



**nileGUIDE**

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



DrPleishner

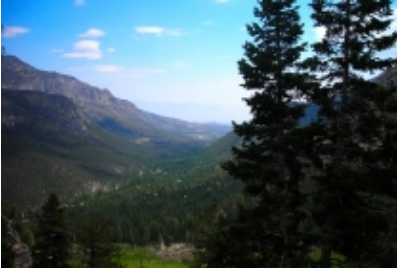
# Ten Hidden Gems in Las Vegas

## Las Vegas, 1 Day

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# Guide Description



**AUTHOR NOTE:** The Desert National Wildlife Refuge is home to bighorn sheep, miles of dirt roads, remote camping spots, and springs. West of the DNWR, the Spring Mountains are an isolated patch of mountains in the Mojave Desert. Off-road enthusiasts will enjoy the 4WD Bitter Springs Trail outside the Valley of Fire. In town, stop at the Gambler's Bookstore for gambling tips, or see Steve Wyrick, one of Las Vegas' newer magicians. The Boulder Dam Hotel, in downtown Boulder City, has a restaurant and museum. Either the Swiss Café or Firefly are terrific, off-the-beaten path restaurants. And when was the last time you went to a drive-in movie theater? ~Picture of Spring Mt. NRA~

# Itinerary Overview

things to do  
restaurants  
hotels  
nightlife

## Day 1 - Las Vegas



### Desert National Wildlife Refuge

US's largest wildlife refuge, outside of Alaska



### Spring Mountain National Recreation Area

The locals call it Mt. Charleston



### Mt. Charleston Hotel

Charm in Kyle Canyon



### Bitter Springs Trail Backcountry Byway

Discover old mining properties such as remnants of the old American Borax mill.



### Steve Wyrick Magic Show at the Planet Hollywood Resort and Casino

Show



### Gambler's Book Club

Everything you need to research gambling



### Swiss Cafe and Patio Garden

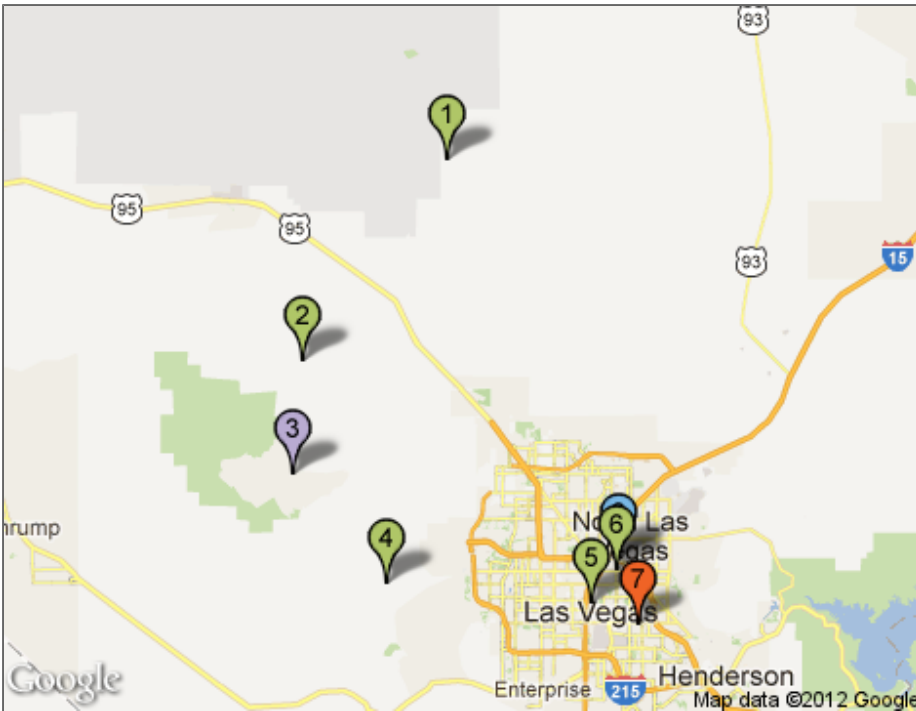
Rave reviews



### Century Las Vegas Drive-Ins

Do drive in!

# Day 1 - Las Vegas



## QUICK NOTE

**contact:**  
tel: 702-879-6110  
<http://www.fws.gov/desertcomplex/>

**location:**  
HCR 38, Box 70  
Las Vegas NV 89124

## 1 Desert National Wildlife Refuge

### OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Stop at the Corn Creek Station to see ponds, the remnants of orchards and a cabin, and wildlife. Very popular spot for bird watching.

**DESCRIPTION:** Facilities in this USDI Fish and Wildlife National Refuge includes; wildlife viewing, bird watching, nature study, viewing historical sites, scenic viewing, camping, picnicking, walking and geology. From Las Vegas take either U.S. Highway 95 or U.S. Highway 93 north.



Photo courtesy of Desert National Wildlife Refuge

**contact:**  
tel: 702-873-8800  
[http://www.fs.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsinternet!ut/p/c5/04\\_SB8K8xLLM9MSSzPy8xBz9CP0os3gjAwhwtDDw9\\_AI8zPyhQoYAOUjMeXfODy-HWHgzDrx8kb4ADOBro-3nk56bqF-RGGGSZOCaCapi8eX8!/dl3/d3/L2dJQSEvUUt3QS9ZQnZ3LzZfMjAwMDAwMDBBODBPSEhWTjJNMDAwMDAwMDA!/](http://www.fs.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsinternet!ut/p/c5/04_SB8K8xLLM9MSSzPy8xBz9CP0os3gjAwhwtDDw9_AI8zPyhQoYAOUjMeXfODy-HWHgzDrx8kb4ADOBro-3nk56bqF-RGGGSZOCaCapi8eX8!/dl3/d3/L2dJQSEvUUt3QS9ZQnZ3LzZfMjAwMDAwMDBBODBPSEhWTjJNMDAwMDAwMDA!/)

## 2 Spring Mountain National Recreation Area

### OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Stop at the visitor's center to learn how to identify Bristlecone Pines from other types of pines.

**DESCRIPTION:** Less than an hour from the Las Vegas Strip, the Spring Mountain National Recreation Area is an island of mountains in the middle of the desert. Mt. Charleston, which is how the local collectively refer to the entire area, is actually the name of the highest peak in the Spring Mountain Range. At a little under 12,000 feet, it's also the third highest peak in Nevada.



Photo courtesy of Whit Andrews

**location:**

State Rt. 156/157/158  
Las Vegas NV 89124

Two major canyons welcome visitors: Kyle Canyon, where you'll find a village (no grocery store) and two lodges. Lee Canyon is home to homes and snow play areas, including a ski and snowboarding lodge.

Hiking trails can be found in both canyons, and a hike to the peak of Mt. Charleston will take you into designated wilderness. You're likely to see more birds than any other type of wildlife, but look for deer and lots of squirrels. Elk herds also live here, although they are rarely seen. This is a very dry mountain, so if you're hiking, bring water. Water sources are few on Mt. Charleston.

State Highway 158 connects Kyle Canyon to Lee Canyon, making it easy to turn a trip to Mt. Charleston into a scenic loop. Look for picnic areas, campgrounds, and viewing turnouts throughout the entire area. A small visitor center can be found on Kyle Canyon Road, or SR 157.

Officially a part of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, SMNR is home to the bristlecone pine (*Pinus longavea*), which are some of the world's longest-living plants--the oldest are thousands of years old.

Temperatures here are often 20 degrees cooler than in Las Vegas, and during winter the area is covered in snow. This is the only place close to Vegas where you can ski in winter, and the mountain roads are clogged with locals after the first snowfall--something the residents of Las Vegas don't get to see often.

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**contact:**

tel: +1 702 872 5500  
fax: +1 702 872 5374  
<http://www.mtcharlestonhotel.com>

**location:**

2 Kyle Canyon Rd  
Mt. Charleston NV 89124

**3 Mt. Charleston Hotel**

**DESCRIPTION:** Built in the early 1980s, the New Mt. Charleston Hotel, Event and Conference Center went through a multi-million dollar renovation. This charming log-built hotel, nestled in Kyle Canyon, is atmospherically a world away from the buzz of Las Vegas--a 35-minute drive from downtown. The newly renovated guest rooms feature electric fireplaces, feather beds and views of the encompassing Spring mountains. The Mt. Charleston opened a year-round outdoor ice-skating rink, complete with ice skate rentals, a hot chocolate stand and fire pit to keep skaters warm in the winter. Dining is available in the hotel's bistro which features gourmet coffee, homemade pastries and light breakfast and lunch offerings, as well as a new and large outdoor patio opening up to the duck pond. It also features a steakhouse, offering full-service dining, and a lounge with overstuffed couches, plasma television and numerous fireplaces along with its specialty award-winning drink menu. © wcities.com



Hotels.com

**contact:**

tel: 702-515-5000  
fax: 702-515-5023  
[http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/lvfo/blm\\_programs/lvfo\\_recreation/backcountry\\_byways.html](http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/lvfo/blm_programs/lvfo_recreation/backcountry_byways.html)

**location:**

115 Valley of Fire Exit to  
Marked Dirt Road  
Las Vegas NV 89130-2301

**4 Bitter Springs Trail Backcountry Byway**

**OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:**

Be prepared for this route through beautiful desert back country. This road is best attempted by experienced off-road drivers, and four wheel drive is a must. Strongly consider teaming with another driver for additional safety.

**DESCRIPTION:** The byway begins at the Valley of Fire State Park and is 28 miles long. From the Valley of State Park the route runs along the foothills of the Muddy Mountains, through several dry washes, past abandoned mining operations and terminates on North Shore Drive in Lake Mead National Recreation Area. Verdant desert streams, evidence of borax mining operations and geological formations rare for this region of Nevada delight byway travelers. Four-wheel drive vehicles are recommended.



Photo courtesy of Julie Vazquez

**contact:**

<http://www.partner.viator.com/en/6793/tours/Las-Vegas/Steve-Wyrick-Magic-Show-at-the-Planet-Hollywood-Resort-and-Casino/d684-5004MAGIC>

**location:**

Las Vegas NV 89109

**5 Steve Wyrick Magic Show at the Planet Hollywood Resort and Casino**

**DESCRIPTION:** Prepare to witness some of the most mind-blowing magic you will see anywhere in the world at the Steve Wyrick Real Magic Show in Las Vegas. See a Lear Jet 35 and AS 350 helicopter appear out of nowhere and a pure steel chopper disappear right before your eyes.

Located in the Steve Wyrick Theater at the Miracle Mile Shops at the Planet Hollywood Resort and Casino, Wyrick incorporates his signature, larger-than-life illusions into this theatrical experience, but it is his personal touches that make the show truly unique!

Choose from Reserved Seats or upgrade to the Premium Seat Option, which includes a VIP Lanyard, Book of Magic Tricks and a \$10 discount coupon for the Magic Shop. © Viator



viator

**contact:**

tel: 800/522-1777  
fax: +1 702 382 7594  
<http://www.gamblersbook.com>

**location:**

5473 S. Eastern  
Las Vegas NV 89119

**6 Gambler's Book Club**

**OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:**

The shop on Eastern is a new location for the store, which was downtown at Charleston and 11th for over 30 years.

**DESCRIPTION:** Here you can buy a book on any system ever devised to beat casino odds. Owner Edna Luckman carries more than 4,000 gambling-related titles, including many out-of-print books, computer software, and videotapes. She describes her store as a place where "gamblers, writers, researchers,

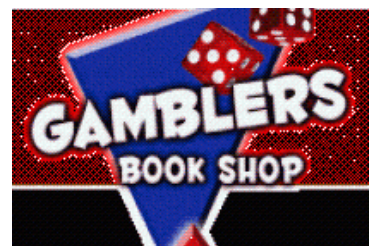


Photo courtesy of Gambler's Book Shop

statisticians, and computer specialists can meet and exchange information." On request, knowledgeable clerks provide on-the-spot expert advice on handicapping the ponies and other aspects of sports betting. The store's motto is "knowledge is protection." Open Monday through Saturday from 9am to 5pm.  
© Frommer's

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**contact:**  
tel: 702 454 2270

**location:**  
3175 East Tropicana  
Boulevard  
Las Vegas NV 89109

## **Swiss Cafe and Patio Garden**

**DESCRIPTION:** This charming eatery has received raves as "One of Las Vegas' Top 40 Restaurants" by Zagat Survey plus many accolades from the Las Vegas Review-Journal. The delightful menu features dishes from three regions in Switzerland: French, German and Italian. Your appetizer choice might be the Roast Duck Salad with Raspberry Walnut Dressing. The Bavarian Rib Chop stuffed with crab dressing is excellent. Swiss Schnitzel with Cognac Sauce goes. An nice selection of imported and domestic wines is available. CLOSED.  
© wcities.com

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**contact:**  
tel: +1 702 646 3565

**location:**  
4150 West Carey Avenue  
Las Vegas NV 89030

## **Century Las Vegas Drive-Ins**

### **OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:**

One of the few remaining drive-in theaters in the United States.

**DESCRIPTION:** This Las Vegas drive-in is quite popular, as it is the only one remaining in the area. With six screens showing the best of Hollywood films, this place can accommodate up to 950 cars. For film timings, ticket prices and further information just call. © wcities.com

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# Las Vegas Snapshot

## Local Info

Las Vegas defies definition. This city in the desert is a gambling capital, vacation paradise, adventure destination, and premier business convention center rolled into one. Las Vegas is the city of neon and the city that never sleeps. Reality takes a hike when you enter the world of glittering casinos, and the hours trickle away in this realm of slot machines, roulette wheels, and high-stakes poker rooms. If you want to keep track of the time, be sure to wear a watch. Casinos don't have clocks, and they are open 24/7, year-round.

Las Vegas hotels range from utilitarian to luxurious, and options for entertainment come in every variety, from adults-only to family-friendly. As a business destination, Las Vegas wins hands-down with the volume of facilities and services available for either large conventions or small business get-togethers. Upscale eateries by chefs like Wolfgang Puck and Emeril Lagasse are found throughout Las Vegas, both on and off the Strip. Award-winning shows from Cirque du Soleil and adaptations of Broadway hits such as *The Phantom of the Opera* grace the hotels' showrooms. Late-night entertainment is plentiful and diverse. Beyond the casinos, the Mojave Desert holds adventures like world-class rock climbing and mountain biking.

### The Strip: Las Vegas Boulevard

The fabled five-mile area known as the Las Vegas Strip holds more hotel rooms than any other city in the world. You'll find famous and remarkable hotels, each with its own theme and ambiance. Bellagio's dancing fountains and Italian Renaissance aura ooze luxury. Caesars Palace recreates the glory of Rome, Vegas-style. The Venetian takes on another Italian city and era, duplicating Old World Venice, complete with canals and gondoliers. Old standbys include the Flamingo and the Mirage, with its white tigers and erupting volcanoes. See the Paris Las Vegas with

outstanding replicas of the Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe and magnifique Parisian atmosphere and charm. Treasure Island offers daily live pirate battles, free of charge. At the "bottom" or south end of the strip, risen from the ashes of the Hacienda Hotel, the magnificent Mandalay Bay takes you to the tropics, including a pool with waves you can actually surf. At the top of the Strip, you will find the Stratosphere Tower visible from miles away. It is the highest free-standing building in the western half of the United States, with views from the top that are indescribable.

You don't have to stay right on Las Vegas Boulevard to enjoy neon and glitz. Just off the Strip, places like the Rio, the Palms, and the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino are only a taxi ride away and offer easier access to areas beyond the Strip.

### Downtown: Fremont Street

The original Las Vegas, where people hung out in the '30s and early '40s, is still thriving, but with a new face known as the Fremont Street Experience. The Fremont Street Experience closed the fabled street to vehicle traffic, and its 90-foot overhead canopy contains state-of-the-art LED lights that create jaw-dropping images. Some tourists actually prefer this area to the Strip because room prices are generally lower. It's an easy walk from one casino to the next, and it's reminiscent of the early, nostalgic days of Las Vegas. The Neon Museum has a permanent display along Fremont Street featuring Old Vegas signs, from Vegas Vic to Aladdin's Lamp. Nightly light shows on the canopy of the Fremont Street Experience are free, and street vendors hawk everything from spray-paint art to henna tattoos. In addition, there are famous hotels such as The Plaza (formerly known as Union Plaza), overlooking Fremont Street, and the classic Golden Nugget. For nostalgia buffs, there is also the Golden Gate Hotel Casino, renovated to its earlier classic glory and appearance and still famous for the 99-cent shrimp cocktail.

## Beyond the Strip

In the last two decades, Las Vegas has added residents at an astonishing rate, creating outlying neighborhoods full of homes and, of course, hotels and casinos. To the west of the Strip, Summerlin sits just outside Red Rock Canyon and contains three hotel/casinos, along with several golf courses. East of the Strip, Henderson/Green Valley puts visitors a quick drive away from Lake Mead National Recreation Area and is home to the trendy Green Valley Ranch Resort, which starred in its very own reality TV show for a while. In North Las Vegas, the Las Vegas Motor Speedway draws racing fans from all over the United States, and places like the Cannery give them a place to stay close to the track.

If playing the tables isn't risky enough for you, you may want to try some of Las Vegas' outdoor adventures. Red Rock Canyon is ranked among the top five rock climbing destinations in the world and contains over 2,000 climbing routes. Bootleg Canyon in Boulder City is home to a network of mountain biking trails and a new zip-line adventure that speeds riders along a suspended cable high above the canyon.

### Las Vegas Weather

Las Vegas is located in the Mojave Desert, which means that from roughly mid-May to late October, you can expect very hot temperatures, often over 100 degrees. The climate is quite dry, except during brief rainstorms—in which case be careful of flash flooding. If you're planning any outdoor activities, drink lots of water, wear sunscreen, and go as early in the day as possible. Better yet, save your desert explorations for the winter months, approximately November through April.

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