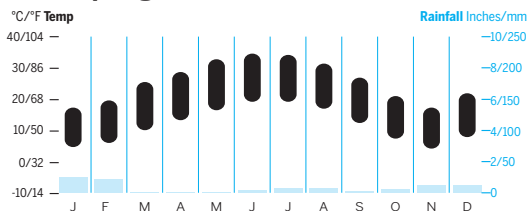
Why Go?

There's something undeniably artistic in the way the landscape unfolds in the California desert. Weathered volcanic peaks stand sentinel over singing sand dunes and mountains shimmering in hues from mustard yellow to vibrant pink. Hot mineral water spurts from the earth's belly to feed palm oases and soothe aching muscles in stylish spas. Tiny wildflowers push up from the hard-baked soil to celebrate springtime.

But it's not just nature that has shaped the desert. The riches of its soil have lured prospectors and miners, while its beauty and spirituality has tugged at the hearts of artists, visionaries and wanderers. Eccentrics, misfits and the military are drawn by its vastness and solitude. Hipsters and celebs come for the climate and retro flair. And through it all threads iconic Route 66, still lined with moodily rusting roadside relics. No matter what your trail, the desert will creep into your consciousness and never fully leave.

When to Go

Palm Springs



Feb & Mar A painter's palette of wildflowers drenches the desert floor in a riot of color.

Nov–Apr Bright and warm days lure the sun-starved. Perfect time for outdoor activities.

Jul & Aug Not for the faint of heart. Temperatures soar, but room rates plunge.



Palm Springs & the Deserts Highlights

- 1** Ascend through five distinct zones in less than 15 minutes aboard the **Palm Springs Aerial Tramway** (p653)
- 2** Poke around mining ghost towns in **Death Valley National Park** (p686)
- 3** Navigate smooth boulders in the **Hidden Valley** (p666) at Joshua Tree National Park
- 4** Hunt rare elephant trees and scramble around the wind caves of vast **Anza-Borrego Desert State Park** (p674)
- 5** Hide out at **Hole-in-the-Wall** (p684) in the forgotten Mojave National Preserve
- 6** Lose yourself (but hopefully not your money) on the **Las Vegas Strip** (p696)
- 7** Revel in the mythology of the Mother Road at the **California Route 66 Museum** (p681) in Victorville
- 8** Feel fabulous stretched out next to the kidney-shaped pool in a **Mid-Century Modern boutique hotel** (p659) in Palm Springs