

# NEVADA

Fall 2023

Display until November 1, 2023

MAGAZINE & VISITOR GUIDE

*Fall in Love*  
with Nevada's True Colors

Ghost Town Travels

A Night at the Museum  
with Creature Curios



A young boy with dark hair, wearing a white t-shirt with blue stripes on the sleeves and blue jeans, is shown in profile. He has a purple cast on his right forearm and is holding a brown leather football with both hands. He is looking down at the ball with a focused expression. The background is a blurred green, suggesting an outdoor setting with trees.

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# NEVADA

MAGAZINE & VISITOR GUIDE

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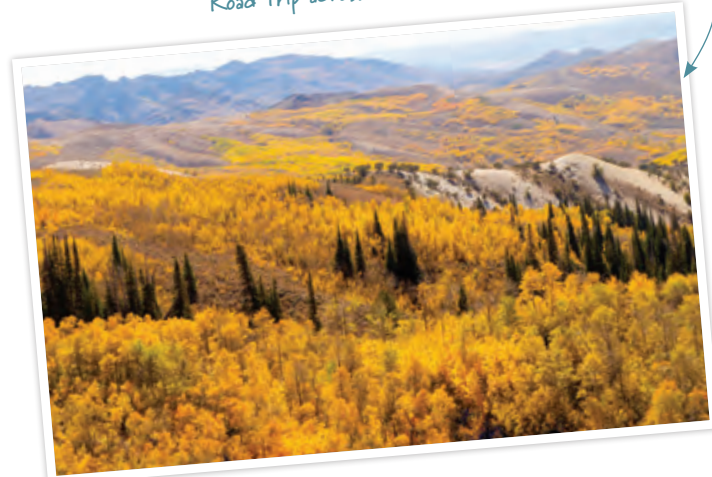
*Tempt your taste buds at the state's best diners on pg. 16.*



*Explore easily accessed ghost towns on pg. 52.*



*Road trip across Nevada's fall colors on pg. 68.*





# TURNING OVER A NEW LEAF

As the seasons change, I often find it's a time to reflect. Fall brings this about most readily as the landscape undergoes its stunning transformation. It's the cycle of life's third act: the one that prepares for a period of dormancy and hibernation after the heady days of summer. The time is right for a little rest and introspection.

It's been almost two years since this publication debuted in its new format, and the work to create an indispensable planning tool continues. Each issue, we listen to feedback and tweak our stories to best serve our readers. These readers include many of our long-time *Nevada Magazine* subscribers. They come for the stories we've told since the magazine began in 1936, and those deep dives (as we like to call them) veer slightly from our tourist-friendly format. These are stories about the soul of Nevada, a behind-the-scenes view of what makes this such a spectacular place to live and visit.

All of our stories include little peeks into the local view of life here, but some delve a bit more, such as our look at our state flower, sagebrush. This unassuming shrub is key to many plants and animals, and it's the perfect state symbol. We'll also tell you about two brothers who left indelible marks on Nevada: Paul and Robert Laxalt are truly Legendary Nevadans.

Along with our usual mix of places to visit and things to see, wait until you feast your eyes on our story about locations to view fall color. Yep, you read that right. We've got some seriously cool leaf-peeping spots right here in the Silver State.

Enjoy!

Megg Mueller, Executive Editor

Discover history  
and hauntings  
at the Historic  
Nevada State  
Prison on pg. 40.



MEGG MUELLER



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us what you like/don't  
like about the guide  
AND what you'd like  
to see in future issues!



Plan your next off-road adventure  
on pg. 80.





# TALK TO US

While there are plenty of things you'll want to keep to yourself during your vacation, we know there are must-post pictures your friends have to see. Here's how to share them and inspire a bit of envy about your trip to NV.

## WE'RE HERE

For all things social, find us at [@TravelNevada](#). If we love your pic, we might ask to reshare it or include it in our next guide!



@\_BRANDI\_MOYA



@DUNYTRAVELS



@JMELART

## HASH IT UP

Nevada has so many reasons to blow up your friends' social feeds, from no-filter-needed scenery to selfies sure to induce a little FOMO. Tag your pictures, and while [#TravelNevada](#) always works, look for other tags geared toward your favorite theme.

Dive deeper into the Silver State at [NevadaMagazine.com](#). For more than 87 years, we've mined a rich vein of stories on history, outdoor rec, cuisine, and more, with new stories added each month. If your adventure fits our deep dive, tag us at [#nvmag](#). See pg. 90 for more.





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LAS VEGAS



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To get your head around all the options, turn to page 98.

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Martin Gollery (group at Spooner Lake State Park),  
Jen Knight (hiking in Mt. Charleston)





*Trekking across Nevada this autumn? You're in for perfect-weather days, off-road adventure, and some of our favorite small-town soirees.*

## COVERS

**Front:** A hunting cabin in the Granite Mountains.  
Photographer: Michelle Sourwine

**Back:** Backpacking in the Schell Creek Range.  
Photographer: Gretchen Baker



(Ed: Our Summer 2023 cover was illustrated by Kate O'Hara.)

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A conversation with the chef, restaurateur, and community leader





# DID YOU KNOW? THE STRIP

If you traveled back to 1940 to visit what is now The Strip, you'd be in the middle of the desert with the tiny town of Las Vegas—population 8,500—a few miles north. But even back then, more than a million motorists were passing through this rural section of the Mojave each year. Developers spied opportunity and wagered that some of those travelers might like to stop for a bed, meal, and maybe even some gaming. Fast forward 80 years, and The Strip—named after Hollywood's Sunset Strip—is one of the most popular tourist destinations on the planet.

## THE CURRENT RESIDENTS & YEAR OPENED

Flamingo 1946  
Caesars Palace 1966  
Circus Circus 1968  
The Mirage 1989  
Excalibur 1990  
Harrah's 1992  
Casino Royale 1992  
Luxor 1993  
Treasure Island 1993  
MGM Grand 1993  
New York-New York 1997  
Bellagio 1998  
Mandalay Bay 1999  
The Venetian 1999  
Paris 1999  
Four Seasons 1999  
Wynn 2005  
Planet Hollywood 2007  
CityCenter 2009  
The Cosmopolitan 2010  
The LINQ 2014  
The Cromwell 2014  
Park MGM 2018  
SAHARA 2019  
The Strat 2020  
Resorts World 2021  
Horseshoe 2022  
Fontainebleau 2023  
Bally's Las Vegas 2023  
Dream 2024

From 1993 until its end in 2003,



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ran more than **16,000** times



**1941 THE WILD WEST-  
THEMED EL  
RANCHO OPENS  
AS THE STRIP'S  
FIRST RESORT**

*It features a swimming pool, motel,  
casino, coffee shop, and riding stable*



**THE STRAT'S  
1,149 FEET**  
*make it the tallest  
observation tower  
in the nation*

The average stay is around **5** DAYS

Las Vegas  
became the  
**U.S. CITY  
WITH THE  
MOST  
HOTEL  
ROOMS** in  
**1996,**  
*overtaking Orlando*

THE STRIP IS

# TECHNICALLY NOT IN LAS VEGAS

*It runs along the unincorporated towns  
of Paradise and Winchester*



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# EYE CANDY

QUICK HITS *EYE CANDY*








## REVERED RETREAT

Karen Brown-Gordon snapped this image on the Cathedral Rock Trail on Mt. Charleston. “This shot was taken while browsing the color-changing aspens. Because the range is on the outskirts of Las Vegas, this was a lovely escape from the desert.”

 Canon 60D, 1/100 sec, f/7.1, ISO 100


*Check out some fall colors up north  
in the Silver State on pg. 68.*





## FIERY SKIES

Rick Topper submitted this shot after a photoshoot in Fish Lake Valley near Dyer. “While aligning my telescope, I noticed the images were red when the skies were near perfect. I took a test image on my camera and again saw the weird light. I then knew the Northern Lights were happening because I had captured this once before. I caught the entire event from beginning to end, more than 2 hours. The peak light occurred in the first 20 minutes and then the atmosphere reverberated long after with orange and pink columns.”

 Nikon D850, 20 sec, f/2.8, ISO 6400


*Fish Lake Valley is home to ghost towns, stunning hikes, and plenty of room and board options. Read more about this remote, verdant valley on pg. 52*






## MORNING LIGHT

Larry Leigh took this photo at Lamoille Lake in the Ruby Mountains. “We were camped at Thomas Creek Campground and woke up in the dark—and cold—to head up to Lamoille Lake for first light. From this particular angle, the colors just popped and the whole scene looked incredibly crisp.”

 Nikon D810, 1/10 sec, f/16, ISO 64

## DESERT MOOD

Mitch Chandran captured this image north of Lake Mead on Route 167. “It was an overcast day, so my wife and I decided to go for a drive. This very scenic road traverses the northern side of Lake Mead and loops back to the entrance of Valley of Fire State Park. Days like this are a good opportunity to capture interesting landscapes because what’s in the sky is just as important as what’s on the ground.”

 Nikon D3200, 1/400 sec, f/16, ISO 100





# COMFORT CUISINE

Fuel up for adventure at these small-town eateries.



ROADRUNNER BURGER AND BLT  
GRILLED CHEESE AT ROADRUNNER CAFÉ



Whether you know them as cafés, diners, hash houses, or greasy spoons, rural restaurants are the oases of the highway. Yes, they provide essential, good-mood-food for road trippers, but that's not the only reason they're beloved. The fact is that diners are a universal part of American culture. Everything from the white mugs to the laminated menus and breakfast counter chatter is welcomingly familiar no matter how far from home we are. So, as you make your way across the Silver State, keep these excellent options in mind: Your stomach and your spirit will thank you.



## ROADRUNNER CAFÉ

Dayton

Whether you're finishing up or embarking on your journey across the Loneliest Road in America (Highway 50), a plate of delicious Americana cuisine is well deserved. With a wide menu featuring everything from chili and burgers to salads and fish and chips, everyone in your group is guaranteed to find something they love. After the meal, treat yourself to a stroll because the Roadrunner Café is next to some of the oldest structures in the state.

*While we were there: A customer at Roadrunner Café commented, "Wow, that food came fast!"*

*"Beep beep!" replied the waitress, not missing a beat.*



## WIGWAM RESTAURANT & CASINO

Fernley

If Pyramid Lake is on the itinerary, make plans to break bread at the Wigwam. For 40 years, this Fernley staple has served all-day breakfast, burgers, sandwiches and wraps, towering pasta entrees, and decadent homemade pies and milkshakes. If you're not sure what to order, get a local favorite: chicken fried steak served with homemade gravy. While you wait for a table, be sure to check out the on-site gallery of tools, baskets, beads, and arrowhead artifacts from Nevada's Northern Paiute Tribes.











## THE GRIDDLE

Winnemucca

This 1960s-era time capsule might be one of the best diners on Interstate 80. In fact, it is so popular that it has even branched out to four locations in Idaho. You'll find all the breakfast and lunch favorites here, but The Griddle's menu also offers gourmet dishes that read like a fancy metropolitan bistro. When you sit down to enjoy that plate of raspberry crepes, pecan-crusted French toast with bacon, slow-cooked corned beef Reubens, or quinoa tacos—don't forget you're still in the middle of cowboy country.



## GEMA'S CAFÉ

Beatty

Nestled in the heart of quiet Beatty, Gema's Café offers fresh, made-to-order classics but with a Mexican American twist. As you sip your freshly roasted coffee, you'll be selecting from a menu featuring favorite family recipes passed down from Gema's abuelita. For breakfast, we recommend you try the Spanish Omelet or enchiladas. If you stop in closer to dinnertime, try the nachos supreme, taco salad, or chicken Diablo.







### **GOLDEN WEST RESTAURANT & CASINO**

Mesquite

Open 24/7, Golden West offers a huge menu for every meal of the day. This tiny diner punches well above its weight with unbeatable breakfasts and house specials like the New York steak sandwich, clam or popcorn shrimp basket, and Navajo tacos. After your meal, enjoy an ice-cold beer at the full bar, hit the casino floor, or burn off some calories on a walk around Mesquite's historic downtown.

### **DORA'S SMOKEHOUSE AND BBQ**

Lovelock

Opening just this summer inside what was formerly the Cowpoke Café, Lovelock's newest restaurant is already tempting hungry travelers off I-80. This excellent eatery features a charming interior, friendly staff, and a mouthwatering menu that specializes in on-site smoked meat and barbecue. Along with seven burger varieties, guests can enjoy sandwich specials like the pastrami, tri tip, pulled pork, ribs, and Philly cheese steak—all accompanied with homemade side dishes.



### **HISTORIC SILVER CAFÉ**

Pioche

*The Historic Silver Café sits in the heart of one of Nevada's oldest mining towns. Check out all there is to do and see in Pioche on pg. 74.*

The family-run Historic Silver Café has been filling bellies for more than a century. And after a day exploring in and around "Nevada's Liveliest Ghost Town," that's exactly what you're going to deserve. Start the day with fresh-cooked delights like berry-slathered French toast, omelets, and country fried steaks, or grab breakfast burritos to-go for a day of exploring. In the afternoon, gorge on burgers, pulled pork sandwiches, ribeye steaks, and all the comforting fried sides. Got more mouths to feed? Order a few homemade pizzas—they're a local favorite.







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# DISCOVER

## Winnemucca, Nevada

Halfway between Salt Lake City and San Francisco on Interstate 80  
The ♥ of Northern Nevada



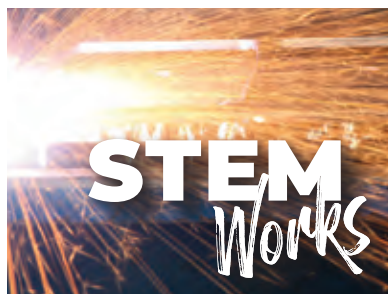
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*Sagebrush Saloons*

# GOLD HILL HOTEL & SALOON



Nevada's oldest hotel also hosts one of its most authentic bars.

Just south of Virginia City (like a little over 1 mile south), tiny Gold Hill packs a big historical punch. While there is no shortage of saloons on The Comstock, make sure to put the Gold Hill Hotel & Saloon on your libation dance card.

Although one historical marker says the property dates to 1859, local historians agree it was fully open as the Riesen House by 1861, which dates back to the Civil War era. Either way, that's long enough in the past to make this Comstock building the oldest hotel in Nevada.

SCAN FOR  
MORE INFO



SAGEBRUSH SALOONS





Entering the bar is a bit like walking into a large mine. Its walls are made of granite and old railroad pillars, and an uneven brick floor leads to a bar that seats around a dozen patrons with a couple tables rounding out the space. The ceiling holds hundreds of dollar bills tacked up by previous patrons, most with some clever(ish) notes left behind for pseudo-posterity. The well-stocked bar has one TV above it as if some sense of modern times needed to be injected into the sublimely rustic atmosphere.

A tasty meal is available at the Crown Point Restaurant a few steps away, but the saloon also has its own small menu with appetizers and pub fare such as burgers, tacos, and pizzas. Outside, a small patio with tables is the perfect place to watch the sun go down.

The Gold Hill bar is where The Comstock miners whiled away the hours more than 150 years ago, swapping tales of their days in the mines and laughing at the latest quaint from “The Territorial Enterprise.” You’re invited to step back in time for your own Sagebrush Saloon adventure.



### TRAVEL NEVADA PRO TIP

The Gold Hill Hotel & Saloon is the perfect getaway. The only full-service property in the entire Comstock National Historic District is your one-stop shop for an awesome bar, delicious restaurant, and comfy (maybe haunted?) overnight stay.



## UNCOMMON OVERNIGHTERS

It's no secret that Nevada offers world-renowned hospitality at lavish resort-casinos and cozy roadside hotels. But elsewhere in the Silver State, our perks are also our quirks. If, instead, you're looking for a vacation that's irresistibly different, Nevada's array of unique retreats and unusual accommodations have got you covered.

### *Tarantula Ranch Vineyard*

Take a step outside the ordinary for a perfectly placed adventure.







Sometimes, you just need a place to stay the night. Nothing wrong with that, but when you're ready for lodgings that are as much a part of the adventure, look no further than Tarantula Ranch Vineyard in Amargosa Valley.

Take a moment to let that sink in...a vineyard lodging named for a feared spider on the doorstep of Death Valley National Park. What else would you expect in Nevada? Tarantula Ranch is the perfect fit for anyone exploring the southern Nevada desert, especially those looking to check the stayed-at-super-cool-lodgings box.



Situated just outside the border town of Amargosa, Tarantula Ranch is the home of Brandon and Sunshine Schmidt and their three kids. Hailing from Oregon, the couple fell in love with the area and its proximity to the park. So in 2020, they took a chance on an 8-acre ranch and vineyard and haven't looked back.

Tarantula Ranch offers five dry camping spots, one RV hookup, three "glamping" trailers (see previous page), and one small guesthouse. The adorable guesthouse has a queen bed, couch, kitchenette, and private outdoor shower. The trailers accommodate two with a queen bed and storage space.

SCAN FOR  
MORE INFO



UNCOMMON OVERNIGHTERS

Want to complement your desert glamping with a meal indoors? Turn to pg. 19 to learn about an excellent dining option in nearby Beatty.



You'll also get Adirondack chairs and a table outside, plus spectacular views of the vineyard and soaring mountain peaks. Clever compostable toilets, a shared kitchen, and an awesome outdoor bathhouse round out the accommodations, along with fire pits, cornhole, and plenty of gathering spaces for your troop and for making friends with fellow campers.

Hiking trails in every direction, unfathomable sunsets, and inky-black night skies are free of charge, as are the memories you'll make at this one-of-a-kind stay.

### TRAVEL NEVADA PRO TIP

*They really do grow grapes and make wine here. If you'd like to be part of the fun, book your stay during the growing season of July-August. You can look forward to a winemaking experience, which will take you from harvesting to bottling with a free tasting at the end of the day!*



Gather your people and hit the road as you participate in the ultimate outdoor experience: Travel Nevada's Death Valley Rally. On your first stop, explore the many offerings of Pahrump through exciting off-roading excursions, sample sips at any of our wineries, or give a toast at Stonewise Mead & Cidery or Desert Cane Rum Distillery.

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# PERSONAL COLLECTIONS

Some private obsessions deserve to be on display.





Some people really like collecting things, but what can begin as a humble hobby often spirals into an obsession. First, the items require their own room, then a garage, then before you know it, you're renting out a storage locker. But some large collections really should be somewhere the public can enjoy them, such as a museum. Don't miss these two museums built entirely around showing off a lifetime's worth of acquisitions.



## WILBUR D. MAY MUSEUM

### RENO

The Wilbur D. May Museum—located near the entrance of Rancho San Rafael Park—preserves the legacy of one of Nevada’s most interesting residents. Throughout the early 20th century, Wilbur D. May lived his life as a true Renaissance man, using his wealth to pursue a wide array of interests. He was a rancher, a painter, an aviator, and a world traveler who circled the globe hunting, exploring, and accumulating art and artifacts.

The museum’s permanent display features pieces from his considerable collection. Visitors will spot treasures ranging from swords and snuff bottles to Venetian glass and Egyptian statues. May’s hunting trophy collection—one of the museum’s highlights—adorns a richly decorated parlor room.

This museum is enjoyable at all ages, but many activities and exhibits are built for children. Be sure to pick up a treasure hunt sheet: Visitors who complete it will earn a cool floral poster (there is a challenging version for adults that has you hunting down obscure oddities—can you find the Striped Dracaena?). Families can look forward to large traveling exhibits (2024 is all about toys), and if things get a little wild, take a trip to the calm down room, a quiet nook stuffed with toys and bean bag chairs.

After your tour, there’s still one more stop to make: the Wilbur D. May Arboretum, located just behind the building. This 23-acre, gardenlike setting features meandering paths, secluded gazebos, and shaded picnic spots amid more than 4,000 native and non-native species. There are 20 distinct groves and gardens within the arboretum, but if you’re on an abbreviated trip, be sure to at least visit Honey’s Garden and The Labyrinth.



### TRAVEL NEVADA PRO TIP

Looking to get a jumpstart on your holiday shopping?

The Wilbur D. May

Museum’s gift shop is packed with pottery, jewelry, watercolors, and eclectic yard art produced by artisans around the globe. We recommend the colorful telephone wire baskets from Africa.

The museum is open 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and noon – 4 p.m. on Sundays. The arboretum is free to the public and open during park hours.





**TOM DEVLIN'S MONSTER MUSEUM**

Boulder City

Just outside historic downtown Boulder City lurks a truly inspired ode to classic horror cinema. Tom Devlin's Monster Museum is an absolute must for fans of slasher, zombie, paranormal, splatter, and every other horror subgenre in-between.



Devlin began his career in 2001 as a special effects creator on "The X-Files" and has since worked on more than 100 horror films, shorts, and TV shows. After years of creating monsters professionally, Devlin decided to open a museum to share his work and help preserve the art and history of special makeup effects. No CGI allowed!



**TRAVEL NEVADA PRO TIP** Visit Tom Devlin's Monster Museum throughout October for their Nightmare at the Museum event. It's lights out in a creepy, haunted house atmosphere as you explore the exhibits. Just beware: Some of the creatures might come to life.

**ON EXHIBIT NOW!****MONSTERS ARE REAL!**

Beneath the surface of the world's rivers swim mysterious giants. Giant freshwater fish measuring six feet or longer and weighing more than 200 pounds! Explore *Monster Fish: In Search of the Last River Giants* and join National Geographic Explorer and University of Nevada, Reno professor Dr. Zeb Hogan on a quest to find and study these rare, colossal, and often mysterious fish.

**MONSTERFISH**  
IN SEARCH OF THE LAST RIVER GIANTSPresented in  
partnership with:

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Once you enter the crypt-like museum, prepare for a startling stroll through labyrinthine chambers containing highly detailed, life-size recreations of some of horror's biggest icons. Guests who can handle the gore and spooky atmosphere will certainly appreciate the nostalgic and informative dive into horror history—and yes, that includes plenty of low budget and cult classics. Peppered among the petrifying displays are Devlin's collection of props that saw actual screen time as well as recreated costumes and pieces.

When you're all monstered out, calm your nerves with a scary movie in the museum theater or snag something monstrous at the gift shop to commemorate your visit. In addition to one-of-a-kind masks, costumes, and collectibles, visitors can get their hands on T-shirts, costumes, and other monster-inspired souvenirs.

#### STAY ANOTHER DAY



Spending another night in Reno or Boulder City? We've got two more collections to recommend. The National Automobile Museum in Reno hosts more than 200 cars from Bill Harrah's personal garage and is worth visiting. For the old school arcade goers among you, don't miss the Pinball Hall of Fame in Las Vegas. This emporium has hundreds of playable games that range from pinball's early days to contemporary creations.



J. Tyge O'Donnell (pinball)



# NEVADA'S HOT!

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[TravelNevada.com/Free-Range-Art-Highway](http://TravelNevada.com/Free-Range-Art-Highway)

# FREE-RANGE ART HIGHWAY





## Take a photographic journey through the wild and wondrous West.

BY MIKALEE BYERMAN

Ready to give your camera a workout? With the Free-Range Art Highway as your canvas, the photo-op stops are countless. Whether you're a newbie photographer just learning the definition of aperture or a veteran documentarian seeking new stories, you'll find plenty of odd and awesome vistas to ogle along this Reno-to-Vegas road trip.



SCAN FOR  
MORE INFO



FREE-RANGE ART HIGHWAY

Get a full itinerary, plus road trip essentials, including downloadable directions, maps, podcasts, and tunes curated for your adventure.





## RENO TO TONOPAH

We're starting in Reno, where you'll find an embarrassment of photographic riches throughout the region. In the heart of town—Midtown, to be exact—you'll spot more than 100 murals and works of public art around every bend. Just keep your eyes open and your camera at the ready. "Find Your Flow"—a favorite—whimsically adorns the side of a building at 300 Holcomb Ave., and the artist even creatively incorporated a security camera into the painting (check the frog's eye!). And of course, you can't leave Reno without a visit to one of the most photographed locations in town, City Plaza, directly across from City Hall—home of the iconic BELIEVE sculpture.



MURAL IN RENO



On the road to Tonopah, you'll probably be pulling over frequently just to capture the sweeping vistas of open road with endless horizons. The drive is stark, scenic, and stoic, and you'll find yourself deep in introspection as you drive for seemingly endless miles—often without a soul in sight. But keep your eyes peeled around Walker Lake because you might spot Nevada's State Animal, the desert bighorn sheep.



WALKER LAKE

Ryan Donnell (Believe sculpture)



## TONOPAH TO GOLDFIELD

Tonopah is a photographer's dream. When you enter town, make for the Old Tonopah Cemetery and let the headstones tell the story of the town's wild history. Established in 1901, it's adjacent to the Clown Motel (of COURSE a cemetery is located next door to a hotel with clown-themed rooms and a 2,000+ collection of clown collectibles, right?). After you've gone from the serene to the scary, stop by the Mizpah Hotel, which has been meticulously restored to its early 1900s glory, complete with brass chandeliers dripping with crystals and Victorian sofas blanketed in rich velvet hues. Heads up: You might even capture a spectral image on this journey, as the Mizpah is said to be haunted by many spirits, including the infamous Lady in Red.

Once you leave Tonopah (and trust me, wild horses may have to drag you away—but hopefully not literally), it's a short journey to Goldfield. This is as authentic a “ghost town” photographic experience as you'll find out West, with many buildings seemingly frozen in time since the town's gold-camp heyday in the early 1900s. The statuesque Goldfield Historic High School is a beautiful gem in the middle of town, but don't be surprised if you feel “called” by the Goldfield Hotel (which, some paranormal investigators have asserted, may or may not be a portal to the underworld).



MIZPAH HOTEL



### TRAVEL NEVADA PRO TIP

Tours of the Goldfield Historic High School are in full swing, and the chance to roam the halls of this gorgeous building should not be missed. Built in 1907, the property featured 12 classrooms, an auditorium, two offices, and two bathrooms. Call 541-218-8236 to schedule a tour.



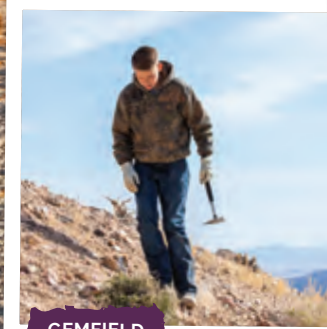


## OUTSIDE BEATTY

Outside of Goldfield, you'll find the famous International Car Forest of the Last Church: an odd garden of vertical vehicles plunked in the dirt. You'll also want to backtrack about 4 miles north of town to Gemfield. There, you'll find swirling oceans of chalcedony (rumored to be the largest deposit in the U.S.), plus adjacent seas of minerals in every color of the spectrum. Photograph away and take home a souvenir—bring your own tools to rockhound and leave \$1 per pound of treasure.



RHYOLITE



GEMFIELD



INTERNATIONAL CAR FOREST OF THE LAST CHURCH

## GEMFIELD TO RHYOLITE THROUGH BEATTY

Now you're on the road to Beatty, an oasis in the middle of the desert billed as the Gateway to Death Valley. Wild Nevada burros are one of the most photo-friendly sights in town. You'll find them everywhere: camping in hotel parking lots, finding shade under a Joshua tree or just lying in familial clusters by the side of the road. Make time to strike up a conversation with a local (and maybe even snap a portrait—with permission, of course) at the Happy Burro Chili and Beer, a legit Sagebrush Saloon.

Now that you're fueled up on chili, head to Rhyolite and the Goldwell Open Air Museum. The most photographed work at this outdoor art gallery is a ghostlike reimagining of Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper," for which models were draped in plaster-soaked burlap to mold the haunting sculptures. But don't stop there, as Goldwell has seven pieces of outdoor art set against the Mojave Desert. Just up the road, you'll find the ruins of Rhyolite. Start with the Tom Kelly Bottle House (exactly what it sounds like) and walk up to the eroding skeletons of the town's main street buildings.

David Braun (Burro and car)  
C2 Photography (Car Forest)

Ryan Donnell (Seven Magic Mountains and Neon Museum)



## RHYOLITE TO LAS VEGAS

To culminate this photographer's dream journey, is there any better destination than the glittering streets of Las Vegas? Don't miss the Neon Museum, where you'll find a two-acre glowing graveyard of vintage signs reflecting Nevada's storied past. And talk about a rich photographic landscape: You can max out your memory card at the nearby Las Vegas Arts District, nicknamed "18b" for its 18 blocks lined with galleries, funky shops, and bars (see pg. 46 to learn more). But don't end your trip there. Take a quick jaunt south to Seven Magic Mountains to photograph this series of seven giant, neon-painted boulder totems rising from the desert floor.

## FREE-RANGE PHOTOGRAPHIC TREASURES

There you have it: A road trip where you're able to capture nature, art, oddities and history, all in one complete journey. You'll come home with a camera full of memories—and perhaps even a few souvenirs to commemorate Nevada's rich, picturesque landscape.



NEON MUSEUM



SEVEN MAGIC MOUNTAINS



# NEVADA STATE PRISON

*History and hauntings await  
on a one-of-a-kind tour.*

For 150 years, the Nevada State Prison—located in Carson City—housed some of the state's most high-profile offenders. Since shuttering in 2012, community groups have worked to preserve its past.





## HOTELS TO HOLDING CELLS

In 1858, Abraham Curry—a founding father of Carson City—purchased the parcel that would one day house the prison, though he originally had other plans for it. The land possessed a bounty of natural resources including a hot spring and easily quarried sandstone. He improved the spring, built a hotel, and—for a few years—provided hospitality for the settlement’s first residents.

In 1861, Nevada’s first territorial legislature met at Curry’s Warm Springs Hotel to negotiate who would staff the brand-new Board of Prison Commissioners. By the end of the meeting, they had elected to convert the very hotel they were staying at into a prison. It is unclear how this decision came about. One tale goes that the legislators got so inebriated that they trashed the property and offered Curry the contract as a reconciliation. Regardless, construction was soon underway, and Curry was appointed the prison’s first warden.





The facility's buildings were built using the property's own sandstone quarry. In fact, the main prison yard is located at the bottom of the quarry. Many of Carson City's most prestigious buildings, including the Capitol and the Carson City Mint, were constructed using sandstone mined out by prisoners.

By 2012, housing prisoners in the aging facility had become cost prohibitive. The Nevada State Prison closed after nearly 150 years of operation. Most of the 700 inmates were transferred to the High Desert State Prison, located in Indian Springs.



## TAKE THE TOUR

Today, prison tours are available through the Nevada State Prison Preservation Society. Generally lasting 90 minutes, these experiences provide an in-depth background on the historic buildings, holding areas, and facilities. Much of the complex sits in arrested decay; although most supplies and furniture have been removed, very little has been done to the prison since it closed a decade ago.

As a warning, some guests might find it difficult to visit the facility. It is, inherently, an imposing and bleak place. Prison cells are small and uncomfortable, and solitary confinement rooms—otherwise known as “The Hole”—are lightless concrete boxes. There is barbed wire coiled around tall chain link fences and guard towers loom everywhere. Then, there is the death chamber.

Until the 1970s, this was Nevada's only prison and thus the only location that could house maximum security or death row inmates. In all, 54 men were executed here: 11 hung, 32 gassed, and 11 through lethal injection. The last execution to take place here was in 2006.

*Tours of the Nevada State Prison are available throughout August and October. Visit [nevadastateprison.org](http://nevadastateprison.org) to learn more or to book tickets.*



The chamber was accessed through a giant door with a wheel—like on a battleship or a bank vault. Prisoners were escorted through the door and strapped to a chair or bed. A large window exposed the procedure to a viewing room, which is also the tour's final stop.

Despite the heavy theme, tours are definitely worthwhile. A visit might bring a flood of emotions, but this is a unique, provoking experience and a rare opportunity to visit a historic—and recently closed—state prison.



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Sept. 22-24, 2023

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ELKO CITY PARK

6 am: Balloons launch around Elko

5 pm: Food vendors and entertainment

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SATURDAY, SEPT. 23 &

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## GHOSTS IN THE PRISON YARD

If spending the predawn hours alone in an abandoned prison hunting ghosts sounds good to you, we have great news. This prison is widely considered to be one of the most haunted buildings in the state. For decades, inmates, employees, and—now—visitors have reported run-ins with the building's spectral residents.

Since closing, the prison has been the subject of many paranormal investigations including the Travel Channel's "Destination Fear." Nevada State Prison Paranormal (NSPP)—a nonprofit tour group whose proceeds go toward the prison's maintenance and restoration—is your contact for your own spooky experience.

If you opt for a standard daytime tour, you'll still get the chance to view the photographs that NSPP has captured during its tours (usually posted in the exact spot it was taken). From silhouettes of tall shadows in corridors to ghostly faces captured in windowpanes, some of the images might leave even the biggest skeptic scratching their head.







## TRAVEL NEVADA PRO TIP

Paranormal tours sell out quickly,  
so book with Nevada State  
Prison Paranormal in advance.  
This experience generally runs  
from 5 p.m. to 2 a.m.







# BET ON ART

Rediscover Nevada's biggest city  
at the Las Vegas Arts District.





Las Vegas is in the middle of an urban cultural renaissance. A well-timed combination of affordable living, supportive city policies, and grassroots community planning has made the city a stronghold for creative expression. At the heart of this movement sits the Las Vegas Arts District and its 18-plus blocks of colorful shops, novel restaurants, and endless entertainment.

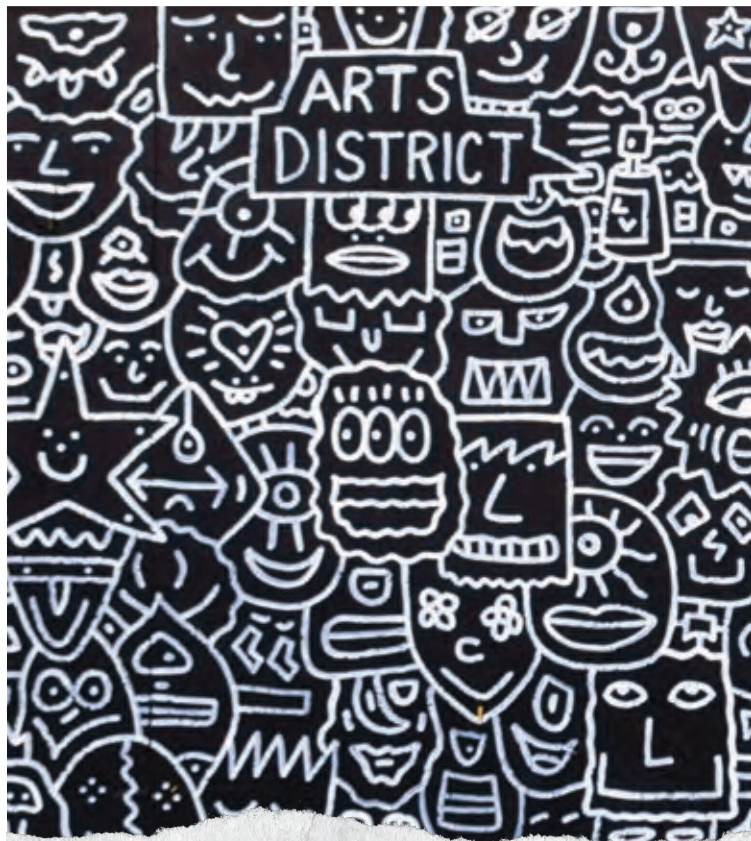


## NUEVA LAS VEGAS

The Strip is one of the best known—and visited—landmarks in the world, but there is so much more to Las Vegas than its resort-packed playground. The past 20 years have seen stunning transformation of the surrounding cityscape, and many off-Strip attractions are now part of almost every itinerary. But the city's changes are more extensive than casual visitors might appreciate.

In the 1990s, Las Vegas began revitalizing its historic downtown. In 1995, five blocks of luminous canopy were built over Fremont Street—the city's original main street. In 2012, public and private entities raised more than \$750 million for 57 downtown projects ranging from sidewalk improvements to entirely new attractions like the Downtown Container Park—a startup incubator—and the DISCOVERY Children's Museum.

The core of Las Vegas was reborn. Today, when visitors finish their stroll down Fremont Street, they find themselves in a hip neighborhood with motels-turned-boutique malls, indie bars, and a prevailing atmosphere of refurbished retro that harkens back to the city's glitzy past. Downtown's second life was making headlines, but it was only part of the story. A dozen blocks away, another neighborhood was getting a very colorful makeover.



SCAN FOR  
MORE INFO



ARTS & CULTURE





ABLE BAKER BREWING COMPANY

## BLANK CANVAS

In the 1980s, what is now the Las Vegas Arts District was largely abandoned. After WW2, the neighborhood was a prosperous industrial center home to auto shops, metalworks, and manufacturing plants. However, as the city grew and locals relocated to the suburbs, the blue-collar district stagnated.

Community leaders knew something had to be done, but finding developers to renovate dilapidated warehouses and rusted factories proved challenging. Fortunately, there is one career path traditionally into that sort of thing. In 1998,

## WALKING TOURS OF 18b

### Best Bet Vegas Tours

This 2-hour tour combines colorful stories and local history with stops at local-favorite bars for delicious libations.

### Lip Smacking Foodie Tours

Fill up on 2.5 hours of dining and drinking at a diverse selection of chef-driven restaurants.

### Taste Buzz Food Tours

Take in the district on this 3-hour sightseeing foodie tour across four local restaurants.

the Arts District—also called 18b for its 18-block area—was born, and entrepreneurs and artists were invited to set up whatever enterprise they could imagine. With the prospect of low rents and relaxed zoning laws, many answered the call.

The district grew around the centrally located Arts Factory—a commercial warehouse-turned studio space. Abandoned storefronts became studios, restaurants, and galleries. Long-disused sidewalks became popular promenades for local window-shopping. And behind it all, a community of like-minded bohemians worked collectively to solve problems, promote one another, and experiment with new ventures.

By the 2010s, the neighborhood had experienced remarkable change. It had also turned Las Vegas into a significant artist enclave. Like Portland or San Francisco before it, the district's mildly decrepit aesthetic invoked limitless potential.



## ART TOWN

The Arts District's Main Street is an eclectic mix of vintage shops, art galleries, breweries, tattoo shops, and dive bars. Excursions on side streets reveal niche boutiques, performance spaces, and enough cultural cuisine to satisfy a seasoned gastrotourist.

It might go without saying, but art is everywhere: it's neatly arranged in upscale galleries, plastered to café walls, and waiting inside vintage cigarette vending machines-turned-impromptu art shops that dispense an original piece for just a couple bucks.



There are still many remnants of the district's industrial past. Adjacent to the new are abandoned lots, tire shops, and shuttered factories with broken windows. But the postindustrial remnants can't help but complement the district's originality. At the very least, they serve as a reminder of where the neighborhood came from. And all the buildings—decaying and refurbished—are illuminated with works that range from commissioned murals to city-approved feral art.

Visitors can easily find their fill of dining and Las Vegas adventures within the now-21 block area. There are even non-resort lodgings within walking distance. Younger guests can enjoy a collection of nearby community-oriented hostels, while discerning travelers will enjoy a pampered stay at the ENGLISH Hotel, featuring Todd English's restaurant, The Peppa Club.



TAVERNA COSTERA



The best time to visit is the first Friday of the month for an event (efficiently) called First Friday. This long-standing monthly festival draws thousands of visitors to the grounds surrounding the Arts Factory for food, drink, live music, visual performances, and artists showing off their creations. Preview Thursday happens the day before, allowing serious art lovers to mingle with artists and browse without the crowds.

### TRAVEL NEVADA PRO TIP

If you like a mural, you should absolutely take a picture of it: it's very likely that another artist will have painted over it by your next visit.



Visit our website to learn about monthly events and new exhibits.  
[www.MuseumElko.org](http://www.MuseumElko.org)

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Eureka High School Rodeo  
August 18-20

### Main St. Eureka

Eureka Restoration's Art,  
Wine & Music Fest  
September 16

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# GO YOUR OWN WAY

Switch up your north-south drive with ghost towns and gorgeous scenery.



As the main road for travel between Reno and Las Vegas, U.S. Route 95 sees its fair share of traffic. Millions of motorists take this 400-mile journey each year, many of them doing it more times than they can count. If that sounds like you, mix things up on your next odyssey with a ghost-town packed alternate route. Without stops, this drive via State Routes 360, 264, and 266 will add only about 15 minutes to your total drive—but who are we kidding, you'll be pulling over.

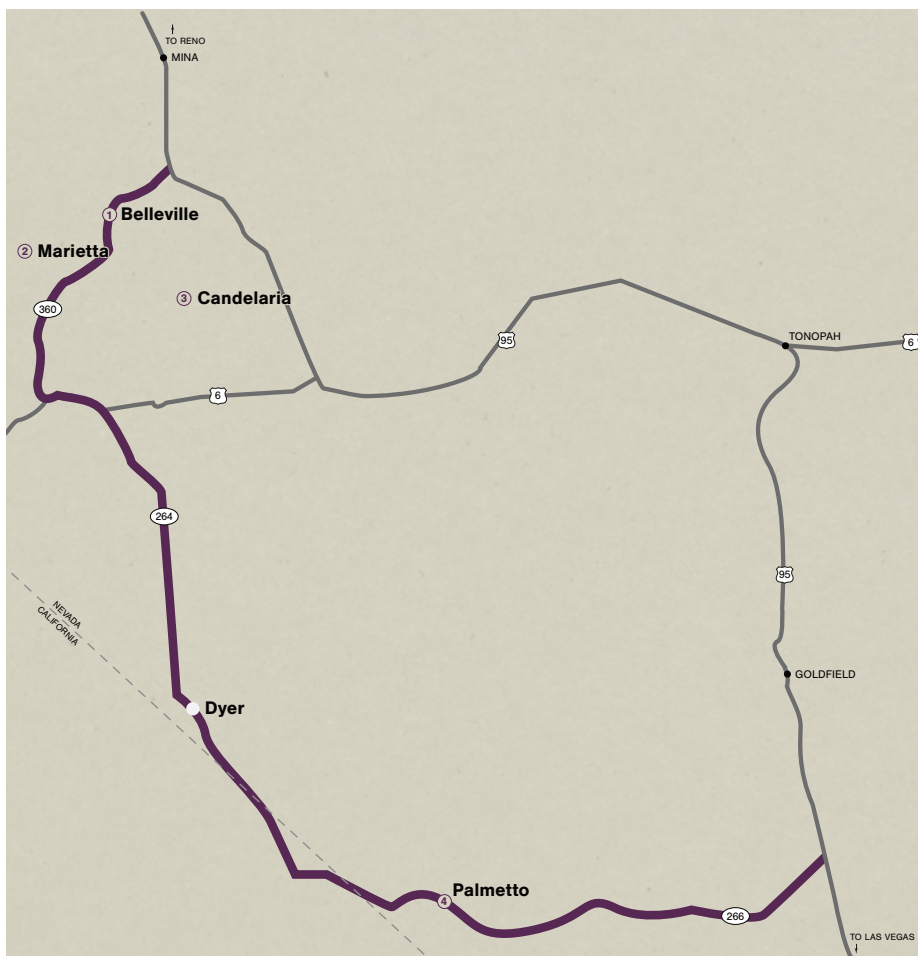


## BELLEVILLE

You'll spot Belleville on State Route 360, about 15 miles south of Mina. The ruins are located right off the road because in the late 1800s, this highway was a railroad, and Belleville was a station town. For the thriving boomtown of Candelaria—located 9 miles east—Belleville was a crucial logistical hub.

All water and goods bound for Candelaria were first unloaded in Belleville and then delivered by wagon. Candelaria even carted its silver ore to Belleville for milling and shipping. But Belleville was also the place folks visited to have fun. By all accounts, Candelaria was a windy and expensive dustbowl. When its residents needed to relax, they headed over to Belleville's exciting night life. You might say it was one of the state's first resort towns.

Belleville thrived into the 1880s, peaking at around 500 residents. Very little remains, however the foundation for one of the stamp mills can be seen from the highway. Another is located slightly up the hill.



University of Nevada, Reno Special Collections (historic photos)









## MARIETTA

From Belleville, the bumpy drive to Marietta takes about 40 minutes. Shortly after turning onto dirt, you'll be in the Marietta Wild Burro Range, a 66,500-acre tract of desert wilderness home to around 85 burros. Don't forget your binoculars—there are plenty of excellent vantage points to do some spotting.





See pg. 102  
for tips on  
Recreating  
Responsibly.



After winding down into an alkaline flat valley, you'll be rewarded with a view of Boundary Peak—Nevada's tallest mountain. The remains of Marietta are scattered along the north end of the valley. In contrast to many Nevada boomtowns, Marietta wasn't in the business of mining gold or silver: Its wealth came from borax, a specialized salt that was used in cleaning, medicine, ceramics, and metallurgy.

Borax deposits were discovered in 1877, and Marietta soon became a sizeable town of a few hundred residents. Its decline came in the 1890s after better borax deposits were found further south near Death Valley. Today, you'll find a handful of standing structures in good condition and a half dozen foundations plus a cemetery.



## CANDELARIA

Candelaria is a 25-minute drive from Belleville, but you'll spot mine entrances, rock cabins, and excavated hillsides long before reaching its decayed main street.

Silver mining began here in 1873. The lode proved rich, and by 1880, Candelaria was the largest community in Mineral County with 1,500 residents. During peak years, its busy downtown included a bank, a newspaper, luxury hotels, and a telegraph office.

By 1884, legal disputes and a summer-long worker strike cut production in half. The town declined, then revived briefly in the 1890s before a national recession shut everything down again. Candelaria was likely always doomed to fail because it had no easy access to water. Even after a 27-mile pipeline was built in 1882, water was still prohibitively expensive. There was rarely enough for industrial use, and mills were forced to crush ore dry. Unfortunately, this technique creates a lot of dust, which made many workers very sick.



Smaller scale mining kept Candelaria alive up until the 1920s. In the mid-1930s, the post office closed, and the last residents departed. Today, few major structures survive, though a gated historic cemetery remains. Candelaria is nowhere near an empty patch, though. Equipment, debris, foundations, and crumbled structures are everywhere: One could easily spend a day wandering its hillsides.



University of Nevada, Las Vegas Special Collections (historic photo)



# BACK AMONG THE LIVING

## Extend your travel with a stayover in this scenic village.

While on State Route 264—near the California border—you'll come across the little town of Dyer (known locally as Fish Lake). This old ranch town is an excellent basecamp for OHV trails, horseback riding, and hiking. It's also the only spot for many miles where you'll find fuel, food, and lodging.

We recommend you overnight at the Wagon Wheels RV Park, which offers hookups, tent camping, and four 120-year-old cabins that include a kitchenette.



### ONE MORE FOR THE ROAD

Located south of Dyer, Palmetto was founded in 1866 by gold and silver prospectors. They thought the local Joshua trees were related to the palm tree, hence the name. Little remains here, but the town's location right off the road makes it easily explorable.



The property is home to a well-curated outdoor museum that includes six historic buildings. If you're looking to host a larger group, consider renting out one of the area's four Airbnbs.

For snacks, sundries, and tasty sandwiches, visit the Esmeralda Market. For dinner, head to The Boonies, an old-fashioned saloon that features half of an antique car sticking out of the wall. You'll find good fare here including chicken strips, salads, weekly specials, and 10 varieties of burgers.

There is plenty to do and see around town. The trailhead for Boundary Peak is less than an hour from Dyer. If you're looking to hit up a hot spring, check out the nearby Hot Box. For a gorgeous offroad drive, consider a visit to McAfee Canyon. If you're seeking to explore some otherworldly landscape, take a trip to The Sump.



# WARD CHARCOAL OVENS

*Giant structures stand sentinel over a landscape ripe with adventure.*

Tucked back in the Egan Mountains about 30 miles south of Ely—and an hour from Great Basin National Park—is Ward Charcoal Ovens State Historic Park. As you approach, you'll spot its six massive beehive-shaped charcoal ovens peeking over the hills, a sign you're in for a very different state park experience.





Get it stamped!



The Nevada State Parks Passport can be picked up at any Nevada State Park and serves as a travelogue for visitors. It includes photos, park descriptions, amenity lists, and spaces for validation stamps. Once you have your booklets stamped at 15 different parks, you earn one free annual pass to all Nevada State Parks! Call 775-684-2770 for more information.



## COMING SOON

Nearby Cave Lake State Park is undergoing a major dam restoration project, and while the two campgrounds remain open for use, the lake is closed to the public. The project is expected to be completed by summer 2024.

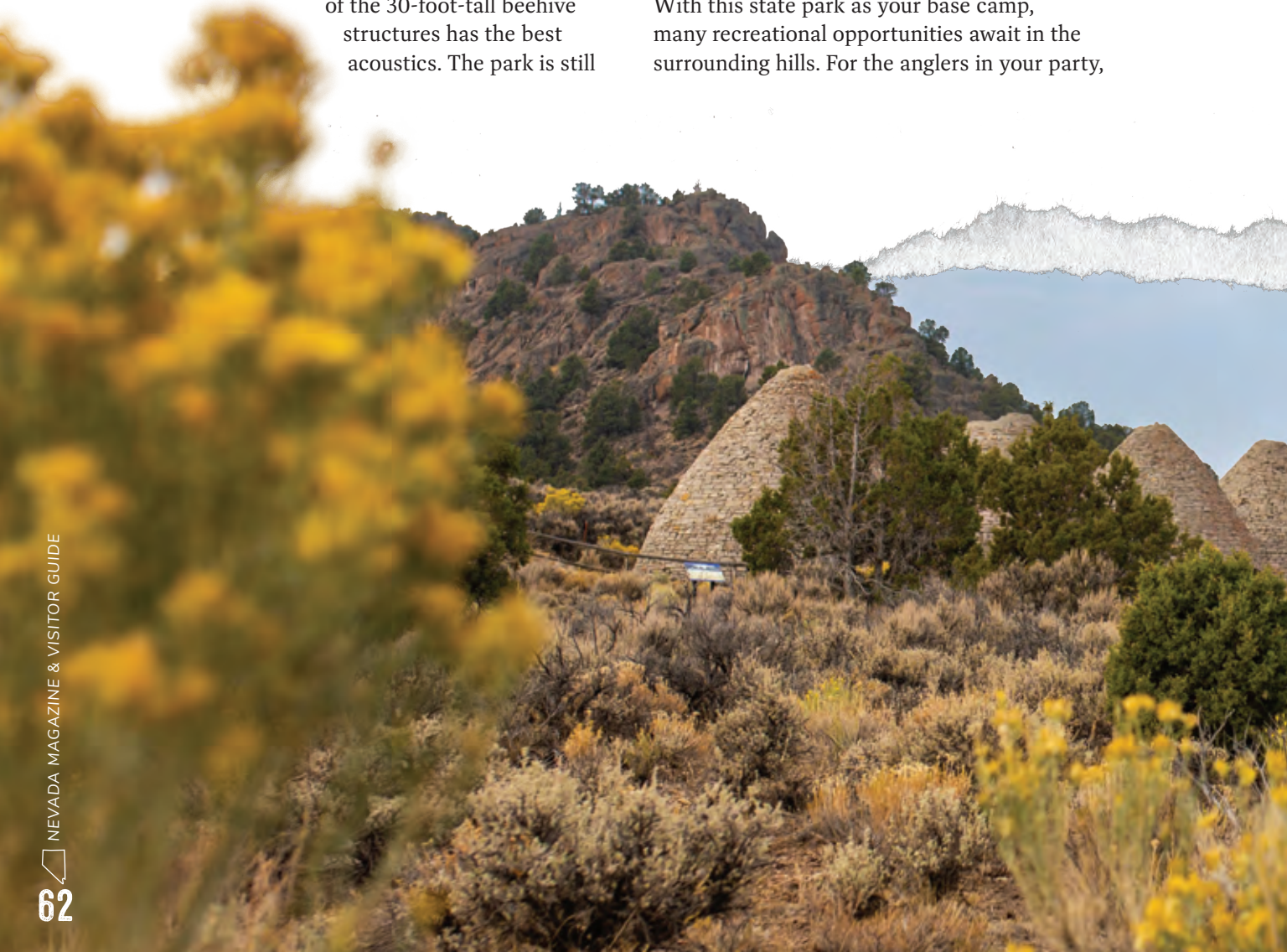
The ovens date back to 1876, when they were used to turn pinyon pine and juniper into charcoal, which was crucial to the smelters used in ore processing for the nearby Ward Mining District. After the mining boom ended, the ovens were abandoned but used by travelers as shelter and—according to legend—a hiding place for stagecoach bandits. The state was given the land in 1969 and designated it a historic monument. Ward Charcoal Ovens became a state park in 1994.

Today, the ovens are open for self-guided tours, and the kids are very likely to test which of the 30-foot-tall beehive structures has the best acoustics. The park is still



surrounded by pinyon and juniper forests—plus lots of sagebrush—and there are many camping options including two large pull-through spots. Even if you're not staying a few days, make sure to stop at one of the day-use areas after viewing the ovens for a picnic. Grills, restrooms, and endless views await.

With this state park as your base camp, many recreational opportunities await in the surrounding hills. For the anglers in your party,







the park's own Willow Creek is stocked with rainbow, German brown, and brook trout. Hikers and mountain bikers have their pick between seven nearby trails, each with varying degrees of difficulty, that can be chained together for a longer excursion. This is also an excellent trailhead for OHV exploration, and the thousands of acres of surrounding Bureau of Land Management land will have you returning every year.

SCAN FOR  
MORE INFO



STATE PARKS



STAY  
ANOTHER  
DAY



Great Basin National Park is Nevada's only national park and so close to Ward Charcoal Ovens, it's time for a two-fer. Camping, hiking, caving (Lehman Caves is incredible), fishing...you can do it all at the park. Or stay in nearby Baker at the Stargazer Inn or Hidden Canyon Retreat. Sugar, Salt & Malt, 487 Grill, Sandra's Mexican Food and the Bristlecone General Store have all your food needs covered.

Flip to pg. 97 for the entire list of Nevada state parks along with their amenities, recreational activities, and more.





# The Laxalt Brothers

**Sons of a Basque shepherd led the state through politics and the pen.**

From adventurers and gunslingers to writers and thinkers, Nevada's history was shaped by individuals with grit and drive. Each issue, we look at one of these notable heroes from the past. Whether born or raised, these aren't just Nevadans: they're Legendary Nevadans.

If ever there was Nevada royalty, the Laxalt family would certainly top the peerage. From humble beginnings to the pinnacle of success, both Paul and Robert Laxalt carved indelible marks in the Silver State's story.

Paul and Robert grew up in the 1920s, two of Dominique and Therese Laxalt's six children. Their parents had emigrated separately from France's Basque Country before meeting in northern Nevada. Dominique was a shepherd, while Therese was the matriarch and ran The French Hotel in Carson City, which she bought for \$100. A graduate of Le Cordon Bleu cooking school, Therese's delicious meals—always served family style—quickly became as popular as her boarding house.

Paul, the eldest son, served in WWII and then used his GI Bill to attend law school. Robert, the second eldest, also served his country and received his degree from the University of Nevada, Reno. The brothers began similarly, but their paths quickly diverged.



THE LAXALT FAMILY



## THE POLITICIAN

Paul received his law degree in 1949 and quickly turned his sights to politics. He successfully ran for district attorney of then-Ormsby County (now a part of Carson City) and served from 1950-1954. He resumed his law practice and counted Thunderbird Lodge magnate George Whittell and Sparks Nugget founder Dick Graves as clients.

Politics again came calling, and Laxalt ran for lieutenant governor in 1962. He served in that role for one term, from 1963-1967. In 1964, the senate race lacked a Republican candidate, and despite wanting to remain in his current office, Laxalt threw his hat in the ring. He was defeated, but then later successfully ran for the state's highest office. He served as governor from 1967 to 1971.

During his one term, Laxalt helped shape the gaming industry's future. Casinos were often associated with the Mob, at least in public perception, so when Howard Hughes sought a gaming license, Laxalt allowed him one without making him appear before the gaming board. The billionaire would add an air of legitimacy, Laxalt reasoned, and Hughes certainly added to the mystique of Las Vegas. Laxalt also supported corporate ownership of casinos, which is how most gaming licenses are held in Nevada today.

While governor, Laxalt developed a lasting friendship with California Governor Ronald Reagan. The two helped create the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency in an effort to protect Nevada and California's shared natural wonder.



In 1974, Laxalt ran again for the U.S. Senate, this time winning. He wielded significant influence in prestigious committees and introduced numerous mentees to the political landscape including future Assemblyperson Barbara Vucanovich, the first woman to serve in Congress from Nevada, and future Governor Brian Sandoval. Laxalt also managed Reagan's three presidential campaigns as senator and was often referred to as "the First Friend" by political insiders.

When he left the senate, Laxalt was remembered as a gentleman and a politician who worked with members of both parties with respect and to great effect. He went back to work as an attorney and lived until the age of 96, passing in 2018.







Stay tuned  
for more tales  
of Legendary  
Nevadans! In  
the next issue,  
Snowshoe  
Thompson.



Video: Discover  
Nevada's Basque  
Culture Today



## THE WRITER

Just one year younger than his brother, Robert Laxalt graduated college in 1947 and started his career as a journalist. He wrote for local papers in northern Nevada and was also employed by United Press International. He started his own news agency, Capital News Service, and to make ends meet, began freelancing. His nonfiction pieces appeared in national papers and magazines such as "National Geographic" and the "New York Times," where he wrote on Nevada's political scene. For 50 years, he contributed articles to *Nevada Magazine*. His writing was evocative yet direct, without flowery prose but full of action and depth.

In 1954, he went to work for the University of Nevada, Reno, as the director of news and publications. He developed a life-long love of teaching, and it was during this time that he wrote his seminal book, "Sweet Promised Land." Published in 1957, the story of his father's visit to his homeland put Laxalt at the forefront of Basque American literature and introduced



University of Nevada, Reno Special Collections (All photos of Robert Laxalt)



the culture to many. It was one of the first books to shed light on the contributions and character of the Basques, who were often looked upon with disdain. Critics have called the book a parable for all immigrants. The Basque culture was a topic he would often revisit during his prolific writing career, both in articles and books.

Laxalt was one of the founders of the University of Nevada Press, serving as director from 1961-1983, and he was a co-founder of the university's Center for Basque Studies. He wrote 17 books in his lifetime, and his novella "A Cup of Tea in Pamplona" was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in fiction.

He was a journalism teacher for 18 years, and he encouraged his students to take their writing seriously, but not themselves. He has influenced generations of Nevada authors and still does through the Robert Laxalt Distinguished Writer program, which the university created in his name. Robert Laxalt died in 2001 at the age of 77.



**TRAVEL  
NEVADA  
PRO TIP**

Family style dining is often seen throughout Nevada's Basque restaurants. Patrons sit at long dining tables and sides like French fries, salad, and soup are served at the table for everyone to share.



FOR SOME, THE ADDITION OF BLUE SKIES, OPEN HILLS AND A FACE FULL OF DUST IS ALL IT TAKES TO UPGRADE THE DAY FROM GOOD TO GREAT. THEY'RE MODERN DAY ROUGH RIDERS SADDLED UP ON 1000 CC'S OF CREATURE COMFORT, COMMANDING FRONT ROW SEATS TO THE RAW PAGEANTRY THAT UNFOLDS IN THE HILLS BEYOND THEIR HOME. THAT'S HOW THE BUGGY BOUNCES IN THE BACKYARDS OF CARSON VALLEY.



**CARSON VALLEY**  
NEVADA  
[visitcarsonvalley.org](http://visitcarsonvalley.org)



# COLOR

## ACROSS NORTHERN NEVADA

Fall in the Great Basin  
might just surprise you.

BY KIPPY S. SPILKER





What do you get when you combine wide open spaces with stunning fall foliage? There's no punchline, and it's no joke that the Silver State has a lot to offer leaf-peepers. With gorgeous October colors awaiting, a road trip was in order, so Senior Graphic Designer Alexandria Olivares-Wenzel and I grabbed our cameras and hit the road.



## OXBOW NATURE STUDY AREA

### Reno

Our first stop on the trip was at this riparian wilderness quietly tucked near downtown Reno. Although the visit proved a little early for the prime colors, it was a fantastic way to spend a morning along the Truckee River. This 22-acre conservation area has miles of trail loops and offshoots, tables, benches, and limited wheelchair access. Climb a platform which looks out over the preserve, and you might be lucky enough to watch a hunting hawk or two.

### TRAVEL NEVADA PRO TIP

Oxbow Nature Study Area is at the end of Dickerson Road, an eclectic commercial area that features artists, unique clothing shops, and restaurants.



## WATER CANYON RECREATION AREA

### Winnemucca

After 2.5 hours traveling east of Reno on Interstate 80, we found ourselves in Water Canyon Recreation Area. Not only is this a great place for spotting beautiful fall color, but it also offers plentiful opportunities for camping, hiking, and biking. The grounds include fire pits, grills, picnic tables, and even a few covered shelters. We took a short photo hike to build our appetites, and then it was time for lunch at Winnemucca Pizzeria.



WINNEMUCCA PIZZERIA



## LAMOILLE CANYON SCENIC BYWAY

### Elko

Arriving in Elko, we immediately headed out to scout the famous Lamoille Canyon. The sun was setting, but we could tell we were in for a treat the next day. We headed back to Elko for a great dinner at Odeh's Mediterranean Restaurant.

As the sun rose the following morning over the Ruby Mountains—otherwise known as the Swiss Alps of Nevada—we began the 12-mile drive up the Lamoille Canyon Scenic Byway. Twelve miles doesn't take long, that is unless you find yourself stopping every few hundred feet for photos. At the end of the road is a parking lot with restrooms, picnic tables, trails, and stunning views.

While we didn't get as far into the Rubies as I'd hoped, we did make it to Harrison Pass and were rewarded with not only golden colors, but reds and oranges as well. We met a friend at Luciano's back in Elko, where we ended our long day with a delicious meal and great conversation.



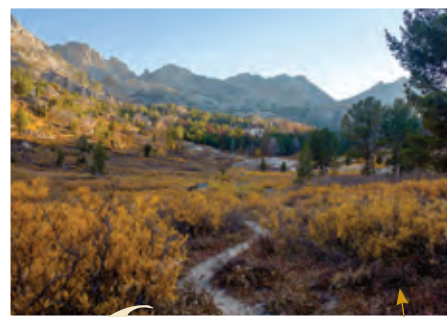
CAMP LAMOILLE



ODEH'S MEDITERRANEAN RESTAURANT



LUCIANO'S



### TRAVEL NEVADA PRO TIP

The pavement might end at the top of the Lamoille Canyon Scenic Byway, but this is also the start of the trailhead for the Ruby Crest Trail. This 43-mile path through the Ruby Mountains is particularly stunning in the autumn, and even a short hike is sure to reveal fall colors.





**TRAVEL  
NEVADA  
PRO TIP**

Roads in the Copper Basin and to Jarbidge can be unmaintained, so make sure your vehicle can handle the trek.

**COPPER BASIN****Jarbidge**

Day three of our adventure found us heading north on the unpaved Charleston-Jarbidge Road for the beautiful 50-mile drive to Jarbidge. When you come upon the Copper Basin in all its autumn color explosion, I dare you not to stop. You won't often find reds and oranges in Nevada's natural fall foliage, but I don't know that you will find a view like this anywhere else. The sight of layers of mountains as far as you can see and hundreds of acres of quaking aspen—with almost-comically-tall, perfectly-shaped subalpine firs jutting up among them—is something to be experienced.

Eventually we tore ourselves away from the Copper Basin and made our way—carefully—down the more-than-15-percent grade into the small town of Jarbidge. Easily the most isolated town in the Silver State (and perhaps





Headed to the Ely area? You'll find one of the state's best fall color spots in the mountains east of town on the Success Loop. Turn to pg. 80 to learn more.

the continental U.S.), there are about a dozen year-round residents operating two saloons, a restaurant, trading post, gift shop, gas pump, and post office. With 113,000 acres in the Jarbidge Wilderness Area, this is an outdoor recreationist's dream.

Refreshed by a comfortable night's sleep at the Outdoor Inn, we filled to-go mugs with fresh coffee from the restaurant, stopped in the gift shop, and made our way back to Elko. After a quick bite to eat, we headed back to Lamoille Canyon to photograph the Milky Way in Nevada's famous dark skies.

## ALL GOOD THINGS...

Four days on the go from sunrise-to-sunset (and beyond), fresh air, and exploration started to take its toll on us, so on our last morning we treated ourselves to a leisurely breakfast at the Coffee Mug Family Restaurant. As much as we saw on our trip, there was still so much we just didn't have time for, adding to our growing travel list for future autumn trips in the Silver State.

### PLANNING CHECKLIST

All the areas mentioned in this story are free to visit with no entry or access fees. They are also part of both the Cowboy Corridor and Rubies Route road trips, which you can learn more about on pg. 98.



See the online version of this story at [nevadamagazine.com](http://nevadamagazine.com) for more photos from this trip.







PIOCHE 1870s

# PIOCHE

*Southeastern  
community is  
your gateway to a  
historic adventure.*

While Las Vegas and Reno offer white-glove hospitality and world-class entertainment, it's our rural destinations that give visitors a glimpse into the heart and soul of our state. Each issue, you'll find one of our smaller-but-no-less-incredible towns highlighted.

## A TALE OF TWO CITIES

In the mid-1860s, stories spread of a rich silver lode in Nevada. Thousands of treasure seekers arrived from all points of the compass, and by 1870, the mining camp became one of the largest cities in the West outside of San Francisco. For years, wealth poured from its surrounding hills as if from a broken tap.

When the bonanza inevitably ended, the town lived on and weathered another century and a half. Today, it is a rare living artifact of the 19th century.

That tale certainly describes Virginia City, but it's really about another Nevada boomtown. Pioche and Virginia City were sister cities from the start.





PIOCHE MODERN DAY

### DID YOU KNOW?

The town was named in honor of the French merchant who funded the earliest claims: Francois Louis Alfred Pioche—coincidentally, *pioche* is also the French word for pickaxe.

silver, and both rose and fell within the same decade. When the wealth disappeared, Virginia City drew tourists as a fanciful recreation of the old days. Pioche preserved its historic charm too, but its remote location made for a quieter community. Today, it is an authentic relic of the region's past and an excellent launch point for all styles of recreation.

### FRONTIER FIGHT CLUB

The first thing most people hear about Pioche usually concerns its rough-and-tumble roots. From the start, this town was one of the wildest settlements on the

Both were founded on chilly, remote mountaintops. Both had mines that produced billions of dollars in

frontier. It is said that 72 men met a violent death before a single person died of natural causes. In the 1870s, the newspaper even congratulated residents when the town went 60 days without a murder.

What caused such notable violence in an era known for its lawlessness? Money, of course. During peak years, the mines surrounding Pioche produced a prodigious amount of wealth. Many mines were paying \$10 million dollars in dividends each year—and that's not adjusting for inflation.

Thanks to the weak frontier legal system, when a mine became successful, its ownership was easily disputed. Mine owners hired armed guards to protect their stakes from claim jumpers: better to settle justice locally than take disputes to an easily bribed court. In 1871, more than half of the murders in Nevada took place in Pioche.

By 1880, most of the mines closed and the town fell into a post-boom slumber. Because Pioche was still the county seat, it was spared the fate of many towns that go bust. Today, visitors can still find much of the



town's original structures along with plenty of mining artifacts scattered around town. There's much to do

and see in and around Pioche, but here are some of our recommendations to get you started.



## OVERNIGHTERS

### Overland Hotel & Saloon –

This 1945 establishment offers a real-deal saloon bar and imaginatively themed rooms. If you're seeking a haunted overnighter, ask about the Victorian Suite.



### Hutchings Motel –

These five tidy cabins are available April through November. You have the pick between The Cowboy, The Hunter, The Miner, The Gunfighter, or The Rancher.

**Motherlode Motel** – This charming location offers eight rooms at a great value. Pets are welcome!



## STAY ANOTHER DAY



Need a venue for an event? Both the Million Dollar Courthouse and Thompson Opera House can be reserved for a very reasonable rate.



PIOCHE RV PARK AND CAMPGROUND





## LIVE LIKE A LOCAL

Forget your toothbrush or need to stock up on snacks? Not a problem: The Meadow Valley Market has everything you're looking for.

### Pioche RV Park and Campground

– Enjoy spacious back-in RV sites and a small campground complete with full hookups, laundry facilities, a community bathroom with hot showers, free Wifi, picnic tables, and a dump station.

**Tillies Country Cabins** – Each of these quiet cabins located just behind Tillies Mini Mart features a queen-sized bed and a kitchenette.

## THE MILLION DOLLAR COURTHOUSE

In the early 1870s, Pioche began drawing up plans for a courthouse that would hopefully bring order to the rowdy silver town. But what began as an encouraging step toward civility soon famously devolved into a financing disaster.

Initially, the cost was set at \$16,400 for a courthouse and \$10,000 for the jail. To raise money quickly, the city sold bonds guaranteeing at least 20 percent interest for lenders. The courthouse was completed within a year, but poor planning forced the project to run nearly \$90,000 over budget.

To pay for the added cost, the city sold yet more high interest bonds. The debt spiraled out of control. By 1900—30 years later—the cost had ballooned to nearly \$700,000. In 1937, Pioche finally paid off its courthouse for the price of around \$1 million—nearly 40 times the initial cost. By that time, however, the building had been disused for four years.

Visitors today are invited to wander inside of the Million Dollar Courthouse and its jail. Admission is free, and the building is open to the public from April through October.



## THE HERITAGE LIVES HERE



The rich story of the Silver State comes to life at the Nevada State Museum in Carson City. Discover prehistoric animals, eons-old geology, the rush of silver and gold, the glitz and glamour of entertainment, the diversity of Indigenous culture, and so much more.

**BECOME A MEMBER FOR FREE**  
**ADMISSION TO ALL 7 STATE MUSEUMS.**  
Visit [NVMuseums.com](http://NVMuseums.com) for museum locations, exhibits, & events.



**LINCOLN COUNTY**  
**NEVADA**  
escape the chaos



## Come Celebrate With Us!

Lincoln County offers dozens of **AMAZING EVENTS** throughout the year, including big holiday celebrations, star gazing, fishing derbies, races, outdoor movies and so much more!



To See **UPCOMING EVENTS**,  
visit [LincolnCountyNevada.com](http://LincolnCountyNevada.com)!



## FOOD AND DRINK

**Alamo Club** – Originally built in the 1860s as the Wells Fargo Freight Office and Pioche Bank, the building converted to The Alamo Club Bar in 1901. This comfortable establishment offers a great supper, serving everything from burgers and sandwiches to pizza and salad.

**Nevada Club of Pioche** – This is the best spot to charge up between adventures for libations, billiards, and a friendly chat with locals.

**Gunslingers** – Stop here for sundaes, milkshakes, candy, souvenirs, and coffee in what was once an 1870s blacksmith shop.



## TRAVEL NEVADA PRO TIP

The most popular spot in town for breakfast, lunch, and dinner is the Historic Silver Café. Turn to pg. 16 to learn more.



HISTORIC SILVER CAFÉ





LABOR DAY WEEKEND FESTIVITIES

## A STONE'S THROW

Come to Pioche for the small-town fun but stay for one of its best attributes: the surrounding countryside. Pioche sits at the center of a network of gorgeous hikes, scenic byways, mining relics, and ghost towns. For those seeking to complete their Nevada State Parks Passport, make Pioche your basecamp: It's within 45 minutes of six parks. Here are a few parks and other adventure spots we like:

1. Echo Canyon State Park
2. Cathedral Gorge State Park
3. Bristol Wells ghost town
4. Spring Valley State Park
5. Condor Canyon
6. Stampede OHV trail

You will find a complete list of state parks on pg. 97



While in town, don't miss the infamous Boot Hill Cemetery, final resting spot to more than 100 men accused of murder.



Pioche Chamber of Commerce (top photo)







# OFF-ROAD ADVENTURES

Discover your new favorite backcountry route.



SCAN FOR  
MORE INFO



DIRT ROAD CODE

If someone knows just one thing about Nevada, it's probably how huge the state is, or how almost 85 percent of its land is public. What they might not know is how seriously we take off-roading around here. In fact, Nevada is home to the very first congressionally designated off-road (as in dirt) trail in the country. Another thing we're serious about? Helping you get onto the lesser-traveled backroads that traverse our landscape.



3

2

1

## 1. THE BIG TRAIL

The **Silver State Off-Highway Vehicle Trail** loops through 260 miles of wild backcountry in southeastern Nevada. Designed with families in mind, well-marked sections—from easy gravel roads to challenging tracks—traverse mountaintops and panoramic basins. Located primarily in Lincoln County, the trail has three established trailheads (near Caliente, Pioche, and Panaca) with more to come.

If almost 300 miles doesn't seem epic enough for you, the trail has tons of offshoots that can take you to the state line, through four state parks, or into the town of Mesquite. We don't believe in limits here, so let your imagination (and a great map!) guide you.



One of the best parts of the Silver State OHV Trail is that you're never far from a good hotel or supper. Turn to pg. 74 to peruse just some of your options.



MAKE YOUR FALL

*unforgettable*

*Mark your calendars for these great Ely events!*

**AUGUST**

5 | Ward Mountain Half/10k/5k Trail Run

5-6 | Bristlecone Arts in the Park

11-12 | White Pine Rodders' Car Show

18-20 | White Pine County Fair & Horse Races

**SEPTEMBER**

1-3 | Iron Horse Cookery Cook-Off

9 | Race the Rails

14-16 | Great Basin Astronomy Festival

14-17 | Silver State Classic Challenge

**OCTOBER**

14 | Great American Eclipse "Ring of Fire Festival"



@VISITELYNEVADA  
**WWW.ELYNEVADA.NET**

# ADVENTURE AWAITS

NEVADA'S COWBOY COUNTRY TERRITORY

## AREAS TO EXPLORE:

- Angel Lake
- Lamoille Canyon
- Jarbidge Wilderness
- Winnemucca Sand Dunes
- Lovelock Indian Caves
- Denio Opal Mines
- Black Rock Desert
- Ghost Towns

Nevada's  
**Cowboy  
COUNTRY**



**WWW.COWBOYCOUNTRY.COM**



## 2. NOW THAT'S A LOOP

Nestled in the deliciously remote, high-elevation mountains surrounding Ely is a backcountry byway that should float to the top of any adventurer's list. The Schell Creek Range is chock-full of trails—some OHV-purpose built—creeks, and campgrounds, but one standout gem is the **Success Loop**.

The trail is adjacent to Cave Lake State Park, and you can begin or end your journey at the park—we recommend

starting at Cave Lake and ending near McGill. The trail is rated easy and is often traversed by high clearance 4WDs. Starting at an elevation of 7,300 feet, the trail winds for 40 miles of incredible mountain views, aspens exploding with color, direct access to trailheads and singletrack, and maybe even a Basque arborglyph or two. Thanks to that elevation, this trail is off-limits during the winter...unless you have a snowmobile! Note: Cave Lake is closed for dam reconstruction, but the campground is still open.



TUSCARORA



LUCKY BOY CANYON



### LIVE LIKE A LOCAL



For some of us, seeing dirt roads sparks the desire to discover where the road leads. If you have the desire but not the OHV, it can be a serious bummer. In Ely, however, that problem is easily solved by Eastern Nevada Adventures. Rent an OHV from them and have it delivered to the trailhead or choose in-town pickup to access many nearby options. Ely is so keen on off roading that many OHV-friendly roads are accessible within city limits.

PONY EXPRESS TRAIL

John Peltier (Pony Express Trail), Nikita Williams (Tuscarora & Lucky Boy Canyon), Larry Burton (Cold Springs Station)



### 3. MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

A plethora of trails are tucked in the Desatoya and Clan Alpine Mountain ranges about an hour east of Fallon or west of Austin. So many, the total mileage isn't known, but what is known is that off-roaders in this area can follow along the **Pony Express Trail** that runs through the area. The landscape is also dotted with historic ranches, mining sites, and many seasonal springs and creeks which account for pockets of lush landscape.

Petroglyphs, cabins made of ammunition cases and glass, reservoirs, and some of the darkest skies ever await

those in search of central Nevada's off-road treasures. The area is also popular with bird watchers.

### THIS IS THE WAY

When there's so much to explore, it also means there's so many places to get lost. That won't happen, however, thanks to **Off Road Nevada**—found at [ohv.nv.gov](http://ohv.nv.gov). This is your one-stop shop for maps, KML and KMZ files for exact coordinates, rules and regulations (registration is a must!), plus tips on how to stay safe in the backcountry. The website has information on dozens of OHV trail systems.



LIVE LIKE A LOCAL



Make Cold Springs Station your base camp for central Nevada OHV trips. Bring your RV or stay in the motel, grab a delicious meal at the restaurant, and then hit the trails in the surrounding mountains. Most trails can be accessed right from the property, so off-road vehicles never need to traverse the highway. The owner gladly offers directions and advice about the area.



# FALL EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



RUBY MOUNTAIN BALLOON FESTIVAL

## RUBY MOUNTAIN BALLOON FESTIVAL

Elko

Sept. 22-24

What could be more magical than watching a parade of balloons skirting along one of Nevada's most famous ridgelines? Bring the whole family to this free event featuring a mass ascension with dozens of hot air balloons launching all over town, a nighttime glow show, immersive kids programs, tethered rides, and much more.

## RENO NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP AIR RACES

Reno

Sept. 13-17

Don't miss the final year of what has long been one of northern Nevada's most beloved events. Along with its world-class air show and military demonstrations, this spectacle offers visitors access to a host of aircraft, pilots, and pit crews, and ample opportunity for shopping and concessions. But the races are the big attraction here, and there's no better thrill than experiencing planes fly overhead at 500 mph.



RENO NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP AIR RACES

Jeremy Spilker (Airplanes)



Not sure where to start your Nevada adventure? Consider planning your visit around one of these special events.

These are just a few experiences the Silver State has to offer. Turn the page for more events.

## EUREKA ART, WINE, & MUSIC FEST

Eureka  
Sept. 16

If you're into small town fun in a mountain setting, this event is for you. Each year, wine and history lovers gather in Eureka's 1860s-era downtown for a cultural bonanza. Enjoy a full afternoon of live music, art classes, exhibits, vendors, food tastings, and—of course—a wine walk through Eureka's famous historic district.



EUREKA ART, WINE, & MUSIC FEST

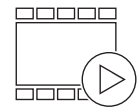


LATTIN FARMS FALL FESTIVAL

## LATTIN FARMS FALL FESTIVAL

Fallon  
Oct. 7, 14, 21, & 28

The 400-acre Lattin Farms is famous for two things: growing some of the region's best produce and hosting its month-long harvest festival extravaganza. Whether you want to build your own scarecrow, peruse a craft market, enter a costume contest, pick pumpkins, take a hay wagon ride, or navigate Nevada's largest corn maze, you'll find it easy to fall into the season's celebrations.



Video: Get a Taste of Fallon's Lattin Farms Festival



Lattin Farms (Gourds)  
Bridgette Bacon (Eureka Art)



# STATEWIDE EVENTS

Fill your warm weather weekends with wine walks, cookoffs, auto shows, and countless small-town celebrations. Wherever your autumn adventures take you in Nevada, there's something fun going on nearby. Remember that dates and events are always subject to change, so be sure to verify before you start planning.

## AUGUST

5-11

BONNEVILLE SPEED WEEK  
West Wendover

11-21

JAZZ & BEYOND MUSIC FESTIVAL  
Carson City

12

JARBIDGE DAYS PARADE  
Jarbridge

16-20

CASEY FOLKS VEGAS TO  
RENO RACE  
Statewide

18-20

WHITE PINE COUNTY FAIR AND  
HORSE RACES  
Ely

25-27

FALLON CANTALOUPE FESTIVAL  
& COUNTRY FAIR  
Fallon

27-Sept. 4

BURNING MAN  
Black Rock Desert

30-Sept. 4

BEST IN THE WEST NUGGET  
RIB COOK OFF  
Sparks



JAZZ & BEYOND MUSIC FESTIVAL

## SEPTEMBER

1-4

PIOCHE LABOR DAY CELEBRATION  
Pioche

8-10

SILVER STATE ART FESTIVAL  
Carson City

RIDES & RODS CLASSIC CAR SHOW  
Elko

THE INTERNATIONAL CAMEL &  
OSTRICH RACES  
Virginia City

THE GREAT RENO BALLOON RACE  
Reno

CASABLANCA RIB FEST  
Mesquite

9

RACE THE RAILS  
Ely



15-17

CALIENTE MOUNTAIN BIKE FEST  
Caliente

SUPER RUN CLASSIC CAR SHOW  
Mesquite

21-24

PAHRUMP FALL FESTIVAL  
Pahrump

STREET VIBRATIONS FALL RALLY  
Reno

22-24

LINCOLN COUNTY PHOTO FESTIVAL  
Caliente

23-24

GENOA CANDY DANCE ARTS &  
CRAFTS FAIRE  
Genoa

## OCTOBER

1-31

HAUNTOBER  
Virginia City

6-7

RiSE LANTERN FESTIVAL  
Las Vegas

7

PARK TO PARK PEDAL  
CENTURY RIDE  
Caliente

7-8

ART IN THE PARK  
Boulder City

11-16

RING OF FIRE ECLIPSE FESTIVAL  
Ely

13-15

LAKE TAHOE MARATHON  
South Lake Tahoe

20-22

THE GREAT EUREKA GHOST HUNT  
Eureka

28

NEVADA DAY PARADE  
Carson City

27-29

BEATTY DAYS FESTIVAL  
Beatty

## NOVEMBER

3-4

POMEGRANATE ARTS & CRAFTS  
FESTIVAL  
Moapa Valley



RiSE LANTERN FESTIVAL

SCAN FOR  
MORE INFO



NEVADA EVENTS CALENDAR



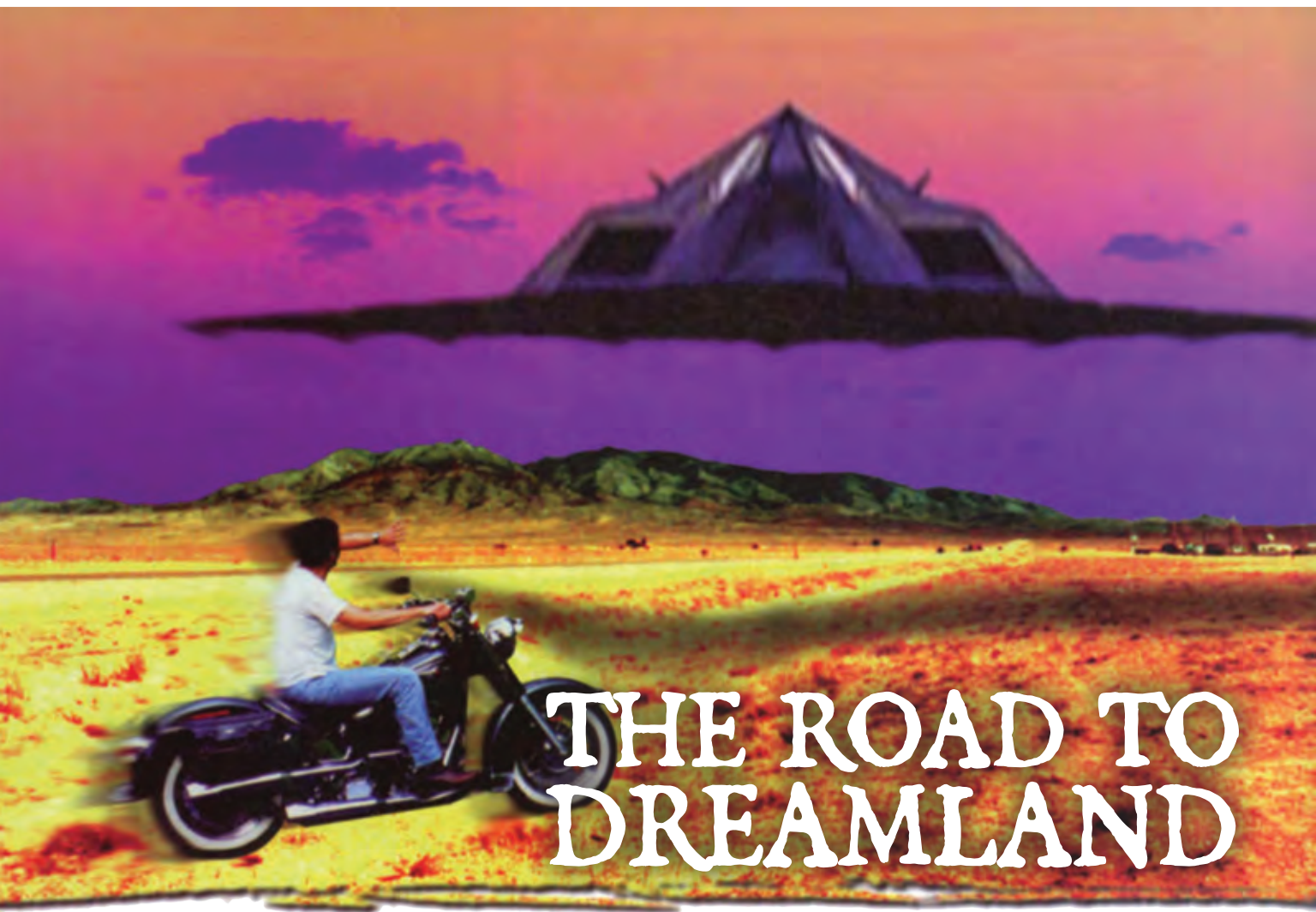
BEATTY DAYS FESTIVAL

RiSE Lantern Festival  
Beatty Chamber



# ONLY AT NEVADAMAGAZINE.COM

In our issue archives, you'll find great stories like this one, which first appeared in our September/October 1996 issue.



A wrong turn at Area 51, the top-secret military base near Rachel, led this Harley traveler on an unexpected detour.

BY HOWARD SIEGEL

Every summer I seek escape from the pressures and populace of New York City by heading out to the desert Southwest on my Harley. I make the trip alone, completely free to set my own schedule and alter my itinerary.

Last summer I took my ninth such desert sojourn. It turned out to lead to an unexpectedly hair-raising detour.

For several months I had researched the remote and highly secret U.S. Air Force Base known as Area 51, located 90 miles north of Las Vegas. Also known as Groom Lake and Dreamland—and until recently so cloaked in secrecy that its funding never appeared as an item in the Congressional budget—this base is said to be the government's highest-security testing area for experimental military aircraft.



There is another dimension to Groom Lake: It is reputed to be the only site of hands-on government research into UFOs. Some people believe that remains of alien spacecraft (and perhaps the remains of aliens themselves) are stored and studied in a clandestine concrete structure at the south end of the base (a situation explored in the recent movie "Independence Day"). This mystery piqued my interest, and I decided to investigate aboard my Heritage Special.

It was mid-July and nearly 105 degrees as I headed out of Las Vegas toward Rachel, an outpost on the recently named Extraterrestrial Highway (State Route 375) with a nicely maintained trailer park, small restaurant, and general store—the only evidence of civilization within many miles. I arrived in Rachel a little dusty but refreshed and eager to press on. After checking into my room (the northern half of trailer No. 4), I washed up, made sure I had film and plenty of water, and was back on the bike in 30 minutes. Using topographic maps, I would try roads that offered the best legal approach to Groom Lake.

Body motorized, I shot through the desert landscape, free and flying. Riding is like that for most of us. But in the desert, these feelings are intensified. The openness, the brightness, and the heat all seem to magnify one's sense of flight.

Suddenly, the skyline changed. In an instant, it was dark. I looked quickly both ways. Nothing. And then I saw it. The horizon—the entire horizon—had been obliterated by the awesome

blackness of a B-1 Stealth jet bomber. I screeched to a full emergency stop, grabbed the camera, and started snapping, but the plane was gone. A distant dot in the bright-blue sky was the only reminder of the metallic mass that had covered the sky only seconds earlier.

Awestruck, I pressed on toward Dreamland. The journey's final leg—a long dirt-and-gravel road—ended after 13-1/2 miles. I saw several signs, none of them suggesting a warm welcome. "This Is A Restricted Military Installation Entry Strictly Prohibited." "WARNING WARNING-Absolutely No Trespassing." "No Photography Allowed-Subject To Search and Confiscation." My personal favorite was the rather direct admonishment, "DO NOT ENTER-Use of Deadly Force Authorized."

True, I was curious, but I wasn't insane.

I turned the bike back in search of the one traversable path that, based on my research, seemed to be a legal approach to the base's perimeter. The road began as fairly hard dirt, passable even for a Harley (which is not noted for its dune-hopping capabilities), but the road soon became much sandier. Still, I hoped to catch at least a glimpse of this mysterious facility. I was wrong. My research had not been extensive enough. The perimeter markers, which I had been so careful to follow, were no longer reliable. Unwittingly, I had crossed into a restricted area.

I was not destined to see Dreamland. Instead, I was confronted with a real-life nightmare.

*There's no going back now for this weekend warrior. Scan here to continue the story and see how much trouble he's gotten himself into.*



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# SHOPPING IN THE PAST

*Antique stores in northern Nevada offer treasures untold.*

BY SUSAN NUGENT

In a time when hand-held technology becomes outdated almost before it hits the shelf, it seems nothing is made to last.

Wouldn't it be nice to experience something so well made it has lasted for generations? Along with great quality, items such as a hand-crafted oak table or a vintage Lionel train set can stir nostalgic feelings and harken back to an earlier time. If an antique road trip speaks to you, treasures such as these can be found at antique and collectible stores in northern Nevada.

Kristen Kabrin (Just Country Friends)



**JUST COUNTRY FRIENDS**

Fallon

A dollhouse of an antique and collectibles store, this weathered, Craftsman-style house-turned-antique-store offers a combination of farmhouse-style gifts and antique collectibles. Billie Jo Snow—an equal partner in the store—

describes a recently sought-after outhouse with a grin adding that there is something for everyone. For shoppers looking for something a little less rustic, they carry new items, vintage kitchenware, linens, and antique furniture. You'll also find a variety of treasures from dressers and iron bed frames to milk cans and farm equipment.

**CHESHIRE ANTIQUES**

Gardnerville

Cheshire Antiques is a trove of antiques and collectibles. What began as the Carson Valley Mercantile in 1896, the two-story brick and stone building is formidable in its size and holds countless antiques and collectibles. Owners Richard and Karen Campbell say interests and trends change over time with items such as original vinyl records replacing once sought after “Life” magazines, for example. Quality antiques continue to be the main attraction like a hand-crafted

Jacobean chair or a beautifully preserved espresso-stained oak trunk—both more than 400 years old.







## THE ANTIQUE MALL

### Mound House

Hidden in plain sight along Highway 50, this inconspicuous antique store is filled with everything from model train sets to antique furniture and collectibles. There's even a yard filled with antique farm and mining equipment. In business for more than 27 years, the 7000-square-foot store is known for its variety of goods and recognized by those in the trades for carrying quality used hand tools. Co-owner and manager Jannette Hoffert notes mid-century modern items fly off the shelves and is excited to see customers of every generation visit the shop. A room in the back of the store holds bigger pieces of furniture purchased through estate sales or brought in directly by sellers.

## HANIFIN'S ARTS & ANTIQUES

### Carson City

For finds such as an 18th century carving by artist Grinling Gibbons—whose work adorned the walls of Windsor Castle—to rare European furniture and art, Hanifin's is not to be missed. Built more than 150 years ago, the building itself is a history lesson with owner Michael Robbins acting as historian. From 1870 to 1930, it operated as a dry goods store and was the primary seller of Dat So La Lee's baskets. Robbins imports high quality antiques from as far away as Europe, Asia, and North Africa and buys every piece himself. He says he looks for pieces made from walnut, cherry, or mahogany because, under natural light, these types of woods “just glow with a patina all their own.”





# NEVADA STATE MUSEUMS

## Hours and Admission Guide



### NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM CARSON CITY

🕒 Thursday-Monday  
9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

🎫 Adults \$8  
Ages 17 and younger FREE



### NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM BOULDER CITY

🕒 Daily, 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Train Rides Saturday & Sunday  
10 a.m. | 12 p.m. | 2 p.m.

🎫 General Admission FREE  
Train Rides  
Adults \$10  
Ages 4-12 \$5  
Ages 3 and younger FREE



### EAST ELY RAILROAD DEPOT MUSEUM

🕒 Monday-Saturday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Sunday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

🎫 General Admission FREE  
Tour Grounds \$8



### NEVADA STATE MUSEUM CARSON CITY

🕒 Tuesday-Sunday  
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

🎫 Adults \$10  
Ages 17 and younger FREE



### NEVADA STATE MUSEUM LAS VEGAS

🕒 Thursday-Monday  
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

🎫 Adults \$9.95  
Ages 3-17 \$4.95  
Ages 2 and younger FREE



### LOST CITY MUSEUM OVERTON

🕒 Wednesday-Sunday  
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

🎫 Adults \$6  
Ages 17 and younger FREE



### NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY RENO

Wednesday-Saturday  
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Adults \$6  
Ages 17 and younger FREE

Call before you go as hours,  
admission rates, and openings  
are subject to change. State  
and federal holidays may  
impact availability.

SCAN FOR  
MORE INFO



MUSEUMS



# WHAT'S *New?*

All around Nevada, you'll find exciting things happening. This issue, we've got big news from Las Vegas!

## ICE AGE FOSSILS STATE PARK

One of Nevada's newest state parks has received a \$3.5 million grant to help complete its outdoor amenities. With this grant, the park—located just north of Downtown Las Vegas—will open to the public later this year.

The park's visitor center will feature fossils and artifacts and interactive exhibits. Hiking trails will have interpretive panels and shade structures, also. The 315-acre park features a portion of the upper Las Vegas wash rich in both paleontological and historical resources. During the Ice Age, the wash provided verdant habitat for several species of now-extinct mammals including Columbian mammoths, American lions, camels, dire wolves, and ground sloths.



## THE BEVERLY THEATER

The city's newest independent film house and performance theater is open for business. The Beverly Theater hosts film festivals, concerts, first-run indie films, poetry readings, author events, and so much more. Located in Downtown, the Beverly's mission is to bring uncommon cinematic, literary, and live experiences to the city.



## THE LEXI

A new hotel concept has opened in Las Vegas. The Lexi—formerly the Artisan Hotel Boutique—has opened after a multi-million-dollar renovation, and it's offering a twist. The new 64-room hotel is the city's first cannabis-friendly property. The hotel's fourth floor will have a special filtration system that will allow guests to use cannabis in their rooms. The rest of the property, including the pool and restaurant, are cannabis free.



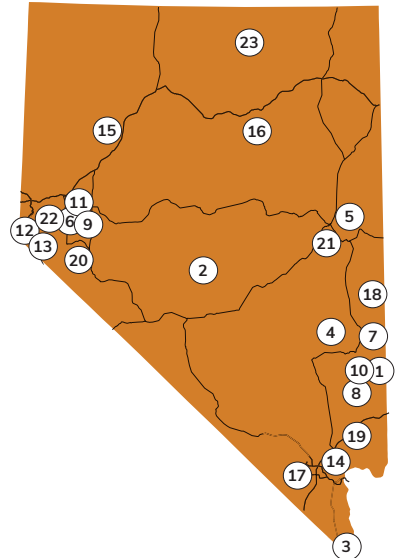
# STATE PARKS

## Directory



	Camping	RV Dump Station	Flush Restrooms	Group Camping	Showers	Visitor Center	Boat Launch	Trails	Fishing	Maximum Size RV Space
1. Beaver Dam State Park	•			•				•	•	28'
2. Berlin-Ichthyosaur State Park	•	•		•		•		•		25'
3. Big Bend of the Colorado State Recreation Area	•	•					•	•	•	60'
4. Cathedral Gorge State Park	•	•	•	•	•	•		•		40'
5. Cave Lake State Park	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	35'
6. Dayton State Park	•	•	•					•	•	35'
7. Echo Canyon State Park	•	•	•	•			•	•	•	35'
8. Elgin Schoolhouse State Historic Site								•		N/A
9. Fort Churchill State Historic Park	•	•		•		•		•	•	45'
10. Kershaw-Ryan State Park	•	•	•					•		30'
11. Lahontan State Recreation Area	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	60'
12. Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park	•		•		•	•	•	•	•	N/A
13. Mormon Station State Historic Park			•			•				N/A
14. Old Las Vegas Mormon Fort State Historic Park			•			•		•		N/A
15. Rye Patch State Recreation Area	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	45'
16. South Fork State Recreation Area	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	30'
17. Spring Mountain Ranch State Park			•			•		•		N/A
18. Spring Valley State Park	•	•	•		•		•	•	•	35'
19. Valley of Fire State Park	•	•	•	•	•	•		•		50'
20. Walker River State Recreation Area	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	50'
21. Ward Charcoal Ovens State Historic Park	•			•				•	•	30'
22. Washoe Lake State Park	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	45'
23. Wild Horse State Recreation Area	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	60'

Spring Mountain Ranch State Park



**Know Before You Go:**  
Park openings, hours, and services are subject to change. Before visiting, consult the Nevada State Parks website, or call the park ranger.





# MAKE YOUR NEXT TRIP A ROAD TRIP

**Fancy yourself a foodie?  
A die-hard history  
buff? A thrill-seeking  
adventure junkie? All of  
the above and beyond?  
Perfect. With these road  
trip ideas—whichever  
corner of the state you  
venture to—you're bound  
to uncover unexpected  
encounters, memorable  
characters, and only-in-  
Nevada experiences.**

SCAN FOR  
MORE INFO



NEVADA ROAD TRIPS



## BURNER BYWAY

110 to 250 miles | 2 to 4 days

This trip starts in the Biggest Little City and follows the same route tens of thousands take each year to the Black Rock Desert and Burning Man. With a night at spellbinding Pyramid Lake and the chance to see some Lower 48's most remote sections, this road is all about unscripted adventure.



## COWBOY CORRIDOR

400 miles | 2 to 4 days

Nevada's Interstate 80 may be what some motorists blast down on their way to somewhere else, but that's their loss! On this trip, you'll discover lively communities with museums, art galleries, and cuisine highlighting the confluence of buckaroo, Basque, and American Indian traditions.



## DEATH VALLEY RALLY

Up to 370 miles | 3 to 4 days

A land of extremes awaits just off The Strip. While diving into the state's southwest, you'll enjoy below-sea-level adventure in Death Valley, stargaze at an alpine resort, wander a ghost town, and enjoy winery tours in the Mojave Desert.



## EXTRATERRESTRIAL HIGHWAY

100 to 470 miles | 2 days

Prepare to rocket off into one of Nevada's most remote and mysterious corridors. Along the way, you'll see one of the deepest craters in the U.S., hunt for UFOs just miles outside Area 51, stay in a clown-themed motel, and score some alien swag.







## FREE-RANGE ART HIGHWAY

440 to 515 miles | 1 to 3 days

Psychedelic free-range art meets the American West on this 500-mile trek from Las Vegas to Reno. Along the way, you'll meet mural-draped downtowns, oddball open-air galleries, funky shops, and iconic overnights.

*For more adventures along the Great Basin Highway, turn to pg. 34.*



## GREAT BASIN HIGHWAY

350 to 585 miles | 3 to 5 days

This trip begins with sandstone canyons and ends at ancient bristlecone pines beneath some of the nation's darkest skies. Before reaching our state's very own national park, you'll explore surreal landscapes including Valley of Fire and Cathedral Gorge and visit charming communities and historic ghost towns.



## LAKE TAHOE LOOP

145 miles | 2 to 5 days

World-famous Lake Tahoe is a year-round haven for resort-goers and outdoor enthusiasts. But don't miss the surrounding idyllic countryside, which includes Reno's artsy Midtown, charming Carson Valley, and the wild Western Virginia City.



## LONELIEST ROAD IN AMERICA

375 to 500 miles | 3 days

This famous road trip is your chance to explore Nevada's wild interior. In between tours of the state's most famous (and remote) towns, you'll have unrivaled opportunities for hot springing, off-roading, wildlife viewing, and Sagebrush Saloon hopping.



## NEON TO NATURE

60 to 210 miles | 1-3 days

Las Vegas is good at keeping people occupied, but just an hour beyond the glow are the world-famous Hoover Dam and Colorado River, outdoor playgrounds like Red Rock Canyon and plenty of ghost towns, historic mines, and archeological sites.



## RUBIES ROUTE

30 miles to 375 miles | 2 to 5 days

With Elko as your hub, get ready to explore a recreation-packed paradise in the state's rugged northwest outback. You'll hike gorgeous Lamoille Canyon, dip into pristine mountain lakes, and wind through the wilds to Jarbidge, one of the West's last true frontier towns.



*See pg. 6 for the full map of all 10 Nevada Road Trips.*



While we packed this guide full of wonderful things to do, there's no way we could include everything Nevada has to offer. If you were hoping for something else, here's a few more great topics you can find at [TravelNevada.com](http://TravelNevada.com). Don't forget, we publish four times a year, so sign up to get every issue—each one offers new ways to explore #ThatNevadaLife

# WANT

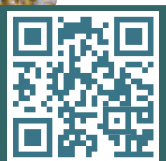


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MUCH MORE AT



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Get here, then get away from it all.

Luxuriate while you get yourself in a little hot water.



**HOT SPRINGS  
RESORTS**





# MORE?

Discover the true  
"spirit" of the  
Silver State.



**DISTILLERIES**



Festivals, gatherings, races  
and more happen each year  
here...discover your favorite.



**ANNUAL EVENTS**



Ready to put rubber  
to the road?



**ITINERARIES**



**LEGENDARY  
NEVADANS**

Larger-than-life  
personalities  
left their mark.





# RECREATE RESPONSIBLY

Nevada is a beautiful place, but one of its best qualities—and the reason folks make repeat visits—is that most of it belongs to everybody. More than 80 percent of Nevada is public, which means our lakes, deserts, valleys, marshes, and mountains are for everyone to enjoy. With that said, it's up to you to protect the land and keep Nevada pristine for the next generation.



## WILDFIRE WATCHOUT

Battling natural wildfires is difficult enough, so let's not add human-caused ones to the mix. Preventable blazes are started by campfire embers, vehicle undercarriages, hot bullet casings, and more. Practice situational awareness and always be aware of local fire restrictions.

## WHERE YOU'RE GOING, THERE'S A ROAD

No matter your destination, you're likely to find a two-tracks or trail that'll get you where you need to be. Please don't blaze your own: desert fauna is slow to grow and takes decades to recover from damage.

## HERE'S YOUR SIGN

While most land is public, some isn't. If you see any No Trespassing signs, please stay out. If you come across a gate with no signage, it's there to keep cattle out. Pass on through but make sure to close the gate behind you.

## TREAD LIGHTLY!

Whether you're off-roading, hunting, target shooting, fishing, or simply exploring, make sure you're operating motorized vehicles legally, safely, and responsibly. Brush up on designated OHV routes before you head out into Nevada's backcountry.

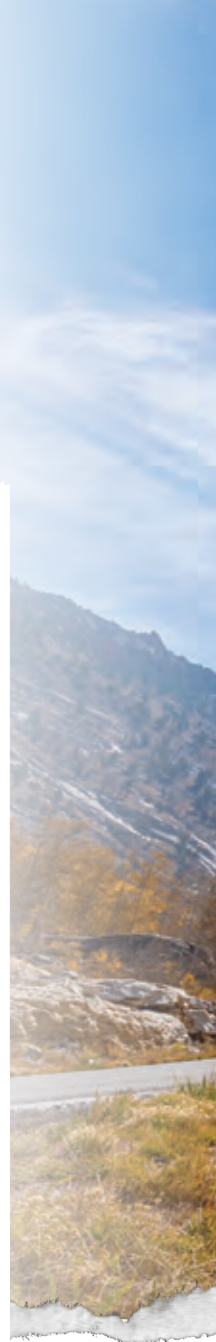
## ANIMAL INSTINCT

Nevada's wildlife ranges from rabbits to rattlesnakes, burros to bighorns, antelope to coyotes, and more wild horses than anywhere else. While exploring the backcountry, be sure to drive at safe speeds. You'll be more likely to spot the fauna, and they'll have more time to get out of your way. Also, feeding or handling wildlife is against the law, and human interaction won't do them any favors in the long run. Enjoy from a distance.

SCAN FOR MORE INFO



DIRT ROAD CODE







LAMOILLE CANYON

## STAR CAMPERS

Nevada's night skies are some of the darkest in the Lower 48, and many visitors take to remote campgrounds for our unrivaled galactic view. Be mindful of the light pollution you bring with you: It doesn't take much to blow out another camper's night vision.

## DIRT ROAD CODE

Study up on the Dirt Road Code if you plan on venturing outside metro areas for an adventure. You'll find packing tips, vehicle suggestions, and advice on how to safely navigate Nevada's backroads.

## TRAVEL NEVADA PRO TIP

Don't count on your cellphone to bail you out of a jam! Nevada's wild places are some of the country's most remote, which means they're often out of cell service and far from help. Be prepared, let people know where you're going, and always have a plan B.







# The Final Word

Mark Estee

**Chef, restaurateur, and community leader, Mark Estee has left a tasty mark on northern Nevada's dining experience for more than 20 years. His company Reno Local Food Group has five restaurant brands and multiple locations around the Reno-Carson City area.**

**NM&VG:** How has Reno's dining scene changed over the years?

**ME:** Back in 2010, when I opened Campo, there were a small handful of restaurants that were delivering on the level we were. Today, we have so many great types of cuisines and restaurants. Even things like Food Truck Friday brought great diversity and culture. Now it's even stronger in the last 3-4 years. Reno Public Market, Gordon Ramsay has a restaurant at Lake Tahoe, Charlie Palmer is still going strong...Reno's just getting better and better.

**NM&VG:** What is your favorite thing to cook at home?

**ME:** We make homemade pasta for the kids, just simple Tagliatelle. The kids each like different sauces so we have a pasta bar-type meal.

**NM&VG:** You've had growing pains, but you stuck it out. Why?

**ME:** I always joke about this and say I'm too stupid to know the difference. If I really listened and paid attention, I would have tucked tail and run away a long time ago. But I always felt if I had a good culture, put people first, and kept going, it would work out. I'm not a collaborator at heart, but today, people who used to work for me are my partners, and they make the company better. I've been willing to go with the changes, take feedback, and learn. I just doubled down. I'll outwork anything bad that's happened to me.

**TRAVEL  
NEVADA  
PRO TIP**

Learn more about Mark's restaurants and discover your next favorite meal at [renolfg.com](http://renolfg.com).

**NM&VG:** If someone had time for just one meal in the area, where would you tell them to go?

**ME:** Liberty Food & Wine Exchange would be the spot, for sure. It's the most creative and elevated of all our restaurants. There are always new menu items, and we are pushing boundaries and testing things. It's a place to find something unique, chef-inspired, local, and you might catch me there cooking. Plus, it always smells good in there.

**NM&VG:** What's on the horizon for Reno Local Food Group?

**ME:** We're always looking at new projects. We just opened a restaurant in Midtown, we're building a new tap room, and we'll open a new Great Basin Brewpub in Minden soon.



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