

**Get it. Do it. See it.**

# guide

## BEYOND COACHELLA

If you're heading to the festival, there's so much more to do than catch a few sets. Here's the lowdown on where to find off-roading adventure, great climbs and stunning mid-century design in this awesome desert valley.

Words LIZBETH SCORDO



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An abundance of boulders in Joshua Tree makes it ideal for rock climbing.

## Do it

### THE EAST VALLEY IN 24 HOURS

If you're looking for a day full of leisure sports, you've come to the right place. Rent a court or take a lesson at the Larry Ellison-owned **Indian Wells Tennis Garden**, an impressive outdoor tennis stadium that's also home to the BNP Paribas Open. There's no shortage of glorious golf in these parts, but for one of the most challenging links courses around, grab a tee time at the Pete Dye-designed **Stadium Course at PGA West**

in La Quinta, where the PGA Tour's Desert Classic takes place every year.

One of two **BMW Performance Centers** in the country is just 10 miles east of Indio, where you can choose your own vehicular adventure, from an hour-long lap session in a high-performance Series M BMW to an all-day class in off-road motorcycling to a Mini stunt-driving lesson. Each experience pairs you with an expert driving instructor.

**STAY** Celeb designer Martyn Lawrence Bullard has glammed up the two-story **Sands Hotel & Spa** with Moroccan accents, oversized daybeds around the pool and rooms with Carrara marble and vintage crystal glassware. Over at the massive, 45-acre **La Quinta Resort & Club**, you'll have your pick of

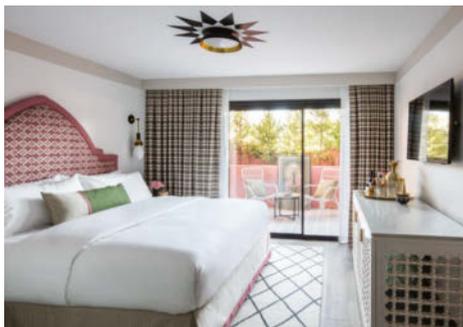
onsite tennis, golf, fitness classes, 41 pools (try 'em all!), some serious spa treatments and a roster of restaurants.

**EAT** Go for a gourmet burger (the bison version is a winner) at **Eureka** in Indian Wells, which also boasts a stellar selection of craft beer and small-batch bourbon in a modern industrial space. The Sands' posh all-day eatery **The Pink Cabana** goes the farm-to-table route with Med-inspired dishes and a notable cocktail program.

**DRINK** To see a bit of the spillover scene from the festival (which is less than three miles away), hit up the western-themed **Neil's Lounge** in Indio, which hosts karaoke every single night of the year. Local brewmaker **La Quinta Brewing Co.** serves up a variety of its own offerings—including a porter made with locally roasted coffee beans—along with rotating guest handles and live music nights in La Quinta's low-key Old Town.



Designer Martyn Lawrence Bullard glammed up the Sands Hotel & Spa.



The luxe interior at the Sands Hotel & Spa.



Why you're here: the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival.

**If you're looking for a day full of leisure sports, you've come to the right place.**



The iconic Palm Springs Aerial Tramway is a must-do activity.

## PALM SPRINGS IN A LONG WEEKEND

Don't call it a comeback. The iconic desert destination never went anywhere; it just keeps reinventing itself. The city's riding the mid-century-madness wave, attracting architecture and design buffs who come to gawk and buy one-of-a-kind pieces at the plentiful vintage shops. Cruise around neighborhoods like **Vista Las Palmas** to take in architectural eye candy like the former pads of OG celebs Dean Martin and Marilyn Monroe. Or book a tour at the A. Quincy Jones–designed **Sunnylands** mansion in nearby Rancho Mirage, once the winter home of the billionaire Annenbergs.

For a 6,000-foot elevation gain with little effort, hop on the **Palm Springs Aerial Tramway**, a rotating modern marvel that

whisks you up to Mount San Jacinto State Park in mere minutes. Once on top, you'll have access to the best views in the valley and 50-plus miles of trails, including an out-and-back 12-miler that will take you up to the peak, the second highest in Southern California.

Fifteen minutes north, you can rent an ATV at **Off Road Rentals** to tackle steep grades in the desert sand. **Indian Canyons** preserve offers a myriad of canyon hikes, including one through Andreas Canyon and its massive natural palm oasis,

Lastly, don't miss the **Desert X** biennial, a series of environmentally conscious outdoor art installations spanning the entire valley that disappears after April 21.



Sunnylands was a winter retreat for many celebs.



The stunning mid-century interior at Sunnylands.



### STAY

A block off the main drag, the blue-and-white-splashed boutique **Holiday House** boasts an impressive art collection with pieces by Roy Lichtenstein and Herb Ritts and boldly decorated rooms. The lushly lined pathways of the sprawling **Parker Palm Springs**—an ultrachic resort with a side of kitsch—lead to hidden pools, poppy cocktail bars, pétanque courts and fire pits. Book a villa for an extravagant experience. Fresh off a multiyear facelift, the formerly dated **Villa Royale** is now a groovy hideaway where Spanish fountains and Moroccan tilework sit beside graffiti murals and Debbie Harry portraits.



### EAT

The Parker's sexy wine bar **Counter Reformation** (complete with a confessional in

the back) does some of the best small plates in town, while the creative Vietnamese-American dinner fare at **Rooster and the Pig** is worth waiting in the line out front. For an old-school experience, dine on escargot and veal sweetbreads on the stunner of a patio at **Le Vallauris**, a 40-year-old French fine-dining spot.



### DRINK

The crowd at **Melvyn's**, a 44-year-old classic piano bar, is as varied as the tunes crooned by its hammy performers, so order a giant martini and take it all in. **Seymour's**, a speakeasy attached to swanky steakhouse Mr. Lyons, churns out inventive drinks in a tiny space, while wine and beer bar **Dead or Alive** serves an obscure lineup of both to the ever-growing contingent of young professionals in town.

## Do it

### JOSHUA TREE IN A WEEK

With its twisted branches and spiky green crowns, the Joshua Tree is the perfect mascot for its national-park namesake—home to monstrous rock formations, winding trails lined with wildflowers and whimsical cactus gardens, all nestled next to an artist community just outside its entrance. While you could spend an entire week just hiking and camping within park limits, we recommend mixing and matching some park highlights to squeeze in other sights around the area.

The hike up **Ryan Mountain** gains more than 1,000 feet in elevation during the mile-and-a-half trip to the summit, rewarding you with 360-degree park views. It's challenging enough to serve as a solid workout while only taking up a couple hours of the day. For a longer but less-crowded trek, take on **Boy Scout Trail**, a 16-miler that'll give you a good overview of the park's terrain as it traverses the low and high desert, toggling from junipers and Joshua Tree forests to boulder piles and rockier terrain.

If bouldering's your bag, take your pick of the park's primo spots, including **Skull Rock Trail** (named for a rock that does indeed resemble a human skull), which is lined with excellent options. **Iron Door Cave boulder** and nearby counterpart **Tidal Wave boulder** are also popular with the climbing crowd.



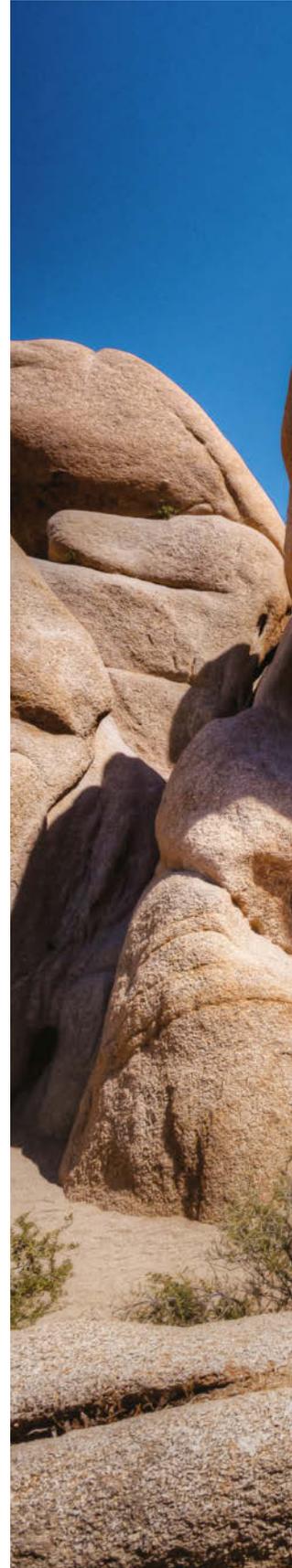
Get a sound bath inside the trippy Integratron.

A car is key for getting in and around the park easily (bonus: the \$30 admission fee is charged by the vehicle and good for a week), so use it to take a ride up to **Keys View**, a lookout where you can gaze at two mountain peaks, the entire Coachella Valley, the Salton Sea and even make out the San Andreas fault line. And be sure to swing by the fuzzy **Cholla Cactus Garden** near the south entrance for some Instagram action.

One-of-a-kind activities abound outside the park, so plan to reserve a crystal-bowl-generated sound-bath session inside the trippy **Integratron**, a dome that touts it was built on a geometric vortex with input from



Funky art installations abound in Bombay Beach.



The Skull Rock Trail is lined with great bouldering options.



extraterrestrials. Visit the 10-acre **Joshua Tree Outdoor Museum** to explore a collection of large-scale sculptures made entirely of junked materials by the late artist Noah Purifoy. If you've got the time, make the trek to the **Salton Sea** (an accidental lake with a fascinating boom-and-bust history) and its resulting shantytown, **Bombay Beach**, which you must see to believe. End your sojourn at the nearby **Salvation Mountain**, a godly tribute in the form of a 50-foot-tall Technicolor mound of painted murals and religious scripture.



Stay at the **Pioneertown Motel** and be transported back to the Wild West—but with AC and free Wi-Fi.



**STAY**

Camping in the park is always an option, with hundreds of sites available, while vacation rentals range from cozy cabins to luxe lairs. Nearby Pioneertown was originally built as a Wild West film set, so most of the "buildings" you see are just facades, but **Pioneertown Motel** is the real-deal, replete with 19 refurbished rooms, rustic decor and a communal space for games and coffee.



**EAT**

Just next door, live-music mecca **Pappy & Harriet's** is the perfect blend of hip and honky-tonk with killer barbecue and an intimate stage that's hosted artists like Lorde and Paul McCartney in recent years. Downtown JT's **Pie for the People** doles out New York-style slices with out-there toppings like

pumpkin-seed pesto, and the airy **La Copine** serves a seasonal menu of veggie-heavy dishes and addictive beignets.



**DRINK**

The **Joshua Tree Saloon** is neither short on character or *characters* with an eclectic mix of longtime locals and visitors who stop into the western-looking watering hole that's just outside the park's main entrance. **Landers Brew** is known for its solid selection of craft beers and friendly resident dogs.



The best way to reach these adventures is to fly into Los Angeles or Palm Springs.

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