

Weekend Getaways

Written by Written by Christine Whitton

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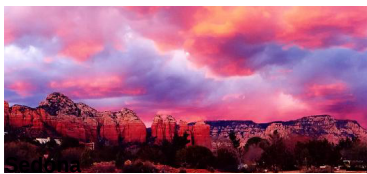
What better way to escape the heat and chaos that comes with everyday life than a quick trip away from home? Whether around the corner or over the mountains, these nearby hideaways are still close enough to home, yet far enough away.



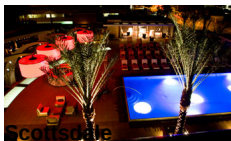
ARIZONA

Flagstaff

Surrounded by the largest contiguous ponderosa pine forest in the world, Flagstaff's scenic commute offers the perfect escape from the Valley's sizzling summer temps. Grab the kids, cooler and camper for a weekend amid the great outdoors. Barbeque to your heart's content, sleep beneath the stars and explore one the greatest wonders of the world—The Grand Canyon.



Just north of Phoenix, Sedona is most noted for its radiating red outcroppings. This mild weather community is a playground for nature lovers. Filled with lush trails and trickling streams, adventure seekers can jump start their weekend mountain biking, mountain climbing or hiking before returning to their reserved stay for a little r-and-r. Guests of the L'Auberge de Sedona can relax while the resort handles every detail from scheduling spa treatments to reservations at L'Auberge Restaurant on Oak Creek.



Coined the next Beverly Hills, Scottsdale is the place to see and be seen. As one of the hippest hotels to hit Scottsdale, the W Scottsdale mixes it up every night at the Library with flavorful cocktails. As night turns to day, move your party poolside. Home to one of the city's sexiest daytime destinations, sunset.beach affords the ideal beach-inspired setting for Valley socialites. The best part, whether you're on a lounging pod or in a private cabana, the resorts personal poolside assistant will cater to your every need.

CALIFORNIA



The famous Rodeo Drive and fashionistas go hand-in-hand. Like its notorious cross streets, Beverly Hills is also noted for million-dollar mansions, manicured gardens and plush parks that frame its legendary 90210 zip code. Weekly farmer's markets and corner cafes bring local residents with visitors together. With room reservations at the historic Beverly Wilshire, be sure to sample the mouthwatering cuisine served at The Blvd.



Amateur duffers, bring your A-game to the only the only over-water miniature golf course around. The Santa Monica Pier is Cali's most memorable family-friendly getaway filled amusement rides, sugar-coated sweets and endless summertime fun. It also features the only

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over-water Ferris wheel in California and the first solar-powered wheel in the world, the Pacific Ferris wheel. And with two luxury resorts flanking each side of the pier (Shutters on the Beach and Fairmont Miramar), this weekend retreat requires an additional return.



Looking to make the most of your vacay? How about a vacation within a vacation? By route of Long Beach, San Pedro or Dana Point, a 15-minute ferry ride will bring you to an island just off the coast of Cali lined with artsy galleries, unique shops and seaside restaurants. Nicknamed the "Island of Romance," the island's main town of Avalon hosts seclusion and the Hotel Vista Del Mar as the overnight destination. Like its Cali counterparts, this hotel does not scrimp on lavishness or stellar services as seen in its evening delivery of fresh-baked cookies and milk. Sweet treat.

NEVADA



What better way to blow off steam then head to the epicenter of entertainment. Towering with ritzy resorts, illuminating lights, A-list celebs, culinary greats, elaborate shows, superior spas and elaborate pool settings, The Strip has paved the way to step out in style. Adorned with several posh boutiques, exotic cars (which can be rented by the hour) and glitzy casinos, Vegas has raised on bar for luxuriousness. With a city that operates 24-7, most visitors are ready to return home just to get some sleep. Until next weekend...

MEXICO



Located at the tip of Mexico's Baja California Peninsula along the Sea of Cortez is San Jose del Cabo, a regular retreat for many Zonies. Here, a mix of aqua-colored waters and salt-rimmed margaritas help to melt away unwarranted stress. Soft coastal breezes and fresh ocean air aid in a peaceful night's sleep at The Grand Mayan Los Cabo Wyndham Alliance resort. The world-class signature Brio Spa resides at this very location to offer much-deserved pampering.