



SCENIC DAY TRIPS

Many travelers are drawn to the lights and excitement of Las Vegas, but too few are aware of the spectacular Southwest landscape that surrounds them. Rugged mountains, red rock canyons and deep desert valleys offer stunning scenery and myriad outdoor recreational opportunities. The region's favorable climate makes outdoor activity around Las Vegas an attractive option year-round.

Natural Attractions

Mt. Charleston is 35 miles (56 kilometers) from Las Vegas, with its highest elevation at 11,918 feet (3,615 meters). An average of 20 to 30 degrees cooler than Las Vegas, Mt. Charleston is perfect for skiing, picnicking, hiking and horseback riding. In addition to year-round hotel accommodations and tours, full-service camping is also available from May through September.

Death Valley is located in western California, 135 miles (216 kilometers) from Las Vegas and a mere 40-minute plane ride away. This scenic wonder has the lowest elevation on the North American continent at 280 feet (84.93 meters) below sea level. Points of interest include Zabriskie Point, 20 Mule Team Canyon and Scotty's Castle. Tours are available.

The Grand Canyon in western Arizona lies approximately 300 miles (480 kilometers) or a one-hour flight from Las Vegas. Over millions of years, the Colorado River carved this natural wonder that is one mile deep and 277 miles long. Sightseeing air tours and ground tours of the Grand Canyon depart Las Vegas daily for half-day, full-day and overnight excursions.

Grand Canyon West, a destination owned and operated by the Hualapai Tribe at the Grand Canyon's western rim, opened The Skywalk. This modern-day marvel is the first-ever cantilever-shaped glass walkway to suspend more than 4,000 feet above the canyon's floor and extend 70 feet from the canyon's rim. Envisioned by Las Vegas-based entrepreneur David Jin, The Skywalk was designed by MRJ Architects and is located 120 miles east of Las Vegas at Grand Canyon West's Eagle Point.

Red Rock Canyon is just 15 miles (24 kilometers) west of Las Vegas. It is a scenic area of rock formations and desert with a 3,000-foot (910-meter) escarpment produced by a thrust fault. Open to the public year-round and a popular destination for hikers, bikers,



joggers and rock climbers, Red Rock Canyon offers a Bureau of Land Management visitors center and is home to feral horses, wild burros, bighorn sheep, coyotes and a variety of desert plant life.

Valley of Fire State Park is only 55 miles (88 kilometers) northwest of Las Vegas and comprises scenic landscapes, hidden canyons and unique red rock formations. Petroglyphs and remains of ancient Native American civilizations can be viewed here and a Nevada Park Service visitors center provides tourist information. The park is open to the public year-round and tours are available.

Bryce Canyon is located 210 miles (336 kilometers) northeast of Las Vegas in southwestern Utah. This popular national park offers an outdoor exhibition of unique rock formations with imaginative names like Pink Cliffs, Silent City and Cathedral. Bryce Canyon is open throughout the year.

Mojave National Preserve is only 60 miles (97 kilometers) southwest of Las Vegas. This 1.6-million-acre preserve, which protects one of the most diverse environments in the world, abounds with sand dunes, volcanic cinder cones, Joshua tree forests and mile-high mountains. The preserve's visitor centers, located in Baker and Needles, Calif., welcome visitors year-round.

Zion National Park, 158 miles (254 kilometers) north of Las Vegas across the Utah border, is a popular winter ski resort. Colorful sandstone canyons, hot rocky deserts and cool forested plateaus are all part of Zion National Park. Zion Canyon is the largest and most visited canyon in the park. Here, the Virgin River has carved the river and the tree and grass-covered canyon floor.

Destinations

Boulder City is just 30 miles (48 kilometers) east of the Las Vegas Strip, on the way to Lake Mead. Built in the 1930s for Hoover Dam construction workers' families, it is the site of the historic Boulder Dam Hotel and is the only Nevada city that does not allow public gaming. Boulder City's historic Old Town district is home to many quaint shops, several of which feature works by Native American jewelers.

Rhyolite is a well-preserved ghost town 120 miles (193 kilometers) north of Las Vegas near the small community of Beatty, Nev., which bills itself as the "Gateway to Death Valley." Highlights of the area include ruins of the Potter General Store, Newton's Grille,



a school, several major banks, a house made entirely out of bottles and a railroad depot.

Bonnie Springs Ranch/Old Nevada lies about 20 miles (32 kilometers) west of Las Vegas near Red Rock Canyon. Bonnie Springs Ranch was built in the 1840s as a cattle ranch and watering hole. Adjacent to the ranch is Old Nevada, a place where tourists can witness a re-creation of an Old West town complete with gunfights, horseback riding, children's petting zoo and mini-train rides. Bonnie Springs Ranch/Old Nevada is open to the public year-round.

Hoover Dam is an engineering wonder of the world just 35 miles (56 kilometers) southeast of Las Vegas. Formerly named Boulder Dam, this historic man-made creation tamed the mighty Colorado River and created North America's largest man-made lake, Lake Mead. The 726-foot-high, arch-gravity dam is 660 feet thick and forever changed the face of the western United States. On-site tours of the dam are available to the public throughout the year.

Lake Mead National Recreational Area is just 25 miles (40 kilometers) from Las Vegas at its closest point. With more than 550 miles (880 kilometers) of shoreline, Lake Mead Recreational Area offers outdoor enthusiasts year-round opportunities for swimming, water skiing, camping, boating, fishing, tours and cruises.

Spring Mountain State Park is located 30 miles (48 kilometers) west of Las Vegas. This historic ranch was a stopover for travelers on the Mormon and Spanish trails. Once owned by industrialist Howard Hughes, radio personalities Lum and Abner and German munitions heiress Vera Krupp, the Spring Mountain State Park is today the site of seasonal outdoor theater and concerts. The park is open year-round.

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