

Carolina Bride



CALIFORNIA
DREAMIN': STEAL AWAY
TO LAGUNA BEACH
AND PALM SPRINGS

FRESH PICKED:
STUNNING FLORAL
ARRANGEMENTS FOR
YOUR BIG DAY

CITY CHIC

SWOON-WORTHY GOWNS AND DREAMY DETAILS

Pack Your Bags

CALIFORNIA DREAMIN'

Whether you love to surf, shop, golf, or just sip in the sun, the Golden Coast makes for the perfect post-wedding getaway.

By Caroline Portillo

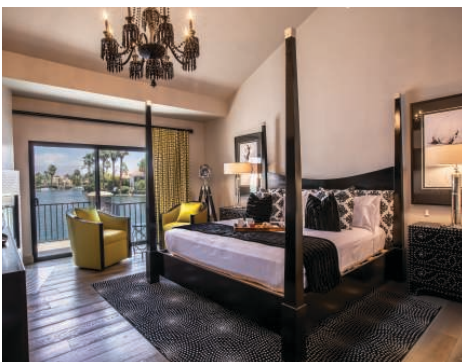
Palm Springs

A mid-century modern oasis in the middle of the Sonoran Desert of southern California, Palm Springs is a vintage resort city renowned for everything from hot springs and spas to golf and shopping. And when it comes to weather, few places give you more sunny days a year than this bastion of style and laid-back living.

STAY

We recommend you stay a few miles outside of Palm Springs proper at **The Chateau at Lake La Quinta (starting at \$200 per night)**, a boutique hotel with 22 private suites and two bungalows overlooking the tranquil lake, which is framed by swaying palms and the San Jacinto Mountains. While the area is known for its mid-century architecture, The Chateau stands out as a European-styled property for people who want a quiet desert getaway.

The hotel is one of the few lakefront properties in the California desert, and the small, intimate spot means you're a name, not a room number. When you enter your room, it's decorated with some of the signature Palm Springs bold looks (think bright red chandeliers and vibrant bedding) with luxurious touches, such as fireplaces and private patios overlooking the lake. On the dresser you'll find a few Medjool dates, a welcome gesture you'll think of often as you watch the date palm trees sway.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE CHATEAU AT LAKE LA QUINTA AND VISIT PALM SPRINGS



Mélange Restaurant & Bar



EAT

Before you make your way to Palm Springs proper, dine al fresco at **Mélange** restaurant and bar, the lakeside dining option at The Chateau at Lake La Quinta. The seasonal dishes are sourced from family farms in California and many of the wines are from boutique California wineries. The cocktails are artfully created using fruit plucked from the Chateau grounds.

Once you're in the heart of Palm Springs, either start or end your night with a Forever Marilyn cocktail at **TRIO Restaurant**, which prides itself on being where "Palm Springs eats and drinks." **Copley's on Palm Canyon** is a romantic spot with a cool history: It's part of the former estate of actor Cary Grant estate. Another iconic spot: **Johannes**, where the German-Austrian wiener schnitzel is beloved by locals and tourists alike.



PLAY

One way to get a view of it all is the **Palm Springs Aerial Tramway**. Inside the world's largest tram car, you'll ascend two-and-a-half miles up Mt. San Jacinto to an elevation of 8,516 feet with a panoramic view of the entire region and its windmill-studded desert landscape. Once you reach Mountain Station, there are two restaurants and more than 50 miles of hiking trails.

When it comes to golf, there's no shortage of options in the area. The Jack Nicklaus-designed **Escena Golf Club in Palm Springs** and the **PGA West Stadium Course** in La Quinta both offer stunning views of the surrounding mountainside and have permanent real estate in *Golf Magazine's* top-100 courses list.

Want to work off some of that California cuisine you've been indulging in? Do some shopping on **Palm Canyon Drive**, where the décor and sartorial traditions are enough to make you want to immediately don a bright pink caftan and call for a martini. There also are countless opportunities for hiking in the greater Palm Springs area. Top of the list, of course, is **Joshua Tree National Park**, a vast protected area straddling the Colorado and Mojave deserts that's known for its rugged rock formations. But other, less traveled hiking trails beckon, including **Tahquitz Canyon** (there are streams and a 50-foot waterfall when it's not too dry) and the **Indian Canyon**, which offers some of the valley's most famous trails for all skill levels.

And after a long desert hike, make a pit stop for a well-deserved date shake at kitschy **Shield's Date Farm** in nearby Indio. Don't feel the need to pay for the walking tour. Just grab a couple of shakes (you won't want to share), take a few of the plentiful samples at the store, and head out to your next desert destination.



Palm Springs Aerial Tramway



Escena Golf Club

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