



Southwest

Includes »

Nevada.....	306
Las Vegas.....	306
Arizona.....	324
Phoenix.....	325
Flagstaff.....	334
Grand Canyon National Park.....	339
Tucson.....	348
Utah.....	353
Salt Lake City.....	354
New Mexico.....	373
Albuquerque.....	374
Santa Fe.....	379
Taos.....	387

Best Places to Eat

- » Café Diablo (p368)
- » Elote Cafe (p337)
- » Joël Robuchon (p313)
- » Poco (p353)
- » San Marcos Café (p383)

Best Places to Stay

- » Cosmopolitan (p307)
- » Earthship Rentals (p388)
- » El Tovar Hotel (p342)
- » Motor Lodge (p338)
- » Sundance Resort (p363)

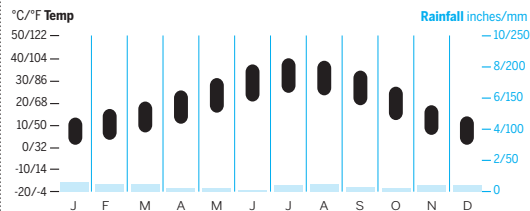
Why Go?

Breathtaking beauty and the allure of adventure merge seamlessly in the Southwest. This captivating mix has drawn dreamers and explorers for centuries. Pioneers staked their claims beside lush riverbanks, prospectors dug into mountains for untold riches, religious refugees built cities across empty deserts, while astronomers and rocket builders peered into star-filled skies. Today, artists and entrepreneurs flock to urban centers and quirky mining towns, energizing the entire region.

For travelers, beauty and adventure still loom large in this land of mountains, deserts and wide-open spaces sprawled across Nevada, Arizona, Utah and New Mexico. You can hike past red rocks, cycle beneath mountain skies, raft through canyons and roll the dice under the mesmerizing lights of Vegas. But remember: beauty and adventure here can also loom small. Study that saguaro up close. Ask a Hopi artist about his craft. Savor some green-chile stew. It's the tap-you-on-the-shoulder moments you may just cherish the most.

When to Go

Las Vegas



Jan Ski near Taos and Flagstaff. In Park City, hit the slopes and the Sundance Film Festival.

Jun-Aug High season for exploring national parks in New Mexico, Utah and northern Arizona.

Sep-Nov Hike to the bottom of the Grand Canyon or gaze at bright leaves in northern New Mexico.

DON'T MISS

A hike in the desert. Your choices? The Sonoran, Chihuahuan, Great Basin.

Fast Facts

- » Hub cities: Las Vegas (population 553,000), Phoenix (population 1.4 million), Salt Lake City (population 181,743)
- » Las Vegas to Grand Canyon National Park South Rim: 280 miles
- » Los Angeles to Albuquerque: 670 miles
- » Time zones: Nevada (Pacific), Arizona (Mountain, does not observe DST), Utah (Mountain), New Mexico (Mountain)
- » States covered in this chapter: Nevada, Arizona, Utah, New Mexico

Did You Know?

Flash floods are most common from mid-July to early September. Avoid camping on sandy washes and canyon bottoms; don't drive across flooded roads. If hiking, move quickly to higher ground.

Resources

- » American Southwest (www.americansouthwest.net) covers parks and natural landscapes.
- » Grand Canyon Association (www.grandcanyon.org) has an extensive online bookstore for the park.
- » Recreation.gov (www.recreation.gov) takes reservations for camping and other activities at nationally run outdoor areas.

Getting There & Around

Phoenix' Sky Harbor International Airport and Las Vegas' McCarran International Airport are the region's busiest airports, followed by the airports serving Salt Lake City, Albuquerque and Tucson.

Greyhound stops at major points within the region but doesn't serve all national parks or off-the-beaten-path tourist towns such as Moab. In larger cities, bus terminals can be in less-safe areas of town.

Private vehicles are often the only means to reach out-of-the-way towns, trailheads and swimming spots. For car rentals, see p457.

Amtrak train service is much more limited than the bus system, although it does link many major Southwestern cities and offers bus connections to others (including Santa Fe and Phoenix). The *California Zephyr* crosses Utah and Nevada; the *Southwest Chief* stops in Arizona and New Mexico; and the *Sunset Limited* traverses southern Arizona and New Mexico.

NATIONAL & STATE PARKS

Containing 40 national parks and monuments, the Southwest is a scenic and cultural jackpot. Add some stunning state parks, and, well, you might need to extend your trip.

One of the most deservedly popular national parks is Arizona's Grand Canyon National Park. Other Arizona parks include Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park, a desert basin with towering sandstone pillars and buttes; Canyon de Chelly National Monument, with ancient cliff dwellings; Petrified Forest National Park, with its odd mix of Painted Desert and fossilized logs; and Saguaro National Park, with pristine desert and giant cacti.

The southern red-rock Canyon Country in Utah includes five national parks: Arches, Canyonlands, Zion, Bryce Canyon and Capitol Reef, which offers exceptional wilderness solitude. Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument is a mighty region of undeveloped desert. New Mexico boasts Carlsbad Caverns National Park and the mysterious Chaco Culture National Historic Park. In Nevada, Great Basin National Park is a rugged, remote mountain oasis.

For more information, check out the National Park Service website (www.nps.gov).

Top Five Places for Sunset Cocktails

- » Asylum Restaurant, Jerome Grand Hotel (p338)
- » Bell Tower Bar, La Fonda Hotel (p384)
- » Grand Canyon Lodge's veranda (p343)
- » Mix, Mandalay Bay (799)
- » Parallel 88 (p372)