



Palm Springs & the Deserts

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Best Places to Eat

- Trio (p671)
- Cheeky's (p671)
- Inn at Furnace Creek (p699)
- Pastels Bistro (p702)

Best Places to Stay

- Riviera Palm Springs (p670)
- El Morocco Inn & Spa (p670)
- La Casa del Zorro (p686)
- Sacred Sands (p680)
- Mandalay Bay (p709)

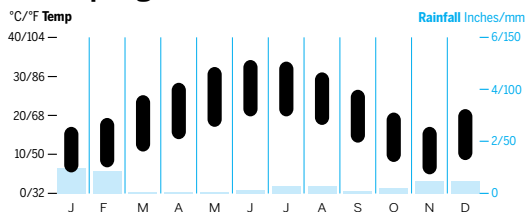
Why Go?

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.

The riches of the desert soil have lured prospectors and miners, while its beauty and spirituality have 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. Through it all threads iconic Route 66, 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



Dec–Apr Moderate temperatures lure in 'snowbirds' and LA weekend trippers.

May–mid-Jun, mid-Sep–Nov Crowds thin out as temperatures arc during shoulder season.

Jun–Sep Some inns and restaurants close in summer's heat; many of the rest offer great deals.



Palm Springs & the Deserts Highlights

1 Ascend through five zones in less than 15 minutes aboard the **Palm Springs Aerial Tramway** (p663).

2 Stretch out next to a kidney-shaped pool in a mid-century modern hotel in **Palm Springs**.

3 Walk in the footsteps of presidents and royalty at **Sunnylands Estate** (p347).

4 Traverse to the lowest point in the Western Hemisphere in **Death Valley National Park** (p693)

5 Navigate smooth boulders in the **Hidden Valley** (p675) at **Joshua Tree National Park**.

6 Scramble around the wind caves of vast **Anza-Borrego Desert State Park** (p682).

7 Hide out at **Hole-in-the-Wall** (p692) in the forgotten **Mojave National Preserve**.

8 Lose yourself (but hopefully not your money) on the **Las Vegas Strip** (p704).

9 Revel in the mythology of the Mother Road at the California Route 66 Museum (p689) in **Victorville**.