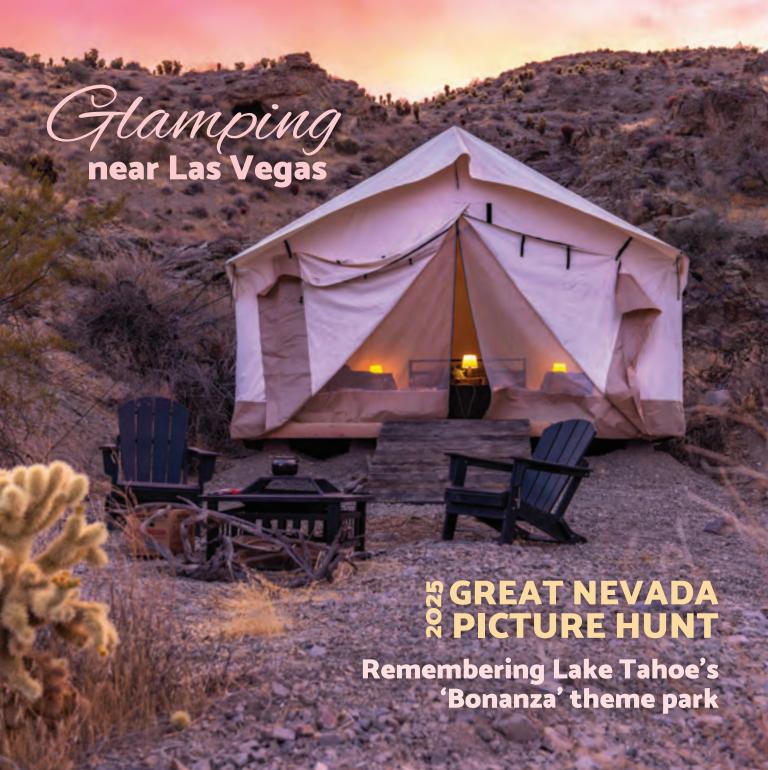
NEVADA

Fall/Winter 2025
Display until February 28, 2026

MAGAZINE & VISITOR GUIDE





Unleash your creativity in *Brick Masters Studio: Build with LEGO® Bricks Like a Pro, a* hands-on exhibition created by artist Sean Kenney, that blends art and science allowing you to experiment with shape, structure and color while learning real-world design principles. Whether you're a seasoned builder or a first-time creator, *Brick Masters Studio* invites you to imagine, play, and build like a pro!



490 S. Center Street · Downtown Reno 775-786-1000 · nvdm.org









*Rate Restrictions: Valid only for Choice Privileges members (program enrollment is free). The reservation must be made on ChoiceHotels. com at participating hotels and must be made at least 7,14,21 or 30 days in advance, which will vary based on the hotel for which a reservation is being made. Subject to availability, the rate starts at 15% off Best Available Rate, is non-cancellable, non-changeable and non-refundable. Your credit card will be charged for the total reservation amount within 24-48 hours of booking. This rate has a seven (7) night maximum length of stay. Rooms at this discount are limited. Offer is not available to groups and cannot be combined with any other discount. Choice Hotels reserves the right to change or discontinue this offer at any time. Eligibility restricted to U.S. and Canadian residents. Members must book direct at https://www.ChoiceHotels.com/Nevada or call 1-877-424-6423. All Choice Hotels properties are independently owned and operated. **Guarantee applies to Third Party Website standard rates for a Choice single or double occupancy room that are at least 1% and \$1.00 less than the Choice rate. Claims must be submitted within 24 hours of booking and 48+ hours prior to 6 PM checkin time the day of hotel arrival. Other terms also apply; see www.choicehotels.com/legal/best-rate-rules for full terms and conditions. ©2025 Choice Hotels International. All rights reserved.

NEV



FALL/WINTER 2025 VOLUME 85, NUMBER 2 200 S. Virginia St., Ste. 500 Reno, NV 89501 775-687-0633 editor@nevadamagazine.com

nevadamagazine.com





NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

info@travelnevada.com • travelnevada.com

CHAIRMAN Lieutenant Governor Stavros S. Anthony

DIRECTOR Brenda Scolari

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER. TRAVEL NEVADA Rafael Villanueva

CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER. TRAVEL NEVADA Caroline Sexton

MARKETING TEAM Ali Anderson, Keelie Cox, Susan Mowers, Rachel Wright

NEVADA MAGAZINE & VISITOR GUIDE TEAM Megg Mueller, Cory Munson, Kippy S. Spilker, Alexandria Hawthorne

ADVERTISING &

CUSTOMER SERVICE info@travelnevada.com

Commissioners: Fletch Brunelle, Shelly Capurro, Mendy Elliott, Annette Kerr, Jill Rowland-Lagan, Mike Larragueta, Jane Moon, Rick Murdock, Herb Santos, Jr., Judith Perez Siegel

Photography: All photos not credited are owned by or were provided to Travel Nevada.

Disclaimer: Advertisements in this publication do not constitute an offer for sale in states where prohibited or restricted by law.

All Rights Reserved. Reproduction of any content without written permission is prohibited.

Nevada Magazine & Visitor Guide (ISSN 0199-1248) is created and distributed by Travel Nevada, a division of the Nevada Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs.

Copyright © 2025 State of Nevada

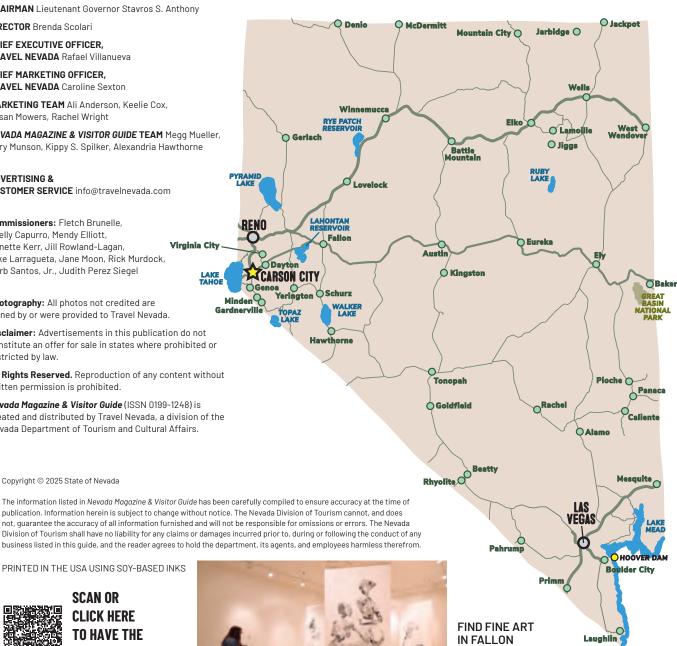
publication. Information herein is subject to change without notice. The Nevada Division of Tourism cannot, and does not, quarantee the accuracy of all information furnished and will not be responsible for omissions or errors. The Nevada Division of Tourism shall have no liability for any claims or damages incurred prior to, during or following the conduct of any business listed in this guide, and the reader agrees to hold the department, its agents, and employees harmless therefrom.

Virginia City

PRINTED IN THE USA USING SOY-BASED INKS



SCAN OR **CLICK HERE** TO HAVE THE **GUIDE MAILED** TO YOU

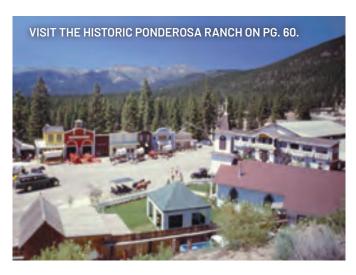


ON PG. 72.

Time Keeps on Slippin'

DIG IN FOR A BASOUE RESTAURANT ROUNDUP ON PG. 54.



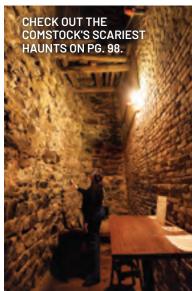


IT'S YOUR TURN.

Use this QR code to take our survey. Tell us what you like/don't like about the guide and you may win a swag bag!

SCAN OR CLICK





Maybe it's because I'm getting older although I suppose we all are—but it seems like time is racing by. I can't believe we're in

the last half of 2025, and the holidays are looming. Seems like just yesterday Nevada was thawing out from a cold winter. But time waits for no woman, so here's our second and final issue of the year, and it's a good one.

One story I want to call your attention to includes a new addition to our collection of Uncommon Overnighters. Vegas Glamping is a sublime way to spend the night in the heart of the Nevada desert while sleeping in total comfort. Treat yourself to the best of both worlds and read about it on pg. 14. We're also taking a look at the professional sports teams that call the Silver State home on pg. 28. Hint: It's way more than just our black and silver friends in the south!

There's a bunch of stories that'll help you plan your next adventure here, but we've got a very special one that reveals a slice of our past. The Ponderosa Ranch near Lake Tahoe rode straight off our television sets in the 1960s, entertaining families, including mine, for almost 40 years. Learn about the once-famous park on pg. 60.

Just in time for spooky season, don't miss the story on pg. 98 where two of our staffers head to Virginia City to check out some of its more haunted locations...and yes, they stay the night.

Last but not least, we've got the Great Nevada Picture Hunt, our annual photo contest. We have eight beautiful pages of winning photos for you, each unique and with its own story of the Silver State to tell. The gorgeousness starts on pg. 84.

Here's to a great fall and a wonderful holiday season—we'll see you with our next issue in the spring!

Megg Mueller, Executive Editor



SOCIAL

If you're wandering the Silver State, we want to hear about it.

With its white peaks, red rock canyons, and expansive sagebrush valleys, Nevada is about as photogenic as a state can be. Help us brag by sharing your favorite travel moments on social media. Each issue, we'll take some of our favorites and show them off. Who knows, maybe your shot will be the one that inspires someone's next visit.









FOLLOW US FOR TRAVEL INSPIRATION OR TO DISCOVER YOUR FAVORITE SILVER STATE ADVENTURER.

◎@TRAVELNEVADA × @TRAVELNEVADA ★ /TRAVELNEVADA
★ /TRAVELNEVADA

Nevada's Fall and Winter: Seasons of Opportunity A note from Nevada's Lieutenant Governor

As summer fades and the temperatures begin to cool, Nevada moves into one of its most dynamic times of year. From crisp fall days to snow-covered mountain landscapes, our state offers a wide range of experiences that reflect the strength and diversity of our communities.

In the fall, Nevada's natural beauty is on full display from high desert trails lined with changing leaves to harvest events and local festivals that highlight our rural traditions. Whether you're taking a scenic drive to Great Basin National Park, attending a community event, or visiting one of our historic towns, it's a great time to explore what's right here at home.

Winter brings with it new opportunities for recreation and tourism. Our ski resorts—especially in the Lake Tahoe and Sierra regions—continue to attract visitors from across the country. At the same time, many of our state parks, small towns, and local businesses offer quiet,

> authentic experiences that are just as rewarding. From snowshoeing and sledding to winter markets and seasonal events, there's plenty to see and do across Nevada.

Supporting Nevada's Tourism Economy

As Lieutenant Governor and Chair of the Nevada Commission on Tourism, I've had the opportunity to travel throughout the state and meet with local leaders, small business owners, and community members working to grow tourism in meaningful ways. Whether it's helping promote events, supporting infrastructure projects, or highlighting Nevada's lesser-known destinations, we remain focused on strengthening this critical sector of our economy.

Looking Ahead

Fall and winter mark a time of transition—but also a time of opportunity. I encourage Nevadans and visitors alike to take advantage of the season, support our local businesses, and discover something new within our own borders.

Thank you for being a part of what makes Nevada such a unique and forward-moving state.

Stavros S. Anthony Lieutenant Governor



Mevadas Gift to the Nation For the first

For the first time ever, Nevada's Humboldt-**Toiyabe National** Forest has the honor of providing this year's **United States Capitol Christmas Tree.**



STARRY SKIES TO NEON LIGHTS

HUMBOLDT-TOIYABE NATIONAL FOREST

From the city lights of Las Vegas and Reno to the wide-open night skies of our rural counties,

ill yours

from working lands to wild places, from high alpine to sagebrush seas,

Nevada and its national forest offer endless adventure and possibility.

> Join us as we harvest and decorate the "People's Tree."

Visit www.uscapitolchristmastree.com and

follow us for details on the harvest celebration and whistle-stop tour events coming this fall, as well as sponsorship opportunities.







USCapitolChristmasTree and **Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest**

@HumboldtToiyabe | @USCapitolChristmasTree

Learn more about the Humboldt-Toiyabe, Nevada's national forest, at: www.fs.usda.gov/r04/humboldt-toiyabe



SPOTLIGHT

10 Eye Candy

14 Uncommon Overnighters

Vegas Glamping

20 State Parks

Big Bend of the Colorado State Recreation Area

24 Museums

Hawthorne's military history

28 Only In Nevada

Professional sports in the Silver State

34 Nevada Magazine Archives

"Diary of a Showgirl"

40 Road Trips

Take a desert drive on the Death Valley Rally



FEATURES

48 Nature

A photographer's journey to Eagles & Agriculture

54 Cravings

Dig in for a Basque restaurant roundup

60 History

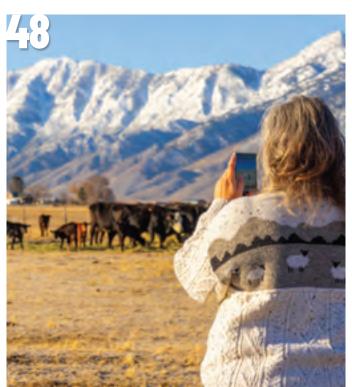
Remembering Tahoe's "Bonanza" theme park

66 Rural Wranglers

Choose your outdoor adventure in Moapa Valley

72 Arts & Culture

Fallon's Oats Park Art Center





Celebrate the changing season with offbeat and unforgettable experiences found across the state.

Whether you're looking for haunted hotels, remote ghost towns, or luxury canyon campouts, you'll find this year's favorite moments in the heart of Nevada.

PLANNING GUIDE

106 Road Trips Directory

109 State Parks Directory

110 Recreate Responsibly

108 State Museums Directory

COVERS

Front: Sunrise at Vegas Glamping in El Dorado Canyon Photographer: Alexandria Hawthorne Back: Washoe Lake winter reflections Photographer: Jesse Bradford





78 Ghost Towns

Explore Tybo and nearby nuclear history

84 Great Nevada Picture Hunt

Don't miss 2025's stunning contest winners

92 Outdoor Rec

Lace up for these southern Nevada hikes

98 Ghost Adventures in Virginia City

Our staff checks out the Comstock's scariest haunts

Top of page: Melody Hoover (Carson River Park, Carson City), Jenny Qi (Ethel M Botanical Cactus Garden, Henderson), Martin Gollery (Ullir Fest, Lake Tahoe)







Scott Mortimore snapped this photo in the Sierra Nevada south of Reno. "This silent winter scene a storage cabin under a blanket of deliciously fresh powder—waited just beyond Sky Tavern, Reno's 80-year-old, family-friendly ski resort that runs on volunteer power."

Nikon Z7II, 1/25 sec, f/18, ISO 64



RUBY MOUNTAINS HIGH

Anthony Cupaiuolo captured this scene of his friend Justin Peverini resting after a climb up the Terminal Cancer couloir in Lamoille Canyon.

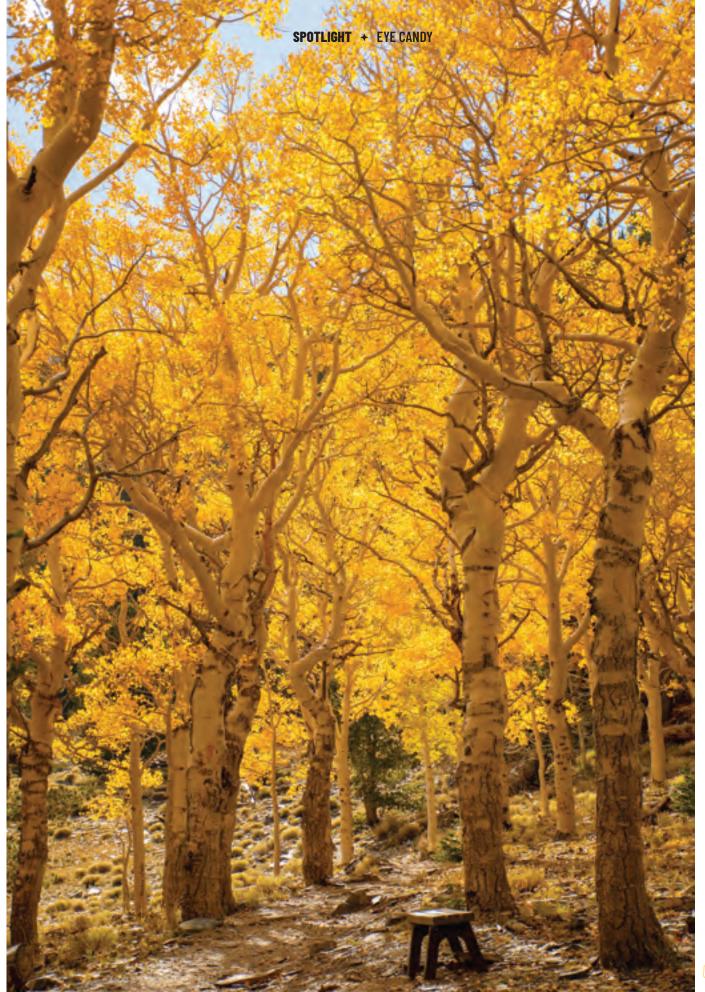
Sony ILCE-1, 1/1600 sec, f/5, ISO 125

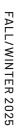
GOLDEN GROVE

Sara Dudo found this breathtaking forest shot in Great Basin National Park. "On October 1, my husband and I drove from Las Vegas to Great Basin National Park to see the aspens. On the Alpine Lakes Loop Trail, we hiked 2.5 miles through golden aspens contrasted by the blue hues of Wheeler Peak."

Nikon D7500, 1/500 sec, f/4.8, ISO 200









New Horizons

With the new land, her off-road business underwent a total transformation. Instead of shuttling the fleet between the city to the desert each day, she could just keep the rigs in the canyon and have clients come to her.

Moreso, the canyon and the new trails were a hit with customers. There was just one little problem: People weren't leaving after their tours.

"We had to change the times when we shuttled in and out because people would wander off and hang out after their ride," says Mannarino with a laugh. "We were like, the tour is over—you should get in the shuttle and go back to Vegas. But nobody wanted to leave. So, we decided to get a couple of chairs for them to sit down."

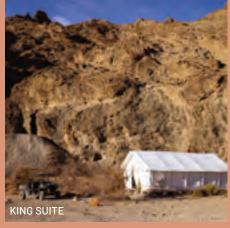
It didn't take long for some of the stragglers to propose the idea of a canyon campout, an idea that lit a major lightbulb over Mannarino's head. What if she turned her picturesque canyon into an overnight destination? Even better, it could be a ready-to-go experience to attract Las Vegas visitors—a demographic that typically travels sans camping gear—or people who aren't usually fans of sleeping outdoors.

"Everyone has the experience of setting up a tent in the wind while rain is pouring, you're fighting with whoever, it's dark, and you lost half the pegs," says Mannarino. "Our job is to have as much of it ready as possible so you can just show up, put wood on the fire, and sit back."





QUEEN SUITE



Glamorous Camping

Now in its second year, Vegas Glamping has already found its niche. That's probably because they've achieved a delicate balance between authentic desert experience and comfortable, memorable accommodations—with a heavy focus on memorable. Even Mannarino couldn't help but be entranced by the allure of the overnight experience.

"After we set up the first tent, I ended up staying in it for six weeks straight," she says. "It was so nice. Here you are sleeping on a queen mattress out in the desert with your door facing out toward the sunrise."

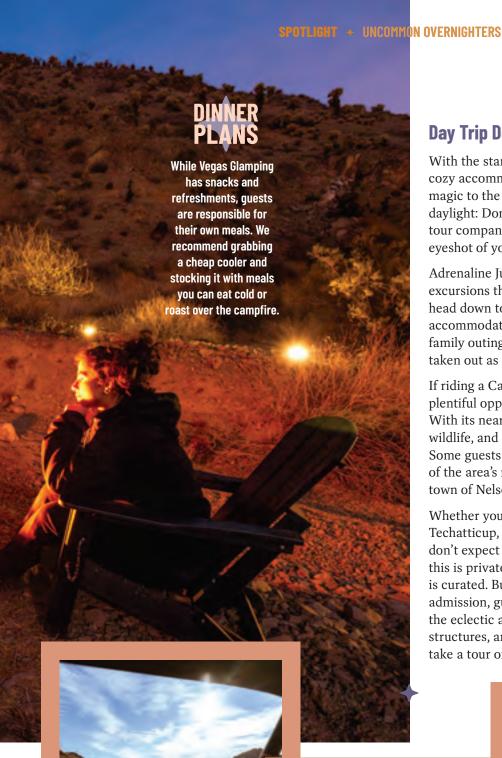
The canyon's five tent sites each feature a unique, inspired design. Whether staying in the Stargazer—an open-ceiling traditional tent—or the majestic King Suite, each site is gloriously photogenic, inside and out. But one of the best parts of the experience is the sense that guests are still immersed in nature. The campsites are spread out along the canyon—close enough to give a sense of community, but with enough distance to provide everyone a quiet, reflective stay.



While guests are welcome to pack their own campout supplies, Mannarino is also prepared for visitors who arrive with nothing at all. The on-site general store has everything from snacks and coffee to sleeping bags and blankets. If the weather is a little colder than anticipated, she also offers hoodies, jackets, gloves, and beanies.

In addition to basic sundries, the general store sells bundles of firewood and propane bottles the latter of which guests use for heating. While these luxury tents might feature an ottoman, rug, and comforter, they're not hooked up to the grid. To some degree, guests are still roughing it—if you can call power banks, LED lamps, and wood stoves a rough time.

In fact, the most primitive part of the experience is probably the bathroom, which is effectively a tent with a compost toilet and gravity shower. But that is no deterrent for visitors who are happy going to bed smelling like campfire.



OHV RIDE WITH ADRENALINE JUNKIES

TECHATTICUP

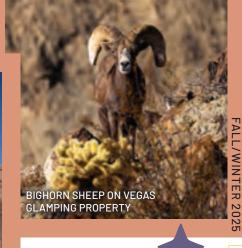
Day Trip Destinations

With the stars in the sky, crackling campfires, and cozy accommodations, evening brings a special magic to the canyon. But there's plenty to do in the daylight: Don't forget this all started as an off-road tour company, and there's a fleet of OHVs within eyeshot of your tent.

Adrenaline Junkies offers one- and two-hour excursions that explore the surrounding desert and head down to the Colorado River. Mannarino can accommodate groups of any size, whether it's a family outing or a company retreat—she says she's taken out as many as 50 people at once.

If riding a Can-Am isn't your style, the area offers plentiful opportunities to hike and seek solitude. With its nearby spring, this area easily attracts wildlife, and it's not rare to spot bighorn sheep. Some guests even take a hike over the hill to one of the area's most popular attractions: the ghost town of Nelson and the Techatticup Mine.

Whether you walk or take a short drive to Techatticup, this historic area is worth a visit. Just don't expect a traditional ghost town experience this is private property, and the collection is curated. But after paying a few bucks for admission, guests are pretty much free to wander the eclectic assemblage of vintage vehicles, structures, and antiques. While there, be sure to take a tour of the historic mine—it's worth it.





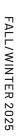
Our southernmost state park

TRAVEL NEVADA PRO TIP

Day use is hugely popular, so reservations are required May through September. Head to ReserveNevada.com to make your day-use and camping reservations. The park is ADA friendly; three campsites are reserved for permit holders, plus parking and beach access points are accessible for most. Limited mobility visitors will find rubber mats occasionally snaking down toward the water to ease their way.

delivers the perfect beachy vibe.







Big Bend of the Colorado
State Recreation Area wanders
alongside the Colorado River. The
shoreline is dotted with covered
shelters, picnic benches, horseshoe
pits, and sandy beaches. You read that right—sandy beaches.
While Nevada has no shortage of lakes and rivers, Big Bend
conjures a much more tropical vibe—complete with a lagoon—
than visitors might expect to find in the Silver State.



Fun in the Sun

Located just outside Laughlin, Big Bend is a top destination for outdoor lovers. Since joining the Nevada State Parks system in 1996, this stretch of the Colorado River has become

> the ultimate southern Nevada haunt for picnicking, bird watching, fishing, boating, camping, jet skiing, hiking, and swimming.

True to its name, the park is located along an actual big bend in the river, offering state-to-state views of Bullhead City, Arizona, across the river. The park is located just a few miles downstream of Davis Dam, and the river is clear and cool year-round. Big Bend encompasses 2 miles of trail-studded shoreline and riparian areas, along with panoramic viewpoints and rock formations.

Hikers, mountain bikers, and walkers will find 4 miles of trails in the campground. Keep an eye out for the area's abundant wildlife, such as cottontail, fox, beaver, and even the occasional bobcat or bighorn sheep. You may even see roadrunners compete with quail for mesquite beans, with numerous waterfowl looking on. Big Bend is quickly becoming a birder's paradise thanks to its easily accessible and plentiful viewing opportunities.

OHV and ATV fans will love the myriad trails accessible from the campground that traverse the desert landscape where you can ride for miles. In fact, you could take a dirt trail all the way to Boulder City, if you were so inclined.



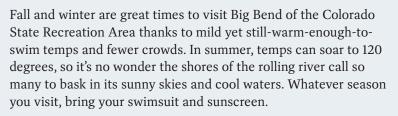
CET IT STAMPED!

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!

Choose Your Stay

Along with those sun-soaked vibes, Big Bend has a 24-unit campground with mostly pull-through sites for RVs up to 60 feet long.

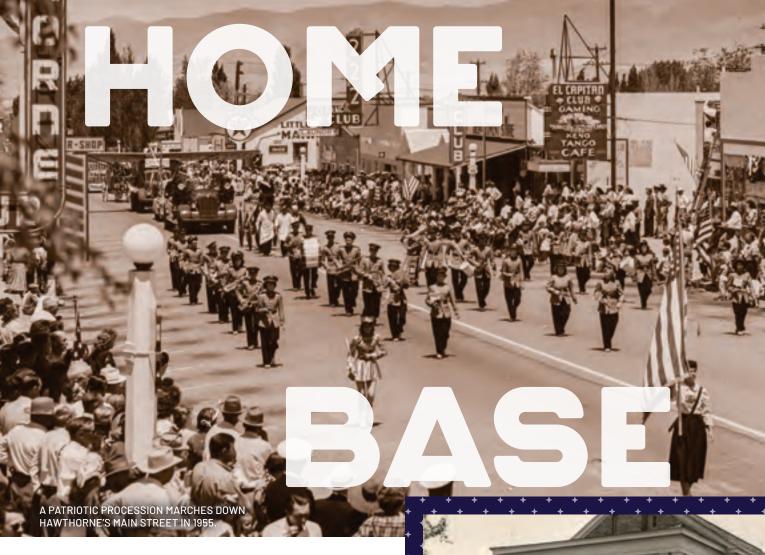
The campground is a favorite of snowbirds escaping the winter chill, but it has local fans, too.



After a day on the beach, head to nearby Laughlin to enjoy a great meal at Bumbleberry Flats, attend a major concert at one of the town's casino-resorts, or take an evening stroll on the riverside boardwalk. But most of all, stop and take a picture with River Rick, and tell him Wendover Will and Vegas Vickie say hello.

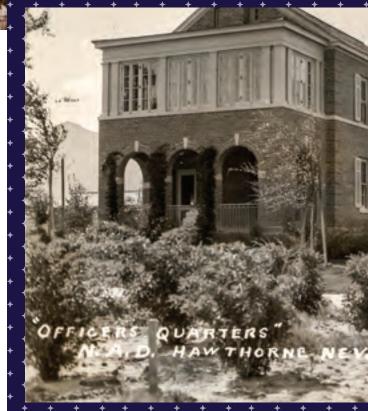


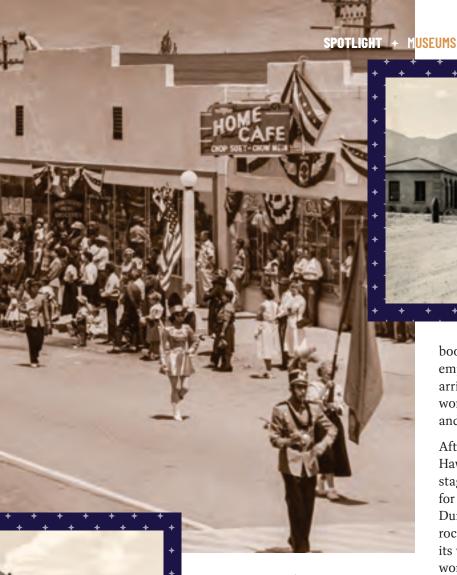




Military history thrives in the small town of Hawthorne.

At 5:15 p.m. on July 10, 1926, lightning hit a storehouse at the Lake Denmark Naval Ammunition Depot in New Jersey—then the U.S. Navy's largest ammunition storage facility. The strike ignited a massive explosion that cascaded across the complex, killing 19 people, injuring more than 50, and annihilating all structures within a half-mile radius.





The Perfect Site

The investigation after the disaster found that the nation's ammunition logistics were in severe need of modernization. Taking lessons learned from Lake Denmark, the Navy would build their new depot someplace remote (to limit casualties) that offered unlimited expansion (to avoid densely packed structures). Their prime location would also be in an arid climate, which would mean fewer thunderstorms.

From many candidates in the West, the Navy chose—with the gentle nudging of Silver State lobbyists—the town of Hawthorne, located in west-central Nevada. At that time, the tiny community was home to only 200 people. But once construction began in 1928, the town entered an exciting

boom era with the Navy its primary employer. By 1930, the first munitions arrived at what would become the world's largest ammunition storage and processing facility.

After the U.S. entered WWII, Hawthorne starred as the main staging area and processing center for the nation's supply of ordnance. During those years, the population rocketed to 13,000 residents, and its workers—many of whom were women—worked long shifts to keep the military supplied. While the town inevitably downsized after the war, subsequent activity in Korea and Vietnam would bring boom cycles of their own.

In 1977, the Navy transferred ownership of its depot to the Army, which operates it to this day.

For more than a century, Hawthorne's story has been intrinsically tied to national security and the armed forces, a fact that's clear long before entering town: The 226-square-mile complex surrounds the community with nearly 2,500 earth-covered bunkers set in conspicuous rows. In a state that famously conjures images of secret government facilities and operations, the massive complex is there for all to see, projecting a quiet power of its own.



Museums & Marches

HAWTHORNE ORDNANCE MUSEUM

With this martial history as background, it's easy to understand why one of the West's best military museums is in a small desert town. The Hawthorne Ordnance Museum—one of the town's proudest and most famous establishments—shares the history of the depot and commemorates the hard work and contributions of the thousands of military, civil service, and civilian corporate personnel.

Here, military equipment is the star of the show. And don't worry about finding the museum: It'll be the one building on main street surrounded by large-scale retro weaponry. Inside, you'll chart the development of military munitions, uniforms, and ammunition as well as tour one of the world's largest collections of inert missiles, bombs, and rockets.

If you're looking for a full weekend of patriotic partying, don't miss the annual Armed Forces Day celebration, held the third weekend of May. This multi-day event—the town's largest—draws thousands of revelers who gather to honor those who serve and have served in the armed forces. In addition to a parade and flyover, visitors will enjoy a weekend of competitions, cookoffs, fireworks, and a car show.

INSIDE HAWTHORNE ORDNANCE MUSEUM

DINE IN THE DESERT

Looking for a good place to grab grub? For lunch, head to Pepper's Place or The Bighorn Crossing (located a few miles north of town). For dinner, you can't go wrong at one of our favorite rural establishments:

Old Nevada Pizza.

Although the public can't visit the depot, there are still plenty of ways to appreciate the rich American history found in this corner of Nevada. And while this community sits in a remote part of the state, don't think for a second that it's not ready to host visitors: Hawthorne is home to many excellent dining, gaming, and lodging options. Nearby Walker Lake is one of the best locations in the state to spot bighorn sheep, and despite the pristine desert that surrounds it, the town is only about an hour over the mountains from Lee Vining, California, one of the entrances to Yosemite National Park.



Elko: Your Next Adventure



Breathtaking views of the Ruby Mountains. Hike, fish, and soak in the beauty.



Diverse habitat like Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge attracts a wide variety of species.



Discover a vibrant outdoor art gallery featuring dozens of murals that depict the region's rich history, culture, and spirit.



Stars sparkle like diamonds against the inky blackness of a celestial canvas.



Vistas of rugged mountains, lush valleys, and sparkling streams showcase the diverse beauty of the region.



Remnants of the region's rich mining history offer a glimpse into the past.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

Rides & Rods Elko Classic Car Show Robin Hood Renaissance Faire Ruby Mountain Balloon Festival Gold Rush Bull Riding Challenge

OCTOBER

Lamoille Pumpkin Festival Lotspeich Pumpkin Patch Ghost Tours Haunted Commercial

DECEMBER

Festival of Trees Christmas Bazaar

JANUARY

41ST National Cowboy Poetry Gathering

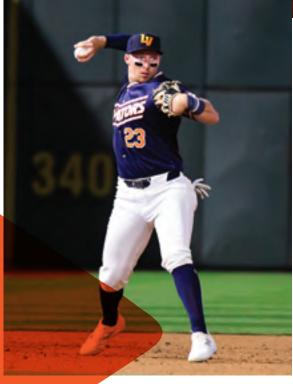
FEBRUARY

Elko Archery Indoor Safari Shoot

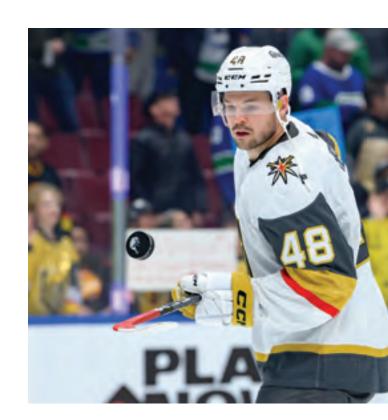


ONLY IN NEVADA













NEVADA TAKES HOME-FIELD ADVANTAGE

In less than a decade, the Silver State has become a pro-sports mecca.







BY MEGG MUELLER

Betting on organized sporting events once had a checkered past—anyone remember the Black Sox? While friendly wagers have likely occurred since man first challenged another to a race, until recently, the combination of legalized betting and organized sports was frowned upon. For Nevada, that meant we watched as pro and semi-pro teams expanded across the U.S., but never to the Silver State. Well not anymore.

A Supreme Court ruling in 2018 opened the door to legalized gaming across the nation, thereby removing Nevada's disadvantage. In the past decade, the state has become home to professional teams in almost every major organization, including the NFL, NHL, MLB, and WNBA. Due to the state's population dispersion, it's no surprise these teams are centered around Las Vegas. Not all the action is in the south, however. Northern Nevada has also found its way into the sporting world with semi-pro teams that offer as much entertainment and action as their bigleague counterparts for those looking for great games on a more budget-friendly ticket.



Lake Tahoe Takes The Ice

Lake Tahoe entered the professional sports scene in 2024 with the introduction of the **Tahoe Knight Monsters**, an ECHL hockey team.

Affiliated with the NHL's Vegas Golden Knights and the AHL's Henderson Silver Knights, the Knight Monsters play at the Tahoe Blue Event Center in Stateline, a state-of-the-art facility within walking distance of the largest alpine lake in the country.



Las Vegas Scores Big

While the sports scene in Las Vegas has exploded in recent years, semi-pro sports have been in the valley since 1983. That's the year the Las Vegas Stars—a Triple-A affiliate of the San Diego Padres—came to town. The team went through several evolutions before becoming the Las Vegas Aviators in 2019, now affiliated with the Oakland A's. Home games are played at the Las Vegas Ballpark in Summerlin, which was built in 2019 and boasts SPOTLIGHT + ONLY IN NEVADA

Las Vegas Ballpark

a swimming pool just outside center field.

Las Vegas Lights FC is the state's only pro soccer team. Launched in 2018, the team is a part of the Western Conference of the USL Championship and is sanctioned by the U.S. Soccer Federation as a Division II professional league. The team plays at the historic Cashman Field.



SPOTLIGHT + ONLY IN NEVADA



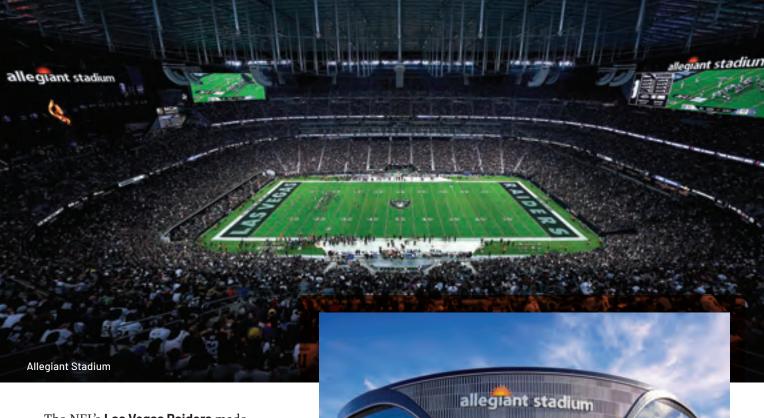
Nevada hit the big leagues in 2017 with the establishment of the NHL's **Vegas Golden Knights**, who have already become a formidable presence in the league. The team reached the Stanley Cup finals in their season and actually won the cup in 2023. Home games are held at T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas.

In 2020, the **Henderson Silver Knights** took to the ice as an affiliate of the Golden Knights. Part of the AHL, the team has played under different names—most recently the San Antonio Rampage—since 1971. Home games are played at Lee's Family Forum in Henderson.

The WNBA's **Las Vegas Aces** has also garnered attention, securing multiple championships since its debut in 2018. The team had previously incarnated as the Utah Starzz and the San Antonio Silver Stars. In 2022 and 2023, the Aces won back-to-back WNBA Championship titles. Home games are played at the Michelob ULTRA Arena in Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino.

2023 Stanley
Cup parade
celebrating
the Vegas
Golden Knights





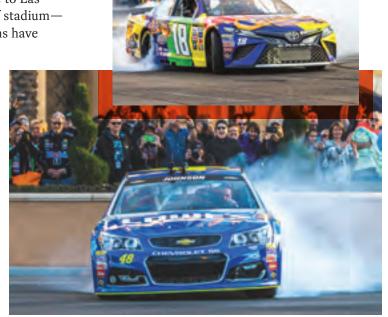
The NFL's Las Vegas Raiders made their Nevada debut in 2020, bringing football fever to the desert. Playing in Allegiant Stadium-built specifically for the team—the Raiders are a consistent attraction for both die-hard fans and visitors looking to catch a professional football game.

Eye on the Prize

Looking ahead, MLB's **Athletics** are set to relocate to Las Vegas, with plans to play in a new retractable-roof stadium set to be built on The Strip by 2028. While no plans have

been announced, it's been said the NBA is looking at the city for an expansion team. If that happens, Nevada will have a part of every major league sporting franchise. But the growth of Las Vegas as a sports mecca doesn't end there.

In 2024, the Raiders' home field-Allegiant Stadium—played host to Super Bowl LVIII. Also in 2024, Formula 1 arrived with the Las Vegas Grand Prix, a night race that covered a portion of the iconic Strip. The event will happen again in 2025. Nevada has truly arrived in the pantheon of professional sports.





Behind the glamor, the hard-working girls of "Jubilee!" just

At nevadamagazine.com,

you'll find great stories

like this one, which

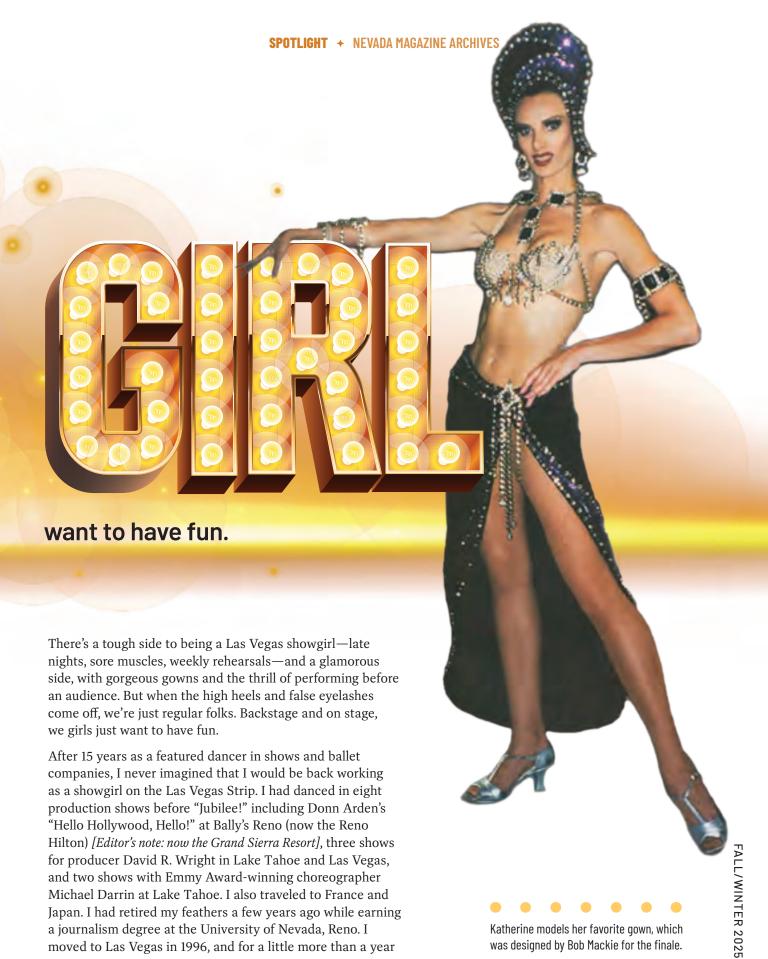
first appeared in our

July/August 1998 issue.

BY KATHERINE MCDONNELL

As I stood on the elevator that would lift us up to the stage in the Jubilee! Theater, Kammy whizzed past, obviously late for the opening cue. The music started, and we all braced ourselves as the elevator-staircase rumbled upward. I crouched from the stair above to help Kammy juggle gloves and bracelets. The show must go on, and Kammy hit the stage missing only a necklace, crunching two fingers in one glove slot, and wearing the biggest smile out there.

As a cast member of "Jubilee!" I found that such rare mishaps added to the excitement of working in the long-running show at Bally's in Las Vegas. At the two-minute call, the mood backstage usually is like the storm before the calm. Dancers are frantic: "Was that 'two'? I'm not going to be make it." "I dropped my eyelash. Where's my eyelash?" Wardrobe personnel are dashing by: "Here are your shoes." "Don't forget your necklace." The exodus from the dressing rooms resembles a stampede of subway commuters, but on the stage the audience sees only the polished product. That's part of the illusion and mystique of show business.



Katherine models her favorite gown, which was designed by Bob Mackie for the finale.

Japan. I had retired my feathers a few years ago while earning a journalism degree at the University of Nevada, Reno. I

moved to Las Vegas in 1996, and for a little more than a year

I had the privilege of once again making a living as a dancer, this time in a prestigious Las Vegas show steeped in tradition.

"Jubilee!" opened at Bally's in 1981 as a prime example of the late producer Donn Arden's flair for spectacle and beautifully costumed girls. The show, which appears nightly except Friday and twice on Thursday and Saturday, takes showgoers on a historical journey

during which Samson and Delilah wreak havoc and the Titanic sinks. There are tributes to Fred and Ginger and movie stars of the '30s and '40s as well as "Ziegfeld Follies."

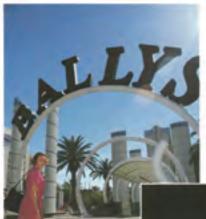
The nearly 100 performers in "Jubilee!" comprise the largest cast in Las Vegas. They include 10 singing and dancing principals (as the featured performers are known), 74 dancers and showgirls, and three specialty acts. The female dancers are divided into covered dancers, principal dancers, and showgirls; the principals and showgirls perform topless.

The women dancers must be pretty, at least five-feet-eight in stocking feet, and have a proportionate physique. My group or "line," affectionately called the tall nudes, danced topless. We privately referred to ourselves as

the "backbone" of the show, knowing that the public comes to see the attractive girls with their tops off. "It's the way we make our living," one dancer told me. "Breasts are just part of the costumes."

The pecking order is dictated by salary. The nudes take home more than the covered dancers or the "boys," as the male dancers are called, but none of us earn as much as those outside the business think we do. One night a bartender from the casino asked me how much the dancers make. I said, "It's not as much as you think." "Is it between 60 and 80 thousand?" he asked. When I laughed and told him that we barely break 30, he was shocked.

A dancer's day is often long and exhausting. After I fell asleep at 1 or 2 a.m., my alarm typically rang between 7 and 8 a.m. I taught fitness classes in the morning and spent the afternoon cleaning house or researching stories. By 4:30 in the afternoon I would arrive at the



The author's transformation into a "Jubilee!" showgirl begins at the Bally's entrance. At right, Katherine (second from left) poses with her feathered friends.





University of Nevada, Las Vegas to conduct two hours of rehearsals and classes as a staff member in the dance arts department.

Like most workers on the night shift, I spent much of my day watching the clock. Daily chores had to be completed before going to work in the evening.

During off hours, many of the "Jubilee!" dancers have additional jobs, raise kids, or attend university and community college classes. Kimberly Chapman, a covered dancer, teaches dance at UNLV. Scott Burrell is a dancer and contract carpenter, and his sister Ami, also a covered dancer, earns extra money waiting tables. Eileen Ryans, a tall nude, keeps busy chasing her eight-year-old son, L.K.

> "I spend more time with my son because of my hours. And it's healthier, quality time," Eileen says. "Most parents work till 6 p.m., and the kids are in bed by 8 or 9. Me, I'm with L.K. from noon to 6. And I'm not tired and stressed from the day's work."

At 7 o'clock, six nights a week, the cast files into the 1,035-seat Jubilee! Theater for another day—make that night—on the job. For an hour the dancers get ready, starting with a 20-minute warm-up, and catch up on the day's news in the dressing rooms below the stage. While applying lashes and drawing lips, the 14 dancers in my line would gab about anything from the latest showbusiness gossip to pet training to the newest restaurants or hottest movies.

Speaking of pets, the girls have a mascot of sorts, known affectionately as the Pig. Like a piggy bank, the Pig receives a quarter every time a human error is committed on stage during a performance. This includes forgetting a cue or a costume piece or tripping over your own feet. In six months the pig ingests about \$20 in change. When enough money is saved, the girls blow it on a big pizza party.

After warming up with a dance partner, Katherine

retires to the dressing room for makeup.

FALL/WINTER 2025

Major battles have been won and lost over "paying the Pig" no matter how obvious the mistake. The offender pleas, "I didn't forget. I just didn't go at the same time as everyone else." A debate then ensues about the grievousness of the error and how steep the fine should be. Is it worth two quarters? Someone pipes up, "No, that's a dollar." In retaliation, the guilty party may dump a penny at a time into the Pig's belly, unfortunately for the pizza-delivery guy.

At the two-minute call, the dancers clamber into position, and then the curtain goes up. Elevators carry dancers and sets from the basement to the stage and lower them at the close of the act.

I enjoyed watching the reactions of the audience members as the feathered showgirls and colorfully costumed dancers arrived on stage. "Oh, wow! Look at the girls," I once overheard a woman in the audience say as the elevator reached the stage. "Honey, she can hear you," her husband whispered, adding a nudge.

Once the singing and dancing begins, the show generally hums along like a well-oiled machine. The hour-and-50-minute spectacle has seven acts with four extravagant production numbers during which everyone performs. Each act is arranged into six or seven scenes and features a different line of dancers or singers. My favorite scene is the Cataclysm at the end of Act III, when Samson destroys the temple by pulling down its pillars. Every Donn Arden production has a spectacular destruction scene in which something

To keep performances fresh, the dancers devise playful ad-libs to distract the others on stage. Tickling, funny faces, and occasional brushes with clumsiness keep everyone laughing. Sometimes audience members see the pranks and laugh along with the perpetrators.

burns or blows up.

As Delilah, Carey Hern wreaks havoc with Samson and occasionally overcomes a costume crisis. One night Carey Hern's Delilah costume got caught on a pillow in the Royal Banquet scene of "Samson and Delilah," and she couldn't move to her next cue. The dancers nearby started giggling. "I was a freak!" Carey exclaimed later. "I just sat there. I was humiliated. Oh, and then I looked down into the audience, and one lady was just dying with laughter."

Sometimes the greatest show is the audience itself. Showgoers are surprised to learn that we can see and hear everything they do. The performers also enjoy seeing a variety of evening wear, choice of dates, tattoos, piercings, and unusual hair colors.

Some tips on audience etiquette: Don't yawn, don't fall asleep, don't make out with your date, and don't say anything you wouldn't want us to hear. At the same time, we love to see you clapping and singing along to favorite tunes such as "Dancing Cheek to Cheek" and "Stairway to Paradise."

If "Jubilee!" appears to be a seamless parade of dancers, sets, costumes, and mechanical wonders, it's the backstage crew that makes it happen. With more than 16 set changes, a mechanical breakdown—late elevators, misaligned staircases, computer problems—can affect the entire show.

That happened one night when the lights went out in the theater and other areas of the hotel. Without warning, the monitors went out on the intercom



system that pipes the on-stage sound to the basement. The stage and stairwells went dark, and the show stopped in silence. We waited for what seemed like forever for the music to begin again. Moments later, the lights and sound came back, and the show continued through the finale without incident—except that the spotlights stayed out, leaving the featured performers in the dark.

When they're not on stage, the dancers are in the dressing rooms. As you can imagine, any large group that is confined for up to six hours can go a little stir crazy. The girls' dressing room is like a sorority house. Dancers walk around half dressed and brush their teeth and wash their faces shoulder to shoulder. As the hour approaches midnight, the banter becomes more irreverent, like girls giggling at a slumber party.

The boys have their own ways to blow off steam. Between shows one Halloween eve, the boy dancers staged an elaborate drag show using their dressing room as a runway. The cast was invited for pizza and a scary Halloween preview featuring the guys in attire that ranged from a gypsy to the evil Cruella from the movie "101 Dalmatians."

Frivolity aside, I found that working at "Jubilee!" was a serious commitment. Dancing in any production show is physically demanding. We had to negotiate 700 stairs and 10 costume changes per show. Such a show requires everyone's full concentration. When you're dealing with 20-foot-high staircases, props, 3-inch heels, and moving scenery, every step is a potential hazard. If you're not careful, you can twist an ankle through a gap in the stairs. My biggest fear was catching a heel on the stairs and tumbling head over heels down the staircase. Knock on wood, that has never happened to me.

Showgoers often ask about the hats and the costume pieces strapped to our backs, known as backpacks. These beautifully decorated accessories weigh as much as 15 pounds. The hat I wore in Act I was adorned with ostrich feathers that reached 4 feet into the air. In fact, another of my hats was so tall that one night I forgot to duck, and it caught on the sprinkler valves in the backstage hallway—the whole hat, feathers and all, came off my head. I managed to wrangle the hat from the sprinkler with just enough time to make an entrance.

My favorite costumes, and the audience's, too, are the nudes' finale gowns, designed by Bob Mackie. Each is handpicked for the dancer when she joins the show. I've never worn anything so elegant and glamorous. The floor-length skirts come in lavender, emerald, red, and blue. They are heavy with velvet and sequins, and our arms are draped with rhinestones. Price is not freely discussed, but I've been told that some costumes in "Jubliee!" cost \$5,000 each. Thus, the rules are: Don't sit, drink, or smoke while wearing any costume.

The grace and elegance of performing in a show like "Jubilee!" doesn't come easily. Professional dancers are schooled to expect the unexpected: busted high heels, hats that cause neck pain, costumes that pinch and bind, glass on the stage from broken light bulbs, callused knees from kneeling on steel elevator tracks, breathing artificial smoke, or a partner who lifts on the wrong cue. It's hard work.

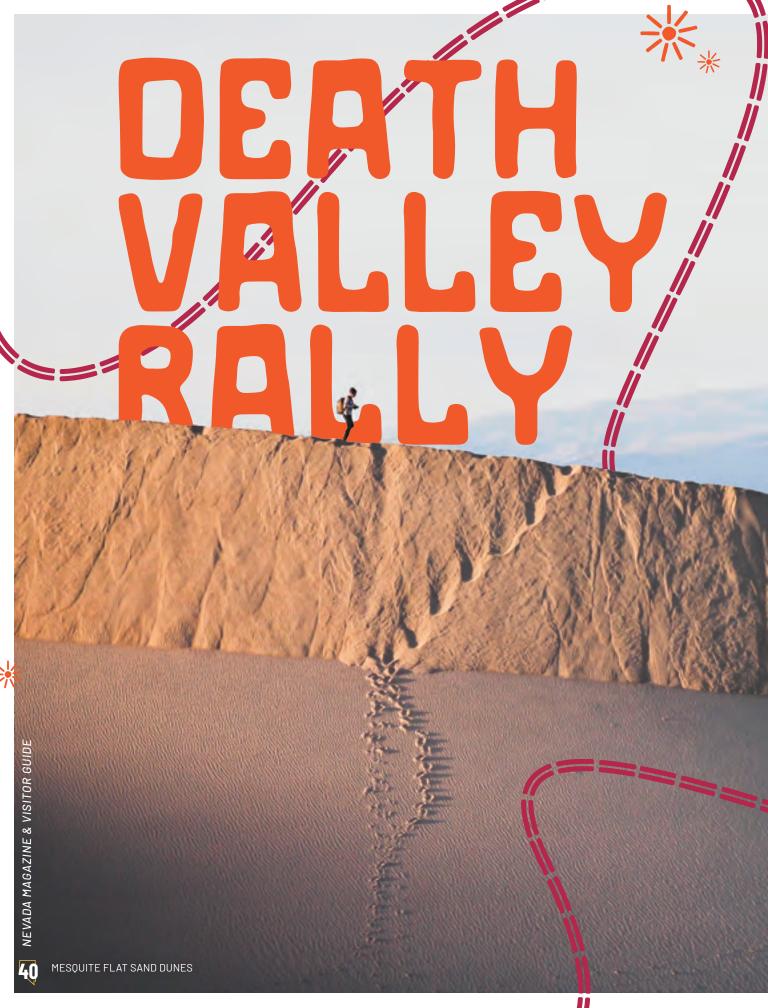
Last year Joan Lunden of ABC-TV found out just how hard it is when she strutted her stuff on the Bally's stage for a taping of her prime-time special, "Behind Closed Doors." For one night, Joan joined the cast of "Jubilee!" as a Glamour Girl in Act I and as the Lady in Red in the finale. She was surprised how tough the assignment was.

"I have a newfound respect for all of you," Lunden told me during a rehearsal break. "You have an incredibly hard job."

Lunden said what impressed her most was how easy the dancers make the job appear. "I had to call on very specific muscle groups—the glutes and inner thighs," she told me later in an interview from her New York home. "Intellectually I knew it was going to be difficult, but physically I had no idea."

Underneath the feathers and sequins, what we do is a profession—a chosen career. Some dancers study for 10 to 15 years before they land their first job. There's more to it than being tall and beautiful. Years of training, discipline, and conditioning go into becoming a dancer. As Lunden commented, "You have to want to do this."

During my time at "Jubilee!" I know that we wanted to have some fun, entertain ourselves and the audience, and pick up a paycheck on our way out the door. Through it all, when the curtain fell and the heat of the lights on my face began to fade, I found myself looking into the showroom and thinking, "There really is no business like show business."



Think Vegas is extreme? Wait until you venture off The Strip.

The allure surrounding Las Vegas is undeniable, but after you've gotten your fill of glitz and glamour, what else is there to do? Short answer: everything. As soon as you hit the road, you'll find breathtaking hikes, a national park, strollable ghost towns, and some seriously cool wildlife. Even better, along the way are some of the best food and lodgings that smalltown Nevada has to offer. Whether you decide to cruise around for an afternoon or a weekend, this road trip is sure to be a highlight of your visit.



FALL/WINTER 2025



Alison Leedham (sand dunes), @ourfulltimeadventure (Mountain Springs Saloon, Jamie Kingham (Happy Burro)



Las Vegas to Pahrump

Traveling west—just 30 minutes from The Strip—you'll find yourself in Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area. Massively popular for its scenic drive among towering red sandstone peaks, this is only the tip of the visual iceberg that awaits.

Spring Mountain Ranch State Park is next, where you can wander the lush landscape and ranch house that was enough to entice Howard Hughes to purchase it from a German movie star. This packs outdoor recreation and history all in one location.







Due to Red Rock Canyon's (well-deserved)
popularity, timed-entry reservations and entry
passes are required to drive the Scenic Loop
October 1 through May 31 and must be purchased in
advance. Get them at recreation.gov.



PAHRUMP

RESTAURANTS

- + Chatthai Bistro
- + Mom's Diner
- + O Happy Bread French Bakery & Café
- + Seemoore's Ice Cream



Next, travel down Nevada State Route 160—also called the Pahrump Valley Highway—until you reach Mountain Springs Summit. At the trailhead, a 5-mile roundtrip hike reveals gorgeous views of Mt. Charleston. For a post-walk respite, stop in at the Mountain Springs Saloon and Maria's Taco Shop, located just down the road. From there, the road flows down the other side of the mountain and into 30 miles of pure Mojave Desert. Up ahead is Pahrump, where you'll find everything from driving ranges and local distillery tours to great restaurants and comfortable accommodations. No matter what you decide, make sure to stock up on supplies for the next stop—one of the West's most famous landmarks.



- + Stonewise Mead & Cider
- Artesian Cellars
- ◆ Desert Cane Distillery

ACCOMMODATIONS

- + Best Western Pahrump Oasis
- ◆ Saddle West Hotel, Casino & RV Resort
- ★ K7 Bed & Breakfast
- + Wine Ridge RV Resort & Cottages
- + Lakeside Casino & RV Park





FALL/WINTER 2025



Pahrump to Death Valley

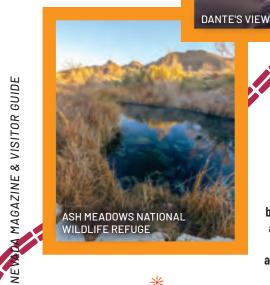
Valley National Park is a landscape alive with incredible beauty. Enter from State Route 190 and get the lay of the land from Dante's View where you can gaze 5,575 feet down to Badwater Basin. On clear days, you can see all the way to Mt. Whitneythe highest and lowest points in the Lower 48.

Despite its ominous name, Death

Hit Furnace Creek Visitor Center, then spend the day exploring landmarks like the kaleidoscopic Artists Palette and Mesquite Flat Sand Dunes.

Death Valley to Rhyolite

From Death Valley, cross the border back into Nevada and take the short drive to Beatty. There's one stop to make before reaching town, however: the ghost town of Rhyolite.



BADWATER BASIN

Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge-located 45 minutes outside Pahrump-boasts clear-blue pools, bubbling springs, wooden boardwalks, and a remarkably unique ecosystem. The refuge is home to 26 plants and animals found nowhere else on Earthincluding many species of Desert Pupfish. Ash Meadows is free to enter.

*







Founded in 1905, Rhyolite rose and fell in the span of a few years. Although it once boasted 5,000 residents, today only a handful of buildings remain in the ghost town, including the stately Cook Bank and the train depot. Just outside Rhyolite, you'll find another famous Nevada landmark: the Tom Kelly Bottle House. This structure hearkens back to a resource-scarce era when a house made from glass bottles was more practical than one of wood or stone.

Stop at the neighboring Goldwell Open Air Museum on your way to Beatty. This outdoor art gallery is one of the state's coolest, and if you're looking for a good place to get photos, this is it.



Beatty was founded in the early 1900s as a water and material supplier to surrounding mining towns. When the gold dried up, Beatty survived thanks to being at the crossroad of two highways and the railroad.

Although small, this town is built to serve road trippers and outdoor adventurers: It's known as the gateway to Death Valley, after all. You'll find a great selection of restaurants, casinos, and lodgings. If you only have time for one stop, make it the Death Valley Nut & Candy Co. and peruse rows of bulkbuy confections. While in town, keep an eye out for the town's iconic—and adorable—wandering burros (look but don't touch!).

BEATTY

RESTAURANTS

- + Smokin' J's Barbecue
- Gema's Café
- + Happy Burro Chili & Beer

ACCOMMODATIONS

- + Atomic Inn
- + Stagecoach Hotel & Casino
- → Death Valley Inn & RV Park
- + Motel 6
- + Exchange Club Motel
- + El Portal Motel



DEATH VALLEY NUT & CANDY CO.

SMOKIN' J'S BARBECUE







Beatty to Las Vegas

On the return trip, don't miss wildlife viewing opportunities at the Desert National Wildlife Refuge. Established in 1936, this massive complex is home to dozens of desert species and is your chance to spot a desert bighorn sheep, Nevada's state mammal.

If you still haven't had enough of the outdoors, consider escaping to the alpine air at The Retreat, a mountain lodge on Mt. Charleston. Stay in a charming cabin or just grab a bite to eat or drinks by the fireplace. Panoramic views plus amazing stargazing await—and you're only 45 minutes from The Strip.

All roads lead back to Las Vegas, and if your trip has left you feeling nostalgic for an earlier time, consider going retro with Downtown's old-school glitz and neon. For some real '60s fare, we recommend classic motel lodgings at the Oasis at Gold Spike or the time-capsule-like El Cortez Hotel & Casino.



*

WILDLIFE REFUGE



25 years of celebrating Eagles & Agriculture in the Carson Valley.



BY KIPPY S. SPILKER

The Carson Valley of northern Nevada enjoys a rich history of agriculture, as one can see by simply driving through it. From the beautiful farms and ranches to the plethora of wildlife you may see, it's no wonder visitors flock to this picturesque region.



In 2001, the Carson Valley
Chamber of Commerce noticed
a rise in visitors during calving
season. Cattle ranchers plan
calving to coincide with prime
grazing season. As a result,
many calves are born around the
beginning of each year, which
brings many scavengers to call,
including eagles.

So many people were attracted to this unofficial wildlife viewing event, the Chamber decided to make it official and offer visitors a robust educational experience. Thus began the now-annual celebration of wildlife, ranching, and wideopen spaces.



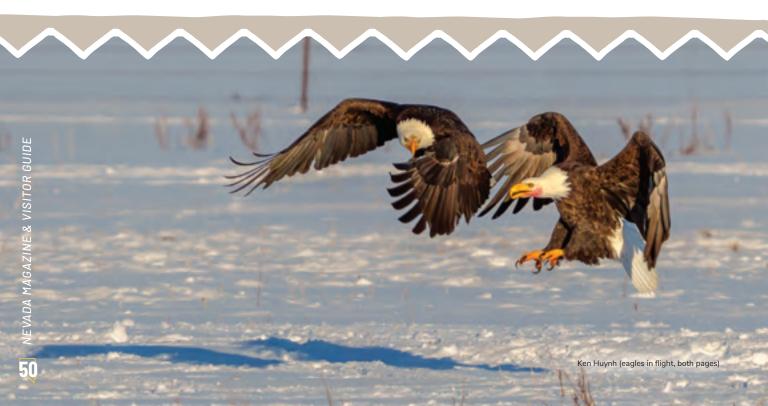


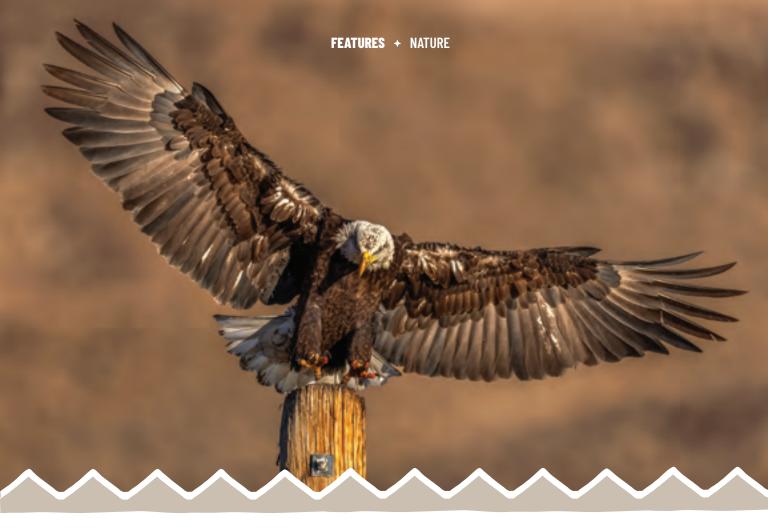


A Soaring Good Time

Eagles & Agriculture gives visitors the opportunity to view raptors up close, visit farms and natural sanctuaries, and learn about both predatory birds and the ranching that supports them.

Not having participated since 2006, I was excited to experience everything this event now offers. In February, I attended the opening reception, which was resplendent with gorgeous photography and local art for sale, along with a robust auction packed with coveted prizes. Falconers





provided attendees a chance to visit with their beautiful birds. The evening included delicious hors d'oeuvres from Sierra Chef, a culinary school in Genoa.

The next day offered guided barn and wetland tours, and the falconer's dinner in the evening, featuring great food, more falcons to visit with, and a presentation by a historian and conservation expert.

Saturday morning and early afternoon provided an eagle/ranch tour and the quickly sold-out owl prowl with live bird field demonstrations. In the evening, local photographers Kim Hunter Steed and Rick Pott hosted a workshop at the Minden Mill Distillery. The two shared personal stories and photo examples as well as tips and tricks for getting great bird photos. The workshop









continued the following day with a handson field session, allowing photographers the opportunity to practice and hone their skills with some of the tips learned the night before.

The event wrapped up with a guided tour on Sunday that focused on identification of birds of prey that winter in the Carson Valley.

Bird of a Feather

Nearly 400 people participated in the 2025 event. Eagles & Agriculture is a labor of love supported by many businesses in the Carson Valley and coordinated primarily by hardworking volunteers. Funds from the various tours, auctions, and workshops are used to help promote future events and also support local conservation projects. Visit the Carson Valley Chamber of Commerce's website at carsonvalleynv.org for information on future events.



5T: A LONG, LONG WAY FROM HOME

Kim Hunter Steed—one of the primary Eagles & Agriculture volunteer coordinators—was photographing eagles in the Lake Tahoe area in January 2021 when she came across a sub-adult bald eagle. She was excited to get several clear images.

At home, she processed the photographs and realized the bird was banded 5T and started doing research. Fortunately, the band was very legible, and Kim was able to submit the information to the United States Geological Survey (USGS) North American Bird Banding Program.

To her delight, she received a response from Bryan Bedrosian, who has been studying raptors in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem for the past two decades.

Bryan explained that 5T was tagged in Yellowstone National Park in 2019 as part of a genetics study, and he was amazed the bird was found more than 450 miles from its starting point.

During their correspondence, Bryan shared some of the challenges involved in making the banding project a success, from hand engraving the bands to swinging 50 feet up in a tree. But it was moments like this, learning about 5T's journey, that made it all worth it.

Kim saw 5T about a month later again in the Lake Tahoe area and has also seen him in Carson Valley. She hasn't had any other encounters since, but she's always looking. USGS 10

Kim Hunter Steed with Certificate of

Appreciation from

the USGS for her work identifying

5T and reporting

its whereabouts





BASQUE RESTAURANTS





Northern Nevada's delicious Basque culture is yours to discover. To truly know a place, you need to engage with its residents. Hearing their stories, seeing their customs, and sharing a meal can inform and inspire any traveler. It also leaves a lasting impression, which is why many of us travel. In Nevada, that kind of experience can be had at any of the state's Basque restaurants.

The Basques who came to Nevada seeking gold in the 1860s may not have all found riches, but the treasures they brought left an indelible, tasty mark. Many found work as sheepherders, forming communities with fellow Basque immigrants. Others started up boarding houses and kept alive their culture, language, and traditions. One facet of the Basque lifestyle that outsiders came to embrace was the communal dining experience: Picture enormous platters of steaks, steaming bowls of savory soup, and homemade red wine. It's the kind of meal that makes you wish you grew up Basque.

Better Come Hungry

Where do we even start? Basque food is nothing short of amazing, and there is a lot of it. From chorizo and garlic steak sandwiches at a traditional Basque bar to multi-course dinners—featuring mains like lamb chops, huge juicy steaks, sweetbreads, and sides like braised oxtail soup—there is enough to impress the fanciest foodie.

Get a taste of today's Basque influence at a handful of still standing—and still authentic—Basque boarding houses across northern Nevada.

J.T. Basque Bar & Dining Room

No one exemplifies the traditional Basque family sit-down meal more than J.T. Basque Bar & Dining Room in Gardnerville. Originally founded in 1896, a Gardnerville entrepreneur bought and moved the building from its original location in Virginia City. This eatery serves up lunches and dinners which include rich lamb steaks, sirloin cuts, Basque chicken, wine, plenty of sides, coffee, and ice cream.





Villa Basque Café

Carson City's Villa Basque Café divvies up all the culture without a multicourse commitment. Order familiar American favorites like pancakes and burgers, or get your hands on Mexican-inspired menu items like chile verde pork. The specialty Basque items include juicy steaks, Basque burritos, hot lamb sandwiches, and Basque-style beef stew. Don't forget their famous chorizo—a family recipe passed from generation to generation in the Battle Mountain region of northern Nevada. Think of the best pork sausage you've ever tasted. Now multiply the taste by about a billion, and you've got Basque chorizo.

Louis' Basque Corner

Located on East Fourth Street in
Downtown Reno, Louis' Basque Corner
has been serving up delicious, authentic
Basque food since 1967. The menu at
Louis' includes traditional Basque dishes
such as sweetbreads, oxtails, and tripe,
as well as chicken, fish—and of course—
steaks. Sides are abundant and include
soup of the day, French bread, Basque
beans, French fries, dessert, and red wine.

Packs a Punch!

No matter where you dine, it's a Nevada rite of passage to enjoy a Picon Punch before your meal. The cocktail presents an initial potent alcohol punch mellowed by the bitter orange and hints of mint presented by the Amer liqueur.



FALL/WINTER 2025

The Martin Hotel

First opened in 1898 to serve Basque sheepherders working in the northern Nevada mountain ranges surrounding Winnemucca, The Martin Hotel is a true Basque-style dinner house with a dining room on the main level and basic rooms that used to be for rent to sheepherders overhead. If you're in the area around lunchtime, order up a Nevada classic with a Basque steak sandwich, Martin Burger, or chorizo dish. Most traditional Basque dinners are complete with a multi-course meal including freshly prepared bread, soup, salad, and garlic—lots of garlic. Lamb shanks and garlic-loaded steaks are most typically offered as a main entree, but visitors will also likely have sweetbreads, sautéed scampi, or roasted chicken as alternate selections.



Ogi Deli Bar & Pintxos

Since opening in 2018, Ogi Deli in Elko has offered a dynamic menu. Choose from some not-so-common Basque treats like a full range of Pintxos—skewered delights of all kinds—as well as familiar traditional favorites like Basque chorizo on a freshly baked French roll and lamb sandwich.





Toki Ona

Toki Ona has been a favorite of locals and travelers since opening in Elko in 1990. This Basque restaurant specializes in serving large portions of savory beef, lamb, pork, chicken, and seafood entrees that combine the best of both Basque and American meals.

The Star Hotel

Part of the Elko story since 1910,
The Star Hotel and its famous neon sign beckon visitors, locals, and old sheepherders alike for an unforgettable meal. When you arrive—whether you're a party of two or six—expect to be grouped with other restaurant-goers for a family-style meal experience.
Order up a main course like garlicloaded steaks, fall-off-the-bone lamb shanks, salmon, or chicken and rice.
Next, prepare for a smorgasbord of shared items to round out the meal, including cabbage soup, French fries, pinto and green beans, and salad.

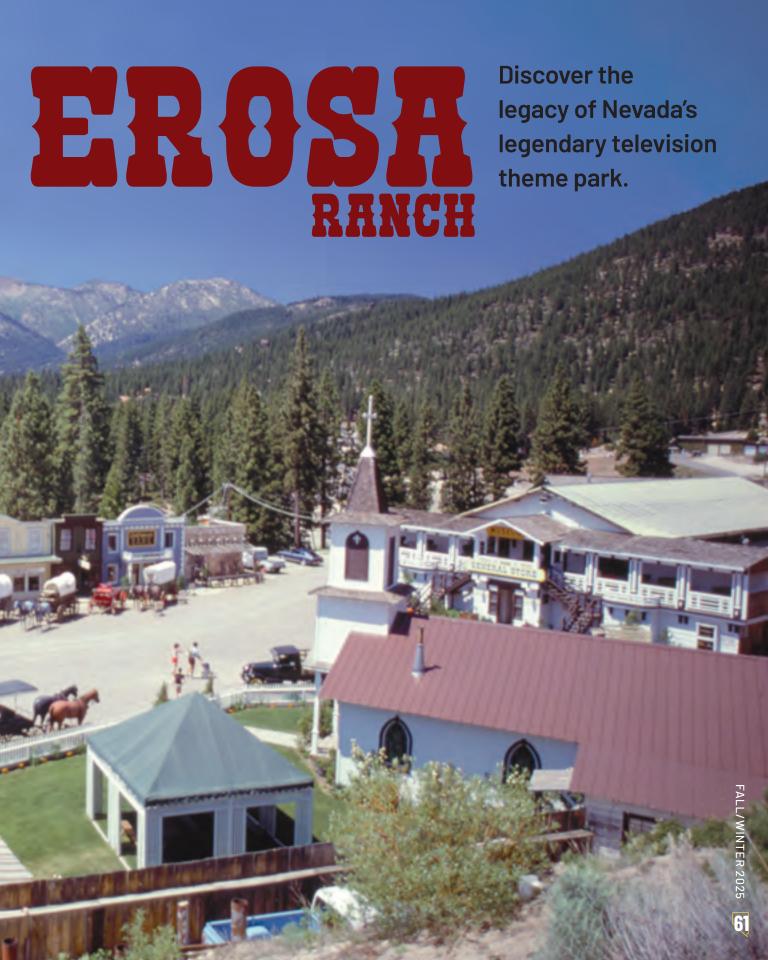


BY MARK MAYNARD

As a kid growing up in Lake Tahoe, a frequent field trip involved a quick bus ride to the end of town. Atop a steep path were life-size plastic oxen to climb on, pellets dispensed from gumball machines to feed rambunctious goats, and a big log ranch house belonging to the famous (and fictitious) Cartwright family. The trip, while of questionable educational value, was always fun.

Once a cultural landmark in northern Nevada, the Ponderosa Ranch has been closed for two decades. But the park's legacy remains strong, found in preserved fragments spread across the state and in the memory of those lucky enough to grow up with it.









The "Real" Ponderosa

In 1959, NBC brought the Western series "Bonanza" to American homes. To sell more color televisions for its parent company—RCA Corporation (then an electronics powerhouse)—NBC crews shot B-roll of Lake Tahoe's deep, blue water framed by lush green pines.

The show's title card began with a map of the fictional Ponderosa Ranch, depicted stretching from the shores of Tahoe to Carson City. The map then combusted, revealing the horseriding Cartwright family: Ben (Lorne Greene), Adam (Pernell Roberts), Hoss (Dan Blocker), and Little Joe (Michael Landon).

The show's 431 episodes focused on the lives of the Cartwright boys, bringing viewers on weekly adventures full of danger, romance, and humor while confronting social issues through the lens of the Western frontier.

It might be hard for younger readers to appreciate the reach and impact of "Bonanza." During the mid 1960s, it was the most popular show on television. For two seasons (1964 and 1965), the show averaged more than 19 million viewers an episode and was syndicated in 49 countries.

Carving An Opportunity Out Of The Woods

Back in Nevada, Bill Anderson was a self-starter who arrived in Lake Tahoe with his wife Joyce in 1962. His daunting job was to clear the pine trees and granite boulders on Tahoe's undeveloped North Shore to create infrastructure for the new town of Incline Village. Due to a loophole in his contract, Bill Anderson controlled more than 400 acres of land near town.

FEATURES + HISTORY

As the show's opening map put Incline Village within the boundaries of the fictitious Cartwright ranch, visitors frequently stopped by Anderson's property looking for the "real" homestead. Of course, the ranch didn't exist, but this seemed like a perfect business opportunity. The Andersons began developing an idea that combined the success of the hit TV show with the beauty of North America's largest alpine lake.

The first step came after Anderson discovered NBC was paying for horses to be hauled from Los Angeles to Lake Tahoe. He convinced the network to save on transport by keeping the horses on his land. Anderson used the horses to offer pony-cart rides for children.

Next, he built a Western-town façade on the hill above the stables and began calling his roadside attraction "The Ponderosa Ranch and Stables"—much to the chagrin of NBC. Copyright issues aside, the studio couldn't deny the property's perfect location and potential. The parties soon worked out a licensing agreement that made Anderson's Ponderosa Ranch the show's official theme park. Anderson got the network to share blueprints of the Cartwright ranch house (just a set on Stage 16 at Paramount Studios) and built the replica ranch house from scavenged lumber. The (now official) Ponderosa Ranch opened in 1967.

While the show occasionally made use of the ranch's exteriors, the crew never shot inside the ranch house (something tour guides glossed over for eager tourists). However, as part of the licensing deal, the show's cast did make frequent in-person appearances to the delight of guests and employees.

complications following surgery. The show added

Griff King, played by 25-year-old Tim Matheson, to appeal to a younger audience, but fans felt the loss of Hoss too deeply. The show ended its run in 1973.

With "Bonanza's" cancellation, the Ponderosa Ranch had seemingly lost its reason to exist. However, the property would continue operating and entertaining guests for the next 30 years.

Many nostalgia-seekers came to immerse themselves in the heyday of the American Western, but the Ponderosa Ranch was also simply a fun place to spend time. Visitors rode horses, enjoyed "hayride breakfasts," walked through a disorienting mystery mine, toured the Cartwright ranch house, and ate "Hoss-burgers." Decades after the show ended and the cast stopped making appearances, crowds continued to make the Ponderosa one of the biggest seasonal employers for locals (including my mom, Connie Maynard, who worked for Joyce Anderson).

The ranch was also an attractive workplace for out-oftowners. Avid horsewoman Joanne Paolillo (née Travers) came to Lake Tahoe from the East Coast in summer 1978. A few weeks after arriving, she saw a pamphlet for the Ponderosa Ranch.

"I couldn't believe the Ponderosa Ranch of my childhood was so close by!" says Paolillo.





She decided to take a trail ride but was soon offered a job to finish out the season. The next spring, Paolillo became the first female live-in wrangler at the ranch. Her job included saddling horses, serving pancake breakfasts, guiding dozens of horseback guests, and cooking for the wrangler crew. If there was a dinner ride, the day ended between 10 and 11 p.m.

"It was a different time back then," says Paolillo, "and I broke many barriers to gain the respect of the rest of the crew."

Cameras Roll Again On The Ponderosa Ranch

In 1987, my mom came home from work with an exciting opportunity. Joyce Anderson had secured us roles as extras in a TV pilot for a "Bonanza" sequel called "Bonanza: The Next Generation." Along with many other locals, we were fitted with period costumes and tasked to stroll in the background of scenes set in "Virginia City"—really just the theme park's Old West façade.

Excitingly, Lorne Greene was slated to return as Ben, but he died before production began. The other original cast members were not available: Michael Landon was busy filming "Highway to Heaven," and Pernell Roberts's character had been written out of the series decades before. Despite this setback, filming continued, appropriately starring Michael Landon Jr. and Gillian Greene to play the titular next generation of Cartwrights.

The series wasn't picked up, but there were two madefor-TV movies, both of which were filmed at the ranch: "Bonanza: The Return" in 1993 and "Bonanza: Under Attack" in 1995, which featured Tahoe homeowner Leonard Nimoy of "Star Trek" fame.

After the film crews departed, the Ponderosa Ranch passed to the next generation. In 1996, Bill and Joyce Anderson's children took over the day-to-day operations. Wanting to leave the legacy of the Ponderosa for Nevada residents, a years-long plan was initiated with the U.S. Forest Service and other entities to acquire the land.

The purchase was never approved by Congress. In 2004, billionaire software magnate David Duffield bought the property for an estimated \$55 million, and the park closed on Sept. 26, 2004. The Ponderosa Ranch era was over after 37 years.

Packing Up The Ponderosa

After the sale, most of the original structures—including the ranch house—remained on property for years until the liability of maintaining and insuring them became too much for the new owners.

The ranch is gone, but some of its best artifacts are being taken care of by the Thunderbird Lodge Preservation Society, a nonprofit organization dedicated to gathering, restoring, and distributing important Nevada artifacts. The society's curator, Bill Watson, calls the collection Lake Tahoe's attic.

"A lot of these buildings were sets," says Watson. "They weren't made to be functional, long-standing buildings." The Duffields recognized the cultural value of the television history, rare vehicles, and historic mining equipment. They were the ones who reached out to the society to begin the process of archiving the property.

Some of these artifacts are now in the Nevada State Museum and the Nevada Railroad Museum in Carson City, and the California State Museum. And a couple of the most iconic buildings have been saved to be rebuilt on the other side of Nevada at Red's Ranch in Lamoille.

Foundation 36, a sister organization of the Thunderbird Lodge Preservation Society, is caretaking many of the Ponderosa Ranch buildings for eventual restoration near Elko. The property's church was originally built in Janesville, California, in 1871. It was disassembled and hauled to Incline Village by Anderson in the 1960s, where it hosted up to 15 weddings a week. After the Ponderosa closed, the church was again disassembled, hauled out to Lamoille, and restored by Foundation 36 volunteers.

"That little church has traveled," says Watson, "but the interior is pretty much as it was back in the day."

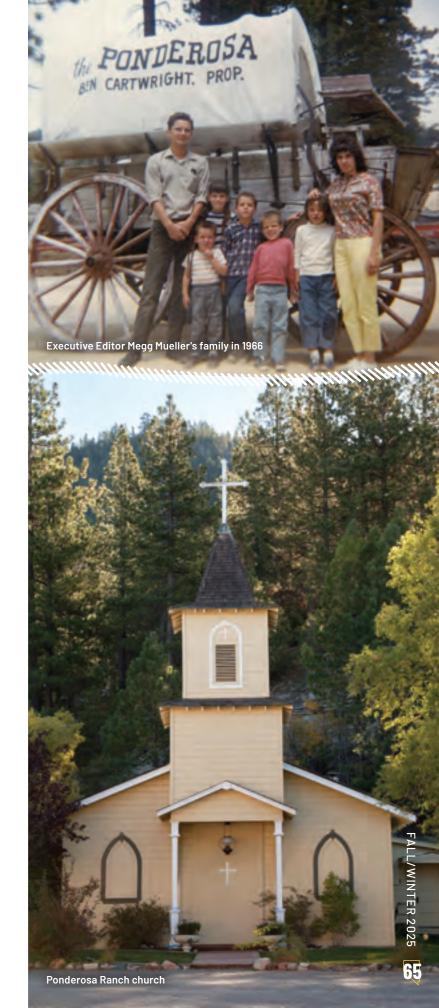
The Cartwright ranch house was saved as well.

"It's in containers," says Watson. "That's our next fundraising project."

The Cartwright Legacy Lives On

Whatever becomes of the Ponderosa Ranch's rich legacy, its memories will live on in the memories of its Incline Village neighbors, its visitors, and those around the world who still watch the show in reruns.

"I still run into folks who have such wonderful memories of going to the ranch," says Paolillo. "It was a place for all ages, from all walks of life, many from overseas, to enjoy and relive their memories of the show."



RURAL WRANGLERS OF THE STATE O







However, the heart of the valley is its rich cultural heritage. Over the centuries, the banks of the Muddy River have beckoned Ancestral Puebloans, Paiutes, Mexicans, and Mormons. The valley's long history is well preserved and easily explored through the its museums and ghost towns.

Whether you choose to stay for a weekend or a winter, Moapa Valley is an excellent escape. This full-service town offers a handful of restaurants and a comfortable hotel to serve as the hub for your outdoor adventures. Curious to learn more? Keep reading to discover area highlights.

LOCAL LEXICON On a map, you'll find the area has several towns including Logandale and Overton. Although these are historic towns with distinct commercial areas, it's perfectly acceptable to refer to the collective communities as Moapa Valley.

Logandale Trails

LOGANDALE TRAILS SYSTEM

The newly opened Logandale Trails System is on its way to becoming one of the state's most popular off-road destinations. Located near the north end of Valley of Fire State Park, the 45,000-acre area—featuring 200 miles of trail—practically mirrors the park's breathtaking rust-red formations. The only difference is that this outdoor-recreation playground is open to horseback riders, rock climbers, hikers, and OHV enthusiasts alike. Note that while restrooms and dry camping are available, there are no RV hookup or dump stations.







Lake Mead National Recreation Area

Known for rugged mountains and breathtaking, horizonstretching waters, this massive, 1.5-million-acre space is the perfect place for visitors to swim, boat, hike, bike, fish, and camp. America's first and largest national recreation area offers scenic vistas, picnicking spots, and family-friendly hikes like the Redstone Trail. This area is also one of the

LAKE MEAD ADMISSION

Daily admission for Lake Mead National Recreation Area is \$25 per vehicle or \$20 per motorcycle. Daily boat permits are \$16 and campgrounds are typically \$20 per night. Note that only electronic card payments are accepted for entrance, lake use, and campground fees.

state's best wildlife viewing areas, boasting a large population of desert bighorn sheep, bald eagles, mountain lions, and other desert-dwelling critters.

Lost City Museum

Lost City Museum tells the long story of the valley's inhabitants, including the Ancestral Puebloans, who farmed this part of the state for a thousand years. Completed in 1935 by the National Parks Service and Civilian Conservation Corps, the museum displays tools, pottery, and other artifacts that offer a glimpse of Puebloan life.





LOST CITY MUSEUM







Oats-Park.

Discover an art oasis just off the Loneliest Road in America.

BY RACHEL WRIGHT







Inside a stately brick building in the heart of Fallon, a vibrant and unexpected art experience awaits. Let the lasso of a neon cowboy rope you into Oats Park Art Center, home to diverse collections, performances, and special events.

Founded in 1986, the Churchill Arts Council (CAC) prides itself on enriching the culture of Fallon and northern Nevada. The CAC has called Oats Park home since the early 2000s, filling the former public school building—opened in 1915 and designed by famed Nevada architect Frederic J. DeLongchamps—with every variety of art.

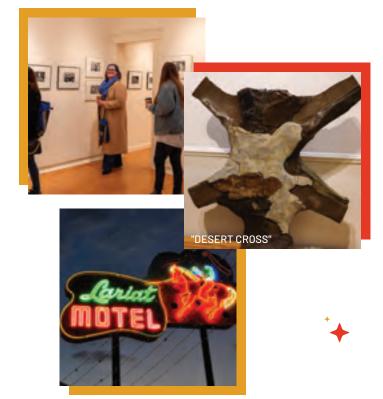
"Over the last three-plus decades, the programming has grown to become an ongoing forum for the exploration of a wide range of creative ideas," says CAC Chair Dr. Tedd McDonald.

That range includes visual arts exhibits, performing arts series, literary readings, classic and foreign film screenings, and conversations with contemporary artists.









The Art Inside (And Out)

Oats Park brims with storied pieces and interactive elements you'd expect to find in major metros. Visitors can't miss "Crank," a roomsized drum sculpture that changes beats depending on the amount of kinetic energy—i.e., moving people—around the work. Another eyecatcher, "Desert Cross," was created by John Mason, a famous ceramicist with close ties to the area.

"Mason was raised...on a ranch 15 miles west of Fallon near Hazen," says McDonald. "Recognized nationally and internationally, he opened the art world's eyes to the possibility of ceramics as sculpture. The "Desert Cross," often referred to lovingly as the Mason Cross, reflects the colors, textures, and gestalt of the area surrounding his Nevada home and its rocky environs."

That aforementioned neon cowboy? Dating back to the 1950s, the Lariat Motel sign once welcomed Highway 50 travelers into Fallon for a road trip respite. The lodging is long gone, but the meticulously restored rider and his horse still greet Oats Park guests with glowing animation.

GHOSTLY SIGHTINGS

When you visit, report any strange encounters to Oats Park staff, as there are plans to gather an oral and written history of the hauntings. Over the last 50 years, people have reported items being moved, unexplained sounds of footsteps, female voices, and sights of "shadowy, moving objects resembling people."









In addition to its three, always-changing galleries, Oats Park houses a striking stage that brings impressive performances to this small town. Inside the intimate Barkley Theatre, patrons can take in live music—everything from bluegrass and bigband funk to groovy jazz and indie folk—and film series.

The CAC hosts a handful of special events at Oats Park, too. These include the chance to sample local and regional spirits during Ales for Arts in October—which raises funds for the CAC's programming—or celebrate the season at Holiday Art Bar, featuring seasonal cocktails, light hors d'oeuvres, and festivities with fellow art enthusiasts. Also popular are their Green Goddess Markets—one held in spring and one in fall—which invite folks to swap seedlings, shop local produce, and spend a day surrounded by art, music, and food.

For more hands-on endeavors, sign up for Oats Park Art School classes. All ages and experience levels can partake in music lessons, creative writing workshops, and courses that cover painting, drawing, silversmithing, textiles, ceramics, and cooking.

Enjoy the entertainment on the main floor or opt for a touch of luxury with elevated box seats. Tickets typically cost \$20 or less, with students and CAC members receiving discounts. For tickets, visit churchillarts.org.





Anything But Ordinary

Located an hour east of Reno, Oats Park is well worth the day trip. Galleries are open Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (and by appointment) and admission is free.

While in Fallon, round out your cultural experience by visiting the Churchill County Museum. The facility is packed with fascinating displays and one-of-a-kind artifacts including vintage vehicles, geologic wonders, and virtual reality views of Hidden Cave, a significant archaeological site less than 20 minutes outside Fallon. At the museum, you can even schedule a tour of the cave.







WITH OUR 2026 NEVADA HISTORICAL CALENDAR!

\$21*

ORDER YOUR COPY NOW!

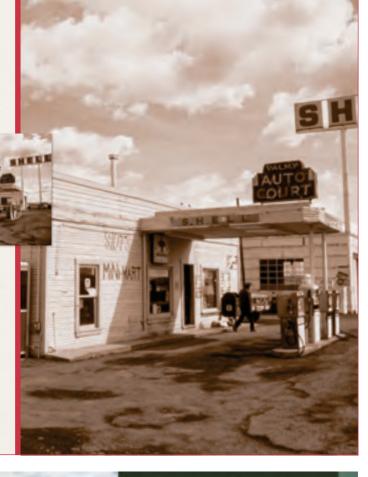


VISIT STORE.TRAVELNEVADA.COM TO ORDER.

NEVADA

Telling the Silver State's story since 1936.

*Includes S&H





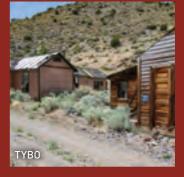
G 775-623-5071





Explore nuclear and ghost town history on one central Nevada road trip.

BY CLIFF BANDRINGA & ILENE BANDRINGA





FEATURES + GHOST TOWNS

In a remote mountain range in south-central Nevada, about 50 miles east of Tonopah, two publicly accessible sites represent two very different chapters of the Silver State's history: mining and nuclear testing. The old mining town is Tybo, and what was to become Nevada's second nuclear test site is the **Central Nevada Test Site** Base Camp, birthplace of Project Faultless.

Our road trip begins with a stop at the Tybo historical marker, located on the east side of U.S. Highway 6—Nevada's famous Extraterrestrial Highway. After reading about the town, drive across the highway and onto a secondary road that shortly turns to dirt. It will immediately take you through the Test Site Base Camp before winding its way up into the mountains to Tybo. Do not venture off the road for the next mile: It's all military property.

This base camp, which consists of a cluster of buildings and residences, is currently used by the U.S. Air Force to test radio and other communications for the Nevada National Security Site, Tonopah Test Range, and other military installations, including Area 51. While driving by, you'll appreciate this place even more after hearing about its history.



NEVADA MAGAZINE & VISITOR GUIDE

WATCH IT ONLINE

Search "Tybo and Project Faultless" on the @BackRoadsWest1 YouTube channel to watch the authors of this article take a deeper dive into this road trip and the area's history.



Project Faultless

In the 1960s, nuclear testing was at its peak. Most of it was done about 75 miles northwest of Las Vegas at Yucca Flat. At this time, Las Vegas was growing both in population and as a popular tourist destination. Although the mushroom clouds (visible from downtown Las Vegas) had become an attraction, residents were growing increasingly annoyed: The tests were conducted in the early morning, which often woke people up.

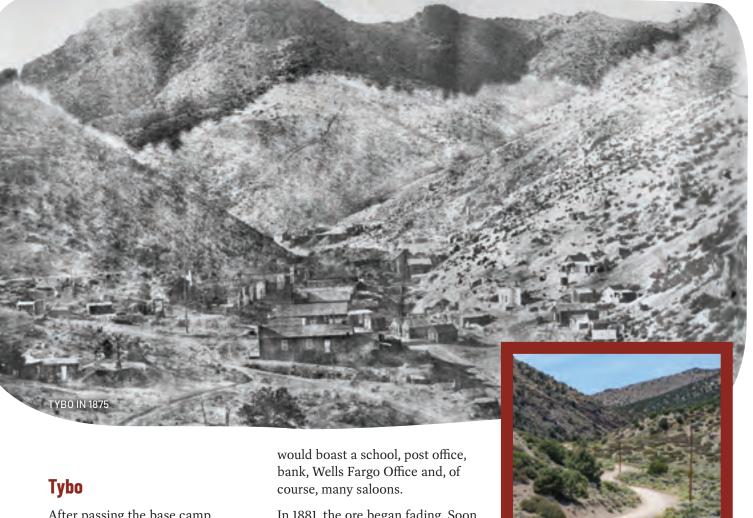
Many influential people, particularly Howard Hughes, urged the Department of Defense to move their testing area farther away from Las Vegas. The Atomic Energy Commission agreed and selected a new spot about 100 miles north of the site in Hot Creek Valley on the east side of the Hot Creek Mountains.

The base was originally built to serve as the operations center for the new testing site. In 1968, the first nuclear test—Project Faultless—was conducted about 25 miles north. The detonation caused a large area to sink by 8 feet—something that didn't happen at Yucca Flat—and several large fault cracks formed near the blast area. Ironically, Project Faultless was just the opposite of being "fault-less."

Several other nuclear tests were planned and already partially prepared, but after discovering the unstable geology, no more tests were conducted. The test site remained at Yucca Flat.

The actual location of Project Faultless can still be visited. It's marked by a big steel drum in the middle of the valley, but it's a long trip down a dirt road to see it.





After passing the base camp, continue following the road until it enters a canyon.

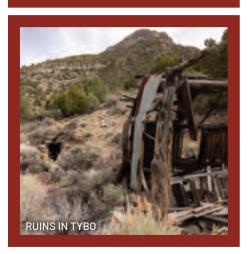
You'll start seeing the remains of several cabins and foundations of two ore smelters. You know you're in "downtown" Tybo when you see its biggest building, the general store, on the right side of the road.

Just like many other mining towns in Nevada, Tybo has a long history that started with the discovery of silver and gold in the late 1860s and lasted, off and on, until the 1940s. The name Tybo came from the local Shoshone Tribe and means "white man's district." Supposedly, it was a Shoshone that showed prospectors an unusual-looking rock that turned out to be valuable ore. A mining camp was established in 1871, and a smelter was built a year later. By 1874, Tybo had become a true town with a population of about 1,000 people. Two years later, the town

In 1881, the ore began fading. Soon after, the Tybo Consolidated Mining Company closed, and the town's population dwindled to less than a hundred people. In 1884, many of Tybo's 32 buildings were destroyed by a fire.

But this wasn't the end for Tybo. As with so many mining towns from this era, some diehard miners came back to give it another try and began to find other ore bodies. Throughout the early 1900s, several companies tried to recover more precious metals—though most of them failed. In 1937, Tybo's mill closed, and the area's one remaining company had to ship its ore to Tonopah for milling.

When World War II came along, the demand for lead greatly increased, and some mines prospered between 1942 and 1945. In the end, the combined mining in Tybo produced about \$9.8 million in silver, lead, zinc, and some gold.



ROAD TO TYBO

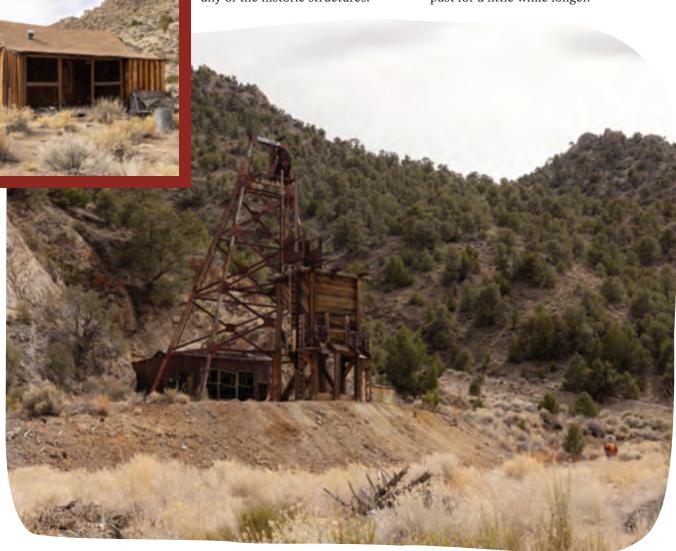


The Almost Ghost Town

Today, Tybo is made up of several buildings in various stages of decay, two headframes, and the remains of smelters along with their slag heaps. Although it may seem like a ghost town, it's technically not. There are people still living in Tybo. These hardy souls (who are on the grid) are caretakers and look after what's left of the town (and are a big reason these artifacts still exist). When you visit, please be respectful of all private property by staying on the obvious roads and don't walk into any of the historic structures.

As avid history lovers and photographers, we really enjoy seeing these old buildings and relics. We try to imagine what it was like back then, when the town was bustling with activity. For us, the crown jewel of today's Tybo is the general store that once included a Wells Fargo office. Its brickwork is a testament to Western architecture when things were built to last.

With the help of the caretakers, the remains of Tybo's past should last for future explorers to enjoy. One can't stop Mother Nature's ongoing intention to return the landscape to its original state, but for now, we can appreciate, respect, and witness the past for a little while longer.





We're bringing history to you. Join us for off-site events through June 2026 as we undergo building renovations. Enjoy compelling lectures featuring area historians at unique locations.

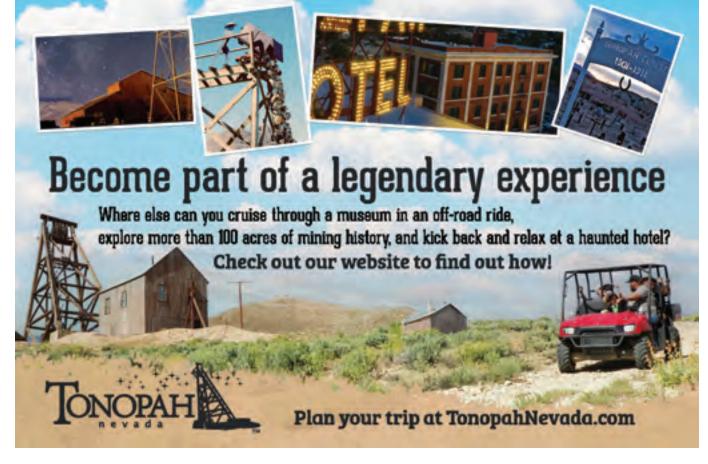


For a calendar of events, scan this code or visit nvhistoricalsociety.org/events



nvhistoricalsociety.org







Each year, Nevada Magazine & Visitor Guide challenges readers to submit their best photos taken around the state. We're excited to present the results from our 2025 contest, featuring the work of some truly talented photographers who have captured the soul of this gorgeous place.

Huge thanks to our generous sponsors, who help make this contest possible year after year!





Nevada Northern Railway & Ramada Copper Queen in Ely nnry.com • wyndhamhotels.com



Home Means Nevada Co. with stores in Reno & Henderson

homemeansnevada.com





CITIES & TOWNS, WINNER, HUGH BYRNE

"It is a rare day when we get steady rain in Las Vegas. I targeted the plaza in front of the Venetian for some reflection shots but didn't get anything great. Heading back to the Palazzo, I noticed this composition with the wet sidewalk and retro streetlights. The telephoto compression makes The STRAT look a lot closer than it is."

Nikon Z6, 1/30s, f/6.3, ISO 800

NEXT YEAR'S CONTEST

Check our Spring/Summer issue and our social media channels in spring of 2026 for more information on the next Great Nevada Picture Hunt!



CITIES & TOWNS, RUNNER-UP, RICK POTT

"My first night at Berlin-Ichthyosaur State Park was unforgettable. In this shot, the Milky Way stretches above an old, broken truck."

Sony A7, 13s, f/1.8, ISO 3200

BIRDS, WINNER, MICHAEL BITTLE

"One morning, I went to Amargosa Big Dune Recreation Area to get some sunrise shots. I was standing next to my car, focused on flying my drone, when I heard this crunching sound. I looked to my right and saw a huge shadow on the ground. An ostrich was 5-10 feet away from me. It wasn't aggressive—it was probably thinking the same thing I was: What are YOU doing here?! I got in my car. It came to my window and tapped with its beak a few times. I tapped back to try and get it away. After about 5 minutes, it walked away. I got out and started taking as many pictures as I could. I don't know if it escaped from somewhere or was someone's pet. I just knew I had to document it because nobody was going to believe me."

Sony A7, 1/400s, f/11, ISO 100





BIRDS, RUNNER-UP, ANTHONY MONTOYA

An unfazed American kestrel braves a snowstorm in Ruby Valley.

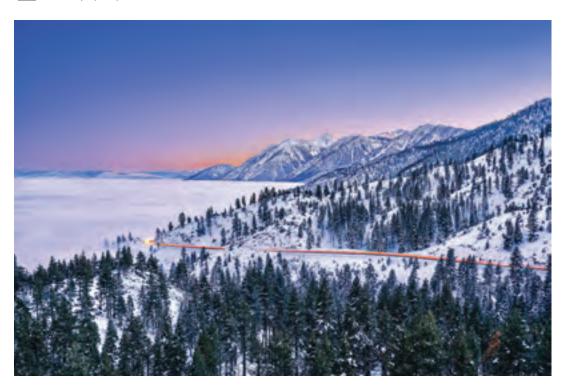
Canon R6, 1/320s, f/8, ISO 400



LANDSCAPE, WINNER, SCOTT MORTIMORE

"I love the anonymity of Nevada and how it rewards those who venture a little further, as in this scene from the High Rock Canyon Wilderness. On this August evening, a monsoon was on its way out at the same time the sunset was varnishing sprigs of sage and casting shadows across mesas."

Nikon Z7, 1s, f/16, ISO 80



LANDSCAPE, RUNNER-UP, JESSE BRADFORD

"It seems, once a year (usually around Christmas), a special cloud inversion happens across the Carson Valley. While it creates hazardous freezing fog conditions in the valley itself, driving up Kingsbury Grade gets you above the clouds to this surrealistic view of the Sierra Nevada rising from the abyss."

Nikon Z7, 30s, f/13, ISO 64



"A man dancing at the Numaga Powwow in Hungry Valley. Presented by the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, this multiday event—which is open to the public—brings American Indians from around the U.S. and Canada."

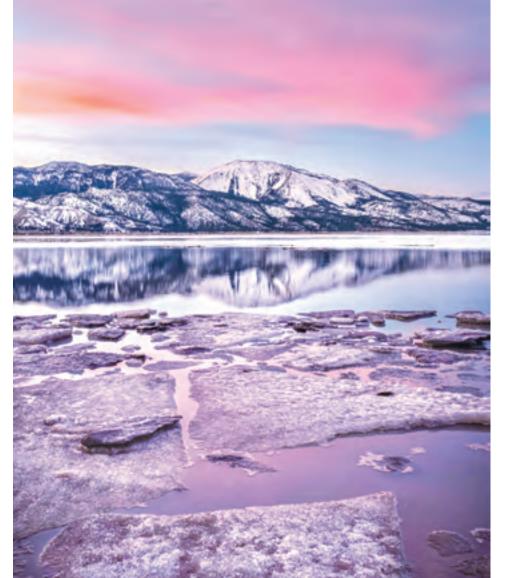
Nikon Z8, 1/250s, f/22, ISO 1250

PEOPLE, RUNNER-UP, ANTHONY MONTOYA

Anthony Montoya pauses to take in the stunning scenery of Lamoille Canyon while scouting during his archery hunt.

Canon R6, 1/160, f/4, ISO 200





WATERSCAPE, WINNER, JESSE BRADFORD

"Often overlooked by motorists racing between Carson City and Reno, Washoe Lake really is a special place. I wanted to showcase its beauty and capture it after fresh snow. Conditions lined up perfectly to capture Slide Mountain reflected through the ice."

Nikon Z7, 6s, f/16, ISO 64

ART DIRECTOR'S NOTE

For the first time ever, in addition to these winning photos, we will be publishing all semi-finalists online as well. Please visit www.nevadamagazine.com to see even more outstanding Nevada images that were in the running to win this year's contest.



WATERSCAPE, RUNNER-UP, MICHAEL BITTLE

"This was shot coming back from a Maverick Helicopter Grand Canyon sunset tour. As the sun was setting, the water looked cool and calm while its color and shadows changed."

Sony A7, 1/100s, f/1.4, ISO 640



WILDLIFE, WINNER, KEN HUYNH

"Got a tip from my good friend, and the next morning I found myself face-to-face with five curious female pronghorn. I waited, they watched, and for one split moment everyone stood still in this perfect symmetry."

Sony A1, 1/640s, f/4, ISO 3200



WILDLIFE, RUNNER-UP, MISTY ONEIL EPSTEIN

"When we go on our long, rugged hike near Henderson, it's always hit-or-miss to see a fox. But that day, my wish came true. He was so beautiful, sitting serenely on the rocks, his tail flowing gracefully over."

Nikon Z8, 1/1600s, f/4, ISO 200

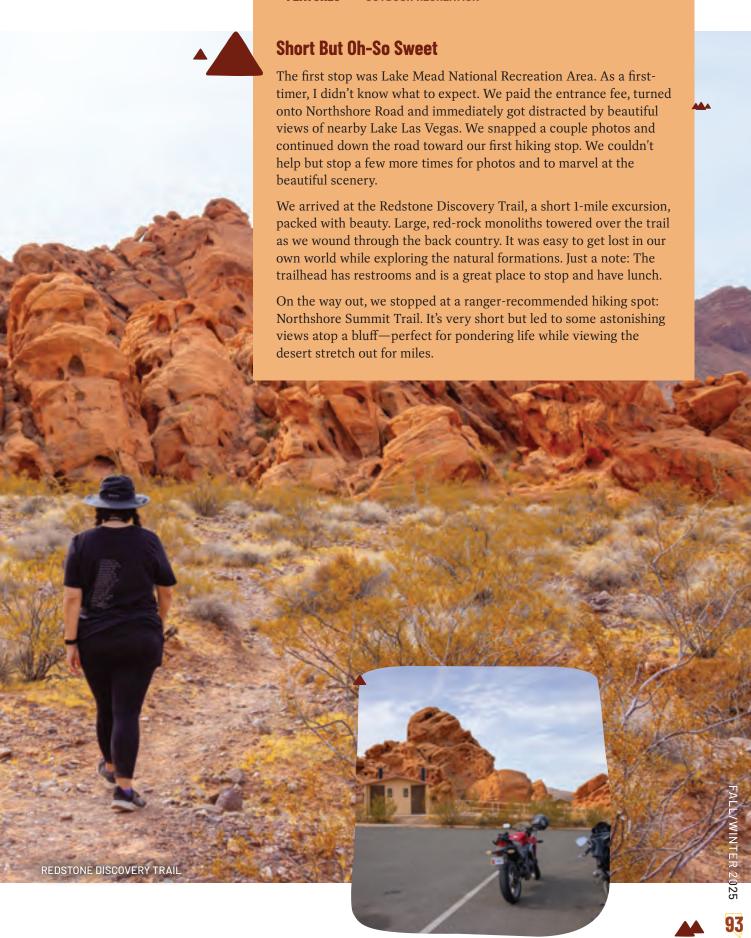


Three southern Nevada hikes prove to be good for the body and soul.

BY ALEXANDRIA HAWTHORNE

Southern Nevada has some of the most insane beauty in the Southwest. From craggy peaks to sweeping valleys covered in desert flora, it's easy for someone to get FOMO about the countless hiking trails, hard-to-reach natural gems, and millions of acres of public lands to explore. (It's me. I have the FOMO.) But if you're like me and perish in any temperature above 70 degrees, exploring the region's geological wonders in the summertime is near impossible.

Thankfully, Las Vegas temperatures generally hover around 60 degrees in late fall and early spring. With camera batteries charged and my partner in crime—Creative Manager Kippy Spilker—in tow, I seized the opportunity to get into the area surrounding Las Vegas. It was time to sink my metaphorical teeth into this magical desert land.



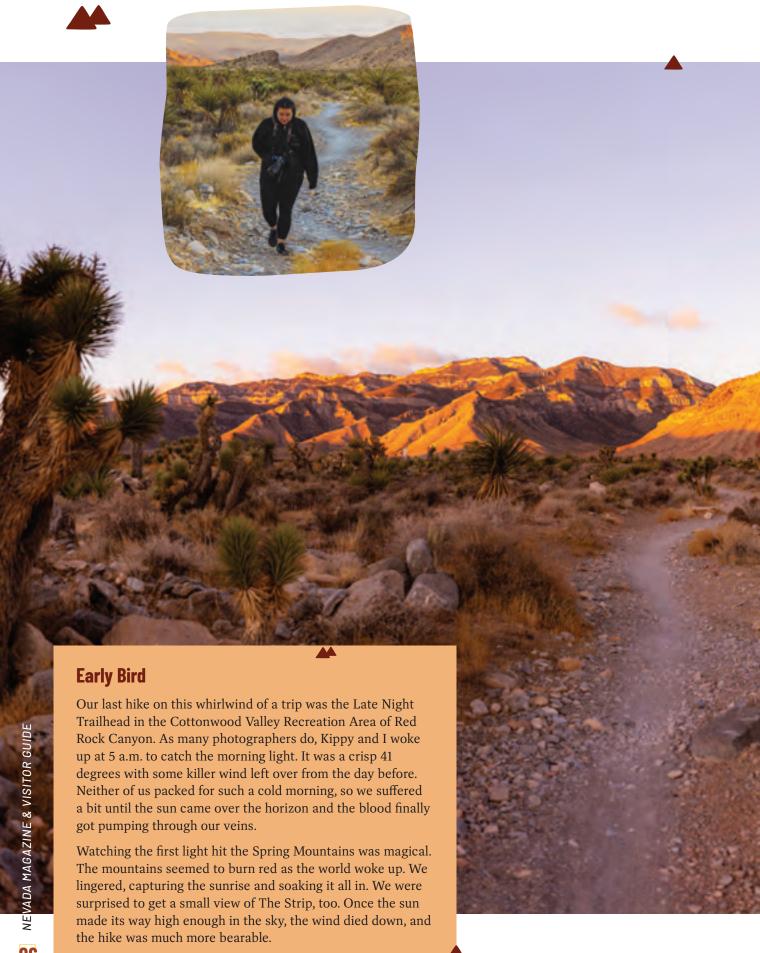


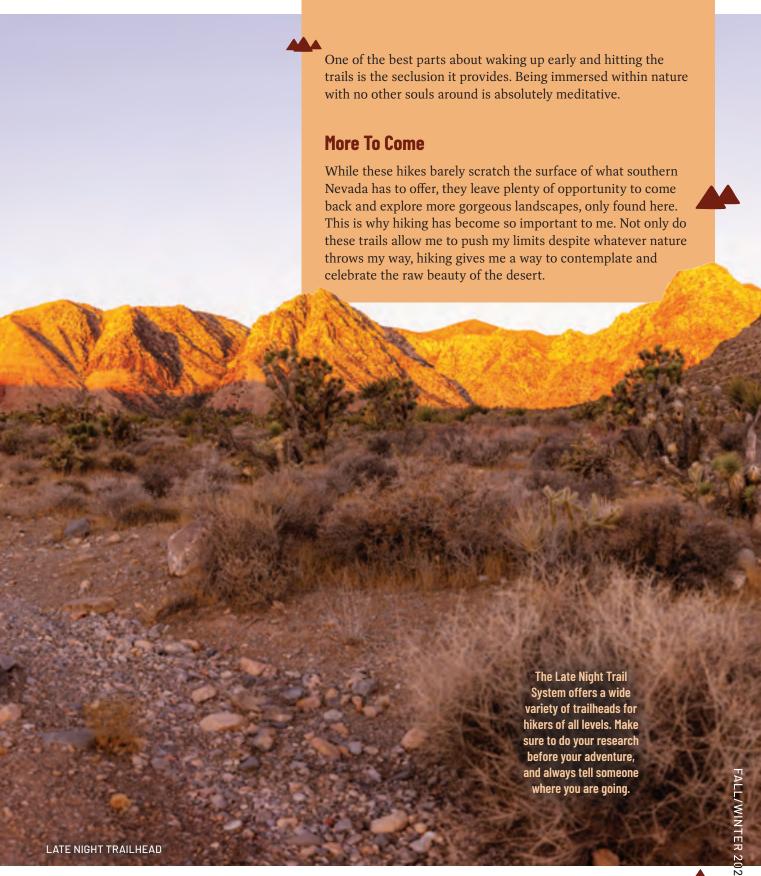


the car.

to continue forward, a first for me.

few times). I wandered through a slot canyon and climbed nearly 200 feet before meeting Kippy at







AMATEUR GHO

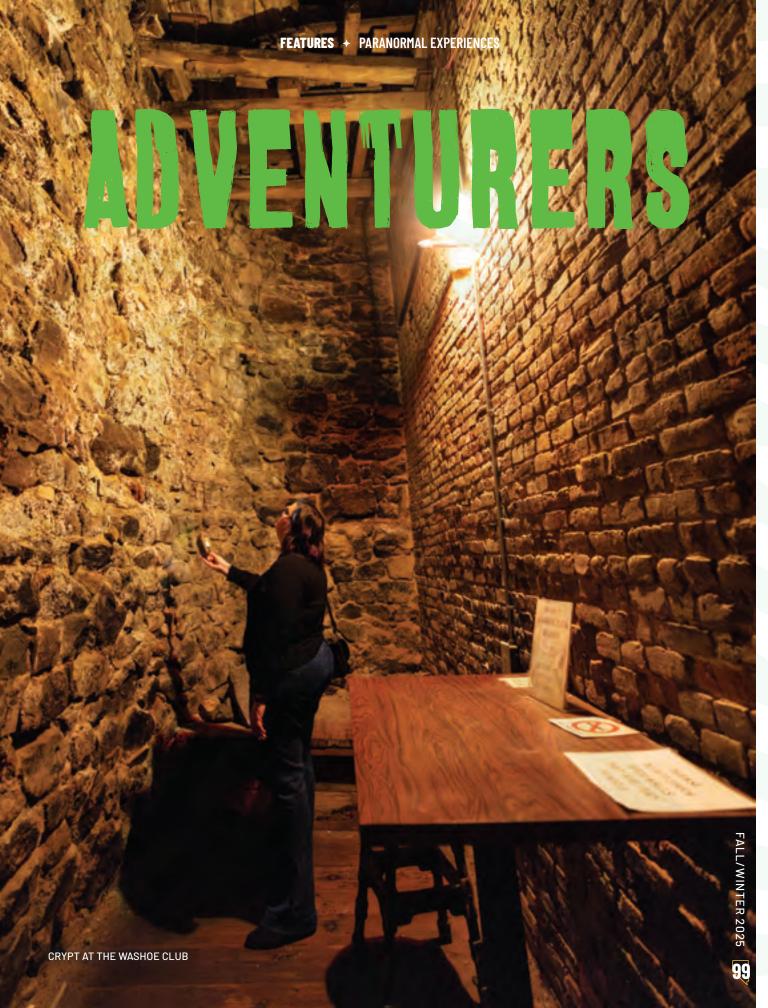
Two spirited sightseers visit Virginia City's haunted hot spots

BY ALEXANDRIA HAWTHORNE AND RACHEL WRIGHT

Virginia City is nestled high in the Virginia Range, just 30 minutes south of Reno. Once the heart of the legendary Comstock mining district, today this town is among the best-preserved communities born in the Old West. It's also regarded as one of the country's most haunted places—understandable given its long history of mining accidents, devastating fires, and plenty of saloon disputes turned deadly.

While Virginia City highlights its haunted history every October—with a whole month of Hauntober special events—spooky sightseeing is an option year-round. And there's never a bad time to go ghost hunting. Hoping for firsthand experiences, Travel Nevada staff members Rachel Wright (RW) and Alexandria Hawthorne (AH) headed to Virginia City to visit some of the community's most reportedly paranormal locations.







Day 1: Washoe Club & Silver Queen Hotel

AH: On a cold February morning, we began our trip with a visit to Silver Terrace Cemetery amid a healthy amount of snow we hadn't anticipated. I realized I forgot my camera memory card, but we continued in search of cool vantage points for future shots—which were abundant. About halfway through, however, the snow started to get seriously deep.

RW: Our shoes got soaked, and we kept nearly falling over from laughing at the situation we found ourselves in. Back at the car, we found the memory card, so no trip to the Carson City office was needed.

We couldn't check into the Silver Queen Hotel & Saloon until 3 p.m., which gave us the perfect opportunity to stroll the main street boardwalk. At both Houston Boot Company and Virginia City Hatmaker, we watched artisans bring their exquisite crafts to life (and dreamed about getting our own custom-made boots and hats). Afterward, we popped inside Wood & Coal Studio and perused the coolest collection of antiques and curios.

AH: Along the way, we passed Garter & Bloomers, one of Virginia City's old-time photo studios. Having always wanted to do this, I convinced Rachel to pose with me. We dressed up like rowdy outlaws and had a blast living out our newfound identities in front of the camera.

RW: Neither of us had stayed at the Silver Queen before, and every inch of the building exuded charm and history. We peeked inside the chapel and marveled at wall-sized portrait of the Silver Queen herself (complete with a dress made from silver dollars) before heading upstairs to drop off our luggage. Then it was a short walk to the Washoe Club for our ghost tour. Opened in 1862, and replete with tragic events, this place ranks among the state's most haunted locations.



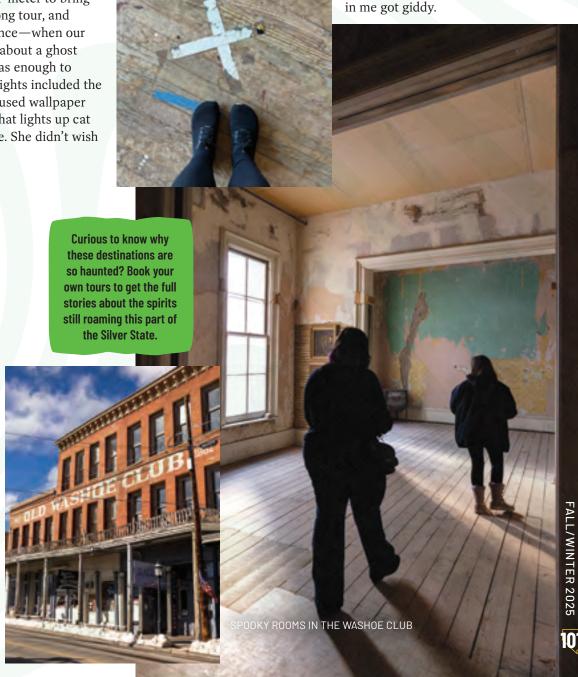
HOUSTON BOOT COMPANY

AH: Flashback to summer break 2007. I'm flipping through TV channels trying to find something to watch when I stumble upon the Sci-Fi Channel's "Ghost Adventures: The Original Documentary" where they investigated Virginia City and other Nevada towns. I was instantly hooked, and for the next 90 minutes, I sat mesmerized. Fast forward 18 years, and here I was standing where the whole show started.

RW: I rented an EMF meter to bring along on our hour-long tour, and while it only lit up once—when our guide was telling us about a ghost named Scotty—it was enough to thrill us. Other highlights included the stunning arsenic-infused wallpaper and a haunted doll that lights up cat toys to communicate. She didn't wish to speak with us.



AH: The ambiance in the Washoe Club was unquestionably eerie. It was easy for my own shadow to startle me, but that's what all the fun is about. After following a long, dark hallway into a ballroom, our guide pointed out an X taped to the floor. That was where "Ghost Adventures" captured one of their most famed pieces of evidence: an apparition walking across the room. This was the moment where things came full circle, and the inner child in me got giddy.





RW: To cover our spiritual bases, I left a dollar bill on a poker table where others had also placed offerings to the ghosts.

AH: I missed the shot, so I asked Rachel to redo placing her dollar—right after the guide told us it angers the spirits when people take things from the table. At the end of the tour, daylight was quickly fading, and we imagined how much more frightening the experience would've been under the veil of night. We agreed to return soon and take the tour after dark.

RW: Up next was the Ponderosa Mine Tour. This isn't billed as a haunted experience, but traveling 50 feet below the surface definitely gives off spooky vibes. At one point, the guide cut the minimal lights, plunging us in total darkness for a few minutes. You truly couldn't see your hand in front of your face. I would never have made it as a miner.

AH: Above ground again, we returned to the Silver Queen to bring some warmth back into our bones.

RW: If there were ghosts in our hotel rooms, we were too tired to notice. As soon as our heads hit our pillows, we slept like the dead until morning.

BBQ, and The Roasting House.





Day 2: Gold Hill Hotel & Saloon

RW: Before departing the Silver Queen, we perused their extensive proof-of-ghosts photo album. There's also a guestbook full of notes from people who had supernatural experiences. We didn't have any ghost stories to share, but hopefully next time!

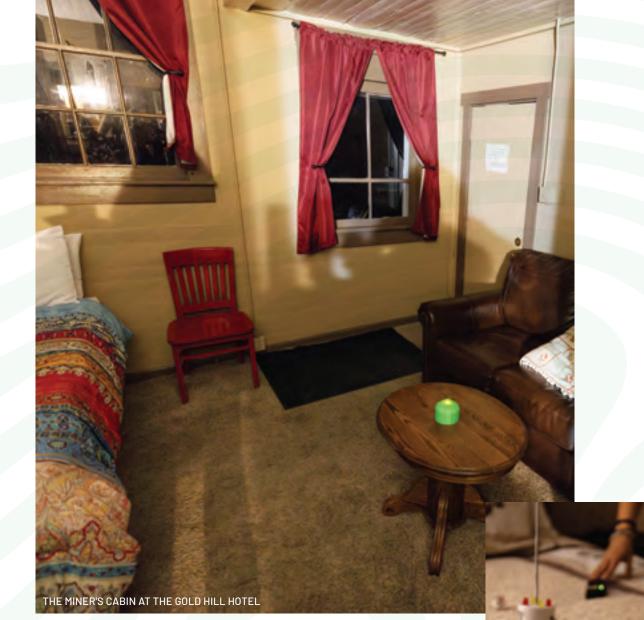
AH: We spent much of the day wandering Virginia City's shops and talking with locals before checking into our hotel, the historic Gold Hill Hotel & Saloon, built in 1861. We had an encounter as soon as we arrived—but it wasn't with a spirit. A sweet orange cat named Cloudy walked us all the way to hotel registration.

RW: The entire property felt so storied and welcoming. After having delicious drinks inside the hotel's historic saloon, we sat down for dinner at the on-site Crown Point Restaurant. Everything, including the brownie sundae, was fantastic. And now we were fueled up for our Gold Hill ghost tour with Northern Nevada Ghost Hunters (NNGH).

AH: NNGH began the night by introducing us to the various tools they use to detect spirits. This was a unique behind the scenes look at paranormal investigations, and the guides made it feel approachable no matter your experience level. We watched and listened for signs of ghosts in a hotel room before moving to the site of the Yellow Jacket Mine, where an infamous fire in 1869 killed dozens of miners.



SPOOKY PHOTOS FROM SILVER QUEEN HOTEL



RW: After the ghost tour, things really got spooky. Our time with NNGH ended with Mama J performing energy readings for us. One at a time, she had us bring our hands briefly toward an EMF reader. Mama J instantly picked up on personal things she'd have no way of knowing about me. It was mind boggling.

AH: My reading was next. At first, I didn't connect with mine. She mentioned the color blue, waves, and international travel, among other things. I chuckled to myself because I thought, "There's no way I can afford any international travel." But halfway through the reading, it suddenly came to me: I

had forgotten I would be traveling. Internationally. On a boat. Could she have guessed any of this stuff based on my appearance or how I held myself? Or was there something mystical happening? I'm still unsure what to make of all of this.

RW: Unable to go straight to sleep after that, Alexandria and I regrouped to discuss what we had experienced. We never did come up with any logical explanations, but we eventually parted ways and remained ghost-free for the night.

GHOST-HUNTING EQUIPMENT



MACKAY MANSION

Day 3: Mackay Mansion

RW: The final haunted hot spot on our Virginia City list was Mackay Mansion, built in 1859. The stately building seemed infinitely larger once we stepped inside and began our tour.

AH: We could've spent hours listening to our guide tell fascinating stories while taking in all the authentic Victorian splendor. The mansion was full of well-preserved furniture, photos, and artifacts—plus so many dolls. People "donate" haunted dolls to the mansion, and the room where they reside is equally unsettling and captivating.

RW: Mackay Mansion has plenty of ghost stories to share (just ask Johnny Depp), but the "regular" history was just as riveting. I don't want to give away all the surprises, but Thomas Edison himself installed the electrical lighting!

HAUNTOBER

Virginia City is full of spooky events in the month of October. Check out visitvirginiacitynv.com for a calendar of events to get your fright on.

AH: The mansion also hosts a plethora of paranormal events, including candlelight tours, aura photography, and guided nighttime investigations. Once again, Rachel and I agreed to come back and immerse ourselves in the otherworldly.

RW: Ultimately, Alexandria and I didn't return home with our own ghost stories—but the potential is absolutely there. Too many travelers have had experiences to believe Virginia City isn't haunted. So, we'll keep up our amateur sleuthing and wait for the spirits to reveal themselves to us next time.



MAKE YOUR NEXT TRIP AROAD 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 onlyin-Nevada experiences.



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 of the Lower 48's most remote sections, this road is all about unscripted adventure.



LONELIEST ROAD IN AMFRICA

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.



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 wildly Western Virginia City.



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 very own national park, you'll explore surreal landscapes like Valley of Fire and Cathedral Gorge. Visit charming communities and historic ghost towns.



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



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. 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.



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.



Scan **or click** for more info on Nevada road trips



RUBIES ROUTE

30 to 375 miles | 2 to 5 days With Elko as your hub,

get ready to explore a recreationpacked paradise in the state's rugged northeast 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.

NEVADA MAGAZINE & VISITOR GUIDE

NEVADA STATE MUSEUMS

HOURS AND ADMISSION GUIDE



NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM Carson City

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

==== Adults \$10 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 \$2 Train Rides Adults \$12 | Ages 4-12 \$6 Ages 3 and younger FREE



NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM East Ely

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

General Admission FREE



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 \$18.95 Ages 3-17 \$10.95 Ages 2 and younger FREE Half-price for NV residents



LOST CITY MUSEUM OVERTON

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

Adults \$8 Ages 17 and younger FREE

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



NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY RENO

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

Adults \$6

Adults \$6
Ages 17 and younger FREE

Closed to the public through May 31, 2026

SCAN OR CLICK FOR MORE INFORMATION:





3. Big Bend of the Colorado State Recreation Area

4. Cathedral Gorge State Park

5. Cave Lake State Park

7. Echo Canyon State Park

11. Kershaw-Ryan State Park 12. Lahontan State Recreation Area

13. Cave Rock State Park

14. Sand Harbor State Park

16. Van Sickle Bi-State Park

8. Elgin Schoolhouse State Historic Site

15. Spooner Lake & Backcountry State Park

18. Old Las Vegas Mormon Fort State Historic Park

17. Mormon Station State Historic Park

19. Rye Patch State Recreation Area

20. South Fork State Recreation Area

21. Spring Mountain Ranch State Park

24. Walker River State Recreation Area

27. Wild Horse State Recreation Area

25. Ward Charcoal Ovens State Historic Park

22. Spring Valley State Park

23. Valley of Fire State Park

26. Washoe Lake State Park

9. Fort Churchill State Historic Park 10. Ice Age Fossils State Park

6. Dayton State Park

Spring Valley State Park

60'

40'

35'

34'

25' N/A

45'

N/A

30'

60'

N/A

N/A

N/A N/A

N/A

N/A

45'

30'

N/A

35'

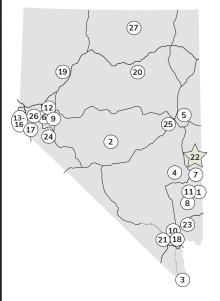
60'

40'

30'

45'

45'



Know Before You Go: Park openings, hours, and services are subject to change. Before visiting, consult parks.nv.gov, or call the park ranger. Visit ReserveNevada.com to reserve your campsite.



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 flora 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.



RESPONSIBLY





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.

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.

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.



Scan or click for more info on the Dirt Road Code

NEVADA MAGAZINE & VISITOR GUIDE

EVENTS CALENDAR

With everything from harvest festivals and heritage days to concerts and auto races, there's an event tailor-made for you somewhere in the Silver State. Events are always subject to change, so be sure to check online before finalizing plans.

September —

Genoa Candy Dance Arts & Crafts Faire Genoa

Great Basin Astronomy Festival Baker

Great Reno Balloon Race Reno

International Camel & Ostrich Races Virginia City

Lincoln County Photography Festival Caliente

Pioche Labor Day Celebration Pioche

Race The Rails Elv

Ruby Mountain Balloon Festival Elko

Silver State Art Festival **Carson City**

Silver State Classic Challenge Ely

Street Vibrations Fall Rally Reno

World Human Powered Speed Challenge Battle Mountain

October

Art in the Park **Boulder City**

Beatty Days Festival Beatty

Hauntober Virginia City

Lattin Farms Fall Festival Fallon

Nevada Day Parade Carson City

RISE Lantern Festival Las Vegas

World Championship Outhouse Races Virginia City

November •

Pahrump Social Powwow Pahrump

Polar Express on the V&T Railway Carson City

Pomegranate Arts and Craft Festival Moapa Valley

December |

Christmas On The Comstock Virginia City

Las Vegas Great Santa Run Las Vegas

Reno Santa Crawl Reno

Wrangler National Finals Rodeo Las Veaas

January •

Fire & Ice Winter Festival Elv

Mesquite Hot Air Balloon Festival Mesquite

Mesquite Motor Mania Mesquite

National Cowboy Poetry Gathering

February •

Chinese New Year in the Desert Las Veaas

Dam Short Film Festival Boulder City

Eagles & Agriculture Carson Valley

The Devil Made Me Do It Saloon Crawl Virginia City

Western Lights Festival Reno

Winnemucca Ranch Hand Rodeo Winnemucca



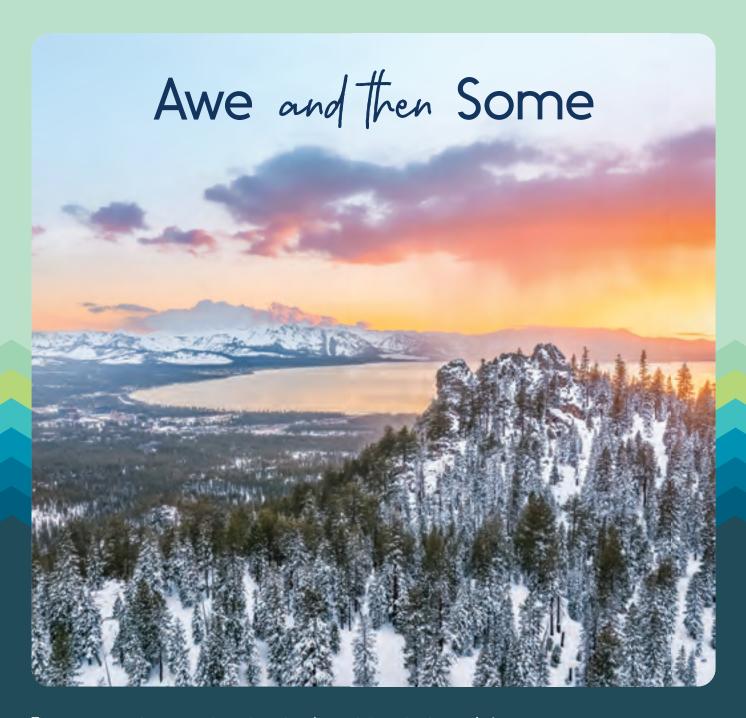
SCAN OR CLICK FOR MORE UPCOMING EVENTS











The temps may be going down, but there's no chilling the fun on Lake Tahoe's South Shore. The fall and winter months are sort of our jam. From hiking under golden hues to first tracks down snowy slopes — to world-class Altitude & Awe Events, dining, gaming and nightlife all year long — this place puts the cool in cool-weather fun. It's action-packed with awesomeness. It's all sorts of Awe and then Some.



lake tahoe

