

# welcome to Southwest USA



## The Great Outdoors

Beauty and adventure don't just join hands in the Southwest. They crank up the white-water, unleash the single track, add blooms to the trail and drape a sunset across the red rocks. Then they smile and say, 'Come in.' This captivating mix of scenery and possibility lures travelers who want to rejuvenate physically, mentally and spiritually. The big draw is the Grand Canyon, a two-billion-year-old wonder that shares its geologic treasures with a healthy dose of fun. Next door in Utah, the red rocks will nourish your soul while thrashing your bike. In southern Colorado ice climbing and mountain biking never looked so pretty. Tamp down the adrenaline in New Mexico

with a scenic drive, an art walk or a lazy slide down a shimmery dune. And Vegas? Your willpower may be the only thing exercised, but chasing the neon lights will certainly add verve to your vacation.

## This is the Place for History

The Southwest wears its history on its big, sandy sleeve. Ancient cultures left behind cliff dwellings and petroglyphs while their descendants live on in reservations and pueblos. Navajos and Apaches arrived next, followed by Spanish conquistadors. Next up? The missionaries, who left a string of stunning missions in their wake. Mormon religious refugees arrived with

*The Southwest is America's playground, luring adventurers and artists with the promise of red-rock landscapes, the legends of shoot-'em-up cowboys and the kicky delights of a green chile stew.*

(left) The Mittens, Monument Valley  
(below) Cactus blooms



Brigham Young, who famously declared, 'This is the place' when he reached the Salt Lake Valley. Their cities have flourished, proving more durable than the region's abandoned mining towns. Which brings us to the Old West. There was gold and copper in them thar hills and plenty of land for cattle-grazing. Tombstone is one Old West town that lives to fight another day – well, every day at 2pm – while dude ranches lure wannabe cowboys.

## Multicultural Meanderings

It's the multicultural mix – Native American, Hispanic, Anglo – that makes a trip to the Southwest unique. There are 19 Native

American pueblos in New Mexico, and the Navajo Reservation alone covers more than 27,000 sq miles. Monument Valley and Canyon de Chelly, two of the most striking geologic features in the Southwest, are protected as sacred places. Tribal traditions and imagery influence art across the region. The Spanish and Mexican cultures are also a part of daily life, from the food to the language to the headlines about illegal immigration. In Utah 58% of the population identifies as Mormon, and the religion's stringent disapproval of 'vices' keeps the state on an even keel. So savor the cultural differences – and start with that green chile stew.