

# NEVADA

Spring 2024

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MAGAZINE & VISITOR GUIDE

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# NEVADA

MAGAZINE & VISITOR GUIDE

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Watch for  
contest entry  
information in  
our Summer  
2024 issue.

Get a little out  
there with an  
otherworldly  
Extraterrestrial  
Highway Road  
Trip on pg. 36.



Explore the ghost town of Tuscarora  
and its pottery school on pg. 60.





# How Time Flies



Find something for everyone at Washoe Lake State Park on pg. 20.

Tasty barbecue eateries await on pg. 56.



## IT'S YOUR TURN.

Use this QR code to take our survey and tell us what you like/don't like about the guide AND what you'd like to see in future issues!



In April, I will have been at the helm of *Nevada Magazine* for 10 years. Because this issue spans February–April, that momentous day may not have occurred yet, but as I sit here writing, I'm reliving the last decade of my life with a big smile on my face.

So much has happened since I started—changing staff members, a pandemic, a promotion, and a new magazine name and home with our Travel Nevada colleagues. Not to mention the tens of thousands of miles driving within our state's borders and the hundreds of stories written about my adventures in Nevada. Somedays, I still can't believe I get paid to share Nevada with the world, but I endeavor to earn that pay every day. This issue is no different, so let's get to it!

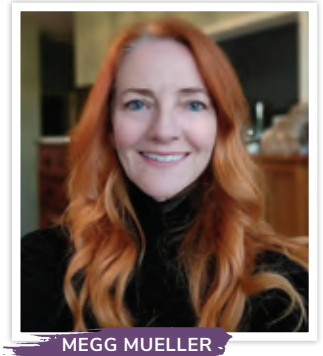
Spring is busting out all over and it starts at the Yellow Petal Flower Farm in Fallon, our latest Uncommon Overnighter. There's no better or more beautiful way to welcome the season than with a stay at this bucolic ranch and working flower farm. It's also a great time to visit southern Nevada and its perfect seasonal temperatures. First, grab your binoculars and head to the Wee Thump Joshua Tree Wilderness to discover wonderful birding opportunities. For those who love to climb, we'll share some of the nation's best rock climbing spots, and we'll also tempt you with great barbecue joints.

In my review of my tenure, I realized I had compiled quite a list of dos and don'ts when traveling in Nevada, so I'm sharing them in this issue. We have a fantastic feature on the Tuscarora Pottery School, and if you've never heard of it, be prepared to plan a trip once you read our story. A couple of intrepid coworkers took a road trip to and along the ET Highway, and we have their delightful story—complete with paranormal twists and turns—for your enjoyment.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *Nevada Magazine & Visitor Guide* as much as I did helping to create it. Nevada is without a doubt my favorite place to be, and sharing it with you is my great privilege.

Enjoy!

Megg Mueller, Executive Editor



MEGG MUELLER



SCAN HERE FOR FREE SUBSCRIPTION



Get vertical with some great rock climbing on pg. 80.





# TALK TO US

ON THE ROAD WITH @GWYNANDAMI

RED ROCK CANYON NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA

The bright lights and neon signs of Las Vegas are quite enticing, but if you're looking to go beyond the glow, the Nevada desert is calling your name. This issue, we're tagging along with @GwynandAmi as they soak in our Neon to Nature route.

## Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area

Hands-down one of the most breathtaking places in the Silver State, Red Rock beckons visitors with its red-banded canyons, towering sandstone peaks, and ancient petroglyphs. Due to its popularity, timed entry reservations are required and must be purchased in advance.



## Nelson Ghost Town

This unique stop is steeped in history and offers a one-of-a-kind experience. Step back in time as you explore numerous abandoned buildings, take a hike alongside the river near the looming sagebrush desert, and get lost in the tales of what once was. For a fun and action-packed UTV tour of the area, contact Las Vegas Adrenaline.



### Boulder City Historic District

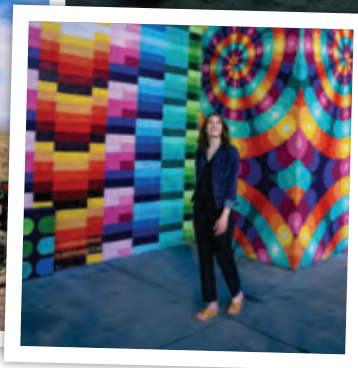
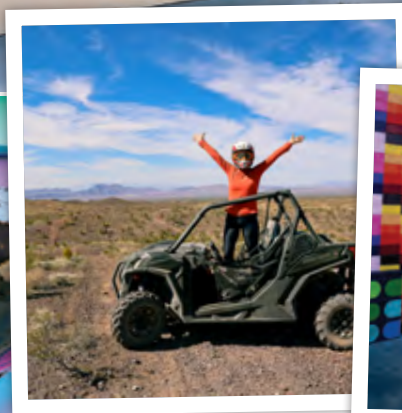
Should your definition of adventure look a little more...mellow, have no fear. This quiet, Art Deco-obsessed town that built the nearby Hoover Dam is the perfect escape. You'll find fascinating museums, cute shops, and amazing eats such as the Boulder City Brewing Company.

#### DID YOU KNOW

*While Nevada is known for its singing slot machines, Boulder City is one of two Nevada towns that prohibits gambling.*

### Hoover Dam

Get to know this engineering marvel inside and out during a guided dam tour. Heads up before you go: Tickets can only be bought on site and are first come-first serve!



### Las Vegas Arts District

Have fun while exploring this funky spot, also known as "18b"—the 18-block neighborhood and art community self-described as a "cultural explosion!"

### Goldstrike Hot Springs Trail

Get to know this 6.0-mile out-and-back trail near Boulder City. The best time to visit this trail is October through May.

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

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To get your head around all the options, turn to pg. 100.

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with a pottery school







*All over Nevada, the landscape is awakening from its winter slumber. Throw off that heavy jacket and discover the wonder of spring in the Silver State.*

## COVERS

### Front:

Lamoille Canyon provides the perfect cowboy backdrop.

Photographer:

Max Djenohan/@nomadikmax

**Back:** The East Humboldt Range, near Angel Lake.

Photographer: Alexandria Olivares-Wenzel



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A conversation with the Olympic medal winner



Top of page: @mindyonthemove (hot springs),  
@gwynandami (offroading),  
@merrills.on.the.move (kids on rocks)





Look at a satellite image of Nevada and you'll spot dozens of gray-white patches scattered across the state. These are salt deposits left by long-vanished lakes, and their presence tells us that the Great Basin was once a very wet place. The largest of these is the Black Rock Desert, located about two hours north of Reno. Best known as the home of the annual Burning Man gathering, this sprawling desert is a true natural wonder.

During **BURNING MAN**, the temporary metropolis of **BLACK ROCK CITY** has more than **60,000** residents

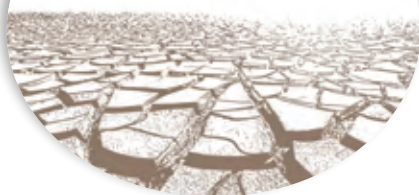
## DID YOU KNOW? BLACK ROCK DESERT

### TRAVEL NEVADA PRO TIP

The tiny town of Gerlach is the gateway to the Black Rock Desert. Before your desert adventure, grab a bite and lodging at Bruno's Country Club, take a stroll on Dooby Lane, and head to Planet X Pottery. North of Gerlach, there are no services or paved roads.

The Black Rock Desert is one of the **FLATTEST PLACES ON EARTH**

A dry lakebed is also called a **PLAYA**, the Spanish word for **BEACH**



In the spring, giant fairy shrimp hatch on the playa. These hardy crustaceans grow up to

**3 INCHES LONG**



More than **120 MILES** of emigrant trails crisscross the landscape

The desert boasts **200 SQUARE MILES** of playa (almost the same size as Chicago)



**13,000 YEARS AGO**, the desert was part of a great inland sea called Lake Lahontan



At its peak, Lake Lahontan was the size of modern Lake Ontario and had an average depth of

**500 FEET**

Beyond the playa, intrepid adventurers will find the Black Rock Desert Wilderness and High Rock Wilderness. Reaching this rugged country is rewarding, but careful planning beforehand is a must. The nearest services are hours away by dirt road.





# TOURISM *Springs Forward*

Hello, Spring! This time of year always reminds me how lucky I am to call Nevada home. It's also the perfect time to get out and explore all the great outdoor activities the state offers, including hiking, rock climbing, and wildlife spotting.

While it might surprise you, 488 bird species visit or make their home in Nevada. And springtime is the best time to catch a glimpse of hundreds of thousands of migratory birds flying from Alaska to Patagonia—the Pacific Flyway—which goes right through Nevada. Be sure to check out this edition's feature about birding in the Wee Thump Joshua Tree Wilderness to learn more about how birds have adapted to thrive in Nevada's harsh climates.

I recently embarked on a road trip adventure up Nevada's eastern edge along the Great Basin Highway. This stretch of road from Las Vegas to Ely took me through stunning state parks (Kershaw-Ryan and Cathedral Gorge), unsurpassed recreational opportunities (Lehman Caves system at Great Basin National Park), and "Nevada's Liveliest Ghost Town" (Pioche). My travels reminded me how diverse, stunning, and vast Nevada's wilderness is.

Our state's tourism continues to thrive because of the hard work of the Nevada Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs. Their team travels all over the country—and the world—promoting Nevada as the prime tourism destination it is.



A few months ago, I joined them on a trip to Mexico City and was honored to speak to small business owners, chambers of commerce, tourism executives, and government officials about the opportunities for tourism and economic development in Nevada. I respect the chance to represent Nevada throughout the world, and I look forward to engaging in more collaborative initiatives that advance our state's interests on a national and international scale.

It's hard for me to believe, but I just celebrated one year as Nevada's Lieutenant Governor. Time flies when you love what you do, and I truly enjoy my role as Lieutenant Governor of the State of Nevada. As Chairman of the Nevada Commission on Tourism, I am proud of the ongoing work being done to increase visitors throughout the state.

My wife Bernadette and I look forward to getting out this summer and exploring even more of the Silver State's best spots, new and old. Even after living in Nevada for most of my life, I still find myself in awe at all there is to see and do throughout the state! I'll continue documenting my travels and activities on my social media pages. Follow @NevadaLtGov and @TravelNevada to stay up to date. See you out on the road!

*Stavros S. Anthony*

Stavros S. Anthony  
Lieutenant Governor  
Chairman, Nevada Commission on Tourism  
ltgov.nv.gov





## ABOVE IT ALL

Anthony Cupaiuolo shot this gorgeous photo of Claire Hewitt-Demeyer biking among the wildflowers on Carson City's Ash Canyon Trail network.

📷 Sony ILCE-1, 1/2000 sec, f/5.6, ISO 500









## PARADISE FOUND

The shot was taken at Spring Mountain Ranch State Park on the South Ash Grove hiking loop. Photographer Carla Ehmann got surprised by a carpet of lush green foliage and white flowers during her hike.

📷 Canon 80D, 1/2000 sec, f7.1, ISO 800





## WHERE'S WALDO?

Look closely at this incredible photo by Andrew Burr. Peter Vintoniv climbed Sun Downer, a 5.12b route at Rose Cave near Ely. Can you see him?

📷 Canon 5DMkii,  
1/400 sec, f/13,  
ISO 100





## UNCOMMON OVERNIGHTERS

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



# The *Sweetest* Little Farmhouse

**In already-bucolic Fallon,  
a beautiful oasis retreat awaits.**

Just an hour east of Reno on State Route 50—you might know it by its nickname, the Loneliest Road in America—is the town of Fallon. It, too, has a nickname, thanks to its nearby naval air station: Top Gun. Pilots come to this small town to hone their aviation skills.

Tucked just 10 minutes outside of town is the Yellow Petal Flower Farm, which has no other name but would still be as sweet if it did. Kim Urso and Kylie Harnar, mother and daughter, respectively, began flower farming in 2018 in nearby Dayton but soon needed more space to tend their bountiful blooms. In 2020, Fallon proved the perfect locale, and their floral design company grew to new heights.





Discover the bounty of Fallon's farm-to-table scene



The property has multiple buildings including a large house for the family and the farmhouse, which was built in 1909. It became a rental cottage in March, appropriately named The Sweetest Little Farmhouse. Set on the back of the property with its own entrance, the space provides an idyllic getaway: Close enough to town for comfort yet far enough for contemplation and quiet. The house has two super comfy bedrooms, a large bathroom, a nicely appointed kitchen (Instant Pot and French press at your disposal), dining, and living areas. A large-screen TV beckons, but honestly, the chance to enjoy the outdoors is even more tempting.











Step outside to a lovely yard and patio, which is the perfect place for writing a story or just enjoying the bray of the family's donkey calling hello. In addition to flowers, the family also grows alfalfa and has chickens, horses, and sheep. This is the perfect spot to breathe in the beauty of farm life without having to do any actual farm work. If work does call your name, blisteringly fast Wi-Fi is at your disposal.

The family is looking to open another of the farm's homes to visitors soon, but in the meantime, check out their page on Airbnb and book your stay.

Enjoy the rope swing on a magnificent mulberry tree while you listen to an owl hoot and the hummingbirds flit by at sunset. It doesn't get better than this.



*LIVE LIKE  
A LOCAL*



*While you've got a full kitchen at the farm, plan to grab at least one meal at The Grid Restaurant & Brewpub. This local's favorite has delicious pub-style food, myriad beer choices, and great ambiance.*





# WASHOE LAKE STATE PARK

Discover history and adventure  
in a majestic setting.







## ADMISSION

The park charges \$5 per local vehicle, \$10 per out-of-state vehicle, and \$2 to bike in. Boat launching ramps are \$10 for Nevada vehicles and \$15 for out-of-state visitors. Washoe Lake State Park is open year-round, 24 hours a day, and 7 days a week.

Nestled within one of Nevada's most picturesque valleys, Washoe Lake State Park is a picture-perfect basecamp for exploring the Reno-Tahoe area.

From the towering peaks of the Sierra Nevada to piney foothills and lush meadows, the park and surrounding landscape provide limitless outdoor fun. In addition, its location 30 minutes from the state's oldest settlements—Virginia City, Genoa, Reno, and Carson City—places it at the center of Silver State history.



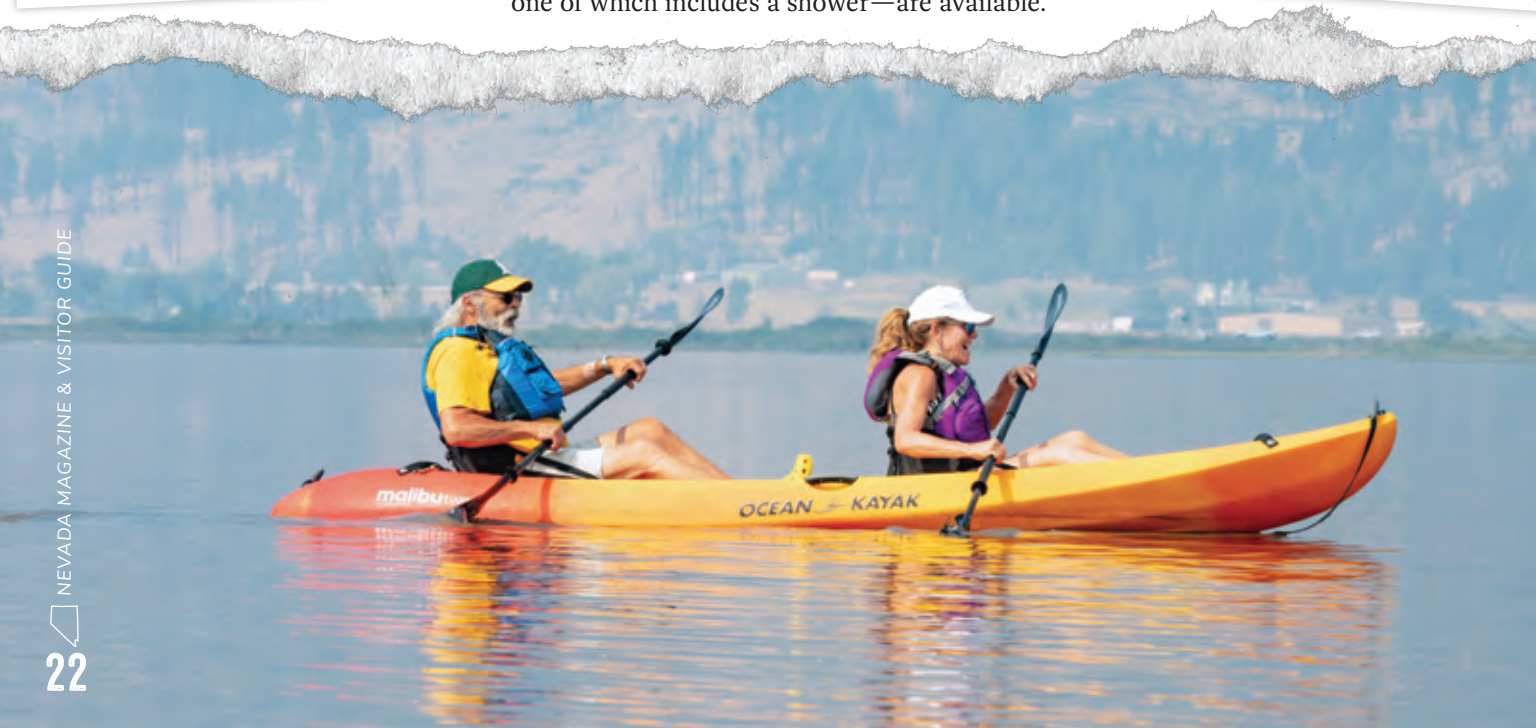
## SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY

Washoe Lake State Park offers plentiful opportunities for fishing, hiking, horseback riding, and camping. Watersports like kayaking are obviously a big draw, and the zephyr-fed waters make it a popular destination to windsurf.

For those who prefer to adventure with a camera and binoculars, wildlife is abundant throughout the valley. Nevada's iconic wild horses roam freely in the eastern hills that lead to Virginia City, and countless songbirds, hawks and other large birds of prey frequent the lake as a resting place along their migration routes.

The lake is home to a mixture of naturally reproducing and stocked bullhead catfish, wipers, brown trout, white bass, and Sacramento perch. Little Washoe Lake—a smaller, separate body of water (except in heavy rain years) located north of the park—delivers amazing shore fishing opportunities, too.

Visitors can get the most out of a visit to Washoe Lake State Park by staying on-site, ensuring easy access to the amenities, including those early bites on the lake. The park has 29 campsites, all equipped with a table, grill and fire ring, and room for trailers. Two comfort stations—one of which includes a shower—are available.







## VALLEY HISTORY

“Washoe,” the namesake of the valley and state park, derives from the Washoe (Wá•siw) people—the first occupants of the area. During the summer months, these communities retreated to cooler elevations at nearby Lake Tahoe and wintered in Washoe Valley.



As European explorers made their way West, mining towns popped up throughout the region, particularly after the discovery of gold in nearby Dayton and the unparalleled silver strike in Virginia City. In the late 19th century, Washoe Valley became an important thoroughfare and logistical hub.

Historic landmarks are easy to find in the valley, like the Ophir Mill—built in 1872—located on Washoe Lake’s west shoreline. Some of Nevada’s earliest residences are located just outside the park, the most famous being Bowers Mansion. This stately

Victorian manor was built in 1863 and illustrates the great wealth extracted out of nearby Virginia City. Visitors can make an appointment to tour Bowers Mansion, but the grounds are free and a splendid spot for an afternoon picnic.

Once the mining boom subsided, residents turned to ranching and farming—an easy prospect thanks to the lush landscape. In 1977, Washoe Lake State Park was established to preserve 3,775 acres of the valley for future generations. Today, the park thrives as a verdant vacation spot set within a peaceful landscape.



Sharlea Taft (horses)

### TRAVEL NEVADA PRO TIP

For a complete RV park experience, Camp-N-Town and Comstock Country RV Resort are located in Carson City, only about 10 miles from the park entrance.





SCAN FOR  
MORE INFO



NEVADA STATE MUSEUM

BY SAMANTHA SZESCIORKA

Clothes can tell you a lot about a person, but what can they tell you about a state? A visit to the Marjorie Russell Clothing and Textile Research Center in Carson City can help answer that question. Inside a nondescript building lies a treasure trove of Nevada history and culture, as shown through the items its residents have worn over the past 200 years.

The Textile Research Center holds the fashion and fabric collections of the Nevada State Museum, the Nevada Historical Society, and the Nevada State Railroad Museum, as well as the now-defunct School of Home Economics at the University of Nevada, Reno. With approximately 10,000 items stored in the 5,000-square-foot facility, the depth of the collection is truly staggering.

*Woman's spoon bonnet  
circa 1860*

# WHERE

## CURATED CLOTHING CLUES

If it's wearable, the Center probably has it. From dresses to suits, hats to shoes, uniforms to underwear, the collection tells the rich story of Nevada from the 18th century to the modern day.

"We all get dressed in the morning," says Curator of Clothing and Textiles Jan Loverin. "So did the pioneers. So did the people striking in Goldfield, so did the workers in the Kennecott Mine, so did the ranchers. They all got dressed and their clothes tell the story of their occupations, their lives, their lifestyles."

The standout item in the collection—which Loverin calls the *pièce de resistance*—is the Margaret Ormsby dress. Margaret Ormsby was the wife of notable Carson City pioneer Major William Ormsby, who died in 1860 during the Pyramid Lake War.

"It is a magnificent garment with a true Nevada provenience," says Loverin. "The fabric itself is of exceptionally high quality, and it's just a spectacular weave. More than just a pretty dress, there's a story here."

That story has remained a mystery. Jan says the origin of the dress is murky: It was either worn for the territorial legislative ball in 1861 or as a wedding dress in 1863. The two-piece dress is faded from its original vibrant red





# FASHION SITS

**Clothing reveals an intimate and personal side of Nevada's early residents.**

but features a form-fitting bodice and skirt trimmed in delicate and intricate lace. When the dress was made, it would have been considered haute couture—the highest end of fashion design.

## HISTORY THROUGH FASHION

The Center is also home to gowns worn by Nevada's First Ladies. The oldest in the collection is from Mrs. Una Dickerson, wife of Nevada's 11th Governor Denver Dickerson, who served from 1906 to 1911. The most recent is from Mrs. Donna Lombardo, wife of Nevada's 31st Governor Joe Lombardo, elected in 2022. The gowns give a fascinating look at the ever-evolving style of women's formal wear.







Other women's wear in the collection includes wedding dresses, capes and muffs, shawls, bras, gloves, and hosiery from the 1930s. For men's fashion, the archive is home to a large collection of men's suits, swimsuits, neckties, suspenders, shirt fronts, and pajamas.

Another uniquely Nevada item in the collection is a nearly complete set of miner's work wear from the early 1900s that was found in Goldfield. The set includes an early style of denim overalls and jeans with rivets, as well as a shirt and sweater.



purses, and eyeglasses. The Center has all of that, as well as wallets, dish towels, doilies, pillowcases, fraternal order clothes, and flags.

"This is the story of Western dress in Nevada," says Loverin. "Clothing represents what they looked like, how they dressed, and how they presented themselves. It puts a face on history."

## ACCESSORIES TO THE PAST

Fashion is more than just clothes. It is also adornments such as jewelry (bolo ties, watch fobs, hat pins, brooches, and pins) and accessories like walking sticks, carriage blankets, fans,



The Center also features a large research library with books, fashion magazines, catalogs, journals, fashion periodicals, and other items, with some dating back to the 1860s.

Fashion aficionados and those who enjoy a unique view of history can tour the entire collection by appointment through the Nevada State Museum in Carson City. Garments from the collection are occasionally displayed at the museum, also.

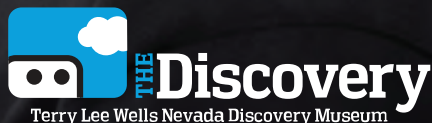


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## PLANNING CHECKLIST



Before you head out on your dig, download the free Nevada Rockhounding Guide and read more tips on all things rockhounding.



# ROCK





# HOUNDING

## Roundup

Digging in the dirt has never been more fun.

Millions of years of geological activity have made Nevada the perfect place for mining gold and other precious minerals. They have also formed countless rockhounding sites loaded with unimaginable diversity. Getting down—and maybe dirty—in the hills of Nevada is one of the easiest, least expensive, and most rewarding pastimes you'll ever find.



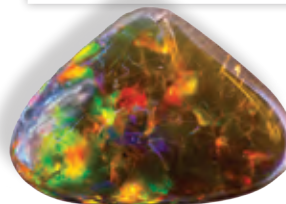
### GARNETS

Just west of Ely on Highway 50, Garnet Hill is an unexpected gem. When prospectors first came to Nevada, they kept turning up red gemstones in the mountains between Ely and Elko. Though originally assumed to be rubies—hence the name of the Ruby Mountains—the stones turned out to be garnets, and pretty sizable ones at that. **Garnet Hill** is a Bureau of Land Management area replete with an accessible bathroom and four picnic sites. But let's be honest, you didn't come here for the picnic—you came for the stones. The hills are full of almandine garnets, which are generally a rich dark color. Flashes of red often burn within the multifaceted stones that can be found lying on the ground. You read that correctly; they can be found lying on the ground as well as in the rocks that populate the hillsides.



### BLACK FIRE OPAL

The only place in North America you'll find this very rare opalized prehistoric wood is in northwestern Nevada. It's no wonder Virgin Valley black fire opal is the state gemstone. Opals are made when silica-packed solutions settle into cracks and voids, which can occur in rocks, tree branches, you name it. While spotting these gems can be tough at first, the folks at **Bonanza**, **Rainbow Ridge**, and **Royal Peacock** opal mines are



all ready to assist you in your hunt. These mines charge a digging fee, but with that you'll get expert advice, and some offer free camping and other amenities.



## TURQUOISE

Nevada has more turquoise mines than any other state. Rule of thumb: If you're out and about and happen to find some turquoise-hued stones, chances are it probably is turquoise. There are more than 100 turquoise mines in Nevada, and while many are private, you can book with **Otteson Brothers Turquoise** in Tonopah and dig to your heart's content at the famous **Royston Mine**. This is the very place that inspired the famous shade of blue that Tiffany & Co. uses as its signature hue.



Recreate Responsibly!



TRAVEL  
NEVADA  
PRO TIP

If you love the prize but not the hunt, head for the best turquoise shop in northern Nevada: Jason's Art Gallery in Austin. See pg. 43 for more info.



## WONDERSTONE

Just east of Fallon at the Grimes Point turnoff, **Wonderstone Mountain** is easily spotted thanks to its orange hills capped by rhyolitic tuff. Due to the volcanic activity the area has witnessed, the unmistakable bands of red, orange, white, and brown are everywhere. The ground is covered in material of every color and size, so while a rock hammer could be useful, it's not necessary. Once you have your fill of these multi-hued rocks, look for agate, green rhyolite, and even jasper, which have all been found in the area, too.







## EVEN MORE

Some of the best rockhounding in southern Nevada lies north of Goldfield in a place called **Gemfield**. There, you can dig for chalcedony, agate, jasper, quartz, and countless other stones. Snag a few pocket-sized baubles or load actual buckets of finds for a small fee. Though the rest of the state is loaded with dig sites presenting this kind of diversity, Gemfield is special because so many types of rocks and minerals are found within one area.

## LEGENDS OF THE VALLEY

★ **DANA GAWORSKI** ★

*ECCENTRIC MIXOLOGIST  
at Nevada's Oldest Bar*

THE FLOOR SQUEAKS, THE WALLS  
TELL STORIES AND THE BARTENDER  
OCCASIONALLY SHOOTS FROM THE HIP.

CARE TO KNOCK ONE BACK?

ADVENTURES AREN'T ALWAYS MEASURED BY APPS AND GADGETS. SOMETIMES THEY ARRIVE IN A GLASS SERVED BY A SALTY BARKEEP AND RAISED IN THE COMPANY OF FOLKS WHO KNOW BETTER THAN TO ORDER A MALBEC. WELCOME TO THE OLDEST, QUIRKIEST, MOST MEMORABLE SALOON YOU'LL EVER SET FOOT IN, THE IDEAL VENUE FOR EMBELLISHING A DAY OF EXPLOITS IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS. CARSON VALLEY, LIFE SERVED WITH A GENEROUS TWIST OF RAW.



  
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# SINATRA JR.





# KIDNAPPED

## Looking back at the botched abduction of a Las Vegas crooner.

In our issue archives, you'll find great stories like this one, which first appeared in our November/December 2013 issue.

BY JONATHAN SHIPLEY

While lounging around in a T-shirt and a pair of underwear, Frank Sinatra Jr. enjoyed a chicken dinner seemingly without a care in the world. Joined by John Foss, trumpet player for the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra—the group Sinatra Jr. was singing for—the two gazed at the heavenly winter scene taking shape outside. It was Sunday, December 8, 1963, the sixth day of a three-week stint at Harrah's Lake Tahoe, where they had a 10 p.m. show in the lounge downstairs. Then, someone knocked on the door of their room—417.

“Hi, guys,” a man said. “I’ve got a package for you.”

Sinatra Jr. opened the door and said, “Put it over there.” The man entered the room and brandished a revolver. Then, a second gun-toting man entered Room 417. “Don’t make any noise, and nobody gets hurt,” he warned.

They bound the trumpet player in masking tape. Allowing Sinatra Jr. to get more fully dressed, they blindfolded him, forced him in the back of a Chevy Impala, and headed off to Canoga Park in Los Angeles, where the kidnappers would hole up awaiting the ransom money.

And so begins the failed attempt by a desperate man trying to become rich by kidnapping the son of one of America’s most beloved entertainers.

### THE CULPRIT’S CONTEXT

Twenty-three-year-old Barry Keenan grew up in Los Angeles. He went to University High School, the same school that Marilyn Monroe and Judy Garland attended. Living amongst the upper crust at his school, he wanted



money, and lots of it. His classmates included Nancy Sinatra (eldest child of Frank Sinatra), William Jan Berry, Dean Torrence (of the surf-pop duo Jan and Dean), and other illustrious peers.

As a young man, Keenan quickly gained affluence. While attending UCLA, he began making sound real estate investments. He became the youngest person ever on the Los Angeles Stock Exchange. But eventually life took some hits on Keenan, and he wasn’t bouncing back. He got into a car accident in 1961 that led to a pain medication addiction and a divorce, followed by the stock market crash of 1962 that brought him to his knees.

### THE BRAINS BEHIND THE ABDUCTION

Keenan visited with his pal, the aforementioned Torrence, about a get-rich-quick scheme because he would need around \$5,000 to get started. Torrence wanted to know what Keenan planned to do with the loan. Keenan told him he was planning a celebrity kidnapping; he’d considered nabbing Bing Crosby’s kid,





*Sinatra's kidnappers, left to right: Barry Keenan, Joe Amsler, John Irwin*

or Bob Hope's adopted son, but he settled on Frank Sinatra Jr. He'd ask Sinatra Sr. for \$100,000, with which he could play the stock market, buy some real estate, make his million, and then repay the ransom money over time. It was a sound business decision. No one would get hurt. Everyone would come out of this OK.

Torrence gave Keenan \$500. That'd be enough to get started, Keenan thought. Whatever Torrence thought of Keenan's plan, he later said he thought Keenan was just bluffing.

An accomplished singer and pianist, Sinatra Jr. made his debut during a 36-week tour with the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra (Dorsey died in 1956, but his orchestra lived on) in April 1963 at the Royal Box nightclub. His father was in the audience, glowing. Sinatra Sr. had sung for the same orchestra years ago.

Keenan knew he couldn't nab Sinatra Jr. alone and that he needed some help. School chum and abalone diver Joe Amsler would help for \$100 a week. House painter John Irwin, who once dated Keenan's mother, would help for \$100 as well.

They first hoped to nab Sinatra at the Arizona State Fair in October 1963; however, the plan fell through. Their next failed attempt happened in early November when they'd hoped to grab him at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles. Next, they tried on November 22, 1963; however, President John F. Kennedy was

who promptly informed the police and soon had more than 100 cops and dozens of FBI agents swarming in search of Sinatra Jr.

Sinatra Sr., who heard the news while filming "Robin and the 7 Hoods" with Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr., and Bing Crosby, rushed to Nevada and set up headquarters at the Mapes Hotel in downtown Reno.

The kidnappers had no idea how to contact Sinatra Sr. They asked his son for his phone number, but Junior refused. Keenan heard on the radio, however, where Sinatra Sr. was staying in Reno. They made a call in.

The kidnappers placed their first call to Sinatra Sr. 23 hours after the abduction. Sinatra offered \$1 million, in a press conference, for the safe return of his son, but all the kidnappers wanted was \$240,000. On December 11, an FBI agent made a drop of \$240,000 in a bag between two school buses at a gas station on Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles.



*The ransom was delivered between these two school buses.*

assassinated, causing Sinatra Jr.'s shows to be canceled.

So, on December 8, 1963, the men drove to snowy Lake Tahoe with no money in their pockets and an ill-conceived plan.

## A PLAN IN ACTION

Ten minutes after Sinatra Jr. was shoved into the back of the Impala, the trumpet player escaped his binds and alerted their road manager,

Keenan nabbed the cash (while being filmed by authorities) and went with Amsler to their hideout. Irwin, however, was not there. Nor was their hostage. Irwin had gotten spooked and drove Junior to the Mulholland Drive overpass, where he freed him. Sinatra Jr. walked to nearby Bel Air and asked a security guard for help.

Photos courtesy fbi.gov



He was taken to his mother's house. Sinatra Sr. was there (as were the press having heard the news that Junior was safe).

## AN EPHEMERAL TRIUMPH

The kidnappers reveled in their newfound wealth. They spread it out, danced on it, lit cigarettes with it, and threw wads of bills at each other; they were rich! They did this while authorities, such as J. Edgar Hoover, his agents, and law enforcement, closed in.

The victory was short-lived. Irwin bragged soon after to his brother that he was in on the kidnapping. The brother called the police, Irwin was arrested, and he quickly ratted out Keenan and Amsler. They, too, were quickly arrested. Of all the loot, they spent a total of \$6,114 of it, most for a furniture set Keenan bought to impress his ex-wife.

The three were in a courtroom two months later. The defense lawyer, Gladys Towles Root, was their representative. She made the audacious claim that the kidnapping was planned by Sinatra Jr. himself as a way to boost his career. Of course, she had no evidence of this,

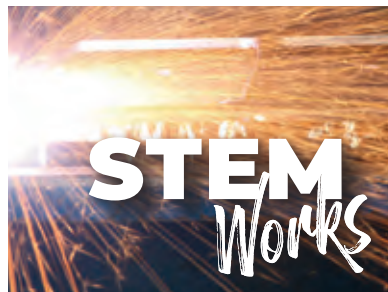
but nevertheless grilled both Sinatras on the bench about their involvement in the kidnapping.

Her argument failed, the three were convicted, and Keenan and Amsler were sentenced to life plus 75 years. Irwin was to be sent to jail for 16 years. However, after some legal wrangling and maneuvers, Amsler and Irwin were released from prison three and a half years later; Keenan four and a half years later.

After prison, Keenan became the millionaire he always wanted to be through sound real estate investments. Still alive, he's busy at work on a book about the kidnapping. Amsler had a brief career in show business, and in 2006 died of liver failure.

*Editor's note: Frank Sinatra Jr. passed in 2016 at the age of 72.*

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# EXPLORING THE EXTRATERRESTRIAL

*Two aptly  
named  
earthlings  
embark on an  
otherworldly  
road trip.*

BY ALI ANDERSON AND  
RACHEL WRIGHT

It started as a joke. Or maybe more of a bad pun. “A Rachel in Rachel, Nevada.” Unexpectedly, the little quip snowballed. “Ali at the Little Ali-Inn,” playing off the legendary Little A’Le’Inn near Area 51. Before we knew it, the two of us were packing up the car, topping off the gas tank, and departing Carson City. Bound for the Extraterrestrial Highway, we were ready for a true Nevada road trip.





# HIGHWAY

## DAY 1

### GOING TO GOLDFIELD

**AA:** As a self-described coffee connoisseur, leaving at 8:30 a.m. for a four-day road trip meant I needed to start with a cup of joe. Imagine my joy when we stumbled upon **Larry's Gourmet Coffee** in Dayton, situated just off Highway 50. I was elated to find a staff of perky baristas in period dress (mustache, top hat, etc.). They served a wicked latte, and some great conversation.

With liquid fuel in hand and an invigorated sense of excitement, we set off for Goldfield. On Highway 95, we came upon a road construction stop. As we waited, we discovered the best way to make new friends: pop out of the car and offer *Nevada Magazine & Visitor Guide* to our traffic neighbors! It was a big hit.



100+ miles  
2+ days

#ExtraterrestrialHighway

TravelNevada.com/Extraterrestrial-Highway



**RW:** Late in the afternoon, we rolled into Goldfield. Our destination was the former home of famed boxing promoter George Lewis "Tex" Rickard. In 1906, he put a spotlight on Goldfield when the town hosted a record-setting bout between Joe "Old Master" Gans and Oscar Matthew "Battling" Nelson.

We met Jeri Foutz, proprietor of the Goldfield Stop & Stop Inn, who welcomed us to the **Tex Rickard House** and gave us a fascinating tour. When Rickard built the house in 1907, it had no kitchen, which worked just fine for a wealthy, single man. Thankfully, this has since been remedied.

We ambled through town, peeking in the windows of the storied **Goldfield Hotel**, and donated \$3 to the Goldfield Art and Business Services in exchange for two pieces of wonderfully marbled wonderstone. Cotton candy colors filled the sky as we snapped photos of the mysterious "subway stations to nowhere." A great end to a great day.







## DAY 2

### SPOOKY KNOCKS

**RW:** I will never forget staying at the Tex Rickard house for one particular reason. In the literal seconds before my alarm went off, I heard three distinct knocks at the door. I bolted awake, assuming Ali was the one knocking. There was nobody at the front or back doors, though, and I later learned Ali had been showering at the time. Had I just had my first supernatural experience?

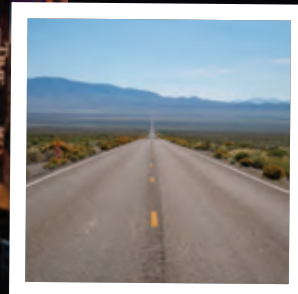
Still wondering who or what had knocked at my door, we strolled across the street to the **Dinky Diner**. Both Ali's French toast and my Texas Benedict were delicious. Fully fueled for our morning activities, we met Steve Foutz, Jeri's husband and our **Goldfield High School** tour guide.

**AA:** Touring the historic (and possibly haunted) high school was at the top of our Goldfield experience list. The school was built in 1907 and operated until 1953. Preservation efforts are underway to keep the three-story building upright. Abandoned for quite some time, the building can give off an eerie vibe, but small details humanize its interior. A Bunson burner in the science room, the piano in the basement, and the lessons etched on the chalkboard reminded me this was once a bustling school.

Steve's take on the building was that it has a friendly spiritual energy, like students playing pranks. That was the vibe I felt as well, but then I noticed the principal's office door has four hinges, while all the others have two. It might have been to protect student records, but Steve mentioned some tragic events that may have unfolded here. It was the only time I felt the energy shift during the tour.







## RIDIN' TO RACHEL

**RW:** Ali and I bid a fond farewell to Goldfield, stopping in Tonopah for gas and lunch. We chose **Tonopah Brewing Company**, where we dined on smoked turkey and pulled pork sandwiches accompanied by tasty housemade root beer.

*Want to find out more to do in Tonopah? Turn to pg. 74.*

We experienced a true Twilight Zone moment on the road to the **Little A'Le'Inn**. Nowhere near a time zone change, our cell phones jumped an hour ahead, reverting back as we neared the restaurant, gift shop, and motel that beckons aliens. When we asked if that was known to happen, the staff replied, "No, that's not something we hear a lot."

**RW:** Before they closed shop for the night, we quickly perused the VHS closet. You read that right—rooms come with VCRs (and DVD players), which brought back memories of my neighborhood video store.

With tapes in hand, Ali and I walked out and met Connie West, co-owner of the Little A'Le'Inn with her mother Pat Travis. She invited us to sit, and we ended up shooting the breeze for almost two hours. During that time, we got a glimpse of the truly international audience this place draws. English tourists asked for directions to Area 51, and an Australian family joined our conversation while taking photos of all the alien attractions.







## SONIC BOOMS AND BLACK MAILBOXES

**AA:** Moments later, everything shifted. An incredibly loud bang erupted. My heart stopped. Rachel catapulted up from the picnic table. “Did a bomb just drop?” I thought.

“That was a sonic boom! A jet just broke the sound barrier!” our companion told us.

My eyes were just able to zero in on a jet disappearing behind the surrounding mountains. We braced for a possible second jet to zoom overhead, but it never came.

We jumped back in the car to locate the famous Black Mailbox. Many believe it to be a meeting place between humans and the unknown. Located just along Highway 375—relatively close to Area 51—I can see how it earned its mysterious reputation. It looks like a mailbox, but it’s in the middle of nowhere. A lone ranch sits far off in the distance...could it belong to them? We’ll let you decide—is it a portal to extraterrestrial activity or just a mailbox?







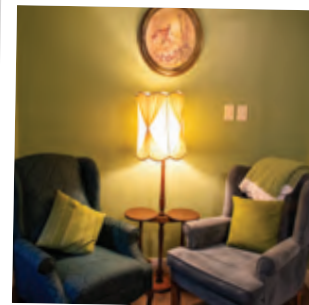
## DAY 3

### AWAY TO AUSTIN

**RW:** After a good night's sleep, Ali and I ordered ham and cheese omelets for breakfast from the inn's kitchen, which were fresh and tasty. We didn't get a chance to try the "World Famous Alien Burger," but we did secure hefty slices of homemade "alienfruit" pie for the road. The last to-do before this Rachel departed Rachel? We added a decorated dollar bill to the cash-rich ceiling—look for it hanging from a colorful \$5 Australian banknote.

**AA:** I must stress the importance of snapping photos in front of the iconic Extraterrestrial Highway sign. This is as much a souvenir as all the other amazing things you'll gather along this road trip. Make sure to do it next to the sign...not the road, as it's an active highway. Don't forget to do the Vulcan salute (a.k.a. the Spock hand)!

**RW:** We left Rachel for the town of Austin, located on the Loneliest Road in America, Highway 50. Once in town, the **Magnolia Gallery & Inn** was our first stop. Owners Laurian and Ken Arbo warmly welcomed us, filled us in on the building's history, and showed us around the two suites. The building once served as a brothel, and the first floor had nine rooms, each the size of the current suite bathrooms.







With our bags tucked away, Ali and I set off for a sunset walkabout through charming Austin. We saw deer, a historic Lincoln Highway marker, and made a note to stop at Jason's Art Gallery before leaving town the next day.

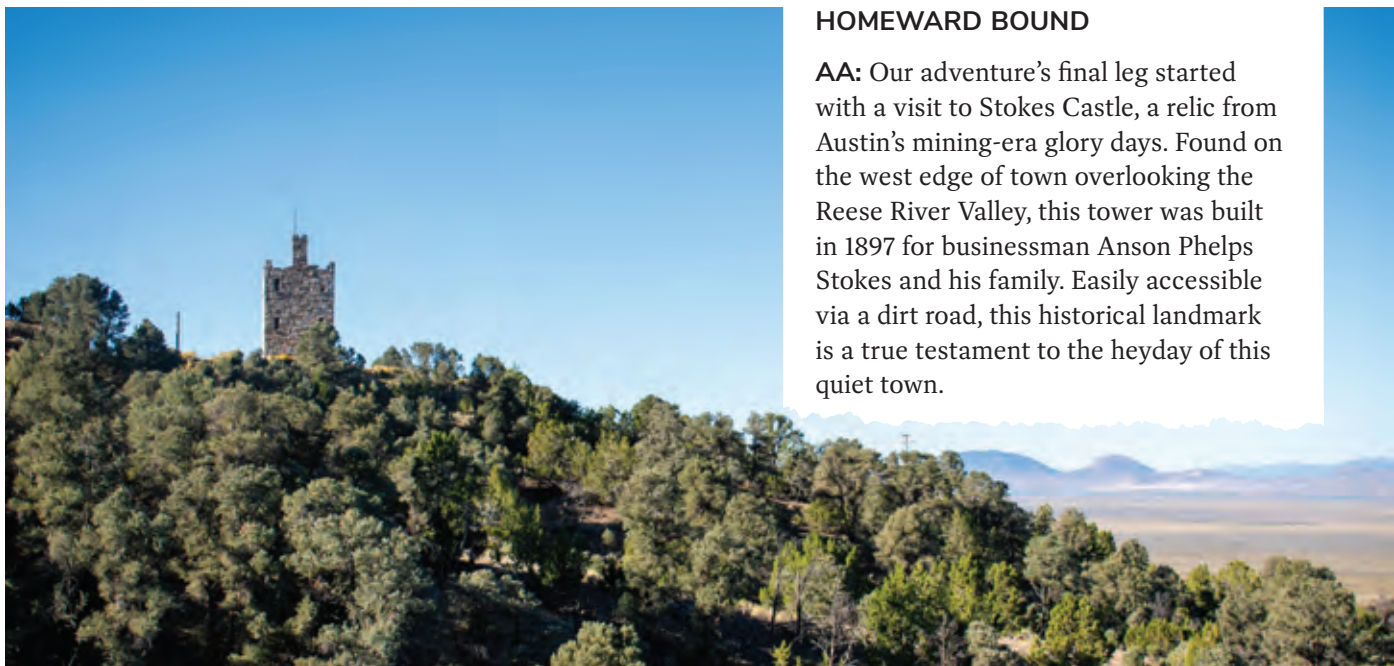
For dinner, we walked to **Grandma's**—a restaurant billed as “Austin’s living room”—which was serving slow-roasted carnitas and chicken tacos for dinner. Yes, please! Ali and I could’ve eaten many more than we did, and paired with a delicious margarita, it was the perfect end to our day. We capped the evening off with our alienfruit pie (we cannot confirm or deny what alienfruit is!) and hit the hay.



## DAY 4

### HOMEWARD BOUND

**AA:** Our adventure’s final leg started with a visit to Stokes Castle, a relic from Austin’s mining-era glory days. Found on the west edge of town overlooking the Reese River Valley, this tower was built in 1897 for businessman Anson Phelps Stokes and his family. Easily accessible via a dirt road, this historical landmark is a true testament to the heyday of this quiet town.





The last stop in Austin was **Jason's Art Gallery**, a jewelry shop full of handmade pieces in vibrant hues. If you're on the hunt for Nevada turquoise, they have a beautiful selection that won't break the bank. I bought my first piece of fine jewelry, and Rachel scored a cabochon. Smitten with our purchases, we headed back on the road, inching our way home.

**RW:** We had one final stop before the road trip officially came to an end: Sand Mountain. Perhaps I haven't driven the Loneliest Road in America enough, or it's simply been too long since my last journey, but seeing this massive mound of smooth, beachy sand surrounded by craggy mountains was an impressive and bewildering sight.

SCAN FOR  
MORE INFO



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We carefully ambled our vehicle into the sandy staging area and watched OHV riders effortlessly wheel up and over the dune. We briefly considered putting the company's four-wheel drive to the test but decided upon keeping our jobs.

Ninety miles later, the trek was complete. Is this a trip we'd take again? Absolutely, especially considering we didn't make it to Gemfield (for rockhounding) or Lunar Crater (for pretending to be astronauts).

Good thing we didn't take the work vehicle off-roading—there's a lot more awaiting our next Nevada adventure.





# BIRDING AMONG THE ANCIENT ONES

*Wee Thump Joshua Tree  
Wilderness offers surprising  
avian variety all year long.*

BY MORRIGAN DEVITO





Scaly Joshua trees sweep by in shades of brown, green, and gold on the route to the Wee Thump Joshua Tree Wilderness, now part of the 500,000-acre Avi Kwa Ame National Monument. Located west of Searchlight on State Highway 164, this hushed landscape gently slopes down from the base of the McCullough Range. At 6,050 acres, the wilderness provides critical habitat for many species of plants and animals, including more than 100 species of birds.

## BIRDS OF THE WEE THUMP

It takes patience and sharp senses to meet the birds of the Wee Thump Wilderness, and you may find yourself waiting for the slightest hint of fluttering or the faintest chirp. Be advised: When waiting for birds, suddenly every leaf and branch looks bird shaped.



GREATER ROADRUNNER

Though elusive, the birds are woven into the landscape. Wait long enough, and you'll spot greater roadrunners and Gambel's quail finding groundcover, cactus wrens nesting in Joshua trees, and red-tailed hawks and common ravens sailing over the mosaic of desert plants. Although some birds stay here year-round, many come and go seasonally on migratory routes, attuned with rhythms of light and temperature. To really get to know the birds here, visiting in different seasons will paint the fullest picture.

Darrin Bush (greater roadrunner)  
Alex Harper (cactus wren)



## LOOKALIKES IN THE JOSHUA TREES

Because Joshua trees are the tallest plants in the Wee Thump, they are a great place to start looking for birds. In the wintertime, two lookalike woodpeckers make their home in the tree's twisted limbs: the gilded flicker and the northern flicker.

Many birders come to the Wee Thump to see the gilded flicker, as this is the only place in Nevada where they have been recorded. With a swipe of red on their cheeks (for males) and speckled breasts that look like the grooves of Joshua tree bark, the two species look nearly identical. That is, until they fly away. The gilded flicker has underwings as gold as a sunrise, whereas the northern flicker has red underwings like a sunset.



GILDED FLICKER



GAMBEL'S QUAIL

## THRASHERS BENEATH THE THORNS

Don't forget to look for birds and other wildlife on the ground when exploring the Wee Thump. Beneath thorny chollas, leafy creosote, and blackbrush, LeConte's thrashers and Bendire's thrashers forage for insects by swishing their bills back and forth.

What these birds have in common, besides being thrashers, is their secretiveness. Otherwise, they have different habitat preferences. When they arrive in late March for the breeding season, the golden-eyed Bendire's thrasher can be found peering out across the desert from the Joshua trees in which they build their nests. In contrast, LeConte's thrashers are year-round residents. Pale like the desert sand, they are more likely to be seen in desert washes at lower elevations and prefer to build nests in creosote habitats.



Both species are closely monitored by biologists because their numbers are dwindling due to drought and urbanization. Fortunately, the best action to help them is by protecting public lands. So, although these birds aren't readily seen, they are very important to the story of the Wee Thump and the larger Avi Kwa Ame.

## MAJESTIC HUNTERS

Golden eagles—one of the largest birds of prey in North America—can be spotted soaring over the Wee Thump Wilderness. Fossils dated in California indicate that these birds trace their lineage back to about 2.8 million years ago. Today, the golden eagles at Wee Thump are living as their ancestors did, scouring the desert for mammals like black-tailed jackrabbits and ground squirrels.

With a flight speed up to 80 mph and powerful talons that can clutch up to eight pounds, golden eagles will even hunt baby mule deer and bighorn sheep, sometimes knocking them off balance before they strike. Golden eagles live primarily in the McCullough Range, but they sometimes fly into the lowlands to hunt.

## EXPLORE SAFELY

On your next journey to the Wee Thump Wilderness, keep your eyes open for these birds and their specialized habitats. And who knows, maybe you'll see other animals such as bighorn sheep, desert tortoise, rattlesnakes, and more. Remember to give wildlife space, and leave no trace by picking up trash and staying on the established roads and trails.

There are no services in the Wee Thump Wilderness: The nearest facilities are in Searchlight. For the most updated maps and information about Wee Thump Wilderness, visit the Bureau of Land Management's website.



GOLDEN EAGLE



# ANCIENT ONES OF THE MOJAVE

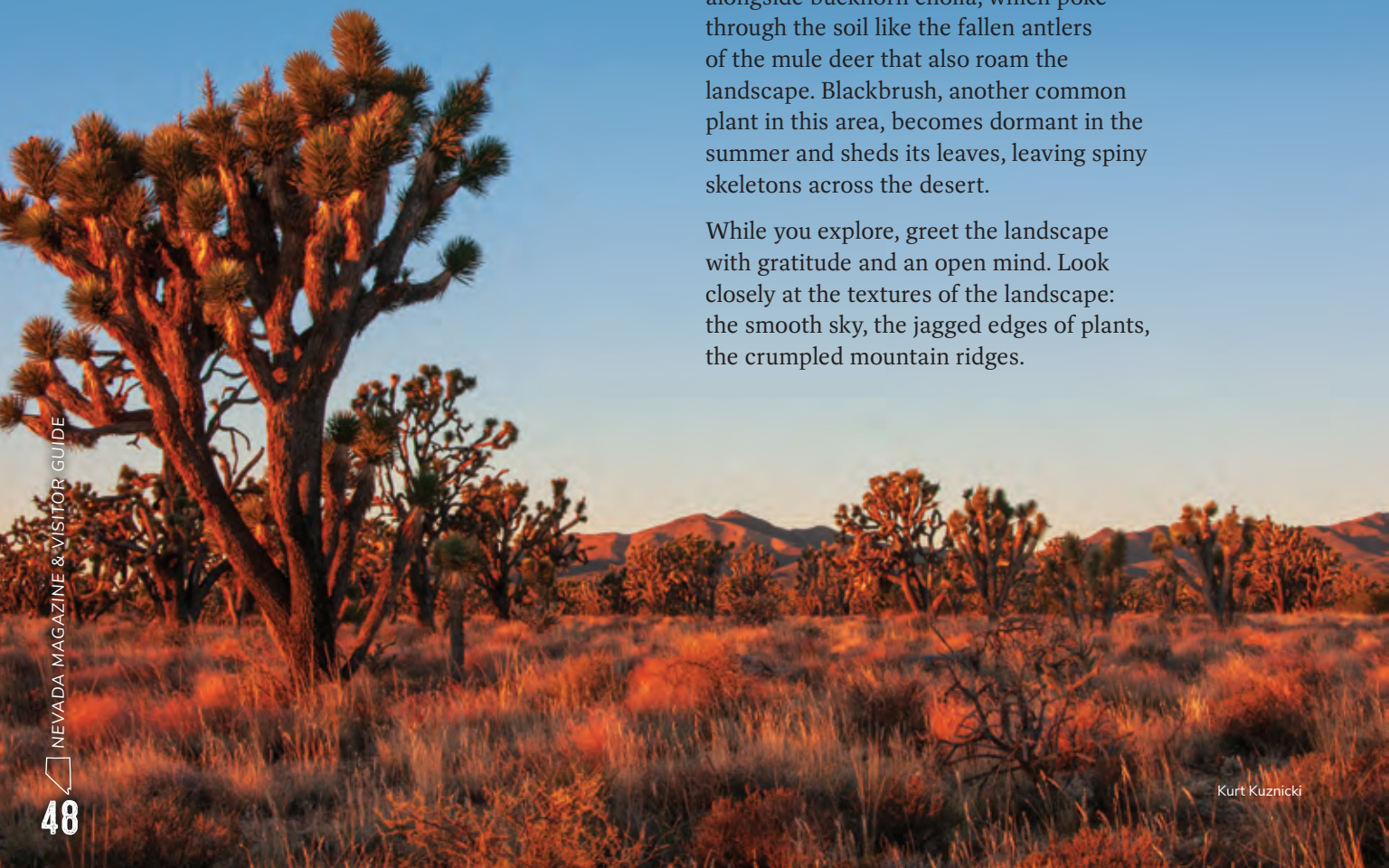
To the Paiute who originally inhabited this landscape, Wee Thump means “ancient ones.” After spending time here, it’s hard not to see the silhouettes of the land’s first caretakers in the bends and curves of Joshua tree shadows. The trees only grow half an inch every year, a feat of survival given that some grow 30 feet tall despite the scant rainfall beneath the blazing sun.

The wilderness is home to two distinct plant communities, each with species whose ecological roots stretch far back into time. On the southeast side is the desert scrub, where creosote soak up the

morning sun. Scattered between creosote are domed white bursage and thorny prickly pear cactus and cholla. Mojave yuccas—evolutionary cousins of the Joshua tree, both in the agave family—also poke through. Although they look similar, the Mojave yucca has longer leaves and curly fibers at the leaf edges.

At a higher elevation on the northwest side are the legendary Joshua trees, which live on a much different time scale than humans. About 2.6 million years ago, the giant ground sloth ate the Joshua tree’s seeds, helping them spread across the Mojave Desert. Today, these trees stand alongside buckhorn cholla, which poke through the soil like the fallen antlers of the mule deer that also roam the landscape. Blackbrush, another common plant in this area, becomes dormant in the summer and sheds its leaves, leaving spiny skeletons across the desert.

While you explore, greet the landscape with gratitude and an open mind. Look closely at the textures of the landscape: the smooth sky, the jagged edges of plants, the crumpled mountain ridges.







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# THE SAGEBRUSH SCHOOL

**Nevada's first generation of writers and journalists were in a league of their own.**

BY CORY MUNSON

In 1861, Samuel Clemens left his home in Missouri to adventure in the American West. In Carson City, he became obsessed with finding gold and spent 11 months galivanting across the desert. When he ran out of money, Clemens moved to Virginia City to be a newspaper reporter for the "Territorial Enterprise." Three years later, he left Nevada with bright prospects and a brand-new pen name—Mark Twain.

PRESSROOM OF THE "TERRITORIAL ENTERPRISE" CIRCA 1895





It's far from a lucky bit of trivia that Twain got his start in the Silver State. In the late 1800s, Virginia City and surrounding communities were home to a strangely high concentration of talented writers. Early Nevada plays, poems, books, and newspapers were so unique that in 1893, historian Ella Sterling Cummins regarded them as an isolated literary movement, which she named the Sagebrush School.

## THE ROTTEN BOROUGH

Nevada's literary golden age began in 1859, when the largest silver strike in U.S. history was made at The Comstock Lode. Unlike California's gold-rich rivers that triggered the Gold Rush, The Comstock's silver was difficult to reach. Constructing and operating the mines was logistically complex, requiring investors, lawyers, surveyors, engineers, and countless skilled laborers.

Within months, the then-sparsely populated territory hosted some of the densest—and most remote—urban cores in the West. When Virginia City was founded, the nearest cities were Salt Lake City—500 miles away—and San Francisco.

Government-sponsored justice was mostly absent throughout the silver rush. Instead, the first cities were run by powerful barons who used their considerable wealth to influence lawmakers and business leaders. Corruption grew to such a shameless level that Nevada was often referred to as the “rotten borough.”

It seemed that the only check on this culture of avarice was through newspapers, and from the earliest days, Nevada's writers played an outsized role in criticizing this era of excess.



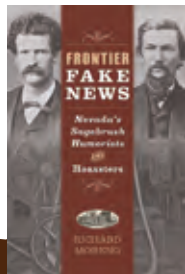
## FRONTIER JOURNALISM

Like most people back then, Sagebrush School alumni came to Nevada seeking wealth, fame, and excitement. Residents of the West's settlements were hungry for news and entertainment.

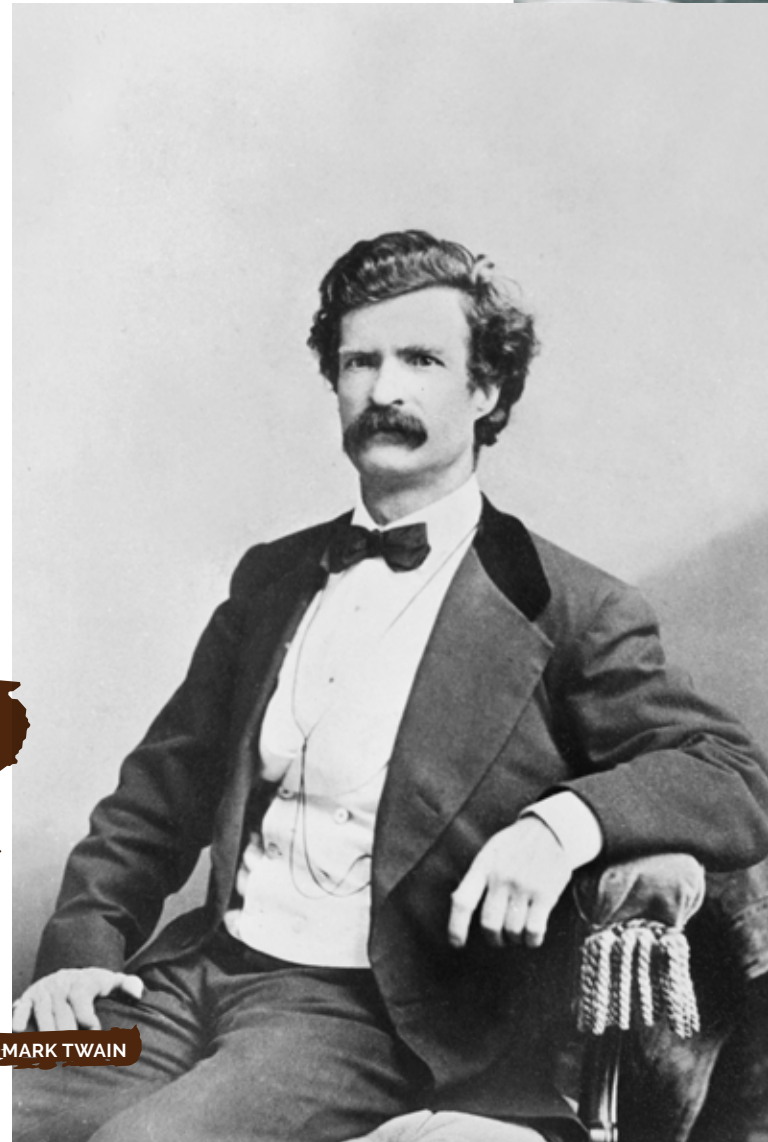
The writers probably wouldn't have acknowledged that they belonged to a literary movement or had much in common with one another, but today we can appreciate their shared traits.

Many, like Mark Twain, were writers at heart who happened to moonlight as editors and newspaper reporters for the stable paycheck. In their spare time, they were theater critics, novelists, playwrights, poets, biographers, and historians. They were a scholarly group who couldn't help but sprinkle flowery prose or Shakespeare and Greco-Roman mythology into their daily reporting. But they were not pedantic: They knew their audience was mostly everyday folk, and writings reflected that with slang, colorful metaphors, and plenty of creative spelling to mirror the local vernacular.

For the most part the Sagebrush School writers were a young crowd. When Samuel Clemens arrived in Virginia City, he was 26 years old. The editor who hired him, the legendary Joseph Goodman, was 24. They were idealistic and took their role as the public conscience seriously. They publicly harassed perceived villains in their articles and applauded heroes who stood up for their principles. They were skeptical—even critical—of the justice system and were not afraid to call out corruption, like in 1864, when Goodman's reporting forced all members of the state supreme court to resign.



For more tales of journalism on the Comstock, be sure to check out "Frontier Fake News: Nevada's Sagebrush Humorists and Hoaxsters" by former Nevada Magazine editor Richard Moreno.



MARK TWAIN

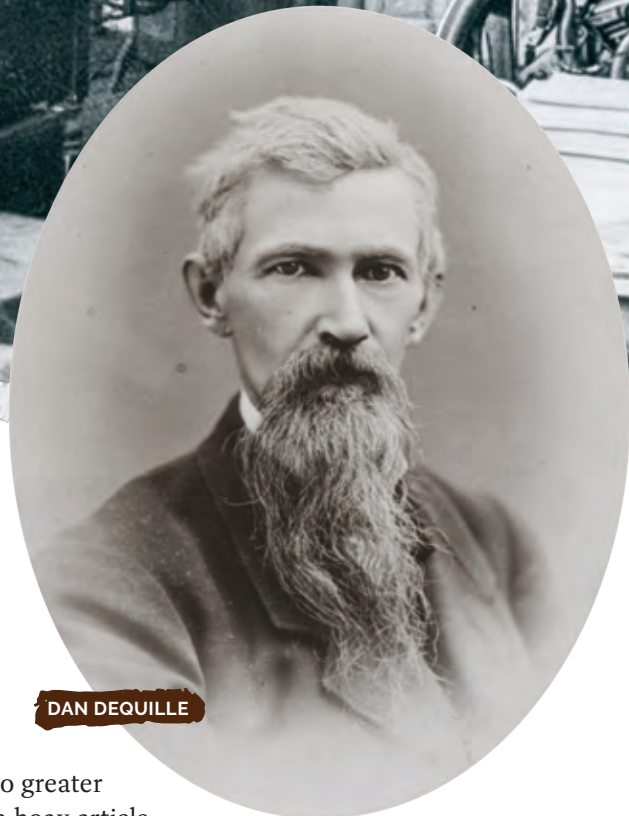




## FAKE NEWS

One hallmark of Sagebrush School writers was their fondness for producing fake articles—also called “quaints.” In an era when public officials and journalists could find their opinions altered for a price, misinformation and downright lies were easily printed. To combat this, Sagebrush School writers published articles that appeared true and authentic, but careful reading revealed the story to be entirely fake.

These hoax stories were written to entertain, but they also aimed to teach readers to pay close attention and read critically. In Dan DeQuille’s article “Solar Armor,” it was reported that an inventor had successfully created an air-conditioned suit designed for crossing the desert. Despite the ridiculous premise, the article is filled with scientific details and seemingly real interviews. Readers might find themselves convinced right up to the last sentence, when it’s revealed that the inventor was discovered frozen solid with an icicle growing out of his nose.



DAN DEQUILLE

There was no greater success for a hoax article than when it was repeated by gullible readers or, better yet, reprinted as fact in other newspapers. Such was the case in 1863, when Twain reported on a man who massacred his wife and nine children outside Carson City. There are plenty of clues in the article that point to it being another quaint, including how the murder weapon switches from an axe to a club to a knife. There was no massacre, but that didn’t stop San Francisco papers from making the story a headline.





**THE WOMAN DID IT.**  
The woman who was the cause of the late trouble in the city of New York, has been identified by the police as a woman named Mary Jones, who was the wife of a man named John Jones, who was the owner of a saloon in the city of New York.

**CRIMINAL RECORD.**  
Special Attention to the Antislavery Cause. The woman who was the cause of the late trouble in the city of New York, has been identified by the police as a woman named Mary Jones, who was the wife of a man named John Jones, who was the owner of a saloon in the city of New York.

**PARISHANAL EXTRAORDINARY.**  
A Remarkable Test of Endurance. The woman who was the cause of the late trouble in the city of New York, has been identified by the police as a woman named Mary Jones, who was the wife of a man named John Jones, who was the owner of a saloon in the city of New York.

**MISCELLANEOUS.**  
SECOND  
GRAND ANNUAL MILITARY AND CIVIC BALL.

**MISCELLANEOUS.**  
JOHN G. FOX,  
CARSON CITY, NEVADA.

**MISCELLANEOUS.**  
AT HOME AGAIN!  
GREAT BARRAINS!

**STOCK AND MONEY BROKERS.**  
L. P. DEXLER & CO.,  
STOCK-BROKERS.

**SOCIETY DIRECTORY.**  
F. & A. M.

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## IN GOOD COMPANY

Twain was a brilliant writer, but his style was highly influenced by the other talents in the Sagebrush School. Many of his peers have not earned recognition in the 21st century, but some went on to have illustrious careers of their own.



JOSEPH GOODMAN

Joe Goodman was one of the most talented writers to work in Nevada. Editor of "The Territorial Enterprise" from 1861-1874, he fostered the career of his friend Twain. He took his work as an editor seriously, and his newspaper was renowned for fact-based reporting and spotlighting wrongdoing on The Comstock. After leaving Nevada, he became fascinated with Mesoamerican cultures and was instrumental in building the cypher that decorated the Mayan writing system.

Dan DeQuille—real name William Wright—was probably the school's most prolific writer. Beyond writing for "The Territorial Enterprise" and other western newspapers, he was a novelist who wrote the first major work of The Comstock's history. His talent has often been compared to Twain. According to Joe Goodman, "Dan was talented, industrious, and, for that time and place, brilliant. Of course, I recognized the unusualness of (Twain's) gifts, but he was eccentric and seemed to lack industry."



**SAM DAVIS**

Sam Davis, who arrived in Nevada a generation later, was a fierce critic of corruption and was willing to let his fists defend what he wrote. After Davis criticized U.S. District Attorney Charlie Jones for his handling of a bribery case, the two men had a fist fight on the steps of the Carson City post office. To quote Davis, "You wrote what you dammed well-pleased, but you'd better be prepared to back it up when the offended party came-a-callin'."



EXTERIOR OF THE "TERRITORIAL ENTERPRISE"

# Winnemucca, NV

*There's More Than Meets the Eye...*

## WINNEMUCCA RANCH HAND RODEO WEEKEND

**February 28 - March 3 2024**

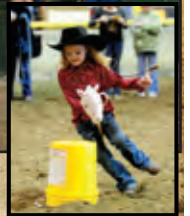
Join us in Winnemucca for Nevada's premier western event! Featuring the Ranch Hand Rodeo, Western Trade Show, Women's Ranch Rodeo, Cow Dog Trials, Barrel Race, PeeWee Events, and the

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# GETTIN' SAUCY

## TRAVEL NEVADA PRO TIP

If you can't get enough barbecue, head to Boulder City May 24-25 for the annual **Best Dam**

**Barbecue Challenge**. For more than 20 years, this competition has served up delicious fare and fabulous fun during Memorial Day Weekend. If you're visiting northern Nevada during Labor Day Weekend, check out the **Best in the West Nugget Rib Cook-Off** in Sparks Aug. 28-Sept. 2. Dozens of the country's best chefs compete for tasty bragging rights in this contest that has been happening for 35 years.



## Barbecue joints across the state are serving up all the meats.

The origin of barbecue in America has been oft debated, with the South claiming dominion over the tasty style of cooking meat and even how it's seasoned, but one thing is for sure: Barbecue is as close to being our national food as apple pie. Every state, heck, every restaurant puts its own spin on grilling, smoking, and slow cooking tasty cuts of meat, and Nevada's barbecue restaurants are no different. You'd be hard pressed to travel to any city and not find barbecue on the menu, but we've got a sample of the delicious delights that await your visit.

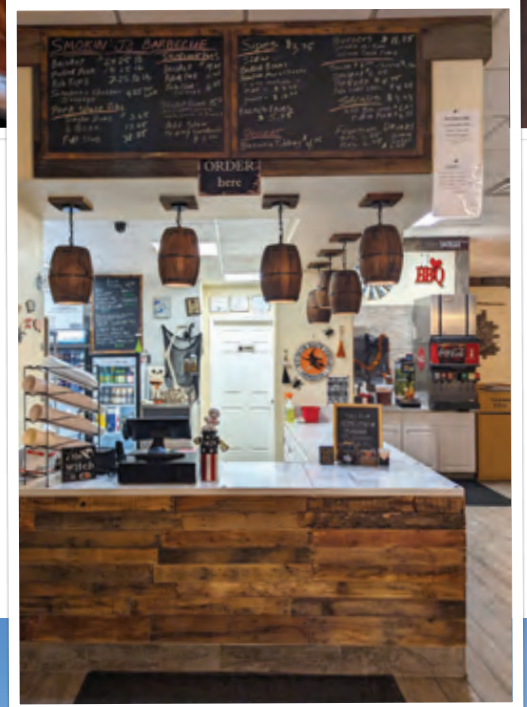




## ★ SMOKIN J'S Beatty

One of Beatty's newest restaurants, Smokin J's slow-smoked barbecue staples include tender pulled pork, brisket smoked to perfection, flavor-loaded rib tips, and juicy jalapeño cheddar sausage. You'll also find a selection of sandwiches (The Brisket Bomb is a can't-miss) and burgers, but don't neglect such sides as potato salad, coleslaw, and jalapeño mac 'n cheese, which are all made fresh daily.

There's plenty of room to sit in the dining room, plus lots of outdoor seating when the weather is fine. Take a break from the road or grab your food to go. Either way, you'll be glad you did.



Jenny Qi (ribs), Kristen Kabrin (interior)





## ★ TONOPAH BREWING COMPANY

Tonopah

Before you think, “A brewery in Tonopah?” consider this: The first permanent stone building in the town was the Wieland Brewery, built in 1901. Part of that structure still stands—and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places—as a monument to the role beer played to the area’s mining population. Where there is great beer, there

is often (or should be!) great barbecue, and Tonopah Brewing Co. doesn’t disappoint. Vegetarians beware; you’re stuck with a house green salad or fried pickle chips for options. But for the carnivores out there, hold on to your hats, because the choices of ribs, pulled pork, beef brisket, and other morsels will blow your mind.



Jenny Qi (Tonopah Brewing Company food),  
Chrissy Ingle (The Pig)





★ **THE PIG**  
Winnemucca

The main event at The Pig is the long list of BBQ specialties, each served “Winnemucca Style” with Buckaroo Beans, Texas toast, and your choice of famous Pigtail Fries, coleslaw, potato salad, Cajun rice, or potato chips. There are so many items to choose from, including hickory-smoked BBQ pork ribs, ribs n’ shrimp, and grilled Cajun hot link sausages. If you can’t decide, try The Smokehouse, which includes 1/4 rack of ribs and your choice of shredded chicken, Louisiana hot link sausage, tri-tip, or pulled pork. For anyone not craving saucy goodness, The Pig offers specialty sandwiches, burgers, and salads. Whatever your choice, this large, fun, family friendly restaurant is sure to be a hit.



**MORE  
PLACES  
TO GET  
SAUCY**

**BJ’s Barbecue**  
Sparks

**Fox Smokehouse BBQ**  
Boulder City

**SoulBelly BBQ**  
Las Vegas

**Jessie Rae’s BBQ**  
Henderson

**Susie’s BBQ**  
Fallon





# TUSCARORA

Peace and pottery in Nevada's remote northeast.

In 1962, a Washington D.C.-based potter named Dennis Parks stopped in Tuscarora during a cross country road trip. He had heard about the remote Nevada community—located an hour north of Elko—from a friend who had recommended it as the perfect artist retreat. Upon arrival, he found what looked be a ghost town of crumbling brick chimneys and weathered homesteads.





HOTEL  
& POTTERY  
SCHOOL



But the town was not dead. Even then, a half dozen residents enjoyed a peaceful life amid its ruins. And who could blame them? The sweeping valley below shimmered with sagebrush rocking in the wind, and a nearby creek babbled between tall grass and wildflowers. The ruins only enhanced the experience, making the town feel ancient rather than decrepit. The place felt isolated, not just geographically but also in time.

Parks fell in love with all of it and decided that Tuscarora wouldn't just be where he'd go to escape the city. In this near-ghost town, he would build a school.



**TUSCARORA 1900**

## 100 YEARS EARLIER

When Parks arrived in Tuscarora, it looked pretty much the same as it had the day the last mine shut down. The town is located partway up the slope of Mt. Blitzen—a less-than-ideal location for growing crops or enjoying mild winters—because that's where a massive silver strike was made in 1871.

Technically, Tuscarora was founded in 1867 after brothers John and Steven Beard discovered gold a few miles up the valley from the town's present site. Near their claim, they established a mostly luckless mining community they named Tuscarora in honor of a U.S. gunboat—which in turn was named for an indigenous people from what is now North Carolina.

Tuscarora's mines soon attracted Chinese workers, themselves unemployed after the transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869. The Beards gladly hired them all to help run the mills and mines. Within a few years, the town was home to one of the largest Chinese communities in the nation.

After silver was discovered in 1871, the Beards sold all their gold claims to the Chinese, believing the mines spent. The new owners reworked the old mines and extracted millions of dollars in gold over the next few years.



Meanwhile, Tuscarora was booming. By the early 1880s, it was home to more than 3,000 residents, making it the largest town in Elko County. Still, the railroad was 52 miles south in Elko, ensuring that the dusty highway between the two towns stayed perpetually crammed with carts and supplies.

Life in the young town was good and busy. The townsfolk enjoyed luxuries like an opera hall and even a public school with more than 200 students. As a true sign of its success, Tuscarora boasted not one but two soft drink bottlers.

The silver bonanza ended in the mid-1890s, but the town didn't die; it just slowed down. Even as late as 1920, Tuscarora was home to around 240 people. By then, however, the mines had gone dormant—their equipment sold for scrap metal.

## THE TUSCARORA POTTERY SCHOOL

Parks did not immediately move after first visiting Tuscarora in 1962. He and his wife Julie had a life and two sons, and they needed to pay the bills.

Parks earned a master's degree in ceramics and became an instructor at Pitzer College in California. But his mind continued to return to the quiet village in the Great Basin Desert.

In 1966, Parks decided to test a summer program for his dream pottery school. The 30-year-old teacher arrived in Tuscarora with Julie and some friends, and the group got to work. Cash-strapped and without supplies, they turned to the town and its surrounding landscape for material. A carriage shop became the studio, abandoned mills provided bricks for firing, and mine tailings were harvested for clay. They used their homemade clay—along with sand and sawdust—to build the first kiln, and the first pottery wheel was a cement cast of a rusted steering wheel.



TUSCARORA TODAY



DENNIS AND JULIE PARKS





The first program in Summer 1966 was a massive success, attracting seven students for a few weeks. For the next three years, Parks taught at Pitzer then returned to Tuscarora for his summer workshop.

In 1969, the school expanded to a 9-week program that could accommodate 14 students. During the summer, Tuscarora's population soared to levels not seen in decades. Its residents—now in their 60s and 70s—embraced the new, young crowd. The students immersed themselves in the community, helping with household chores and maintaining the town's generator. In return, the residents helped fix up the school's headquarters: a leaning, two-story building that was once a boarding house.

In the remote setting, everybody had to help. Life at the school was as rugged as things got in 20th century America. This was the late 1960s, though, and enthusiasm was high for a return-to-the-earth lifestyle. Students sourced pottery supplies from the desert and maintained the school's vegetable garden. They even raised chickens, goats, ducks, and rabbits for food.



After the 1969 summer classes ended, Parks decided it was time to relocate.

He and Julie withdrew their life savings, bought the boarding house—and two other properties—and moved to Tuscarora permanently.

With the family now giving Tuscarora their undivided attention, the school and its student body continued to grow. In 1972, a new studio was built: a geodesic dome that is still the most eye-catching structure in town.





## FEATURES **TUSCARORA**

### DENNIS PARKS' PERSONAL WORKS



Parks' career flourished, and he became a leader in the field of ceramics. Due to the natural restrictions in Tuscarora and the need to ration resources, Parks pioneered creative alternatives to firing pottery. Most clay is fired twice, but Parks perfected a way to do it in a single fire. For his oil-powered kiln, he developed a method that recycled the oil from discarded crankcases. He went on to literally write the book on both techniques, "A Potter's Guide to Raw Glazing and Oil Firing," which sold more than 10,000 copies.

## CONTINUING THE TRADITION

As the years went on, students became instructors, and a new generation of potters studied under Parks. During the off-season, the school became a retreat for professional artists and teachers.

All the school's visitors can be found in the guestbook, a massive 19th century ledger that never leaves its location near the front door. It is easy to lose track of time flipping through its hundreds of pages and thousands of signatures and comments.

Parks passed in 2021, and while the school continues on, everybody can agree that things are different.

"We call it a beautiful burden," says artist Elaine Parks, Dennis' former daughter-in-law.

Want more art? Check out  
Elko's art scene on pg. 68







She, like all the other instructors, does not live in Tuscarora but instead makes the long commute when school is in session. Indeed, everybody who participates in the school takes time out of their careers and lives to keep Parks' dream alive.

Despite the loss of the school's figurehead, classes continue. Students make the pilgrimage, including an entire high school art class from Idaho that camps out for a week. The school still has dedicated instructors and high-quality sessions. This past summer, the Tuscarora Pottery School offered a raku course and held a two-week certifier class for high-temperature firing.

"The students make pots for six or seven days and then do the glazing and then load the kiln and fire it off. That's always a big fun night," says Elaine.

But everything that happens at the school today, from repairs to running the nonprofit, is done through a lot of volunteer work and many long hours on the road. If the school is to continue, a new generation will need to inherit the responsibility. Maybe some of them will call Tuscarora their new home: with only one year-round resident, the town is smaller than it has ever been.



"At this point, we're hoping to get somebody who could live here at least six months out of the year. Someone who is a ceramist and knows how to work on the equipment and tools. Someone who's kind of handy and can maintain the old boarding house," says Elaine.

## VISIT TODAY

For now, there are plans for classes in summer 2024. And while Tuscarora grows quieter each year, it is still full of life in the summer. Visitors who make the drive during warm months can expect picturesque ruins overgrown with greenery and countless artifacts to inspect.







Stop in town to take a walk along its decaying street grid and then wander down to the cemetery. Or hike up the hill to the big chimney to enjoy the breathtaking view. While you're at it, mail a letter. The only business in town is a functioning post office—staffed daily—that services the ranches spread out across the valley.

And, of course, stop by the school. Someone might be available to show off the historic boarding house or the studio. There is also a gallery/gift shop that offers a beautiful pottery collection created by instructors and friends of the school. You can find branded apparel, books, and your very own honey bear sticker (ask them about that) as well. You might also get a tour of the 1878 tavern-turned-community center, which is packed with exhibits and relics that tell the town's story.

To learn more about the Tuscarora Pottery School and view their class schedule, visit [tuscarorapotteryschool.com](http://tuscarorapotteryschool.com) or call 323-636-6262.



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**NEVADA**  
STATE MUSEUM  
LAS VEGAS





# HIGH DESERT RENAISSANCE

*Fancy footwear and colorful murals speak to Elko's public art revival.*

BY BRIAN KLUEPFEL

What's six feet tall, weighs 110 pounds, and is seen all over Elko? Visitors wandering this historic cowboy town might be surprised to spot more than four dozen oversized polyurethane boots, each with a unique paint job representing Elko's rich legacy.

## BOOT CAMP

The boots are part of Elko's artistic blossoming. Despite being home to only about 20,000 residents, this community prioritizes the arts, boasting its own orchestra, five independent theater companies, and a smattering of galleries strung through downtown.

"There's no other big city around here," says Catherine Wines, an architect and Elko County native. "People are surprised by the diversity of our artistic community. But we had to do it ourselves."

Wines led the Elko Arts and Culture Advisory Council that, quite literally, put the decorative boots on the ground. In 2017, the town kicked off its centennial by commissioning 36 artists to adorn the 6-foot boots with images representing the town's history and culture.

"We're a blue-collar town, and most people wear boots," says Wines to explain the cowboy-style canvases.







Boot sponsored by the Silver State Stampede



These works include a Central Pacific train steaming through the Rubies, Basque dancers waving flags, and vaqueros shepherding mule trains through “the Last Cowtown in the West.”

Now numbering almost 50, the colorful tributes stand proudly around town—in front of the public library, local college, government offices, and businesses. All the boots tell a story, and discovering them is a veritable urban scavenger hunt.

In front of the LP Insurance building, Inga Ojala’s boot depicts a trout-filled stream rushing down the Rubies, flanked by a mountain goat and bighorn sheep. The guitar-and-banjo festooned boot at the Western Folklife Center was painted by Tuscarora artist Sidne Teske; metal sculptor Susan Church provided the realistic spur. Teske’s boot is “branded” with Western Folklife Center letters.





Wines and her sister-in-law Heather even had a hand in creating one of the outlandish boots. Their piece, titled “Starry Elko Night,” is an homage to Vincent van Gogh’s “The Starry Night” with the Elko skyline replacing Saint Remy. Wines’ architecture background served her well in creating the buildings; the pair had more difficulty copying van Gogh’s inimitable night sky.



## MURALS WITHOUT BORDERS

For the centennial endeavor, nearly all the artists were from Elko and its environs. In 2019, the arts council went a bit further afield for its next project.

Eric Brooks, co-founder of Art Spot Reno, had found success producing mural festivals in Reno, Fernley, and Carson City and approached Elko with a similar idea.

“I felt that the creation of so much public art in just a weekend would be positively compounded in smaller, rural communities,” explains Brooks.

Thus began the second phase of beautifying downtown: the Elko Mural Expo. Originally, the idea behind covering Elko with murals was purely cosmetic: Many older downtown buildings had simply lost their luster and were crying out for a splash of color.





## TRAVEL NEVADA PRO TIP

An app for a self-guided tour of Elko's art scene is in the works. Until then, visitors can contact the Elko Art Council for a tour.

In September 2019, 40 artists—some local, but others from as far away as Buenos Aires and the Basque Country—gathered in Elko for one memorable three-day weekend. Their assignment was clear: Paint more than 60 murals across the hard-edged town's hard-edged surfaces. The artists were given total creative freedom and utilized an array of tools ranging from spray cans to airbrushes to stencils.

Spring Creek artisan Simone Turner's library mural—a simulated stack of two-foot tomes of E.B. White, George Orwell, C.S. Lewis and others—was a collaboration with Elko teenagers. Turner's joy is palpable when describing the collaboration with local youth: "Painting two-foot tall books? Yes please!"

Even celebrity artists were drawn to the festival. When Elko first petitioned world-renowned muralist Sebas Velasco to paint, he declined, citing an engagement in Portugal.



Then he found out about Elko's rich Basque history—Velasco was born in Burgos, Spain, 50 miles from the Basque Country. He changed his itinerary and traveled to the event, where he painted a mural depicting members of the Elko Basque Club.





Reno-born artist Erik Burke also drew inspiration from Elko's Euskadi heritage with his multi-paneled work on the wall of Basque eatery Ogi's Deli. It includes a traditional Basque wagon, legendary accordionist Bernardo Yanci, and depictions of "arborglyphs," a local tradition whereby shepherds carved their initials into aspen trees. Burke, who now has five murals in Elko, made frequent trips to Elko as a young man and, as he says, "more or less absorbed the people and feeling when I was there."

In subsequent years, more muralists came, and the scene was repeated, and now Elko boasts 100-plus concrete canvases that draw on both the mythical and real life. Today, visitors will find whimsical jackalopes, Mexican dolls, Native American imagery, and cowboy scenes, all a slice of life in this diverse community.





RURAL WRANGLERS

# TONOPAH

*Discover adventure  
in the historic  
“Queen of the Silver  
Camps.”*

Located halfway between Las Vegas and Reno, Tonopah is a welcome stop for road-weary travelers. But this old mountain town is no mere rest stop. Tonopah is the perfect weekend getaway to wander Sahara-like dunes, dine in luxurious haunted hotels, and take in some of the darkest skies around.

Legend has it that the silver near present-day Tonopah was discovered by a burro. It's said that in the year 1900, a prospector named Jim Butler was wandering the uncharted hills of central Nevada looking for his stray burro. When he finally found the animal, he grabbed a nearby rock to throw at it, only to realize he was holding a big chunk of silver.



Courtney Blacher



Whether or not that's how it happened, it's true that Butler's site contained Nevada's richest silver lode since Virginia City's legendary bonanza. By 1901, the mines had produced almost \$750,000 in silver and gold. One of the Old West's last rushes was underway, and the remote mountain outcrop was home to a bustling city. By 1906, Tonopah was the largest city in Nevada with around 10,000 residents.

Tonopah's peak mining years lasted into the 1920s, but by WWII, most of the silver was gone. During the war,

the town was home to the Tonopah Army Air Field, an important training base for American pilots.

These days, Tonopah stays busy thanks to its location midway between Reno and Las Vegas. Not only is the town a full-service oasis, it's also rife with amazing accommodations, delicious dining, outrageous outdoor adventures, and stellar stargazing. In other words, Tonopah is so much more than just a rest stop: It's your hub for exploring central Nevada.



#### ROAD TRIPPIN'

If you're traveling U.S. Routes 6 and 95, the town of Tonopah acts as an excellent start or end point for the Extraterrestrial Highway and natural overnighiter on the Free-Range Art Highway, respectively. See pg. 100 for more information.



## THINGS TO DO

### Tonopah Mining Park

This 100-acre park is home to much of the mining infrastructure that made Tonopah the “Queen of the Silver Camps.” Start your journey at the visitor center, then embark on foot—or by ATV—to explore buildings, mine tunnels, and massive pieces of historic equipment. The park is structured with freedom to roam, and while guided tours are available, it’s also fine to quietly wander the sprawling complex to soak in some perfectly preserved mining history.



TONOPAH MINING PARK

### Tonopah Stargazing Park

Thanks to its remote location, Tonopah is one of the nation’s best places to stargaze while still enjoying all the services of a town. The park offers plentiful picnic tables and a large concrete pad to set up your telescope or camera. Enjoy long hours admiring the dazzling night sky while looking forward to a comfortable bed and a hot meal.



CENTRAL NEVADA MUSEUM

### Central Nevada Museum

This museum features a host of exhibits covering the history of this corner of the Great Basin ranging from the prehistoric to present day. Visitors to this story-packed museum are sure to become enthralled in the tales of colorful characters who made their mark here, including saloon keeper and boxing promoter Tex Rickard, crime-fighting brothers Wyatt and Virgil Earp, and even the enigmatic billionaire Howard Hughes.

## WHAT TO EAT

**Bamboo Chinese Kitchen**  
Pan-Asian plates including  
Pad Thai and Singapore  
noodles

**El Marques**  
Classic Mexican cuisine,  
panuchos, and seafood plates

**Hometown Pizza**  
Calzones, sandwiches, and  
a famous pizza lunch buffet

**Pittman Café**  
Grass-fed beef burgers  
and tasty pub fare

**Tonopah Brewing Company**  
Beef brisket, ribs, and  
other barbecue favorites

**A&W Restaurant**  
Fast food and frosty root  
beer





## WHERE TO STAY

### The Mizpah Hotel

The iconic Mizpah Hotel—built in 1907—is one of Nevada’s most historic hotels. In 2011, the building was restored to its bonanza-era glory, and today its glorious lobby boasts authentic chandeliers, velvet Victorian couches, and one of the classiest saloons around. The hotel’s 52 rooms also promise a historically immersive stay and include themed suites like the Jim & Belle Butler Suite, the (reportedly haunted) Lady in Red Suite, and the Wyatt Earp Room.

### Belvada Hotel

The elegant Belvada Hotel was originally the Nevada State Bank & Trust when it was built in 1906. When the bank closed, the building became something of an early commercial mall, hosting a saloon, barbershop, and a clothing store. After the Great Depression, the building sat vacant for 80 years before it was renovated in 2020.



### STAY ANOTHER NIGHT

Need more overnight recommendations? Be sure to check out Tonopah Station Hotel, Casino and RV Park; Jim Butler Inn & Suites; and Best Western Hi-Desert Inn.

### Clown Motel

This is without a doubt the one landmark that all passersby remark on as they roll through town. As expected, this famous motel is the West’s clown capital: Some 3,200 clown figurines call the motel’s lobby home, and rooms are even decorated with custom-made clown paintings. No matter how you feel about clowns, expect a cozy (and memorable) place to stay the night.







## DAY TRIP DESTINATIONS

Countless adventure opportunities are located within a short drive of downtown Tonopah. ATV enthusiasts, photographers, and people who just like walking barefoot on warm sand should head for **Crescent Dunes** (also called Tonopah Dunes) just north of town. If you're the type of person who likes to earn their souvenirs, make a reservation with **Otteson Brothers Turquoise** to enjoy a day of rockhounding.

About 50 minutes north of town await two living ghost towns. The charming remains of **Belmont** include the ruins of a massive stamp mill and a 100-foot-tall brick chimney, plus the wonderfully preserved Belmont Courthouse and the still-open Dirty Dick's 1867 Belmont Saloon. Over in nearby **Manhattan**, check out the "Stolen" Belmont Church and stop in at the Manhattan Public Library to learn about the town's history.

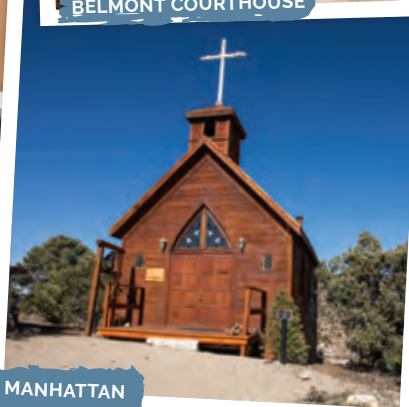
BELMONT



CRESCENT DUNES



BELMONT COURTHOUSE



MANHATTAN

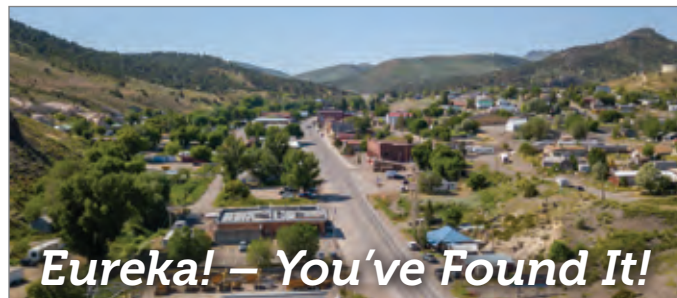


OTTESON BROTHERS TURQUOISE



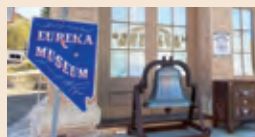
# GET ELY-VATED

ELYNEVADA.NET



## Upcoming Eureka Events

**Eureka Opera House**  
Men of Worth IRISH MUSIC  
March 15 @ 6pm



**Eureka  
Sentinel Museum**  
10 N Monroe Street



**Eureka  
Opera House**  
31 S Main Street

**EUREKA OPERA HOUSE**  
P.O. BOX 284, Eureka, NV 89316  
(775) 237-6006 | [opera@eurekacountynv.gov](mailto:opera@eurekacountynv.gov)



# TRUE NEVADA ADVENTURE AWAITS.

If you love the outdoors, Pahrump, Nevada is your destination! Offering a wide range of adventurous attractions and exciting excursions, Pahrump is perfect for explorers with hiking trails, access to Death Valley, and off-road activities that will make you want to get lost off the beaten path.

**Book your Pahrump adventure today!**

**PAHRUMP**  
true NEVADA



[travelnevada.com](http://travelnevada.com)

**60 Miles West of Las Vegas. 180 Degrees Different.**

Explore the possibilities at [VisitPahrump.com](http://VisitPahrump.com)





# ROCK ON

Nevada is the nation's biggest rock-climbing playground.

INCLINE VILLAGE, LAKE TAHOE





The past decade has seen a massive rise in rock climbing popularity, and for good reason. The sport is relatively inexpensive, it promotes outdoor exploration, and it's a perfect excuse to get in shape. It's also a great mental workout, requiring climbers to think critically as they move their bodies in and out of compromising positions.

To enjoy the sport, there's no better place than the Silver State. Not only is Nevada home to popular climbing meccas like Red Rock Canyon, its public lands beckon advanced climbers with hundreds of mountain ranges. If you're new to climbing or want to brush up on your skills, both of our major cities offer world-class climbing gyms.

## GREAT OUTDOORS

Nevada's plentiful canyons and mountains offer a lifetime's worth of climbing opportunities. There's plenty to discover on your own, but if you're looking for a place to get started, it's as easy as picking up a guidebook—available at most gear shops or local bookstores—or searching for routes on sites like [mountainproject.com](https://mountainproject.com). To help narrow things down, we recommend these popular destinations.

### Red Rock Canyon

Some of the world's best climbing is located within this mass of burnt sienna sandstone located a quick 45 minutes from the Las Vegas Strip. Get ready to explore more than 2,000 routes—including tons of bouldering opportunities—ranging from easy-access top-rope climbing to expertly bolted sport climbing and multi-pitch traditional climbing routes.







ELY



### Lamoille Canyon

Roughly 30 minutes from Elko, this glacially carved canyon is a favorite for climbers in northern Nevada. Most climbs are short, bolted routes on small crags with some popular winter ice climbs.



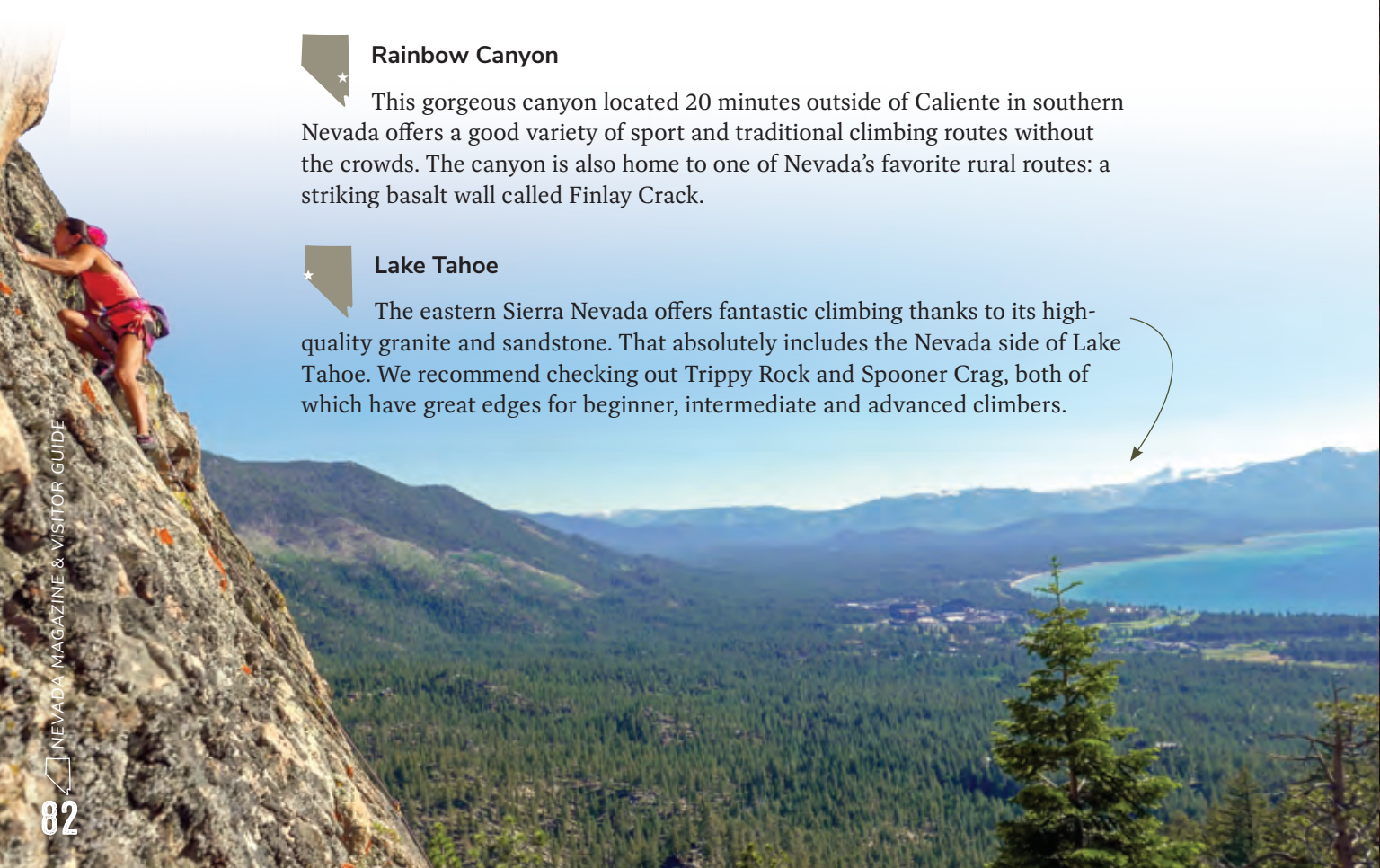
### Rainbow Canyon

This gorgeous canyon located 20 minutes outside of Caliente in southern Nevada offers a good variety of sport and traditional climbing routes without the crowds. The canyon is also home to one of Nevada's favorite rural routes: a striking basalt wall called Finlay Crack.



### Lake Tahoe

The eastern Sierra Nevada offers fantastic climbing thanks to its high-quality granite and sandstone. That absolutely includes the Nevada side of Lake Tahoe. We recommend checking out Trippy Rock and Spooner Crag, both of which have great edges for beginner, intermediate and advanced climbers.







## RECREATE RESPONSIBLY

Whether you're enjoying popular routes or discovering something new in the desert, make sure to practice good habits. Don't climb on private property, and always tell people where you're going. In remote parts of the state, plan for diverse weather and limited cellphone service. When you leave a site, do a final sweep for trash: Last thing anybody wants is to find somebody's climbing tape tangled up in sagebrush.

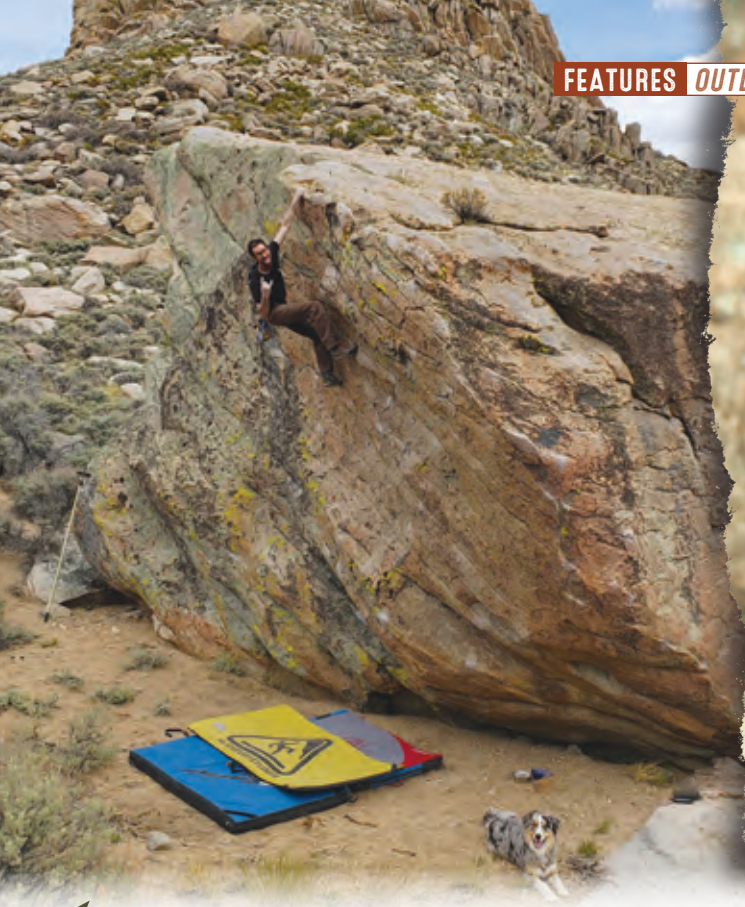


THE CUBE, RED ROCK CANYON

Ben Ditto (Ely), Anthony Cupaiuolo (Lake Tahoe), Al Baker (The Cube)







## CLIMBING STYLES

**Bouldering** — Free climbing on smaller formations with very limited ascension. Bouldering does not require ropes or harness; climbers generally only need climbing shoes, chalk, and a crash pad.

**Sport Climbing** — Higher elevation gain than bouldering with the use of rope, harness, and a belayer below. This type of climbing features routes that already have bolts and anchors drilled into the rock.

**Traditional Climbing** — This activity is only for the most experienced climbers. Traditional climbing is like sport climbing but with one big difference: Climbers have no fixed route and ascend by fitting their own hardware into the rock.





## CLIMBING GYMS

If you're in Reno or Las Vegas, you're never far from a climbing gym. These gyms are great for a vacation workout, but they're also the perfect spot for an engaging family outing. In addition to renting the equipment you'll need, these gyms offer introductory classes that teach critical skills like how to stretch and how to fall.

### RENO

#### Mesa Rim

Welcome to the Silver State's largest indoor rock-climbing gym. The sprawling facility offers private and group instruction classes for all levels and plenty of routes for bouldering and sport climbing.

#### BaseCamp

Visitors to downtown Reno often gawk at The Big Wall, a heart-pumping, 164-foot climb located outside the iconic Whitney Peak Hotel. But don't forget that the conspicuous wall is just part of the BaseCamp gym. Open to the public, this facility features a 7,000-square-foot bouldering park, a separate room for kids, and expert instructors.

### LAS VEGAS

#### The Refuge Climbing and Fitness

Located just south of The Strip, this family-friendly gym is the perfect way to get a good workout between Las Vegas adventures. The Refuge boasts affordable rates and rentals and an hour-long bouldering class for beginners for \$30.

#### Red Rock Climbing Center

This gym offers one of the best ways to connect with the Las Vegas climbing community and prepare for outdoor adventure. In addition to classes and countless routes for all style, the center also offers climbing guides for Red Rock Canyon.

### RENT OR BUY

If you aren't looking to buy—or just don't want to pack your gear around—many businesses provide rentals for essentials like crash pads and climbing shoes. In Las Vegas, head to Basecamp Outdoor Gear or Desert Rock Sports. In Reno, check out Gear Hut or Nevada Adventure Rentals.





# GETTING HOME SAFELY

*A little preparation goes a long way when enjoying Nevada's wilderness.*

STORY BY MEGG MUELLER  
PHOTOS BY JEFF MOSER

Picture a beautiful day where the sun shines, uninterrupted views unfold one after the other, and the destination is second to the journey. I've been lucky enough to encounter many days like this during my travels across Nevada. But I've also encountered impassable roads, wrong turns that led to dangerous conditions, mud that acts like glue in tire wheels, snow that dumps quickly...you get the idea. The best laid plans are no match for Nevada's capricious weather or a well-hidden hazard that leaves not one but two of your tires flat. Despite potential hardships, Nevada's 48 million acres of public land beg to be explored, and with a solid plan and plenty of supplies, there's no reason to ignore those wide-open spaces.











## GO WHERE YOU KNOW

In March 2022, an elderly couple from Illinois relied on outdated directions and found themselves stuck on a mountain road. After more than a week, authorities found them, but unfortunately, the husband had passed away while awaiting help. Frigid temperatures at night, an altitude of more than 7,000 feet, and dehydration all contributed to his death. Cautionary tales like this illustrate just how quickly things can go wrong.

With cellphones, navigation systems, and countless people drawn to the outdoors, it's hard to imagine there are places where people can become stranded and succumb to the elements. Sadly, it happens every year.

Folks looking to get away from it all are keen to take the road less traveled, and while those clichés may sound trite, the desire for solitude is real. The Silver State is chock-full of that solitude, but it is not to be sought without a good amount of planning and preparation.

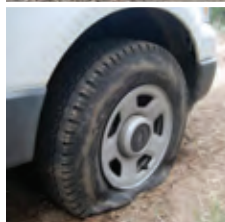
Jeff Moser spent eight years working with the Carson City Sheriff's Department Search and Rescue. In that time, he estimates he went on at least 100 rescue missions. And while it may be easy to cast aspersions when reading news accounts of these rescues, Moser says the cause isn't foolishness in most cases.

"(People may be) unprepared, but it's usually a series of mistakes (not just one) that gets people into the worst predicaments," he says.

Take this series of bad choices that could have turned deadly. A visitor rented a two-wheel drive pickup and decided to explore an unfamiliar mountain range; two possible mistakes, but so far, not serious. He turned off the main dirt road and headed up a narrow, sandy, unmaintained road.

"He should have turned around at this point when he had the chance. Another mistake," Moser explains. "He kept going another mile until he backed off the side of the road with his drive wheels hanging over the edge. He was completely stuck with no tools to get unstuck. Final mistake."





A few flat tires from magazine staff adventures over the years.



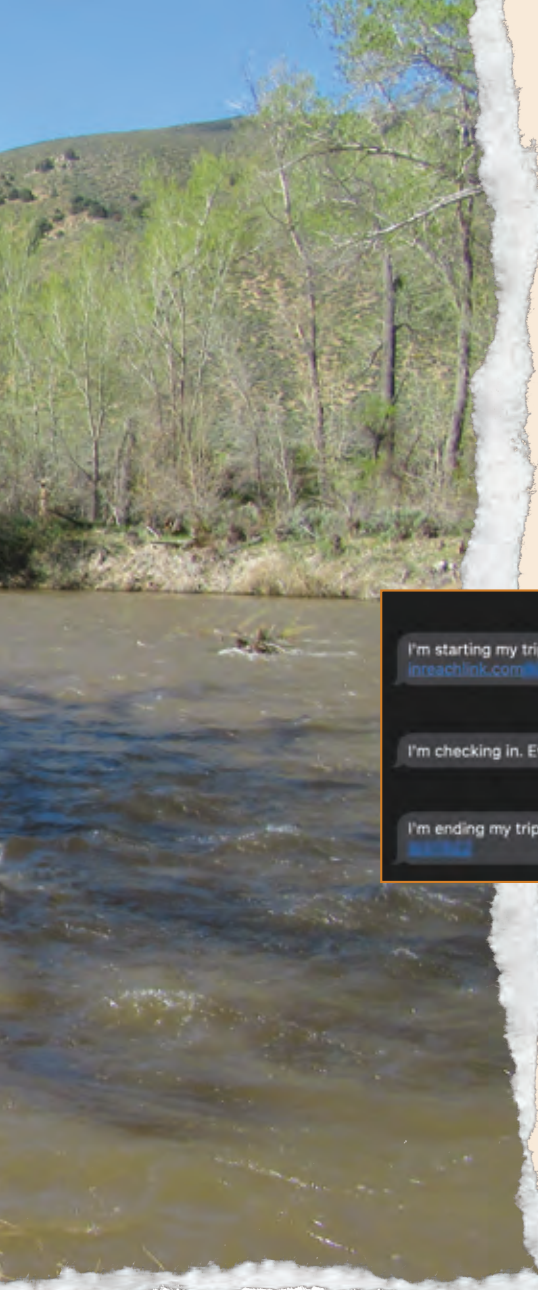
Got a survival story from your Nevada travels or a great tip? Share them with [editor@nevadamagazine.com](mailto:editor@nevadamagazine.com) and we'll publish the best advice and stories in a future issue!









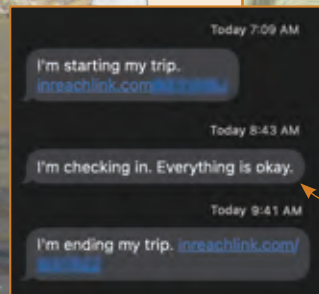


## Jeff Moser's best recommendations

### Satellite communications



While a mobile phone is essential for remote travel, those adventuring off the Nevada highways will quickly realize there is often no cell service after leaving the pavement. A satellite communicator, such as a unit made by Garmin or Spot, allows you to send and receive messages virtually anywhere as long as there is a clear view of the sky. These devices require a subscription fee,



which usually lets you send unlimited preset messages. Some satellite communicators have a map screen, while others must pair with your phone to see maps of your current location.

Make sure to turn on tracking so someone can monitor your progress via a map on a web browser. The greatest insurance, though, is the SOS feature. With just the push of a button, you can start the process of a search and rescue.

### GPS/GPS Apps

A Global Positioning System Unit (GPS) or GPS phone app uses satellites to get exact coordinates and show your position. Jeff's primary GPS is the Gaia GPS app for his mobile phone. The free version is handy, but a pro account offers many map layers. The Gaia Topo base map is loaded with most of Nevada's off-highway backroads to help keep you on track. Bonus: A mobile phone GPS app allows you to quickly and accurately share your data with others.



Before you head out, download any maps of the area you'll be visiting to your device. Maps are downloaded over the cellular network and paired with your phone's GPS location. This won't work if you're off grid, so do it before you leave. GPS units also have the ability to record your route, i.e. leaving a trail of breadcrumbs. If you get lost, it makes it easy to retrace your steps. As you can imagine, this is a great feature no matter your method of travel, whether by SUV, ATV, bike, or hike!

## SURVIVAL OF THE MOST PREPARED

One of the simplest mistakes during trip preparation is not bringing enough supplies. While that gallon jug of water seems ample, consider that your trip might not go as planned. Supplies for the unexpected are crucial when traveling across this vast state, regardless of the weather.

"It is common for people to not have enough warm clothing and water for the time they were unexpectedly stranded," says Moser.



## MORE TIPS OF THE TRADE

- ❑ Plan your route carefully. Be sure to check the weather forecast and avoid traveling during extreme conditions.
- ❑ Let someone know where you're going and when you expect to be back. This is especially important if you're traveling alone.
- ❑ Pack for all types of weather. Nevada can be hot and sunny one day and cold and windy the next. Be sure to pack warm clothes, even if you're traveling in the summer.

While not overpacking might be a valued skill when flying, when cruising in the high desert terrain—chockful of sketchy mountain roads, potential flash flooding situations, and little to no cell service—it's important to bring supplies for the worst-case scenario. If they don't get used, great! If you end up needing that extra can of gasoline or those layers of clothing, you'll be glad you had them.

And now, without further ado, a basic packing list 10 years in the making with the help of many experts. Adjust as needed for your particular circumstances of course, but when in doubt, throw it in.





SECOND ANNUAL  
TONOPAH NEVADA

# ROCK & BOTTLE SHOW

JULY 19<sup>TH</sup>, 20<sup>TH</sup>  
& 21<sup>ST</sup> 2024

Vendors please contact Chrissy Pope,  
Tourism & Events Coordinator Town of Tonopah  
at 775-277-0804 or  
email: [chrissy.townoftonopah@gmail.com](mailto:chrissy.townoftonopah@gmail.com)

To view a full list of vendors please visit  
[TONOPAHNEVADA.COM/TONOPAH-ROCK](https://TONOPAHNEVADA.COM/TONOPAH-ROCK)



THIS EVENT IS HOSTED BY THE TOWN OF TONOPAH



# SPRINGTIME SPECIAL EVENTS

## EAGLES AND AGRICULTURE

Carson Valley  
Feb. 8-11

This annual event brings together photographers and wildlife lovers during Carson Valley's calving season—which draws raptors, including bald eagles. The event hosts an opening dinner, tours with access to local ranches, a photography workshop, and a photo contest.



## DAM SHORT FILM FESTIVAL

Boulder City  
Feb. 14-19

Each February, filmmakers and fans from around the world descend upon Boulder City's Historic District to celebrate the art of the short film. Over the course of four days, the Dam Short Film Festival presents more than 120 short films of all styles and genres.

The festival hosts a wide array of subjects and styles, and viewers play the role of judges: After each screening, audience members cast votes for their favorite film. Categories include Best Drama, Documentary, Animation, Comedy, Screenplay, Music Video, and Sci-Fi/Horror. Awards are also presented for Best Nevada Filmmaker, Student, and Best of the Fest.





## SNOWFEST

Lake Tahoe  
Feb. 29-March 10

Take part in a grand celebration of life in the High Sierra made up of more than 40 events across 10 days. Headquartered in Tahoe City, SnowFest is a culmination of activities and events happening all along north shore communities including Incline Village. Get in on fireworks, parades, pancake breakfasts, live music, ski races, pet events, a Mardi Gras party, ice carving, a polar bear swim, and much more.



## ROCKY MOUNTAIN OYSTER FRY

Virginia City  
March 16

This city-wide celebration combines the green and giddiness of Saint Patrick's Day with—simply put—bull testicles starring as a culinary ingredient. You'll find this delicacy frittered, smoked, baked, and folded into classic dishes like burgers and tacos. Tickets are sold online and must be purchased in advance—this event tends to sell out quickly.



## RENO JAZZ FESTIVAL

Reno  
April 25-27

Join jazz fans from all over the country as the University of Nevada, Reno's School of the Arts hosts its 62nd annual festival. Audiences will enjoy professional jazz musicians, instructors, and student performers. The event features more than 300 school groups and about 9,000 participants attending a series of concerts, workshops, and clinics.



Rob Retting (people playing instruments)



# STATEWIDE EVENTS



DEATH VALLEY DARK SKY FESTIVAL

## FEBRUARY

Through Feb. 3  
NATIONAL COWBOY  
POETRY GATHERING  
Elko

14-19  
DAM SHORT FILM FESTIVAL  
Boulder City

Feb. 28 – March 3  
WINNEMUCCA RANCH  
HAND RODEO  
Winnemucca

## MARCH

1-3  
DEATH VALLEY  
DARK SKY FESTIVAL  
Death Valley

2  
DONKEY JAMBOREE  
Mesquite

8-10  
ELY FILM, ART  
& MUSIC FESTIVAL  
Ely

30  
BOULDER CITY BEERFEST  
Boulder City



ELY FILM, ART & MUSIC FESTIVAL

Patrick Taylor (Death Valley)  
Melody Hoover (Virginia City)



## APRIL

5-7

WINTERWONDERGRASS  
TAHOE  
North Lake Tahoe

26-28

GENOA WESTERN  
HERITAGE DAYS  
Genoa

27-28

VIRGINIA CITY GRAND PRIX  
Virginia City

## MAY

4-5

BOULDER CITY  
SPRING JAMBOREE  
Boulder City

17-18

NEVADA OLD TIME  
FIDDLERS' CONTEST  
Eureka

24-25

Run-A-Mucca Motorcycle  
& Music Festival  
Winnemucca

SCAN FOR  
MORE INFO



NEVADA EVENTS CALENDAR



BOULDER CITY SPRING JAMBOREE



GENOA WESTERN HERITAGE DAYS



WINTERWONDERGRASS TAHOE



VIRGINIA CITY GRAND PRIX



# NEVADA STATE MUSEUMS

## Hours and Admission Guide



### NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM CARSON CITY

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

🎫 Adults \$8  
Ages 17 and younger FREE



### NEVADA STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM BOULDER CITY

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

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



### EAST ELY RAILROAD DEPOT MUSEUM

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

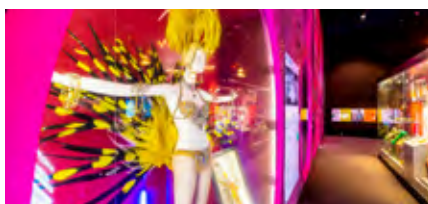
🎫 General Admission FREE  
Tour Grounds \$8



### NEVADA STATE MUSEUM CARSON CITY

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

🎫 Adults \$10  
Ages 17 and younger FREE



### NEVADA STATE MUSEUM LAS VEGAS

🕒 Thursday-Monday  
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

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



### LOST CITY MUSEUM OVERTON

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

🎫 Adults \$6  
Ages 17 and younger FREE



### NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY RENO

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

🎫 Adults \$6  
Ages 17 and younger FREE

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

SCAN FOR  
MORE INFO



MUSEUMS



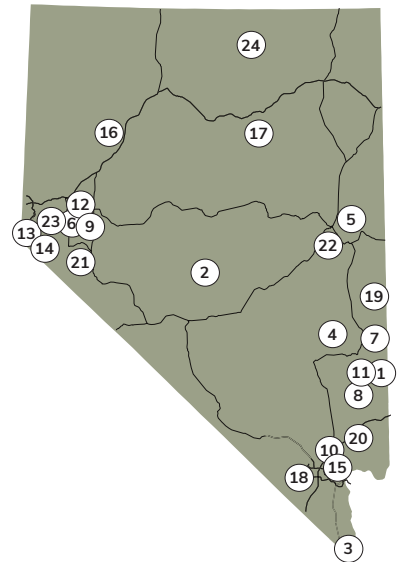
# STATE PARKS

## Directory

Camping  
RV Dump Station  
Flush Restrooms  
Group Camping  
Showers  
Visitor Center  
Boat Launch  
Trails  
Fishing  
Maximum Size  
RV Space

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

Ward Charcoal Ovens State Park



**Know Before You Go:**  
Park openings, hours, and services are subject to change. Before visiting, consult [parks.nv.gov](https://parks.nv.gov), or call the park ranger.





# MAKE YOUR NEXT TRIP A ROAD TRIP

SCAN FOR  
MORE INFO



EAST HUMBOLDT  
RANGE

NEVADA ROAD TRIPS

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



## 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.



## COWBOY CORRIDOR

400 miles | 2 to 4 days

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



## DEATH VALLEY RALLY

Up to 370 miles | 3 to 4 days

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





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



## 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.

*For more out-of-this-world adventures, turn to pg. 36.*



## FREE-RANGE ART HIGHWAY

440 to 515 miles | 1 to 3 days

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



## GREAT BASIN HIGHWAY

350 to 585 miles | 3 to 5 days

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



## LAKE TAHOE LOOP

145 miles | 2 to 5 days

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



## LONELIEST ROAD IN AMERICA

375 to 500 miles | 3 days

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



## NEON TO NATURE

60 to 210 miles | 1 to 3 days

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

## RUBIES ROUTE



30 to 375 miles | 2 to 5 days

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



# RECREATE RESPONSIBLY



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

## WILDFIRE WATCHOUT

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

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

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

## HERE'S YOUR SIGN

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

## TRAVEL NEVADA PRO TIP

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



## TREAD LIGHTLY!

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

## ANIMAL INSTINCT

Nevada's wildlife ranges from rabbits to rattlesnakes, burros to bighorns, antelope to coyotes, and more wild horses than anywhere else. While exploring the backcountry, be sure to drive at safe speeds. You'll be more likely to spot the fauna, and they'll have more time to get out of

your way. Also, feeding or handling wildlife is against the law, and human interaction won't do them any favors in the long run. Enjoy from a distance.

## 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 FOR  
MORE INFO



DIRT ROAD CODE





# The Final Word

THE FINAL WORD **KRYSTA PALMER**

## Krysta Palmer

Our conversation with Nevada-born Olympian Krysta Palmer, who won the bronze medal in the 3-meter Women's Springboard at the Olympic Games in 2020.

**NM&VG:** Krysta, you've enjoyed a very successful athletic career. When did you get your start?

**KP:** I started gymnastics when I was around 5 years old. At 12, trampolining captured my heart, and I did that for about eight years.

**NM&VG:** Why did you transition from trampolining to diving?

**KP:** I had two knee injuries over my trampolining career. When I was 18, I decided to phase out of the sport: I only have one body, and I didn't want to get any more injuries. One day, I was visiting a friend who worked at the Carson Valley Swim Center. He knew how to change the diving board settings, so I did all the things that I knew from trampolining. I didn't know how to land on my head back then, but he recommended I get in touch with the person who is now my coach, Jian Li You at the University of Nevada, Reno.

**NM&VG:** So, diving was just a hobby in the beginning?

**KP:** It was. When I met Jian Li, I told her I was only looking for something fun that would be easier on my body. But after I jumped around a little bit, she got pretty excited and told me to come back every night of the week. Within three months, she offered me the spot on her college team.

**NM&VG:** Do you remember when you realized you could go all the way to the Olympics?

**KP:** My Olympic dream became more of a reality after my coach took me to China for a month-long training trip in 2016, which was the hardest training I've been through in my life. I think going there really shifted my mindset from being a collegiate athlete to a professional athlete,



especially after watching those young kids in China and how hard they train. Such a high level of diving helped me envision where I wanted to go. I thought 'OK I'm going to be doing diving a little bit more long term than originally planned.'

**NM&VG:** You grew up outside Carson City and live in Reno now. Where do you take people when they visit the area?

**KP:** Well, obviously I show them Tahoe, but I like to take people in the diving community to the springboard manufacturer Duraflex, located outside Reno. Their springboards are sent all over the world, and they're the only springboard that top level athletes train and compete on. Showing visitors how springboards are designed and built is really cool, and it gives people in the diving world just so much appreciation for the equipment we train on.

**NM&VG:** What restaurants would you take a Reno visitor to?

**KP:** I would definitely go to Archie's Giant Hamburgers & Breakfast because they have a breakfast burrito that's named after me! It's called The Olympian.

**NM&VG:** Are you feeling ready for 2024?

**KP:** Yes, I'm getting pretty busy. I have a World Championship Trials competition at the beginning of December. World Championships, if I qualify, would be in February. Then the Olympic trials are June next year, and Olympic Games is August.



Getty Images (diving)





# RESERVE YOUR MOMENT IN HISTORY

TONOPAH, NEVADA



## COMPLIMENTARY BREAKFAST

*Luxury Rooms – Free Hi-Speed Internet – Lavazza In Room Coffee  
Fitness Center – Free Parking – Belvada Café – Kitchenettes Available*

**TONOPAH**  
BREWING Co.

  
**MIZPAH HOTEL**  
1907

**PITTMAN**  
CAFÉ  
MIZPAH HOTEL





**Go on, get a little out there.**

Into the big heart of Nevada.

Beyond the neon glow, where the stars sparkle  
and the desert goes and goes.

A place the wild things call home and the wild-hearted roam.

**LA  
A LITTLE  
OUT  
THERE.**

