

MOUNT CHARLESTON AND LEE CANYON RECREATION AND SKI AREA

Mount Charleston

Located 42 miles from Las Vegas in the Spring Mountains, Mount Charleston is an evergreen island in the Mojave Desert. Charleston's peak reaches 11,900 feet into the Southern Nevada sky. The lower foothills are covered with pinion pine and juniper; then comes the ponderosa pines and quaking aspen as the elevation increases. The ancient bristlecone pine can be found from 6,900 feet to the tree line. The Native Americans used this area to spend their summers, escaping the heat in the valleys below. The United States Forest Service manages the Charleston Forest Reserve, established Nov. 5, 1906. The Spring Mountain/Mount Charleston area is home to the Rocky Mountain elk, desert bighorn sheep, mule deer and a variety of other wildlife. You might even see a herd of wild Nevada mustangs on your trip up the mountain. There are numerous hiking trails in the Mount Charleston area. The Mt. Charleston Lodge (702-872-5408) and the Resort on Mount Charleston Hotel (702-872-5500) both offer food and rooms for visitors; there is no fuel service available on the Mount Charleston highway.

Lee Canyon Ski Area

Like Mount Charleston, Lee Canyon is located in the Toiyabe National Forest. Lee Canyon and Mount Charleston are connected by Highway 158. Lee Canyon offers snow skiing in the winter months and sightseeing and hiking in the summer and fall. Prepare for a scenic drive through Joshua trees as you return to U.S. 95. There are no services available in Lee Canyon. For more information call 702-385-2754.



VALLEY OF FIRE STATE PARK

Valley of Fire State Park is a must-see while you are visiting Las Vegas. Valley of Fire State Park can be reached by using either I-15 or the Northshore Drive. Valley of Fire derives its name from the spectacular red sandstone formations formed during the time of the dinosaurs 150 million years ago. This area was home to the Anasazi Pueblo farmers. There are many exquisite examples of rock art left by these ancient people at several sites within the park. There is also a large variety of desert animals and reptiles located within the park boundaries. A visitors information center, located within the park, includes exhibits on the geology, prehistory and ecology of the park. There are camping sites, picnicking sites and hiking opportunities for visitors. Always check with the visitors center for information on any hiking questions; call 702-397-2088.

Lost City Museum

The Lost City Museum features collections of the early Pueblo Indians in the Southwest. This museum is a journey through the Native American culture of this area, starting 10,000 years ago through about 1000 A.D. The museum also features exhibits relating to Mormon farmers who settled in the valley in 1865. The Lost City Museum is located on Highway 169. For more information call 702-397-2193.

Lake Mead National Recreation Area

The Northshore Drive of Lake Mead National Recreation Area, Highway 167, can be reached by traveling highways 147 or 166. The view of Lake Mead, created by the completion of Hoover Dam in 1935, is spectacular from Northshore Drive. You may want to stop and have lunch at one of the many marinas or just take in the view from Northshore Drive. This is a great day trip that will take you to Valley of Fire State Park, Lost City Museum and the rural communities of Logandale and Overton. You can use I-15 for a quick return to Las Vegas. Call 702-293-8990 for information.

RED ROCK CANYON CONSERVATION AREA

Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, managed by the Bureau of Land Management, is located 20 miles west of Las Vegas. This 197,000-acre area provides a 13-mile scenic drive, more than 30 miles of hiking trails, picnic areas, and a visitors center with exhibit rooms and a bookstore. The Red Rock National Conservation Area offers a unique opportunity to observe some of the best examples of the Mojave Desert. More than 1 million visitors each year enjoy the unique desert landscape, climbing and hiking opportunities, and informative programs offered by the BLM.

Scenic Drive

The 13-mile scenic drive is a one-way road, and bicycles are allowed. Hiking trails, sightseeing and photo opportunities abound in this spectacular setting. The scenic drive is open daily from 6 a.m. to dusk. For more information call 702-515-5350.

Interpretive Activities/Visitors Center

Activity schedules for naturalist-guided walking tours, programs and talks are posted at the visitors center from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information call 702-515-5350. Additional information and printed materials related to Red Rock can be obtained by stopping at the visitors center.

ADDITIONAL PLACES OF INTEREST WITHIN THE RED ROCK NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA

Spring Mountain Ranch State Park

Spring Mountain Ranch State Park, a 520-acre oasis located at the base of Wilson Cliffs, is a state park that offers historic tours, picnic sites and summer plays. The main ranch house and historical grounds are open to the public on select days. The Spring Mountain Ranch Park represents a part of the colorful history of the Las Vegas Valley. For additional information call 702-875-4141.

