

Palm Springs

Mid-century modern in the desert, the aerial tramway and Joshua Tree next door

Palm Springs is a desert resort two hours from LA, where mid-century modern houses, a tramway to a 10,000-foot mountain and 350 days of sun make it the winter escape of southern California. Joshua Tree is 45 minutes away, Indian Canyons are inside the city, and the pool is never closed.

At a glance

AIRPORT	PSP, 10 min to downtown
BEST SEASON	Oct-May; summer passes 43°C
GETTING AROUND	Car for Joshua Tree; walk Palm Canyon Drive

When to go

October to May is ideal. December to March is peak season with perfect 20-25°C days. June to September is above 40°C and quiet; hotels drop to half price but the heat is extreme.

Getting around

Palm Canyon Drive and the uptown design district are walkable. A car is needed for Joshua Tree, the Indian Canyons and the outlets. The Buzz trolley runs the strip for free.

What to see

Palm Canyon Drive	The main strip: shops, galleries and restaurants under palms.
Aerial Tramway	The world's largest rotating tramcar to Mount San Jacinto, 10,834 ft.
Indian Canyons	Tahquitz, Palm and Andreas: oasis hiking on Agua Caliente land.
Moorten Botanical Garden	3,000 desert plants in a mid-century garden.
Architecture	Desert Modernism: Frey, Wexler and Neutra houses; take a tour.
Palm Springs Art Museum	Modern art, Western art and a glass studio.
Joshua Tree	45 min north: boulders, yuccas and the Mojave-Colorado border.
Cabazon Dinosaurs	The concrete dinosaurs off I-10, since 1975.

Tours worth booking

Palm Springs Aerial Tramway ticket	2 h · Nature · 4.8/5 (2940 reviews)
Joshua Tree National Park day trip from Palm Springs	6 h · Nature · 4.8/5 (1620 reviews)
Universal Studios Hollywood day ticket	Full day · Adventure · 4.7/5 (4120 reviews)
Alcatraz Island day tour with ferry	2.5 h · Culture · 4.8/5 (8920 reviews)
Warner Bros Studio Tour Hollywood	3 h · Culture · 4.8/5 (3640 reviews)
San Diego Zoo 1-day admission	Full day · Nature · 4.7/5 (6210 reviews)

Where to stay

Ace Hotel & Swim Club	Palm Springs · uptown · Design · From \$220
The Parker Palm Springs	Palm Springs · Gene Autry · Luxury · From \$420
The Saguaro Palm Springs	Palm Springs · downtown · Design · From \$180
Hotel Corona de Oro	Palm Springs · South Palm Canyon · Boutique · From \$260
Arrive Palm Springs	Palm Springs · Uptown Design · Design · From \$250
Colony Palms Hotel	Palm Springs · Central · Boutique · From \$290

Day-by-day itineraries

Palm Springs in 1 day	suitesandsunsets.com/itineraries/palm-springs/1-day-itinerary
Palm Springs in 2 days	suitesandsunsets.com/itineraries/palm-springs/2-day-itinerary
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