



15 APR, 2024

DESERT dreams

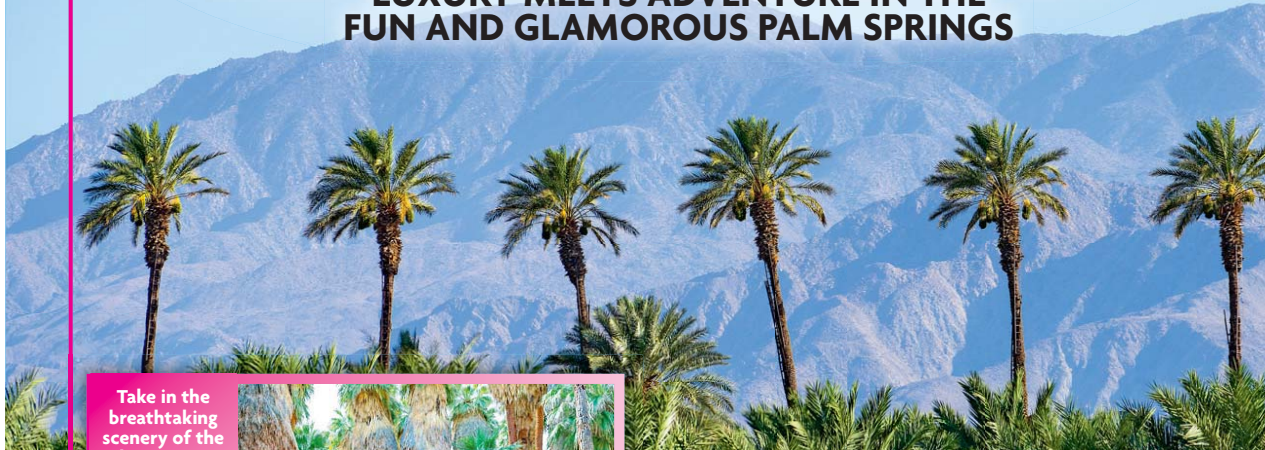
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DESERT *dreams*

LUXURY MEETS ADVENTURE IN THE FUN AND GLAMOROUS PALM SPRINGS



Take in the breathtaking scenery of the Indian Canyons.



By Michelle Heiderman.

Travel writer Michelle was blown away by Palm Springs.

I came to Palm Springs expecting no more than a dusty desert, but I was completely blown away by the glitz and glamour contrasted by amazing scenery. If you've ever been thinking about a trip to Palm Springs, DO IT. This is one destination not to be missed and guaranteed to surprise you around every corner!

OUT OF THIS WORLD

As I jump out of our air-conditioned van into a rustic open-air Jeep, I instantly feel the desert heat. I'm on a tour to the San Andreas Fault with our lovely guide from Desert Adventures. I am told they have filmed scenes from *Star Wars* here, and as we wind our way through the rocky terrain I can definitely see the resemblance.

Our guide tells stories about the past – hunters would use parts of the palm trees and animals to make weapons, and the plants are still used to this day for medicinal purposes. Just as I think the heat is too much we come across an oasis. There's flowing water, shade and animals living

under the dense foliage on the tree trunks.

CHECKING IN

Now it's time to wash off the dust and mix up the adventure with a touch of luxury. We check into the Avalon Hotel & Bungalows Palm Springs and it's gorgeous. There are pools, a restaurant and my beautiful Grecian-style villa is giving off Hollywood glam vibes. In fact, we're told it was frequented by Marilyn Monroe and Joan Crawford, who demanded French bread and packs of cigarettes whenever she stayed.

EAT & DRINK

It's time for some dinner, and we're off to The Pink Cabana restaurant at the Sands Hotel & Spa. If you're



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GATE 7

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Albert Frey designed his house around the natural boulders.



Upcycle an old garment at Superbloom workshop.



The Pink Cabana restaurant is perfect for dinner and drinks.

meets drought-ridden bush track.

PAINT THE TOWN

For my next stop I've arrived at upcycling workshop Superbloom, where our hosts greet us dressed top to toe in upcycled garments covered in paint splatters. I am told to bring along an old item of clothing that I am keen to inject a bit of life back into, and so I have chosen my old faithful denim jacket. As I flick paint all over my jacket I'm both terrified and excited, but I am delighted with the final product.

HOME SWEET HOME

Palm Springs is also famous for its architecture, and as luck would have it we're off on a tour of some of the most interesting houses I've ever seen. Our guide takes us past hundreds of mansions, including the home featured in *Don't Worry Darling*, Leonardo DiCaprio's holiday retreat,

Elvis and Priscilla's house, and also Frank Sinatra's humble abode, which we're told has a piano-shaped pool complete with an awning which creates piano key-shaped shadows.

One of the most amazing houses we pass is by famous Palm Springs architect Albert Frey. We're told that boulders – for which there are literally thousands here – are legally not permitted to be moved to make way for construction work. As a result, Frey designed the property around the huge rock which still features to this day in the living space.

THINK PINK

For a bit of fun and even more glam, we're booked in for a tour of the Trixie

Motel. Infamous drag queen Trixie Mattel opened the all-pink hotel back in 2022. There are seven rooms on the property, each with their own theme and individual scent. The hotel is oozing with Barbie Dreamhouse vibes, and it's impossible not to smile as you walk around the love-heart pool floats, cacti and pink flamingos in the gardens, all set against the iconic palm-tree skies.

Later, we're treated to a few cocktails at the (you guessed it – PINK) bar! We're also lucky enough to be invited to stay for a show featuring some up-and-coming drag queens.

after a fancy feast, this is the place to visit. The king salmon melted in my mouth, and I also treated myself to the Pushing Buttons cocktail, which comes with a flower that turns your tongue numb and changes the flavour – so cool!

INTO THE WILD

We're up early the next day to beat the heat and go on a hike of the Indian Canyons.

This picturesque area is sacred to the Cahuilla people who have thrived here for thousands of years. Rock art, house remnants, dams and trails still exist in the canyons. The scenery is like nothing I've ever seen before – a tropical paradise



The Trixie Motel is like a Barbie Dreamhouse.

