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From this week's Business of Life

Destination: Palm Springs

By: Margaret Littman January 12, 2009



El Paseo shopping, above, and the Pete Dye-designed PGA West TPC Stadium golf course in Palm Springs, below | Photos courtesy of Palm Springs Desert Resort Communities

GO: Don't laugh. This isn't your grandfather's resort town. Yes, Palm Springs still has a little bit of 1950s-era charm. But there are all sorts of 21st-century amenities and reasons to head there this winter, and we're not just talking the Chicago climate (although wanting to escape these temperatures is understandable).

DO: Golf, soak and sun. That's the trifecta of recreation in this resort area, where winter temperatures stay in the 70s before climbing quickly in spring. You could spend the whole season teeing off on one of more than 300 first-rate golf courses, dipping in the natural hot springs or sunbathing by the luxurious swimming pools. This time of year is ideal for hiking in

Joshua Tree National Park (www.nps.gov/jotr), too, before the desert heats up. If celebrity-sighting is more your speed, this week (through Jan. 19) marks the 20th annual Palm Springs International Film Festival (www.psfilmfest.org). The Palm Springs fest is to foreign films what Sundance is to indies, but you wait in line in sun instead of snow. From Jan. 19-25 is the 50th annual Bob Hope Chrysler Classic Pro-Am Golf Tournament (www.bhcc.com), where sports and entertainment celebrities take to the greens.

STAY: Rest your head in the mid-century modern style for which Palm Springs is known. Options for feeling like you are on the set of "Mad Men" include the Orbit In (www.orbitin.com, 877/996-7248; rates \$159-\$269) and the Colony Palms (www.colonypalms.com, 800/577-2187; rates \$229-\$599). The centrally located Hotel Zoso (www.hotelzoso.com, 760/325-9676; rates start at \$200) is a great choice for film buffs — it's within walking distance of theaters, the art museum and shopping along Palm Canyon. Or, choose the pampered world awaiting you at the newly renovated Le Parker Meridien Palm Springs (www.starwoodhotels.com, 760/770-5000; doubles start at \$355 a night).



DINE: Palm Springs still has a reputation as a meat-and-potatoes town. Steakhouses like the old-school Davey's Hideaway (760/320-4480, entrees \$15-\$26) still rule, with its thick slabs of beef and live piano music. For something more intimate, head to the tiny Pomme Frite (www.pomme-frite.com, 760/778-3727; entrees \$21-\$28), a Belgian restaurant on the main strip, Palm Canyon Drive, that serves fresh mussels and other classics. Global fusion food is on the menu at the new Dink's Restaurant & Ultra Lounge (www.dinksrestaurant.com, 760/327-7676; entrees \$12-\$29). Top off any meal with a date shake, a milkshake made with the local favorite fruit. At Shields Date Garden (www.shieldsdates.com, 760/347-7768) you can learn about the history of dates in the area and buy date crystals to make your own shakes back at home.

FOR MORE INFO: Call the Palm Springs Desert Resort Communities Convention and Visitors Authority at (800) 967-3767, or surf to www.giveintothedesert.com.

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What do you think?

Sheila S. wrote:

I just got back from P.S. over NYE weekend - 75 degrees. I highly recommend checking out the new Riviera Palm Springs Resort & Spa, Aerial Tramway gondola - up to the snow covered mountains, casinos and the Desert Hill outlet stores.

1/13/2009 1:26 PM CST

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leslie w. wrote:

Forget visiting, I want to move there. TODAY!

1/13/2009 11:04 AM CST

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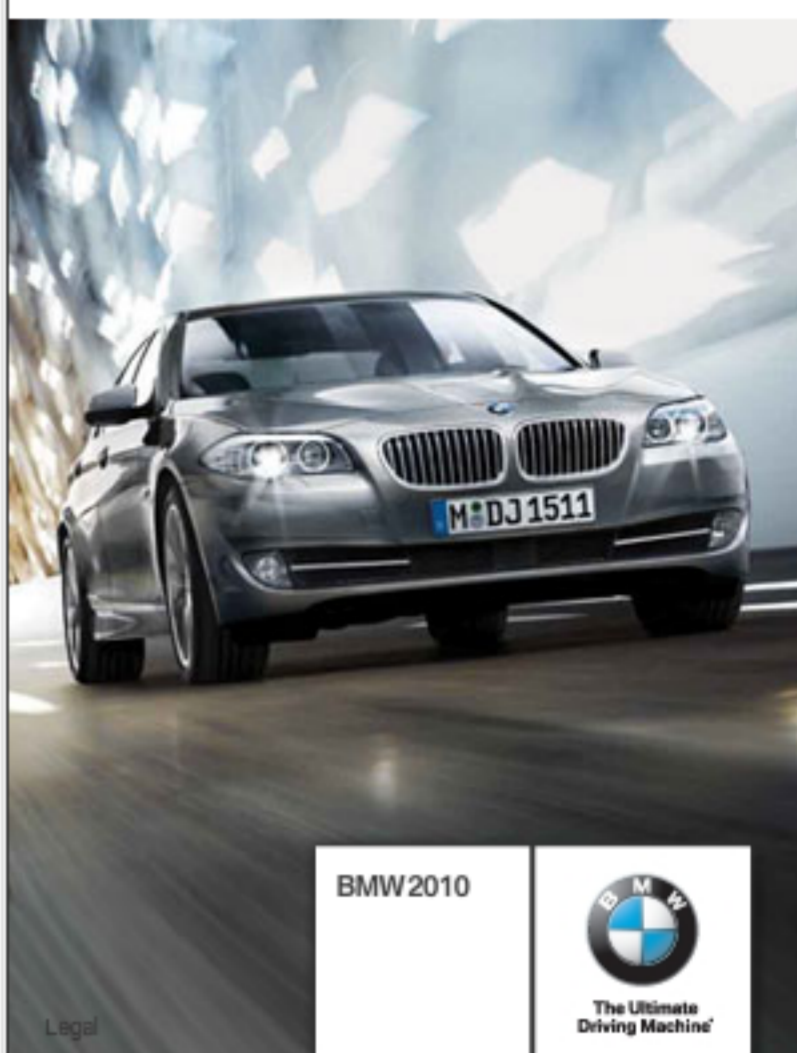
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